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Miscellaneous Works

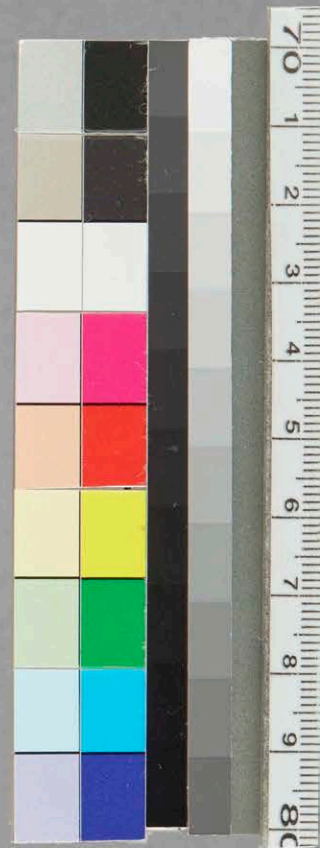
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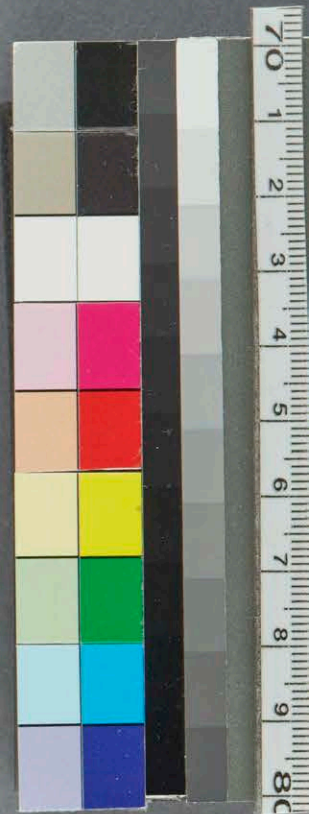
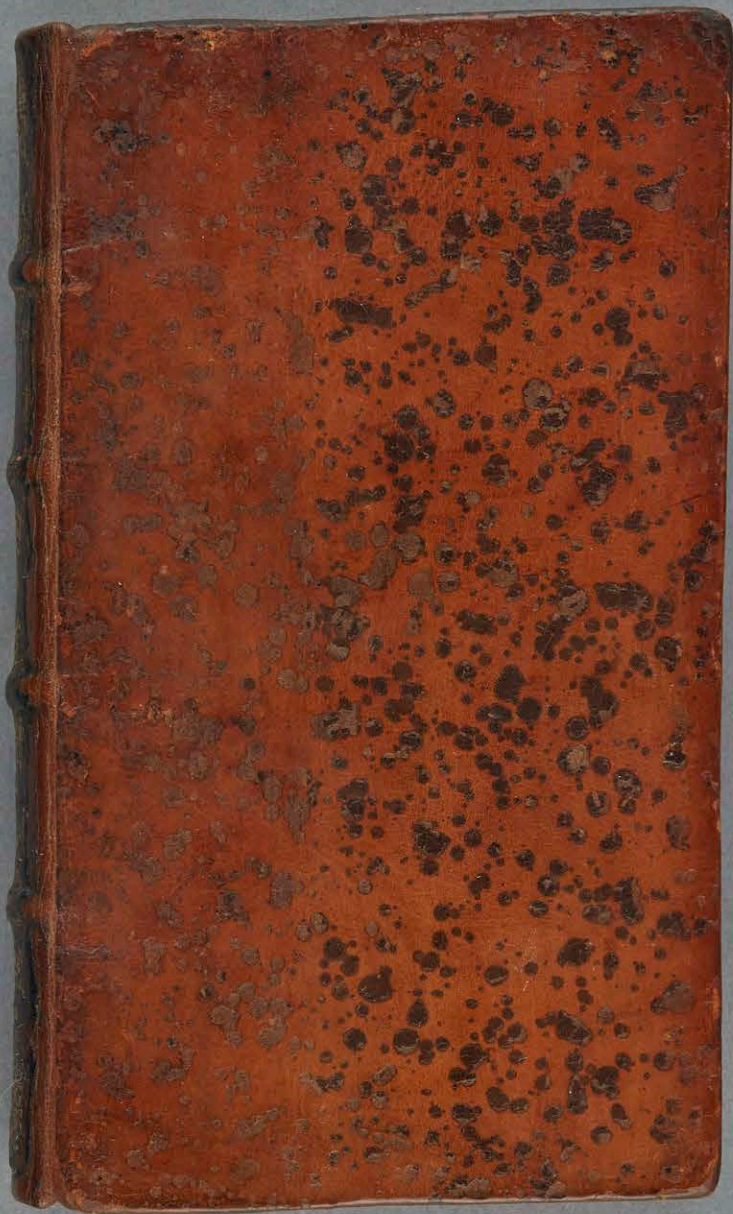
CONTAINING

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| II. <i>Anima Mundi</i> , or the Opinions of the Ancients concerning Man's Soul after this Life, according to unlighten'd Nature. | I | V. A just Vindication of Learning, and of the Liberty of the Press. |
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| IV. An Appeal from the Country to the | I | |

To which is prefix'd the Life of the Author, and an Account and Vindication of his Death. With the Contents of the Whole Volume.

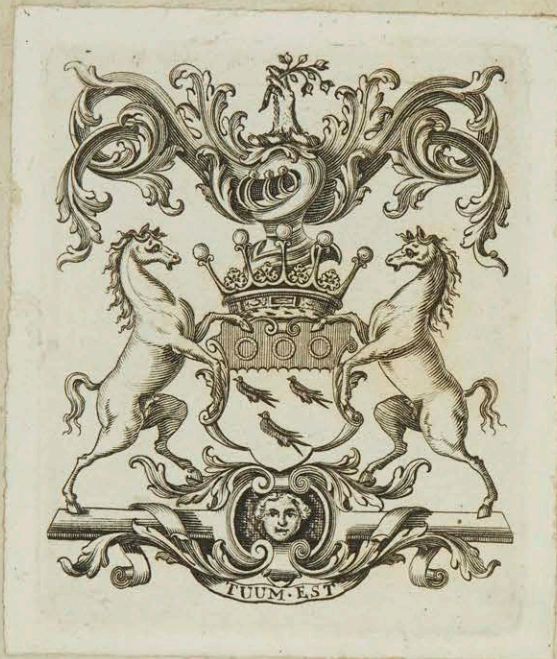
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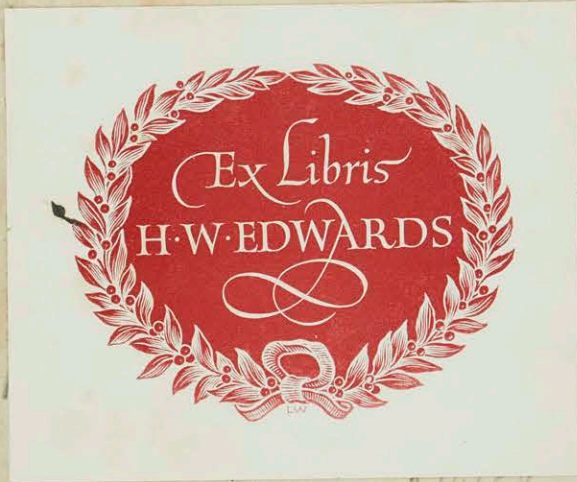


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THE
 Miscellaneous Works

OF
 Charles Blount, Esq;

CONTAINING

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|---|--|
| <p>I. The Oracles of Reason, &c.</p> <p>II. <i>Anima Mundi</i>, or the Opinions of the Ancients concerning Man's Soul after this Life, according to uninlighten'd Nature.</p> <p>III. Great is <i>Diana</i> of the <i>Ephesians</i>, or the Original of Priestcraft and Idolatry, and of the Sacrifices of the Gentiles.</p> <p>IV. An Appeal from the Country to the</p> | <p>City for the Preservation of his Majesties Person, Liberty and Property, and the Protestant Religion.</p> <p>V. A just Vindication of Learning, and of the Liberty of the Press.</p> <p>VI. A Supposed Dialogue betwixt the late King <i>James</i> and King <i>William</i> on the Banks of the <i>Boyne</i> the Day before that Famous Victory.</p> |
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To which is prefix'd the Life of the Author, and an Account and Vindication of his Death. With the Contents of the Whole Volume.

Printed in the Year, 1695.

To the Honourable and Divine
HERMIONE. Giving an
account of the Life and Death of
the Author.

YOU being Sovereign of my
Heart (*HERMIONE*)
have a Natural Right to all its
Treasures, and next to your divine Image
nothing is *there* of greater value, than the
memory of my Dead Friend, the only share
of whose Immortal Part, that we can now
enjoy, is contain'd in these Papers, the other
which is now in Heaven, we can only pur-
sue with Contemplative Wishes, till we
come to a nearer enjoyment there: But I
send you this Volume on a further score, as
the Product of a Generous Soul, and a faith-
ful Lover; the example I fear that the un-
happy *LINDAMOUR* must follow, having
less hopes, and as strong motives to Pas-
sion.

'Tis the opinion of some that the first
sickness of any violence, carries off those, who
have before, for any long time, enjoy'd a
perfect health; and I fear those, who for so

An Account of the Life and Death

many years have past through the Conversation of Ladies, with a heart scarce touch'd with love, receive it the more fatally at last when once the avenging Darts transfix their Breasts: None but one just so qualified as *Hermione*, cou'd ever have wounded me; not Beauty, good Humour, Wit, &c. separately cou'd have don't, and sure they never met but in *Hermione*, and *Astrea*: you have seen the force of their Union in her, and you may justly apprehend it as great in your self.

But, divine *Hermione*, this Letter is not design'd, as the conveyance of my Sentiments of you to the World, but to do my friend Justice, and scatter some pious Flowers on his Sacred Monument. You knew the incomparable *Mr. Blount*, and knew him intimately, and can therefore the better bear witness to those Truths I shall speak of him.

I leave to other Books and other Authors those Prefaces that do the Office of the Verger at *Westminster*, that shews the Tombs, in giving a short Account of the sum and substance of each of their Performances; that method perhaps might be agreeable enough in most of the Trifles of the Age, where a superficial View is more pardonable, than a severer perusal; or where the Author makes amends for the tedious Impertinence of his Book, by giving us the
substance

of the Author.

substance of it in the Preface, either by way of *Apology*, or *Abstracts*. But the Subjects and Compositions of these following Sheets left no room for either of these; their merit took away all occasion of *Apology*, and the *Majesty* and *Consequence* of their Design all pretence to *Abstracts*. Those that desire to see these Sacred *MONUMENTS*, must be more nice considerers, than to be satisfy'd without attentive *OBSERVATION*; they are *TRUTHS* of too great *Importance*, to be slightly run over, of too great Beauty, not to hold our Eyes some time on them, to take a through *Survey* of their various *Perfections*.

I shall therefore say nothing of the several Pieces contain'd in this Volume, they are the best Advocates for themselves, and will give some force to what I shall venture to say of their Author. I mean not here to write a Panegyric on him, having now neither leisure nor room, only I cannot lose this opportunity of presenting you the Minature of that large Image of him, that his Friendship has drawn in my heart.

His Father was Sir *HENRY BLOUNT*, the *Socrates* of the Age for his aversions to to the reigning Sophisms, and Hypocrisies, Eminent in all Capacities, the best Husband, Father, and Master, extremely agreeable in Conversation, and just in all his dealings.

From such a Father our Hero deriv'd himself, to such a Master ow'd his generous Education, unmixt with the nauseous Methods, and prophane opinions of the Schools. Nature gave him parts capable of Noble Sciences, and his industrious Studies bore a proportion to his Capacity: He was a Generous and constant Friend, an Indulgent Father, and a kind Master: His temper was open and free; his Conversation pleasant; his Reflections just and modest; his Repartees close, not scarrilous; he had a great deal of Wit, and no malice: His Soul was large and noble, above the little designs of most men; an enemy to dissimulation, and never fear'd to own his thoughts. He was a true *Englishman*, and Lover of the Liberty of his Country, and declar'd it in the worst of times. He was enemy to nothing but Error, and none were his Enemies, that knew him, but those who sacrific'd more to *Manimon*, than *Reason*: He met indeed with false Friends, that sav'd on him alive, and villify'd him dead, such who think their *Wit sufficient to atone for all their Villanies, and make amends for their want of Honesty*, for to lessen the Reputation after death of one they profess a friendship for alive, only to keep up a custom of condemning every one, that are incapable of obliging their Pocket, is out of the compass of all the Ethics I ever read.

This

This is an imperfect Summary of his Virtues, which I shall hereafter consider more at large; these made him the darling of his Acquaintance, and the delight of his Friends. But there is no *Excellence* but has its *Emulators* and *Detractors*; and therefore 'tis no wonder he has met with his.

He had been bred in a just and adequate notion of the Deity; he had learn'd that God was the first Cause of All Things, was *One*, and *Indivisible*, was *Goodness* it self, Infinite and Uniform in All his Attributes; and held that we have a true and perfect knowledge of what is meant by *Goodness, Justice, Mercy, Unity, &c.* since else we cou'd never know that God was *Good, Just, Merciful, One, &c.* This was his Test of all Doctrines, and when he met with such as oppos'd any of these Divine Attributes, or made them oppose one another, he rejected 'em as false and impious. He not only embrac'd evident Truths in his own mind, but like a sincere Lover of Truth endeavour'd to promote it, to disabuse the deceived, and establish a pious and just Notion of the Eternal Source of the *Goodness, Wisdom, Power, Justice, and Mercy.* A Noble Task, and worthy his *Heroic Spirit.* But the Age was too corrupt to suffer his pious Endeavours; *Avarice, Pride, Envy, Prejudice and Obsinacy,*

A §

An Account of the Life and Death

Obstinacy, had the possession of the World, and therefore naturally hated their *Opposer*. This made them fix (by a contradiction agreeable to their other opinions) the infamy of *Atheism*, on the most zealous asserter of the *Glory, Honour, and Adoration of ONE GOD*, and though scarce one of them pretended to Infallibility in their own way, yet were all positively certain he was in the wrong, or at least asserted it with as much *Assurance as Ignorance*. But all this cou'd not pervert his Thoughts of the Deity, he kept all profane Notions of God at a distance, and prefer'd those writ by the finger of the Almighty Creator in the minds of all mankind, to the *Obscure, unintelligible, and impious Doctrines*, devis'd by men to serve some turn or particular *Faction or Nation*.

This Opinion he liv'd in, this he dy'd in; you know, Madam, with what Calmness, with what Resignation he dy'd; not the least pang of guilt; not the least apprehensive fear to bitter his departure, his frequent Meditations on God during his Sickness, and the continu'd Contemplation of him his whole life, had fixt so lovely an Idea of God in his Soul, that he had no terror to launch out into the Ocean of Eternity. He left life like a tempest-beaten Traveller a stormy Voyage, and welcom'd Death, as the kind Pilot, that wou'd certainly conduct him to his wanted peace and quiet, to his Eternal
Repose

of the Author.

Repose and Tranquility. He had the satisfaction to see her embalm him with her Tears, who was debarr'd by *unaccountable custom* from making him happy in her embraces.

This leads me to the Vindication of the most questionable Action of his Life, I mean the *Cause of his Death*. Some condemn the Motive, and others the Action, and I think him justifiable in both: The Reasons of this my opinion, divine *Hermione*, are these.

Against *Suicide* the most substantial Argument they bring, is from the first Law of Nature, *Self-preservation*, imprinted in all mankind, and indeed on every sensible Creature. I answer to this, that no man had a greater Veneration for the Divine *Laws of Nature* than *Mr. BLOUNT*, nor did ever any one think 'em more Sacred, and inviolable; but then he consider'd the real extent of each particular Law; and found that *Self-preservation* was not so general a Precept, but it met with various limitations and exceptions; he found that to adhere inviolably to it, wou'd only be the destruction of all the other *Moral Laws*. For if *Self-preservation* were in all things, all times and Conjunctures, chiefly if not wholly to be regarded, there wou'd be no room left for *Honour, Virtue*, or indeed

deed for *Honesty*, no regard to public Good, and that noted Maxim of the Natural Law, *That the Public Good is to be prefer'd to any particular*, had been wholly abolish'd; for it might, nay has, and daily does happen, that the preservation of Particulars opposes the Public Weal. Then *Codrus*, *Decius*, and the rest of the Hero's of Antiquity must lose those Reverend Honours so many Ages have paid 'em for preferring the Public Good before *Self-preservation*. *Mutius Scævola*, and *Marcus Regulus*, must both be damn'd for the breach of the Sovereign Law of Nature, one for the preservation and delivery of his Country, the other for the preservation and honour of his word. Nay were this so, all the bravest Actions of War in all Ages are criminal and ignominious, for none of them are to be done without a more than ordinary hazard of the Darers. 'Tis evident therefore that the Rule of *Self-preservation* is not so general, and comprehensive, but that there are some Exceptions. But this being granted, as it can't be deny'd, it follows that our Opposers limit the number of those Exceptions, and let us know how far they reach, and when we transgress them; but if they give themselves leave to consider, they will find it amount to this, that every man is *sui Juris*, that is Judge, or rather

ther disposer of himself; 'tis one of the *Regalia* of Free-will, and will always be thought good, and eligible, when any man comes into the circumstance of exerting it. But to the reason of the thing.—All the Laws of Nature are founded in Reason, there is an evident Cause why 'tis so and so, this we must examin into, and that will shew us how far we are oblig'd by *Self-preservation*. The force of this Law is in the Design of the Creator, and the good of the Creature. Now 'tis evident, that the Creator made Mankind with a design of his Preservation, that he shou'd live a certain time here, and leave a succeeding Race to future Ages, which cou'd not be done, if there were no Principle of *Self-preservation* ingrafted in us, for then the moment Man had been made, he had perish'd; but the design of the Almighty being that men shou'd have a short Duration here, 'twas necessary, such a Principle shou'd be fixt in 'em. But to effect this (according to the order of the Creation) in a free Agent, 'twas necessary it shou'd afford and offer some certain or *Apparent Good* to the *Judgment*, which shou'd influence the *Will* to receive it. But *Life* being the Mōther of all *Goods* that we are capable of judging of, (without which we cou'd indeed know none) the
Judgment

Judgment and Will, desire its continuance, because without it, the Mind cannot possess those other Objects it esteems Goods. So that the first Principle of Self-preservation is founded on the Good that the Judgment observes in Life, for the Will is necessarily born to what the Judgment esteems Good, that is in the choice betwixt evident Good, and evident evil, but in the choice of two Goods, it often takes the Apparent Good for the Real; so that when Life ceases to be or appear to be a Good, the Principle of Self-preservation ceases to be of force, for 'tis not consistent with our nature to desire the continuance of what appears to us an Evil. But when my Friend, possess'd with the justest and most violent of Passions, found no hopes of obtaining, and in the midst of despair found Life wou'd be but a perpetual Evil, without *Astrea*, he did but according to the precepts of Nature and Reason, in doing what he did, and by consequence did nothing unworthy of a Philosopher, that is as to the Action.

I know *Cicero* brings a Simile for an Argument against this point: A Centinel, says he, that is plac'd in his Station, ought not to leave it till reliev'd by his Commander that plac'd him there. But first a
Simile

Simile is no proof, especially when there is no parallel in the cases, as there is not betwixt a Centinel at his Post, and a Man in this Life; for first the Soldier (at least in free Countries) is not forc'd to that Station without his consent, he knows before he Lists himself the Conditions of a Soldier's Life, and then submits himself to those Conditions, a very substantial Reason, why he shou'd stay till reliev'd at his Post. But what man had his free choice, or indeed cou'd have, whether he wou'd be or not be, before he was? Then 2dly, what will they agree is a relieving us from the Post of Life? Nothing but dying on a Bed? 'Tis evident from every days experience, that there are infinite other Accidents that carry off Mankind of all Ages, Degrees, and Sexes, whether they will or no. Nay 'tis evident from the consent of all mankind, that there are several ways lawful to seek death in. Who ever thought a Foot-Soldier, that ventures his Life in Battles, &c. ever abandon'd the Law of Self-preservation, tho he quit his Security, for a Groat a day, without any other Motive? Do not Superfluities make the Merchant and Seamen venture through a thousand hazards of Life? and I never yet heard them accus'd of a breach of this Law of Nature,
so

An Account of the Life and Death

so that there are some Motives lawful to hasten our deaths; and I think there is none so reasonable as the easing our selves of an unavoidable pain, for since Life is only eligible for the *Good* it brings, 'tis to be rejected when it offers nothing but *Evil*.

There remains one Objection more against *Suicide*, and that is the *Good* of the Creature, I mean of the public, which consists of each particular, and if every man be *sui juris*, the disposer of his own person, it must endanger the whole, which is nothing but a composition of its parts? First 'tis not to be suppos'd that this Case will reach the *Many*, for they judge of *Goods* in a grosser manner, and will scarce ever want enough to make them think Life such. But 2dly, 'tis evident from the practice of all Nations, that every man is the disposer of his own person, for no body yet denied but a man that's born in one Country might transplant himself to another; and become a Natural free Denizen of a strange and foreign Land. Next 'tis the Right of every free-born man (and all men are by natural right free) to choose what place he pleases to live in. Consent is suppos'd to make all Governments, and when

of the Author.

when the Cause and Condition of that *Consent* alters or ceases, every man is free to do what he pleases. Nor can any man or people oblige their Posterity by their *Consent*, for all men have the same freedom and power of giving or denying their Consent to any Government, as the first Composers had, though by their Living under such and such a Government they imply their Consent to their forefathers Agreement, or by leaving it shew their dissent, and this is a right founded in Nature. Now if I can leave any one particular Body Politick, I have the same right to leave another, and so on through all those of the World, and then by consequence I offend not, if by my death I take my self away from all. For every man is in this, what *Almanzor* tells *Boabdilin*,

I my self am King of Me.

Thus, Divine *Hermione*, we see the Action of Killing ones self is far from Criminal. I shall now pass to the particular Motive, that is *Love*.

I know there are a sort of men in the World, who profess a singular aversion to, and a contempt of this generous Passion; Fools and Sots are the mildest terms they

An Account of the Life and Death

they can afford to those, who submit to its Rule, and nothing can pacifie their indignation against 'em. But these are a people you may observe who are either past the power of giving an ill example themselves, and therefore rail at all others that follow the wise Dictates of Nature, as perverters of the Dignity of Mankind, and Rebels to Reason; or else they are a kind of fowre fac'd Hypocrites, Devils with the Vizors of Gravity and Sanctity, secret Debauchees, and publick Stoicks; Men and Women of no principle of Morality, Justice, and Honour, and only formal Devotees to the airy part of Religion, espousing the name against the thing; or else they are Cast Mistresses, Bubl'd Cullies, Notorious Cuckolds, debilitated Stallions, Catamites, and the rest of the nasty Refuse and Scum of mankind, whom Age, Folly and Vices have render'd incapable of relishing the serener and purer Delicacies Nature has prepar'd for more refined spirits. We have besides a sort of Gentlemen who urge that 'tis not the part of a *Philosopher* to be subject to his Passions. But these are men who seldom consider so much as to know the nature of man, or remember that none but the *Stoicks* ever pretended to a blockish stupidity, and insensibility of things, which

of the Author.

which is the effect of nothing but a swollen pride; and those that have acted most according to that Doctrine, have only discover'd that they chose rather to be Slaves to the Tyranny of *Pride*, than Subjects to the just Government of *Love*, and the other Natural Passions. *Aulus Gellius* gives an account of *Epictetus*, which favours more of the slavish condition he was in, than of a mind full of Elevation, and the precepts of wisdom; for to bear an evil that may be avoided is the effect of a low and narrow soul, not of a *Philosopher*, or Lover of Wisdom. He considers Nature as she is a Wife Author of all her Works, that does nothing in vain; and finding that in man she has plac'd the Passions, as the Instruments or Vehicles of Pleasure, sees by the effect they were not plac'd in the Soul to no purpose; for that wou'd be contrary to the Wisdom of Nature, who has given no superfluous piece of matter through the whole Mechanism of the Body, much less to the *Mind*. The Passions therefore were given to be us'd. But Reason say they, is set over them for their moderation and direction. *Reason* I grant is the first Director and Judge of the motives of the Passions, of which *Love* and

Hate

An Account of the Life and Death

Hate are Parents; Love is employ'd on *Good*, and *Hate* on *Evil*; and when Reason has examin'd the Object, to consider whether it be *Good*, or *Evil*, *Pleasant*, or *Painful*, it has done its office, and leaves the Passions to exert their force, sets 'em no bounds, for a *Good* cannot be lov'd too much, nor an *Evil* hated more than it deserves. 'Tis true, Reason does not always throughly consider the Object, and that makes the Passion more weak, and of shorter continuance. Thus the Loves of young men are generally grounded on the first apparent *Good*, *BEAUTY*; and therefore cease when they have either possess'd it, or find that Beauty lost in folly, Coquetry, prostitution, &c. But when a man of maturer years considers the Object of Love; though *Beauty* may give the first motion, yet *Wit*, *Prudence*, *Honour*, *Virtue*, *Good Humour*, and several other Qualifications must meet to give it a Rational, that is, a lasting Ground; and when such an Object is found, Reason can no longer doubt but 'tis a Good to be Loved, and here instead of lessning the Passion she strengthens it, 'till 'tis fix'd beyond her power to controul, especially when besides this there is no reasonable difficulty to oppose his happiness. So that we find that such a Lover may be
a Phi-

of the Author.

a *Philosopher*, that is a Lover of Wisdom, and obedient to her Laws; and such a Lover was Mr. *Blount*, furnish'd with such an Object to move his desires, and such Reasons to confirm 'em. You know *Astrea*, *Divine Hermione*, and have an exact Friendship with her, you can attest her *Beauty*, *Wit*, *Honour*, *Virtue*, *Good humour*, and *Discretion to a fault*, you have been acquainted with the Charms of her Conversation and Conduct, and condemn only her adhering to a *Notional Custom*, to the loss of so generous a Friend, and so faithful a Lover. But Custom and Obedience meeting the more easily betray'd her *Virtue* into a crime. I know my Friend lov'd her to his last breath, and I know therefore that all that love his Memory must for his sake value her, as being a Lady of that merit, that engag'd the Reason of *Philander* to so violent a Passion for her.

This is enough to shew that it was a real *Good* he desir'd, and that the loss of it render'd his Life a burden, and by consequence that he might rationally and justly put an end to what he experimentally found an *Evil*. Nor did he in this otherwise than *Cato*, or *Brutus* and *Cassius*, Men whose Lives and Deaths the unani-
mous

mous consent of so many Years and Nations have consecrated. If we examin into the motives of their death we shall find it *Pride*, though I confess a generous *Pride*. *Cato* could not bear to receive his Life at the hands of *Cesar*, and chose rather to fall with the first shock of the falling Liberty of *Rome*, than by the favour of a generous Enemy, wait an opportunity of Restoring *Rome* to her Liberty again. The same may be said of *Brutus* and *Cassius*, though with some advantage, since they had seen the small effect of their Noble attempts for the freedom of their Country, and that in the place of one Tyrant destroy'd three rose up. But *Cato's* death was his greatness of heart, that he could not endure to live by the bounty of his Enemy. But I think none will doubt but *Love* the Queen of Passions is a more noble motive than *Disdain*.

But supposing all I have alledg'd insufficient with the byas'd adversaries of this Great Man, yet they must not therefore rob him of his Virtue, or Wisdom, since they let not the base Murder and Adultery of *David*, his Numbring of the People, and other Transgressions, deprive him of the Character of being a *Man according to God's own heart*, nor the Idolatry

try that *Solomon* fell into for the sake of his *Egyptian Ladies*, cancel his Title of the Wisest of Men.

This is all I shall say on this Point, at this time, I shall only add a Caution to some Gentlemen (who have a peculiar faculty of Coining God's Judgments in their own Mint) that they are a little more wary in calling any particular manner of death a Judgment, since that consisting wholly in Custom and Opinion, they will bring their own *Diana's* into a worse Predicament, since not only untimely (I speak after their Nonfensical Cant) but ignominious Deaths have attended them, they will allow the Supporters of their Doctrines. But more of this elsewhere.

Thus, *Hermione*, I have given you my hasty Sentiments of the man I lov'd best of any, and who I think the best deserved it, and presented you with an Example not to be too severely rigorous to him that loves as I do, without hope; and have given some substantial Reasons (at least I think so) for my imitating *Philander*, when Life appears to me an *Evil*, as it soon will, if you take away from me that

Esteem

An Account of the Life and Death, &c.
Esteem (for I never presum'd to hope for
Love) I flatter'd my self *Hermione* had
for her

Zealous Adorer,

LINDAMOUR

The Oracles

THE
ORACLES
OF
REASON:

Consisting of

1. A Vindication of Dr. *Burnet's Archæologie*.
2. The Seventh and Eighth Chapters of the same.
3. Of *Moses's* Description of the Original itate of Man, &c.
4. Dr. *Burnet's* Appendix of the *Brachmin's* Religion.
5. An Account of the *Deist's* Religion.
6. Of the Immortality of the Soul.
7. Concerning the *Arrians, Trinitarians* and Councils.
8. That Felicity consists in Pleasure.
9. Of Fate and Fortune.
10. Of the Original of the *Jews*.
11. The Lawfulness of Marrying Two Sisters Successively.
12. A Political Account of the Subversion of *Jewdaism*, and Original of the *Millenium*.
13. Of the Auguries of the Ancients.
14. Natural Religion as oppos'd to Divine Revelation.
15. That the Soul is Matter.
16. That the World is Eternal, &c.

In several Letters to Mr. *Hobbs* and other Persons
of Eminent Quality, and Learning.

By *Char. Blount* Esq. Mr. *Gildon* and others.

LONDON, Printed 1693.

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TH

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PREFACE.

Nature, or that Sacred and Supreme CAUSE of all Things, which we term GOD, has furnished his Creatures with such Guides, a may best Conduct them to the several Ends of their Beings. To the Birds, Beasts and other Animals, which we generally hold Inferior to Mankind, he gave INSTINCT, as sufficient to direct them to all that is necessary for them. We may well therefore excuse them, if by that Guide they go not beyond a present Care of their Subsistence and Continuation, all which reaches not beyond the Body; because we can discover no other End of their Being (except what humane Luxury has found out in their Destruction,) but to Support that Being by Food, and to Preserve it by Propagation;

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pagation; and to this, Instinct is sufficient.

But in Man we (at least) discover farther and noble End. Nature therefore must have given him another and more sufficient Guide; for the Mind Man (the Chief Ingredient of his Composition) is not bounded by present Objects in which Instinct alone would serve. Instinct has always a share in its Thoughts and its Faculties will be employ'd with a Care of those Things that are to come from whence it may derive not only Advantage, Interest and Ease for the Body but also Improvement, Happiness and Tranquility for its self.

But the things from which the Mind must gather, and of which Compose these, are so vast in Number, and Various and Obscure in their Nature that without the Help of a very good Guide, it may make a Collection of Poisons instead of Medicines, and reap Destruction, not Satisfaction; But Omnipotent CAUSE, that had so well furnished Brutes, left not the Mind Man without its Director in this Maze and Lottery of Things; he gave Reason

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Reason, as its sovereign Rule and Touchstone to examin them by, and to fit our Choice to our double Advantage of Body and Mind. Reason is the Light, that brings Day to those Things, that will contribute to, or oppose our Happiness; without which we should in vain grope in the Dark; and we should owe entirely to Chance what we obtain'd.

'Tis true, Reason is not sufficient to bring us to a perfect Knowledge of all Things, but 'tis able to furnish us with enough to make us happy, and that is as much as we need care for. There is no necessity of our Skill in the inmost Nature of Things, but there is (since we are ordain'd to an eternity of Continuance) that we should know how to make Eternity Happy, since its Being so depends on our selves; and since such a Knowledge is absolutely necessary, I can discover nothing that can give it us, but our sovereign Guide, Reason.

REASON, therefore being the Supreme and Primitive Director of every Man, to infringe its Liberty of directing, is to invade the common Charter of Nature, and every Man's Right and Property; so that those that do so, are justly

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justly to be look'd on as the Enemies of Humane-kind. But how that Character agrees with the Fiery Glory of the Zealots for Religion, I cannot comprehend, unless they can demonstrate, That Religion and Nature are directly Opposites.

I am not ignorant that they pretend their Severity against Heterodox Books, (that is, all that deviate from their Opinions) is the Effect of their Zeal for the Good of Mankind. But then they cannot deny but that they make themselves the Judges of that Good, and so make their Opinion the Standard, which is too particular for what they would have of so universal Extent; and will afford us no Refuge if they should lead us into an Error, which we may hereafter find, (unless they deny that they can be deceived;) and if they should do so, then may their Universal imaginary Good prove a Real and Universal Evil.

If they would have us believe, that they hold every Man must be saved by his own, not another's Faith; they must grant every one the Liberty of believing and professing what his own Reason shall direct him; and that 'tis a Crime to oppose this Liber-

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Liberty, I mean by indirect Means, for I shall never quarrel at Reason, if they can produce any. I must tell these Fiery Bigots, that their Practice and Doctrin being so Contradictory, gives a more effectual Blow at Religion, than all the Attempts of professed Aheists; for when these clash, they give too great Grounds to suspect a trick in the whole: And when so essential a Birthright of each Man is invaded, it must improve those Suspicions very much, and cause a narrower Enquiry into Things that might otherwise pass unregarded.

We should not have so great cause to resent this Severity, if we might say of Religion and Eternity, as Pliny said of Providence, ----- *Ridiculum est agere curam rerum humanarum, Quicquid est Summum; sed credi usui est Vitæ.*----- That 'twas merely a political Trick for the Convenience of Government and Human Life. Then indeed it would be something pardonable in these Gentlemen, that Patronize the Fire and Faggot so vehemently, to strive with so much Ardor for the reducing all to their own Fancy. Then the Prophanation would not be great, of making what they really believ'd,

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a Chymæra, serve a Turn, and complement a Faction or any Interest. I will easily excuse the ancient Founders of Paganism, for having recourse to Stratagems, to reduce Mens Reason to particular Opinions, because they made use of them only to form Greatness to themselves, by imposing on the Predominant Frailties of the Vulgar Sort, in a thing they judg'd of no more Concern, than a Temporal Convenience. 'Twas no ill Policy in them, when they perceiv'd the Generality of Mankind would easily submit their Reason to every appearance of a Wonder, to fish for their Profit and Glory, with so easie a Bait. Alexander the false Prophet, mentioned by Lucian, found it turn to his Advantage, in gaining him so great an Interest in the People. And from this Topic Philostrates magnifies Apollonius. These in short, every new God and Prophet among them was to have, as Credentials of his Divinity, and a Right to the Zeal of his Devotees. Some of these carried, I must confess, extraordinary Circumstances to gain 'em necessary Credit, as one (among several others) in those Marble Records found

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found in the Temple of Æsculapius in Rome, viz.

Αὐ ταῖς ταῖς ἠπίσταῖς Γαῖα, &c.

To this purpose in English.

In those days there was an Oracle delivered to one Caius, that was blind, that he should come to the Sacred Altar, and kneel down, and should then go from the right side to the left, and place five Fingers on the Altar, and lift up his Hand, and put it on his own Eyes: Which done, he plainly saw in the presence of all the People, who congratulated the Cure, that such great Miracles should be performed under our Emperor Antoninus.

The Circumstances of this were very Remarkable, and there is nothing but the Blind Man himself that could carry on the Imposture, in pretending a Cure of a Disease he did not labour with, and for the Glory of their Gods the Romans always found some that would attest the highest Improbabilities by Authority, to influence

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influence the People with an Ave; as he that swore he saw Romulus assum'd into Heaven, in that Senate that had been the Authors of his Death; but they were willing to grant him Immortality, and Deity above, to be rid of him there, and at the same time give the People a Veneration for their Princes, when they saw they pass'd from governing them to be Gods.

But to return from this Digression, I could pardon these Heathens, because they had no Opinion of the Sacredness of what they impos'd, and besides fear'd to trust Mankind with their Reason, lest they should discover the Imposture. But among Christians, whose Opinions in Matters of Religion, ought to be Sacred, and beyond the Fear of the nicest Scrutiny of Reason, to confine our Liberty of Judging is too Arbitrary for Englishmen to bear. If these Gentlemen, with the Heathens, think this Method for their turn, I can't blame 'em; but if with us they believe Religion and Eternity a Sacred Truth, and that every Man is so far interested in them, that his Enjoyment and loss of Eternal Happiness depends on his own

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own Faith; let them leave every Man in his Native Right to Reason on what Concerns him so much, and bring nothing against us but what Reason affords them. For 'tis but fair, that if I must venture my Life in any Cause, I have the Liberty of taking my own Methods of Security.

This Liberty among us extends to the interpreting that sacred Repository of Truth, the Holy Scriptures, according to our own Reason; which is a Liberty that has been for many Tears asserted to be the Right of every Reasonable Man: This being granted, as indeed it can't be deny'd, it inevitably follows, that we ought to be allow'd a Liberty of Declaring our Opinion and Interpretation, or else it could be of no use in Nature to us. And if this be the Right of every reasonable Man, how much more must it be of Men that to their natural Reason have the acquired helps of Learning, as Dr. Burnet must be granted to have, whom my ever Honoured and Learned Friend has so well, and with so much Evidence, vindicated in the first Letter of this Book? Nor is it through a vain Opinion, that I can add any force to that incomparable Defence of his learned

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Advocate, that I presume to interest my self in the Doctor's Quarrel; but only to plead for that Liberty for him (and in him for every ingenious Man) which his great Opposers stand so much upon, against those Adversaries that would deny the same to them. I should never complain of their confuting him by fair Reason, for that is the Weapon of Mankind; but when they have Recourse to the wretched Refuge of rooted Argument, Power, and the say so of such and such, we have cause to complain of unfair Dealing, and that they press what they would not admit themselves.

Let Reason be our Judge, and we can never fear being Censur'd by it, for establishing its Sovereignty? Nor can the nicest Devotee that hath any deference to Reason deny, but that Dr. Burnet has discover'd more Veneration for the great Prophet Moses, by reducing him to that noble Standard, and freeing him from all the Absurdities vulgar Apprehensions had cast on him, than those who stickle them, that involv'd him in 'em. In short, 'tis not Moses, but his interpreters, that the learned Doctor has expos'd, and by consequence, 'tis not that holy Law-giver, but the blind Big-
gots

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gots of the old absurd Interpretation of him, that we have offended in publishing this in English.

Let our Adversaries but consider that this Liberty I have been pleading for, and which the Doctor has made use of, is only to examine the Interpretation of others, by the severe, yet just, Rules of Reason; which they will agree to be very reasonable, when they shall reflect, that the Passions and Interests of Men, have not only emboldned them to misinterpret the Sacred Writ to their own Ends, but also to add to, and detract from the very Text it self.

Thus they have brought into Question several parts of the new Testament, and among others particularly the Epistle to the Hebrews, which in some Manuscripts is left out, and even in that of Beza, which is very ancient, 'tis put by it self at the End, like an Apocriphal piece.

St. Jerom is a further Testimony of this, who having the Supervisal and Correction of the Latin Bible, assures us, that having recourse to the Greek, he found those Copies as defective, and as much alter'd by the Transcribers as those of the Latins.

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This liberty of Reasoning I have been so long pleading for, our severest Opponents will grant us in Philosophical and Historical Points, of which that part of this Book which relates not to Religion, is compos'd: I shall therefore say nothing in defence of them, nor obviate those Objections I foresee will be made against them by those that do not consider, that we judge of things of that nature but by bare Appearances and Probabilities. 'Twill be time enough to defend them when they are attackt. Nor shall I meddle with any other of the Letters that relate to Religion, except one, the subject of which is so uncommon, the Reasons it contains so extraordinary, and the end it aims at so evidently gain'd, that I cannot but take notice of it. Not that I can be so vain to imagin, that my declaring my self of that Opinion, will be any Advantage to the cause, or that what I can say, will in the least strengthen my Honoured Friend's Arguments, which of themselves are invincible, but I consult purely my own satisfaction in running over some Particulars of the Subject of it; which tho I am not vain enough to think, yet am I
zealous

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zealous enough to wish, serviceable to the Honourable Person the Letter is directed to; I mean that about the Lawfulness of Marrying Two Sisters.

All the weight and force of the Arguments of this Subject seem to turn upon this one Point, viz. Whether the Marriage of two Sisters successively be against the Laws of God. This is the Rock that all the Defenders of the Affirmative depend on, and this they fix chiefly on Levit. 18. 16, & 18. or some other Mosaic Prohibitions. So that if it be made evident that such a Marriage is not forbidden by the Law of God, the Bugbears of Custom (for those of the Laws of the Land as well as the Canon-Law evidently, from the proof of my ever Honoured and Learned Friend, depend entirely on this) will vanish; for if the Law of God be not infring'd, I think there is no other consideration can reach the nicest scruple of the most severe Lady of Honour that has with it Sense and Reason, as I am assur'd the Admirable Astræa has. Tho this Point as well as the rest be already beyond contradiction clear'd, yet I shall venture to attempt a Supererogatory Argument or
two,

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two, as a tribute I owe to the truth, I so much approve of.

First, then to make any Law the Law of God, strictly taken (for in some sense every Law that tends to the temporary convenience or good of a people is so) it must have one quality, that is inseparable from the Nature of God, and (by consequence) of his Acts, viz. Immutability, that is it must be founded in nature, and always the same. So that what was the Law of God in the time of Abraham, could not cease to be so, or at least be opposite to his Law, in our time; and what God plainly and openly espous'd in the time of Abraham, cannot but be suppos'd to be according to his Law? Now 'tis evident from the Sacred Scriptures, that Sarah Abraham's Wife was his Sister, by the Father, tho not by the Mother, Gen. 20. 12. And yet indeed she is my Sister, she is the Daughter of my Father, but not the Daughter of my Mother, and she became my Wife.

Here was at least a half-blood, and something with a face very like Incest, and yet the Marriage justify'd by God himself, not only in the threats he us'd to Abimelech,

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bimelech, if he return'd not his Wife, and those Plagues he inflict'd on Pharaoh and his House, Gen. 12. 17. And the Lord Plagued Pharaoh and his House, with great Plagues because of Sarai Abraham's Wife: But also in the farther confirmation of it, Gen. 17. 15, and 16. And God said unto Abraham, as for Sarai thy Wife, thou shalt not call her Name Sarai, but Sarah shall her Name be. Now this alteration of her Name, shew'd a particular favour she had found in being Abraham's lawful Wife, for God always alter'd or order'd the Names of those he particularly chose, as Abraham's Jacob's, &c. And ver. 16. is a confirmation of my assertion, I will bless her, and give thee a Son also of her, and She shall be a Mother of Nations, Kings of People shall be of her.

Certainly never was Marriage better confirm'd than this, so solemnly approv'd by the God of Heaven, the God of Right and Just. And afterward God chooses to establish his Covenant with Isaac the Son Sarah, not with Ishmael the Son of Hagar, tho Hagar was not his Sister.

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Yet we find this very sort of Marriage so approv'd of by God in Genesis, forbid by Moses in Leviticus (that is, if we will believe these Gentlemen, that perswade us that he intended the prohibitions of the 18th. of Levit. as to Marriage) for if, Thou shalt not uncover the Nakedness of thy Father's Daughter, be the same as, Thou shalt not marry thy Father's Daughter, and this be a Divine immutable Law, and by consequence so from the beginning, the very Case of Abraham is expressly condemn'd. Nay, if this Levitical Prohibition be in this sense, and the Law of God too, then wou'd there be a Divine Law expressly contradictory to the Will of God himself. Such absurdities do some men incur, whilst they pursue either some private design, or supinely interpret without a diligent and thorough comparison of the several Texts of Scripture.

But before I proceed, 'twill not be amiss in a line or two, to shew that this Standard I make of the Law of God, is not my own particular Fancy, but a Reality established by Christ himself. For he examining some of the Levitical Law, tells the Jews this was permitted for the hardness of your Hearts,

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Hearts, but from the beginning it was not so, where he makes from the beginning the Test and Standard of that permissory Law, which must hold good too for the Prohibitions, both proceeding from the same cause, viz. the hardness of the Israelites hearts, or the depravity of their inclinations.

But after all, 'tis evident to me that there is no Prohibition of Marriage intended by that 18th. Chap. of Leviticus, for I meet not with the Phrase of Uncovering the Nakedness, importing Marriage, in any part of Scripture, I mean absolutely and alone; and 'tis evident from the 20th. Chap. where the same Prohibitions are repeated, that they are meant barely as to unlawful Copulations without Marriage. For first, to what purpose wou'd it be to forbid what never was done, or cou'd indeed be suppos'd to be tolerated ev'n among the Jews. For we never read of any Daughters that Married their Fathers, or Sons their Mothers knowingly; there was such a horror of this printed in the heart of Man, that the very Heathens gave a punishment to Oedipus for the involuntary commission of it; and Periander kill'd his Mother for stealing his Embraces.

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Next there is not one Verse in the whole Chapter except the 18th. that has any relation to Marriage, and that indeed expresses the taking to Wife; which evinces the truth of what I assert, viz. that Uncovering the Nakedness, is not a Synonymous Expression for Marrying; else 'twould be perfect Nonsense in this 18th. Verse, which runs thus, Neither shalt thou take a Wife to her Sister, to vex her, to uncover her Nakedness, besides the other in her life-time. Now if these Expressions were Synonymous, it wou'd be thus, Neither shalt thou take a Wife to her Sister, to vex her, to take a Wife, &c. Besides it seems to imply a liberty of espousing two Sisters at once, tho not of enjoying both, for uncovering the Nakedness, is only an expression for bare enjoyment, without regard either to Marriage or not.

If it be objected, that the Chapter should be all of a piece, and that either this Verse should not relate to Marriage, or the rest shou'd; I answer, there is no necessity of that, for in all the Chapters in the Books of Moses, where several Laws are repeated, he does not observe, at least generally speaking, any order or
method

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method in that, but mixes things of no relation to one another, as is evident from the very next Chapter, where almost every Verse affords a new and different Prohibition. Besides, according to this the Verses that follow the 18th. as well as those that go before, must be of the same, which wou'd indeed be merry enough to make Moses forbid our Marriage with Beasts, or Mens Marrying one another, which perhaps might reach one of Nero's Extravagant Actions, but none else. But the 20th. Chap. explains this annexing each particular punishment, to each particular transgression, whereas in this, the punishment is put in general at the End, as ver. 29. For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the Souls that commit them shall be cut off from among the People. 'Tis a common thing in this Prophet, to repeat his Prohibitions, and sometimes with a little variety. But methinks ver. 15. of this Chap. shou'd put this beyond all question, where 'tis thus, Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy Daughter in Law, for she is thy Son's Wife, &c. The Verb Is, being in the present Tense, denotes the Son to be living.

But

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But for a concluding Proof that Marriage was not meant here, or that, if it was, not as an invariable Law of God, but only limited under such and such considerations, and by consequence only Temporary, and therefore wants that distinguishing mark given to the Divine Laws by Christ, let us compare vers. 16th. of this 10th. Ch. of Levit. with Deut. 25. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10. First, Lev. 1. 18, 16. Thou shalt not uncover the Nakedness of thy Brother's Wife, it is thy Brother's Nakedness. Next, Deut. 25. 5. If Brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no Child, the Wife of the Dead shall not marry without unto a stranger, her Husband's Brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to Wife, and perform the Duty of a Husband's Brother to her. Nay, in the succeeding Verses, that is, to the 11th. 'tis proved so evident a Duty, that he who would not comply with it, was to be affected by public Authority with a public Infamy. The first-born was only to succeed to the Name of the deceas'd Brother, That his Name be not put out of Israel. Now if Marrying the Brother's Wife were contrary to the Law of God, and

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by consequence Malum in se, it cou'd not be despens'd with to serve a meer Political turn, and that so trivial as this, especially since any other might perform it (if not a stranger, yet at least some other of the Family not so nearly related) and the Child so begotten wou'd be as much the Child of the Deceas'd, as if begot by his surviving Brother. Nay, an Adoption might have kept up the Name, which seems to be the whole Aim of it, without dispensing with the Law of God on so small and inconsiderable an Account.

So that upon the whole, if (as I think is evident) the Marriage of a Brother's Widow be not forbid, the ubi eadem Ratio, ibi idem Jus of the Canonists, is quite out Doors against the Marriage of Two Sisters. And were I deceiv'd in my Assertions in this particular (which I do not believe,) yet can I see no reason why this blind Prohibition of the old Law, should affect us any more than that of not wearing Garments of Linen and Woolen, since the former is no more confirm'd by Christ, than the latter, that is, not at all. And great part of the Levitical Law, was calculated for the Israelites, in regard to their Rites, Customs

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stoms and Inclinations, and are merely Political, which in their very nature can have no tie upon us.

To conclude, if I have given the Scripture a contrary Interpretation to what has receiv'd before, I can't help it; this I have chosen, appears to me the natural result of the Words and Context, the other a plainly forc'd Exposition.

C. GILDON Mr. GILDON

(1)

A

LETTER

To my Worthy Friend

Mr. GILDON

IN

VINDICATION

OF

Dr. Burnet.

S I R,

I Have, according to my Promise, sent you herewith the Seventh and Eighth Chapters, also the Appendix, of the Great and Learned Dr. Burnet's Book, *Archilogie Philosophica*, published this Winter in Latin, and by him dedicated

B cated

cated to his Most Sacred Majesty, and our Gracious Sovereign King *William*, being employ'd about other Things, I had not time to make the Translation my self, but transferred that Task upon ——— yet dare answer for the Exactness of the Version. As for the Piece itself, I think it one of the most Ingenious ever read, and full of the most acute, as well as learned, Observations. Nor can I find anything worthy an Objection against him, or some of the censorious part of the World pretend; who would have you believe it a mere Burlesque upon *Moses*, and Destructive to the Notion of Original Sin, wherefore by consequence (say they) there could be no necessity of a Redemption, which however I think necessary Consequence: But for my part, either the great Veneration I have for the Doctor's extraordinary Endowments, or else my own Ignorance has so far bribed me to his Interest that I can by no means allow of any of those Unjust Reflections the Whole-sale Merchants of Credulity, as well as their unthinking Retailers, make against him. It is true, in the Seventh Chapter he seems to prove that many parts of the *Mosaic* History of the Creation appear inconsistent with Reason; and in the Eighth Chapter the same appears no less inconsistent with Philosophy; wherefore he concludes (as many Fathers of the Church have done before him) that the whole rather seems to have been but a pious Allegory, which

Moses was forced to accommodate to the weak Understandings of the Vulgar (who were incapable of Philosophy, or any higher Notions) thereby to imprint in them a true Sense of one Supreme God, and of his Power, as also of the Original of the World, wherewith all other Lawgivers began their Histories, as well as *Moses*. But that the World had a beginning about Six thousand Years since, as also the Degeneration of Mankind, our learned Author doth as strenuously affirm, as 'tis possible.

Nor is Dr. *Burnet* the only ingenious Man either of this Age or Nation who has been, upon Enquiry, startled at some Passages in the *Mosaic* History: For Dr. *Brown* (so justly admired as well by Foreigners as his own Country men, upon the Account of his Knowledge in all Gentile sorts of Literature) does both in his *Religio Medici* & *Vulgar Errors*, betray his many Doubts and Scruples as well upon this Subject as others, in these very words--- 'I confess (says the Doctor) 'there are in Scripture Stories that do exceed the Fables of Poets, and 'to a captious Reader sound like *Garagantua* or *Bevis*. Search all the Legends of times past, 'and the fabulous Conceits of these present, and 'will be hard to find one that deserves to carry the Buckler unto little *Sampson*; yet is all this 'of an easie possibility, if we conceive a divine Concourse, or an influence from the little 'Finger of the Almighty. I my self (says he)



could shew a Catalogue of Doubts, never
 imagined nor questioned, as I know of, which
 are not resolved in Scripture, at first hearing
 not fantastic Quæries or Objections of Atheists.
 For I cannot hear of Atoms in Divinity.
 can read the History of the Pidgeon that was
 sent out of the Ark, and returned no more
 yet not question how she found out her
 Mate that was left behind. That *Lazarus*
 was raised from the Dead, yet not demand
 where in the Interim his Soul waited; or raise
 a Law Case, whether his Heir might lawfully
 detain his Inheritance bequeath'd to him by his
 Death, and he, though restored to Life, had
 no Plea or Title to his former Possession.
 Whether *Eve* was framed out of the left side
 of *Adam*, I dispute not; because I stand not
 assured, which is the right side of a Man
 or whether there be any such distinction
 of Nature. That *Eve* was Edified of the Rib
 of *Adam*, I believe, yet raise no question
 shall arise with that Rib at the Resurrection.
 Whether *Adam* was an Hermaphrodite,
 the Rabbins contend upon the Letter of the
 Text (*Gen* 1. 27.) because it is contrary
 Reason there should be an Hermaphrodite
 before there was a Woman, or a Composition
 of two Natures before there was a second com-
 posed. Likewise, whether the World was
 created in *Autumn*, *Winter*, *Summer*, or the
Spring, because it was created in them all.
 For whatsoever Sign the Sun possesseth, that

four Seasons are actually existent: It being
 the nature of this Luminary to distinguish the
 several Seasons of the Year, all which it makes
 at one time in the whole Earth, and successive
 in any part thereof. That there was a Deluge
 once, whether in the time of *Deucalion* or
Noah, seems not to me so great a Miracle, as
 that there is not one always. How all kinds
 of Creatures, not only in their own Bulks,
 but with a Competency of Food and Suste-
 nance, might be preserved in one Ark, and
 within the Extent of Three hundred Cubits,
 will not appear very feasible. There is also
 another Secret not contain'd in Scripture,
 which is more hard to comprehend, and put
 the honest Father (*St. Austin*) to the Refuge
 of a Miracle; and, that is, not only how the
 distinct pieces of the World, and divided
 Islands, should be first Planted by Men, but
 Inhabited by Tygers, Panthers and Bears?
 How *America* abounded with Beasts of prey
 and noxious Animals, yet contained not in it
 that necessary Creature, a Horse, is very
 strange. By what Passage those, not only
 Birds, but dangerous and unwelcome Beasts
 came over? How there be Creatures there
 which are not found in this triple Conti-
 nent? All which must needs be strange, to
 us that hold but one Ark, and that the Crea-
 tures began their Progress from the Moun-
 tain *Ararat*. 'Tis a Paradox to me, that
Methusalem was the longest liv'd of all the
 Children

Children of *Adam*, and no Man will be
 able to prove it, when from the Process
 the Text, I can manifest it may be othe
 wise. Also that *Judas* perished by hangin
 himself, there is no certainty in Scripture
 the two Texts (*Matth. 25.* and *Acts 1. 18.*
 seeming to contradict one another. That our
 Fathers after the Flood, erected the Tower
 of *Babel* to preserve themselves against a se
 cond Deluge, is generally believed, yet
 there another Intention of theirs express'd
 Scripture: Besides it is improbable from the
 Circumstance of the Place, which was
 Plain in the Land of *Shinar*. I believe the
 was a Tree, whose Fruit our unhappy Pa
 rents tasted, though in the same Chapter
 where God forbids it, 'tis positively said
 the Plants of the Field were not yet grown
 for God had not then caused it to rain upon
 the Earth. I believe that the Serpent (as
 we shall literally understand it) from his
 proper Form and Figure, made his Motion
 his Belly before the Curse. I find the try
 of the Pucillage and Virginity of Women
 which God ordained the *Jews*, is very fallible
 Experience and History inform me, that not
 only many particular Women, but likewise
 whole Nations have escaped the Curse of
 Childbirth, which God seems to pronounce
 upon the whole Sex. Having perused the
 Archidoxes, and read the secret Sympathies
 of things, the Devil would dissuade my Be
 lief

lief from the Miracle of the Brazen Serpent,
 and make me conceit that Image workt by
 Sympathy, and was but an *Aegyptian* Trick
 to cure their Diseases with a Miracle. Again,
 having seen some Experiments of *Bitumen*,
 and read many more of *Naphtha*, he whis
 per'd to my Curiosity, the Fire of the Altar
 might be natural; and bid me distrust a Mi
 racle of *Elias*, when he entrenched the Altar
 round with Water, since that inflammable Sub
 stance yields not easily to Water, but flames
 in the Arms of its Antagonist. And thus
 would he invigle my Belief to think the
 Combustion of *Sodom* might be natural, and
 that there was an Asphaltic and Bituminous
 Nature in that Lake, before the Fire of *Go
 morrah*. I know that *Manna* is now plenti
 fully gathered in *Calabria*, and *Josephus* tells
 me in his Days it was as plentiful in *Arabia*;
 the Devil therefore made me Quare, where
 was then the Miracle in the Days of *Moses*,
 since the *Israelites* saw but that in his time,
 which the Natives of those Countries behold
 in ours? *Brown's Religio Medici*. Also in his
Vulgar Errors, our same Author writes thus:
 —It hath puzzled the Enquiries of others
 to apprehend, and forced them to strange
 Conceptions, to make out how *Eve* should be
 deluded by a Serpent, or subject her Reason
 to a Beast, which God had subjected to hers?
 and how without Fear and Doubt she could
 Discourse with such a Creature, or hear a
 Scr-

‘ Serpent speak, without suspicion of Impo-
 ‘ sure. Others wonder at her simplicity,
 ‘ that when the Serpent told her the eating
 ‘ that Fruit would make them like Gods, she
 ‘ did not question the Beast, why he himself
 ‘ did not eat of it then. *Brown, Vol. Err.*

Now as one observes very well, in relation
 to Divine Miracles, there is oftentimes great
 Errors committed in the manner of reading
 Scripture; as when that is taken in a general
 Sense, which ought to be particularly under-
 stood: As that of *Adam*, whom *Moses* made
 only to be the first Father of the *Jews*, whilst
 others Hyperbolically make him to be the first
 Father of all Men. So likewise the Darknes
 at the Death of our Saviour, which some say
 was spread over the Face of the whole Earth.
 Others, and some able Interpreters, have only
 translated it, *Upon all the Land of the Jews, viz.*
Palestine, which the *Hebrews* always meant
 when they said the Earth. So likewise the Star
 which Conducted the Wise-men upon the Na-
 tivity of Christ, some place in Heaven among
 the rest of the Stars; but others say, that could
 not be, for then other People had seen it as
 well as those few Wise-men and *Herod* among
 the rest; who being troubled at this Report,
 and not being able to see it himself, calling the
 Wise-men to him privately (says the Evangelist)
 he enquired of them what time the Star did
 appear? And besides, it marched before them
 like

like a Torch, and conducted them; so that it
 cannot be said to have been a fixed Star in the
 Heavens. Again, some will tell you, that the
 Fiery Army sent to the help of *Elisha* from
 Heaven was such, whom the Prophet himself
 saw, and yet his Servant that stood by him
 could not see. Likewise in the miraculous Sign
 which was given of *Ezekiah's* Recovery from
 his Sickness, when 'tis said, — That God
 brought back the shadow of those Lines that it
 had gone down in the Dial of *Achaz* back ten
 Degrees. — Here some affirm, That the Sun
 went not back in the Heaven, (as 'tis generally
 believed) but only in the Dial of *Achaz*; for,
 say they, if the Sun went back in the *Zodiac*,
 or that Degree of the Ecliptick standing still,
 which he was running that Day, the *Primum*
Mobile came also backwards, and with it all the
 rest of the Spheres; if we say that he went back
 only in the *Zodiac*, and a tenth part of the
Zodiac, then say they the Sun must needs re-
 turn through a great many Signs of the *Zodiac*,
 and bring back with him past Months, yea,
 and Seasons of the Year. Besides, that this
 Sign was seen only in the Land of *Judah*, and
 not elsewhere, they pretend to prove from Am-
 bassadors which were sent from *Babylon* to en-
 quire after the Sign, which (say they) might
 have been seen in *Babylon*, as well as in *Judah*,
 had the Sun gone back in the Firmament.
 Much to the same purpose they argue against
 the Miracle of the Sun's standing still one whole
 Day.



Day in *Gabaon* at the command of *Joshua*, acknowledging, That that long day extended not itself beyond the Country of *Gabaon*, or otherwise it must have been apparent elsewhere: And therefore they urge, That the Light of the setting Sun after he was himself gone down, was only the Reflection of his Beams, remaining as yet in the Atmosphere, which reverberated longer than ordinary upon the Mountain and City of *Gabaon*, by a favourable Scituation of the Hills: In the North of *Scotland* they have at sometimes in Summer hardly any Night at all; and some Mathematicians write, that according to the Obliquity of the Sphere, there were some Days of six Months continuance, with them who live under the Parallel. Likewise concerning the Miracle of the *Jews*, not wearing out their Garments or their Shoes in Forty Years time that they continued in the Wilderness; some pretend, that they feeding a Thousand Flocks in the Desert, made Cloath and Rayment of their Wool, as well as Shoes of their Skin and Leather, wanting neither Weavers, Taylors nor Shoemakers among so numerous a Mob. Now lastly, others will not allow that the Flood of *Noah* was upon the whole Earth, but only upon the Land of the *Jews*; not to destroy all Men, but only the *Jews*: For, say they, God being offended at their Wickedness, said, I will cut off Man whom I have created from the Face of the Earth, from the Man to the Beast, from the creeping thing

thing to the Fowl of the Heaven---- Where they will have it, that the *Hebrews* by Earth ever meant their own, viz. *Palesine*; by the Man whom he had created, the *Jews*, the Posterity of *Adam*; and by living Creatures the *Gentiles* match'd among the *Jews*: Besides Cattle, Birds and all creeping Things within the Land of *Palesine*, except only *Noah* and his Family. Now that this Flood was only in the Land of the *Jews*, they argue, First, From the Causes of the Deluge, which were only the Sins of the *Jews*: Secondly, From the words of *Berosus*, who hath written of the Ark (says *Josephus*) in which the chief of our Family was preserved; not the chief of Mankind, but the chief of our Lineage, that is, the *Jews*. 3dly, From the Dove that was sent out and return'd at Night with an Olive-branch free from Dirt or Slime and cover'd with green Leaves; whereas, say they, in all places where the Flood had been, the Trees were depress'd and cover'd with Slime and Mud. They further tell you, That the World was said to be divided by *Phaleg*, who was the Fifth in Descent from *Sem*, wherefore they question, how they could People *China*, *America*, the *Southland*, *Greenland* and the rest with Inhabitants: These and many more Scruples are raised by some nice and curious Enquirers; so that we see our Learned *Dr. Burnet* stands not alone by himself in his more refined and speculative Doubts. All which might easily be salved, were it not for that

that untoward Axiom in Philosophy, *Apotele esse non valet consequentia*: However as that Argument shews it may not be so, yet neither does it demonstrate it is not so. For God seldom alters or perverts the course of Nature, however Miracles may be necessary sometimes to acquaint the World with his Prerogative, lest the Arrogance of our Reason should question his Power; a Crime no wise Man can ever be guilty of: Who climbing up from Cause to Cause, shall ever find the highest Link of Nature's Chain to be tyed at the Foot of *Jupiter's* Chair.

The next Charge against our Author, is for his disowning Original Sin, which I modestly confess was ever a difficult Pill with me to swallow, my Reason stopping it in my Throat, and not having Faith enough to wash it down. There are some Persons, I know, who believe that Wars, Plagues, Feavers and all the Troop of natural Corruptions invaded the Earth by that imputation of the Sin of *Adam*, without discriminating between Natural and Legal Sin. For Wars, Plagues and Feavers, with whatever else of this sort troubles and afflicts Mankind, are the consequences of Natural Sin, which is the Wickedness and Imperfection of Nature. This will easily appear to such, who can suffer that ancient Cloud of Prepossession to be taken off, which dulls their sight; for who knows not that Wars had

had their Original from such, whom either greedy Desire of Prey, or cruel Thirst after Revenge, or sacred Ambition of Rule stirr'd up to take *Atlas*? Then who hath not had experience of the Breeding and Inflammation of Plagues and Feavers, either by the natural Corruption of the Air, or by the Corruption of our natural Bodies? We have as many Witnesses of this Observation and Truth, as we have States-men & Physicians, Therefore not from *Adam's* Sin proceed our Diseases, but from our own Corrupt and Rotten Natures; the innate Infirmity of Men being the chief and natural Calamity of Men. Nay, it is not known that *Adam*, who was the Criminal and Fountain (as they say) of so great Evils, was ever so much as troubled with the least Disease all those 930 Years which he lived; unless you will believe him, who relates, out of I know not what Author, that *Adam* died of the Gout, wherewith he was troubled from his Ancestors. Did *Cain* fall sick when he slew his Brother? No; he was very strong and lusty, he fled to the *East of Eden*, where he associated himself with a pack of Lewd Fellows; he set up for the Trade of Padding, then married a Wife, begot a Son, and built a City. Likewise the most excellent Poet falls out with his Gods, for that his Mistress (*Eugenia*) being perjured, kept the same Face which she had before, or rather became fairer and fairer: The same is also



also the constant complaint of the Elect in Scripture, That the Wicked prosper so much in this World. Wherefore to me it seems certain, that the Imputation of *Adam's* Sin is always an occasion of our Sufferings. I know there are some affirm, That if *Adam* had not sinn'd, Men should never have died; as if Immortality and Eternal Life, which nothing but a New Creation could beget, should have been bestow'd on Men by Vertue of the First Creation, which by its own Nature is subject to Death and Corruption: And that those Men should not have died, who (as the Schools say) are naturally Corruptible, and were created Mortal. Some will here object and say, God told *Adam* That on the Day he eat that Fruit, he should die the Death; from whence they gather, That if Death was given as a Punishment to *Adam*, on that day wherein he transgress'd the Law of God, then surely *Adam* would never have died, if he had never sinn'd: But that Consequence I deny; for although they die which kill, yet they who do not kill are not Immortal. Besides, to conclude this point, 'tis altogether inconsistent with God's Attributes of Mercy and Justice, to punish all Mankind for one single Persons sin, which we could no ways prevent or hinder, nor any but God himself, who permitted that Evil Spirit to Reign in him. The *Roman* Schools affirm the first Motions of Concupiscence to be no sin; because they

they are involuntary, and come upon us whether we will or no; then why should they think Original Sin to be really and truly a Sin in us, which is altogether as involuntary, and unchosen by us as Concupiscence? For how can another's sin, wherein we have no hand, be imputed to us? Eternal Death was not threatned to *Adam* for his Sin, and therefore could not from him descend upon us, for that which was none of ours. The Death that *Adam's* Sin introduced, is such as could have a Remedy or Recompence by Christ, but eternal Death hath no Recompence, nor can ever be destroy'd, whereas temporal Death shall. If God should impute *Adam's* Sin so as to damn us for it, then all our Good we receive from God, is much less than the Evil, saith *Dr. Taylor*. If God will not give Men Heaven by Christ, he will not throw them into Hell by *Adam*; if his Goodness will not do the First, his Mercy and Justice will not suffer him to do the Last. Nor did any Church ever enjoy Penance or Repentance for Original Sin: wherefore it seems preposterous and unreasonab, that any Man should be damn'd for that, which no Man is bound to Repent. However I do no way find that *Dr. Burnet* does absolutely declare against Original Sin; but rather the contrary, acknowledging the degeneracy of Mankind from its primitive State, which must be redeemed by the Seed of a Woman. All Extrems are dange-

dangerous, as walking upon the Brink of a Precipice, or the like; and if he be not so violent in this Point; what others may only think he wants in Piety, may perhaps be really supplied in Charity: And what they only fancy they have in Piety, may be truly defective in Charity: An honest Augure is ever in most danger of his own Fraternity.

But to proceed, it hath been a point very much disputed among several Politicians in the Commonwealth of Learning, who was the real and true Author of the Pentateuch. A late and great Modern Philosopher of this Nation declares, It is not an Argument sufficient to prove those Books were written by *Moses*, because they are call'd the Five Books of *Moses*, for, as much as Books often take their Titles from their Subject, as well as from their Authors. It's true, the History of *Livy* denotes the Writer, but the History of *Tamberlain* is denominated from the Subject. We read in the last Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, v. 6th, concerning the Sepulcher of *Moses*, that no Man knoweth his Sepulcher to this Day, that is to say, to the Day wherein those Words were written; wherefore, it is manifest, that those Words were written after his Interrment. But it may perhaps be alledged, That the last Chapter only, and not the whole Pentateuch, was written by some other hand, and the rest by

by *Moses*. Let us therefore consider, that which we find in the Book of *Genesis*, (cap. 12. v. 6.) *And Abraham passed through the Land, to the place of Sichem, unto the Plain of Moreh, and the Canaanite was then in the Land;* which must be the Words of one that wrote when the *Canaanite* was not in the Land, and consequently not of *Moses*, who died before he came into it. Likewise, *Numb.* 21. v. 14. the Writer citeth another more ancient Book, entituled, the Book of the Wars of the Lord, wherein were registred the Acts of *Moses* at the *Red-Sea*, and at the Brook of *Arnon*; which he would never have mention'd of himself, but could as well have given us an account himself of what he did in those places. Wherefore it is evident, That the Five Books of *Moses* were written by another Hand after his Decease. But yet it is rational to believe, that *Moses* wrote the Volume of the Law, contain'd in the 11th. of *Deuteronomy*, and the following Chapters to the 27th. which he commanded to be written on Stones in the Entry into the Land of *Canaan*. Also *Moses* himself deliver'd it to the Priests and Elders of *Israel*, to be read every seventh Year to all *Israel* at their Assembly in the Feast of Tabernacles, as we may find in the 31st. Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, v. 9th. Nay, it may be also question'd, whether the aforesaid was that very Law which *Moses* deliver'd, since having been a long time lost, *Helkiah* pretended to find it again,



again, and so sent it to King *Josias* (2 *King* 22. 8. and the 23. 1, 2, 3.) so that we have only *Helkiah's* Word for it. The Book of *Joshua* was also written long after *Joshua's* time, which may be gather'd out of many places of the Book it self: *Joshua* had set twelve Stones in the midst of *Jordan* for Monument of their Passage; of which the Writer saith (*Josh.* 4. 9.) *They are there unto this day*; which Expression, *Unto this day*, a Phrase that signifieth a Time past. And the same is manifest by like Arguments of the Books of *Judges* and *Ruth*, that they were written long after the Captivity, *Judges* chap. 21. 26. chap. 6. 24. chap. 10. 4. chap. 15. 11. chap. 17. 6. and *Ruth* chap. 1. 1. but especially *Judges* 18. 30.

Now the Reason why I make mention of these things, is only to shew, That our most Reverend and Ingenious Author, is not the first that has had scruples in this kind, and that he may well make an Enquiry into the Truth of some Passages of the History, when the very Historians themselves are so much doubted of by others; not but that we may pay just deference to the Church, and yet at the same time raise scruples for information sake, the better to arm our selves against our Antagonists.

The next little Part or Epilogue of Dr. *Burton's* Book, which we here present you with in *English*, is his *Appendix* concerning the *Brachmin's* Religion, and has reference to one of his former Chapters on the same Subject. I must confess his Notion of their Omnipotent Spider (though what I have read many Years since) was no less grateful to me, than the return of a Friend after a long Voyage. That thought of Resolving all things into himself, an Estate for Life that falls into the Landlords hands. Sure no good Tenant needs fear a good new Lease; the State of Man, if rightly well consider'd, is only wearing out our Threads of Life, in order to our Deaths. And he that weighs our Progress here, the great Vicissitudes without decay, since things may change, but ne'er annihilate, will find *Penelope's* *Telam texere* is our case: Dress and undress the Emblem of our Lives, till shrowded in our mortal *Dishabillic*, we wait the Morning for a different Dress; when the Celestial Drop as now enclosed, may to a different Viol be exposed. But I shall trouble you no more upon this subject, lest you should mistake it for the foolish Funeral Sermon of,

SIR,

Your ever Faithful Friend,
and Real Servant,

BLOUNT.

The

March 23,
1693.

The



The 7th. and 8th. Chapters of
Dr. Burnet's *Archiologia Philosophica*, together with his Appendix to the same, concerning the
Brachmin's Religion, all Written
Originally in *Latin*, and now
rendred into *English*, by Mr. H.B.

C H A P. VII.

Concerning Moses's Description of Paradise, as well as the Original State of Nature and Mankind in the beginning of the World.

WE have hitherto made our Enquiry after the Originals of things, as well as after a true knowledge of Paradise among the Ancients; yet still with reference to Sacred Writ, where it gave us any manner of light into the Subject, but this is altogether unnecessary to define the place or situation

tion of Paradise; since in respect to the Theory of the Earth, 'tis much the same thing where you place it, provided it be not on our modern Earth. Now if you enquire among the ancient Fathers where the situation of it was, either they will have it to be none at all, or else obscure and remote from our understanding; some of them indeed term it an Intelligible Paradise, but confin'd to no one particular place; whilst others at the same time make it a sensible one; and here it is they first divided about it. Moreover, such as believe it to be a Sensible and Corporeal Paradise, place it either on this Earth, or out of it, (*viz.*) in the Air, or in the Lunary Orb; when they who believe those happy Mansions to have been upon the Earth, place them either on this side the *Æquator*, under the *Æquator*, or beyond the *Æquator* or *Toric Zone*; finally, all that are of our opinion believe the true Paradise, which is now passed away, did in reality formerly flourish upon the Earth, but nevertheless on such an Earth, as was quite different from what we now inhabit. However these different opinions we have else where more at large explained; especially that which carries Paradise beyond the *Æquator*, *Toric Zone*, the *Ocean*, and our Northern World. Not that this opinion pleases me above the rest, but because it is demonstrated by the Calculations of the Ancients; and plainly evinces the Paradise we now pretend to place in *Mesopotamia*, to be only a Modern fiction. Besides, as to the Theory



Theory of the Earth, it does not in the least obviate a Local Paradise in any part of the Earth, since it supposes that in the Infant world even the whole inhabitable Globe was like a Paradise. Yet notwithstanding consequently and agreeably to the Mosaic Hypothesis, which makes Mankind how numerous soever to have first receiv'd its birth only from one Man and one Woman, you may therefore (if you please) appropriate the name of Paradise to the original native soil and first habitation of these two; a place most wonderfully beautified as well with Trees as Waters; provided at the same time you grant to the other parts of the same Earth a Perpetual Spring, and those advantages which necessarily flow from it, (*viz.*) spontaneous fertility together with long life to its inhabitants; for that the World did in its first beginning enjoy all these blessings we have sufficiently demonstrated as well from the nature of the thing itself as from the testimonies of the Ancients. *But, say you, Moses mentions only one Garden which he calls Gan Eden, or the Garden of Delicousness; and seems to suppose that all the other Regions of that Earth enjoyed but one and the same common Lot with little variation from our modern Earth: Now to this I answer, That among the Ancients, but more especially the Orientals, there were two different ways of delivering their Divinity & Philosophy, (*viz.*) *δημόσιος* & *ἀποκρυφτός*, a Popular and a hidden one: of which dubious sort of style the Holy*

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Scripture seems to make use in the explaining natural things; sometimes accommodating it self to the capacities of the people, and sometimes to the real but more clouded truth.

However, being resolv'd not in the least to deviate from the very literal sense without an absolute necessity; that is to say, unless the Nature of the thing does unavoidably oblige or enforce me to it; we must first enquire what is in this case the literal sense, and how much it will bear; as also, on the other side, what the Subject-matter will bear and what not; to the end that having thus fairly stated the case on both sides, we may be the better enabled to give a certain determination according to the merits of the cause, as well as to disclose where the real truth lies hid.

Now the History of Paradise (from whence we'll begin) according to *Moses* is thus: When God had in six days finished the Creation of the World, the seventh day he rested from all manner of work: And here *Moses* relates particularly each days Operation; but for the story of Mankind, as well Male as Female, of that he makes a peculiar Treatise by it self. Wherefore omitting the rest at present, let us, if you please, consider the *Mosaic* Doctrin upon these three subjects (*viz.*) *Adam*, *Eve* and the Garden of *Eden*; together with those things which are interwoven or adherent to them. As to the first Man *Adam*, *Moses* says he was formed, not out of Stones or Dragons Teeth, as others have feigned



feigned concerning their men; but out of the Dust or Clay of the Earth; and when his Body was formed, *God blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man was made a living soul,* Gen. 2. 7.

But after another manner and of other matter was the Woman built (*viz.*) with one of *Adam's* small bones; for as *Adam* lay asleep, *God* took away one of his Ribs, and out of that, made *Eve*. The Words of *Moses* are these, *And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man for a wife,* Gen. 2. 21.

So much for the forming of the first Man and first Woman, according to the literal Reading. Now *Moses* has likewise given us a large account of their first Habitation; he says that *God* made them a certain famous Garden in the East, or as others render it, *ab antiquo*, of old, and gave it to them as a Farm to cultivate and inhabit; which Garden was a most delightful place, watered with four several Fountains or Rivers, planted with Trees of all kinds, as well those that bore Fruit, as those that were agreeable for their shade and aspect. Amongst which Trees, in the midst of the Garden, stood two more remarkable than the rest, whereof one was called the Tree of Life, the other the Tree of Death, or of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Why one was called the Tree of Life, is not

not certain; perhaps because whoever had eat of it, wou'd have from it received Immortality, as many conjecture. The effect of the other fatal experience has sufficiently taught us: *Hinc illa Lachryma & infandus dolor:* 'Tis for our first Parents eating the fruit of this Tree, that all their Posterity now smarts; and is punished for a crime committed some Thousands of Years before they were born. But of this I'll here present you with a full Relation.

God upon pain of death, prohibits *Adam* and *Eve* from tasting the Fruit of this Tree: But it happened upon a time that *Eve* sitting solitary under this Tree without her Husband, there came to her a Serpent or Adder, which, tho' I know not by what means or power, civilly accosted the Woman, (if we may judge of the thing by the event) in these words, or to this purpose.

Serp. All Hail most fair one, what are you doing so solitary and serious under this Shade?

Eve. I am contemplating the beauty of this Tree.

Serp. 'Tis truly an agreeable sight, but much pleasanter are the Fruits thereof. Have you tasted them, my Lady?

Eve. I have not, because *God* has forbidden us to eat of this Tree.

Serp. What do I hear! who is that *God* that envies his Creatures the innocent delights of Nature? Nothing is sweeter, nothing more wholsom than this very fruit; why then should

he forbid it, unless he were in jest?

Eve. But he has forbid it us on pain of death.
Serp. Undoubtedly you mistake his meaning: This Tree has nothing that would prove fatal to you, but rather something Divin'd above the common force of nature.

Eve. I can give you no answer, but will first go to my Husband, and then do as he thinks fit.

Ser. Why should you trouble your Husband about such a trifle? Use your own judgment.

Eve. Let me see, had I best use it or no: what can be more beautiful than this Apple. How sweetly it smells! but it may be it tastes ill.

Serp. Believe me, 'tis a bit worthy to be eaten by the Angels themselves; do but try, and if it tastes ill, throw it away, and say I am a great Liar.

Eve. Well, I'll try then, thou hast not deceived me; it has indeed a most agreeable flavour. Give me another, that I may carry it to my Husband.

Serp. Very well thought on; here's another for you; go to your Husband with it. Farewel happy young Woman. — In the mean time I'll go my ways, let her take care of the rest.

Accordingly *Eve* gave this Apple to the uxorious *Adam*, which he likewise eat of; when immediately upon their eating of it, they became both (I know not how) ashamed of their Nakedness; & sowing together Fig-leaves, made

them a sort of Aprons to cover their *Pudenda*. Now after these transactions God did in the Evening descend into the Garden; upon which our first Parents fled to hide themselves among the thickest of the Trees; but in vain, for God called out, *Adam*, where art thou? When he trembling appeared before the Almighty, *God* said, Lord, when I heard thee in this Garden, I was ashamed because of my Nakedness, and hid my self amongst the most shady parts of the thicket. Who told thee, said *God*, that thou wert naked? Have you eaten of the forbidden fruit? That Woman thou gavest me, brought it, 'twas she that made me eat on't. You have finely order'd your business, you and your Wife! Here, you Woman, what is this that you have done? Alas for me, thy Serpent gave me the Apple, and I did eat of it.

This Apple shall cost you dear, and not only you but your posterity and the whole race of Mankind. Moreover, for this crime I will curse and spoil the Heavens, the Earth and whole Fabric of Nature. But thou in the first place, vile Beast, shalt bear the punishment of thy craftiness and malice. Hereafter shalt thou go creeping on thy Belly, and instead of eating Apples, shalt lick the dust of the Earth. As for you *Mrs. Curious*, who so much love Delicacies, in sorrow shall you bring forth Children; you shall be subject to your Husband, and shall never depart from his side unless having first obtained his leave. Lastly, as for

you *Adam*, because you have hearkened more to your Wife than to me, with the sweat of your Brow you shall obtain your food both for her and her Children. You shall not gather Fruits, which, as heretofore, grew of themselves, but shall reap the Fruits of the Earth with labour and trouble. May the Earth, for thy sake accursed, hereafter grow barren; may she produce thistles, thorns, tares, with other hurtful and unprofitable herbs; and when thou hast here led a troublesom laborious life, *Dust thou art, to Dust thou shalt return.* In the mean while, let these Rebels be banished out of my Garden, and sent as Exiles into strange Lands; lest they also eat the Fruit of the Tree of Life, and live for ever. However, for fear they should perish through the cold or inclemency of the Weather, the Almighty made them Doublets of the Skins of Animals; and being thus clad, he thrusts them out of Paradise. Finally, to prevent their return, he placed Angels at the entrance of his Garden, who by brandishing a Flaming-sword, and waving it on all sides, guarded the passage that led to the Tree of Life.

This is the Sum and Substance of *Moses's* Account concerning Paradise, and the first State of Mankind; which keeping always close to the Sense, I have explained in other words, that we may more freely judge of the thing itself; as if it were written by a Modern Author.

Now

Now that there are in this Relation, some things Parabolical, and, which will not bear a construction altogether Literal, there are few but do allow. Nay, some proceed farther, and will have even the whole Discourse to be artificially figurative, in order to explain things that were really true (*viz.*) the new and degenerate Condition of Mankind; as also the paradisiac State of Infant Nature, and its Degeneracy. For although in the beginning of the Discourse, this state of Paradise seems confin'd only to one Region, which is called *Gan Eden*, yet afterwards, when the Curse of Barrenness comes out, the whole Earth is brought in for a share. *The Earth shall not for the future bring forth her increase of her own accord, nor any of her Fruits without Tillage and Husbandry: but hereafter, saith the Lord, with the Sweat of thy brow shalt thou get those things that are necessary for Life and Sustenance.* Whence 'tis evident, that before this Alteration or Curse, the whole Earth yielded her Increase without Planting or Labour; for otherwise by this Curse, nothing had been made new, nothing had been chang'd in the Face of Nature. Besides from another thing it plainly appears, that one small Country or some few Acres of Land, such as is a Garden, could not alone enjoy this Fertility, together with those other Privileges as well of Air as Soil, but that the whole inhabitable Globe did partake of them in the primitive State of things. For suppose *Adam* had continued In-

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nocent, how would there have been room for his Posterity within the inclosures of one Garden? Or admit you will have them all shut up there, like so many unfledg'd Birds in a Nest, what must have been done with all those other vast Tracts of Earth? Should they have stood Emptie, Desert, and without Inhabitants?

Nature it self does not allow of that, neither is it becoming the Divine Wisdom. From all these things, we may conclude what is very agreeable to Reason, (*viz.*) That *Moses* puts the part for the whole, and laid one Example before the Eyes of the People, instead of a greater number; because it was more suitable to the Genius and Understanding of the Vulgar, to conceive a pleasant Garden or single Field, than that the whole Globe of the Earth should put on a new Face and new Nature entirely different from what we now enjoy. But let us proceed in the Road we have begun.

The aforesaid Relation consists of five or six parts, whereof the first is, concerning the Birth and Formation of the first of Mankind. The second, the Description of the Garden *Eden*. The third is, the History of the two Trees of Life and Death. The fourth treats of the Serpent's Conference with *Eve*. The fifth about the Wrath of God and his Curse, for eating the forbidden Fruit. Lastly, the sixth contains the Expulsion of these first of Mankind out of the Almighty's Garden, as

also how God made them Coats of Skins, and placed Angels with flaming Swords at the Entrance of his Garden; together with other things hereto belonging.

Great is the force of Custom and a preconceived Opinion over human Minds. Wherefore these short Observations or Accounts of the first Originals of Men and Things, which we receive from the Mouth of *Moses*, are embraced without the least Demur or Examination of them. But had we read the same Doctrine in another, for Example, in a Greek Philosopher, or in a Rabbinical or Mahometan Doctor, we should have stop'd at every period with our Mind full of Objections and Scruples. Now this difference does not arise from the Nature of the thing it self, or of the Matter in hand, but from the great Opinion we have of the Faithfulness and Authority of the Writer, as being divinely inspired.

All which we willingly acknowledge, neither do we in this occasion doubt of our Author's Authority, but with what intent it was that he wrote these Things, and what kind of Style he has made use of, whether *Plebeian* or *Philosophical*; I say, *Plebeian* and not *Fabulous*, although this last word might have been used, did we speak of a *Prophane* Author. Now of Fables, some are pure Fictions; others are built upon some Foundation, but beautified with Additions and acquired Ornaments. Be-

sides there are some Relations that have Truth at the bottom, but not in every particular point of them; only as to the substance of the thing, and drift of the Author. As in Christ's Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, and in many things which are related concerning the Day of Judgment, as to the outward Shell and Form. Such kind of Relations I think ought not to be termed Fables, but sometimes Parables, and sometimes *Coelocis Invidias*, Hypotheses adapted to the Vulgar. And if in this rank you place the Narration we have now in hand, preserving always the good Name and Honour of the Author, I shall not think it amiss.

But let us, if you please, first examin some Articles herein.

As to the Temporal Rise of Mankind, I have ever held it most certain and undoubted; and that upwards of 5000 Years, according to the account given us by Sacred Chronology. But out of what Matter the first of Mankind, whether Male or Female was composed, is not so easily discover'd, nor of so great importance to know. If God had a mind to make a Woman start from one of *Adam's* Ribs, 'tis true it seems to be a Matter not very proper; but however, out of any Wood, Stone, or other Being, God can make a Woman: And here by the by, the Curious ask whether this Rib was usefess to *Adam*, and beyond the number requisite in a compleat Body?

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If not, when it was taken away, *Adam* would have been a maim'd Person, and robbed of a part of himself that was necessary. I say *necessary*, for as much as I suppose that in the Fabric of a Human Body nothing is superfluous, and that no one Bone can be taken away, without endamaging the whole, or rendring it in some measure imperfect. But if on the other side, you say this Rib was really usefess to *Adam*, and might be spared; so that you make him to have had only twelve Ribs on one side, and thirteen on the other; they will reply that this is like a Monster; as much as if the first Man had been created with three Feet or three Hands, or had had more Eyes or other Members than the use or compleatness of an Human Body requires. But in the beginning all Things were made with Number, Weight and Measure, that is to say, with all imaginable Exactness.

For my part, I do not pretend to decide this dispute, but what more perplexes me is, how out of only one Rib the whole Mass of a Woman's Body could be built? For a Rib does not equal the hundredth, perhaps not the Thousandth part of an entire Body. If you answer that the rest of the matter was taken from elsewhere, certainly *Eve* might much more truly be said to have been formed out of that borrowed Matter, whatever it was, than out of *Adam's* Rib. I know very well, that the Rabbinical Doctors solve this business quite another

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way; for they say, the first Man had two Bodies, the one Male and the other Female, whose sides stuck together, or (as some will have it) their Backs; that God cut them asunder, and having thus cloven *Eve* from *Adam*, gave her to him for a Wife. *Plato* has in his *Symposium* something very like this Story, concerning his first Man *Anaroginus*, who was afterwards divided into two parts, Male and Female. Lastly, others conjecture (which is not improbable) that *Moses* gave out this original of Woman, to the end he might breed a mutual Love between the two Sexes, as parts of one and the same whole; and that by this means he might more effectually recommend to his People his own institution of Marriage, (which does unite them a second time) as if it had been imprinted in nature it self. But leaving this Subject, I will hasten to something else.

Now the second Article treats of God's Garden in *Eden*, water'd with four Rivers arising from the same Spring. Which Coelestial Garden mentioned by *Moses*, some will have to be the same with *Διδυμίων*, *Jupiter's* Garden in *Plato*, and that in both places the History or Allegory is the same, *κατὰ τινὰς ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων Μωσέως*, according to the secret meanings of *Moses*, as *Eusebius* saith, and I am so much the more willing to embrace these secret meanings in Relation to the Garden of *Eden*, because there is no place in the whole World wherewith all the distinguishing Marks and Characters of this

this Garden may agree, for not to speak of that continual serenity of the Air, and spontaneous fertility of the place; even the very Rivers themselves afford a most perplexing, and as yet undecided Controversie both to Divines and Geographers, as well Ancient as Modern.

Those Rivers are by *Moses* call'd *Pishon*, *Gihon*, *Hiddekel*, and *Perath*, which the Ancient Authors interpret by *Ganges*, *Nile*, *Tigris* and *Euphrates*. Nor do I truly think without some reason; for *Moses* seems to have propos'd nothing more to himself than the bringing four of the most celebrated and most fertile Rivers of the whole Earth to the watering of his Garden. Ay but, say you, these four Rivers do not spring from the same source, or come from the same place; 'tis true, nor any other four Rivers that are named by the Interpreters. Wherefore this Objection will every where hold good, as well against the Ancient as Modern Writers. But altho you should reduce these Rivers, only to two as some do, to *Tigris* and *Euphrates*, yet neither have these two Rivers the same Fountain-head, but this is really and truly an Evasion rather than an Explanation, to reduce, contrary to the History of *Moses*, a greater number of Rivers to a smaller; only that they may the more conveniently be derived from the same Spring; for these are the words of *Moses*, but there:

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Comes a River out of Eden to water the Garden, and from thence it divides it self into four Branches: The Name of the first is Pishon, &c. Gen. 2. 10. Whereby it is apparent, that either in the entrance or Exit of the Garden, there were four Rivers; and that those four Rivers did proceed from one and the same Fountain-head in Eden. Now pray tell me in what part of the Earth is this Country of Eden, where four Rivers arise from one and the same Spring? But do not go about to say that only two came from that Fountain of Eden, and that the other two arose from the Tigris and Euphrates where they split near the Sea, and make as it were a Bifrontic Figure; Since this does by no means answer the words of Moses. Besides, he mentions in the first place Pishon and Gishon, and afterwards Tigris and Euphrates as lesser Rivers; whereas you on the contrary will have those to be derived from these last as Rivers of an inferior order; which is a manifest distorting the Historical Account. But to end all these Difficulties or Controversies concerning the Originals and Channels of the Rivers that water'd Paradise, you will perhaps at last say, that the Springs as well as the courses of Rivers have been changed by the Universal Deluge. And that we cannot therefore be now certain where it was they formerly broke out of the Earth, and what Countries they passed through. For my part

I am much of your opinion, provided you confess there happened in the Deluge such a fraction and disruption of the Earth as we suppose there did; for from only an Inundation or Superabundancy of Waters, such a change could never possibly happen. Besides, according to what Geography or Hydrography will you have Moses to describe these Rivers? Antediluvian, or Postdiluvian? If the latter, there has happened no considerable alteration of the Earth since the time of Moses or the Flood; if the former, you then render Moses's description of the Earth altogether superfluous, and unuseful to find out the situation of Paradise. Lastly, 'tis hard to conceive that any Rivers, whether these or others, can have subsisted ever since the very first beginning of the World, whether you have regard to their Waters or to their Channels. The Channels of Rivers used to be made by little and little as well as by a daily attrition, for if they had been made, as Ditches and Furrows are, by Earth dug out and heaped up on each side, or at least on one side, there would certainly have been every where seen great Banks and Heaps of Earth. But we plainly perceive that this is only fortuitous; forasmuch as they often run through Plains, and the River-banks are no more than level with the adjacent Fields, besides whence could there be had water at the first foundation of the World to fill these Channels?

nels? If you say that on the third day when the great Bed of the Ocean was made the smaller Channels of the Rivers were also; and as the greatest part of the Waters of the Abyſs fell into the Gulf of the Seas; so the remaining part descended into these other Channels, and therewith formed the Primitive Rivers: Admitting this, yet the Waters would be not only as Salt as those of the Sea, but there would be no continual Springs to nourish these Rivers; insomuch that when the first stream of Water had flow'd off, there being no fresh Supplies of Water to succeed it, these Rivers would have immediately been dried up: I say because there were no perpetual Springs, for whether Springs proceed from Rain, or from the Sea, they could neither way have rose in so short a time; not from Rain, for it had not as yet Rained, neither was it possible that in the small space of one day the Waters of the Abyſs should run down from the most Inland places to the Sea, and afterwards returning through ways that were never yet opened by them, should strain themselves through the Bowels of the Earth, and ascend to the heads of their Rivers. But of Rivers we have said enough, let us now proceed to the rest.

We have in the third place a very strange account of a Serpent that talked with *Eve*, and enticed her to mistrust God. I must confess

confess we have not yet known that this Beast could ever speak, or utter any sort of voice, besides hissing. But what shall we think *Eve* knew of this business? If she had taken it for a dumb Animal the very Speech of it would have so frightened her that she would not have durst to stay and enter into a Conference with it. If on the other side, the Serpent had from the beginning been capable of talking and haranguing, and only lost his Speech for the crime of having by his seducements corrupted the Piety and Faith of *Eve*, certainly *Moses* would have been far from passing over in silence this sort of Punishment, and instead of that have mentioned so small a Penalty as that of licking the dust. But besides all this, pray will you have the particular Species of Serpents, or all the Beasts of the Field that were then in Paradise to have been indued with the faculty of speaking, like the Trees in *Dodona's* Grove? If you say all, pray what offence had the rest been guilty of, that they also must lose the use of their Tongues? if only the Species of Serpents enjoyed this privilege, how came it about that so vile an Animal, and by Nature the most averſe and remote from Mankind, should before all his other fellow Bruits deserve to be Master of so great a favour and benefit as that of Speech?

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Lastly, since all discoursing and arguing include the use of Reason, by this very thing you make the Serpent a Rational Creature. But I easily imagin those who are great sticklers for the literal Interpretation will solve this difficulty another way : For, say they, under the shape of this Serpent was hid the Devil, or an Evil Spirit, who using the Mouth and Organs of this Animal, spoke to the Woman as it were with an Human Voice. But what Testimony, with Authority, have they for this ? The most literal reading of *Moses*, which they so closely adhere to, does not express any thing of it ; for what else does he seem to say, but that he attributes the seducing of *Eve* to the natural craftiness of the Serpent, and nothing else ? For these are *Moses's* words : Now the Serpent was more cunning than any Beast of the Field that the Lord God had made : (Afterwards continues he) *The Serpent said to the Woman, ye hath God said*——But besides, had *Eve* heard an Animal, by nature dumb, speak through the means of some Evil Spirit, she would instantly with horror have fled from the Monster. When on the contrary she very familiarly received it ; they discoursed and argued very amicably together, as tho nothing new or astonishing had happen'd ; Again, if you say, that all this proceeded from the ignorance & weakness of a Woman, 'twould on the other side, have been but just, that some good Angels should have

have succoured a poor Ignorant weak Woman, those Just Guardians of human affairs would not have permitted so unequal a conflict ; for what if an Evil Spirit, crafty and knowing in business, had by his subtlety overreached a poor silly Woman, who had not as yet seen the Sun either rise or set, who was but newly come of the Mould, and wholly unexperienced in all things ? Certainly a Person who had so great a price set on her head, as the Salvation of all Mankind might well have deserved a Guard of Angels : Ay, but perhaps (you'll say) the Woman ought to have taken care not to violate a Law established upon pain of death : *The day you eat thereof you shall surely die*, both you and yours ; this was the Law. Die ! what does that mean, says the poor ignorant Virgin, who as yet had not seen any thing dead, no not so much as a flower ; nor had yet with her eyes or mind perceived the Image of death (*viz.*) Sleep or Night. But what you add concerning his Posterity and their Punishment, that is not at all expressed in the Law. Now no Laws are ever to be distorted, but especially not those that are Penal. The punishment of the Serpent will also afford no inconsiderable question if the Devil transacted the whole thing under the form of a Serpent ; or if he compell'd the Serpent to do or suffer those things, why did he pay for a crime committed by the Devil ? Moreover as to the manner

ner and form of the punishment inflicted on the Serpent (*viz.*) that for the future he should go creeping on his Belly, it is no easie to be explained what that means. Hardly any one will say that the Serpent did before walk upright, or after the manner of four-footed Beasts; and if on the other side, from the beginning he crept like our Modern Snakes, it may seem ridiculous to impose on this Creature as a Punishment for one single Crime, a thing which by nature he ever had before. But let this suffice for the Woman and Serpent, let us now go on to the Trees.

I here understand those two Trees which stood in the middle of the Garden, (*viz.*) the Tree of Life, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Tree of Life was (they'll tell you) so called, for that it would give Men a very long life. But by what follows in the same Relation we find that all our Forefathers before the Flood, did without the help of this Tree attain to a very great Age. Besides, if the Longevity or Immortality of Men had depended only upon one Tree, or its Fruit, what if Adam had not sinned? how could his Posterity, when they were diffused over the face of the whole Earth have been able to come and gather Fruit out of this Garden, or from this Tree? Or how could the product of one Tree have been enough for all Mankind.

As to the other Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, it does not so plainly appear what was its vertue, or from whence it received that name: It seems by I know not what juice or other vertue, to have infused into them a new sense of shame and modesty; or, as it is expressed, of Nakedness, as though before the Fall they had been wholly void of bashfulness in Venereal Pleasures; yet now adays in things of that kind even the most innocent have some sense of shame. I know not what St. *Austin* means, when he says, that in the first state and innocence of Mankind, Women would have conceived and brought forth without violating their *Claustrum Virginale*, the seed being immitted, and the Off-spring coming forth through the Pores, as do Virgins Monthly Purgations, and that the whole Act of Generation would have been performed without any sting or transport, just as one hand rubs another. If these things were taken exactly according to the Rules of Nature and Philosophy they would be very difficult to solve. But God seems to intimate quite another Vertue in this Tree, when he says, *Behold Adam is become as one of us, knowing good and evil (viz.)* by the force and Vertue of the Fruit which he had eaten. Now certainly whatever heat or transport arises from a vicious, inordinate Motion, is so far from making us like God, that it on the contrary



rary renders us but the more dissimular him.

Having thus therefore spoken sufficient concerning the Trees, let us next proceed the rest: Now after the eating this Apple, or whatever other Fruit it was, our Parents made themselves Aprons: For, says the Text they sewed together Fig-leaves, and thereupon made themselves Aprons. From whence you may deduce the Original of the *Taylor's Trade* but where had they Needles? And where the Thread that very first Day of their Creation since the Thread-makers Art was not yet found out, nor yet the Art of Working in Iron. All which Questions may perhaps be thought little too free, but the thing it self requires to deal freely, when we are seeking for naked Truth. When they had thus made themselves Aprons, God gave them likewise Coats made of the Skins of Animals: But here again we run into other Difficulties, wherefore to soften the Thing, let us suppose an Angel to have been in the place of God, that 'twas an Angel who killed and flead the Animals, or pulled off their Skins whilst they were yet alive and Innocent. N twithstanding this too smells more of the Butcher or Executioner, than of an Angel. Besides, through this Burchery some entire Species of Animals must necessarily have perish'd; for 'tis not believed that from the beginning there were more than two of each kind created, and one alone, without another

ther for its Consort, could never have produced any Off-spring. After all this, what follows? Why God expell'd our Parents thus cloath'd out of Paradise, and placed at the Entrance of the Garden, Cherubims with a great two-handed flaming Sword, that continually waved about the same, for fear lest either by open force, or by stealth, they might have repossess themselves again of those happy Mansions. Now is there any one of the Interpreters that will put an exact literal Construction upon these Things? that will make Angels to have stood like Centinels, with drawn Swords before the Doors of the Garden, for I know not how many Ages, as Dragons are feign'd by the Poets to have guarded the Apples of the *Hesperides*? But how long did this Angelical *Corps du Guard* last? To the Flood, I suppose, it not longer. So that you here suppose the Angels to have been for above Fifteen Hundred Years employed in keeping a Garden. *Sic vocat exiguis Rebus adesse Deos?* How much easier would it have been, in a place so well watered as Paradise, to have fenced the Garden about with a River? which to *Adam* and *Eve*, who were as yet ignorant of the manner either of Building, or conducting Boats and Vessels, would have been a more than sufficient Obstacle: But these, and other Things of this Nature, lest they should be thought to favour of Malice, I had rather leave for others to reflect upon.

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Thus have we in short run over the chief Heads of the History of Paradise; the only thing now remaining to be consider'd, is, how short a time all these things are said to have been transacted, in one Days time, or perhaps, but in half a Day. Divines suppose *Adam* to have consummated his Marriage with *Eve* the first Night; afterwards, say they, if *Eve*, whilst she was yet Innocent, had conceived her first Born, she would have like a wife brought him forth Innocent and free from all blemish of Sin: Whence also the whole Progeny, in Relation to the Fathers side, would have continued unspotted with Sin. But there is none of that sort of Progeny unspotted, or so much as half pure, we are all tainted with the same Blemish, have all the same Disease. Wherefore we must necessarily suppose all these Things to have been done the sixth Day of the Creation, before their coming together, or the Embraces of their Matrimonial Bed. How many therefore, and how great Things must we heap on this one Day! will, if you please, briefly run them over. The Day did God create all manner of Creatures of all manner of wild Beasts, and all sorts of creeping Things: Lastly, he created *Adam*, and when he had created all these things, brought each kind of Animal before *Adam*, that to every one of them he might give a name according to their several Faculties. For me, what Language *Adam* could speak

the first Hour or Day of his Nativity, I am wholly ignorant of; but however it be, since there are so many different Ranks and Families of Animals, to weigh and consider well the Nature of each, and afterwards to give them a name adapted to it, seems a Task that requires no small time. Again, when all this work was in some manner finished, God cast *Adam* into a deep sleep, and whilst he was snoring, took from him a Rib out of which he built a Woman: The same Day these new born Man and Woman commit Matrimony without Contract, or the formal Preliminaries of Wooing. And that very same Day Mistress Bride being, to I know not what intent, pleased to ramble among the Groves of the Garden, happened to meet with the Serpent: This Serpent begins a Discourse with her; they argue on one side and t'other, about a certain Tree, and eating, or not eating a certain Fruit. She at length overcome by his Reasons, or seducing Expressions, eats of this Fruit; and not only that, but carries it to her Husband, who likewise eat of it. Upon this there happens a great alteration, they cast their Eyes on each other's Nakedness, are ashamed, and make themselves Aprons of Fig-leaves sew'd together.

When things being in this Posture, God Almighty in the Evening descends into the Garden; they conscious of their own Guilt fly away, and abscond themselves among the Trees and



and shady Coverts, but all in vain ; for God Summons the Criminals, they appear, & upon Examination of the whole Cause, he Decrees to the Man, Woman and Serpent the several Punishments they had merited. Lastly, to fulfil all parts of the Punishment, our Parents are cast out of Paradise, and sent into Exile: When several Angels being placed at all the Avenues of the Garden, they are forced to wander alone among the Woods, and take up their Lodging among the Wild Beasts. All which things we read to have been done within the small space of one day ; truly a very considerable and very numerous piece of business. But I cannot bear to see, that in so short time all Things were inverted and put into a total Disorder ; and that the whole Nature which had but just now been composed and polished, should, before the first time of the Sun's setting, fall to Ruin and Confusion : In the Morning God said all things were good ; and in the Evening of the same Day, all things are accursed. Alas ! how fleeting and unconstant is the Glory of Things created ! A work that was six days e'er it could be elaborate and brought to perfection, and that by an Omnipotent Architect to be thus in a few Hours ruined by so vile a Beast. Now this is a faithful Account of Matter of Fact contain'd in the History of Paradise and Creation of Mankind, as also of the time wherein each Part of the said History was produced : All
which

which things when I revolve in my Mind, which is wholly unbyass'd and ready to comply on every side, where right Reason and the Love of Truth conduct me ; I cannot be angry with those of the Fathers and ancient Writers who have endeavour'd to convert these things into Symbols, Parables or ways of discoursing adapted to the Vulgar. But am angry with *Celsus*, who calls this account an old Wive's Tale ; upon which *Origen* tells him very well by way of answer, *ἡ μετὰ τροπολογίας τῶν τὰ ἑρμῆας*, that these things were spoken in a figurative Sense. However *Celsus* himself does in what follows acknowledge that the fairest Interpreters both among the *Jews* and *Christians* were ashamed of the literal Sense, and therefore accommodated them to Allegories. Hence you may see, that in the first Ages of the Christian Church (at which time *Celsus* lived) as also among the *Jews* before Christ's Birth, the more candid Interpreters deviated from the literal Reading of *Moses's* History. And really it seems a very cruel and very hard thing in this respect, that God should be said to have tormented, nay, and ruined Mankind for so small a Fault, and that too committed through the Levity of a Womans Mind. Wherefore some are of an Opinion (which I am not much averse to) That *Moses* laid so vast a Punishment on so small a Crime, only to the end he might procure the greater Defe-

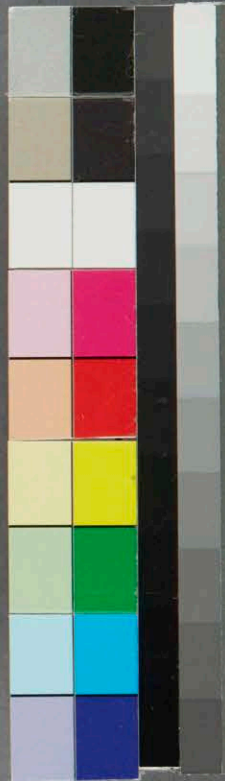
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rence and Authority to his own Laws, which often decree with the strictest Severity things Frivolous, and in their own Nature, Indifferent. For who would not fear to violate the most petty, inconsiderable Precept that comes in the Name of -God, if the eating of one Forbidden Apple could bring perdition to all Mankind? But upon these and the other Articles in *Moses's* Narration, let every one enjoy his own Sentiments, provided he do not destroy the Foundation.

Now by Foundation, I here mean the Doctrine of the Temporal Rise of Mankind, as well as of this Earth, the Degeneration of both; and that Mankind will be redeemed by the Seed of a Woman. In this blind State of Mortality we are all prone to Error; and among the Duties of Charity, 'tis not the least for us to indulge and succour one another when we are Erroneous. For my own part, I call God to Witness (who knows our most secret Thoughts) that in this or any other Writing I never propos'd more to my self, than the promotion of Piety founded upon Truth. Neither do I in this Discourse about Paradise, and the Origination of Mankind affirm any thing positively, but with Modesty and Submission, that I may the better Fathom the Judgments of discreet, well-minded Persons. Who if they will but with me consider the Usage and Genius of the Primitive Ages, more especially among the Oriental Nations (whose

Custom

Custom it was to deliver their Decrees and Doctrines by Symbols, Similitudes and Parables) if they do not concur with, will yet at least not be prejudic'd against those who explain ancient Things after this manner.



C H A P. VIII.

Concerning the Original of Things, as they are Expounded in the First Chapter of Genesis; together with the Manner of Interpreting Moses's Hexaemeron, that is to say, his Account of the Creation performed in Six Days.

WHAT Reflections we have made in the foregoing Chapter about the Originals of Things, chiefly respect Mankind, as also their Causes and primary State. But the Original of Things inanimate, and the Universe, as *Moses* describes it in the First Chapter of *Genesis*, seems no less contrary to the Theory of the Earth. This Account therefore which *Moses* gives us of the World, being much ancients than all those others before mentioned, we ought to examine it the more diligently, and so to compose or dilute these Controversies by a friendly Interpretation, that Truth (which is alike necessary to each of them) may at the same time be inviolably preserved.

The *Hexaemeron* and Theory ('tis true) agree in their first Foundation of Things: For as they both suppose the Chaos to have been the matter out of which the World was Built.

So

So they likewise agree in their general Order, making the World to have been first inanimate, and then afterwards animated. But, as to the rest, for Example, the Form and Limits of the created World, as also the manner, time and other Things, they do not a little differ; all which we must now at large examine.

'Tis *First* therefore to be observed, what Form and what Limits of the World the *Hexaemeron* has proposed to its self. Now 'tis well known, that betwixt the Learned and the Vulgar there are two different Systems of the World, therefore one supposes the Sun to be the Centre, and t'other the Earth. Quære then upon which of these two Systems is *Moses's Hexaemeron* grounded? 'Tis most certain, that *Moses* has begun his Work from the Earth, as the Basis or Foundation of the whole Machine; and that he did not produce the Sun (according to what he says) till the 4th Day, at which time the Structure of the Earth and Sea was already finish'd. The Sun was not therefore the Centre of the whole Work, since it had no Being, till the work was half brought to Perfection. Besides, as well the Sun as the rest of the Heavenly Bodies, are by *Moses* represented to have been created meetly for the use of the Earth, and in a manner but as for many servile Bodies, whose only business was to measure out to us the Days, Years and the rest of the several Seasons. But according to

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the other Hypothesis, the Sun and fixed Stars are not only very great, but also very noble Bodies, bearing the first Rank amongst the various Parts of the Universe, and being as it were the Foundations of that prodigious Mass. 'Tis evident therefore from both these Reasons, that *Moses* has followed the popular System; that which most pleases the People, which most flatters our Senses, is believed and comprehended, or at least seems to be comprehended by the greater number: And in so doing, he rightly consulted the publick Safety; when neglecting Philosophy, he adhered to more serious Counsels and Reasons of greater weight.

Secondly, Since it is evident that the Earth was the Center of this *Mosaic* Chaos, 'tis next to be enquired after, how far upwards this blind and confused Mass did reach. The *Hexameron* truly seems to suppose that this Chaos filled and possessed the whole Universe how great soever, together with all the Heavens and Regions of the Air, which way soever they were diffused; as also that the brightest and most resplendent Stars were composed of this chaotic Matter, neither that there were any before the Birth and Creation of this our Earth. Which is what the very Letter of the *Hexameron* seems to import, & absolutely contradictory to the Nature of Things, as well as to all Philosophical Reasons. 'Tis most certain that the fixed Stars are fiery Bodies; that they do

do not all rest upon the same Superficies; being some more remote from the Earth, and more profoundly immers'd in the Heavens, than others; and that upon this score there can be no common Center assigned to all of them at least, to believe our modern Earth (a blind and fordid particle of the Universe, inferiour to each of the fixed Stars, as well in bulk as in dignity) to be the Heart, the most noble and most vital Part of so vast a Body, is altogether irrational and repugnant to the Nature of Things. I speak it again with Indignation, that to say, or almost to think, that this Earth, the Dregs, the meer Scum of Nature, is the Supreme Head of all Things, and as it were the first-born Product of the whole Creation, cannot be without an Abuse and Scandal, as well to the Operator as to the Work. Besides if that earthly Chaos had been extended throughout the vast Face of the Universe, and that this Earth were the only Center in which all the grosser parts convened, the same Earth or middle Body, being the common Receptacle of all the grosser Parts, would have grown up to a bulk infinitely bigger than this little Earth of ours. For that the sub-lunary Chaos (or which reaches to the Moon) is of it self sufficient to make up this Earth; and if to this you add the whole visible Heaven, and those spaces above the Heavens, which are not obvious to our Senses, but surpass all our imagination: Neither the



Sun nor any visible Body is of so great a magnitude as would be that Body composed in the midst of the Chaos. Moreover, that as well the corporeal as the incorporeal World is more ancient than this inhabitable Earth, may in some measure be proved out of Ecclesiastical Authors, if we strictly examin the thing.

Many Fathers of the Christian Church were of Opinion, that before the Earth or *Mosaic* World, there had been Angels for many Ages unknown to us; and some also mention the same of the highest Heaven or Firmament. But this Opinion of the Angels is a thing more positively asserted, and by a greater number. Not to speak of *Origen*, *St. Basilus* says this in his *Hexaemeron*; *Chrysostom.* *περὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν κτίσεως*, cap. 7. *τοῦ κόσμου τῆς κτίσεως* *πρὸ τῆς γῆς*, &c. *Gregorius Nazianzenus* *Orat.* 38. and in other Places. *Johannes Damascenus*, l. 2. *Orth. Fid.* cap. 3. *Job. Philoponus*, de *Creatione mundi*, lib. 1. cap. 10. ult. *Olympiodorus* upon *Job* 38. and others of the *Greeks* have taught the same; not a few also of the *Latins* have been of this Opinion. *Hilarius*, l. 12. de *Trin.* *St. Jerom.* *Ambrosius* (in *Hexam.* l. 1. c. 5.) *Isidorus Hispalensis*, *Beda* and others. Accordingly these are *St. Jerom's* own words upon the subject. — *Our World has not yet seen Six Thousand Years; and what Eternities, what vast Tracts of Time, what inexhaustible Fountains of Ages ought we to suppose have been before it, in which the Angels, Thrones, Powers and other Vertues have*

serv'd

serv'd God. In the *Book de Trinitate* (whether it was written by *Novatian* or *Tertullian*) as well the *Angelical World* as the spaces above the *Firmament*, are said to have been made before the *Mosaic* World, in these words; *Altho in the higher Regions* (viz. those above the *Firmament*) *it self he did before institute Angels, Spiritual Vertues, Thrones and Powers, as also create many other vast Tracts of the Heavens &c* *Inasmuch that this World appears rather to be the last Work of God, than his sole and only one.* To which passage adds *Damelius*, — *Novatian was not only of this Opinion, but also St. Jerom together with all the Greeks, that the Angels were sooner instituted, (viz.) before any part of the Creation of our present World.* Lastly, *Cassian* tells us, *That this was the common Opinion of the Catholics in his time; which was at the beginning of the fifth Age: Whereof* (says he) *none of the Faithful doubt.* And having more fully explained this generally received Opinion, he after wards adds, *'Tis most certain and undoubted, that God created all those Celestial Powers before that Temporal beginning of the Creation.* But to remove all doubt concerning the pre-existence of Angels, we have the very words which the Lord himself spake to *Job*, chap. 38. 4. &c. *Where wast thou when I laid the Foundations of the Earth: when the morning Stars sang my praises, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy? Whereupon* says *Olympiodorus*, ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης, ἐν πρῶτῳ οἱ ἄγγελοι τῶν κόσμου γέγονιστα. 'Tis plain from this

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Passage,

Passage, that in the Creation of the World the Angels were first made. Forasmuch as these words certainly imply, that before the Foundations of the Earth were laid, there were Angels, and that they sang praises to God at the first Building of our World. Likewise if you take the Morning Stars according to the very Letter, it is most certain that the Stars and Heavens also preceded the Foundation of our Earth.

Besides, St. *Jerom* makes intellectual Beings pre-existent to the World, by those Passages of Scripture, where something is said to have been done, *πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων*, *Tit. 1. 2.* *2 Tim. 1. 9.* or *πρὸ ἧς αἰῶνων*, *1 Cor. 2. 7.* before the World began. Nor is there less included in this Expression, *πρὸ καταβολῆς τοῦ κόσμου*, *1 Pet. 1. 20.* *Ephes. 1. 4.* *John 17. 3.* and 24. Before the Foundations of the World were laid. Which does not denote a bare Eternity, but the Periods and Foundation of this World. Before both which did exist the Soul of the Messias, and the Mystery of the Christian Oeconomy. But to return again to the Angels.

Lastly, We can evince the same by the Sacred Oracles and Authority of the Fathers, as well as by Reason and Arguments. The Fall of the Angels was before the Creation of the World, therefore they were before created, and that for some Ages. For really 'tis not at all probable that the most excellent Creatures

were made of so frail a nature, as that on the very day of their birth they should fall into evil and misery: neither is it consistent with the *Deus Opt. Max.* the kind Father of all Intelligent Beings, to place the most noble part of his work in so slippery a station, that no sooner had their Maker taken his hand from off them, but they immediately fell head-long into destruction; damned to the utmost of torments, and a most dismal Hell. Which being thus stated, let us pass on from the Angels to the Corporeal World; wherein we are first to observe, That if the Angels had not any ways been united with matter, nor had from it received any pleasure, or any sort of perception, it could scarce have been possible that they should have been wrested from their habitations and first state: For pray where were the places that these pre-existent Angels did inhabit? *Basilus* says, they dwelt in the Heavens and Light. Many of the Ancients did (as is well known) attribute to the Angels, *σώματα λεπτά*, thin Bodies, and not gross Terrestrial ones like ours. And the second *Nicene* Council would have this Doctrine proposed out of the Book of *John* Bishop of *Thessalonica*, to be confirmed; these are the words: Concerning the Angels, Archangels, and their Powers, to which I also joyn our own souls: This is the opinion of the Catholic Church; that they are, 'tis true, intelligible, yet not wholly Incorporeal and Invisible, as you *Gentiles* say, but endowed with a thin

and Aerial or Fiery Body ; as it is written, *Who makes his Angels Spirits, and those that minister unto him a flaming fire.* This we know to have been the opinion of many Holy Fathers, amongst whom are *Basilus*, Surnamed the Great, *St. Athanasius*, *Methodius*, and those that follow them ; not that they suppose Angels to be Bodies, but like human Souls to be invested with Bodies ; yet not such as are moulded up of the same Clay, with our Modern ones, but thin and pure like Air or Fire. Of the same nature as those we shall one day have, when we come to be *ἰσούσαμενοι*, equal to the Angels.

Lastly, those who interpret that passage, *Gen. 6. 2, &c.* of the Angels joyning themselves with the Daughters of Men (which not a few of the Fathers and others do) must necessarily assert that the Angels have Bodies, proper and agreeable to their own nature, from all which we may conclude that together with the Angels some Cœlestial Matter did exist before the Earth. But of whatever kind this thin, subtile and lucid Matter was, it could not exist by it self, and before the remaining part of the Mass of Matter. For all Matter was together, and at once produced out of Nothing. Neither may we conceive the action of the Creation as divided into parts and distant ages ; whilst the rest of the Regions and Tracts of the World remained empty. For my part if

an Atom, or the smallest Particle of Matter existed before the *Mosaical* Epoque, I am of opinion that the whole Mass of the Universe did the same. And by the same Rule, if that Angelical Matter, or Vehicle of the Angels preceded the beginning of the Earth, all Matter in general did (as the *Greek* Fathers argue) in some measure precede it ; but its disposition and order according to its different parts, situations and forms, have by the Decree of Providence been from time to time varied sometimes after one manner, and sometimes after another. Thus by the Authority of the Fathers we have hitherto treated of the pre-existence of Angels and of Matter it self, as it hath a connection with the Angels ; let us now therefore return to the nature of things, and to the visible World ; for in the Corporeal we have as many Arguments to confirm the same antiquity of Matter ; and to sufficiently demonstrate that the *Mosaical* Epoque of about six thousand years, does not comprehend the Original of the whole Universe, but the Age of our present Earth, and the time since it was formed out of its Chaos. If we again consider the *Phœnomœnes* of the Heavens, and the Companies of both erring and fixed Stars, we shall easily believe that so numerous a progeny, and which was worthy of a better Parent, could not be the off-spring of one Earthly Chaos ; nor admit of their Ages

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and Histories being included within the limits of so small a time; wherefore let us, if you please, call to mind a thing which is now no longer doubted of (*viz.*) that the Earth is a Planet; and that besides the Earth there are many Planets of the same nature, as well as of a like matter and form. All which, 'tis probable, have had the same manner and principle of birth; that is, every one out of its own Chaos. Moreover, since the Creation of the Earth, we have not seen the birth of any one new Planet; for which reason certainly they are all either older than the Earth, or as old. Now if you grant the former, 'tis all we desire; and if you make them of the same age with the Earth, you must suppose as many Chaos's as there are Primary Planets since. For example, 'tis certain, that *Jupiter*, who wheels about his own Satellites or Tenders, is a Center to himself, and does not any ways depend on our Earth, as do none of the rest, except it be the *Moon*. Again, the fixed Stars seem ancients than the Planets, and to be each of them the Center of its own Orb or Vortex; as many Systems therefore must be constituted in the Heavens as there are fixed Stars; which being very great both as to number and bulk, would swallow up this little point of Earth, as if it were less than nothing; wherefore whoever has any favour for the Heavens, and is an unbiased observer of God's Works, will not easily

ly consent to have their Originals deduced from the Earth, or dependent on it.

Lastly, 'tis probable that the Planets were formerly fixed, and that the Earth it self ought to be numbred in the same rank. 'Twill be no easie matter for you to solve the Originals of the Planets by any other Hypothesis; at least, not if they have fire in their Center, which 'tis very probable they have. Besides we sometimes see the face of the Sun overgrown with thick spots, and perceive him for some days pale, obscure, and as it were in the pangs of death; but he that is sick may die; and what happens to one, may happen to others of the same kind (now all the fixed Stars are homogeneous) therefore the fixed Stars are perishable. Now a fixed Star perishes, and is extinguished when being crufted over with a thick shell of scurf which it cannot break through, it degenerates into an obscure and opaque body, such as is a Planet. Finally, the new Stars that have of late years appear'd in the Heavens, have not, 'tis probable, I mean in respect to their Originals, had any connection or communication with the Earth; neither have the Comets, which, although in some things they are dubious and hard to be explained, do to me seem nothing else, but (as one may say) the dead bodies of the fixed Stars, unburied, and not as yet compos'd to rest, they like shadows wander up and down through the various Regions of the Heavens, till they have found out fit places



places for their residence, which having pitched upon, they stop their irregular course, and being turned into Planets move Circularly about some Star. Whereas, if according to another Hypothesis, Comets are held to have been just the same from the beginning, they take such vast Tours, make such immense Circles and Periods, that no man can prove we ever saw the same Comet twice in one and the same part of its circuit. These and the like *Phenomenaes* of the Heavens can hardly without using some violence to the Laws of Nature be reduced to an Epocha of six thousand years. We should much rather confess that our Earth had not the same Original, nor is of the same age with the whole Universe, whether Intellectual or Corporeal. Nor is it to be wondered at, that *Moses* did not distinguish them, or treat of the Original of the Universe apart, from that of our Sublunary World; since the common people never distinguish these things, nor have any separate Ideas of them. The greatest part of Mankind esteems the remaining part of nature, and of the Universe only as an Appendix of our World or Earth, worth nothing of it self, but created merely for our use and benefit. 'Twas therefore not without much reason, that our most wise Law-giver left it to the Philosophers as their business, that when human understanding was through age, use and observations come to a greater maturity, they might digest the

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Works of God into another Method adapted to the Divine perfections and nature of things. But enough of this Subject, let us now proceed to something else.

Thirdly, *Moses* in his *Hexaemeron* mentions a famous *Phenomena* whereof we have not any appearance, I mean his Waters above the Firmament, in the making or disposing of which he tells us God spent one entire day; which is no less time than he employed about the Sun, Moon and all the Host of Heaven! 'Tis true, these Noble Bodies deservedly claim to themselves twenty four Hours labour, but to an obscure unknown thing we cannot but grudge so much work. Let us make a search therefore after these invisible Waters, let us enquire what are the places they now possess, or where they have formerly resided. *Moses* says, they were placed above the Firmament; but the Sun with the rest of the Stars he makes to be in the Firmament: Thus he places those Waters above all the Stars, and the Starry Heaven, nevertheless of these and all things else he supposes the Earth to be the Centre; but since the Waters are heavier than the Cœlestial Matter, and than even the very air it self, how is it possible for them to stay in the highest Regions, not being sustained by any intermediate Bodies of a grosser kind? *St. Austin* in this matter forbids us having recourse to the Divine Omnipotence, when in treating on the same subject he thus very gravely and much to the purpose admo-



admonisheth us, neither let any one say, that according to the Almighty Power of God to whom all things are possible, we ought to believe that the Waters, thus heavy as we know and feel them to be, are diffused above the Heavenly Body in which are the Stars; for now we ought to examin by his Scriptures, how God has instituted the natures of things, not how he is pleased to operate according to his Miraculous Omnipotence; and this agrees with what he has more generally taught us elsewhere, God does after such manner administer all the things he has Created, that he suffers them to be exercised and governed by their own motions. Let your judgment then go according to these Rules. Besides, suppose these, I know not what kind of Waters had been above the highest Heavens, what had it signified to the People to know this Mystery? 'tis remote from *Moses's* custom, and what he proposed to himself to relate in his *Hexameron* invisible, abstruse things which were of no use when known: He in that only traces the *Phænomenaes* of the visible World, which strike upon the eyes of all People, and make them sensible that there must be a Creator; whereas those things which are no way apparent, as they need no Author, so neither do they require any explanation. And therefore some have thought it proper to interpret these Waters above the Firmament, as it were watry Clouds, and to that end they establish

blish two Firmaments, an upper and a lower; the former is that where the Stars reside, the latter that wherein the Vapours, Clouds and Meteors roul about; that is to say, they call by the name of Firmament, the space that lies between the Earth, and the middle Region of the air. But according to this solution, pray what did God Almighty create the second day? a little extension or space? The distance which is between us and the Clouds? But that distance did before exist, being not only extended to the middle Region of the Air, but even to the very highest Heaven; whether you suppose the newly Created Light, or the Chaos to have been interposed. What a business then is it to create distance? besides, to create distance the second day which did exist the first? Neither is there according to this Proposition any solid fence or enclosure admitted in the fluid Heaven. But that we may further confute this Interpretation, let us hear *Moses's* own words: *The second day* (says he) *God said let there be a Firmament in the midst of the Waters, and let it divide the Waters from the Waters*; that is, the Superiour from the Inferiour, these Waters therefore as well the one as the other did exist before this *Interaqueous* Firmament was made. For there can be no bound or separation but of things that do already exist. Tell me then what or where were these Superiour Waters before this Separation was made they seem to have before been one continued Mass, and after to have been



been by this partition divided into two different Stories. But before all this there were neither Rain nor Clouds; if therefore you will have these to be the Superiour Waters, this does not answer *Moses's* words. Finally, 'twould be preposterous to suppose Clouds before the Earth; or to imagin these coagulations of Vapours, which perish and are renewed each day, considerable enough to take up the sixth part of the Almightyes vast Work. The thing in shure comes to this; the vulgar do not comprehend the natural Generation of Rain by the condensation of Vapours, but fancies Rain is sent down from Heaven by a Divine Impulse, or comes immediately from God: *Moses* to favour this Opinion, goes and makes a common Receptacle for the Waters above the Heavens; so that God by opening or shutting his Flood-gates, might at his pleasure, keep up or let down the Rain; this I take to have been the mind and intent of the Sacred Author, as to his Super-coelestial Waters. And this is the best way to keep up the dignity of *Moses*, if whenever he deviates from the Physical Truth, we suppose him to do it *κατὰ συνανάγκην*, by adapting his History of the Creation to the capacity and use of the common People. Thus also when he treats of light in the first day of the Creation that *Phænomena* is equally incapable of being explained by any Physical reason; but lest God should seem to work three days in the dark, *Moses* thought it was convenient to

produce

produce Light at the beginning of the work. But what sort of a Light was it? A Light without any source, without any original from whence it might be derived. Yet Light, to argue Philosophically, always flows from some Centre wherein is the Heart and Principle of its Motion. Nevertheless in this account of the Creation, Light is produced before any distinction of the Heavens into Orbs or *Vortex's*. Besides, according to the literal reading, God seems to have rested from his work in the Night-time, as Men used to do; but I do not see how another Hemisphere either Celestial or Terrestrial could be perfected, if there was any intermission of the work, and God acted only where there was Light. But the Vulgar never regard these little Niceties, nor do they dream of Antipodes or another Hemisphere; conceiving the World to be like a Tent, whose covering is Heaven, and foundation the surface of the Earth. Next comes the third Days Task, wherein the Original of the Ocean is described, *ἀπέχων ἢ ἀδεοφύτος*, purely according to the Capacity of the Vulgar, in these words, *Let the Waters be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry Land appear.* Now the dry Land be called Earth, and the gathering together of the Waters be called Seas; this gathering together of the Waters to uncover the Face of the Earth, which lay hid under the Abyss, could not be effected any more than two ways, (*viz.*) either

by



by an accumulation of the Waters in certain places, so as that others might remain empty; or else by hollowing the Earth, which was under the Abyss, in certain places, so as that the Waters might subside there. But that accumulation could not make the Channel of the Ocean, wherefore all the Interpreters say, it was made by a hollowing of the Earth, and that the Waters being drawn down, and aggregated there, the Earth was deprived of them in other places. They also tell you, that the Mountains were made of this work (*viz.*) with the Earth, which was dug out of this Channel of the Sea, and heaped up in divers places. Now what can be plainer than this Original of the Ocean and Mountains, provided you do not too much play the Critic, and forbear too nice a scrutiny: These things therefore must have pleased and satisfied the People who do not trouble themselves about niceties. But if any one has a Mind to make a more exact Enquiry into these Things, he may if he pleases, consult what is written on this Subject in *Theor. l. i. c. 8, 9. and last*; in which last Chapter by various Reasons and manifest Tokens, it is demonstrated that neither the Channel of the Ocean, nor the first inhabitable dry Land, could proceed from this Original. But it would not be worth my while to repeat the same here, or to add any more upon this Subject.

So

So much for the first three Days of *Moses's* Creation, in which if our Author had passed by the first and second Days Task (*viz.*) that glimmering Light and those Waters above the Firmament; and had put his ninth verse immediately after his second, his World or inhabitable Orb had been never the more deficient: But because he had resolved (at least as I suppose) to hold and consecrate the seventh Day for a Sabbath, it was necessary for him to spin out his Creation to six Days: That with the remembrance of the World's being finished, and after the Example of God's resting from all manner of Work, the seventh Day might be for ever solemnly observed. But the Tasks of each of these days are extremely unequal, the first days work would have been finished in the twinkling of an Eye; and so in my Opinion the second: Whereas the third days Task would have been a vast and tedious piece of Business, First to cut out so large a Channel as is that of the Sea; then to draw off all the Waters that covered the Surface of the Earth, or rather to force them down into that Channel; I say force, since they would not fall down towards the Sea of their own accord, there being as yet no Channels to convey the Rivers, nor Descents of the Earth to carry them down in those places where the new Mountains or heaps of Earth newly dug up were fixed, the Waters would be thrown off, and the same proportion of them fall
down

down into the Pit of the Sea : But in all other places if no violence were used to them, they would remain unmoveable upon the Face of the Earth. However, although you suppose them to have run down with the same rapidity as Rivers do; yet from some of the most Inland Places, 'twould be several Days Journey to the Sea. The fourth days Task seems no less laborious (*viz.*) the Sun, Moon and Stars: Good God, how many and vast Bodies did that one day produce and perfect! Even in the making each of the Planets there ought to be six Days employ'd, as well as about this of ours, they being of the same Form (and as we have Reason to believe) their Ornaments and Equipage not very unlike: Besides, according to the order of Things in the Creation, they being terrestrial Bodies, ought all to have been thrown into the third days work; especially the Moon, which could scarce be torn from its Centre the Earth, and transferred into another Class. But *Moses* follows the Philosophy of the Vulgar, and joyns the Moon with the Sun, as though they were of like Nature and Magnitude. Lastly, the fifth and sixth Days Tasks consisted of great variety: In these two Days were built the Bodies of all the Birds, all the Fishes and all the Beasts, both great and small that were produced out of the Earth and Waters. Now adays the Bodies of Animals arrive more slowly at perfection; nor do I wonder at it, since they are so artificially compos'd. But

seeing

seeing the Bodies of Animals even to the smallest are of so exquisite a Form and Composition, I shall never be induced to believe that the Earth, the common Mother of all things, was from the beginning of the World, as ruinous an ill shapen Mass as now it is. But this by the by.

St. Austin would have all those Things that are said to be the work of six Days, to have been created in one Moment; although *Moses* divided them into Classes and different Times that he might the better help the imagination of the People, to comprehend the first Originals of Things. God Almighty did in my Opinion create out of nothing in one moment, and by one individual act, all Substance, whether intellectual or corporeal. Nor did *St. Austin* in that come wide of the mark.

But here is not (in the reality of the thing) spoken of Substance in general, but only of the terrestrial World; and not of its Creation, but its Formation. As for the Creation of all Things out of nothing, or out of no pre-existent Matter, 'tis what cannot be doubted, as also that they were not from Eternity; (for we cannot form to our selves any Idea of a thing created from Eternity) but to prescribe the divine Creation so short an *Epocha*, as the limits of Six Thousand Years, 'tis what I never durst. I had rather leave that together with several other Things amongst the hidden secrets of God.

E

Now

Now these short Annotations upon the Account *Moses* gives us of the first Creation of Things, seems to imply that it was not this Sacred Author's design to represent the beginning of the World, exactly according to the Physical Truth (which would have been of no use to the common People who were incapable of being made Philosophers) but to expound the first Originals of Things after such a method as might breed in the Minds of Men Piety, and a worshipping of the true God. And so far much as all the ancient Nations (*viz.*) the *Chaldeans*, *Phenicians*, *Aegyrians*, &c. had each of them their several Accounts of the Creation of the World, placed as an Introduction before their Histories or Systems of Divinity; so *Moses* in like manner being to write Laws and Institutions for the *Israelites*, thought it convenient also to prefix, as an introductory Preface, an Account not only of the Original of his own Nation, but even of the whole World. However, wheteas the Heathens Accounts of the Creation were frequently stuffed with Fables, and I know not how many Gods and Goddesses, to the very great Corruption of Religion, he laying aside all those Fooleries has handled this Subject with a great deal of Purity and Innocence. When that he might tear up the very Roots of Idolatry, he represented the Heavens, Sun, Moon and Stars, which were the chief Deities of other Nations, not as eternal or created on their own account,

but

but as subservient to this sublunary World, as well as to the use of Mankind.

This to me seems the Scope of our Holy Writer; but if we seek only after pure naked Truth, and a physical Theory, we must go quite upon another Foundation; that is, we must (if I am not mistaken) suppose the World, which began near upon six Thousand Years ago, to have been no other than the sublunary Orb, or our Earth together with its Sky; and that Chaos from whence it arose, not to have been universal or diffused over the vast spaces of the Heavens, but contained within the aforesaid bounds, which are whatever is below the Moon. Likewise the Primitive Earth did not arise out of that Chaos in the same Form as *Moses* had represented it: For his Description of it was just according to what the People had before their Eyes, which was the *Postdiluvian* and modern one; nor could he without a great many far fetched obscure terms, and a long Chain of Arguments, have ascended to its first Form, and have brought the Thread of both down to his own Times. In short, neither the Sun nor Stars were composed out of this terrestrial Chaos; but *Moses* having made Man to be the Head, and under God the supream Lord of all things, he represented the whole Universe as it were created and compiled purely for his sake. This to me seems the Reason of both the physical and ethical Account of the Creation, for so I

E 2

call



call the *Mosaical* Relation, since it seems not to have been Instituted so much *φυσικῶς* as *ἰδιωτῶς*. In the mean time, if to other Peoples Opinions this appears in a different view, I do not desire to trouble or disturb any one in their Opinion. Let every one please and hug himself in his own. But we are all bound to make use of that Portion of Reason God Almighty has distributed to each of us, till we have some more clear Light to illuminate us from Above.

A N

APPENDIX

Concerning the
Modern *BRACHMINS*
IN THE
INDIES,
Together with their generally received Opinions.

HAVING already spoken of the Modern *Brachmins* in the *Indies* (whom, besides the near resemblance of their Studies and Customs, we have several other Arguments to shew they are descended from the ancient Race) I think it may be neither impertinent nor unpleasant to add some few Words here by way of Appendix, about their Opinions

concerning the Originals and Revolutions of Things; which Opinions are, 'tis true, neglected by most People, because they are delivered in a mythological way; and that Truth is very much clouded with Fables.

Under the name of *Indies*, we here comprehend, besides the *Chineze* Empire, and Kingdom of *Indostan*, or Dominion of the Great *Mogul*, the Kingdoms of *Siam*, of the *Malabars*, of *Cochinchina*, of *Coromandel*, and whatever others are known to us in the *East*, that have in some measure shaken off their Barbarity. Now in each of these are a certain sort of Philosophers or Divines, and in the Kingdoms of *Indostan*, *Siam* and the other adjacent Parts, there are some who seem to be the Progeny of the ancient *Brachmins*, being different and distinguished from the rest of the People by their Manner and Way of Living, as well as by a Doctrine and Language wholly peculiar to themselves. They have a certain *Cabala*, or Body of Learning, which they receive by Tradition from one to the other. Now this Body of Learning does not treat of each little Point or Nicety in Philosophy, as our modern Philosophers used to do; but like the natural Theology of the Ancients, it treats of God, of the World, of the Beginning and Ending of Things, of the Periods of the World, of the Primitive State of Nature, together with its repeated Renovations. All which Opinions are by some
more

more plainly, by others more obscurely and fabulously delivered; but that they were of old spread amongst these Nations, is plain from several Footsteps of them at this day remaining. For a Specimen whereof, we will give you some short Remarks out of our late Voyages, upon several Heads of this now barbarous Theology, or Philosophy: Nor is it of Moment with what Kingdom or Country we begin.

The *Mogul's* Kingdom call'd *Indostan* is extremely large, and has been visited by several *Europeans*, whose Credit & Authority are sufficient to make them be believed. There are in this Kingdom, besides *Mahometans*, those they call *Gentiles* or *Pagans*; among which *Gentiles* is a certain Tribe or Order of Men, who bear the Title, and perform the Offices of Sages, Priests or Philosophers. They have a Language peculiar to themselves, which they call *Hanscrit*, or the pure Tongue; in this Language they have some very ancient Books, which they call Sacred, and say were given by God to the Great Prophet *Brahma*; as formerly the Law of the *Israelites* was to *Moses*. *Athan Kircher* gives you an Alphabet of this *Brachmin's* Language, written by the Hand of Father *Henry Roth*, who for several Years in the *Inates* apply'd himself to the Learning of *Brachmins*. And in this they not only write and conceal their Divinity, but also their Opinions in Philosophy of all Kin'ds

besides the *μετεμύχουσι*, & the *ἐποχὴ ἐμύχου*, which are Opinions of a very ancient Date. They likewise Philosophize after the manner of the Ancients, upon the Creation of the Universe, together with its End, and Destruction; for they explain these Things by the Efflux or Emanation of all things from God, and by their Reflex or Restoration into him again: But this they propound in a Cabalistical Mythological way. For they feign a certain immense Spider to be the first Cause of all Things, and that she, with the Matter she exhausted out of her own Bowels, spun the Web of this whole Universe, and then disposed of it with a most wonderful Art; whilst she herself in the mean time sitting on the Top of her Work, feels, rules and governs the Motion of each part. At last, when she has sufficiently pleas'd and diverted her self in adorning and contemplating her own Web, she retracts the Threads she had unfolded, and swallows them up again into her self; whereby the whole Nature of Things created vanishes into nothing.

After this manner our modern *Brachmins* represent the Birth, Order and Perishing of the World. Nor does this much differ from the Opinions of the Ancients we have above mentioned, (*lib. 1. cap. 7. page 63, 64, &c.*) provided, that taking off the fabulous Shell, we go to the Kernel. If you have leisure to read a larger Account of the *Indostan Genites*,

'tis what you may find in *Henry Lord, F. Bernier*, and other Travellers, who have more diligently enquired into their Literature.

In the Kingdom of *Siam*, which Borders upon the Empire of the *Mogul*, there is the same Progeny of the *Brachmins*. *Guido Tachard*, one of the *Jesuits Society*, who waited upon the *French Ambassador* to the King of *Siam*, has given us this Account of their Philosophy or Theology. They say, That the first Men were of greater Stature, and longer Liv'd than we now adays are; as also, that they lived many Ages free from Distempers. That this Modern Earth, parched with a long Heat, will at length be consumed by Fire, the Ocean being dried up, the Mountains melted, and the whole Surface of the Earth being made level. This I find in our aforesaid Author, with more of the same in others; all which a late Poet has compiled and facetiously explained in these Versicles.

*Stolidus Regni Mysta Siami,
Ostoginta dat perituro
Secula mundo. Tunc qui tantum
Fam fuerit uno fervidus Oculo,
Septem pandet lumina Phœbus,
Quis equoreas ebibet undas.
Queis immensum vindice flammæ
Destruet Orbem, Sed duo calidæ
Que restabunt recta favillis*

E 5

Bios

*Binos homines ova creabunt.
 Qui secundo semine cultum
 Iterum poterunt reddere mundum.
 Quem non salis Neptunus aquis,
 Alluet unquam, tantum rigui
 Undique fontes Dulcesque lacus
 Irrorabunt molliter herbas;
 Et perpetuo Vere Beatos
 Spargent variis floribus agros.*

The *Siamese Brachmins* not only say, that this modern Earth must perish, and that by Fire; but even that out of its ashes a new Earth must arise; and without a Sea, that is to say, such a one, as *St. John* the Prophet saw, *Apoc.* 21. 1. and without the yearly Vicissitudes of the Seasons, being blest with a perpetual Spring; such another Earth as we have described in the Fourth Book of our *Theory*, Cap. 2. 'Tis really a most wonderful thing that a Nation half barbarous should have retained these Opinions from the very times of *Noah*: for they could not have arrived to a Knowledge of these things any other way, than by Tradition; nor could this Tradition flow from any other Spring, than *Noah*, and the Antediluvian Sages. But out of what Author or *Siamese* Traveller the Poet has taken these Things, I have not yet been able to learn. Moreover the Kingdom of *Choromandel*, on the Southern Coast of the *Indies*, has its *Brachmin*: whose Manners and Doctrine have been with

no

no small Diligence enquired into by *Abraham Rogers*, who wrote the Book called—*Jarua aperta ad Arcana Gentilismi*. Having himself lived many years there. Now they affirm that there are several Worlds which do at one and the same time exist in divers Regions of the Universe: and that there are several successive ones; for that the same World is destroyed and renewed again according to certain Periods of Time. They say also that our Terrestrial World began by a certain Golden Age, and will perish by Fire. Lastly, they retain the Doctrine of the *Ovum Mundanum* comparing the World to an Egg; as did the Ancients both *Greeks* and *Barbarians*. Finally, to the Kingdom of *Choromandel* is contiguous that of the *Malabars*; where Father *Robert Nobilius*, Founder (as 'tis said) of the *Maudarian Mission*, has spent no small part of his life; learned as well in the vulgar *Indian* Language, as in that of the *Brachmins*: Then he is said to have written a great deal concerning the *Theory* of the *Brachmins*, but I know not in what language: for I have not yet happened to light upon any of his writings; neither have I any Account of this or the rest of the Countrys of the *Indies* to be depended upon, to furnish me with their Opinions, either from eye or ear witnesses.

We have likewise before mentioned the *Chinese*, a People of great Antiquity, but among the Ancients unknown, as to matter

of



of Learning, they have this in Common with the rest of the Orientals, that they compare the World to an Egg, and will have it to be born of one. In like manner they say, their first Man, whom they call *Purocam*, was born of an Egg; whether you will suppose, that by it, they mean the *Chaos* or the Primitive Earth; and although they do not seem to have derived their Philosophy or History from the *Brachmins*, yet they set so great a value on their Letters, and secret Alphabet, that as things sacred, and of a very great Antiquity, they use to inscribe them on their Idols. As for the *Mahometans*, who are spread at large over the East under several different Dominions, I pass by them, as men of an upstart, ignorant kind: What an *Egyptian Priest* formerly told——*Solon* (*You Greeks, always Boys; not one of the Greeks ever comes to be Old*) may changing names, be much more properly said to them. Nor does the *Egyptian* give an ill reason for what he says, —— “ You are young in your
“ Minds; for in them is no tenent of the
“ Ancients, that comes by ancient Tradition: you retain no Learning that is grey
“ with old Age. These things exactly square with the *Mahometans*, wherefoever they are dispersed, they retain nothing of Ancient Wisdom; for the Ambition of extending their Dominions, has taken from them all manner of Love or Desire of Learning.
Even

Even in *Persia* it self, where formerly flourished the Mystical Philosophy of the great *Zoroaster*, and the *Magi*, at this day remains nothing worth taking notice of. The aforementioned *Henry Lord* relates, that when the *Sarazens* overran all *Persia*, having beaten and slain the King *Jeздегирд* about the Year of our Lord 628. Some of the *Persians* who could not bear the yolk of a new Slavery and new Religion, transported themselves and their effects by Sea into *India*: And that having sworn Allegiance to the *Indian Kings*, they each of them freely exercised their own Religion, and ancient way of living. The same Author relates some opinions generally received by these *Persians* transplanted into *India*, concerning the Original Age, and End of the World: But they are so stuffed with Fables, that they hardly seem worth while to repeat. This must be observed in General, of the Modern *Pagans*, that there are (its true) now remaining amongst them some *Footsteps* of the most ancient Tenents, which come to them by Tradition from their Ancestors, but quite overwhelmed with *Trash* and *Filthiness*, being for the most part clogg'd with fabulous Additions, even to the degree of being nauseous; insomuch that when you come to manly Arguments, they are of no manner of Validity. I cannot but pity the Eastern World, that the place which was the first Habitation of wise men, and one day a most flourishing

flourishing *Emporium* for Learning should for some ages past have been changed into a wretched Barbarity.

Tantene Animis caelestibus ite.

“ I pray God grant that we may not
 “ undergo the same Vicissitude, and that in
 “ his Anger he may not withdraw that
 “ Light we now enjoy in the West, but that
 “ it may be more and more diffused on all
 “ sides, till the Knowledge of God shall
 “ have filled the Earth, as the Waters fill
 “ the Sea.

*To the most Ingenuous and Learned Dr.
 Sydnham at his House near the Pestle
 and Mortar in the Pall Mall.*

S I R,

THE last time I had the happiness of
 your Company, it was your Request
 that I would help you to a sight of the Deists
 Arguments, which I told you, I had some-
 times by me, but then had lent them out, they
 are now return'd me again, and according to
 my promise I have herewith sent them to you.
 Whereby, you'll only find, that human Reason
 like a Pitcher with two Ears, may be taken on
 either side. However, undoubtedly in our
 Travails to the other World the common
 Road is the safest; and tho Deism is a good
 manuring of a Man's Conscience, yet certainly
 if sowed with Christianity, it will produce the
 most profitable Crop. Pardon the haste of

S I R,

*Your most Obliged Friend and
 Faithful Servant,*

C. BLOUNT.

Rolleston, May
 14th. 1686.

To

A

A

Summary Account
OF THE
DEISTS RELIGION.

CHAP. I.

The Deists Opinion of God.

Whatsoever is Adorable, Amiable and Imitable by Mankind, is in one Supreme infinite and perfect Being: *Satis est nobis Deus unus.*

CHAP. II.

Concerning the manner of Worshipping God.

First, Negatively; it is not to be by an Image; for the first Being is not sensible, but intelligible: *Pinge sonum*; puts us upon an impossibility

possibility; no more can an infinite mind be represented in matter.

Secondly, Nor by Sacrifice; for *sponsio non valet ut alter pro altero puniatur*; However no such *sponsio* can be made with a brut Creature; nor if God loves himself, as he is the highest Good, can any External Rite, or Worship reinstate the Creature, after sin, in his favour, but only repentance, and obedience for the future, ending in an Assimilation to himself, as he is the highest Good: And this is the first error in all Particular Religions, that external things or bare Opinions of the mind, can alter sin propitiate God. Hereby particular Legislators have endeared themselves, and flattered their Proselytes into good Opinions of them, and Mankind willingly submitted to the cheat; *Enim facilius est superstiosè, quam justè vivere.*

Thirdly, Not by a Mediator; for, 1st, It is unnecessary; *Misericordia Dei* being *sufficiens justitiæ suæ.* 2^{ly}, God must appoint this Mediator, and so was really reconciled to the World before. And 3^{ly}, A Mediator derogates from the infinite mercy of God, equally as an Image doth from his *Spiritualitie* and *Infinite.*

Secondly, Positively, by an inviolable adherence in our lives to all the things *quasi divina*, by an imitation of God in all his imitable Perfections, especially his goodness, and believing magnificently of it.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Of Punishments after this Life.

A Man that is endued with the same Vertues we have before mentioned need not fear to trust his Soul with God after death: For first, no Creature could be made with a malevolent intent, the first Good who is also the first Principle of all Beings, hath but one affection or Property, and that is Love; which was long before there was any such thing as Sin. 2dly, At death he goes to God, one and the same being, who in his own nature for the sins of the Penitent hath as well an inclination to Pity as Justice, and there is nothing dreadful in the whole Nature of God, but his Justice, no Attribute else being terrible. 3dly, Infinite Power is ever safe and need not revenge for self-preservation. 4thly, However *Verisimile est, similem Deo a Deo non negligi.*

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

The Probability of such a Deist's Salvation before the credulous and ill-living Papists.

TO be sure he is no Idolater. The *Jews* and the *Mahometan* accuse the *Christians* of Idolatry, the *Reform'd Churches*, the *Roman*, the *Socinian* the other *Reformed Churches*, the *Deists* the *Socinian*, for his *Deus factus*, but none can accuse the *Deist* of Idolatry, for he only acknowledges one Supreme Everlasting God, and thinks magnificently of him. 2dly, The Mortality in Religion is above the mystery in it; for, 1. The Universal sense of Mankind in the Friendships men make, sheweth this; for who does not value good Nature, Sincerity and Fidelity in a Friend, before subtilty of Understanding; & *Religio & quedam, cum Deo amicitia*: An unity of nature and will with God, that is the Root of the Dearest Friendships. Then, 2dly, it is an everlasting Rule that runs through all Beings, *Simile à simili amatur*, God cannot love what is unlike him. Now, 3ly, here lies our trial, here is the scene of our obedience, and here are our conflicts with our Passions; if this be true, then the credulous Christian that believes Orthodoxly, but lives ill, is not safe.

3dly,

3dly, If the Deist errs, he errs not like a fool, but *secundum verbum*, after enquiry, and if he be sincere in his Principles, he can when dying appeal to God, *Te, bone Deus, quæsvi per omnia.*

Nota Aliquot :

1. The Grand *Arcanum* of Religion among the *Pythagoreans* was, that the object of Divine Worship is one and invisible; *Plutarch* cites this in the Life of *Numa*, as the Dogma of *Pythagoras*, and accordingly his Followers used no Images in their Worships.

2. The Heathens, notwithstanding their particular and Topical Deities, acknowledged one Supream God, not *Jupiter of Crete*, but the Father of Gods and Men: Only they said this Supream God being of so high a nature, and there being other intermediate Beings betwixt God and Mankind, they were to address themselves to them as Mediators to carry up their Prayers, and bring down his Blessings; so as the Opinion of the necessity of a Mediator was the foundation of the Heathen Idolatry; they could not go to the fountain of Good it self. The Popish Religion stands on the same foundation; whereas the greatest goodness is the most accessible; which shews that Popery was a Religion accommodated to the Sentiments of Mankind from precedent Religions, and not to infallible Reason drawn from the eternal respects of things. And Reason being the first relation of God, is first to be believed,

believed, not depending on doubtful fact without us, but full of its own light shining always in us.

3dly, It was the common sense of the wisest Philosophers, that things were good antecedent to all human Compacts; and this opinion, *Pyrho* in *Sextus Empericus* argues against: Also Mr. *Hobbs* hath of late revived in the world *Pyrho's* Doctrin, tho without reason; for as there are immediate Propositions, to which the understanding (*sine discursu*) assents, as soon as proposed; so are there things good and just which they will at first view, without deliberation approve of and chose also, (*viz.*) the Veneration of an Almighty invisible Being, referring of our selves to him, with a (*fiat voluntas tua*) abhorrence of breach of contract with man, of a lye, as a violation of truth; so as in my judgment, there is a sanction arising from the nature of things, before any Law declared amongst men: that there is a *generosum honestum* bid in all our Souls is plain, from the *Epicurean* Deists themselves, for they labour to have their Vices imputed rather to a Superiority of their reason above that of others, than to a servitude of their reason to their own passions; which shews vice is naturally esteemed a base and low thing. This appears from the Legislators of the World, as *Numa*, *Zamolxis*, &c. *A Jove Principium*; there they did begin, well knowing human compacts were too weak to balance and restrain the passions of human nature; offenders



fenders presuming to escape unpunished, and rightly enough were all Laws but human compacts. In two cases which ordinarily happen in human life, (*viz.*) when the fact is unevitable, or when the Magistrate is too weak to punish. Hence is *Grotius* his description of the Law of Nature, *Lex est*, &c. The Law is a combination of the Vertuous to punish the Vicious. Here the Obligation must be lodged, and this appears in the Satyrs of the Poets, in the complaints of the Philosophers, and in the several ages of the World against the manners of Mankind; for without Vertue God is only a name amongst men, and no man without it can hope well of God.

4ly, I remember *Plutarch* speaking of *Aristides's* Justice, complains thus, Men have commonly three Affections or Opinions of the Gods; the first that they think them blessed; the second, that they fear them; and the third, that they reverence them: They account them blessed, because they're Immortal; they fear them, because of their Power, and reverence them because of their Justice; yet of these three men most desire Immortality, wherof our nature is incapable: Also Power which dependeth upon fortune, the only Divinity man is capable of, they neglect, and undervalue, in that God is inimitable by us: And this is the difference betwixt Corporeal and intellectual Love. If the object of my Love be external beauty, a person or a face, that I can-

not

not imitate; but if an Idea of Perfection, and Intellectual Beauty, that I may be assimilated to, and partake of. Besides the soul in Intellectual love suffers not with the object it loves as a Corporeal love it doth; because that its object the Sovereign God never suffers; and this is the chief true conversion which frees us from all evils, the *Mors Philosophorum*, which *Porphyry* speaks of. Others are rolled as upon Cynders from one appearance of Good to another, and live in a perpetual storm; for 'tis not the change but the choice of our Object that makes us happy.

5ly, *Antoninus* says, if the question be put to us, what is thy art or profession, our Answer should be, to be good; as God made the world; one for his own good (who was infinitely happy before) but for his Creatures good: So our Religion must necessarily be this, to do good to his Creatures; for therein we concur with the Will of God, and it is a grand truth, very proper for the Immortal Deist to consider, that all vice and wickedness is but a denial and disowning of God, to be the Supreme, Infinite Good; my Pride denies he has ever been good to me; my lust believes the low and base matter can with its pleasures make me happier than he can with all his goodness; my envy would not have him good to others, but would have him contract and shrink up himself from his Creatures; and lastly, my malice and revenge hates his Creatures, if they be but once imagined

ing



gined my Enemies, and would destroy those whom his goodness first and would have still to exist.

6ly and Lastly, *Campanella* in his Book *De Sensu Rerum*, observes *Aristotelem dicentem Deum non habere cum hominibus amicitiam (quoniam non est proportio finiti ad infinitum) Majestatem non bonitatem Dei considerasse.*

For Mr. Hobbs, to be left with Mr. Crook, a Bookseller, at the Sign of the Green Dragon without Temple-Bar, near St. Clement's Church.

Ludgate-Hill, 1678.

Concerning the Arrians, Trinitarians and Councils.

S I R,

BY your Permission, and Mr. Crook's Favour, I have had the Happiness to peruse your incomparable Treatise of Heresie in Manuscript, wherein you have certainly given us a more accurate and faithful Account of the Nicene Council, together with their particular Grounds and Reasons for each distinct Article of their Faith in the Nicene Creed, than is any where else to be met with. How grateful this Discourse of yours will be to the *Quicunque-men*, I shall not presume to determine, since I am sure Mr. Hobbs is as much above their Anger, as they are below his Resentments. You your self have very well observed, *when Reason is against a Man, a Man will be against Reason; and*

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therefore 'tis no wonder to see, from several Interests, so many several Opinions and Animosities arise: This made the *Arrians* and *Trinitarians* so zealously endeavour to supplant one another; this made *Constantine* at first espouse the *Arrian* Interest to Mount the Throne, as the present *Lewis XIV.* did the Interest of the *Hugonots*; and afterwards thinking to weaken or at least to ballance that Power that raised him, strike in with *Athanasius* and the *Trinitarians* for a time as our present *Lewis* hath since done the like with the Popish and Jesuitical Party against his Protestant Subjects. For Mankind ever lived and died after one and the same Method in all Ages, being governed by the same Interests and the same Passions at this time, as they were many Thousand Years before us, and will be many Thousand Years after us.

It must be confessed, the *Arrians* were so powerful a Sect in the *Roman* Empire (especially the *Eastern* Part of it) that the Followers of the *Nicene* Council were not equal to them, either in Number, Splendor, Interest or Riches. If you will believe the learned *Petavius* and others, they did offer to be try'd by the Fathers that preceded the *Nicene* Council: For at that Council, they were rather condemn'd by a Party than by the general Consent of the Christian Church; because *Constantine*, out of above Two thousand Bishops then assembled, excluded all but Three hundred

hundred and eighteen; nor were those permitted (for Accounts vary) all Bishops, that made up this great Council. They were all of a Party at first, and so rather Parties than Judges; the *Arrians* had not the Freedom to espouse their Cause: And the Emperor *Constantine* was afterwards so ill satisfied with their Description, that he soon recalled *Arrius*, and little before his Death was baptized by an *Arrian* Bishop. *Constantius* and *Valens* were distressed *Arrians* (and not to mention the *Emperors* *Valentinian*, *Theodosius* and other Emperors protected and honoured them, both in civil and military Commands.

The *Arrian* Doctrine was not only confirmed by Eight Councils several times assembled at *Tyre*, *Sardis*, *Syrmium*, *Milain*, *Seleucia*, *Nice*, *Arifis*, and particularly at *Ariminum* (where three hundred Bishops were of their Opinion, and only three which held the contrary) but they also punished others their Adversaries, who were of a contrary Opinion to them, with Excommunications, Banishments and other grievous Punishments. Now whether the Power of the *Arrian* Party, the Riches of their Churches, the Magnificence of their Worship (as the first that brought Musick into the Church) or the Fame of their Learning, and pretensions to Reason (which is always an invidious Plea) did raise Jealousie & Hatred in the Emperors against them, as also rendered them odious to the *Trinitarians*; or what most contributed to



their first Depression and Persecution, I know not: Since to persecute for Religion, was by the *Trinitarians* (*Athanasius, Hillary* & others) then accounted an *Arrian* an unchristian Tenet. It is not to be doubted, but that, after the days of *Theodosius*, Reason of State did most prevail towards their Subversion, lest they should joyn with the *Goths*, who at that time possessed of *Italy, Spain, Afric* & other Provinces, were formidable to the *Bizantine* Empire. Notwithstanding whatsoever it was, 'tis easier to comprehend that the Depression of them did facilitate the Conquest of the *Goths*; and if you will credit *Salvian*, the *Goths* were very pious in their Way, mild to the Conquer'd, just in their Dealings; so that the Wickedness of the Christian Rulers of Provinces, their Exactions upon the People, and Insolence of the Foreign Souldiers, whereby they ruled, made even the *Trinitarians* themselves willingly submit to their Dominion, and prefer it before that of the *Eastern* Emperors.

As for the *Trinitarians* of those Times, I must confess, I cannot but esteem them as Enemies to all human Learning; for they had Canno s forbidding them to read any *Ethick* Books, and a Zeal which disposed them to destroy all they met with of that kind. Thus we may well suppose them universally ignorant, except some few; and as the Pastors so were the People. Their Religion also consisted rather in an out-side Service, than in

ward Piety and Knowledge; their Faith was in a manner implicir, the Mysteries of Religion (for such I call the Doctrin of the *Trinity* and its Dependencies) were scarce ever mentioned to them in Sermons, much less explicated. Hence the Vulgar became prone to embrace Superstition, and credit Miracles, as ridiculous and fabulous soever: Visions, Allegories and Allusions to Texts, were convincing Arguments; and no Demonstration to a feigned Story and Legend, or what might be Interpreted a Judgment upon an Heretic.

Amongst the *Trinitarians* were a sort of People who followed the Court Religion, and believed as their Prince ordained, living then unconfin'd by the Dictates of the then declining Church; And though the *Trinitarians* had resolv'd upon, and subscrib'd to the *Nicene* Council, and embraced those Forms of Speech which are now in use, yet did they not understand what was meant by them. The *Latin* Church allow'd of Three Persons, and not of three Hypostases; the *Greek* Church allow'd of three Hypostases, and not of three Persons. As difficult was it for them to Explicate *Usia* or *Essence*, which hard words produced a subdivision amongst them, consisting of *Nestorians* and *Eutyrians*. The *Nestorians* believing the Deity of Christ, held that he was made up of two distinct Persons, and so

perfect God, and perfect Man. The *Euty-
chians* aver'd, that Christ had but one Nature,
and that upon the Hypostatical Union, the
Deity and Humanity were so blended toge-
ther, by Confusion of Properties and Subs-
tances, that one Person endued with one Will,
did emerge thence. Now these two Sects were
of great Power in the *Eastern Church*, and
though they were both condemn'd in the third
and fourth General Councils, yet did they
spread far and near, through *Palesine Egypt*,
the Kingdom of *Abyssines*, and all *Persia* over:
Each of them had their Patriarchs, Bishops
and Churches contradistinct from the *Mel-
chites*, who adhering and subscribing to the
Council of *Chalcedon* (which all the Imperial
Clergy did) were called *Melchites*, that is to
say, Men of the King's Religion. The Au-
thors of the *Nestorian* and *Eutybian* Sects were
Learned and Potent Bishops: *Euty chius* was
Patriarch of *Constantinople*, and with him joy-
ned *Dioscorius* Patriarch of *Alexandria*, *Severus*
Patriarch of *Antioch*, and *Jacobus Baradaeus*,
from whom the *Jacobites* are at this day de-
nominated. *Nestorius* was also Patriarch of
Constantinople, and his Sect very much dis-
fused.

The Truth is, such were the Ignorance of
the People, and Debaucheries of the Ages at
this time, that if a Man did but live a pious
strict Life, with great Mortification, or out-
ward

ward Devotion, and were but an Eloquent
Preacher, he might in any place of the *Eastern*
Empire have made a Potent Sect instantly. And
to shew how ignorant the Clergy were at the
General Council of *Chalcedon*, in the time of
Marcianus the Emperor, we find that the
Greek Tongue was then so little understood at
Rome, and the *Latin* in *Greece* that the Bishops
of both Countries (in all 630.) were glad to
speak by Interpreters: Nay, in this very Coun-
cil of *Chalcedon*, the Emperor was said to de-
liver the same Speech in *Greek* to one Party,
and in *Latin* to the other, that to both might
understand him: The Council of *Jerusalem*, for
the same Reason, made certain Creeds both in
Greek and *Latin*: At the Council of *Ephesus*,
the Pope's Legates had their Interpreter to Ex-
pound the Words; and when *Celestine's* Letters
were there read, the Acts tell us, how the
Bishops desired to have them Translated into
Greek and read over again, in so much, that the
Romish Legates had almost made a Contro-
versie of it, fearing lest the Papal Authority
shou'd have been prejudiced by such an Act;
alleging therefore, how it was the ancient
Custom to propose the Bulls of the See Apo-
stolic in *Latin* only, and that that might now
suffice. Whereupon, these poor *Greek* Bishops
were in danger not to have understood the
Pope's *Latin*, till at length the Legates were
content with Reason, when it was evidenced

to them, that the major part could not understand one word of *Latin*. But the pleasantest of all, is, Pope *Celestine's* Excuse to *Nestorius*, for his so long delay in answering his Letters, because he could not by any means get his *Greek* construed sooner. Also Pope *Gregory* the First, ingeniously confesseth to the Bishop of *Thessaly*, that he understood not a jot of his *Greek*; wherefore 'tis probable, the Proverb of honest *Accursius* was even then in use, — *Gracum est, non legitur*, — and this was the Condition of Christianity in which *Justinian* the Emperor found it, A. C. 540. So that, as Monsieur *Daille* has demonstrated with how little certainty we can depend upon the Fathers, I think I may safely averr, there is as little Trust to be reposed in General Councils, who have been Guilty of so much Ignorance and Interest, as well as so frequently contradicting one another. And to say, that Councils may not Err, though private Persons may, is (as Mr. *Hales* well observes) all one as to say, that every single Souldier indeed may run away, but the whole Army cannot.

Sir, Your Treatise having reviv'd these Meditations in me, I hope you'll pardon if I have been too prolix; and though I am not so vain to pretend to offer these Collections, or indeed any thing, for Mr. *Hobbs's* Instruction, who is of himself the great Instructor of the most

most sensible Part of Mankind in the noble Science of Philosophy; yet I may hope for the Honour of your Correction wherein I am Erroneous, the which will for ever oblige,

SIR,

Your most unfeigned

Humble Servant,

C. BLOUNT.

Pardon, Sir, I beseech you, my sending this *Tristie*, called *Anima Mundi*, being commanded to do it by one, whom 'tis my duty, as well as my happiness, to obey.

E 5

To

To my Dear Friend Mr.
Harvey Wilwood.

That Felicity consists generally in
Pleasure.

YOU often profess your self an *Epicurean*, but sacrifice your health in pursuit of a mistaken happiness; the pleasure the wise *Epicurus* plac'd happiness in was of another kind, 'twas more temper'd with Reason; but hear what he says, and then judge how far you are his Disciple. Felicity seems plainly to consist in Pleasure, this is first to be prov'd in general, then we must shew in what Pleasure particularly it consists.

In general, Pleasure seems to be, as the beginning to the end also of a happy life, since we find it be the first Good, and convenient to our, and to all animal Nature, and is that from which we begin all Election and Avoidance, and in which at last we terminate them, using this affection as a rule to judge every good.

That Pleasure is the first and connatural good, or (as they term it) the first thing suitable and convenient to Nature, appeareth
from

from. that every animal affection as born, desires Pleasures, and rejoices in it, as the chief good, shunneth pain as the greatest ill, and to its utmost ability repels it. We see that ev'n *Hercules* himself tormented by a Poysonous Shirt, could not withhold from Tears. Thus does every undepraved Animal, in its own nature judging incorruptibly & intirely. There needs not therefore any reasoning to prove, that Pleasure is to be desired, Pain to be shunn'd, for this is manifest to ones Sense; Fire is hot, Snow white, Honey sweet; we need no Arguments to prove this, it is enough that we give notice of it: For since that if we take away from Man all his Senses, there is nothing remaining; it is necessary that what is convenient or contrary to nature, be judged by nature her self, and that Pleasure is expetible in it self, and Pain in it self to be avoided; for what perceives or what judges, either to pursue or avoid any thing, except Pleasure and Pain.

That Pleasure as being the first thing convenient to Nature, is also the last of Expetibles, or the end of good things, may be understood even from this, because tis Pleasure only for whose sake, we so desire the rest, that it self is not desired, for the sake of any other but only for its self; for we may desire other things to delight or please our selves, but no man ever demand'd a reason, why we should be delighted,

cer-

certainly no more than for what cause we
 desire to be happy, since Pleasure and Fe-
 licity ought to be reputed, not only in the
 same degree, but to be the very same thing,
 and consequently the end, or ultimate, and
 greatest good, on which the rest depend, but
 it self depends on time.

This is farther prov'd, for that *Felicity* is
 no otherwise than because it is that state, in
 which we may live most sweetly, and most
 pleasantly, that is, with the greatest pleasure
 that may be; for take from life this sweet-
 nesses, jocundity, pleasure, and where I pray
 will be your notion of *Felicity*? Not of that
Felicity only which I term'd *Divine*, but even
 the other esteem'd *human*? which is no o-
 therwise capable to receive degrees of more,
 or less, or intension, and remission, than be-
 cause addition or detraction of Pleasure may
 befall it.

To understand this better, by comparing
 Pleasure with Pain; let us suppose a Man en-
 joying many great incessant Pleasures, both
 in Mind and Body, no pain hindring them,
 nor likely to disturb them; what state can
 we say is more excellent, or more desirable
 than this? For in him who is thus affected, there
 must necessarily be a constancy of mind, fear-
 ing neither death nor pain, because death is
 void of sense; pain if long, uses to be light, if
 great short; so as shortness makes amends for
 its greatness, lightness for its length. When
 he

he arrives at such a condition, as he trembles
 not at the horror of the Deity, nor suffers the
 present pleasures to pass away, whilst his
 mind is busi'd with remembrance of past, or
 expectation of future good things, but is
 daily joy'd with the reflecting upon them,
 what can be added to better the condition of
 this person?

Suppose on the other side, a man afflicted
 with as great pains of Body, and Griets of
 Mind, as man's nature is capable of, no hope
 that they shall ever be eas'd, no pleasure past,
 present or expected; What can be said or
 imagin'd more miserable than he?

If therefore a life full of pains be of all
 things most to be avoided, doubtless the great-
 est ill is to live in pain, whence it follows that
 the greatest good is to live in pleasure: Nei-
 ther indeed hath our Mind any thing else
 wherein as its center it may rest all Sicknesses,
 and troubles are reduced to pain; nor is there
 any thing else which can remove Nature out
 of her place, or dissolve her.

That Pleasure wherein consists *Felicity* is
 Indolence of Body and tranquility of Mind.
 There being two kinds of Pleasure, one in
 station or rest, which is a placability, calm-
 nesses & vanity, or immunity from trouble and
 grief: The other in motion, which consists
 in a sweet movement, as in gladness, mirth, or
 whatever moves the sense delightfully with
 a kind of sweetness and titillation, as to eat
 and

and drink out of hunger and thirst: It may be demanded whether, in both, or in either, and in which consists Felicity? We say that Pleasure wherein Felicity consists, is of the first kind, the stable, or that which is in station, and so can be no other than indolence of Body, and tranquillity of Mind. Or not pain'd in Body, and not troubled in Mind.

This Doctrine wou'd make any one a Disciple of *Epicurus*, that will govern himself according to the rules of Reason; and for the rest, my Friend, as they are Brutes in quitting their best pretence to Humanity, so I shall no more trouble my self about their manner of life, than I wou'd about that of their Brethren of the Forrest, or have indeed any more regard to 'em. Let not the complaisance your good nature infects you with, betray your Reason to the importunities of Fools, but rather disoblige them than your self, and

Your Real Friend,

R. A. RICHARDSON.

To Madam-----

Of *Benevolence, Gratitude.*

YOU condemn *Epicurism* and Profuseness, and at the same time Careless Avarice, Ingratitude. You rail at the folly of men of sense, and

and make none but Fools your Friends. Let your Enemy *Epicurus*, better instruct your life, or set some bounds to your tongue. There are Vertues (says *Epicurus*) ally'd to Justice, for that they have regard to other persons, tho they are not (as Justice is) prescrib'd by Laws and Covenants, yet they import out of decency a certain obligation like that of Justice.

The first is *Benevolence*, or the doing good to others, whereunto those are oblig'd who are

able to assist, or relieve others, either with their Hand or Purse.

If they deny the assistance of their Hands, they are censur'd as barbarous, cruel, inhuman: If that of their Purse, they are thought the same, as also sordid, rapacious, covetous and the like.

But if they assist others, they are accounted courteous, civil, kind, as also liberal, magnifi-

cent, &c. so that they are oblig'd for their own sakes to do good to others, so far as may be without prodigality.

For those that practise this Vertue procure to themselves good will, and (what most of all conduces to a quiet living) dearness and tender estimation from others; they who use it not will, and (what most occasions a troublesome life) contempt and hatred. Take heed therefore you omit not to be Beneficent, at least in small matters, that so you lose not the advantage

Not to pass, as *Pyrrho* is reported, along without any regard to the mischance of his Friend *Anaxarchus*, that was falln into a Ditch, tho he that cou'd defend such sordid incompassion, deserv'd to be so left.

tage of being accounted ready to gratifie others ev'n in great.

Not without reason did I say formerly it is not only more honourable, but also more delightful to give than to receive benefits; because the giver thereby makes himself superior to the receiver, and reaps moreover the interest of thanks; and there is not any thing that Joys aman more than *Thanks*. A Beneficent person is like a fountain, which if you should suppose it to have a reasonable soul, what joy would it not have at the sight of so many Corn Fields and Pastures, which flourish and smile as it were with plenty and verdure, and all by the diffusion of its streams upon them?

The second is Gratitude, to which every man that receives a benefit is reciprocally oblig'd, unless he wou'd incur the greatest hatred and ignominy. For Ingratitude is worthily hateful to all men, because seeing nothing is more suitable to Nature, than to be propense to receive a good, it is highly contrary to Nature not to be readily grateful toward the Author of that Good.

Now since none is more gratefully affected toward his Benefactors than a wife man, we may justly affirm, that only the wife man knows how to fulfil the duty of Gratitude, because he alone is ready upon all occasions to express his thankfulness to his Friends both present and absent, even to those that are dead.

Others

Others pay thanks only to present Friends, when present, and this perhaps for their own farther ends, to encourage them to some new favour; but how few are there who gratefully commemorate their absent Benefactors? who requite the good they did them upon their *Children, or other Relations? how few who honour their Memory after death? who rejoyce not rather as if their Obligations were cancell'd? who love those that were dear to them, respect them, and as far as in them lyes do them good?

World for the sake of maintaining her, and the Sons of his old Master Socrates.

Madam, my Relation to you makes me so zealous to reform your faults which render you obnoxious to the Discourse of the World. If you will persist in Vice, discover it not by your railery at the opposite Vertues; be a better Christian, or learn the Dictates of Nature from a Heathen, either would render you more agreeable to

Your humble Servant and Kinsman,

Rob. Yaxly.

To

A foolish man behind a Friend's back shall side with his Enemy, not remembering that of Horace, *Absentem qui redit amicum, qui non defendit, &c.*

* As Xenophon to Xantippe, and the Children of Socrates, who receiv'd no other benefit than his Learning from Socrates, and yet expresses himself in his Epistle to Xantippe that he takes care only

to thrive in the



To Mr. Savage; These.

Of Fate and Fortune.

YOU sent me word that you desire to know what the ancient Philosophers held of *Fate* and *Fortune*: I shall here send the Opinion of Two of the greatest (for I shall not fear to prefer them to *Aristotle*) I mean *Plato* and *Pythagoras*.

Concerning *Fate*, *Plato* held thus; 'All things are in *Fate*, yet all things are not decreed by *Fate*; for *Fate*, though it be like a Law, yet it uses not to speak after this manner, *That this Man shall do thus, and to that Man, that shall befall* (which were to proceed to infinite Generation of Men, and infinite Actions hapning daily to them; beside, that this would take away our free Will, our praise or dispraise, or whatever is of that kind) but rather thus: *Whatsoever Soul chuseth such a Life, and doth such things, these shall follow.* The Soul therefore is free, and is left within its power to do or not do, without any compulsion or necessity. But that which follows the Action is perform'd by *Fate*. As from *Pari's* ravishing *Helena*, (which is within my power to do or not to do) shall follow, that the *Grecians* contend with the *Trojans* about *Helena*. Thus *Apollo* foretold *Laius*, *If thou beget*

a Son, that Son shall kill thee. In the Oracle are comprehended both *Laius* and he begetting of a Son, that which follows the begetting of a Son, depends on *Fate*. That which may be done is of a middle kind, be wixt true and false; and being so indefinite by Nature, that which is in our power is carried on as it were unto it. That which is done by our Election, is presently either true or false; that which is in power, is different from that which is said to be in Habit and Act. That which is in power, declareth an Aptitude in that thing wherein the Habit is not perfect: So a Boy may be said to be a *Grammarians*, a *Musicians*, a *Carpenters*, in power: He is in the Habit of one or more of these, when he hath acquired this Habit. He is said to be in Act when he operateth according to that acquired Habit. That which we call possible to be done is none of these. Indeterminate is that which is in our power, and to which part soever it inclines, will be true or false.

Pythagoras of Fate and Fortune says,

All the parts of the World above the Moon are governed according to Providence, and from Order, the Decree of God which they follow; but those beneath the Moon, by four Causes, by *God*, by *Fate*, by our *Election*, by *Fortune*. For instance, to go aboard into a Ship,

Ship, or not, is in our Power ; Storms and Tempest to arise out of a Calm, is by Fortune ; for, the Ship being under Water, to be preserved, is by the Providence of God. Of Fate there are many Manners and Differences ; it differs from Fortune, as having a Determination, Order and Consequence ; but Fortune is spontaneous and casual, as to proceed from a Boy to a Youth, and orderly to pass through other degrees of Age, happens by one manner of Fate. — There is also Fate of all Things in general, and in particular, the cause of this Administration.

As for *Zeno* and some other Philosophers, I will in my next send you their Opinions, till then, I rest

Yours to Command,

AN. ROGERS.

TO THE
Right Honourable

The most Ingenious

STREPHON.

Ludgate Hill, Feb. 7th. 1682.

Concerning the Immortality of the Soul.

My LORD,

I Had the Honour Yesterday to receive from the Hands of an Humble Servant of your Lordship's, your most incomparable Version of that Passage of *Seneca's*, where he begins with, — *Post mortem nihil est, ipsaque mors nihil, &c.* — and must confess, with your Lordship's Pardon, that I cannot but esteem the Translation to be, in some measure, a
confu-

TO

confutation of the Original; since what less than a divine and immortal Mind could have produced what you have there written? Indeed, the Hand that wrote it may become Lumber, but sure, the Spirit that dictated it, can never be so: No, my Lord, your mighty Genius is a most sufficient Argument of its own Immortality; and more prevalent with me, than all the Harangues of the Parsons, or Sophistry of the Schoolmen. No subject whatever has more entangled and ruffled the Thoughts of the wisest Men, than this concerning our Future State; it has been controverted in all Ages, by Men of the greatest Learning and Parts. We must also confess, that your Author *Seneca* has not wanted Advocates for the Assertion of his Opinion; nay, even such, who would pretend to Justifie it, out of the very Scriptures themselves: *Ex.gr.* as when *Solomon* says (*Eccles. 7. 12.*) — *Then shall the Dust return to Dust as it was, and the Spirit to God that gave it.* — And (*Eccles. 3. 20. 21.*) when he declares, — *All go to the same place; all are of dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the Spirit of Man that goeth upward, and the Spirit of the Beast that goeth downward to the Earth* — Again (*Eccles. 3. 19.*) when he tells us, — *That which befalleth the Sons of Men befalleth Beasts, even one thing befalleth them both. As the one dieth, so doth the other; yea, they have all one Breath: so that a Man hath no preeminence*
above

above a Beast — Likewise to such who are desirous to know what their Friends are in the other World, or (to speak more properly,) their dead Friends know; *Solomon* answers their inconsiderate *Utinam* [*Ecces. 9. 5.*] with these words — *The Living know they shall die, but the Dead know not any thing* — Moreover, others, for the purpose, cite that Passage of *Luke 20. 38.* where it is said, — *He is not a God of the Dead, but of the Living* — All which Texts (through the Weakness of Understanding) have by some Men been misapplied, as concurrent with the *Anima Mundi* of *Pythagoras*, which has been since in great measure revived by *Averroes* and *Avicenna*, although in one point they differ'd among themselves: For, that *Averroes* believed, after Death, our Souls return'd and mix'd with the common Soul of the World; whereas *Avicenna* thought it a distinct portion of the *Anima Mundi*, which after our Deaths remain'd entire and separate, till it met with some other Body capable of Receiving it, and then being clothed therewith, operated *ad modum Recipientis*. *Montieur Bernier* likewise gives us, agreeable to *Averroes*, an account of much the same Opinion held at this time by some of the *Indians of Indostan*, whose Faith he illustrates in this Manner, — They believe (says he) the Soul in Man's Body to be like a Bottle fill'd with Sea-water, which
' being

being close stop'd and cast into the Sea, rydes it up and down, till by some Accident or other, the unfaithful Cork, or decrepit Bottle, becomes disorder'd, so as the Water Evacuates and Disgorges it self again into the common Ocean, from whence it was at first taken — Which agrees very well with what (as *Philostratus* tells us, *lib. 8. chap. 13.*) *Apollonius* after his Death revealed to a Young Man concerning the Immortality of the Soul in these words, as rendered from the Greek:

*Est Anima immortalis, & incorrupta manebit,
Non tua res, verum que providet omnia
Divæ;
Qua velut acer equus, corrupto corpore
Vinclis
Profilit, & tenui miscetur flamine Cali:
Cui grave servitium est, atque intolerabile
visum. —*

*The Soul's immortal, and once being free,
Belongs to Providence, and not to thee:
Shee, like a Horse let loose, doth take her
flight
Out of the Carcass, and her self unite
With the pure Body of the liquid Sky;
As weary of her former slavery. —*

But

But he, among the Heathens, who spake plainest and fullest of this matter was *Pliny* in his *Natural History*, lib. 7. ch. 4. where he writes to this purpose:

After the Interment of our Bodies, there is great diversity of Opinions concerning the future state of our wandring Souls or Ghosts; But the most general is this: That in what condition they were before they were born Men, in the same they shall remain when dead: forasmuch as neither Body nor Soul hath any more sense after our dying-day, than they had before the day of our Nativity. However, such is the Folly and Vanity of Men, that it extendeth even to future Ages; nay, and in the very time of Death even flattereth it self with fine Imaginations and Dreams of I know not what after this Life. For, some crown the Soul with Immortality; others pretend a Transfiguration thereof; and others suppose that the Ghosts sequestred from the Body have Sense; Whereupon they render them Honour and Worship, making a God of him, that is not so much as a Man: As if the manner of Mens Breathing differ'd from that of other Living Creatures: or, as if there were not to be found in the World many more things that live much longer than Man; and yet no Man judgeth in them the like immortality. But

G

shew

shew me, if you can, what is the Substance
 and Body of the Soul (as it were) by it
 self? what kind of Matter is it apart
 from the Body? where lyeth the Cogita-
 tion that she hath? how is her Seeing?
 how is her Hearing perform'd? what
 toucheth she? Nay, what one thing doth
 she? how is she employ'd? or if there
 be none of all this in her, what Good can
 there be without the same? Again, I
 would fain know where she resides after
 her Departure from the Body? and what
 an infinite multitude of Souls, like Sha-
 dows, would there be in so many Ages
 as well past, as to come? Now, surely,
 these are but fantastical, foolish and chil-
 dish Toys; devised by Men that would
 fain live always; the like foolery is there
 in preserving the Bodies: Nor was the va-
 nity of *Democritus* less, who promis'd a
 Resurrection of the Body, and yet himself
 could never rise again. But what a folly
 of follies is it, to think that Death should
 be the way to a second Life? what Repose,
 what Rest could ever the Sons of Men
 have, if their Souls did remain in Heaven
 above with Sense, whilst their Shadows tar-
 ry'd beneath among the infernal Spirits?
 certainly these sweet Inducements and
 pleasing Persuasions, this foolish Credulity
 and easiness of Belief, destroyeth the Bene-
 fit of the best Gift of Nature, Death. It
 'like-

likewise doubleth the Pains of a Man that
 is to dye, if he does but consider what is
 to become of him hereafter: how much
 more easie and greater security were it for
 each Man to ground his Reasons and Reso-
 lutions upon an Assurance, that he should
 be in no worse a condition, than he was be-
 fore he was born? Now these (my Lord)
 with what others I have mention'd in my
Anima Mundi, are the chief Opinions of the
Moralists among the ancient Heathens.

In answer to which, some of our Moderns
 argue, That if the Soul be not immortal,
 the whole Universe would at this time be
 deceiv'd, since all our Laws do now suppose
 so. But to this it has been reply'd, That
 if the whole be nothing but the Parts, (as
 must be allow'd) then, since there is no
 Man who is not deceiv'd, as *Plato* saith, it is
 far from an Offence, that it is absolutely
 necessary to grant, either that the whole
 World is deceiv'd, or at least the greater
 part of it; for supposing that there be but
 three Laws, *viz.* that of *Moses*, that of
Christ, and that of *Mahomet*: either all are
 false, and so the whole World is deceiv'd;
 or only two of them, and so the greater part
 is deceiv'd. But we must know, as *Plato* and
Aristotle well observe, That a Politician is a
 Physician of Minds: and that his Aim is,
 rather to make Men good, than knowing,
 therefore, according to the diversity of



Men, he must render himself agreeable to the diversity of humours, for the attainment of his end. Now there are some Men so ingenuous and good-natur'd, that they are induc'd to Vertue by the meer excellency thereof, and withdraw themselves from Vice, purely for the sake of its own deformity; and these are Men the best disposed, tho' rarely to be met with. Others, who are worse inclined, notwithstanding the beauty of Vertue, and turpitude of Vice, do still practice virtuous things, and refrain from those that are vicious, meerly out of Rewards, Praises, Honours, Punishments and Dispraises, whom we may enrol in the second Rank. Again, others, for hope of some good, as well as for fear of corporal Punishment, are made Virtuous: wherefore Politicians, that they may attain such Vertue, allure them with the hopes of Riches, Dignity and Command; at the same time, to prevent their committing Vice, they terrify them with some punishment either in Purse, Honour or Body. But others, out of a savageness and ferocity of Nature, are moved with none of these things, as daily experience sheweth: wherefore for such, they have propos'd to the Virtuous, Rewards in another Life; and to the Vicious, Punishments, which do most of all terrify: since the greater part of Man, if they do good, do it rather out of fear of eternal Loss, than

hope

hope of eternal Gain, forasmuch as we have a more sensible *Idea* of Suffering and Losses, than of *Elyzium*, and the good entertainment there. Now because this last Expedient may be profitable to all Men of what condition soever, Lawgivers considering the proneness of Men to evil, and themselves aiming at the Publick Good, establish'd the Immortality of the Soul, perhaps, at first, not so much out of a regard to Truth, as to Honesty, hoping thereby to induce Men to Vertue. Nor are Politicians to be so much blamed herein, more than Physicians, who many times, for the benefit of their Patients, are compell'd to feign and pretend divers things: since, in like manner, Politicians devise Fables only to regulate the People; notwithstanding, in these Fables, as *Averroes* saith, (*Prolog. in 3. Phys.*) there is properly neither Truth nor Falshood: Thus Nurses bring their Children to those things which they know are Good for them, after the like manner; whereas if the Man or the Child were either sound in Body or Mind, neither would the Physician or the Nurse, stand in need of such contrivances. Likewise, if all Men were in that first Rank abovemention'd, tho' we should admit the mortality of the Soul, they would yet (perhaps) be virtuous and honest; but such are rare to be found, and therefore it is necessary to use other Expedients:

dients: neither is there any Absurdity therein, since almost all humane Nature is immerst in matter, and partaketh but little of the Intellect: whence Man is more distant from Intelligences, than a sick Man from him that is sound, or a Fool from a Wise man; To that it is no wonder if a Politician makes use of such ways or means, for the publick establishment of good manners. And therefore, *my Lord*, besides the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, as also the innumerable other Arguments which may be deduc'd as well from Philosophy as Reason, to prove the Immortality of the Soul, together with its Rewards and Punishments, (tho' I determine not their duration) yet there is no Argument of greater weight with me, than the absolute necessity and convenience that it should be so; as well to compleat the Justice of God, as to perfect the Happiness of Man, not only in this World, but in that which is to come. And for this very Reason, when I hear *Seneca* the Philosopher, and others, preaching up the Doctrine of the Soul's Immortality, with a

Quid mihi Curæ erit transfuga?

Tackt to the end of it, nothing under Heaven to me seems more unaccountable or contradictory. For, as to suppose a hum-drum Deity chewing his own Na-

Nature, a droning God sit hugging of himself, and hoarding up his Providence from his Creatures, is an Atheism no less irrational, than to deny the very Essence of a Divine Being; so, in my Opinion, to believe an Immortality of the Soul, without its due Rewards and Punishments, is altogether as irrational and useless, as to believe the Soul it self to be mortal; by such a Faith we rob the Soul of its best Title to Immortality: for what need is there of an Executor, where there are no Debts to pay, nor any Estate to inherit? But *Pomponatius*, and especially *Cardan* in his *Theonostion*, will furnish your *Lordship* with great Variety upon this Subject, altho' I am sure you will meet with so noble an entertainment no where, as in your own thoughts.

(My LORD)

Your *Lordship's* most obedient

humble Servant,

BLOUNT.

G 4.

To

To the deservedly Honoured and
most Ingenious Major A. con-
cerning the Original of the Jews.

S I R,

I Receiv'd yours, and have formerly seen a Translation of the Annals of *Tacitus*, but never yet met with that of his History, altho', as I have been inform'd, it is not only rendred into *English* by the great Sir *H. S.* but likewise illustrated with very learned Notes of his own writing: which makes me the more admire at what you say, that a Person of his Knowledge and Judgment, should so far complement the *Jewish*, as to rob the *English* World of the Fifth Book of *Tacitus* his History, by omitting any part of it in his Version; since, according to the true method of Translating, an Author ought not to be drawn off, but generously and freely pour'd out of one Language into another: lest in separating him from the Dregs, you leave the Spirit behind you. Nevertheless, I hope, this one Example will not be sufficient to introduce an *Index Expurgatorius* among us; whereby Posterity might be tempted to esteem Writing, Reading, and Books, as things unprofitable. *Justin*,
the

the Epitomizer of *Trogus Pompeius*, is more fairly dealt with; notwithstanding in the 5th Book of his History, he doth, for the most part, concur with *Tacitus* in his account of the Original of the *Jews*; all which the Translator hath sincerely and impartially given his Reader in *English*: wherefore, according to your desire, I shall only trouble you with what was never yet publish'd in our Language, viz. what *Tacitus* speaks concerning this Subject, in the 5th Book of his History, which is as follows.

Some conceive the *Jews* to have been Exiles from the Island of *Crete*, and to have planted themselves upon the Borders of *Lybia*, about the time when *Saturn* suffer'd expulsion from his Dominions by *Jupiter*; the Reason whereof is grounded upon the Name: for there being in *Crete* a Mountain, not a little remarkable, call'd *Ida*, the Inhabitants, by a barbarous intrusion of a letter, were call'd *Judæi*, quasi *Idæi*. Others say, that the Mob swarming throughout *Egypt*, when *Isis* bare Rule there, these were evacuated into bordering Countries, *Hyerosolimus* and *Judas* having at that time the Command over them. Again, many think them to have been a People of *Ethiopia*, whom King *Cephrus*, betwixt fear and hatred, thought fit to have removed. Others also make them to have been an indigent People of *Assyria*, who having possess'd



' fess'd themselves of Part of *Egypt*, by de-
 ' grees built Cities, inroaching upon the
 ' *Hebrew* Countries, and Borders of *Syria*.
 ' But, among the rest, some will entitle
 ' their Original to a more honourable deri-
 ' vation, *viz.* to be the *Solimi* of *Asia*, a
 ' People mention'd by *Homer* with Honour,
 ' who, from their own, gave name to *Jeru-*
 ' *salem*. However, sundry Authors agree,
 ' that there being an Epidemical *Scabies*
 ' throughout *Egypt*, which much polluted
 ' their Bodies, King *Occhoris* addressing him-
 ' self to *Hamon's Oracle*, and supplicating a
 ' Remedy, receiv'd this Mandate, *viz.* To
 ' purge the Kingdom of that sort of People,
 ' which were not acceptable to the Gods, and to
 ' convey them into other Countries. Where-
 ' upon Inquisition being made, they were ga-
 ' ther'd together, and proscribed for a
 ' March. But being afterwards left in a
 ' Wilderness, disanimatèd and drooping
 ' with Lamentations, one of the Proscrip-
 ' tion, *Moses* by name, advis'd them to
 ' abandon all expectation of Aid, either
 ' from Gods or Men, being thus forsaken
 ' both, and to confide only in him as
 ' their celestial Guardian, who were al-
 ' ready by their present trust free'd from
 ' some Miseries. They assented, and, as an
 ' ignorant People, adventurèd under his
 ' Conduct; in which Pilgrimage, nothing
 ' fatigued them more, than the want of
 ' Water:

' Water: when lying in the Fields ready to
 ' perish with Thirst, there passèd by an
 ' Herd of wild Asses towards a Creek, very
 ' much shadow'd with Groves; whom *Moses*
 ' follow'd, imagining there might be a fruit-
 ' ful Soil: and discovers fair Channels of
 ' Water, wherewith they refresh'd them-
 ' selves. Now the sixth day of their Tra-
 ' vels being at an end, on the seventh they
 ' possess'd themselves of Lands, (expelling
 ' the Inhabitants) wherein were both City
 ' and Temple consecrated. When *Moses*,
 ' to the end he might confirm to himself this
 ' People for the future, constitutes new Rites
 ' different from the rest of the World;
 ' esteeming those things prophane, which,
 ' with us were sacred; and indulging others,
 ' which we interdickt. They, likewise,
 ' consecrated the Effigies of an *Ass*, for be-
 ' ing their Guide to the Waters where they
 ' satisfied their Thirst; as also sacrificed a
 ' *Ram* in contempt of *Jupiter Hamon*. They
 ' offer'd up an *Ox* likewise, under which
 ' Effigies the *Egyptians* worship'd *Apis*. They
 ' abstain'd from Swines Flesh, in memory of
 ' their *Scabies*, (whereto this Creature is
 ' very obnoxious) wherewith they were
 ' polluted. They commemorate their long
 ' Famine with frequent Fastings; the loss of
 ' their Fruits with unlevn'd Bread; and
 ' every seventh day they restèd, because that
 ' gave a Period to their Labours: which af-
 ' terwards



terwards grew so pleasing to them, that they devoted every seventh year to their ease. Others are of opinion that they did this in honour of *Saturn*; but by what means soever they have been introduced, they have no Antiquity for their Patronization. Other sinister and filthy Institutions have been prevalent for their pravity; and all the very dregs of the People (who contemned the Religions of their own Countries) accumulated Tributes hither: whereby the substance of the *Jews* was very much enlarg'd. Among themselves, they were very fruitful and merciful; but for all others, had an irreconcilable hatred. They were a People very much inclin'd to Lust, and however they abstain'd from mixing with *Aliens*, yet nothing was esteemed unlawful amongst themselves: Now this brought in their Custom of *Circumcising* their *Genitals*, thereby to distinguish them from others; and whosoever expected to be incorporated into them, was to do the same: after which, the first Lesson they taught them was, to contemn the Gods, forsake their Country, and disesteem of Parents, Children, Brethren, &c. *Tacit. lib. 5.*

Now, besides the concurrence of *Trogus*, we hear also of others, who pretend to much the same both with him and *Tacitus*, as those

those ancient *Egyptian* Writers, *Manethon*, *Charemon*, *Lysimachus*, *Appion*, and others: nor does *Josephus* seem to produce any considerable Confutation of their Opinions; only in general, he finds fault with their mistaking of Names, and other such small Variations in their Histories, which to impartial Readers are very inconsiderable. Nay, we see *Josephus* does not so much reject the Truth of *Manethon's* History; but when it was for his advantage, he could make use of him, in quoting his Writings, to prove the Antiquity of his Countrymen the *Jews*; so that, however in Circumstances and Names of particular persons they might vary, yet that the *Jews* were banish'd out of *Egypt* for *Scabies*, that *Moses* their Commander gave them new Laws of his own making, forbidding them to converse or marry with strangers; as also that they afterwards, to revenge their Banishment, invaded *Egypt*, putting the *Egyptians* and their King to flight, (as they did) in all this (I say) most of the ancient *Egyptian* Writers agree, as we may gather from *Josephus* his own Writings.

The Tradition of the *Memphites*, concerning *Moses's* passing the *Red Sea*, was,

That *Moses* being well acquainted with the condition of the place, observed the Flux and Reflux of the Waters, and so brought over his Army by dry Land.

However,



However, had this been wrought immediately by God, we need not (says *Josephus*) so much wonder at it, for that the *Pamphylian* Ocean did the same to Great *Alexander* of *Macedon*, and gave way to him and his Followers, the Waves themselves marking out a Path, rather than any thing should hinder the Design which God had purposed to them, viz. to overthrow the Kingdom of *Persia*, and this *Josephus* in these very words records; so that by lessning the Miracle, he destroys it: making it cease to be a Wonder, while he strives to make it fit to be believ'd.

Abraham and *Moses* seem'd first to institute Religious Worship, and both of them were well skill'd in *Egyptian* Learning; which gave occasion for some to think, that *Moses* and the *Jews* took divers of their Customs from the *Egyptians*; as for Instance, their *Circumcision*, because *Herodotus* says, that the *Phœnicians* and *Syrians* in *Palestine* (which must be the *Jews*, since none else us'd it in *Palestine*) took their *Circumcision* from the *Egyptians*; also (says he) they confess the same themselves: nor does *Josephus* deny as much: only says (without giving any reason why) that he doubts, whether they learnt it of the *Egyptians* and *Ethiopians*, or whether the *Egyptians* and *Ethiopians* learnt it of them, but does not affirm or deny either: *Joseph. Cont. Ap.* However,

ever, *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*, as well as Dr. *Stillingfleet* in his *Origines Sacræ*, affirm the latter; not to mention *Theophilus Gale*, and other Gleaners upon the same Subject.

The Article of one true God, was common both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, even before their Reception: the universality of Religious Worship consisting in the practice of Virtue and Goodness, we may find also common to the *Gentiles*, as well as to the *Jews*: or if it be said, that Precept in the *Decalogue*, That we should make no graven Image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath; was particular to the *Jews*; it will be found, that whatsoever they said thereof, the *Persians* and other neighbouring Nations concurred therein; as also in the rest of the Commandments: thus *Feriarum Deo* is a kind of *Sabbath-keeping*.

The ancient *Jews*, and modern *Christians*, have many Rites and Ceremonies common with the *Gentiles*; which is more than our vulgar Divines do imagine. Most of the *Jewish* Laws and Rites were practis'd among the *Gentiles* indifferently, or at least did not much vary from them, as the diligent Searchers into Antiquity well know. The *Gentiles* as well as the *Jews*, held the most substantial parts of *Moses* his Doctrines, without differing in much more than certain particular Laws, more proper for that Country

Country than any other, as, their not eating Swines flesh; their making Adultery death, &c. since, as the Notions of God, and a good Conscience, are written in our Souls at this day, so we cannot justly think, any of our Forefathers among the *Gentiles* were deprived of them.

But when all is done, SIR, these Relations of *Trogus*, *Tacitus*, and the rest, are only the uncertain Accounts of partial Authors, since the best and only History extant to be rely'd on for this Subject, is the Holy Scriptures, (dictated, as every good Christian ought to believe, by the Holy Spirit) therefore, tho' I send you these other Accounts to gratifie your Curiosity, yet referring you to these for matter of Truth, I shall give you no farther trouble, than to assure you I am (without Reserve)

(SIR)

Your unfeigned Friend,

Decemb. 12.
1692.

And faithful humble Servant,

BLOUNT.

To

To his Friend, *Torismond*, to Justifie the Marrying of two Sisters, the one after the other.

S I R,

According to your Letter, I find the Objections urged against your marrying *Eugenia*, your Ladies Sister, are chiefly these three;

1. That you being her Brother in Law, by having formerly married her Sister, it would be not only a Violation of the Canon Law, but also of the Levitical, and consequently a sin.
2. That it is against the known Laws of the Land, and so might be dangerous and troublesome to you both.
3. And Lastly, That such a match being a thing unusual, and contrary to custom, it might reflect upon your Honours.

All which Objections I do conceive so easily to be answered, that (were it not too great a confidence in any man to say so) with that little knowledge I have, either in Civil, Canon or Common Law, I would assert it to be lawful, and accordingly enter the

the Lists of Argument against any Levitical or Canonical Gamester whatever upon that Subject. In the mean time, what I have briefly collected, for your service, upon this occasion is, as follows.

'Tis confessed, the 99th. Canon of the Church of *England* is positive in its determination, that no man shall Marry within the Degrees prohibited by the Laws of God, and expressed by a Table set forth by Authority, *Anno Dom.* 1563. in the 17th particular of which Table, it is declared, that a man may not marry his Wives Sister: the foundation of which Prohibition, both in the Canon and Table is this (*viz.*) *Kindred and Affinity forbidden to marry by the Laws of God*: So that the Prohibition, as well in the Canon, as in any part of the Table seems to be no farther obliging, than as it is forbidden by the Laws of God, and the same dependance likewise have our Statute Laws in this Case, to which they wholly refer.

The First Text of Scripture, which is commonly urged in this Case, is that of marrying a Brothers Wife, which seems to be forbidden; where by a side wind they would bring in that of marrying a Wives Sister as a parallel, saying *ubi eadem Ratio, ibi idem Jus*. But, with their pardon, the simile does not run upon four feet, the Reason is not the same: For the words (in

Levit. 18. and 16.) which forbid the marrying a Brothers Wife, say, *because a man thereby uncovers his Brothers Nakedness*: which seems not at all to be a good Reason against marrying the Wives Sister; because every man is supposed to have discovered his first Wives Nakedness before any such marriage with her Sister. Besides, all Penal Laws (such as *Moses's* are in this Chapter,) which concern Life, Limb, nay and the very Soul too in this case are no where construed by Parallels, but straitly tyed up to the very express Letter of the Law, or else no man would be safe, if it were liable to be hang'd by way of comparison for a similitude, or being like the Picture of a Traytor: and this makes *Moses* so exact in particularizing each Crime, that whereas in prohibiting you to uncover your Fathers Nakedness, he would have serv'd likewise for the Mothers, the Reason being the same, yet nevertheless he in express words particularizes and forbids both distinctly by themselves, and in like manner does the same in all other Cases, which he need not have done, if he had design'd to have any cases not mentioned come within the equity and construction of those that are: as because I must not marry my Brothers Wife, therefore I must not marry my Wives Sister, a pretty Syllogism indeed. Besides, if it were so intended there, then, what follows had been unnecessary. For ——— The



The Canon of Scripture which seems more nearly to concern this Case, is *Levit.* 18. 18. where it is said, Neither shalt thou take a Wife to her Sister to *Vex* her, to uncover her Nakedness, besides the other in *her Life-time*.

Though Polygamy was allowed under the Law, yea, and *Jacob* did actually marry two Sisters, *Leah* and *Rachel*, yet it is here forbidden that one man should at one and the same time have two Sisters in Marriage; It was adjudged inconvenient, and *Diodate* upon this Text saith—

The Reason of the Inconveniency is, it would be a kind of confusion, to make two Sisters Rivals or Adversaries to one another, 'twould produce continual Jealousies and Strifes, as an example may be seen in *Jacob's* Marriage, which in those first Ages were tolerated.

But this doth not therefore seem to restrain or prohibit the marrying of two Sisters one after another, for the first being dead, the other cannot be a Rival or Vexation (as the Text calls it) to her dead Sister: and then how shall the Prohibition be urged, if the Reason of it be removed? It is rationally apparent, that there is great stress placed in those expressions (*during her Life*) and (*to Vex her in uncovering her shame upon her*) as doth more fully appear in our Translation of the Bible in Queen

Eliza-

Elizabeth's Reign, Printed Anno Domini

1599—
Thou shalt not take a Wife with her Sister, during her Life to Vex her, in uncovering her shame upon her.—

Which seems to be very suitable to the Greek Translation, γυναῖκα ἐπὶ ἀδελφῆ ἢ ἀδελφῆς ἀποκαλύψαι τὴν ἀχιμοσύνην αὐτῆς ἐπὶ αὐτῆ, ἐξ ὧσιν αὐτῆς: where the Prohibition running upon these Terms, or containing these Conditions, that a man shall not take a Wife, ἐπὶ ἀδελφῆ αὐτῆς, with her Sister, ἐξ ὧσιν αὐτῆς, during her Life: because it could be ἀντιζήτησις, a Vexation to her; but she being dead, all those inconveniencies expire with her, and so it may Probably be imagined that *Cessante Ratione, Cessat Prohibitio*.

And that this is the proper tendency of the words, is the Opinion of the Learned *Grotius*, in his Tract *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, lib. 2. cap. 5. paragr. 14.

Nam de singulis partibus ne intelligatur, argumento esse potest interdictum, de non habendis eodem tempore in Matrimonio Sororibus duabus: For that it ought not to be understood upon all Occasions is sufficiently proved by the Prohibition it self, which forbids only the having two Sisters in Marriage at one time.

And this he doth not deliver as his own private Opinion, but refers to the Authority

rity of the Ancient Canons, the Composers whereof did not seem to esteem such a marriage absolutely sinful, but inconvenient, and so obnoxious to penalties: As in the same Paragraph of *Grotius* (*Lin. 17.*) *Certe Canonibus Antiquissimis, qui Apostolici dicuntur, Qui duas Sorores alteram post alteram duxisset, aut à sorore, id est, Fratris aut Sororis Filiam; tantum à clero arcetur*: certainly whoever should have married two Sisters the one after the other, or the Daughter of his Brother or Sister, was by the most ancient Canons, which are called Apostolical, only forbidden entering into the order of Priesthood.

Where it was esteemed inconvenient and offensive, there the Person so doing ought not to be admitted to be a Priest, but that was the only punishment laid upon him, *tantum à Clero arcetur*. But doth not prejudice a Layman, such as my Friend *Torismond* is, who, I presume, never designs to enter into the Priestly Office, unless it were to be a Confessor to the fair Sex; neither doth it forbid Marriage to a Priest, only restrains him from Marrying two Sisters one after another.

For a man to marry two Sisters successively is unusual, (because most have enough of one out of a Family) and by Canonists esteem'd inconvenient; but it doth not appear by them to be forbidden anywhere,

where, except it be *Lege Humanâ*, by Human Law; which may restrain under a Penalty, but doth not therefore make the marriage either sinful, or void, when contracted: Whereas if it had been prohibited *Lege Divinâ*, by a Divine Law, then both the contracting of it, and living in all Matrimony had been sinful, whether the Canons of men had been for it, or against it. But if it be not against the Laws of God, it is so far from being forbidden by the Laws of our Land, that it is rather confirm'd by the 32 *H. 8.* 38. where it is enacted and declared.

That the Marriages of all Persons shall be adjudged Lawful, who are not prohibited by God's Law to Marry. Which I urge in opposition to the second Objection, *viz.* that 'tis against the Laws of the Land to marry two Sisters, and so may be dangerous.

But against this some may object, that this Statute of *H. 8.* was enacted, 1540. and the Table set forth by Authority, which the 99th Canon doth confirm, was set forth after it, in 1563. to which may be answered, that the Canon neither did, nor could repeal the Statute of *H. 8.* And that as a Canon it was a Human Law, as well as the other, and cannot therefore be intended to make void any Marriage, which the Law of God hath not prohibited and made void:



void : with which *Grotius* doth concur, and particularly applies it to the Case in hand, at the conclusion of his aformention'd Paragraph——

Sed sciendum simul est, non quod verum est fieri lege humanâ, si fiat, irritum quoque esse, nisi & hoc Lex addiderit & significaverit? But (saith he) 'tis also necessary to be known, that what is forbidden by humane Law to be done, if it be done, is not therefore void, unless the Law has also added and signified as much.—And then he proceeds to give you a Quotation of some Ancient Canons, which did, under a Penalty, forbid such a Marriage, but not make it void : *Canon Eliberinus, 60.*——

Si quis post obitum uxoris suæ, sororem ejus duxerit, & ipsa fuerit fidelis, per Quinquennium eum a Communionem abstinere, eo ipso ostendens, manere vinculum Matrimonii; & ut jam diximus in Canonibus qui Apostolici dicuntur. Qui duas sorores duxerit, aut fratris filiam, tantum Clericus fieri prohibetur : If any one, after the death of his Wife, marries her Sister, and she proves faithful to him, he must, during five years, abstain from the Communion, which shews that the Bond of Matrimony still remains inviolable; and, as we have already said, in those Canons which are called Apostolical, whosoever marries two Sisters, or his Brother's Daughter, is only forbid to be a Priest——which is indeed

indeed as near as possible to the words of the Canon set forth by *Joverius* in his Collection of Ecclesiastical Constitutions, *A. D. 1555. Clas. p. 3. Apostolorum Canon. 18. Qui duas sorores duxit, aut Consobrinam, Clericus esse non potest :* Whoever has married two Sisters, or his Niece, must not be a Priest.

Now that these ancient Canons retain their Validity, is apparent, not only from the practice of the Learned and Judicious *Grotius*, as well as other eminent Civilians, who appeal to their Authority; but they likewise receive confirmation and encouragement from the Laws of our own Nation; it being Enacted, 25 *H. 8. 19.*

That all Canons, Constitutions, Ordinances, and Synodals Provincial, not repugnant to the King's Prerogative, nor to the Customs, Laws and Statutes of the Kingdom, shall be used and executed, till such time as they shall be otherwise order'd and determined.

Now upon these preceding Authorities some Queries may be offer'd : As,

1. Whether the 99th Canon *Eccles. Angl.* and the Table set forth 1563, concerning the prohibited Degrees of Marriage, do not derive their Force from the Sacred Writ, so that they are not to be understood, or extended farther than the Scriptures do plainly direct?

H

2. Whether

2. Whether the Energy and force of *Levit. 18. 18.* be not grounded upon the Reasons contain'd in the Text? so that *cessante Ratione, cessat Prohibitio.*

3. Whether if the Marriage of two Sisters, one after the other, be not positively against the Law of God, it be not adjudg'd lawful, confirm'd by the 32 *H. 8. 38?*

4. Whether the Solution of *Justinian* in the like cases of Affinity, (*viz.*) *Privignæ & Nurus*, in the first book of his Institutions, (*Tit. 10. de Nuptiis. Paragr. 6.*) be not properly applicable to *Levit. 18. 18?* *Si una tibi nupta est; ideo Alteram, Uxorem ducere non poteris, quia duas Sorores eodem tempore habere non licet.*

5. Whether if any of the Canons *Eccles. Angl.* be dubious, it be not proper and convenient to consult the ancient Canons for Explanation and Illustration?

6. And lastly, Whether upon these preceding Considerations, to marry two Sisters, *Alteram post Alteram*, be *malum vetitum Legis divinæ*, and so sinful for'd *Conscientiæ*, and such Marriage void? or only inconvenient and obnoxious to Ecclesiastical Censures and Penalties, which the Ecclesiastical Court may either inflict or commute?

Now to conclude with this first and principal Objection, Whether it be a Sin against the

the Levitical Law? I shall only make three short Remarques.

1. That there are many other Laws in *Leviticus*, that are no more abolish'd by Christ, than this of Marriages, which yet are wholly neglected, and no ways look'd upon as obligatory.

2. Many doubt, Whether any of the Laws given to the *Jews* in particular, are binding to other Nations, excepting only those revived by Christ, which this of Marriages never was?

3. Thirdly, and lastly, 'Tis worth our observation, that when the Question was put to Christ by the *Sadduces*, about the Wife that had been married to seven Brethren, tho' it was a common practice among them, and he had so fair an opportunity offer'd him, that he never reproveth the Custom of one Man's marrying several Brethren, but answers only to the plain Question as 'twas put, *That at the Resurrection they neither marry nor are given in Marriage:* Now since he did not reprove and abolish all their other evil Customs, it may well be suppos'd he thought not this so, or otherwise he would have condemn'd it with the rest.

As for the second Objection, That such a Marriage would be against the known Laws of the Land, and therefore dangerous to both.

I have sufficiently answered this already, as likewise the third and last Objection; since, as well the Statute Laws, as Honour and Conscience in this case do wholly depend upon the Legality of such a Match according to the Law of God, which point I think has been pretty well clear'd by what has been said before. But for the better illustration of the matter, I will present you with a short view of the Original and Foundation of these Laws.

The Statute Laws of this Land never meddled with the Degrees of Kindred in relation to Marriages, till *Henry* the Eighth's time; which happen'd thus.

Prince *Arthur*, eldest Son to *Henry* the 7th, married *Katharine*, the Infanta of *Spain* in *November*, 1502, but on the second of *April* following the Prince dyed; whose Death (says *Dr. Bernet*) was imputed to his using too great an excess in his Love towards her. (So that it is not likely he left her a Maid, as some would have it.) After which the Princess having watch'd ten Months, to see that she was not with Child by Prince *Arthur*, she was married to her Husband's youngest Brother, afterwards *Henry* the 8th, by whom she had two Sons, and one Daughter *Mary* (since Queen of *England*;) the two Sons dying young, and only his Daughter *Mary* surviving. Now *Henry* the 8th growing weary of his Queen, as

thinking he should have no more Children by her, desired a Divorce, and then (tho' he had been married many years, by and with the Advice of *Fox* Bishop of *Winchester*, and several of his chief Clergy,) he first pretends a scruple of Conscience, for being married to his Brother's Wife, the *Pope* nor *Church* would not allow of his scruple in that kind, nor grant him any Divorce, but those rather to forfeit their Interest in these Kingdoms; however King *Henry's* Lust prompting him, to make use of any shift to obtain his desires, he bribed some few Members among the foreign Universities to give him their opinions that the Marriage was unlawful, and a Divorce but reasonable, which accordingly his Commissioners executed in a clandestine manner at *Dunstable*. After this, the Parliament (who, during his Reign, were aw'd into a compliance with him in all things, being for the *Pope's* Supremacy, when ever he was for it; and as much against it, when he was against it) made a Law (32 *H.* 8. ch. 38.) in compliment and confirmation of his Divorce and second Marriage, limiting all Marriages to the Degrees of the Levitical Law: so that we see this Law was made, not of any Religious or pious Consideration whatsoever, but only to serve a turn, and gratifie the Lust of an imperious Prince. And one consideration further is worthy



our Notice; viz. that this very Princess *Mary* was afterwards allow'd and approv'd of by the Judgment of the whole Nation, and of all *Christendom* besides, to be undiſputably the right and lawful Sovereign Queen of *England*, and ſo lived and dyed, notwithstanding the ſaid Act of Parliament and Divorce; to which Title and Dignity, ſhe could no ways have pretended, had the Marriage between *Hen. 8.* Her Father, and his Brother's Wife Queen *Katherine*, (who was her Mother) been adjudged by the World unlawful.

As to the *third* and *laſt* Objection, That ſuch a Match being unuſual and contrary to Cuſtom, may reflect upon your Honours: This is the weakeſt Objection of all others. For as Conſcience is but the Reflection of Vertue in our own Minds; ſo Honour is but the Vibration or darting thoſe Beams abroad among our Friends and Acquaintance, thereby to illuminate our own Reputations. So that all this Objection is at once answer'd, if there be no violation of Vertue in the Action; which, I hope, I have already in a great meaſure demonſtrated by the former part of this Diſcourſe: for I do not ſee where Vertue can be concern'd in an Action, that is neither impious to God, nor unjuſt or injurious towards Man; as I am ſure ſuch a Marriage is neither. Your Relation of Affinity, was but

in the nature of a Bargain, and upon your Lady's death, the leaſe expired, and the whole Contract ended. Couſin *Germans* (who marry daily) have a near Conſanguinity and mixture of the ſame Blood, whereas you two have not one Drachm of the ſame. But the moſt confuſedly and fooliſheſt Queſtion of all is, *What will the World ſay?* Gather two Flowers off one Root, eat two Grapes off one Branch, marry two Siſters? a thing never known before: But I hope both *Toriſmond* and *Eugenia* have too much Senſe to be ſtartled at ſuch Mob Bugbears; ſince no body of Reaſon will argue that the Rarity or Novelty of a thing is any Reflection either upon Honour or Conſcience; for as much as every thing is intrinſically either good or bad of it ſelf; nor can the Opinion of others any way alter the Nature of it. At this Rate, every new Law, and every new Mode or Faſhion, may be eſteemed diſhonourable and vicious, as violating the oldeſt. He that alters his Watch by every Dial he comes at, ſhall never have it go well, ſo he that alters or ſteers his courſe of Life according to the various Cenſures of the World, can never live wiſely or comfortably; for as much as every man's Intereſt furniſhes him with a By-Conſcience of his own, however ſome may pretend the contrary, and others may perhaps not really diſcern it themſelves. Laſtly, to urge the



common Usage, Practice and Custom of our times, is the effect of Narrowness of Soul, and meanness of Thought. For Custom is an Argument will lye as well for Vice, as Virtue: Drinking, Whoring, and Gaming have as ancient a Prescription for their Plea, and as universal, as any Vertues whatsoever. It is a common and ancient usage to rob upon St. *Albans* Road, is it therefore e're the more Lawful? Nothing can be more ridiculous than to make Antiquity and Presidents the Standard and Measure of Good and Evil: 'twould be a pleasant Argument for a Jilt to use to her Spouse, *Lord Husband, your Father was a Cuckold, will not you be one?* And yet perhaps such a Question would be as seriously Rational, as most of the things that govern Mankind: only one's merry Folly, and the other a grave Folly. But, to conclude, at this rate, we ought to have continued in the *Popish* Ignorance of our Fore-Fathers, as esteeming all Reformatations and Changes unlawful.

*By Education most have been misted,
So they believe, because they so were bred:
The Priest continues what the Nurse began,
And thus the Child imposes on the Man.
Hind and Pant.*

If

If what I have here written may prove effectual to the purpose it was design'd, I shall think my labour well spent: but never be dismay'd with the thoughts of being wonder'd at; or if any one should tell you a Bear that's led through the Streets is no more: Pray ask him from me what Emperors hazard their Crowns for? Generals venture their Lives for? Poets crack their Brains over their *Paladian* Oyle for? I doubt all ends in being wonder'd at; crowd with a Mob in the Streets, who, by way of Gratitude, point at him, and cry, *that's He;* and if they do the same to you, 'tis but fancying your self an Emperor, a General, a Poet, or a Lover, 'tis all one among Friends.

Yours,

BLOUNT.

Burton. Staff.
March 8. 1693.

H 5

To

To the Right Honourable and
most Ingenious *Strephon*, being
a Discourse of Sir *H. B's*. De
Anima.

Ludgate-hill, Febr. 8th 1679.

My Lord,

Nothing less than the Honour of your Com-
mands, could have inspired me with a
Confidence sufficient to trouble your
Lordship with this undigested heap of
my Father's Thoughts concerning the
Soul's acting, as it were, in a state of Ma-
trimony with the Body: But since it is
your Lordship's pleasure, as also to have
them in his own very words, I have here
set them down accordingly, and shall
plead only your Lordship's *Fiat* for my
Pardon.

*S*piritus in Nobis non manet in Identitate, sed
recens ingeritur per renovationem conti-
nuam, sicut flamma, sed velociore transitu, quia
res est spiritualior. Nos quotidie facti sumus
ex iis quae transeunt in nos: morimur & renas-
cimur quotidie, neque iidem hodie & heri su-
mus,

mus, & personam quam transeuntem non senti-
mus, tandem pertransisse agnoscimas.

Nulla est rerum transitio in nos, nisi per viam
alimenti; omne alimentum respectu alimentandi
est consimile & debilius: Alimentantis corpus
succrefeit nobis in corpus; Spiritus in spiritum.
Non tamen proportio utriusque fit nobis ad propor-
tionem Cibi & Potus, aut aëris nisi à nobis bene
superantur; aliter etenim non alunt ingesta, sed
opprimunt si fortiora sunt, corrumpunt si dissi-
milia, idque plus minusve pro gradu in utroque:
Ideoque quo melius res procedat multa fieri oportet:
primum prudens electio & moderatio eorum,
quae ingerenda sunt; & deinceps debita præpa-
ratio per artem, ut nobis similia & debiliora
fiant: ex parte Nostri præcipuum est exerciti-
um frequens sed modicum quo calor naturalis
vigeat.

Credibile est Homines prout in iis pollet spi-
ritus corpusve, alios melius in se convertere ali-
mentantium spiritum, alios corpus: ideoque in-
ter gulones & potores nonnulli minus stupidi red-
duntur quam alii, & nonnulli minus morbofo &
oppleto corpore evadunt quam alii: plerumque
tamen ingenio plus obest excessus in potu, quam
in cibo; quia potus spirituosior est, corpus vero
magis opprimitur esculentis quoniam ea ut ma-
gis corporea plus gravant.

Anima sapiens lumen siccum: corpus sanum
temperies sicca & pervia: ideoque siccare sed
deobstruere convenit: idque fit victi exercitio
& aëre idoneis sed parum sagaciter pleraque
solum

solum ut calida, frigida, humida vel sicca notamus : in illis qualitatibus non est rerum energia : longe divinius magisque intrinsecum quiddam est in rebus, quo rei cardo vertitur quodque solum experientia & effectu agnoscitur : est Deus in rebus ; estque omnia, & omnia agit : illius namque infiniti corpus est omne & spiritus : ex eorum Unione oritur creatura ; quæ etiam disperditur dissolutione istius Unionis : cum autem omnia perpetuo sunt in motu de una conjectura in aliam, Mundi autem corpus & Spiritus æterna sed novas continuo conjuncturas ineunt ; ideoque nos creatura sumus æterni Dei apparitiones momentaneæ, quas tantum terris ostendunt fata, nec ultra esse sinunt, veluti effigies en Auleis.

Dei opus sumus nos parentibus instrumentis ; actionesque nostræ Dei sunt opera instrumentis nobis, sed per electionem nostram agentibus : ista verò electio per aptas conjuncturas & Ideas adeo inmissas invitatur & regitur.

Per Condensationem & Rarefactionem partes Mundi corporeæ fiunt Spiritus, & spirituales fiunt corpora : sicque æternè retro aguntur omnia : Lumen Jovi, tenebræ Plutoni ; Lumen Plutoni, tenebræ Jovi : ut Hippocrates habet ; cum Microcosmus à Mundo trahit, vivit Microcosmus : cum Mundus à Microcosmo trahit, deficit Microcosmus.

These,

These, my Lord, are only such twilight Conjectures as our human Reason (whereof we yet so vainly boast) can furnish us with : this τ θεῶν, or *Divinum Aliquid*, (as Hippocrates terms it) is that which does all things ; but our Capacity not being able to discern it, makes us fasten either upon elementary Qualities, as Hippocrates and Galen do : or upon Geometrical Proportions, as our modern Descartes doth ; so that (indeed) all Philosophy, excepting Sceptism, is little more than Dotage. Pardon, I beseech you, this Boldness from

(MY LORD)

Your Lordship's most faithful

bumble Servant,

BLOUNT.

To



To the Right Honourable and most ingenious Strephon, giving a Political human account of the Subversion of Judaism, Foundation of Christianity, and Origination of the Millenaries.

Ludgate-Hill, Decemb. 1678.

My Lord,

I humbly ask your Lordships pardon for this presumption; but when I had last the honour of waiting upon you, your Lordships candour gave me the freedom of venting my own Thoughts; and then, as the Subject of our discourse was, about the great Changes and Revolutions that from time to time had happen'd in the Universe, so I made bold to assert, that in all Mutations, as well Ecclesiastical, as Civil, I would engage to make appear to your Lordship, that a Temporal Interest was the great Machine upon which all human Actions moved; and that the common and general pretence of Piety and Religion, was but like Grace before a Meal: accordingly, I have presumed to trouble your Lordship with these ensuing Remarques, to justify the same Assertion.

There was never any Republick which dwindled into a Monarchy, or Kingdom altered into an Aristocracy or Commonwealth,

wealth, without a Series of preceding Causes that principally contributed thereunto; had not other Circumstances concurr'd, never had *Cesar* establish'd himself, nor *Brunus* erected a Senate: And if you enquire, why the first *Brutus* expell'd *Tarquin*, and the second could not overthrow *Augustus* and *Anthony*? Or why *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, and *Numa*, could establish those Governments, which others have since in vain attempted to settle in *Genoa*, *Florence*, and other places, you will find it to arise from hence: that some considering those antecedent Causes, which secretly and securely encline to a Change, took advantage thereof; whilst others did only regard the Speciousness or Justice of their Pretensions, without any mature examination of what was principally to be observed; for nothing is more certain, than that in these Cases, when the previous dispositions all intervene, but a very slight occasion, nay, oftentimes, a meer Casualty, opportunely taken hold on, and wisely pursued, will produce those Revolutions, which (otherwise) no humane Sagacity or Courage could have accomplished.

I cannot find any Authentic Ground to believe, that the Sects among the *Jews* were more ancient than the days of the *Macca-bees*, but arose after that *Antiochus* had subdued *Jerusalem*, and reduced the generality of



of the Jews to Paganism; when (the better to confirm his Conquests) he erected therein an Academy for the Pythagorean, Platonic and Epicurean Philosophers. This, I conceive, (and so do others) was the Original of the Pharisees, Sadduces and Essenes; tho' afterwards, when the Macchabees had anathematized all that taught their Children the Greek Philosophy, one Party did justify their Tenets, by entitling them to *Sadoc* and *Baitos*, and the other to a *Cabala* derived successively from *Ezra* and *Moses*. The Introduction of those Sects, and of that *Cabala*, occasion'd that Exposition of the Prophecy of *Jacob*, viz. *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, until Shilo come, and unto him shall the gathering of the People be.* From whence they did (according to that fantastic *Cabala*) imagine, That whensoever the Scepter should depart from *Judah*, and the Dominion thereof cease, that then there should arrive a Messiah. But as for his being of the Line of *David*, this was no general Opinion; for how then could any have imagined *Herod* the Great to have been the Messiah? Or how could *Josephus* fix that Character upon *Vespasian*, as him who should restore the Empire, and Glory of *Israel*, to whom all Nations should bow, and submit unto his Scepter? I do not read that the Jews harbor'd any such Exposition during their

their Captivity under *Nebuchadnezzar*; albeit that the Scepter was at that time so departed from the Tribe of *Judah*, and the House of *David*, that it never was resetled in it more. After their return to *Jerusalem*, no such thing is spoken of; when *Antiochus Epiphanes* subdued them, prophaned their Temple, destroyed their Laws, and left them nothing of a Scepter or Lawgiver; during all which time, notwithstanding they had the same Prophecies and Scriptures among them, there is no News of any expected Messiah. But after the Curiosity of the Rabbins had involved them in the pursuitance of mystical Numbers, and Pythagorically or Cabalistically to explain them according to the *Gematria*, then was it first discover'd, that *Shiloh* and Messiah consisted of Letters which make up the same Numerals, and therefore that a mysterious promise of a Redeemer was insinuated thereby: as also, that the Prophecy of *Balaam* concerning a Star out of *Jacob*, and a Scepter rising out of *Israel*, with a multitude of other Predictions, (which the condition of their Nation made them otherwise to despair of) should be accomplished under this Messiah. I name no other Prophecies, because they are either general and indefinitely express'd as to the time of their Accomplishment, or inexplicable from their obscurity, or uncertain as to their Authority: such

such as are the Weeks of *Daniel*, which Book the *Jews* reckon among their *Hagiographa* or Sacred, but not Canonical Books.

This Prophecy likewise had a contradictory one, where 'tis said of *Coniah*, That no man of his seed shall prosper sitting upon the Throne of David, and ruling any more in *Judah*, *Jer.* 22. 30. Also *Ezek.* 22. 26, 27. Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the Diadem, and take off the Crown, this shall not be the same, &c. Now the aforesaid obscure Prophecy, which did not take effect at first, until the Reign of *David*, and which suffer'd such a variety of Interruptions, seemeth to have fallen under this Interpretation in the days of *Herod* the Great, whom the *Jews* so hated for his Usurpation over the *Maccabees* Levitical Family, and for his general Cruelties, that he was particularly detested by the cabalistical *Pharisees*, who, to keep up the Rancor against him and his Lineage, as well as to alienate the People from him, I could easily imagine the Exposition of this Prophecy to have been for no other purpose. Neither perhaps was *Herod* much displeas'd with the said Interpretation of the Prophecy, after the *Herodians* had accommodated it to him, and made him the Messiah, who (after their Conquest and Ignominy under *Pompey*) having restor'd the *Jews* to a great reputation and strength, and rebuilt

rebuilt their Temple, found some who could deduce his Pedigree from the thigh of *Jacob*, as directly as *David's* and *Solomon's* were.

Now this Construction of the Prophecy being inculcated into the People, and into all those *Jews*, Strangers or Profelytes which resorted to *Jerusalem* at their great Festivals, (from *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, *Babylon*, and all other parts where the *Jews* had any Colonies) there arose an universal expectation of a Messiah to come, (excepting amongst the *Herodians*, who thought *Herod* the Messiah) and afterwards possess the *Jews* (for our *Jews* are but the Remains of the *Pharisees*) to this very day. But their impatience for his appearance, seems to have been less under *Herod* the Great, than ever since the first Interpretation of the Prophecy, (there being no mention of false Messiahs at that time) perhaps, because the Prophecy was not so clear and convincing whilst that *Herod* was King: Since under him the Scepter and Legislative Power seem'd to be still in *Judah*, tho' sway'd by an *Idumean* Profelyte, the Priesthood continu'd, the Temple flourish'd, and there was a Prince of the *Sanhedrin*, *Rabbi Hillel*, of the Lineage of *David*. But ten years after the Birth of Christ, when *Archelaus* was banish'd to *Vienna*, and *Judea* reduc'd into the form of a Province, the Scepter then seem'd

to



to be entirely departed from *Judah*; the Kingdom was now become part of the Government of *Syria*, and ruled by a Procurator, who taxed them severely, then the sense of their miseries made the People more credulous; and whether they more easily believ'd what they so earnestly desir'd might happen, or whether the Malecontents (taking the advantage of their afflictions) did then more diligently insinuate into the multitude that opinion, it so hapned, that there arose at that time sundry false Messiahs, and the World was big with expectation, (rais'd in every Country by the *Jews*, who had receiv'd the intelligence from their common Metropolis *Jerusalem*) that the great Prince was coming, who should re-establish the *Jewish* Monarchy, and bring peace and happiness to all the Earth.

Now these Circumstances made way for the reception of Christ, and the Miracles he did, (for Miracles were the only Demonstrations to the *Jews*) convincing the People that he was the Messiah, they never staid till he should declare himself to be so: (for I think he never directly told any he was so, but the Woman of *Samaria*) or evinced his Genealogy from *David*; (for tho' some mean persons call'd him the Son of *David*, and the Mobb by that Title did cry *Hosanna* to him, yet did he acquiesce in terming himself the Son of Man) but esteem'd

esteem'd him a Prophet, *Elias*, *Jeremiah*, and even the very Messiah. Also when he made his Cavalcade upon an *Asinago*, they extoll'd him as the Descendant of King *David*: but his untimely apprehension and death (together with his neglect to improve the Inclination of the People to make him King) did allay the Affections of the *Jews* towards him, disappoint all their hopes; and so far exasperated them against him, that they who had been part of his Retinue at his entrance, did now call for his Execution, and adjudge him by common Suffrage to be crucify'd: insomuch that his Disciples fly, the Apostles distrust, and sufficiently testify their unbelief, by not crediting his Resurrection. But after that he was risen again, and they assur'd thereof, they reassume their hopes of a temporal Messias, and the last Interrogatory they propose unto him, is, *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?*

After his Assumption into Heaven, they attended in *Jerusalem* the coming of the Holy Ghost, which seized on them, and gave them the Gift of Tongues (as 'tis written) for a season; whereby they preached to the *Jews*, *Elamites*, *Parthians*, *Alexandrians*, &c. (whom *Salmasius* shews, not to be absolute Strangers to the Natives of those Countries, but *Jews* planted there) as also to the *Prophetytes*. These being surpriz'd with the Miracul



Miracle of the *Cloven Tongues*, and *Gift of Languages*, as likewise being possess'd with the desire and hopes of a Messiah, and being further ascertain'd by the Apostle *Peter*, That *Jesus* (whom *Pilate* had crucify'd) was the Lord and Christ, were, to the number of 3000, immediately baptized into his Name; and such as were to depart, when they came to their Colonies, did divulge the tydings, and engage other *Jews* and Profelytes to the same Belief: the Apostles themselves going about, and ordaining likewise others to preach the glad tydings of a Messiah come; who (tho' dead) was risen again (according to the obscure Prediction of *David*) for the salvation of *Israel*: and whose second appearance would compleat the happiness of all Nations, as well *Jews* as *Gentiles*.

Having thus therefore given your Lordship an Account of the subversion of *Judaism*, as well as of the foundation of Christianity, the origination of the *Millenaries* is only the consequence of the Fall of the one, and Rise of the other; for it is apparent, that not only the *Jews*, but also the *Christians* were *Millenaries*, and did believe and expect the temporal Reign of a Messiah, together with the Union of the *Jews* and *Gentiles* under one most happy Monarchy. Not one of the two first Ages dissent'd from this Opinion; and they who

oppose it, never quote any for themselves before *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, who liv'd (at least) 250 years after Christ. Of this Opinion was *Justin Martyr*, and (as he says) so other Christians that were exactly Orthodox. *Irenaeus* sets it down exactly for a Tradition, and relates the very Words which Christ us'd when he taught this Doctrine; so that if this Tenet was not an universal Tradition in the Primitive Times, I know not what Article of our Faith will be found to be such. This Doctrine was taught by the Consent of the most eminent Fathers of the first Centuries, without any Opposition from their Contemporaries; and was deliver'd by them, not as Doctors, but Witnesses: and not as their own Opinion, but as Apostolick Tradition. Moreover, it was with this pretence of Christ's being a coming to reign with them here in Glory, that stopt the Mouths of the unbelieving *Jews*, who before, upon his Death and suffering like other Men, began to doubt very much of the Power of his Messiahship, which made them distrust his reigning in Glory amongst them here on Earth, as it was foretold the Messiah should do; wherefore this *Millenary* Invention of his coming again to reign in Glory salv'd all.

And thus your Lordship sees, the wickedness of Mens Natures is such, that all Revolutions



lutions whatever both in Church and State, as well as all Mutations both in Doctrine and Matters of Faith, be they never so pious and sacred, or never so beneficial and useful to Mankind, both in their Souls and Bodies, yet they must still be seconded by some private temporal Interest, and have some humane Prop to support them, or else all will not do. My Lord, I am sensible I have a thousand Pardons to ask your Lordship for this tedious impertinence, but to do so at this time, were but to lengthen, and consequently add to my Crime: So I shall only beg the honour to subscribe my self at present,

(My LORD)

Your Lordship's most obedient

humble Servant,

BLOUNT.

To

To the Ingenious Friend Mr. Ph.
Lodging between the Two Temple
Gates in Fleetstreet, concerning
the several Sorts of Augury
practised among the Ancients
1692

S I R,

According to your desire, I have sent you my few inconsiderable Observations concerning that sort of the ancient Heathenish Superstitions, which was committed to the management of their *Augurs*. There were two kinds of *Augury*, Natural, and Artificial: the Natural was taken from a constant Experiment of Events following upon such and such Causes of Signs; the Artificial was that which was interpreted by *Augur* to portend something more than can be known by the ordinary course of Nature. *Cicero* herein mentions two sorts of Priests, whereof the first took care of the Ceremonies and Rites; the second of Divinations, and foretelling things to come;

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come;



come; of which sorts, it was lawful only for the latter to be *Augurs* or Prophets. Again, these were divided in three Orders, *Augurs*, *Haruspices*, and *Extispices*; who had all distinct Colledges, but yet they were all Priests.

There were five principal kinds of *Augury*; the first taken from the Heavens, or superior parts of the World: the second from Birds: the third from two footed Creatures: the fourth, from four footed ones: and the fifth or last *ex divis*, or from unusual Prodigies. They likewise took Divinations from Sneezing once, twice, thrice, or oftner, as signifying something to come, either good or bad. Itching, Palpitation, and shaking or trembling of some Limbs, or some part of the Body, had their Interpretation also: of all which the *Egyptians* are said to have been the first Authors.

The Birds commonly used for *Augury* were of two sorts: *Præpetes*, such as Eagles, Vultures, Butiones, Sanquales and Immussuli, of whom *Pliny* speaks, and which may be a certain kind of Hawk; the other sort are call'd *Oscines*, as foreboding something to come, by their Voice, Tune or Singing. All manner of Owls were thought fatal; but Swans the contrary. Other Birds, together with certain Insects, as Bees, Ants, Locusts, &c. did

did signifie sometimes good, and sometimes bad, in the observation whereof, the *Augurs* regarded the sight of the Heavens, as supposing certain Planets did preside and govern at some hours, more than others. Young Birds were not admitted into *Auguries*, as not being of ripe understanding. Some *Prædictions* were also taken from Fishes, as *Pliny* saith, whereby we may see that Superstition, like Fire, endeavours to resolve all things into it self, or like a cunning Expositor, interprets every Text to the Interest of his own party: for it here appears, that all Animals whatsoever, were in some degree, time or place thought to be ominous.

Auguries were taken at the same time Meat was given to Chickens, which was called *Bolissima Tripudia*: these *Auguries* were never undertaken till the Gods were first invoked with much solemnity. At which time a procession was made by the Senators, *Patricii*, and better sort of the People, who were for the most part crown'd with Bayes, and attended with their Wives and Children, they again being followed by the inferiour sort: Before all whom the *Pontifex Maximus* march'd in great state, having about him only certain young Boys and Virgins, either crown'd with or carrying Lawrels in their hands, and singing certain Verses,



which tended to the Demanding of the Gods prosperity and peace, (as occasion was;) and in this Pompous manner they made a Proceſſion to the Temple of their Gods; whoſe Images were carv'd with Garlands, called by the Ancients *Strophia*, made of Vervin. There were alſo *Lectiſternia*, or Canopy-Beds appointed for the Gods with much Magnificence and Ceremony, that, when they pleas'd, they might reſoſe themſelves thereon by Couples; as *Jupiter* with *Juno*, *Neptune* with *Minerva*, *Apollo* with *Diana*, *Mars* with *Venus*, or *Vulcan* with *Veſta*, &c. ſometimes alſo the ſame Gods were reſoſented in company with other Goddeſſes, as it pleas'd the Priests, whereof you may read *Gell. lib. 5. 1.* Now from hence the manner of the *Chriſtians* going in Proceſſion was thought to be firſt taken; it being eſteem'd but a politick and wiſe part in them to conform their Religious Rites, as much as was Poſſible, to the practice of the Ancient *Roman Empire*, without innovating more than needs muſt.

Plato attributes much to this Art in a Natural Way; and for my own part, I think, as the Ancients eſteem'd this Art of Divining too much, ſo we eſteem it too little; ſince, as many of their Observations concerning *Auguries*, were either ſuperſtitious, or vain, or deviſed only to abuſe the People:

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ſo, on the other ſide, uſeful Observations might have been taken from thoſe Signs, the Event whereof followed in a conſtant method and way.

Theſe Arts have been very ancient, eſpecially in *Italy*, *Greece*, and *Aſia minor*; where one *Cār* or *Cara* is ſaid to have invented them, and *Orpheus* to have multiply'd them: for as they there wanted the knowledge of Divination by the Stars, in that perfection as the *Egyptians* and *Chaldeans* had it, ſo they deviſed theſe Arts to make themſelves eſteem'd Prophets. The *Romans* learnt this Art from the *Hetrufcians*, to whom they ſent ſix Children of their beſt Families to learn their diſcipline at a place not far from *Florence*, formerly called *Fefulæ*, and now *Fieſoli*, where a Colledge of *Augurs* flouriſhed; Another alſo was built at *Rome*, which *Sylla* augmented to the numbr of 24. This being all I have to trouble you with upon this ſubject, I ſhall take my leave, and ſubſcribe my ſelf,

(S I R)

Your moſt faithful Friend

and Servant,

BLOUNT.

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To

To the justly honoured Sir W. L.
G. to be left for him in the Spea-
kers Chamber, concerning the
Regulations of Corporations, and
Surrenderers of Charters, 1691.

SIR,

IF to have a Picture drawn by a *Michael Angelo*, a *Raphael*, or by the hand of some eminent Master, be an advantage to the Person for whom it is drawn; then certainly it is no less an Honour for a Country to be so well represented in Parliament, as ours is by you. Foreign Courts have no better a taste of the Wisdom and Grandeur of their Neighbouring Princes, than from the Embassadors they send: nor can any thing be a greater Testimony of the Loyalties, Prudence and Integrity, either of Country, City, or Corporation, than the Election of such Magistrates, as are both Loyal, Prudent and honest; who (like your self) have no other Interest, but the true service of their King, and those whom they represent; as well maintaining the
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Prerogative of the one, as supporting the Liberty of the other; wherein, as by the King's Prerogative, I mean not his single Will, or (as Divines pretend) a power to do what he list, only the King's Law, or a Law relating particularly to himself: so likewise, by the Peoples Liberty, I mean not the Licentiousness of a Mobb, but only a Liberty according to Law, whereby we might assert our Rights, and maintain our Freeholds; which Liberty has been too lately in danger of being devour'd, not so much by Foreigners and *Papists*, as by our own Natives, and those too, who have the Impudence to call themselves *Protestants*, even without blushing: I mean our late Regulators of Corporations, and Surrenderers of Charters, in the two former Reigns, upon whose account it is, that I presume to give you this present trouble, as hearing it will be the next Business upon which your House designs to fall; and hope the Offences are not so long past, but that, *Parthian* like, you may yet shoot back some punishments upon the Offenders: since 'tis but reasonable, that they who mortgaged the Kingdom in the last Reign, should pay the Interest of their Crimes in this.

Therefore, *Sir*, with submission, I do humbly conceive, that to make the *Church of England* concern'd in the preservation of
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the late Regulators of Corporations, or Surrenderers of Charters, is one of the greatest Indignities can be put upon her: and something like reviving the old Popish Law of *Sanctuaries*, making her once more become (as it were,) an *Aylum* or place of Refuge for the most notorious Malefactors. Pardon me, if it be an Error, to joyn these Regulators and Surrenderers together; I do but imitate Nature herein, and am unwilling to make a separation between the Arm that gives the strength, and the Hand that gives the Blow. The Charter of each Corporation was the undoubted Right and Freehold of the same, as well as of every individual Member of the same: wherefore he that had any hand in Surrendring or delivering up such a Charter, did, what in him lay, to betray, nay, to rob the people of their Inheritances. And if the *Church of England* can be supported only by such ill men, the Lord have mercy upon her! if a Father of a Family has one Son that proves an Extravagant, and sells his Birth-right, may not that Son be disinherited without a total Ruin to the whole Family? I hope the Church of *England* has many more Sons, and many better Friends to stand by her, than those who were concern'd in so foul an Action: And that it does not follow by consequence, *If we seclude all ill men from the Government, none but*

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fanaticks would be left in---No, I will not, I cannot do so much honour to that Party, as to admit of such an Objection.

Of how great importance an honest, impartial and duly elected House of Commons is to this Nation, every Body well knows: and the ill effects of the contrary, I think, is unknown to no body. My old Lord *Burleigh* us'd to say, *We can never be thoroughly ruin'd, but by a Parliament.* They may cut the Throats of us and our Posterity by a Law; whereas all other Arbitrary Acts of Violence or Tyranny in a Prince, will either vanish by his Death, or blow over with every adverse Gale of Fortune that attacks him. And this (undoubtedly) was well known to those Instruments in the last Reigns, who were so zealously affected for the regulating Corporations, that they would not have left one man amongst them, who should not *jurare in Verba Magistri*, have done as a Popish King and his Popish Councils had dictated to them. So that, I confess, I cannot but couple these Regulators or Surrenderers together with those Judges and other Gentlemen of the Long Robe, who were for the *Annihilating* and Dispensing Power. Since, these were the only sort of men, who (in those times,) laid the Ax to the Root of the Tree: These were the men that were to have hewn down our

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Government, and burnt both it and us in *Smithfield* Fire: These were the men that should have plunder'd the Rights of each Corporation: and then, (like so many *Catalines*, to secure the Ills that they had done, by doing greater still,) have sent up such Members to Parliament, such Representatives, such truly Representatives of themselves, as should have confirm'd their own Iniquities by a Law; in so much as, the honest Subject of *England* was, at that time, but like a Traveller fallen into the hands of Thieves, who first take away his money, and then to secure themselves, take away his Life: They rob him by Providence, and then murder him by Necessity. The *Casuits* (as one observes,) do well distinguish, when they say, *He that lies with his Mother commits Incest; but he who marries his Mother does worse, by applying God's Ordinance to his Sin.* In like manner He that commits murder with the Sword of Justice, aggravates his Crime to the highest Degree: As these Gentlemen of whom I have been speaking, would have done, in making the Government *Felo de se*, and Accessary to its own Ruin.

Sir, all that I can say of this matter is, that certainly never was a greater Rape offer'd upon any Government, and therefore I doubt not of your Interest to have the

the Delinquents brought to a Condign Punishment, for the Exemplary Benefit of future Ages: which that they may be, is the hearty desire of,

(S I R,

Your most Obliged

Humble Servant,

BLOUNT.

Possibly, *Sir*, a motion of a General Pardon; wherefore it will be the surest way, to rest satisfied with making Example of some few of the most notorious and Capital Offenders. And further, that all Persons (how obnoxious soever in this case) who yet refus'd to take away the Penal Laws and Test, might be exempt from any Punishment whatever; that at the same time you reprove an ill Action, you may reward that which was good.

To



To Dr. R. B. --- of a God.

I Have perus'd your Arguments for the proof of a Deity, but think that you undertook a needless trouble, since I'm confident there's no man of sense that doubts whether there be a God or no. The Philosophers of Old of the *Theodorean Sect*, that had spent all their time and study to establish the contrary as a truth, when they came to die consulted all their Arguments by imploring some Deity; as *Bion* in particular: I know not whether the *Idea* of a God be *Inmate* or no, but I'm sure that it is very soon imprinted in the minds of Men; and I must beg Mr. *Lock's* pardon, if I very much question those Authorities he quotes from the Travels of some men, who affirm some Nations to have no notions of a Deity; since the same has been said of the Inhabitants of the *Cape of Good Hope*, which the last account of that place proves to be false. And if there be a God, the necessary Qualities that must be granted him, will not permit a man that Reasons right of things

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to question his Care and Providence over humane Affairs. Tho' I confess it a superficial way of Dispute; the *Epicureans* may seem to have some Reason to conclude, that the Deity has no care of mankind, because the confusion in humane affairs, and the general triumphs of Wrong over Right, the preposterous endeavours of men in the pursuit of Happiness, (which consisting in mutual offices, yet they doing one another what mischief they can, by the means destroy the end, and bring all things into such a confusion) would persuade it, and almost make one think, if what the *Pythagoreans* and *Chaldeans* held of Souls were true, *viz.* That they were created in Heaven, and thence transmitted to the Bodies for punishment, that we are Devils, our Malice to each other, our abounding Villanies gave some occasion for such thoughts. This consideration gave that Beauty to the beginning of *Claudians* in *Rufinum*, which a certain Critick admired so much, that he said, he that had a mind to be a *Poet*, should settle that perfectly in his memory, *viz.*

*Sæpe mihi dubiam traxit sententia mentem
Curarent superi terras an ullus inesset
Rector an incerto fluerent Mortalia Casu, &c.*

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The form and beauty of the Universe would not let the considering *Heathens* doubt but there was a God; but the confusion of humane affairs, made others think they were left to Chance. Tho' if they had throughly considered the matter, they must have thought first, that since all the rest of the Inanimate, and meerly Corporeal Substances, not dignified with understanding, by the exact and regular Order they observe, discover some Divine Disposer and Providence; that certainly man, evidently more excellent, could not be wholly destitute of all regard of Providence, or indeed be thought to have less than the more ignoble Beings. Next, that if they confessed a God, they must not deprive him of his necessary perfections, and certainly a Providence over his Works is one.

Having said all this, I may venture to tell you, that the very Foundation of your Arguments will not hold, since you pretend to demonstrate it in your Analytick Method from the existence of Man: you begin thus. 1. Humane Kind that now inhabits the Earth, did not always exist, as all Histories make appear, asserting Man had a beginning. This they not only plainly testify, but imply the same thing by the series of those things which they deliver; for there is no History that pre-

tends to give an Account of the Transactions of above Six Thousand Years, or thereabouts.

This being the first step of your Progression, and which being removed, all the rest falls to the Ground: give me leave to tell you, that all things that are not self-evident, should be prov'd, or not pass upon us in Philosophy; but this, you have said for your foundation, is so far from being self-evident, that it is extremely controvertible. For tho' our Chronology is less than Six Thousand Years come up to the Creation, that of *Eusebius* being the longest, and the only that exceeds that Summ. Yet this takes not in all Nations, and if it did, the Argument is weak, since 'tis possible there may have been Histories of them that reached farther, tho' now lost. Or perhaps they kept no Records, for the uncertainty of the *Greek* Chronology before the *Olympiads*, shews us they came but late to a regular observation of time. And the *Roman* Histories can give us no assurance or certainty, when, or by whom *Rome* was built. *Livy* tells us of *Romulus* and *Remus*, *Salust* says, the *Trojans* built it, and concludes it uncertain: I know as to the time they are more positive, reckoning *ab urbe condita*, tho' I can't think there can be an absolute certainty of their computation, since



since that was begun some years at least after its Foundation.

Besides, to draw an Argument from this, that because we have no History that exceeds six thousand years, therefore the World was not before, is all one as if I should say, that because the *Goths*, *Vandals*, and other barbarous Nations were not known till the time of the *Roman Emperours*, therefore they were not in being before.

But since our Correspondence with *China*, we have found they have Records and Histories of four or six thousand years date before our Creation of the World; and who knows but some other Nations may be found out hereafter, that may go farther, and so on. Nay, the *Chinese* themselves in a Traditional account, tell us, That the Posterity of *Panzon*, and *Panzona*, inhabited the Earth 90000 years. The *Bramins* of *Guzarat* said the year 1639, that there had past 326669 Ages, each Age consisting of a number of years, and if I mistake not Centuries. Nay the *Egyptians* in the time of their King *Amasis*, Contemporary with *Cyrus*, had the Records, and Story of 13000 years, and a succession of 330 Kings, which shews they were not Lunary years.

But you may say after all these accounts they settle some beginning of it: true, they pre-

pretend to have Records of no more; but it follows not from thence that there had been no other Ages before, whose Records, if they kept any, were lost, or of no use: and a good reason for the loss of the Records of Countrys, is the several Revolutions they have been subject to. The Inhabitants of the Earth changing their Places from one part of it to another, as if there were a necessary Circulation in that, as in the Blood of Man, and the Waters of Rivers, &c. Next, the Earth and Sea, in process of time, some very able Philosophers hold, have changed places; and in the destruction of Countries by these several ways, their Records may very well be supposed to be lost. Besides, the Languages and Characters altering, they would be of no use to Posterity; so if spared in the havock of time, are permitted to perish afterward. As in the Kingdom of *Trigremaen* in *Athiopia*, superior in *Africa*; where in the City of *Caxuma*, the *Auxume* of *Ptolomy*, there are now Obelisks full of engraved Characters, which none of the *Africans* can read; as there are also on the Coasts of *Safola*.

Mr.

Mr. *L. Clerk* has split upon the same Rock with you: I would therefore desire you to consider this Point a little more seriously, and build your Demonstration of a thing of this Consequence on a firmer Basis, else instead of promoting the Cause, you espouse, you only give advantages to those who would be thought at least to be what they are not. I hope you'll pardon this freedom of,

S I R,

Your Friend,

[and humble Servant,

CHAR. GILDON.

To Charles Blount Esq.

After so many Favours, you must think me a very impudent Beggar indeed, to importune you for more; but as I'm sensible the Benefits you bestow are the effects of a generous Nature, so I persuade my self, that the Pleasure you have in conferring them, lessen the assurance of my asking; especially in a disquisition of this Nature, which may afford a more substantial profit to my Mind, than Favours of another kind, which I must always acknowledge I owe to you; and none wou'd be a greater, than your employing me in something that may be serviceable to you, for then I shall be able to convince you, that my Will extends beyond bare Acknowledgment.

I have often doubted whether there were any such thing as a pure Spirit independant of all Body and Matter: And, I must own, I think that there can be no such thing as this vulgarly apprehended. For what Idea can we form of it? *Thought*, generally taken for the *Essence* of the Soul, seems only the



the *Action*, or an *Accident* of it, since the *Mind* is often without it, as *Body* without *Motion*, or any particular *Modification* of it. So that we may consider the *Soul* without *Thought*, but not *Thought* without some Subject to inhere in (unless by Abstraction) no more than roundness without some round *Body*. And why the *Intima Natura*, that composes the *Matter*, which goes to the making up that definition of *Body*, as *Extension*, *Divisibility*, *impenetrability*, should be incapable of receiving the accident of *Thought*, I can find no Reason; for being ignorant of the Nature of those *contiguous Particles* of *Matter* that are extended *divisible*, and *impenetrable*, how can we pretend to decide it magisterially against this Opinion, especially since *Memory*, *Wit* and *Judgment*, the noblest *Qualities* of the *MIND*, are agreed by the *Naturalists*, (as is evident from *Physick*) to have so great a dependance on the *Mechanism* of *Brain*, &c. And to shew plainly that we are ignorant of this inmost nature of things, one Example may suffice, since we take the definition from certain *general Qualities* we discover in *Matter*. As for Example, a *Seed* of *Pepper*—we see 'tis *extended*, *divisible*, and *impenetrable*; but we discover not what that quality of heating the mouth is compos'd of, or proceeds from; or what secret power those *Particles* have, to affect the

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sense in that manner. So in all other things 'tis not *Extension*, &c. that compose the *Body*, but some other occult thing we know not what, of which *Extension*, &c. are the consequence, whether it be the Congregation of *Atoms*, or other invisible *Particles* of *Matter* solid or subtle, tho' it must be confess'd that even the least of these *Atoms* has the same *Qualities*; but yet it must be also granted, they have other *Qualities* probably not less in number, which we know nothing of; so that when I term *Extension*, &c. the consequence of those occult *Qualities* we know not, I mean a co-existent consequence, as the consequence of a self-evident principle. But if the *Soul* be not *Matter*, tho' more fine and Subtle than the *Body*, 'tis very strange the chief part of us should be of such a nature, that we can form no *Idea* of it. But 'tis stranger yet, that Men should think it so necessary to believe so, when a more obvious and intelligible Opinion would answer all the ends of *Religion* as well. They must acknowledge the *Soul* a Substance, and we have no *Idea* of Substance distinct from that of *Body*. If they have any, they would do well to impart it to the grosser understandings of the rest of the World.

But these Gentlemen that advance this Opinion of pure immaterial Substances, trust to *Fancy*, and meer *Conjectures*, which they can

can give no account at all of, but by one only Accident, viz. *THOUGHT*; which they can never demonstrate incapable of inhering in Body modefy'd to that purpose, tho' not in all Bodies; for I think Mr. Bentley's far from Demonstrations, since they rise only to a *Probability*. But by making *Thought* the Essence of the *Soul*, they distinguish it not from that of Beasts; for they think, and have perhaps something equivalent to Reason, or must at least be granted equal to Ideots. Nay, this proves, that either *Thought* and *Matter* are not incompatible; or that the Essence of the *Souls* of Men and Beasts is the same, and by consequence both mortal, or both immortal, for they both think. Besides, since 'tis evident from this uncontrovertible Maxim, *Nema dat quod non habet*, that the Qualities of all things; and therefore of *Body*, are in God himself (that is in an infinite degree of perfection) the most pure of *Spirits*, 'tis not likely that *Body* shou'd be derogatory to the purity of infinitely inferior *Spirits*.

On this Corporeity of *Spirits*, depends a more obvious Explanation of two Texts of Scripture, than I have met with in any of the vulgar and general Comments (supposing the Book of *Genesis* a true History of matter of Fact, and no Parable, as Dr. Burnet contends in his *Archiologia*) *If the Angels have Bodies, we may, without Absurdity,*

suggest them to generate with Women, and so the Sons of God might enter with the Daughters of Men, and beget a Race of Gyants on Earth. For 'tis unaccountable to me, that none of the Daughters of Iniquity (as the vulgar Interpreters will have it) should be capable of bearing so robust a Generation. The other place is in the Epistles of St. Paul, where he enjoyns the *Women* to be cover'd in the Church because of the *Angels*. For the Church being the more peculiar place of the Ministry of *Angels*, they might, perhaps, by the Beauty of that Sex, be diverted from their Duty. This Opinion wou'd restore the Free-will to the *Angels*, which I can't conceive shou'd be so absolutely necessary for the justification of Man, as the Clergy wou'd persuade us, and yet not at all requisite to that of *Angels*. If Free-will was taken from them on the Fall, of one part of 'em, they met with a more indulgent Fate than Man, who still possesses it to his Ruine.

These Considerations suggest an odd extravagant Thought, which I must set down, if it be but to make you laugh, and, I hope, you'll pardon my impertinent freedom——

The Thought is this——

Who knows but this Race of Men was first of Angelic Degree, till by the bewitching Smiles of Woman (the most lovely Brute of



of the Universe) betray'd to Mortality in her Embraces. And then perhaps *Columbus* might be the first of the Sons of *Noah*, that enter'd the new discover'd World of *America*, which might be a Race deriv'd from some other deluded Angels, won by the same destructive Bait.

Pardon me if I think the *Pandora* of the Heathens (to say nothing of our *Eve*) may favour this *Imagination*.

But these are only indigested Thoughts, I dare neither yield nor deny my Assent to, till I know your Judgment, which has a very great Influence over,

S I R,

Your much obliged Friend,

And humble Servant,

CHARLES GILDON.

To

To Mr. B. Fellow of --- Colledge.

I N the last you honoured me with, you said you were now giving your self to the study of Philosophy, which makes me desire you to give me your Thoughts upon these following Heads, in as brief a manner as may be.

1. Whether there be a Succession in Eternity, or it be as *Boetius* defines it *Interminabilis vita tota simul & perfecta possessio*, but he building his Opinion with the rest of the old *Platonists* on a false Supposition, seems to me in the wrong: For they imagin'd that it would be incompatible with the Immutability of God, not to have his whole Existence to be all once, his duration measur'd, as Mr. *Cowly* does by the Phrase of *An Eternal now*, because they thought by succession he must lose those parts that are past, and gain those that are to come, and only enjoy the present. But the Imperfection of Succession in Creatures is no good Argument that it must be so in God; for 'tis true that they both receive and lose by it, because as they grow

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grow



grow old, they acquire or are depriv'd of some property, which cannot happen in God. But that which makes most for this Opinion, is that since the contrary is not built on Revelation, there is no Reason we should implicitly yield our assent to it on the bare Authority of the *Platonists*, unless they could make us understand it; for I defy any one to think of Eternity without the Idea of Succession.

2. As to the Origin of *Good* and *Evil*, methinks 'tis less contradictory, and unreasonable to believe as the *Ancient Persians* did, that there were two beginnings of things, the one *Good*, and the other *Evil*. For how can *Evil* proceed from a Being infinitely *Good*, and without whom nothing is, if *Evil* be not? And if *Dr. Burnet* has prov'd *Genesis* but a Parable, why may not the *Persians* be as much in the right as the *Jews*.

3. Supposing the Soul Immaterial, why may not Material Fire have an operation on it, since the Body so much influences it in this Life.

4. I would fain know what Reason some men have (and those Philosophers) to term any one quality in God more excellent than another; for certainly let the number be

be infinite, so must the perfection of each be, else the Infinite Being would in some be less Infinite, or rather Finite; for I think there's no medium betwixt Infinite, and Finite; nor any difference can I discover betwixt two equally Infinite Qualities. If therefore the Qualities of all things are, and by consequence Originally were (for God's Qualities can neither increase nor suffer diminution) in God, as it may be evidently prov'd, then it follows, that those of Body are of equal excellency with those of Spirits, since equally in him, and all the Qualities of God are Infinitely perfect.

5. The opinion of the Plurality of Worlds seems more agreeable to God's infinite (for so must all God's Qualities be) communicative Quality to be continually making new Worlds, since other ways this Quality or Act of Creating would be only once exerted, and for infinite duration lie useless and dormant. But it seems strange, that only once this Infinite desire of Communicating his Infinite Glory should be put in practice, and that only to so little, and inconsiderable a Number as all the Sons of *Adam* can make up, in comparison of Infinity. The opinion Plurality of Worlds does at least give us a more August Idea of the Wisdom and Power of God, and of his infinite



Perfections, than to imagine all that Infinite Extension should be like a barren Heath, without any Productions of the Infinite Being, and not fill'd with Infinite and Endless Worlds.

But these are Doubts enough to be resolv'd in one better, if you will answer them, I shall be extremely oblig'd to you, since they are design'd for the publick view; and I would willingly have them resolv'd, of which I'm sensible you are very capable. I am

Your oblig'd

humble Servant,

C. GILDON.

To

To CHARLS BLOUNT Esq;

*Of Natural Religion, as opposed to
Divine Revelation.*

Natural Religion is the Belief we have of an eternal intellectual Being, and of the Duty which we owe him, manifested to us by our Reason, without Revelation or positive Law: The chief Heads whereof seem contain'd in these few Particulars.

1. That there is one infinite eternal God, Creator of all Things.
2. That he governs the World by Providence.
3. That 'tis our Duty to worship and obey him as our Creator and Governour.
4. That our Worship consists in Prayer to him, and Praise of him.
5. That our Obedience consists in the Rules of Right Reason, the Practtice whereof is Moral Virtue.
6. That we are to expect Rewards and Punishments hereafter, according to our Actions in this Life; which includes the Soul's Immortality, and is proved by our admitting Providence.

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7. That

Seventhly, That when we err from the Rules of our Duty, we ought to Repent, and trust in God's mercy for Pardon.

That Rule which is necessary to our future Happiness, ought to be generally made known to all men.

But no Rule of Revealed Religion was, or ever could be made known to all men.

Therefore no Revealed Religion is necessary to future Happiness.

The Major is thus prov'd :

Our Future Happiness depends upon our obeying, or endeavouring to fulfil the known Will of God.

But that Rule which is not generally known, cannot be generally obey'd.

Therefore that Rule which is not generally known, cannot be the Rule of our Happiness.

Now the Minor of the first Syllogism is matter of Fact, and uncontrovertible, that no Religion supernatural has been conveyed to all the World; witness the large Continent of *America*, not discover'd till within this two Hundred Years; where if there were any Revealed Religion, at least it was not the *Christian*.

And if it be objected to the whole, That the ways of God's dealing with the *Heathen* as to Eternal Mercy, are unknown to any; and that he will Judge them by the Law
of

of Nature, or (in other terms) the Rules of Natural Religion or Morality. We urge again, that either those Laws of Natural Religion are sufficient, if kept, to Happiness; or they who could know no more, are out of a possibility of a future state of Blessedness: because they could not comply with Laws they know not: And in saying this, they deny God's Infinite Goodness, which provides for all his Creatures the means of attaining that Happiness, whereof their Natures are capable. Again, if they urge, that Natural Religion is sufficient, but not possible to be lived up to. The same answer falls more heavy upon them; That then there is no visible means left for the greater part of Mankind to be happy: And to do our duty according to what we are able, is but a cold comfort, if we have no Assurance or Hope at least in the means we have laid before us.

Now if they infer, that therefore a Revealed Religion is necessary, because the Natural will not suffice, is to beg the Question, and to begin again the Dispute; for we hold that a Natural Religion will suffice for our Happiness; because it is the only general means proposed. And tho' we affirm not that we can wholly live up to it; yet that a general expiation is discovered in the Natural Religion, *viz.* Penitence.



nitence, and Resolution of Amendment that we acknowledge.

Sir *Charles Wolfy* tells us what is most true, that Mankind in all Ages has applyed to God, as guilty and Offenders; that all have agreed an Expiation was necessary, but look'd up to him for the Revelation of it: wherefore they used several Sacrifices and Lustrations, which they had, or thought they had reveal'd.

This I think so weak an Argument for a revealed Religion, that it serves rather to destroy it, because, that granting all Ages have thought an Expiation necessary, yet first their differing in the outward means, shew'd the means was uncertain; And if there had been any outward Expiation necessary, it must have been known generally, or the force of the first Argument holds good, namely, that it is not possible for the greatest part of Mankind to be happy hereafter, where the means of compassing it was not known to them.— But, *2dly*, these several Expiations were indeed all but Symbolical, and refer'd to our Sorrow and Repentance: That it is the true and only Expiation of Sin, and is so agreed upon by all men in all Ages, and of all Religions, wherefore take it for an undoubted Truth: and this not revealed, but innate, and a part of Natural Religion.

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The same may be said of the Doctrinal part of it: Thus are the things generally known and believ'd; but all end in the practice of Vertue, and Reverence of the Deity.

Now all Reveal'd Religions are different from each other; and you cannot prove any one of them to be truer than the rest, before you can prove that one of them must be true; and if once known true, mankind would all agree in it; otherwise those marks of Truth in it were not visible, which are necessary to draw an universal assent.

For Rewards and Punishments hereafter, the Notion of them has not been universally receiv'd; for the *Heathens* disagreed in the Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul: But grant that they seem reasonable, because they are deduced from the Doctrine of Providence, which the most Rational of the *Heathens* held: For if God governs all things, he is just, because it is a part of Infinite Perfection; and if so, he either rewards here, or hereafter; but not always here, therefore hereafter. Yet if they who hold Revelation, will grant that they are parts of Natural and un-reveal'd Religion, because the wisest men have inclin'd to hold them amongst the *Heathen*, and now do in all Opinions; then it follows, that by living up to the Dictates

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of



of Reason and Penitence, when we fail in so doing, men may be happy in a future state, without any help of Revealed Religion, which is all I contend for.

The great Objections against the validity of Natural Religion to Eternal Happiness, seem to be these,

1. That this Doctrine was never generally held in any Age; and therefore seems not to carry that light of Moral certainty in it, which we hold necessary to establish the truth of a Religion: for we say that Religion is only true, which is or may be reasonable, and convincing to all men; now if it be not generally held, it appears not convincing.

This Objection has not really the weight in it, which it seems to carry at first sight; for 'tis evident that many men of all Religions at this day, have center'd in the Opinion of Natural Religion, and its sufficiency of Happiness. The *Heathen* Philosophers and Poets (who were the first Priests) did at the bottom acknowledge Vertue to be the guide of all our Actions; and all their Mysteries referr'd to a good Life, and to Repentance. At this day the Learned in all Religions hold the same: this they agree in; in the outward Ceremonies of every Religion, they are every man

man content to Conform to those of their own Country. Which is an Argument for us, that whatever new Religions have sprung up, yet they have all retain'd this part thereof, *viz.* that they have disagreed amongst themselves.

'Tis confess'd that whole Nations have never follow'd our Opinion: but how many of a Nation ever consider to the bottom of any Religion! that which is establish'd draws the Vulgar, who enquires not beyond it. And, besides, our Opinion is so Charitable, that we do not exclude any Dissenters from eternal Happiness: God may be pleas'd with different Worships, because we say that all Worships are included in Prayer, Praise, exercise of Vertue and Penitence, when we have done amiss: So that the foundation being the same, we labour not in the Superstructures, which are only the Modes and Circumstances of Religion.

2. The next Objection against the Sufficiency of Natural Religion to Happiness eternal, is only a bare Affirmation of our Adversaries, That Natural Religion is but an imperfect Light, which God gives us so far, as that by improving it, we may arrive at a Supernatural Knowledge. As suppose I were going to *Whitehall* from *Covent-Garden Church*, and can then see only

to



to the end of the *Strand* before me, but coming thither, am directed further.

But I wholly deny any Natural Light can lead me to a Supernatural; there is no proportion betwixt those two extremes: There is a Gulph betwixt, a *μεγαλονησος*: And 'tis not so easie a passage as from *Covent-Garden* to *Whiteball*; 'tis rather from *Covent-Garden* to some place beyond the *Cælum Empyræum*, and wholly out of the Boundaries of Nature. Also to prove that God can reveal to me what is farther Necessary, when I have us'd my best Natural Endeavours, is only to prove that God is Omnipotent and Infinite; but proves not that 'tis necessary he should or will do it: for a *posse ad esse non valet Consequentia*. I have already endeavoured to prove that it is not necessary he should reveal more; and therefore till that point be determin'd *επιχειρηματι*, I humbly doubt and suspend my Belief.

3. Another Objection may be this: That there is no foundation in Natural Religion for a vertuous Life; or at least not so great as in a Revealed Religion, where Rewards and Punishments are proposed. So that a meer Moral Man upon bare Vertue, will be discouraged when he sees Vertue not rewarded here.

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A second Objection is, That there is a difference betwixt our condition, and that of the *Heathens*: for if they liv'd up to the height of Vertue and known Reason, they might (say some charitable *Christians*) be happy in a future condition: We cannot, because a revealed Religion has been discover'd to us, more than to them, tho' we believe it not: Therefore we ought in our own defence to embrace it, because that by the Principles of a Natural Religion we grant, that those of a reveal'd may be saved: but they of the reveal'd deny that safety to us. (A foolish Catholick Argument.)

To the first Objection we answer: That Rewards and Punishments are acknowledg'd in Natural Religion, and are to expect them in a future Life answerable to our Actions here; and according to the Justice and Mercy of the great Creator: And till you prove they are inconsistent with the Doctrine of Natural Religion, we need answer no further to your Argument.

To the second Objection; It supposes like the other; first, a Supernatural Religion, which is to prove. And if the *Heathens* living up to the height of Natural Religion, might be eternally happy, I see no reason but why we may be so too; for
if



if our Happiness depends upon our Belief, we cannot firmly believe till our Reason be convinced of a Supernatural Religion: And if the Reasons of it were evident, there could be no longer any Contention about Religion: All men would embrace the same, and acquiesce in it; no prejudice would prevail against the certainty of a future good. 'Tis every mans greatest business here to labour for his Happiness, and consequently none would be backward to know the means.

For the Inference, namely, that tho' a Supernatural Religion be dubious, yet 'tis the safest way to embrace it. I *first* Answer, That I cannot embrace what comes not within the compass of my knowledge: And if I cannot believe, 'tis a sign the Evidence is not strong enough to make me. And *secondly*,

Two Arguments there are, which Sir Ch. Wolfey calls *Demonstrations* to prove a Reveal'd Religion:—

The first is, *The Notion of Sin, or deviation from good in all men; a repugnant Principle to Vertue; a lapse from our first estate, wherein God, who is all good, must needs create us, and which the World has generally acknowledg'd by Lustrations and Sacrifices to appease the Deity: This he says, we can know by no other Light but Revelation, &c.*

Secondly,

Secondly, The approaches to God, and propitiation, must be immediately and supernaturally discover'd, how he will be pleas'd.

To the first, I Answer; This generally acknowledg'd Lapse of Nature that it came may be discover'd by Nature, *viz.* by Natural Reason; how it came, 'tis reasonable to conclude without Revelation, namely, by a deviation from the right Rule of Reason implanted in us: how he came to deviate from this Rule or Lapse, proceeds from the Nature of Goodness, originally given us by our Creator; which Reason tells to be an Arbitrary state of Goodness only, therefore not a Necessary Goodness to which our Natures were constrain'd. In short, our fall proceeds from our not being able to reason rightly on every thing we act; and with such Beings we were created: For all our Actions are design'd by us to some good which may arise to us; but we do not always distinguish rightly of that good: we often mistake the *Bonum apparens* for the *Bonum reale*; *Decipimur specie Recti*: The *Bonum jucundum* is prefer'd for want of Right Reasoning to the *Bonum honestum*; and the *Bonum vicinum* (tho' it be the less in it self) often carries it before the *Bonum remotum*: which is greater in its own Nature. No Man ever held, that we could *appetere malum quâ malum*:

lum : And therefore I will not grant him a total Lapse in our Natures from God ; for we see many born with virtuous Inclinations. And though all Men at some times err, even the best in their Actions; it only shews, that we were not created to a necessitated goodness. 'Tis enough to prove no fatal Lapse, that many are proved through the course of their Lives, more prone to do Good than Ill ; and that all Men do Ill only for want of right Reasoning, because the Will necessarily follows the last Dictate of the Understanding.

To the Second ; Namely, *That the Propitiation for our Offences must be supernaturally discover'd, or else we can come upon no certain Terms of Acceptation with God.*

I answer that which I have often hinted, *viz.* That all the World who have agreed upon the Fault, agree upon the Compensation ; namely, Sorrow and a true Repentance : And Reason dictates this without Revelation. The World indeed has differ'd in their Lustrations and Sacrifices; but more have in all Ages agreed, that these without Repentance were nothing, and Repentance without them was valid : But that bare Repentance is sufficient Compensation for an infinite Offence against an infinite Being, is what our Adversaries deny, and therefore point

point us to an infinite Sacrifice or Propitiation for Sin, namely, Jesus Christ.

I may first answer, That till all who profess Christianity, agree whether Christ be a Propitiation or no, I need not go about a farther Refutation of their Argument ; for the *Socinians* will allow him only to be set up for an Example, not as a Mediator or Sacrifice. But grant that the Offence is committed against an infinite Being, we are but finite Creatures who commit it, and Repentance is what we can answer to an Atonement ; and therefore we may reasonably assert, 'tis all God will expect from us : Faith, even in in Christ, according to their Rules, not being good without it. If I owe a Million, and can pay but a Thousand Pounds, my Creditor can have but All ; 'tis true, my Body is then subject to Imprisonment, that is to the farther Extent of the Law ; but then that Law is void of Mercy. Now Mercy is one of the greatest Attributes of God, and I think that infinite Justice cannot be extended on a finite Creature infinitely, without a Contradiction to infinite Mercy, which is, as 'twere, God's High-Court of Equity in the Case to relieve from the extremity of the Law: for tho' God's Attributes are all infinite, and tho' his Justice be infinite as well as his Mercy ; yet the infinity of his Justice is only as inherent, not as extensive as his Mercy towards



wards us, we receiving of his Justice but according to the measure of our deserts, in punishment from his Mercy more than we can deserve: As the strictest of Christians hold, If that his Mercy be farther extended to us than his Justice, his Justice is not infinitely extended in punishing us; for nothing is infinite which another thing can go beyond. And in this I follow that Father of the Church *Origen*, who thought that by a long Purgation, the greatest Sins might be wash'd away, and that *Pythagoras* and *Plato* taught him.

It has been demanded of me, Whether I should be convinc'd of my Opinion, and admit of supernatural Religion, in case the Gospel (*i. e.*) a supernatural Religion had been promulgated to all the World? I answer'd, I should; and was contented that the whole stress of the Dispute should be terminated in that one Point. It was reply'd, That then if it could be proved that this universal Revelation was unnecessary, I ought to acquiesce; I granted that also.

'Twas then urg'd, That this Revelation was not thought necessary by Almighty God, because he foreknew that none of those Heathens, or whosoever else would live up to the height of their natural Reason or Religion, and that therefore it was not reasonable that they should receive this supernatural Help; wherefore it was concluded

cluded, that they were all damned eternally.

I answer; This is to dive too far into God's Secrets, to conclude them all damned in all Ages, to whom that revealed Light came not. The apostle says, *They shall be judged by the Law of Nature*; but he says not, They shall be damn'd. Neither will they or can they be call'd of themselves, unless the means had been offered to them, as well as to us. Also by the same Reason, all to whom this Revelation is come, shall be saved; because it was revealed to none who were not worthy of it: For if he foreknew that no one of the Heathens should live up to the worth of this new Light, and therefore deny'd it to them all, then he who makes no distinction of Persons, would only have reveal'd it to those who should be saved: But our Adversaries confess that this Light is revealed to many as shall not be saved among the Christians, as if it were only to double their Condemnation; an Opinion which totally robs God of his Attribute of Mercy, and Man is left at least in a very doubting condition, if not totally desperate.

I am, S I R,

Your Friend without Reserve,

A. W.

To



To his Friend Mr. Gildon, concerning
the World's Age, Beginning
and End.

S I R, That Part of *Ocellus Lucanus* which I
promised to send you, is what follows.

OCELLUS LUCANUS.

MY Opinion is, That the Universe
admitteth neither Generation nor
Corruption, for it ever was, and ever shall
be; inasmuch as if 'twere subject to time,
it would not yet continue. For if any
Man should conceive it to have been made,
he would not be able to find into what it
should be corrupted and dissolv'd; since
that out of which it was made, is before
the Universe; as that into which it shall
be corrupted, will be after the Universe.
Besides, the Universe being made, is made
together with all things; and being cor-
rupted, is corrupted together with all
things; which is impossible: So that the
Universe is without Beginning and End-
ing. Now whatsoever had a Beginning of
its Production, and ought to partake of
Dis-

Dissolution, admitteth two Alterations;
the one from that which is less, to that
which is greater; and from that which is
worse, to that which is better; and that
term from whence it beginneth to be
ter'd, is call'd Production; as that to
which it arriveth is called the State: The
other Alteration is from that which is
greater, to that which is less; and from
that which is better, to that which is
worse: But the Period of this Alteration
is call'd Corruption and Dissolution. If
therefore the whole be producible and
corruptible, when it was produced, it was
alter'd from that which was less, to that
which was greater: and from that which
was worse, to that which was better: and
consequently will afterwards be alter'd
from the greater to the less, and from
better to worse. So that the World being
produced, admitted Growth and State; and
shall again receive Diminution and Cor-
ruption. For every Nature that admitteth
Progress, hath three Terms, and two In-
tervals. The three Terms are Production,
State, and Dissolution; but the two Inter-
vals are, from the Production to the State,
and from the State to the Dissolution.
Now the Universe doth of it self afford
us no such evidence, since no one ever saw
it produc'd nor alter'd either in *Ascensu*
or *Descensu*, but it always remain'd in the
same

' same condition 'tis now in, equal and like
 ' it self. The evident Signs whereof, are
 ' the Orders, fit Proportions, Figures, Sci-
 ' tuations, Intervals, Faculties, mutual swif-
 ' tness and slowness of Motions, Numbers,
 ' and Periods of Times; for all such things
 ' admit Alteration and Diminution, accord-
 ' ing to the Progress of a producible Na-
 ' ture: For that which is greater and bet-
 ' ter, accompanieth the State by reason of
 ' its Vigor; and which is less or worse, ac-
 ' companieth the Dissolution, by reason of
 ' its Weakness. Now I call the World by
 ' the Name of the Universe, which Appel-
 ' lation it obtaineth, in that it is framed out
 ' of all things, being an absolute and perfect
 ' Collection of all Natures: for besides the
 ' Universe, there is nothing; and if there
 ' be any thing, it is contain'd in the Uni-
 ' verse, either as a part, or excrescence
 ' thereof. As for those things that are con-
 ' tain'd in the World, they have commu-
 ' nion with the World, but the World hath
 ' communion with nothing else besides it
 ' self; for all other things have not such a
 ' Nature as is sufficient of it self, but stand
 ' in need of the communion with other
 ' things: As living Creatures need Respi-
 ' ration; the Eye, Light, and the other
 ' Senses their severall Objects; and Plants
 ' need the Juice of the Earth for their
 ' growth: Nay, the Sun, Moon, Planets, and
 ' fixed

' fixed Stars, stand in need of a certain por-
 ' tion of the Universe; only the Universe
 ' stands in need of no other thing besides it
 ' self. Now as Fire, which is able to give
 ' heat to other things, is of it self hot; so
 ' that which is the cause of perfection to
 ' other things, is of it self perfect; and
 ' that which is the cause of Safety to others,
 ' must of it self be safe and permanent.
 ' Also that which is the cause of Compacted-
 ' ness to others, must needs of it self be
 ' compacted: But the World is to all other
 ' things the cause of Being, Safety, and Per-
 ' fection; wherefore of it self it must needs
 ' be eternal, perfect, and permanent for
 ' ever. Again, If the Universe be dissolv'd,
 ' it must of necessity be dissolv'd into Some-
 ' thing, or into Nothing; Not into Some-
 ' thing, inasmuch as there will not be a
 ' total Corruption of the Universe, if it be
 ' dissolv'd into Something: for Something
 ' must be either the Universe, or at least a
 ' Part of it; nor will it be annihilated: For it
 ' is impossible that Something should either
 ' be made of Nothing, or dissolv'd into No-
 ' thing; wherefore the Universe can admit
 ' neither Production nor Corruption. Now
 ' if any one should conceive it is corrupted,
 ' either it must be corrupted from Some-
 ' thing that is without the Universe, or from
 ' Something that is within; it cannot be
 ' from Something without it, for there is
 ' No-



' Nothing without the Universe which com-
 ' prehends all things, and is the World.
 ' Nor can it be from things that are within
 ' the Universe, for then they must of Ne-
 ' cessity be greater and more prevalent than
 ' the Universe, which cannot be: for all
 ' things are hurry'd by the Universe, and
 ' endew'd with Life and Soul. So that if it
 ' comes neither by any thing without the
 ' World, nor within it, then it cannot be
 ' Subject to Corruption and Dissolution.
 ' Moreover, All Nature, if it be well con-
 ' sider'd, seemeth to take away Continuity
 ' from the first and most honourable parts
 ' in a certain Proportion, lessning it by de-
 ' grees, and applying it to all mortal things,
 ' as also admitting a Progress of its own
 ' Constitution, (for the first Bodies being
 ' mov'd, do in an uniform manner perform
 ' their Periods) I say, a Progress not con-
 ' tinued and local, but consisting in Altera-
 ' tion; viz. Condensation and Rarefaction.
 ' Thus Fire being press'd together produ-
 ' ceth Air, Air Water, and Water Earth.
 ' Also from Earth there is the same Period
 ' of Alteration, till you come to Fire again,
 ' whence the Alteration at first began,
 ' (according to what *Hippocrates* saith—
 ' *Lumen Jovi, Tenebræ Plutoni; Lumen Plu-*
 ' *toni, Tenebræ Jovi:*) Likewise Fruits and
 ' Plants receiv'd their Beginning from Seeds,
 ' which

' which being come to maturity and per-
 ' fection, are again resolv'd into Seeds, Na-
 ' ture making her progress from the same
 ' unto the same. But Men, and other Ani-
 ' mals, do in a more inferior Manner finish
 ' the progress of their Nature, (since they
 ' do not return to their first Age:) Nei-
 ' ther have they a reciprocal change into
 ' one another, as 'tis in Fire, Air, Water,
 ' and Earth; but after they have run thro'
 ' all the four aforesaid parts of their Race,
 ' and passed their several Ages, they are
 ' dissolv'd and dye, becoming in the same
 ' state as they were. (*Quo non Nati Jacent,*
 ' as *Seneca* and *Pliny* both speak.) These
 ' therefore are Arguments sufficient to
 ' prove, That the Universe remaineth per-
 ' fect and uncorrupted; as also that the Ex-
 ' crescences and Results thereof, suffer only
 ' a Mutation, and not an Annihilation;
 ' there being no such thing as *Quies in Na-*
 ' *tura*, all things being in a perpetual circu-
 ' lar Motion. Nay, that the Figure, Mo-
 ' tion, Time, and Substance thereof, are
 ' without Beginning and End; thereby it
 ' plainly appears, that the World admit-
 ' teth neither Production nor Dissolution:
 ' for the Figure is spherical, and conse-
 ' quently on every side equal, and therefore
 ' without Beginning or Ending. Also the
 ' Motion is circular, and consequently
 ' stable, never shifting its former place. The
 ' Time

' Time likewise is infinite wherein the Mo-
 ' tion is perform'd, as that which is mov'd
 ' had neither Beginning, nor shall have End;
 ' from all which it is evident, that the Uni-
 ' verse admitteth neither Production nor
 ' Corruption. *Ocellus Lucanus*, chap. 1.

Now it is very much, that this Author
Ocellus Lucanus (who for his Antiquity is
 held to be almost a Contemporary with
Moses, if not before him) should have so
 different a Sentiment of the World's Begin-
 ning from that which *Moses* had, methinks
 if *Moses's* History of the Creation, and of
Adam's being the first Man, had been a
 general receiv'd Opinion at that time, *Ocel-
 lus Lucanus*, who was so ancient and so emi-
 nent a Philosopher, should not have been al-
 together ignorant thereof.

' Again, (saith he) as the Frame of the
 ' World hath been always, so it is necessary
 ' that its Parts should likewise always have
 ' existed; by Parts, I mean the Heaven,
 ' Earth, and that which lieth betwixt, *viz.*
 ' the Sky; for not without these, but with
 ' these, and of these, the World consists.
 ' Also if the Parts exist, it is necessary that
 ' the Things which are within them should
 ' also coexist; as with the Heaven, the Sun,
 ' Moon, fixed Stars and Planets, with the
 ' Earth, Animals, Plants, Minerals, Gold
 ' and Silver; with the Air, Exhalations,
 ' Winds, and Alterations of Weather, some-
 ' times

' times Heat, and sometimes Cold; for with
 ' the World, all those things do, and ever
 ' have existed as parts thereof. Nor hath
 ' Man had any original Production from the
 ' Earth or elsewhere, as some believe; but
 ' hath always been, as now he is, coexistent
 ' with the World, whereof he is a part.
 ' Now Corruptions and violent Alterations
 ' are made according to the Parts of the
 ' Earth: sometimes by the overflowing of
 ' the Sea; sometimes with the dilating and
 ' parting of the Earth by Winds and Wa-
 ' ters imprison'd in the Bowels thereof; but
 ' an universal Corruption of the Earth
 ' never hath been, nor ever shall be. Yet
 ' these Alterations have given occasion for
 ' the invention of many Lies and Fables.
 ' And thus are we to understand them that
 ' derive the Original of the *Greek History*
 ' from *Inachus* the Argive: not that he was
 ' really the Original thereof, as some make
 ' him; but because a most memorable Al-
 ' teration did then happen, some were so
 ' unskilful as to make that Construction
 ' thereof; and if any way we may believe
 ' *Adam* to be the first Man, we must expound
 ' it after this manner, *viz.* That he was the
 ' first of the whole Race. But for the Uni-
 ' verse, and all the parts whereof it subsists,
 ' as it is at present, so it ever was, and ever
 ' shall be; one Nature perpetually moving,
 ' and another perpetually suffering; one al-



' ways governing, and the other always being govern'd.

The course which Nature takes in governing the World, is by one Contrary prevailing over another, as thus——

The Moisture in the Air prevaieth over the Driness of the Fire; and the Coldness of the Water, over the Heat of the Air; the Driness of the Earth, over the Moisture of the Water; and so the Moisture of the Water, over the Driness of the Earth; and the Heat in the Air, over the Coldness of the Water; and the Driness in the Fire, over the Moisture of the Air. And thus the Alterations are made and produced out of one into another.

It plainly appears out of the Bible, that there were two Creations both of Man and Woman, and that *Adam* was not the first Man, nor *Eve* the first Woman, only the first of the Holy Race, and this divers of the *Jews* believe: for in the first Chapter of *Genesis*, ver. 27. It is said—*So God created man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him: male and female created he them. Bidding them increase and multiply, and have dominion over all things:* Which plainly shews that Man was then created, and that the other Creation of *Adam* and *Eve* spoken of in the second Chapter, *Ver. 7. and 22.* were of the first Man and Woman of the Holy Race, and not the first Man and Woman

Woman that ever was in the World; for it was a great space of time, and divers great Actions were accomplish'd betwixt those two Creations: Therefore when it is said—*Gen. 6. 2. That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and took them for their Wives.* The meaning is, that the Sons of *Adam* of the second Creation, saw the Daughters of the Men of the first Creation, that they were fair, and married them. What *Josephus* speaks of the *Greeks*, and other Nations, may with the same Reason be apply'd to *Moses* and the *Jews*, viz. That all Founders and Establishers of new Estates, have each of them suppos'd in their own behalf, that whosoever was of theirs, he was the first of the World, *Contra Apionem*, Lib. 1.

Now however *Josephus* boasts so much of the Antiquity of his Countrymen the *Jews*, yet he himself confesses, That he nevertheless durst not presume to compare the Nation of the *Jews*, with the Antiquity of the most ancient and infallible Writings of the *Egyptians*, *Chaldeans* and *Phœnicians*, who dwell in such Countries as are not subject to the Corruption of Air; and have carefully provided, that whatsoever has been done by them, should not sleep in obscurity, but be kept in memory, in the publick Writings of the most learned Men. *Contra Apionem*, L. 1.

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Which is as if he had said, Forasmuch as no other Nations but the *Egyptians*, *Phenicians* and *Chaldees*, have certain Records of their Original, therefore will I pretend my own Nation of the *Jews* to be ancients than them, who cannot disprove me; but because the *Egyptians*, *Phenicians* and *Chaldees* have more ancient Records of their Country in being, to disprove me, therefore to prevent being confuted, I think it more convenient to yield to them in Antiquity. And this is the secret meaning of what *Josephus* says.

I have observ'd that no Prophets ever foretold the End of the World should happen till many years after their own deaths, being thereby sure not to live to see themselves proved Lyars—

Cur mundi finem propriorem non facis? ut ne Ante Obitum mendax arguerere? sapis.

Owen upon Napier.

For they who prophesie of the World's destruction, are upon sure grounds, viz. that till it comes to pass, it may be expected.

As Nature cannot create, by making Something out of Nothing; so neither can it Annihilate, by turning Something into Nothing: whence it consequently follows, As there is No Access, so there is no Diminution in the Universe, no more than in the Alphabet, by the infinite Combination and Transposition of Letters, or in the Wax by
the

the alteration of the Seal stamp'd upon it. Now as for the Forms of natural Bodies, no sooner doth any one abandon the Matter it inform'd, but another steps instantly into the place thereof; no sooner hath one acted his part and is retired, but another comes presently forth upon the Stage, tho' it may be in a different shape, and so act a different part: So that no Portion of the Matter is, or at any Time can be altogether void and empty, but like *Vertumnus* or *Proteus*, it turns it self into a thousand shapes, and is always supply'd and furnish'd with one Form or another, there being in Nature Nothing but Circulation: *Ne Res ad Nihilum redigantur protinus omnes.* Lucret. lib. 2. And to this purpose divers of the Poets speak—

Nec sic interimit mors res, ut materia Corpora conficiat, sed cæcum dissipat ollis: Inde aliis aliud conjugit & efficit, omnes Res ut convertant formas, mutantque colores, Et capiant sensus, & puncto Tempore reddant: Ut nos eas referre eadem primordia rerum.

Lucret. lib. 1.

————— *Mutantur in ævum Singula, & inceptum alternat natura tenorem, Quodque dies antiqua tulit, post auferet ipsa.*

Pontan. Metamorph. cap. 48.

Nec species sua cuiq; manet: rerumq; Novatrix Ex aliis alias reparat Natura figuras. Nec perit in tanto quidquam (mibi credite) mundo, Sed

*Sed variat faciemque novat: Nascique vocatur
Incipere esse aliud, quam quod fuit ante: moriq;
Desinere illud idem: cum sint huc forsitan illa,
Hæc Translata illuc, summâ tamen omnia con-
stant.* Ovid. *Metam.* 15.

Also *Philo* in his Book of the *World's In-
corruptibility*, alledgeth to this purpose the
Verses of a *Greek* Tragick Poet, and I think
of *Euripides*, which the Translator renders
thus—

————— *Genitum Nihil emoritur.*

*Sed Transpositum ultro Citroque
Formam priorem alterat.*

Casaubon likewise in his first Exercitation
against *Baronius*, sheweth from the testimo-
ny of *Hippocrates*, *Appolonius*, *Seneca*, *Anto-
ninus* the Emperor, and others. *Nihil in
rebus Creatis perire, sed mutari duntaxat.*

But to confirm what *Ocellus* saith, we
find something like it in the Scriptures, for
Solomon speaks much to the same purpose,
Eccles. 1. 4. *One Generation passeth away, and
another Generation cometh, but the Earth abideth
for ever.*

Now as Geographers use to place Seas upon
that part of the Globe which they know not;
so Chronologers, who are much of the same
humour, do generally blot out past Ages,
which are unknown to them; as the one
drown

those Countries they cannot de-
scribe; so do the other with their cruel
Pens destroy those times, whereof they
have no account.

The *Grecians* made three Divisions of
Time; the Unknown times; the Heroick
or Fabulous Times; and the Historical
times, or such as they knew to have been
true. The Unknown Times were those
with them, which past from the Be-
ginning of things to the Flood; which
Time, whether it had a Beginning, by
Computation can never certainly be
comprehended, as *Censorinus* from *Varro*
affirms. The Fabulous and Heroick Times
were those that intervened betwixt the
Flood and the first Olympiad: buried like-
wise in Obscurity; nor is it certainly known
how long *Inachus* was from *Ogyges*, or *Co-
drus* from *Inachus*. Lastly, the Historical
and known part of Time is computed from
the first Olympiad, and treasur'd up by the
Greek Historians. That the *Egyptians* and
Phenicians had a constant Record of things
past, is confess'd by the very *Greeks* them-
selves; who but lately learn'd the use of
Letters from *Cadmus* the *Phenician*: for
which reason it has been doubted, whether
the *Greeks* had any use of Letters in time
of the *Trojan* Expedition; as we may find
in *Josephus* against *Appian*: That the *Phæ-
nicians* had the use of Letters long before
Moses,

Moses, and spake the same Language as the Hebrews did, is clearly proved by Samuel Petit in his *Miscellanea*, as well as by the Learned Bochart in his *Phaleg*. For although we know of no Writer at this time extant more ancient than Moses (unless it be Ocellus) yet few will deny but that there were Writers before him, out of whom he collected much of his own History; wherefore says Dr. Brown, I believe, besides Zoroaster, there were divers others that wrote before Moses. Upon which his Annotator quotes a Passage out of Apuleius (in *Apol.*) in these Words: *Si quod libet modicum emolumentum probaveritis, ego ille sim Carinondas, vel Damigeron, vel is Moses, vel Jannes, vel Apollonius, vel ipse Dardanus, vel quicumque alius post Zoroastrem & Hostanem inter Magos celebratus est* — Diodorus Siculus was not only famed for his great Learning, but by Reading, Enquiring, and Travelling throughout Europe, Asia and Africa, for the space of forty Years, had furnish'd his Library with many exquisite Volumes. Now he speaking of the Chaldeans, relates, that they thought very long ago, that the World according to its own Nature, was eternal, having no Beginning, nor that it should have any Corruption, in order to an End, and that Mankind was from Eternity, without any Beginning of their Generation: that the Stars were eternal; and by long observation of

of those eternal Stars, as also as an acute Knowledge of each of their particular motions, they foretold many future Events. You will hardly (says he) believe the Number of Years that the College of Chaldeans affirm'd they had spent in Contemplation of the Universe; for before the Expedition of Alexander into Asia, they reckon'd four hundred and seventy thousand Years, from the time they began to observe the Stars. Likewise Cicero (who was cotemporary with Diodorus,) mentions the very same account of time and Number of years. Critias, in Plato's Dialogue call'd *Ti-mæus*, tells us, how an ancient Egyptian Priest laugh'd at old Solon for boasting of the Primitive acts of the Athenians, as of Phoroneus and Niobe before the Flood, as also of Deucalion and Pyrrha after the Flood, as also of Deucalion and Pyrrha after the Flood; whereas the Priest told Solon, there had formerly been many more Floods: that he was ignorant even of the most famous of his Ancestors: that he had no knowledge of another Athens, the first and most ancient which stood before the Flood, and was destroyed by it: that he never heard of the glorious Enterprizes which those first Athenians had perform'd ten thousand years before the Flood; at which time an innumerable Company of fierce Warriors had invaded Egypt and Greece, and all that was against Hercules Pillars: against whom, the only
 Valor



Valor of the Citizens of old *Athens* was then shewn, above all other Nations. Now whether the Priest did this to banter poor *Solon*, I shall not determine; but the same History is cited, likewise in *Arnobius's* Treatise against the *Gentiles*, where he uses these Words—*We were the Cause* (says he) *that Ten thousand Years ago a great Army of Men came from the Atlantick Islands, as Plato relates, and destroy'd a great many Cities.*——*Scaliger* (in his Book *de Emend. Temp.*) says, *That the Chineses reckon'd the World to have been Eight hundred eightscore thousand and seventy three Years old, Anno Domini 1594.*

But I shall tire you no more with this Subject, which as it does to me, so undoubtedly it will to you, and ought to do the same to every good Christian, appear a meer Paradox, tho' of as great Antiquity as any thing I ever yet met with in prophane Story. However, notwithstanding it does not edifie, yet if it may in any kind serve to entertain and divert you, 'tis all that is aim'd at by,

S I R,

Your most faithful Friend

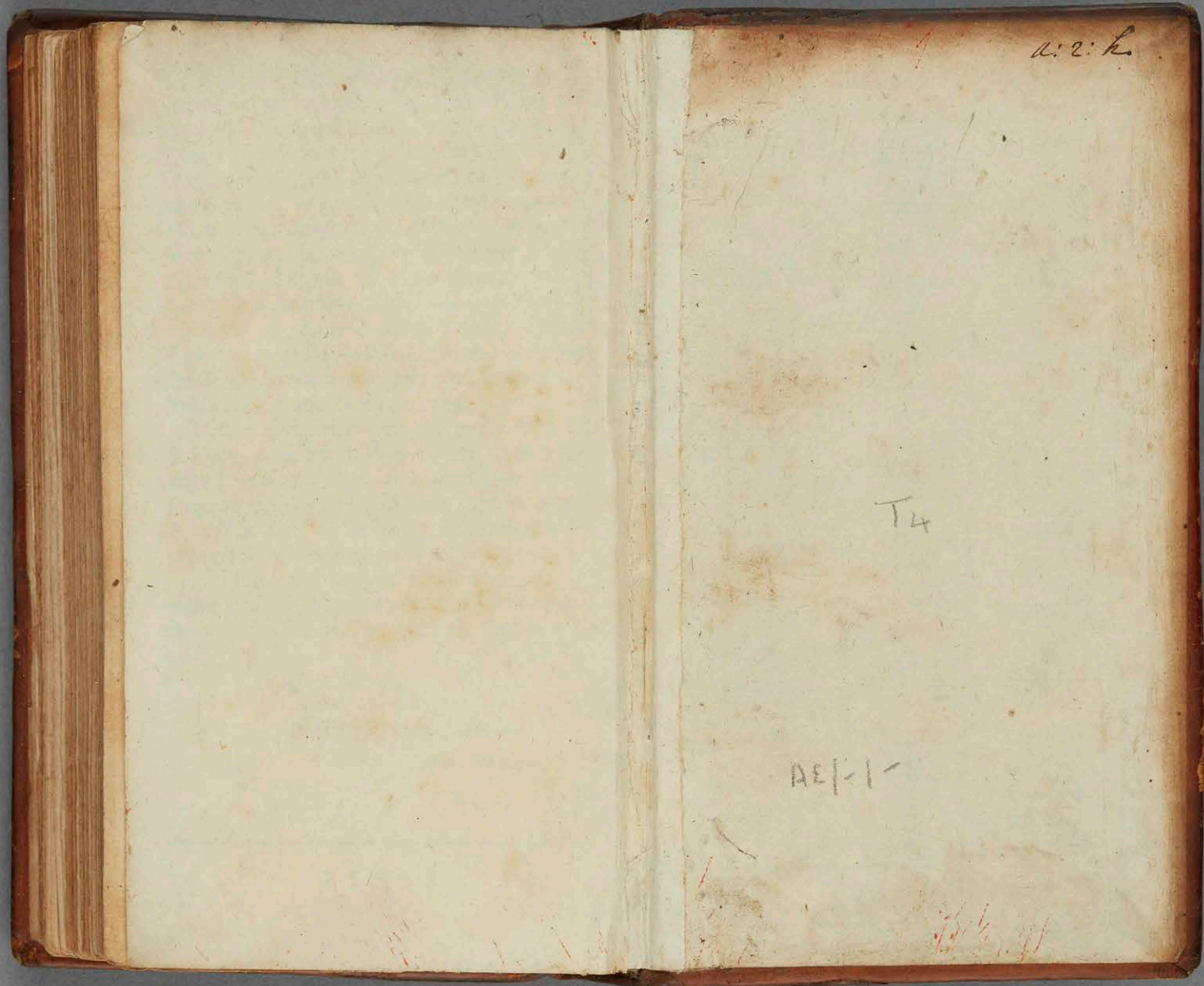
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