

Serious Reflections
DURING THE
L I F E
And Surprising
ADVENTURES
O F
ROBINSON CRUSOE;
WITH HIS
V I S I O N
O F T H E
Angelick W O R L D.

Written by Himself.



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Rec.
Regent L. L. Hubbard
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11-9-1925



Robinson Crusoe's PREFACE.



AS the Design of every Thing is said to be first in the Intention, and last in the Execution; so I come now to acknowledge to my Reader, That the present Work is not merely the Product of the two first Volumes, but the two first Volumes may rather be called the Product of this: The Fable is always made for the Moral, not the Moral for the Fable.

I have heard, that the envious and ill-disposed Part of the World have rais'd some Objections against the two first Volumes, on Pretence, *for want of a better Reason*; That (*as they say*) the Story is feign'd, that the Names are borrow'd, and that

ROBINSON CRUSOE'S

it is all a Romance ; that there never were any such Man or Place, or Circumstances in any Mans Life; that it is all form'd and embellish'd by Invention to impose upon the World.

I *Robinson Crusoe* being at this Time in perfect and sound Mind and Memory, Thanks be to God therefore ; do hereby declare, their Objection is an Invention scandalous in Design, and false in Fact ; and do affirm, that the Story, though Allegorical, is also Historical ; and that it is the beautiful Representation of a Life of unexampled Misfortunes, and of a Variety not to be met with in the World, sincerely adapted to, and intended for the common Good of Mankind, and designed at first, *as it is now farther apply'd*, to the most serious Uses possible.

Farther, that there is a Man alive, and well known too, the Actions of whose Life are the just Subject of these

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P R E F A C E

Volumes, and to whom all or most Part of the Story most directly alludes, this may be depended upon for Truth, and to this I set my Name.

The famous History of *Don Quixot*, a Work which thousands read with Pleasure, to one that knows the Meaning of it, was an emblematic History of, and a just Satyr upon the Duke *de Medina Sidonia*; a Person very remarkable at that Time in *Spain*: To those who knew the Original, the Figures were lively and easily discovered themselves, as they are also here, and the Images were just; and therefore, when a malicious, but foolish Writer, in the abundance of his Gall, spoke of *the Quixotism* of *R. Crusoe*, as he called it, he shewed evidently, that he knew nothing of what he said; and perhaps will be a little startled, when I shall tell him, that what he meant for a Satyr, was the greatest of Panegyricks.

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ROBINSON CRUSOE'S

Without letting the Reader into a nearer Explication of the Matter, I proceed to let him know, that the happy Deductions I have employ'd myself to make from all the Circumstances of my Story, will abundantly make him amends for his not having the Emblem explained by the Original ; and that when in my Observations and Reflexions of any Kind in this Volume, I mention my Solitudes and Retirements, and allude to the Circumstances of the former Story, all those Parts of the Story are real Facts in my History, whatever borrow'd Lights they may be represented by: Thus the Fright and Fancies which succeeded the Story of the Print of a Man's Foot, and Surprise of the old Goat, and the Thing rolling on my Bed, and my jumping out in a Fright, are all Histories and real Stories; as are likewise the Dream of being taken by Messengers, being
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P R E F A C E.

arrested by Officers, the Manner of being driven on Shore by the Surge of the Sea, the Ship on Fire, the Description of starving; the Story of my Man *Friday*, and many more most material Passages observ'd here, and on which any religious Reflections are made, are all historical and true in Fact: It is most real, that I had a Parrot, and taught it to call me by my Name, such a Servant a Savage, and afterwards a Christian, and that his Name was called *Friday*, and that he was ravish'd from me by Force, and died in the Hands that took him, which I represent by being killed; this is all literally true, and should I enter into Discoveries, many alive can testify them: His other Conduct and Assistance to me also have just References in all their Parts to the Helps I had from that faithful Savage, in my real Solitudes and Disasters.

ROBINSON CRUSOE'S

The Story of the Bear in the Tree, and the Fight with the Wolves in the Snow, is likewise Matter of real History; and in a Word, the Adventures of *Robinson Crusoe*, are one whole Scheme of a real Life of eight and twenty Years, spent in the most wandring desolate and afflicting Circumstances that ever Man went through, and in which I have liv'd so long in a Life of Wonders in continu'd Storms, fought with the worse kind of Savages and Man-eaters, by unaccountable supprising Incidents; fed by Miracles greater than that of Ravens, suffered all Manner of Violences and Oppressions, injurious Reproaches, contempt of Men, Attacks of Devils, Corrections from Heaven, and Oppositions on Earth; have had innumerable Ups and Downs in Matters of Fortune, been in Slavery worse than *Turkish*, escaped by an exquisite Manage-

P R E F A C E.

Management, as that in the Story of *Xury*, and the Boat at *Sallee*, been taken up at Sea in Distress, rais'd again and depress'd again, and that oftner perhaps in one Man's Life than ever was known before ; Shipwreck'd often, tho' more by Land than by Sea : In a Word, there's not a Circumstance in the imaginary Story, but has its just Allusion to a real Story, and chimes Part for Part, and Step for Step with the inimitable Life of *Robinson Crusoe*.

In like Manner, when in these Reflections, I speak of the Times and Circumstances of particular Actions done, or Incidents which happened in my Solitude and Island-Life, an impartial Reader will be so just to take it as it is ; *viz.* that it is spoken or intended of that Part of the real Story, which the Island-Life is a just Allusion to ; and in this the Story is not only illustrated, but the
real

ROBINSON CRUSOE'S

real Part I think most justly approv'd: *For Example*, in the latter Part of this Work called the Vision, I begin thus, *When I was in my Island Kingdom, I had abundance of strange Notions of my seeing Apparitions, &c.* all these Reflections are just History of a State of forc'd Confinement, which in my real History is represented by a confin'd Retreat in an Island; and 'tis as reasonable to represent one kind of Imprisonment by another, as it is to represent any Thing that really exists, by that which exists not. The Story of my Fright with something on my Bed, was Word for Word a History of what happened, and indeed all those Things received very little Alteration, except what necessarily attends removing the Scene from one Place to another.

My Observations upon Solitude are the same, and I think I need say
no

P R E F A C E.

no more, than that the same Remark is to be made upon all the References made here, to the Transactions of the former Volumes, and the Reader is desired to allow for it as he goes on.

Besides all this, here is the just and only good End of all Parable or Allegorick History brought to pass, *viz.* for moral and religious Improvement. Here is invincible Patience recommended under the worst of Misery; indefatigable Application and undaunted Resolution under the greatest and most discouraging Circumstances; I say, these are recommended, as the only Way to work through those Miseries, and their Success appears sufficient to support the most dead-hearted Creature in the World.

Had the common Way of Writing a Mans private History been taken, and I had given you the Conduct or Life of a Man you knew,
and

ROBINSON CRUSOE'S

and whose Misfortunes and Infirmities, perhaps you had sometimes unjustly triumph'd over; all I could have said would have yielded no Diversion, and perhaps scarce have obtained a Reading, or at best no Attention; the Teacher, *like a greater*, having no Honour in his own Country. Facts that are form'd to touch the Mind, must be done a great Way off, and by somebody never heard of: Even the Miracles of the Blessed Saviour of the World suffered Scorn and Contempt, when it was reflected, that they were done by the Carpenter's Son; one whose Family and Original they had a mean Opinion of, and whose Brothers and Sisters were ordinary People like themselves.

There even yet remains a Question, whether the Instruction of these Things will take place, when you are supposing the Scene, which is placed so far off, had its Original so near Home. But

P R E F A C E.

But I am far from being anxious about that, seeing I am well assur'd, that if the Obstinacy of our Age should shut their Ears against the just Reflections made in this Volume, upon the Transactions taken Notice of in the former, there will come an Age, when the Minds of Men shall be more flexible, when the Prejudices of their Fathers shall have no Place, and when the Rules of Virtue and Religion justly recommended, shall be more gratefully accepted than they may be now, that our Children may rise up in Judgment against their fathers, and one Generation be edified by the same Teaching, which another Generation had despised.

ROB. CRUSOE.

T H E



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Publiſher's INTRODUCTION.

TH E publishing this extraordinary Volume will appear to be no Preſumption, when it ſhall be remembred, with what unexpected Good and Evil Will, the former Volumes have been accepted in the World.

If the Foundation has been ſo well laid, the Structure cannot but be expected to bear a Proportion; and while the Parable has been ſo diverting, the Moral muſt certainly be equally agreeable.

The ſucceſs the two former Parts have met with, has been known by the Envy it has brought upon the Editor, expreſs'd in a thouſand hard Words from the Men of Trade; the Effect of that Regret which they entertain'd, at their having no Share in it: And I muſt do the Author the Juſtice to ſay, that not a Dog has wag'd his Tongue at the Work itſelf, nor has a Word been ſaid to leſſen the Value of it, but which has been the viſible Effect of that Envy at the good Fortune of the Bookseller.

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The Publisher's Introduction.

The Riddle is now expounded, and the intelligent Reader may see clearly the End and Design of the whole Work; that it is calculated for, and dedicated to the Improvement and Instruction of Mankind in the Ways of Vertue and Piety, by representing the various Circumstances, to which Mankind is exposed; and encouraging such as fall into ordinary or extraordinary Casualties of Life, how to work thro' Difficulties, with unwearied Diligence and Application, and look up to Providence for Success.

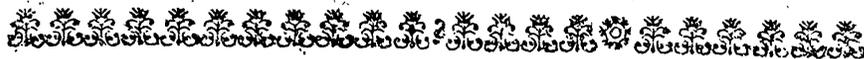
The Observations and Reflections, that take up this Volume, crown the Work; if the Doctrine has been accepted, the Application must of Necessity please; and the Author shews now, that he has learn'd sufficient Experience, how to make other Men wise and himself happy.

The Moral of the Fable, as the Author calls it, is most instructing; and those who challeng'd him most maliciously, with not making his Pen useful, will have Leisure to reflect, that they pass'd their Censure too soon; and like Solomon's Fool, judg'd of the Matter before they heard it.

Those whose Avarice prevailing over their Honesty, had invaded the Property of this Book by a corrupt Abridgment, have both fail'd in their Hope, and been ashamed of the Fact; shifting off the Guilt as well as they could, tho' weakly, from one to another: The principal Pirate is gone to his Place, and we say no more of him, De mortuis nil nisi bonum; 'tis Satisfaction

The Publisher's Introduction.

faction enough, that the Attempt has prov'd abortive, as the Baseness of the Design might give them Reason to expect it would.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of *Robinson Crusoe*, of *York*, Mariner: Who lived eight and twenty Years all alone in an un-inhabited Island on the Coast of *America*, near the Mouth of the Great River *Oroonogue*; having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, wherein all the Men perished but himself: With an Account how he was at last as strangely deliver'd by Pyrates. Written by himself. The Third Edition.

The farther Adventures of *Robinson Crusoe*, being the Second and last Part of his Life, and strange surprising Accounts of his Travels round three Parts of the Globe. Written by himself. The Second Edition: To which is added a Map of the World, in which is delineated the Voyages of *Robinson Crusoe*. Both sold by W. TAYLOR, at the *Ship and Black-Swan* in *Pater-noster-Row*.



Serious



Serious

OBSERVATIONS.



INTRODUCTION.

I Must have made very little Use of my solitary and wandering Years, if after such a Scene of Wonders, as my Life may be justly call'd, I had nothing to say, and had made no Observations which might be useful and instructing, as well as pleasant and diverting to those that are to come after me.

CHAP. I.

Of SOLITUDE.

*How incapable to make us happy, and
How unqualify'd to a Christian Life.*



Have frequently look'd back, you may be sure, and that with different Thoughts, upon the Notions of a long tedious Life of Solitude, which I have represented to the World, and of which you must have formed some Ideas from the Life of a Man in an Island. Sometimes

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I have wonder'd how it could be supported, especially for the first Years, when the Change was violent and impos'd, and Nature unacquainted with any thing like it. Sometimes I have as much wonder'd, why it should be any Grievance or Affliction; seeing upon the whole View of the Stage of Life which we act upon in this World, it seems to me, that Life in general is, or ought to be, but one universal Act of Solitude: But I find it is natural to judge of Happiness, by its suiting or not suiting our own Inclinations. Every Thing revolves in our Minds by innumerable circular Motions, all centring in our selves. We judge of Prosperity, and of Affliction, Joy and Sorrow, Poverty, Riches, and all the various Scenes of Life: I say, we judge of them by our selves: Thither we bring them Home, as Meats touch the Palat, by which we try them; the gay Part of the World, or the heavy Part; it is all one, they only call it pleasant or unpleasant, as they suit our Taste.

The World, I say, is nothing to us, but as it is more or less to our Relish: All Reflection is carry'd Home, and our Dear-self is, in one Respect, the End of Living. Hence Man may be properly said to be *alone* in the Midst of the Crowds and Hurry of Men and Business: All the Reflections which he makes, are to himself; all that is pleasant, he embraces for himself; all that is irksome and grievous, is tasted but by his own Palat.

What are the Sorrows of other Men to us? And what their Joy? Something we may be touch'd indeed with, by the Power of Sympathy, and a secret Turn of the Affections; but all the solid Reflection is directed to our selves. Our Meditations are all Solitude in Perfection; our Passions are

are all exercised in Retirement; we love, we hate, we covet, we enjoy, all in Privacy and Solitude: All that we communicate of those Things to any other, is but for their Assistance in the Pursuit of our Desires; the End is at Home; the Enjoyment, the Contemplation, is all Solitude and Retirement; 'tis for our selves we enjoy, and for our selves we suffer.

What then is the Silence of Life? And, How is it afflicting, while a Man has the Voice of his Soul to speak to God, and to himself? That Man can never want Conversation, who is Company for himself; and he that cannot converse profitably with himself, is not fit for any Conversation at all; and yet there are many good Reasons why a Life of Solitude, as Solitude is now understood by the Age, is not at all suited to the Life of a Christian, or of a wise Man. Without enquiring therefore into the Advantages of Solitude, and how it is to be managed, I desire to be heard concerning what Solitude really is; for I must confess, I have different Notions about it, far from those which are generally understood in the World, and far from all those Notions upon which those People in the primitive Times, and since that also, acted, who separated themselves into Desarts and unfrequented Places, or confin'd themselves to Cells, Monasteries, and the like, retir'd, as they call it, from the World; All which, I think, have nothing of the Thing I call Solitude in them, nor do they answer any of the true Ends of Solitude, much less those Ends which are pretended to be sought after, by those who have talk'd most of those Retreats from the World.

As for Confinement in an Island, if the Scene was plac'd there for this very End, it were not at all amiss. I must acknowledge, there was Con-

finement from the Enjoyments of the World, and Restraint from human Society: *But all that was no Solitude*; indeed, no Part of it was so, except that which, as in my Story, I apply'd to the Contemplation of sublime Things, and that was but a very little, as my Readers well know, compar'd to what a Length of Years my forced Retreat lasted.

It is evident then, that as I see nothing but what is far from being retir'd, in the forced Retreat of an Island, the Thoughts being in no Composure suitable to a retired Condition, no not for a great While; so I can affirm, that I enjoy much more Solitude in the Middle of the greatest Collection of Mankind in the World, I mean, at *London*, while I am writing this, than ever I could say I enjoy'd in eight and twenty Years Confinement to a desolate Island.

I have heard of a Man, that upon some extraordinary Disgust which he took at the unsuitable Conversation of some of his nearest Relations, whose Society he could not avoid, suddenly resolved never to speak any more: He kept his Resolution most rigorously many Years; not all the Tears or Entreaties of his Friends, no not of his Wife and Children, could prevail with him to break his Silence. It seems it was their ill Behaviour to him at first, that was the Occasion of it; for they treated him with provoking Language, which frequently put him into undecent Passions, and urged him to rash Replies; and he took this severe Way to punish himself for being provok'd, and to punish them for provoking him: But the Severity was unjustifiable; it ruin'd his Family, and broke up his House: His Wife could not bear it, and after endeavouring, by a'l the Ways possible, to alter his rigid Silence, went first away from him, and afterwards

terwards away from her self, turning melancholly and distracted: His Children separated some one Way, and some another Way, and only one Daughter who lov'd her Father above all the rest, kept with him, tended him, talk'd to him by Signs, and liv'd almost Dumb like her Father, near 29 Years with him; till being very sick, and in a high Fever, delirious as we call it, or light-headed, he broke his Silence, not knowing when he did it, and spoke, tho' wildly at first. He recover'd of the Illness afterwards, and frequently talk'd with his Daughter, but not much, and very seldom to any Body else.

Yet this Man did not live a silent Life with respect to himself; he read continually; and wrote down many excellent Things, which deserv'd to have appear'd in the World, and was often heard to pray to God in his Solitudes very audibly, and with great Fervency; but the Unjustice which his rash Vow, *if it was a Vow*, of Silence, was to his Family, and the length he carry'd it, was so unjustifiable another way, that I cannot say his Instructions could have much Force in them.

Had he been a single Man, had he wandred into a strange Country or Place, where the Circumstance of it had been no Scandal, his Vow of Silence might ha' been as commendable, and as I think, much more than any of the primitive Christians Vows of Solitude were; whose Retreat into the Wilderness, and giving themselves up to Prayer and Contemplation, shunning human Society, and the like, was so much esteem'd by the primitive Fathers, and from whence our religious Houses, and Orders of religious People were first deriv'd.

The *Jews* said, *John* the Baptist had a Devil, because he affected Solitude and Retirement; and

they took it from an old Proverb they had in the World at that time : *That every solitary Person must be an Angel or a Devil.*

A Man under a Vow of perpetual Silence, if but rigorously observ'd, would be even on the Exchange of *London*, as perfectly retired from the World, as a Hermit in his Cell ; or a *Solitair* in the Desarts of *Arabia* ; and if he is able to observe it rigorously, may reap all the Advantages of those Solitudes, without the unjustifiable Part of such a Life, and without the Austerities of a Life among Brutes. For the Soul of a Man under a due and regular Conduct, is as capable of reserving it self, or separating it self from the rest of human Society, in the midst of a Throng, as it is when banish'd into a desolate Island.

The Truth is, that all those religious Hermit-like Solitudes, which Men value themselves so much upon, are but an Acknowledgment of the Defect or Imperfection of our Resolutions, our Incapacity to bind our selves to needful Restraints, or rigorously to observe the Limitations we have vow'd our selves to observe : *Or take it thus, That the Man first resolving that it would be his Felicity to be entirely given up to conversing only with Heaven, and heavenly Things, to be separated to Prayer and good Works ; but being sensible how ill such a Life will agree with Flesh and Blood, causes his Soul to commit a Rape upon his Body, and to carry it by Force, as it were into a Desert, or into a religious Retirement, from whence it cannot return, and where it is impossible for it to have any Converse with Mankind, other than with such as are under the same Vows, and the same Banishment. The Folly of this is evident many Ways.*

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I shall bring it home to the Case in Hand thus: Christians may without doubt come to enjoy all the desirable Advantages of Solitude, by a strict Retirement, and exact Government of their Thoughts, without any of these Formalities, Rigours, and apparent Mortifications, which I think I justly call a Rape upon human Nature, and consequently without the Breach of Christian Duties, which they necessarily carry with them, such as rejecting Christian Communion, Sacraments, Ordinances, and the like.

There is no need of a Wilderness to wander among wild Beasts, no necessity of a Cell on the top of a Mountain, or a desolate Island in the Sea; if the Mind be confin'd, if the Soul be truly Master of it self, all is safe; for it is certainly and effectually Master of the Body, and what signify Retreats, especially a forc'd Retreat as mine was? The anxiety of my Circumstances there, I can assure you, was such for a Time, as were very suitable to heavenly Meditations, and even when that was got over, the frequent Alarms from the Savages, put the Soul sometimes to such Extremities of Fear and Horror, that all manner of Temper was lost, and I was no more fit for religious Exercises, than a sick Man is fit for Labour.

Divine Contemplations require a Composure of Soul, uninterrupted by any extraordinary Motions or Disorders of the Passions; and this, I say, is much easier to be obtained and enjoy'd in the ordinary Course of Life, than in Monkish Cells and forcible Retreats.

The Business is to get a retired Soul, a Frame of Mind truly elevated above the World, and then we may be alone whenever we please, in the greatest apparent Hurry of Business or Company: If the Thoughts are free, and rightly un-

engag'd, What imports the Employment the Body is engag'd in? Does not the Soul act by a differing Agency, and is not the Body the Servant, nay, the Slave of the Soul? Has the Body Hands to act, or Feet to walk, or Tongue to speak, but by the Agency of the Understanding, and Will, which are the two Deputies of the Soul's Power? Are not all the Affections, and all the Passions which so universally agitate, direct, and possess the Body, are they not all seated in the Soul? What have we to do then more or less, but to get the Soul into a superior Direction and Elevation, there's no Need to prescribe the Body to this or that Situation; the Hands, or Feet, or Tongue, can no more disturb the Retirement of the Soul, than a Man having Money in his Pocket can take it out, or pay it, or dispose of it by his Hand, without his own Knowledge.

It is the Soul's being entangled by outward Objects, that interrupts its Contemplation of divine Objects, which is the Excuse for these Solitudes, and makes the removing the Body from those outward Objects seemingly necessary; but what is there of Religion in all this? For Example, a vicious Inclination remov'd from the Object, is still a vicious Inclination, and contracts the same Guilt, as if the Object were at Hand; for if, as our Saviour says, *He that looketh on a Woman to lust after her*, that is, to desire her unlawfully, has committed the Adultery already; so it will be no inverting our Saviour's Meaning to say, that he that thinketh of a Woman to desire her unlawfully, has committed Adultery with her already, though he has not looked on her, or has not seen her at that Time; and how shall this thinking of her be remov'd by transporting the Body? It must be remov'd by the Change in the Soul, by bringing
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the Mind to be above the Power or Reach of the Allurement, and to an absolute Mastership over the wicked Desire; otherwise the vicious Desire remains as the Force remains in the Gunpowder, and will exert it self when ever toucht with the Fire.

All Motions to Good or Evil are in the Soul: Outward Objects are but second Causes; and tho' it is true, separating the Man from the Object, is the Way to make any Act impossible to be committed; yet where the Guilt does not lye in the Act only, but in the Intention or Desire to commit it, that Separation is nothing at all, and effects nothing at all. There may be as much Adultery committed in a Monastery, where a Woman never comes, as in any other Place, and perhaps is so: The abstaining from Evil therefore depends not only and wholly upon limiting, or confining the Man's Actions, but upon the Man's limiting and confining his Desires; seeing to desire to sin, *is to Sin*; and the Fact which we would commit if we had Opportunity, is really committed, and must be answer'd for as such. What then is there of Religion, I say, in forc'd Retirements from the World, and Vows of Silence or Solitude? They are all nothing; 'tis a retired Soul that alone is fit for Contemplation; and it is the Conquest of our Desires to Sin, that is the only human Preservative against Sin.

It was a great while after I came into human Society, that I felt some Regret at the Loss of the solitary Hours and Retirements I had in the Island; but when I came to reflect upon some ill spent Time, even in my Solitudes, I found Reason to see what I have said above; that a Man may sin along several Ways, and find subject of Repen-

Repentance for his solitary Crimes, as well as he may in the midst of a populous City.

The Excellency of any State of Life consists in its Freedom from Crime ; and it is evident to our Experience, that some Society may be better adapted to a Rectitude of Life, than a compleat Solitude and Retirement : Some have said, that *next to no Company, good Company is best* ; but it is my Opinion, that *next to good Company, no Company is best* ; for as it is certain, that *no Company* is better than *bad Company*, so 'tis as certain, that *good Company* is much better than *no Company*.

In Solitude a Man converses with himself, and as a wise Man said, he is not always sure that he does not converse with his Enemy ; but he that is in good Company, is sure to be always among his Friends.

The Company of religious good Men, is a constant Restraint from Evil, and an Encouragement to a religious Life. You have there the Beauty of Religion exemplified ; you never want as well Instruction in, as Example for, all that is good ; you have a Contempt of evil Things constantly recommended, and the Affections mov'd to delight in what is good by hourly Imitation : If we are alone, we want all these, and are led right, or led wrong, as the Temper of the Mind, which is sometimes too much the Guide of our Actions, as well as Thoughts, happens to be constituted at that Time. Here we have no Restraint upon our Thoughts, but from our selves, no Restraint upon our Actions, but from our own Consciences, and nothing to assist us in our Mortifications of our Desires, or in directing our Desires, but our own Reflections, which after all may often err, often be prepossess'd.

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If you wou'd retreat from the World then, be sure to retreat to good Company; retreat to good Books, and retreat to good Thoughts; these will always assist one another, and always join to assist him that flies to them in his Meditations, direct him to just Reflections, and mutually encourage him against whatever may attack him, from within him, or without him: Whereas to retreat from the World, as it is call'd, is to retreat from good Men, who are our best Friends: Besides, to retreat, as we call it to an entire perfect Solitude, is to retreat from the publick Worship of God, to forsake the Assemblies; and, in a Word, is unlawful, because it obliges us to abandon those Things, which we are commanded to do.

Solitude therefore, as I understand by it, a Retreat from human Society, on a religious or philosophical Account, Is a meer Cheat; it neither can answer the End it proposes, or qualify us for the Duties of Religion, which we are commanded to perform; and is therefore both irreligious in it self, and inconsistent with a Christian Life many Ways. Let the Man that would reap the Advantage of Solitude, and that understands the Meaning of the Word, learn to retire into himself: Serious Meditation is the Essence of Solitude; all the Retreats into Woods and Desarts are short of this; and though a Man that is perfectly Master of this Retirement, may be a little in Danger of Quietism, that is to say, of an Affectation of Reservedness; yet it may be a Slander upon him in the main, and he may make himself amends upon the World, by the blessed Calm of his Soul, which they perhaps who appear more cheerful may have little of.

Retiring into Desarts, in the first Days of Religion, and into Abbeys and Monasteries since,
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what have they been? Or what have they been able to do, towards purchasing the Retirement I speak of? They have indeed been Things to be reckon'd among Austerities, and Acts of Mortification, and so far might be commendable: But I must insist upon it, that a retired Soul is not affected with them, any more than with the Hurries of Company and Society. When the Soul of a Man is powerfully engag'd in any particular Subject, 'tis like that of *St. Paul, wrapt up*, whether it be into the third Heaven, or to any Degree of lower Exaltation: Such a Man may well say with the Apostle above, *Whether I was in the Body, or out of the Body, I cannot tell*. It was in such a wrapt up State, that I conceived in what I call my *Vision of the Angelical World*; of which I have here subjoined a very little Part.

Is it rational to believe, that a Mind exalted so far above the State of Things with which we ordinarily converse, should not be capable of a Separation from them, which, in a Word, is the utmost Extent of Solitude? Let such never afflict themselves, that they cannot retreat from the World: Let them learn to retreat in the World, and they shall enjoy a perfect Solitude; as compleat to all Intents and Purposes, as if they were to live in the Cupola of *St. Paul's*, or, as if they were to live upon the *Top of Cheviot Hill in Northumberland*.

They that cannot be retir'd in this Manner, must not only retire from the World, but out of the World, before they can arrive to any true Solitude. Man is a Creature so form'd for Society, that it may not only be said, that it is not good for him to be alone, but 'tis really impossible he should be alone: We are so continually in need of one another; nay, in such absolute Necessity

cessity of Assistance from one another; that those who have pretended to give us the Lives and Manner of the *Solitaires*, as they call them, who separated themselves from Mankind, and wander'd in the Desarts of *Arabia* and *Lybia*, are frequently put to the Trouble of bringing the Angels down from Heaven to do one Drudgery or another for them; forming imaginary Miracles, to make the Life of a true Solitair possible; sometimes they have no Bread, sometimes no Water, for a long Time together; and then a Miracle is brought upon the Stage, to make them live so long without Food; at other Times they have Angels come to be their Cooks, and bring them Roast-meat; to be their Physicians, to bring them Physick, and the like: If Saint *Hillary* comes in his Wandrings to the River *Nile*, an humble Crocodile is brought to carry him over upon his Back; tho' they do not tell us, whether the Crocodile ask'd him to ride, or he ask'd the Crocodile, or by what Means they came to be so familiar with one another: And what is all this to the Retirement of the Soul, with which it converses in Heaven in the midst of infinite Crowds of Men, and to whom the nearest of other Objects is nothing at all, any more than the Objects of Mountains and Desarts, Lions and Leopards, and the like, were to those that banish'd themselves to *Arabia*?

Besides, in a State of Life, where Circumstances are easy, and Provision for the Necessaries of Life, which the best Saint cannot support the Want of, is quietly and plentifully made; has not the Mind infinitely more Room to withdraw from the World, than when at best it must wander for its daily Food, tho' it were but the Product of the Field.

Let

Let no Man plead he wants Retirement, that he loves Solitude; but cannot enjoy it, because of the Embarrassment of the World; 'tis all a Delusion; if he loves it; if he desires it; he may have it when, where, and as often as he pleases; let his Hurries, his Labours, or his Afflictions, be what they will: It is not the Want of an Opportunity for Solitude, but the Want of a Capacity of being solitary that is the Case in all the Circumstances of Life.

I knew a poor, but good Man; who tho' he was a Labourer, was a Man of Sense and Religion; who being hard at Work with some other Men, removing a great Quantity of Earth to raise a Bank against the Side of a Pond, was one Day so out of himself, and wrapt up in a perfect Application of his Mind, to a very serious Subject, that the poor Man drove himself and his Wheelbarrow into the Pond, and could not recover himself, till Help came to him. This Man was certainly capable of a perfect Solitude, and perhaps really enjoy'd it; for as I have often heard him say, he liv'd alone in the World: (1.) Had no Family to embarrass his Affections. (2.) His low Circumstances placed him below the Observation of the upper Degrees of Mankind. (3.) And his reserv'd Meditations plac'd him above the wicked Part, who were those in a Sphere equal to himself; among whom, as he said, *and is most true*, it was very hard to find a sober Man, much less a good Man; so that he liv'd really alone in the World; apply'd himself to labour for his Subsistence, had no other Business with Mankind, but for Necessaries of Life, and convers'd in Heaven, as effectually, and, I believe, every Way, as divinely as St. *Hilary* did in the Desarts of *Lybia*, among the Lions and Crocodiles.

If

If this Retirement, which they call *Solitude*, consisted only of separating the Person from the World, that is to say, from human Society, it were itself a very mean Thing, and would every Way as well be supplied, by removing from a Place where a Man is known, to a Place where he is not known, and there accustom himself to a retir'd Life, making no new Acquaintance, and only making the Use of Mankind which I have already spoken of; namely for Convenience, and Supply of necessary Food; and I think of the Two, that such a Man, or a Man so retir'd, may have more Opportunity to be an entire Recluse, and may enjoy more real Solitude, than a Man in a Desert. For Example, In the Solitude I speak of, a Man has no more to do for the Necessaries of Life, than to receive them from the Hands of those that are to furnish them, and pay them for so doing; whereas, in the Solitude of Deserts, and wandring Lives, from whence all our Monkish Devotion springs, they had every Day their Food, such as it was, to seek, or the Load of it to carry; and except where as it is said, they put Providence to the Operation of a Miracle, to furnish it, they had frequently Difficulties enough to sustain Life; and if we may believe History, many of them were starv'd to Death for meer Hunger, or Thirst; and as often the latter as the former.

Those that had Recourse to these Solitudes, merely as a Mortification of their Bodies, as I observ'd before, and delivering themselves from the Temptations which Society expos'd them to, had more Room for the Pretence indeed, than those who alledge they did it to give up themselves to Prayer and Meditation. The first might have some Reason in Nature for the Fact, as
Men

Mens Tempers and Constitutions might lead; some having an inordinate Appetite to Crime, some addicted by Nature to one ill Habit, some to another; tho' the Christian Religion does not guide us to those Methods of putting a Force upon our Bodies to subdue the Violence of inordinate Appetite. The blessed Apostle *St. Paul*, seems to have been in this Circumstance, when being assaulted with what is call'd in the Text, *a Thorn in the Flesh*; be it what it will that is meant there, it is not to my Purpose; but he pray'd to the Lord thrice; that was the first Method the Apostle took, and thereby set a pious Example to all those who are assaulted by any Temptation. He did not immediately fly to Austerities and bodily Mortifications, separating himself from Mankind, or flying into the Desert to give himself up to Fasting, and a Retreat from the World, which is the Object of all private Snare. But he applied himself by serious Prayer to him, who had taught us to pray, *Lead us not into Temptation*; and the Answer likewise is instructing in the Case; he was not driven out as *Nebuchadnezzar* into the Desert; he was not commanded to retire into the Wilderness, that he might be free from the Temptation; *nothing less*. But the Answer was, *my Grace is sufficient for thee*, sufficient without the Help of artificail Mortification.

So that even in the Case of these forcible Mortifications they are not requir'd, much less directed for Helps to Meditation; for if Meditation could not be practis'd beneficially; and to all the Intents and Purposes for which it was ordain'd a Duty, without flying from the Face of human Society, the Life of Man would be very unhappy.

But

But doubtless the Contrary is evident, and all the Parts of a compleat Solitude are to be as effectually enjoy'd, if we please, and sufficient Grace assisting, even in the most populous Cities, among the Hurries of Conversation, and Gallantry of a Court, or the Noise and Business of a Camp, as in the Desarts of *Arabia* and *Lybia*, or in the desolate Life of an uninhabited Island.



C

CHAP.



CHAP. II.

An Essay upon HONESTY.



WHEN I first came home to my own Country, and began to sit down and look back upon the past Circumstances of my wandering State, as you will in Charity suppose I could not but do very often; the very Prosperity I enjoy'd led me most naturally to reflect upon the particular Steps by which I arriv'd to it. The Condition I was in was very happy, speaking of human Felicity; the former Captivity I had suffer'd, made my Liberty sweeter to me; and to find my self jump'd into easy Circumstances at once, from a Condition below the common Rate of Life, made it still sweeter.

One Time, as I was upon my Enquiries into the happy Concurrence of the Causes which had brought the Event of my Prosperity to pass, as an Effect, it occur'd to my Thoughts, how much of it all depended, under the Disposition of Providence, upon the Principle of *Honesty*, which I met with, in almost all the People whom it was my Lot to be concern'd with in my private and particular Affairs; and I that had met with such extraordinary Instances of the Knavery and Villainy of Mens Natures in other Circumstances, could not but be something taken
up

up with the Miracles of Honesty that I had met with among the several People I had had to do with, I mean those whom I had more particularly to do with in the Articles of my Liberty, Estate, or Effects, which fell into their Hands.

I began with my most trusty and faithful Widow, the Captain's Wife, with whom I first went to the Coast of *Africa*, and to whom I entrusted 200 *l.* being the Gain I had made in my first Adventures to *Guinea*, as in the first Volume, Page 330, appears.

She was left a Widow, and in but indifferent Circumstances; but when I sent to her so far off as the *Brasils*, where I was in such a Condition as she might have reasonably believed I should never have been able to come myself; and if I had, might be in no Condition to recover it of her; and having myself nothing to shew under her Hand for the Trust; yet she was so just, that she sent the full Value of what I wrote for, being one hundred Pound; and to shew, as far as in her lay, her sincere honest Concern for my Good, put in among many necessary Things which I did not write for, I say, put in two Bibles, besides other good Books, for my Reading and Instruction, as she said afterwards, in Popish and Heathen Countries, where I might chance to fall. Honesty not only leads to discharge every Debt and every Trust to our Neighbour, so far as is justly to be demanded, but an honest Man acknowledges himself Debtor to all Mankind, for so much Good to be done for them, whether for Soul or Body, as Providence puts an Opportunity into his Hands to do: In Order to discharge this Debt, he studies continually for Opportunity to do all the Acts of Kindness and Beneficence, that is possible for him to do; and tho' very few consider it, a Man is

not a compleatly honest Man, that does not do this.

Upon this Consideration, I question much, whether a covetous, narrow, stingy Man, as we call him, one who gives himself up to himself, as born for himself only, and who declines the Advantages and Opportunities of doing Good, I mean, extremly so: I say, I much question, whether such a Man can be *an honest Man*; nay, I am satisfy'd he cannot be honest Man; for tho' he may pay every Man his own, and be just, as he thinks it, to a Farthing; yet this is Part of the Justice, which in the common Phrase is the greatest Unjustice. This is one Meaning of that Saying, *Summum jus, summa injuria*.

To pay every Man their own, is *the common Law* of Honesty; but to do Good to all Mankind, as far as you are able, is the *Chancery Law* of Honesty; and tho' in common Law or Justice, as I call it, Mankind can have no Claim upon us, if we do but just pay our Debt; yet in Heaven's *Chancery* they will have Relief against us; for they have a Demand in Equity of all the Good to be done them, that it is in our Power to do, and this *Chancery Court*, or Court of Equity, is held in every Man's Breast; 'tis a true *Court of Conscience*, and every Man's Conscience is a Lord Chancellour to him; if he has not perform'd, if he has not paid this Debt, Conscience will decree him to pay it, on the Penalty of declaring him *a dishonest Man*, even in his own Opinion; and if he still refuses to comply, will proceed by all the legal Steps of a Court of Conscience Procefs, till at last it will issue out a Writ of Rebellion against him, and proclaim him a Rebel to Nature and his own Conscience.

But

But this is by the Way, and is occasioned by the Observations I have made of many People, who think they are mighty honest if they pay their Debts, and owe no Man any Thing, *as they call it*; at the same Time, like true Misers, who lay up all for themselves, they think nothing of the Debt of Charity and Beneficence, which they owe to all Mankind.

Rich Men are their Maker's Free-holders; they enjoy freely the Estate he has given them the Possession of, with all the Rents, Profits, and Emoluments, but charg'd with a *free Farm Rent* to the younger Children of the Family, namely the Poor; or if you will, you may call them, God's Copy-holders, paying a Quit-Rent to the Lord of the Manor; which Quit-Rent he has assigned for the Use of the rest of Mankind, to be paid in a constant Discharge of all good Offices, friendly, kind, and generous Actions; and he that will not pay his Rent, cannot be an honest Man, any more than he that would not pay his other just Debts.

The Scripture concurs exactly with this Notion of mine; the Miser is call'd by the Prophet *Isaiah, a vile Person, one that works Iniquity, and practises Hypocrisy, and utters Error before the Lord, Isaiah xxxii. 6.* How does this appear? The very next Words explain it. *He makes empty the Soul of the Hungry, and he will cause the Drink of the Thirsty to fail.* But lest this should seem a strain'd Text, let us read on, both before and after, *Verse 5. The Vile Person shall no more be call'd Liberal, nor the Churl said to be Bountiful.* Here the Opposite to a Liberal Man is call'd a Vile Person, and the Opposite to a Bountiful Man is call'd a Churl; and in the Verse following, the same Vile Person, as opposed to the Liberal Man, is

call'd a Wicked Man; and the Liberal Man is set up a Pattern for us all, in Opposition to the vile, churlish, covetous Wretch. Verſ. 7, 8. *The Instruments alſo of the Churl are evil: He deviſeth wicked Devices to deſtroy the Poor with lying Words, even when the Needy ſpeaketh right. But the Liberal deviſeth liberal Things, and by liberal Things ſhall he ſtand.*

In a Word, I think my Opinion juſtify'd by this Text, that a Churl, a moroſe, ſowre Diſpoſition, a covetous, avaricious, ſelfiſh principl'd Man, cannot be an *honest Man*; he does not pay the common Debt of Mankind to one another, nor the Fee-Farm, or Quit-Rent of his Eſtate to God, who is his Great Landlord, or Lord of the Manor, and who has charg'd the Debt upon him. I know the Miſer will laugh at this Notion; but I ſpeak my own Opinion, let it go as far as Reason will carry it.

I come back to the Examples I was giving in my private Caſe. As the Widow was *honest* to me, ſo was my good *Portugueſe* Captain; and it is this Man's original *Honesty*, that makes me ſpeak of the *honest Man's* Debt to Mankind. It was *Honesty*, a generous *Honesty*, that led the poor Man to take me up at Sea; which if he had neglected, my Boy *Xury* and I had periſhed together: It was no Debt to me, in particular, but a Debt to Mankind, that he paid in that Action; and yet he could not have been an *honest Man* without it. You will ſay, if he had gone away and left me, he had been barbarous and inhuman, and deſerv'd to be left to periſh himſelf in the like Diſtreſs: But, *I ſay*, this is not all the Caſe: Cuſtom and the Nature of the Thing leads us to ſay, it would have been hard-hearted and inhuman; But Conſcience will tell any Man, that it was a Debt,

Debt, and he could not but be condemn'd by the Court of Conscience in his own Breast, if he had omitted it; nay, in the Sight of Heaven he had tacitly kill'd us, and had been as guilty of our Death as a Murtherer; for he hat refuses to save a Life thrown into his Hands, *takes it away*; and if there is a just Retribution in a future State, if Blood is at all requir'd there, the Blood of every Man, Woman, or Child, whom we could have saved, and did not, shall be reckon'd to us at that Day, as spilt by our own Hands; for leaving Life in a Posture in which it must inevitably perish, is without Question causing it to perish, and will be call'd so then, by whatever gilded dress'd-up Words we may express and conceal it now.

But I go farther, for my good *Portuguese* went farther with me; he not only paid the Debt he ow'd to Heaven, in saving our Lives, but he went farther: He took nothing of what I had, tho' in the common Right of the Sea, it was all his *Due for Salvage*, as the Sailors call it: But he gave me the Value of every Thing, bought my Boat, which he might have turn'd adrift, my Boy *Xury*, who was not my Slave by any Right, or if he had, became free from that Time; and the Life of *Xury*, which he had sav'd, as a Servant, was his own; yet he bought every Thing of me, for the full Value; and took nothing of me, no not for my Passage!

Here was the *Liberal Man devising liberal Things*, and the Sequel made good the promissory Text; for by these liberal Things, the honest liberal Man might be truly said to *stand*; When I came to reward him at my coming to *Lisbon*, to sell my Plantation at *Brazil*: Then he being poor, and reduc'd, and not able to pay even what he ow'd

me, I gave him a Reward sufficient to make his Circumstances easy all his Life after.

The Bounty of this Man to me, when first he took me up out of the Sea, was the highest and most compleat Act of Honesty; A generous Honesty, laying hold of an Opportunity to do Good to an Object offer'd by the Providence of Heaven, and thereby acknowledging the Debt he had to pay to his Maker, in the Persons of his most distress'd Creatures.

And here also let me remind my Readers of what perhaps they seldom much regard; it is not only a Gift from Heaven to us, to be put in a Condition of *doing Good*; but 'tis a Gift, and a Favour from Heaven, to have an Opportunity of *doing the Good* we are in a Condition to do; and we ought to close with the Opportunity, as a particular Gift from above, and be as thankful for it; I say, as thankful for the Occasion of doing Good, as for the Ability.

I might mention here the Honesty of my Fellow-Planter in the *Brafils*, and of the two Merchants and their Sons, by whose Integrity I had my Share in the Plantation preserved, and taken Care of; as also the Honesty of the publick Treasurer for the Church there, and the like: But I am carry'd off in my Thoughts, to enlarge upon this noble Principle, from the two Examples I have already mentioned, *viz.* the *Guiney* Captain's Widow, and the *Portuguese*; and this in particular, because, since I came to *England* to reside, I have met with Abundance of Disputes about Honesty, especially in Cases where honest Men come to be unhappy Men, when they fall into such Circumstances as they cannot be honest, or rather, cannot shew the Principle of Honesty, which is really at the Bottom of all their Actions, and which,
but

but for those Circumstances which entirely dis-able them, would certainly shew it self in every Branch of their Lives: Such Men I have too often seen branded for Knaves by those who, if they come into the same Condition, would perhaps do the same Things, or worse than they may have done.

Both my Widow and my *Portuguese* Captain, fell into low Circumstances, so that they could not make good to me my Money that was in their Hands; and yet both of them shew'd to me, that they had not only a Principle of Justice, but of generous Honesty too, when the Opportunity was put into their Hands to do so.

This put me upon enquiring and debating with my self, what this subtle and imperceptible Thing, call'd Honesty, is, and how it might be describ'd; setting down my Thoughts, at several Times, as Objects presented; that Posterity, if they think them worth while, may find them both useful and diverting. And *First*, I thought it not improper to lay down the Conditions upon which I am to enter upon that Description; that I may not be mistaken, but be allow'd to explain what I mean by Honesty, before I undertake to enter upon any Discourses or Observations about it.

And to come directly to it, *for I would make as few Preambles as possible*, I shall crave the Liberty in all the following Discourse, to take the Term *Honesty*, as I think all *English* Expressions ought to be taken; namely *Honestly*, in the common Acceptation of the Word, the general vulgar Sense of it, without any Circumlocutions or Double Entendres whatsoever; for I desire to speak plainly and sincerely. Indeed, as I have no Talent at hard
Words,

Words, so I have no great Veneration for Etymologies; especially in *English*: But since I am treating of *Honesty*, I desire to do it, as I say above, *honestly*, according to the genuine Signification of the Thing.

Neither shall I examine, whether *Honesty* be a natural or an acquired Virtue, whether a Habit, or a Quality, whether inherent or accidental; all the philosophical Part of it I chuse to omit.

Neither shall I examine it, as it extends to Spiritualls, and looks towards Religion; if we enquire about *Honesty* towards God, I readily allow all Men are born Knaves, Villains, Thieves, and Murtherers, and nothing but the restraining Power of Providence witholds us all from shewing our selves such, on all Occasions.

No Man can be just to his Maker; if he could, all our Creeds and Confessions, Litanies and Supplications, were ridiculous Contradictions and Impertinences; inconsistent with themselves, and with the whole Tenor of human Life.

In all the ensuing Discourse therefore, I am to be understood of *Honesty*, as it regards Mankind among themselves, as it looks from one Man to another, in those necessary Parts of Man's Life, his Conversation and Negotiation, Trusts, Friendships, and all the Incidents of human Affairs.

The Plainness I profess, both in Style and Method, seems to me to have some suitable Analogy to the Subject, *Honesty*; and therefore, is absolutely necessary to be strictly follow'd. And I must own, I am the better reconcil'd, on this very Account, to a natural Infirmary of homely plain Writing; in that I think the Plainness of Expression, which I am condemn'd to, will give no Disadvantage to my Subject, since *Honesty* shews the most beautiful, and the more like *Honesty*, when

when Artifice is dismiss'd, and she is honestly seen by her own Light only ; likewise the same Sincerity is required in the Reader ; and he that reads this Essay without *Honesty*, will never understand it right : *She must, I say, be view'd by her own Light.* If Prejudice, Partiality, or private Opinions stand in the Way, *the Man's a reading Knave*, he is not honest to the Subject ; and upon such an one all the Labour is lost ; this Work is of no Use to him, and by my Consent, the Bookseller should give him his Money again.

If any Man, from his private ill Nature, takes Exceptions at me, poor, wild, wicked, *Robinson Crusoe*, for prating of such Subjects as this is, and shall call either my Sins, or Misfortunes to Remembrance, in Prejudice of what he reads ; supposing me thereby unqualify'd to defend so noble a Subject as this of *Honesty*, or at least to handle it *honestly* : I take the Freedom to tell such, that those very wild wicked Doings and Mistakes of mine, render me the properest Man alive to give Warning to others, as *the Man that has been sick is half a Physician.* Besides, the Confession which I all along make of my early Errors, and which Providence, you see, found me Leisure enough to repent of, and I hope, gave me Assistance to do it effectually ; assists to qualify me for the present Undertaking, as well to recommend that Rectitude of Soul, which I call *Honesty* to others, as to warn those who are subject to mistake it, either in themselves or others : Heaven it self receives those who sincerely repent, into the same State of Acceptance, as if they had not sinn'd at all, and so should we also.

*They who repent, and their ill Lives amend,
Stand next to those who never did offend.*

Nor

Nor do I think a Man ought to be afraid or ashamed to own and acknowledge his Follies and Mistakes, but rather to think it a Debt which *Honesty* obliges him to pay : Besides, our Infirmities and Errors, to which all Men are equally subject, when recovered from, leave such Impressions behind them, on those who sincerely repent of them, that they are always the forwardest to accuse and reproach themselves : No Man need advise them, or lead them ; and this gives the greatest Discovery of the Honesty of the Man's Heart, and Sincerity of Principles. Some People tell us, they think they need not make any open Acknowledgment of their Follies ; and 'tis a Cruelty to exact it of them ; that they could rather dye than submit to it ; that their Spirits are too great for it ; that they are more afraid to come to such publick Confessions and Recognitions, than they would be to meet a Cannon Bullet, or to face an Enemy : But this is a poor mistaken Piece of false Bravery ; all Shame is Cowardise, as an eminent Poet tells us, That all Courage is Fear, the bravest Spirit is the best qualify'd for a Penitent ; 'tis a strange Thing that we should not be ashamed to offend, but should be ashamed to repent ; not afraid to sin, but afraid to confess. This very Thought extorted the following Lines from a Friend of mine, with whom I discoursed upon this Head.

*Among the worst of Cowards let him be nam'd,
Who having sinn'd's afraid to be ashamed ;
And to mistaken Courage he's betray'd,
Who having sinn'd's ashamed to be afraid.*

But to leave the Point of Courage and Cowardise in our repenting of our Offences, I bring it back to the very Point I am upon ; namely that of
Hone-

Honesty. A Man cannot be truly an honest Man; without acknowledging the Mistakes he has made; particularly, without acknowledging the Wrong done to his Neighbour; and why pray is Justice less required in his Acknowledgment to his Maker? He then that will be honest, must dare to confess he has been a Knave; for as above, speaking of our Behaviour to God, we have been all Knaves, and all dishonest; and if we come to speak strictly, perhaps it would hold in our Behaviour to one another also; for, Where's the Man that is not chargeable by some or other of his Neighbours, or by himself, with doing Wrong, with some Oppression or Injury, either of the Tongue, or of the Hands.

I might enlarge here upon the Honesty of the Tongue, a Thing some People, who call themselves very honest Men, keep a very slender Guard upon, I mean, as to Evil-speaking; and of all Evil-speaking, that worst Kind of it, the speaking hard and unjust Things of one another.

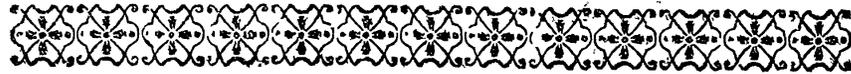
This is certainly intended by the Command of God, which is so express and emphatick, *Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy Neighbour*; at least that Part which is what we call Slander, raising an injurious and false Charge upon the Character and Conduct of our Neighbour, and spreading it for Truth.

But this is not all; that Honesty I am speaking of respects all Detraction, all outrageous Assaults of the Tongue; Reproach is as really a Part of Dishonesty, as Slander; and tho' not so aggravated in Degree, yet 'tis the same in Kind.

There is a Kind of Murther that may be committed with the Tongue, that is in its Nature as cruel as that of the Hand: This can never

never be the Practice of an honest Man; Nay, he that practises it cannot be an honest Man.

But perhaps I may come to this again, but I must go back to explain my self upon the Subject a little farther in the General, and then you shall hear more of me, as to the Particulars.



Of H O N E S T Y in General.

Have always observ'd, that however few the real honest Men are, yet every Man thinks himself, and proclaims himself an honest Man. Honesty, like Heaven, has all Mens good Word, and all Men pretend to a Share of it: So general is the Claim, that like a Jest which is spoil'd by the Repetition, 'tis grown of no value for a Man to swear by his Faith, which is in its original Meaning, by his *Honesty*, and ought to be understood so.

Like Heaven too, 'tis little understood by those who pretend most to it, 'tis too often squar'd according to Mens private Interest, tho' at the same Time the Latitude which some Men give themselves, is inconsistent with its Nature.

Honesty is a general Probity of Mind, an Aptitude to Act justly and honourably in all Cases, religious and civil, and to all Persons superiour or inferiour; neither is Ability or Disability to act so, any Part of the Thing it self in this Sense.

It may be distinguish'd into Justice and Equity, or if you will, into Debt and Honour; for both make up but one *Honesty*.

Exact

Exact Justice is a Debt to all our Fellow-Creatures; and honourable, generous Justice is deriv'd from that golden Rule, *Quod tibi fieri non vis alteri ne feceris*; and all this put together, makes up Honesty: Honour indeed is a higher Word for it, but 'tis the same Thing, and

— *Differs from Justice only in the Name,
For Honesty and Honour are the same.*

This Honesty is of so qualifying a Nature, that 'tis the most Denominative of all possible Virtues: An *Honest Man* is the best Title can be given in the World; all other Titles are empty and ridiculous without it, and no Title can be really scandalous if this remain. 'Tis the capital Letter, by which a Man's Character will be known, when private Qualities and Accomplishments are Worm-eaten by Time; without it a Man can neither be a Christian or a Gentleman: A Man may be a poor honest Man, an unfortunate honest Man; but a Christian Knave, or a Gentleman Knave, is a Contradiction: A Man forfeits his Character and his Family by Knavery; and his Escutcheon ought to have a particular Blot, like that of Bastardy. When a Gentleman loses his Honesty, he ceases to be a Gentleman, commences Rake from that Minute, and ought to be us'd like one.

Honesty has such a general Character in the Minds of Men, that the worst of Men, who neither practise or pretend to any Part of it, will yet value it in others; no Man ever cou'd be so out of Love with it, as to desire his Posterity should be without it; nay, such is the Veneration all Men have for it, that the general Blessing of a Father to his Son, is *Pray, God make thee an honest Man.*

Indeed

Indeed so general is the Value of it, and so well known, that it seems needless to say any Thing in behalf of it. So far as it is found upon Earth, so much of the first Rectitude of Nature, and of the Image of God, seems to be restor'd to Mankind.

The greatest Mischief which to me seems to attend this Virtue, like the Thorn about the Rose, which pricks the Finger of those who meddle with it, is *Pride*: 'Tis a hard Thing for a Man to be very honest, and not be proud of it; and tho' he who is really honest, has, as we say, something to be proud of, yet I take his Honesty to be in a great deal of Danger, who values himself too much upon it.

True honest Honesty, if I may be allow'd such an Expression, has the least Relation to Pride of any View in the World; 'tis all simple, plain, genuine, and sincere; and if I hear a Man boast of his Honesty, I cannot help having some Fears for him, at least, that 'tis sickly and languishing.

Honesty is a little tender Plant, not known to all who have Skill in Simples, Thick sow'd, as they say, and Thin come up; 'tis nice of Growth, it seldom thrives in a very fat Soil; and yet a very poor Ground too is apt to starve it, unless it has taken very good Root; when it once takes to a Piece of Ground, it will never be quite destroy'd; it may be choak'd with the Weeds of Prosperity, and sometimes 'tis so scorcht up with the Droughts of Poverty and Necessity, that it seems as if it were quite dead and gone; but it always revives upon the least mild Weather; and if some Showers of Plenty fall, it makes full Reparation for the Loss the Gardener had in his Crop.

There is an ugly Weed, call'd *Cunning*, which is very pernicious to it, and which particularly injures

injures it, by hiding it from our Discovery, and making it hard to find : This is so like Honesty, that many a Man has been deceiv'd with it, and have taken one for t'other in the Market : Nay, I have heard of some, who have planted this *wild Honesty*, as we may call it, *in their own Ground*, have made Use of it in their Friendships and Dealings, and thought it had been the true Plant, but they always lost Credit by it : And that was not the worst neither ; for they had the Loss who dealt with them, and who chaffer'd for a Counterfeit Commodity ; and we find many deceived so still, which is the Occasion there is such an Outcry about false Friends, and about Sharping and Tricking in Mens ordinary Dealings in the World.

This true Honesty too has some little Difference in it, according to the Soil or Climate in which it grows, and your Simplers have had some Disputes about the Sorts of it : Nay, there have been great Heats about the several Kinds of this Plant, which grows in different Countries, and some call that *Honesty*, which others say, is not ; as particularly they say, There is a Sort of Honesty in my Country, *Yorkshire Honesty*, which differs very much from that which is found in these southern Parts about *London* : Then there is a Sort of *Scots Honesty*, which they say is a meaner Sort than that of *Yorkshire* : And in *New England*, I have heard they have a kind of Honesty, which is worse than the *Scottish*, and little better than the wild Honesty, call'd *Cunning*, which I mention'd before. On the other hand, they tell us, that in some Parts of *Asia*, at *Smyrna*, and at *Constantinople*, the *Turks* have a better Sort of Honesty than any of us. I am sorry, our *Turkey* Company have not imported some of it, that we might try whether it would thrive here or no. 'Tis a little odd

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to me, it should grow to such a Perfection in *Turkey*, because it has always been observ'd to thrive best, where it is sow'd with a Sort of Grain call'd *Religion*: Indeed they never thrive in these Parts of the World, so well apart, as they do together. And for this Reason, I must own, I have found that *Scots* Honesty, as above, to be of a very good Kind. How 'tis in *Turkey*, I know not; for in all my Travels, I never set my Foot in the Grand Seignior's Dominions.

But to wave Allegories, Disputes about what is, or is not Honesty, are dangerous to Honesty it self; for no Case can be doubtful, which does not border upon the Frontiers of Dishonesty; and he that resolves not to be drowned, had best never come near the Brink of the Water.

That Man who will do nothing but what is barely honest, is in great Danger. 'Tis certainly just for me to do every Thing the Law justifies; but if I should only square my Actions by what is literally lawful, I must throw every Debtor, tho' he be poor, in Prison, and never release him till he has paid the uttermost Farthing: I must hang every Malefactor without Mercy, I must exact the Penalty of every Bond, and the Forfeiture of every Indenture: In short, I must be uneasy to all Mankind, and make them so to me; and in a Word, be a very Knave too, as well as a Tyrant; for Cruelty is not Honesty.

Therefore, the sovereign Judge of every Man's Honesty has laid us down a general Rule, to which all the Particulars are resolv'd, *Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris*. This is a Part of that Honesty I am treating of, and which indeed is the more essential of the two; this is the Test of Behaviour, and the grand Article to have Recourse to, when Laws are silent:

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I have heard some Men argue, that they are not bound to any such Considerations of the Indigence of Persons, as lead to Concessions of Time, or Compositions with them for Debts; that 'tis all *ex gratia*, or the Effects of Policy, because Circumstances lead them to judge it better to take what they can get, than lose the Whole. •

Speaking of the Letter of the Law, I allow that they may be in the right.

On the other hand, a Man who gives a Bond for a Debt, pleads, he is answerable for no more than the Law will force him to; that is, he may defend a Suit, stand out to the last Extremity, and at last keep out of the Way, so as not to have Judgment or Execution serv'd on him; he may secure his Estate from the Execution, as well as his Person, and so never pay the Debt at all; and yet in the Eye of the Law be an honest Man; and this Part of legal literal Honesty is supported only by the other, namely, the cruel Part; for really such a Man, speaking in the Sense of common Justice, is a Knave; he ought to act according to the true Intent and Meaning of his Obligation, and in the Right of a Debtor to a Creditor, which is to pay him his Money when it became due, not stand out to the last, because he cannot be forc'd to it sooner.

The Laws of the Country indeed allow such Actions as the Laws of Conscience can by no Means allow, as in this Case of the Creditor suing for his Debt, and the Debtor not paying it till he is forced by Law. The Argument made Use of to vindicate the Morality of such a Practice, stands thus:

If a Man trusts me with his Money or Goods, upon my common Credit, or upon my Word, he then takes me for his Money, and depends both

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upon my Ability and my Honesty; but if he comes and demands my Bond, he quits his Dependence upon my Honesty, and takes the Law for his Security; so that the Language of such an Action is, He will have a Bond, that it may be in his Power, to make me pay him, whether I will or no; and as for my Honesty, he'll have nothing to do with it: What Relief then I can have against this Bond, by the same Law, to which the Person refers himself, is as legal an Action on my Side, as the other Man's suing for his own, is on his.

And thus the Letter of the Law will ruine the Honesty of both Debtor and Creditor, and yet both shall be justify'd too.

But if I may give my Opinion in this Case, neither of these are the honest Man I am speaking of; for Honesty does not consist of Negatives; and 'tis not sufficient to do my Neighbour no personal Injury in the strict Sense and Letter of the Law; but I am bound, where Cases and Circumstances make other Measures reasonable, to have such Regard to these Cases and Circumstances, as Reason requires. Thus to begin with the Creditor to the Debtor, Reason requires, that where a Man is reduc'd to Extremities, he should not be destroy'd for Debt; and what's unreasonable cannot be honest.

Debt is no capital Crime, nor ever was; and starving Men in Prison, a Punishment worse than the Gallows, seems to be a Thing so severe, as it ought not to be in the Power of a Creditor to inflict it: The Laws of God never tolerated such a Method of treating Debtors, as we have since thought proper, I won't say honest, to put in Practice: But since the Politicks of the Nation, have left the Debtor so much at Mercy by the
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Letter of the Law, 'tis honest with Respect to the Law, to proceed so; yet Compassion is in this Case thought reasonable; *Why shou'dst thou take his Bed from under him?* says the Text; which implies, 'tis unnatural and unreasonable.

I have heard some Men insist upon it, that if a Man be sued wrongfully at Law, he ought rather to submit to the Injury, than to oppose the Wrong, by the same Law; and yet I never found those Gentlemen so passive in Matters of Law, but they would sue a Debtor at Law, if they could not otherwise obtain their Right.

I confess, I cannot blame them for the last, but I blame them for pretending to the first: I am not arguing against recovering a just Debt by a just Law, where the Person is able, but unwilling to be honest: But I think, pursuing the Debtor to all Extremities, to the turning his Wife and Children into the Street, express'd in the Scripture by, *Taking his Bed from under him*; and by keeping the Debtor in Prison, when really he is not able to pay it; there is something of Cruelty in it, and the honest Man, I am speaking of, can never do it.

But some may object, if I must serve all Mankind, as I would be serv'd in like Case, then I must relieve every Beggar, and release every poor Debtor; for if I was a Beggar, I would be reliev'd; and if I was in Prison, I would be releas'd; and so I must give away all I have. This is inverting the Argument; for the Meaning is in the Negative still, Do not to another any Thing, or put no Hardship upon another, which you would not allow to be just, if you were in their Case.

Honesty is Equity, every Man is Lord Chancellor to himself; and if he would consult that

Principle within him, would find Reason as fair an Advocate for his Neighbour, as for himself: But I proceed.



Of the Tryal of HONESTY.

Necessity makes an honest Man a Knave; and if the World was to be the Judge, according to the common receiv'd Notion, there would not be an honest poor Man left alive.

A rich Man is an honest Man, *no Thanks to him*; for he would be a double Knave to cheat Mankind, when he had no Need of it: He has no Occasion to press upon his Integrity, nor so much as to touch upon the Borders of Dishonesty. Tell me of a Man, that is a very honest Man; for he pays every Body punctually, runs into no body's Debt, does no Man any Wrong; very well, What Circumstances is he in? Why, he has a good Estate, a fine yearly Income, and no Business to do. The Devil must have full Possession of this Man, if he should be a Knave; for no Man commits Evil for the Sake of it; even the Devil himself has some farther Design in Sinning, than barely the wicked Part of it. No Man is so hardned in Crimes, as to commit them for the meer Pleasure of the Fact; there is always some Vice gratify'd; Ambition, Pride, or Avarice, make rich Men Knaves, and Necessity, the Poor: But to go on with this rich honest Man; his Neighbour a thriving Merchant, and whose Honesty had as untainted a Character, as he can pretend

pretend to, has a rich Ship cast away, or a Factor Abroad broke in his Debt, and his Bills come back protested, and he fails, is fain to abscond, and make a Composition : Our rich honest Man flies out upon him presently, he is a Knave, a Rogue, and don't pay People what he owes them ; and we should have a Law, That he that runs into Debt farther than he is able to pay, should be hang'd ; and the like. If the poor Man is laid Hold on by some Creditor, and put in Prison ; ay, there let him lye, he deserves it ; 'twill be an Example to keep others from the like ; and now when all is done, this broken Merchant may be as honest a Man as the other.

You say, you are an honest Man, How do you know it? Did you ever want Bread, and had you Neighbour's Loaf in your Keeping, and would starve rather than eat it? Was you ever arrested, and being not able by your self or Friends, to make Peace with your Plaintiff, and at the same Time having another Man's Money in your Cash Chest, committed to your Keeping, suffer'd your self to be carry'd to Jayl, rather than break Bulk, and break in upon your Trust. God himself has declar'd, That the Power of Extremity is irresistible, *and that so*, as to our Integrity, that he has bid us not *despise the Thief* that steals in such a Case ; not that the Man is less a Thief, or the Fact less dishonest : But the Text is most remarkably worded for Instruction, in this Point ; Don't you despise the Man ; But remember, if you were driven to the same Exigence, you would be the same Man, and do the same Thing, tho' now you fancy your Principle so good ; therefore, whatever his Crime may be as to God, don't reproach him with it here ; but you that think you stand, *take heed, lest you fall.*

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I am of the Opinion, that I could state a Circumstance, in which there is not one Man in the World would be honest: Necessity is above the Power of human Nature; and for Providence to suffer a Man to fall into that Necessity, is to suffer him to sin; because Nature is not furnish'd with Power to defend it self, nor is Grace itself able to fortify the Mind against it.

What shall we say to five Men in a Boat at Sea, without Provision, calling a Council together, and resolving to kill one of themselves for the others to feed on, and eat him? With what Face could the four look up, and crave a Blessing on that Meat? With what Heart give Thanks after it? And yet this has been done by honest Men; and I believe, the honestest Man in the World might be forc'd to it; yet here is no Manner of Pretence, but Necessity, to palliate the Crime. If it be argued 'twas the Loss of one Man to save the Four, 'tis answered, But what Authority to make him die to save their Lives? How came the Man to owe them such a Debt? 'Twas Robbery and Murder; 'twas robbing him of his Life, which was his, Property to preserve mine; 'tis Murder, by taking away the Life of an innocent Man; and at best 'twas doing Evil that Good may come, which is expressly forbidden.

But there is a Kind of Equity pleaded in this Case; generally when Men are brought to such a Pass, they cast Lots who shall be the Man, and the voluntary Consent of the Party makes it lawful (God himself being suppos'd to determine who shall be the Man) which I deny; for it is in no Man's Power legally to consent to such a Lot; no Man has a Right to give away his own Life; he may forfeit it to the Law, and loose it; but that's a Crime against himself, as well as against
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the Law ; and the four Men might by our Law have been try'd and hang'd for Murder. All that can be said is, That Necessity makes the highest Crimes lawful, and Things Evil in their own Nature are made practicable by it. From these Extremes of Necessity, we come to lighter Degrees of it ; and so let us bring our honest Man to some Exiencies. He would not wrong any Man of a Farthing ; he could not sleep if he should be in any body's Debt ; and he cannot be an honest Man that can.

That we may see now, whether this Man's Honesty lyes any deeper than his Neighbour's, turn the Scale of his Fortune a little: His Father left him a good Estate, but here comes some Relations, and they trump up a Title to his Lands, and serve Ejectments upon his Tenants ; and so the Man gets into Trouble, Hurry of Business, and the Law : The extravagant Charges of the Law sink him of all his ready Money, and his Rents being stopp'd, the first Breach he makes upon his Honesty (*that is, by his former Rules*) he goes to a Friend to borrow Money, tells him this Matter will be over he hopes quickly, and he shall have his Rents to receive, and then he will pay him again ; and really he intends to do so: But here comes a Disappointment, the Tryal comes on, and he is cast, and his Title to the Estate proves defective ; his Father was cheated, and he not only loses the Estate, but is call'd upon for the Arrears of the Rent he has receiv'd ; and in short, the Man is undone, and has not a Penny to buy Bread, or help himself ; and besides, this cannot pay the Money he borrowed.

Now, turn to his Neighbour, the Merchant, whom he had so loudly call'd Knave, for Breaking in his Trade, he by this Time has made up with his Creditors, and got Abroad again ; and he meets
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him in the Street in his dejected Circumstances; Well, says the Merchant, and *Why don't you pay my Cousin, your old Neighbour, the Money you borrowed of him?* Truly, says he, *because I have lost all my Estate, and can't pay, nay I have nothing to live on.* Well, but, returns the Merchant, *Wan't you a Knave to borrow Money, and now can't pay it?* Why truly, says the Gentleman, *When I borrowed it, I really design'd to be honest, and did not question but I should have my Estate again, and then I had been able also, and would have paid him to a Penny, but it has proved otherwise; and tho' I would pay him, if I had it, yet I am not able.* Well but, says the Merchant again, *Did you not call me Knave, tho' I lost my Estate Abroad, by unavoidable Disasters, as you have lost yours at Home? Did you not upbraid me, because I could not pay? I would have paid every Body, if I could, as well as you.* Why truly, says the Gentleman, *I was a Fool, I did not consider what it was to be brought to Necessity, I ask you Pardon.*

Now, let's carry on this Story: The Merchant compounds with his Creditors, and paying every one a just Proportion, as far as 'twill go, gets himself discharg'd; and being bred to Business, and industrious, falls into Trade again, and raises himself to good Circumstances; and at last, a lucky Voyage, or some Hit of Trade, sets him above the World again: The Man remembering his former Debts, and retaining his Principle of Honesty, calls his old Creditors together; and tho' he was formerly discharg'd from them all, voluntarily pays them the Remainder of their Debts. The Gentleman being bred to no Business, and his Fortune desperate, goes Abroad, and gets into the Army, and behaving himself well, is made an Officer; and still rising by his Merit, becomes a great Man, but in his new Condition troubles
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not his Head with his former Debts in his native Country, but settles in the Court and Favour of the Prince, under whom he has made his Fortunes, and there sets up for the same honest Man he did before.

I think I need not ask which of these two are the honest Man, any more than which was the honest Penitent, the Pharisee or the Publican.

Honesty, like Friendship, is try'd in Affliction; and he that cries out loudest against those who in the Time of this Tryal are forc'd to give Ground, would perhaps yield as far in the like Shock of Misfortune.

To be honest when Peace and Plenty flows upon our Hands, is owing to the Blessing of our Parents; but to be honest, when Circumstances grow narrow, Relations turbulent and quarrelsome, when Poverty stares at us, and the World threatens; this Blessing is from Heaven, and can only be supported from thence. God Almighty is very little beholding to them, who will serve him just as long as he feeds them. 'Twas a strong Argument the Devil used in that Dialogue between Sathan and his Maker about *Job*. *Yes he is a mighty good Man, and a mighty just Man, and well he may, while you give him every Thing he wants: I wou'd serve you my self, and be as true to you as Job, if you wou'd be as kind and as bountiful to me, as you are to him: But now, do but lay your Finger on him; do but stop your Hand a little, and cut him short; strip him a little, and make him like one of those poor Fellows that now bow to him, and you will quickly see your good Man be like other Men; nay, the Passion he will be in at his Losses, will make him curse you to your Face.* 'Tis true, the Devil was mistaken in the Man, but the Argument had a great deal of Probability in it, and the Moral may
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be drawn, both from the Argument and from the Consequences.

I. That 'tis an easy Thing to maintain the Character of Honesty and Uprightness, when a Man has no Business to be in employ'd in, and no Want to press him.

II. That when Exigences and Distresses pinch a Man, then is the Time to prove the Honesty of his Principle.

The prosperous honest Man can only by boasting tell the World he is honest, but the distress'd and ruin'd honest Man hears other People tell him he is honest.

In this Case therefore, since Allowance must be made for human Infirmities, we are to distinguish between an Accident and a Practice. I am not pleading to encourage any Man to make no Scruple of trespassing upon his Honesty in Time of Necessity: But I cannot condemn every Man for a Knave, who by unusual Pressures, Straits, Difficulties, or other Temptation, has been left to slip, and do an ill Action, as we call it, which perhaps this Person would never have stoop'd to, if the Exigence had not been too great for his Resolution. The Scripture says of *David*, *He was a Man after God's own Heart*; and yet we have several Things recorded of him, which, according the modern Way of censuring People in this Age, would have given him the Character of a very ill Man: But I conceive, the Testimony of *David's* Uprightness, given us so authentickly from the Scripture, is given from this very Rule, That the Inclination of his Heart, and the general Bent of his Practice, was to serve and obey his Great Sovereign Benefactor, however,

ever, human Frailty, back'd with Extremities of Circumstances, or powerful Temptations, might betray him, to commit Actions which he would not otherwise have done. The Falling into a Crime, will not denominate a Man dishonest; for *humanum est errare*. The Character of a Man ought to be taken from the general Tenour of his Behaviour, and from his allowed Practice. *David* took the *Shew-Bread* from the Priests, which it was not lawful for him to eat. *David* knew, that God, who commanded the *Shew-Bread* should not be eaten, had however commanded him by the Law of Nature, not to be starv'd; and therefore, press'd by his Hunger, he ventures upon the Commandment. And the Scripture is very remarkable in expressing it, *David when he was an hungry*: And the Occasion for which our Blessed Lord himself quoted this Text, is very remarkable. *viz.* to prove, that Things otherwise unlawful, may be made lawful by Necessity, *Matth. xii. 4.*

Another Time, *David* in his Passion resolves the Destruction of *Nabal* and all his Family, which, without Doubt, was a great Sin; and the Principle which he went upon, *to wit,* Revenge for his churlish and saucy Answer to him, was still a greater Sin; but the Temptation back'd by the Strength of his Passion, had the better of him at that Time: And this upright honest Man had murder'd *Nabal* and all his House, if God had not prevented him.

Many Instances of like Nature the Scripture has left upon Record, giving Testimony to the Character of good Men, from the general Practice and Bent of their Hearts, without leaving any Reproach upon them for particular Failings, tho' those Sins have been extraordinary provoking, and in their Circumstances scandalous enough.

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If any Man would be so weak as from hence to draw Encouragement to allow himself in easy Trespasses upon his Honesty, on the Pretence of Necessities, let him go on with me to the further End of this Observation, and find room for it if he can.

If ever the honest Man I speak of, by whatsoever Exigence or Weakness, thus slips from the Principle of his Integrity, he never fails to express his own Dislike of it ; he acknowledges upon all Occasions; both to God and to Man; his having been overcome; and been prevail'd upon to do, what he does not approve of ; he is too much ashamed of his own Infirmary, to pretend to vindicate the Action, and he certainly is restor'd to the first Regulation of his Principles, as soon as the Temptation is over. No Man is fonder to accuse him than he is to accuse himself; and he has always upon him the sincere Marks of a Penitent.

'Tis plain from hence, that the Principle of the Man's Integrity is not destroy'd; however; he may have fallen; tho' seven times a Day; and I must while I live reckon him for an honest Man.

Nor am I going about to suppose, that the Extremities and Exigencies which have press'd Men of the best Principles, to do what at another time they would not do, make those Actions become less Sinful, either in their own Nature or Circumstances. The Guilt of a Crime with respect to its being a Crime, *viz.* an Offence against God, is not removed by the Circumstances of Necessity. It is without Doubt a Sin for me to steal another Man's Food, tho' it was to supply Starving Nature ; for how do I know whether he whose Food I steal may not be in as much Danger of
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Starving for want of it, as I; and *if not*, 'tis taking to my own Use what I have no Right to, and taking it by Force or Fraud; and the Question is not as to the Right or Wrong, whether I have a Necessity to eat this Man's Bread or no; but whether it be his or my own? If it be his, and not my own, I cannot do it without a manifest Contempt of God's Law, and breaking the Eighth Article of it, *Thou shalt not Steal*. Thus as to God, the Crime is evident, let the Necessity be what it will.

But when we are considering human Nature subjected by the Consequences of *Adam's* Transgression, to Frailty and Infirmity; and regarding things from Man to Man, the Exigencies and Extremities of streightned Circumstances seem to me to be most prevailing Arguments, why the Denomination of a Man's general Character ought not, *by his fellow Mortals (subject to the same Infirmities)* to be gathered from his Mistakes, his Errors or Failings, no not from his being guilty of any extraordinary Sin, but from the Manner and Method of his Behaviour. Does he go on to commit Frauds, and make a Practice of his Sin? Is it a Distress? Is it a Storm of Affliction, and Poverty has driven him upon the Lee Shore of Temptation? Or is the Sin the Port he steer'd for? A Ship may by Stress of Weather be driven upon Sands and dangerous Places, and the Skill of the Pilot not be blameable; but he that runs against the Wind, and without any Necessity, upon a Shelve which he sees before him, must do it on purpose to destroy the Vessel, and ruine the Voyage.

In short, if no Man can be call'd honest, but he who is never overcome, to fall into any Breach of this Rectitude of Life; none but he who

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is sufficiently fortified against all Possibility of being tempted by prospects, or driven by Distress, to make any Trespas upon his Integrity; Woe be unto me that Write, and to most that Read, where shall we find the honest Man?

The Scripture is particularly expressive of this in the *The Righteous Man falleth seven times a Day, and riseth again.* Why, this is very strange, if a Man come, to commit seven Crimes in a Day, that is, many, for the Meaning is Indefinite, can this be an honest Man? What says the World of him? Hang him, he is a Knave, a Rascal, a Dishonest Fellow; this is the Judgment of Men: But in the Judgment of Scripture this may be a Righteous Man.

The main Design, of this Head and the proper Application of it is, to tell us we ought not be too hasty to Brand our Brother for his Sins, his Infirmities or Misfortunes, since he that is Dishonest in your Eyes, by a casual or other Crime which he Commits, may rise from that Disaster by a sincere Repentance, and be to morrow an honest Man than thy self in the Eyes of his Maker.

But here I am assaulted with another censorious honest Man; here you talk of falling to Day, and rising again to Morrow; Sinning and Repenting; why here is a Fellow has cheated me of 500 l. and he comes canting to me of his Repentance, tells me he hopes God has forgiven him; and it would be hard for me to call to Remembrance what God has wip'd out; he is heartily sorry for the Fault, and the like, and begs my Pardon, that is, begs my Estate indeed: For what's all this to my Money, let him pay me and I'll forgive him too; God may forgive him the Sin, but that's nothing to my Debt.

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Why truly, in Answer to this in Part, you are in the Right if the Man be able to make you any Satisfaction, and does not do it; for I question not, but every Trespafs of this Nature requires Restitution, as well as Repentance; Restitution as far as the possible Power of the Party extends; and if the last be not found, the first is not likely to be sincere.

But if the Man, either is not able to make you any Restitution at all, or does make you Restitution to the utmost of his Capacity, and then comes and says as before; then the Poor Man is in the Right, and you in the Wrong; for I make no Question likewise to affirm, and could prove it by unanswerable Arguments, *He may be an Honest Man who cannot pay his Debts, but he cannot be an Honest Man who can, and does not.*

Innumerable Accidents reduce Men from Plentiful Fortunes to mean and low Circumstances; some procur'd by their own Vices and Intemperance, some by Infirmities, Ignorance, and meer want of Judgment to manage their Affairs: Some by the Frauds and Cheats of other Men, some by meer Casualty and unavoidable Accidents, wherein the Sovereignty of Providence shews us, that the Race is not to the Swift, or the Battle to the Strong, or Riches to Men of Understanding.

First, Some by Vices and Intemperance are reduc'd to Poverty and Distress: Our Honest Man cannot fall in the Misfortunes of this Class, because there the very Poverty is a Sin, being produc'd from a sinful Cause. As its far from being allow'd, as an Excuse to a Murtherer, to say he was in Drink, because it is excusing a Crime with a Crime: So for a Man to ruin his Fortunes, as the Prodigal in the Gospel, with riot-

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ous Living, all the Effects are wicked and dishonest, as they partake of the Dishonesty of the Cause from whence they proceed: For he cannot be an honest Man, who wants wherewith to pay his Debts, after having spent what should have discharg'd them, in Luxury and Debauches.

Secondly, Some by Ignorance and want of Judgment to manage their Affairs, are brought to Poverty and Distress; these may be honest Men, notwithstanding their Weakness, for I won't undertake that none of our honest Men shall be Fools: 'Tis true the good Man, is the wise Man, as to the main Part of Wisdom, which is included in his Piety, but many a Religious Man who would not do any Wrong wilfully to his Neighbour, is oblig'd at last to injure both his own Family, and other People's, for want of Discretion to guide him in his Affairs, and to judge for himself: and therefore I dare not Tax all our Fools with being Knaves, nor will I say but such a Man may be Honest. Some will say, but such a Man should not venture into Business, which he is not able to manage, and therefore 'twas the Vice of his Understanding, and like the Case in the first Article, is excusing a Fault with a Fault.

I cannot allow this, for if I am askt why a Fool ventures into Trade, I answer, because he is a Fool, not because he is a Knave.

*If Fools could their own Ignorance discern,
They'd be no longer Fools, because they'd learn.*

If you would convince a Man that he wants Discretion, you must give him Discretion to be convinc'd: 'Till then he cannot know he has it not, because he has it not. No Man is answerable,
either

either to God or Man, for that which he never was Master of: The most proper Expression that ever I met with in this Nature, was of a certain Ideot or Natural, which a Gentleman of my Acquaintance kept in his Family, who being on his Death-Bed, was observ'd to be very pensive, and much concern'd about dying; the Gentleman sent a Minister to him, who as well as he could to his Understanding, discoursed with him about Death and Judgment to come; the poor Creature who was hardly ever able to give a rational Answer to a Question before, after hearing him very attentively, broke out into Tears with this Expression, *That he hoped God would not require any Thing of him, that he had not given him Judgment to understand.* Whatever it may be as to the Soul, I am positive in the Case of human Affairs, no Man is answerable to Man for any more than his Discretion; Events are not in our Power, a Man may be nicely Honest in Life, tho' he may be weak enough in Judgment.

Thirdly, Some are ruin'd, and are yet merely passive, being either defrauded and cheated by Knaves, or plundered and rifled by Thieves, or by immediate Casualties, as Fire, Enemies, Storms, Floods, and the like; these are Things which neither touch the Man's Honesty, nor his Discretion. Thus *Job* was by God's Permission and the Agency of the Devil, - reduc'd in a Moment from a plentiful Estate to be as naked as he came out of his Mother's Womb: I would fain ask those who say, no Man can be an honest Man if he does not pay his Debts, who paid *Job's* Debts if he own'd any, and where was his Dishonesty, if he did not pay them? I still readily grant that he cannot be an honest Man who does not pay his Debts if he can; but if other-

wife, then the Words ought to be altered, and they should say, he cannot be an honest Man who borrows any Money, or buys any Thing upon his Credit, and this cannot be true.

But since I have led myself into the Argument, I cannot but make a small Digression concerning People who fail in Trade: I conceive the greatest Error of such is their Terror about Breaking, by which they are tempted while their Credit is good, tho' their Bottom be naught, to push farther in; expecting, or at least hoping, by the Profits of some happy Voyage, or some lucky Hit, as they call it, to retrieve their Circumstances, and stand their Ground.

I must confess, I cannot vindicate the Honesty of this; for he, who knowing his Circumstances to be once naught, and his Bottom worn out; ought not in Justice to enter into any Man's Debt; for Then he Trades on their Risque, not on his own, and yet Trades for his own Profits, not theirs; this is not fair, because he deceives the Creditor, who ventures his Estate on that Bottom which he supposes to be good, and the other knows is not. Nay, tho' he really pays this Creditor, he is not honest; for in Conscience, his former Creditors had a Right to all his Effects, in Proportion to their Debts; and if he really pays one all, and the rest but a Share, 'tis a Wrong to the whole.

I would therefore advise all Tradesmen, who find their Circumstances declining, as soon, at least, as they first discern themselves to be incapable of paying their Debts, if not, while yet they can pay every one all, make a full Stop, and call all People together; if there is enough to pay them all, let them have it, if not, let them have their just Shares of it; by this Means
you

you will certainly have God's Blessing, and the Character of an honest Man, left to begin again with ; and Creditors are often prevail'd with, in Consideration of such a generous Honesty, to throw back something to put such a Man in a Posture to live again; or by further voluntary Credit and Friendship, to uphold him. This is much better also with respect to Interest, as well as Honesty, than to run on to all Extremities, till the Burthen falls too heavy, either for Debtor or Creditor to bear : This would prevent many of the Extremities, which, I say, puts the Honesty of a Man to so extraordinary a Tryal.

An honest Principle would certainly dictate to the Man, if it were consulted with, that when he knows he is not able to pay, it is not lawful for him to borrow. Taking Credit is a Promise of Payment ; a Promise of Payment is tacitly understood, and he cannot be honest who promises what he knows he cannot perform, as I shall note more at large on another Head. But if the Man be paid, yet it was not an honest Act ; 'twas deceiving the Man, and making him run a greater Risque than he knew of, and such a Risque as he would not have run, had he known your Circumstances and Bottom, as you do ; so that here is Deceit upon Deceit.

This I know is a disputed Point, and a Thing which a great many practise, who pass for very honest Men in the World ; but I like it not the better for that ; I am very positive, that he who takes my Goods on the Foot of his Credit, when if he should dye the next Day, he knows his Estate will not pay me five Shillings in the Pound ; tho' he should not dye, but does pay me at the Time appointed, is as much guilty of a Fraud, as if he actually robb'd my House. Credit is a

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receiv'd Opinion of a Man's Honesty and Ability, his Willingness to pay, and his having wherewith to pay; and he who wants either of these, his Credit is lame. Men won't sell their Goods to a litigious quarrelsome Man, tho' he be never so rich, nor to a needy Man, tho' he be never so honest. Now, if all the World believe I am honest and able, and I know I am not the last, I cannot be the first, if I take their Goods upon Credit; 'tis vain to pretend, Men Trade upon the general Risque of Mens Appearance, and the Credit of common Fame, and all Men have an equal Hazard. *I say no*: Men may venture their Estates in the Hands of a flourishing Bankrupt, and he by Virtue of his yet unshaken Credit is trusted; but he cannot be honest that takes this Credit, because he knows his Circumstances are quite otherwise than they are suppos'd to be, that the Man is deceiv'd, and he is privy to the Deceit.

This Digression is not so remote from the purpose, as I expected, when I began it; the Honesty that I am speaking of, chiefly respects Matters of Commerce, of which Credit and Payment of Debt are the most considerable Branches.

There is another Article in Trade, which many very honest Men have made familiar to themselves, which yet I think, is in no Case to be defended; and that is relating to Counterfeit Money. Custom, before the old Money was suppress'd in *England*, had prevail'd so far upon Honesty, that I have seen some Men put all their Brass Money among their runing Cash, to be told over in every Sum they paid, in Order to have somebody or other take it; I have heard many People own they made no Scruple of it, but I could never find them give one good Reason to justify the Honesty of it. *First,*

First, They say it comes for Money, and it ought to go so: To which I Answer, that is just as good a Reason as this: *A* has cheated me, and therefore I may Cheat *B*. If I have received a Sum of Money for good, and knowing not that any of it is otherwise, offer it in Payment to another: This is Just and Honest; but, if on this other Man's telling it over, he returns me a Piece of Brads or Counterfeit Money which I change again, and afterwards knowing this to be such, offer the same Piece to another: I know no worse Fraud in its Degree in the World, and I doubt not to prove it so beyond Contradiction.

If the first Person did not take this Piece of Money, it was because being both watchful and skilful, he could discover it; and if I offer it to another 'tis with an Expectation, that he being either less watchful or less skillful, shall overlook it, and so I shall make an Advantage of my Neighbour's Ignorance, or want of Care.

I'll put some parallel Cases to this, to illustrate it: Suppose a blind Man comes into a Shop to buy Goods of me, and giving me a Guinea to change, I shall give him the Remainder in bad Money; would not every Body say 'twas a barbarous Thing? Why the other is all one, for if the Person be ignorant of Money, he is blind as to the Point in Hand; and nothing can be more unfair than to take the Advantage.

Suppose again a young Boy, or a Servant newly entred in Trade, is sent to buy Goods, and by his Master's Order, he asks for such a Commodity; and you presuming upon the Rawness of the Messenger, deliver a Sort of a meaner Quality, and take the full Price of him; would you grudge to be used scurvily for such a Trick? Why, no less or better is Offering Brads for Silver,

presuming only the want of Care or Skill in the Receiver, shall pass it unobserv'd.

Ay, but says a learned Tradesman who would be thought honest than ordinary; I always change it again, if it be brought back: Yes Sir, so does a Pick-Pocket give you your Handkerchief again when you have fasten'd on him, and threaten'd him with the Mob. The Matter in short is this; if the Man whom you have cheated, can cheat no Body else, then no Thanks to you; when he comes to you, and charges the Fraud upon you, you'll make Satisfaction, because if you won't, the Law will compel you to it.

But if the Fraud may be carried on, as you are manifestly willing, consenting, and instrumental in it that it should; behold the Consequence, your first sin against Honesty is multiplied in all the Hands thro' whom this Piece of bad Money knowingly so passes, till at last it happens to go single to a poor Man that can't put it off, and the Wrong and Injury may issue where it was wanted to buy Bread for a starving Family.

All the Excuses I could ever meet with could never satisfy me, that it can consist with Honesty, to put Brass or Copper away for Gold or Silver, any more than it would, to give a blind Messenger Sand instead of Sugar, or brown Bread instead of white.



Of H O N E S T Y *in* Promises.



Man is known by his Word, and an Ox by his Horns, says an old *English* Proverb. If I understand the true Meaning of it, 'tis, that the Honesty of a Man is known by his punctual observing his Word, as naturally and plainly as any Creature is known by the most obvious Distinction. 'Tis the peculiar Quality of an honest Man, the distinguishing Mark to know him by. His Word or Promise is as sacred to him in all his Affairs in the World, as the strongest Obligation which can be laid on him; nor is it a Thing form'd by him from settled Resolutions, or Measures of Policy taken up of course to raise or fix his Reputation; but 'tis the native Produce of his honest Principle: 'Tis the Consequence, and his Honesty is the Cause; he ceases to be Honest, when he ceases to preserve this solemn Regard to his Word.

If he gives his Word, any Man may depend upon it, for the Safety of his Life or Estate; he scorns to prevaricate or shift himself off from the punctual Observance of it, tho' it be to his Loss.

I can't abate an honest Man an Inch in the punctual Observance of a Promise made upon Parole, if it be in the Man's possible Power to perform it, because there seems to be something too base to consist with Honesty in the very Nature of a Man that can go back from his Word.

The Reverence our Ancestors paid to their Promises, or Word past, I am of the Opinion, gave

gave that remarkable Brand of Infamy and Scandal upon the Affront of giving the Lie; a Gentleman, which is, in short, the modern Term for an honest Man, or, a Man of Honour, cannot receive a greater Reproach, than to be told, *he lies*; that is, that he forfeits his Word, breaks his Veracity; for the Minute he does that, he ungentle-mans himself, disgraces the Blood of his Family, degenerates from his Ancestors, and commences Rake, Scoundrel, and any Thing.

Some People, who have run their Points of Honour to the Extreame, are of the Opinion, that this Affront of the Lie ought not to be given to any Thing they call a Gentleman, or that calls himself so, till he has so far exposed himself to all other Degrees of Infamy, as to bear Kicking, or Caning, and the like; that after this, when he breaks his Word, he may be told, *he lies*, or any Thing else; but till then, the very Thing it self is so intolerable an Abuse, that the Person who ventures to trespass so foully on the Rules of good Manners, deserves not the Honour of fair Play for his Life: But as some Beasts of Prey are refused the fair Law of the Field, and are knock'd down in every Hedge; so these, like Bullies and meer Rakes, may be pistol'd in the Dark, and stabb'd at the Corner of an Alley; that is to say, any Measure may be used with them, to dismiss them from the Society of Mankind, as Fellows not sufferable in the Common-wealth of good Manners.

I do not argue for these Extremes; but I instance in this, to testify the Veneration all good Men have for the Word or Promise of an honest Man, and the Esteem which the Integrity of the Mind express'd by a zealous Regard to the Words of the Mouth, have obtain'd in the World. The
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French, when they express themselves in Vindication of their Honour, always bring it about by this, *Je suis homme de Parole*, I am an honest Man, or a Man of my Word; that is, I am a Man that may be trusted upon my Parole; for I never break my Word.

Such was the Value put upon the Promises of Men in former Time, that a Promise of Payment of Money was recoverable in our Courts by Law, till the Inconveniencies prov'd so many, that an Act was made on Purpose to restrain it to a Sum under ten Pounds: But to this Day, if a Man promises Marriage to a Woman, especially if she has granted him any Favours upon that Condition, the Laws of the Land, which therein have Regard to the Laws of Honour, will oblige him to make it good, and allow it to be a sufficient Plea to forbid his marrying with any body else.

There are innumerable Instances of the Veneration all Nations pay to the expressive Article of human Veracity. In the War, you meet with frequent Instances of Prisoners dismiss'd by a generous Enemy, upon their Parole, either to pay their Ransom, or to procure such or such Conditions, or come back and surrender themselves Prisoners; and he that should forfeit this Parole, wou'd be posted in the Enemy's Army, and hiss'd out of his own.

I know nothing a wise Man would not chuse to do, rather than by breaking his Word, give the World such an undeniable Testimony of his being a Knave: This is that good Name which *Solomon* says is better than Life, and is a precious Ointment, and which, when a Man has once lost, he has nothing left worth keeping. A Man may even hang himself out of the Way; for no Man that looks like a Man, will keep his Company.

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When a Man has once come to breaking his Word, no Man, that has any Value for his Reputation, cares to be seen in his Company; but all good Men shun him, as if he were infected with the Plague.

There are Men indeed, who will be exceeding punctual to their Words and Promises, who yet cannot be call'd honest Men, because they have other Vices and Excursions that render them other Ways wicked: These give their Testimony to the Beauty of Honesty, by chusing it as the best Mask to put a Gloss upon their Actions, and conceal the other Deformities of their Lives; and so Honesty, like Religion, is made Use of to disguise the Hypocrite, and raise a Reputation upon the Shadow, by the Advantage it takes of the real Esteem the World has of the Substance: I say of this Counterfeit-Honesty, as is said of Religion in like Cases. If Honesty was not the most excellent Attainment, 'twould not be made Use of as the most specious Pretence; nor is there a more exquisite Way for a Man to play the Hypocrite, than to pretend an extraordinary Zeal to the Performance of his Promises; because, when the Opinion of any Man's Honesty that Way, has spread in the Thoughts of Men, there is nothing so great, but they will trust him with, nor so hard, but they will do it for him.

All Men reverence an honest Man; the Knaves stand in Awe of him, Fools adore him, and wise Men love him; and thus is Virtue its own Reward.

Honest Men are in more Danger from this one Hypocrite, than from 20 open Knaves; for these have a Mark plac'd upon them by their general Character, as a Buoy upon a Rock to warn Strangers from venturing upon it: But the Hypocrites are like

like a Pit cover'd over, like Shoals under Water, and Danger conceal'd which cannot be seen. I must confess, I have found these the most dangerous, and have too deeply suffer'd by throwing myself on their Protestations of Honesty: The Esteem I always entertain'd of the most beautiful Gift God has bestow'd, or Man could receive, has made me the easier to be deceiv'd with the Resemblance of it.

So much as I, or any one else, by the Vitioufness of our own Nature, or the prevailing Force of Accidents, Snares, and Temptations, have deviated from this shining Principle, so far we have been foolish, as well as wicked; so much we have to repent of towards our Maker, and be asham'd of towards our Neighbour.

For my Part, I am never backward to own, let who will be the Reader of these Sheets, that to the Dishonour of my Maker, and the just Scandal of my own Honesty, I have not paid that due Regard to the Rectitude of this Principle, which my own Knowledge has own'd to be its due; let those who have been juster to themselves, and to the Giver of it, rejoice in the Happiness, rather than triumph over the Infirmary.

But let them be sure, they have been juster on their own Parts; let them be positive, that their own Integrity is untainted, and would abide all the Tryals and Racks, that a ruin'd Fortune, strong Temptations, and deep Distresses, could bring it into: Let them not boast till these Dangers are past, and they put their Armour off; and if they can do it then, I will freely acknowledge, they have less need of Repentance than I.

Not that I pretend, as I noted before, and shall often repeat, that these Circumstances render my Failing, or any Man's else, the less a Sin, but

but they make the Reason, Why we that have fallen, should rather be pity'd than reproach'd by those who think they stand; because, when the same Assaults are made upon the Chastity of their Honour, it may be every jot as likely to be prostituted as their Neighbours.

And such is the Folly of Scandal, as well as the Blindness of Malice, that it seldom fixes Reproach upon the right Foot: I have seen so much of it, with respect to other People, as well as my self, that it gives me a very scoundrel Opinion of all those People whom I find forward to load their Neighbours with Reproach. Nothing is more frequent in this Case, than to run away with a Piece of a Man's Character, in which they err; and do him Wrong; and leave that Part of him untouch'd which is really black, and would bear it; this makes me sometimes, when with the humblest and most abasing Thoughts of my self, I look up, and betwixt God and my own Soul, cry out, *What a Wretch am I!* at the same time smile at the hair-brain'd Enemy, whose Tongue tippt with Malice, runs ahead of his Understanding, and missing the Crimes for which I deserve more than he can inflict, reproaches me with those I never committed. Methinks I am ready to call him back, like the Huntsman, when the Dogs run upon the Foil, and say, hold, hold, your are wrong; *take him here, and you have him.*

I question not but 'tis the same with other People; for when Malice is in the Heart, Reproach generally goes a Mile before Consideration, and where is the Honesty of the Man all this while? This is trampling upon my Pride, *sed majori fastu*; but with greater Pride; 'tis exposing my Dishonesty, but with the highest Knavery; 'tis

a Method no honest Man will take, and when taken, no honest Man regards; wherefore, let none of these Sons of Slander take Satisfaction in the frequent Acknowledgments I am always ready to make of my own failing, for that Humility with which I always find Cause to look into my own Heart, where I see others worse, and more guilty of Crimes than they can lay to my Charge, yet makes me look back upon their Weakness with the last Contempt, who fix their impotent Charges where there is not Room to take hold, and run away with the Air, and Shadow of Crimes never committed.

I have instanc'd this, not at all on my own Account, for 'tis not worth while; for if I am injur'd, what's that to troubling the World with, when I am forgotten; but while I am examining the nicest Article in the World, *Honesty*, I cannot but lay down these three Heads from the preceding Observations.

1. *He who is forward to reproach the Infirmities of other Mens Honesty, is very near a Breach of his own.*
2. *He that hastily reproaches another without sufficient Ground, cannot be an honest Man.*
3. *Where there may be sufficient Ground of Reproach, yet an honest Man is always tender of his Neighbour's Character from the Sense of his own Frailty.*

But I return to *Honesty*, as it affects a Man's pledging his Word, which is the Counter-part of his Principle, and this because as I said, I should chiefly regard this *Honesty*, as it concerns human Affairs Conversation, and Négotiation:

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And here I meet with a Tradesman come just in from dunning one of his Neighbours : Well, I have been at a Place for Money, *says he*, but I can get none ; there's such a one, he passes for an honest Man, but I am sure he is a great Rogue to me, for he has promised me my Money a long Time, but puts me off still from Time to Time ; he makes no more of breaking his Word, than of drinking a Glas of Beer. I am sure he has told me forty Lies already ; this is one of your honest Men, if all such honest Men were hang'd we should have a better Trade ; and thus he runs on.

If all such honest Men were hang'd, they that were left might have a better Trade, but how many of them would there be ?

Now tho' I shall no Way vindicate Mens hasty Promises absolutely to perform what is doubtful in the Event, yet I cannot agree, that every Man who having promis'd a Payment, does not perform it, to his Time, is a Knave or a Lyar ; if it were so, the Lord have Mercy upon three Parts of the City.

Wherefore, to state this Matter clearly, it must be taken a little to Pieces, and the Articles spoken to apart.

First, Without Question, when a Man makes a Promise of Payment to another on a set Day, knowing in his own Thoughts that it is not probable he should be capable to comply with it, or really designing not to comply with it, or not endeavouring to comply with it : 'Tis a Deceit put upon the Party, 'tis a premeditated formal Lye, the Man that made it is a Stranger to Honesty, he is a Knave, and every Thing that is base and bad. But

Secondly, Promises ought to be understood both by the Person to whom, and the Person by whom,
they

they are made as liable to those Contingencies that all human Affairs and Persons are liable to, as Death, Accidents, Disappointments, and Disorder: Thus, if a Man, who ought to pay me to Day, tells me, Sir, I cannot comply with you to Day, but if you call for it next Week, you shall have it.

If I may put this Answer into plainer *English*; and I suppose the Man to be an honest Man; I cannot understand his Meaning other wise than thus:

“ Sir, I acknowledge your Money is due;
 “ I have not Cash enough by me to pay you to
 “ Day; but I have several running Bills, and se-
 “ veral Persons who have promised me Money,
 “ which I doubt not I shall receive against such a
 “ Time; and if you call then, I make no Que-
 “ stion, but I shall be able to do it; and if it is
 “ possible for me to pay you, I will do it at that
 “ Time, without Fail.

I confess, it were as well to express themselves thus at large, in all the Appointments People make for Payment; and would the Persons who make them consider it, they would do so: But Custom has prevail'd in our general Way of Speaking, whereby all Things that are subject to the common known Contingents of Life, or visible in the Circumstances of the Case, are understood without being expressed. For Example:

I make an Appointment of meeting a Man positively at such a Town, such a certain Day or Hour; if I were talking to a *Turk* or a *Pagan* that knows nothing, or believes nothing, of Supreme Providence; I would say, *If the Lord of Heaven and Earth that governs all my Actions, please to preserve and permit me*: But when I am talking to a *Christian*, it should seem to be so universally supposed, that every Appointment is subjected, and

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submits to the Government of Providence, that the Repetition would be needless; and that when a Man promises positively to meet, 'tis with a general *Subintelligitur*, a Reserve as natural as Nature it self, to the Divine Permission: All Men know, that unless I am alive, I cannot come there; or, if I am taken sick, both which may easily happen, I shall disappoint him: And therefore, if he shou'd urge me again to come without Fail, and I should rep'y, I won't fail, if I am alive and well, the Man ought to take it for an Affront, and ask me, if I take him for a Fool, to think, if I am taken sick, I should come with my Bed at my Back; or if Death should interveen, he had Occasion to speak with my Ghost.

In this Sense, a Tradesman who promises Payment of Money at a set Time; first 'tis supposed he has it not now in his Hands, because he puts off the Person demanding to a further Day, and promises to comply with it then: This Promise therefore, can be understood no otherwise, than that he expects to receive Money by that Time: Now, if this Man, by the like Disappointments from other Men, or any other involuntary Casualty, is really and *bona fide* unable to comply with the Time of promised Payment; I cannot see, but this may befall an honest Man, and he neither designing to fail when he promised, nor being able to prevent the Accident that oblig'd him to do it, nor any way voluntary in the Breach, is not in my Opinion guilty of a Lie, or Breach of his Honour, tho' he did not make those verbal Reserves in the Promises he had given.

If every Man, who cannot comply with promised Payments, should be thus branded with Lying and Dishonesty, then let him, who is
without

without the Sin, cast the Stone, for no body else ought to do it.

'Tis true, there is a Difference between an Accident, and a Practice; that is in short, there is a Difference between him who meets with a great many Occasions thus to break his Word, and he that meets with but a few: But if it be a Crime, he that commits it once, is no more an honest Man, than he that commits it forty Times; and if it be not a Crime, he that does it forty Times, is as honest as he that has Occasion to do it but once.

But let no Man take Encouragement from hence, to be prodigal of his Word, and slack in his Performance; for this nice Path is so near the Edge of the Pit of Knavery, that the least Slip lets you fall in.

These Promises must have Abundance of Circumstances to bring the honest Man out of the Scandal.

As, 1st. The Disappointments which occasioned this Breach of his Word, must have been unforeseen, and unexpected, otherwise the Expectation of performing his Promise, was ill grounded, and then his Honesty is answerable for the very making the Promise, as well as the breaking it.

2^d. No Endeavours must be wanting to comply with the Promise; otherwise 'tis wrong to say, I am disappointed, and can't make good my Word; the Man ought to say, Sir, I have disappointed my self by my Negligence or Wilfulness, and have oblig'd my self to break my Word; or, in *English*, Sir, I am a Knave; for tho' I made you a Promise which I might have performed, I took no

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Care about it, not valuing the Forfeiture of my Word.

If then the Case is so nice, tho' in the Strictness of Speaking, such a Disappointment may oblige an honest Man to break his Word; yet every honest Man, who would preserve that Character to himself, ought to be the more wary, and industriously avoid making such absolute unconditional Promises, because we are to avoid the Circumstances of Offence.

But as to the Nature of the Thing, 'tis plain to me, that a Man may in such Cases be obliged to break his Word unwillingly; and nothing can be a Fraud or dishonest Action in that Case, which is not either voluntary in it self, or the Occasion voluntarily procur'd.



Of Relative HONESTY.

AS Honesty is simple and plain, without Gloss and Pretence, so 'tis universal: He that may uphold an untainted Reputation in one Particular, may be justly branded with Infamy in another. A Man may be punctual in his Dealings, and a Knave in his Relations; honest in his Ware-house, and a Knave at his Fire-side: He may be a Saint in his Company, a Devil in his Family; true to his Word, and false to his Friendship: But whosoever he be, he is no honest Man. An honest Man is all of a Piece, the whole Contexture of his Life, his general Conduct is genuine, and squar'd according to the Rules of Honesty; he never runs into Extremes and Excesses on one Hand or other.

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I confess, I find 'this Thing, which they call *Relative Honesty*, very little thought of in the World; and that which is still worse, 'tis very little understood: I'll bring it down to but a few Examples; some of which frequently happen among us, and will therefore be the more familiarly receiv'd.

There are relative Obligations entail'd on us in our Family Circumstances, which are just Debts, and must be paid; and which, in a Word, a Man can no more be honest, if he does not make Conscience of Discharging, than he can in the Case of the most unquestionable Debts between Man and Man.

The Debts from Children to Parents, and from Wives to their Husbands, are in a Manner relatively chang'd, and the Obligation transferr'd into the Order of religious Duties. God the Guide and Commander of all Subordination, has as it were, taken that Part into his own Hand; 'tis rather call'd a Duty to him, than a relative Duty only: But if Men take this for a Discharge to them, of all relative Obligations to Wives and to Children, or that God had less required one than the other, they must act upon very wrong Principles.

Nature indeed dictates in general a Man's providing Subsistence for his Family, and he is declared to be so far from a Christian, that he is worse than an Infidel that neglects it: But there are other Parts of our Obligations, which Honesty calls upon us to perform.

A Wife and Children are Creditors to the Father of the Family; and he cannot be an honest Man that does not discharge his Debt to them, any more than he could, if he did not repay Money borrowed, to a Stranger and not to lead my

Reader on to intricate and disputed Particulars; I instance principally in those that no body can dispute: As *First*, EDUCATION: By this I mean, not only putting Children to School, which some Parents think, is all they have to do with or for their Children; and indeed with some, is all that they know how to do, or are fit to do: I say, I do not mean this only, but several other additional Cares, as (1.) Directing what School, what Parts of Learning, is proper for them; what Improvements they are to be taught. (2.) Studying the Genius and Capacities of their Children, in what they teach them: Some Children will voluntarily learn one Thing, and can never be forc'd to learn another; and for Want of which observing the Genius of Children, we have so many learned Blockheads in the World, who are mere Scholars, Pedants, and no more. (3.) But the main Part of this Debt, which Relative Honesty calls upon us to pay to our Children, is the Debt of Instruction, the Debt of Government, the Debt of Example: He that neglects to pay any of these to his Family, is a *relative Knave*; let him value himself upon his Honesty, in paying his other Debts, as much as he will.

'Tis a strange Notion Men have of Honesty, and of their being honest Men, as if it related to nothing but Tradesmen, or Men who borrow and lend; or that the Title was obtain'd by an ordinary Observance of Right and Wrong between Man and Man. 'Tis a great Mistake, the Name of an honest Man is neither so easily gain'd, or so soon lost, as these Men imagine. *David* was a very honest Man, notwithstanding his Passion and Revenge in the Case of *Nabal*, his Murder in the Case of *Uriah*, or his Adultery in the Case of *Bathsheba*. The Intent and main Design of his Life

was

was upright; and whenever he fell by the Power of that Temptation that overcame him, he rose again by Repentance.

Let no vain Men flatter themselves with the Pride of their Honesty, in mere Matters of Debtor and Creditor, tho' that's also absolutely necessary and essential to an honest Man.

But trace this honest Man home to his Family: Is he a Tyrant or a Churl to his Wife? Is he a Stranger to the Conduct and Behaviour of his Children? Is he an *Eli* to their Vices? Are they uninstructed, uncorrected, unexhorted, ungoverned, or ill governed? That Man's a *Knave*, a relative Knave; he neither does his Duty to God, or pays the Debt of a Husband, or of a Parent to his Wife or his Family.

Secondly, After the Debt of EDUCATION, there is the Debt of INDUCTION due from us to our Children. The Debt from a Parent is far from ending when the Children come from School, as the Brutes who turn their Young off from them when they are just able to pick for themselves: It is our Business, doubtless, to introduce them into the World, and to do it in such a manner, as suits the Circumstances we are in, as to their Supply, and the Inclinations and Capacities of our Children: This is a Debt, the Want of paying which, makes many Children too justly reproach their Parents with neglecting them in their Youth, and not giving them the necessary Introduction into the World, as might have qualify'd them to struggle and shift for themselves.

Not to do this, is to ruin our Children negatively on one Hand, as doing it without Judgment, and without Regard to our Family Circumstances, and our Childrens Capacities, is a positive ruining them on the other. I could very usefully

run out this Part into a long Discourse on the Necessity there is of consulting the Inclinations and Capacities of our Children, in our placing them out in the World. How many a martial Spirit do we find damn'd to Trade, while we spoil many a good Porter, and convert the able Limbs and Bones of a Blockhead into the Figure of a long Robe, or a Gown and Cassock?

How many awkward clumsy Fellows do we breed to Surgery, or to Musick, whose Fingers and Joints, Nature originally design'd, and plainly shew'd it us by their Size, were better suited for the Blacksmith's Sledge, or the Carpenter's Axe, the Waterman's Oar, or the Carman's Whip?

Whence comes it to pass, that we have so many young Men brought to the Bar, and to the Pulpit, with stammering Tongues; Hesitations, and Impediments in their Speech, unmusical Voices, and no common Utterance; while on the other Hand, Nature's Cripples, Bow-legg'd, Battleham'd, and half-made Creatures, are bred Tumblers and Dancing-Masters.

I name these, because they occur most in our common Observation, and are all miserable Examples, where the Children curse the Knavery of their Fathers, in not paying the Debt they ow'd to them as Parents, in putting them to Employments that had been suitable to their Capacities, and suitable to what Nature had cut them out for.

I came into a publick House once in *London*, where there was a black *Maletta*-look'd Man sitting, talking very warmly among some Gentlemen, who I observ'd were listning very attentively to what he said; and I sat myself down, and did the like; 'twas with great Pleasure I heard him discourse very handsomly on several weighty Subjects;

jects; I found he was a very good Scholar, had been very handsomely bred; and that Learning and Study was his Delight; and more than that, some of the best of Science was at that Time his Employment: At length I took the Freedom to ask him, If he was born in *England*?

He reply'd with a great deal of good Humour in the Manner, but with an Excess of Resentment at his Father, and with Tears in his Eyes, Yes, yes, Sir, I am a true-born *English* Man, to my Father's Shame be it spoken; who being an *English* Man himself, could find in his Heart to join himself to a *Negro* Woman, tho' he must needs know, the Children he should beget, would curse the Memory of such an Action, and abhor his very Name for the sake of it. Yes, yes, says he, repeating it again, I am an *English* Man, and born in lawful Wedlock; happy had it been for me, tho' my Father had gone to the Devil for Whoredom, had he lain with a Cook-Maid, or produced me from the meanest Beggar Woman in the Street. My Father might do the Duty of Nature to his black Wife; but, God knows, he did no Justice to his Children. If it had not been for this damn'd black Face of mine, says he then smiling, I had been bred to the Law, or brought up in the Study of Divinity: But my Father gave me Learning to no manner of Purpose; for he knew I should never be able to rise by it to any Thing, but a learned *Valet de Chamber*. What he put me to School for, I cannot imagine: He spoil'd a good Tarpawlin, when he strove to make me a Gentleman: When he had resolv'd to marry a Slave, and lye with a Slave, he should have begot Slaves, and let us have been bred as we were born: But he has twice ruin'd me; first with getting me a frightful

ful Face, and then going to paint a Gentleman upon me.

It was a most affecting Discourse indeed, and as such I record it; and I found it ended in Tears, from the Person who was in himself the most deserving, modest, and judicious Man, that I ever met with, under a *Negro* Countenance in my Life.

After this Story, I perswaded myself I need say no more to this Case; the Education of our Children, their Instruction, and the Introducing them into the World, is a Part of Honesty, a Debt we owe to them; and he cannot be an honest Man that does not to the utmost of his Ability and Judgment, endeavour to pay it.

All the other relative Obligations, which Family Circumstances call for the Discharge of, allow the same Method of arguing for, and are Debts in their Proportion, and must be paid upon the same Principle of Integrity. I have neither room, nor is there any Occasion to enlarge upon them.



CHAP.



CHAP. III.

OF THE

Immortality of CONVERSATION,

AND

The Vulgar ERRORS of *Behaviour.*



Conversation is the brightest and most beautiful Part of Life; 'tis an Emblem of the Enjoyment of a future State; *for suitable Society is a heavenly Life*; 'tis that Part of Life by which Mankind are not only distinguish'd from the inanimate World, but by which they are distinguish'd from one another. Perhaps I may be more particularly sensible of the Benefit and of the Pleasure of it, having been so effectually mortify'd with the Want of it: But as I take it to be one of the Peculiars of the rational Life, that Man is a conversible Creature; so 'tis his most compleat Blessing in Life, to be blessed with suitable Persons about him to converse with. Bringing it down from Generals to Particulars, nothing can recommend a Man more, nothing renders him more agreeable, nothing can be a better Character to give of one Man to another, next to that of his being an honest and religious Man, than to say of him that he is very good Company. How

How delightful is it to see a Man's Face always cover'd with Smiles, and his Soul shining continually in the Goodness of his Temper; to see an Air of Humour and Pleasantness sit ever upon his Brow, and to find him on all Occasions the same, ever agreeable to others and to himself; a steady Calm of Mind, a clear Head, and serene Thoughts always acting the Mastership upon him : Such a Man has something angelick in his very Countenance; the Life of such a Man, is one entire Scene of Composure; 'tis an Anticipation of the future State, which we well represent by an eternal Peace.

To such a Man to be angry, is only to be just to himself, and to act as he ought to do; to be troubled or sad, is only to act his Reason; for as to being in a Passion, he knows nothing of it; Passion is a Storm in the Mind, and this never happens to him; for all Excesses, either of Grief or of Resentment, are Foreigners, and have no Habitation with him: He is the only Man that can observe that Scripture heavenly Dictate, *Be angry and sin not*; and if ever he is very angry, 'tis with himself, for giving Way to be angry with any one else.

This is the truly agreeable Person, and the only one that can be call'd so in the World; his Company is a Charm, and is rather wonder'd at than imitated: 'Tis almost a Vertue to envy such a Man; and one is apt innocently to grieve at him, when we see what is so desirable in him, and cannot either find it, or make it in our selves.

But take this with you in the Character of this happy Man, namely, that he is always a good Man, a religious Man: 'Tis a gross Error to imagine, that a Soul blacken'd with Vice, loaded with Crime, degenerated into Immorality and Folly, can

can be that Man, can have this calm, serene Soul, those clear Thoughts, those constant Smiles upon his Brow, and the steady Agreeableness and Pleasantry in his Temper, that I am speaking of; there must be Intervals of Darkness upon such a Mind; Storms in the Conscience will always lodge Clouds upon the Countenance; and where the Weather is hazey within, it can never be Sun-shine without; the Smiles of a disturb'd Mind are all but feign'd and forg'd; there may be a good Disposition, but it will be too often and too evidently interrupted by the Recoils of the Mind, to leave the Temper untouch'd, and the Humour free and unconcern'd; when the Drum beats an Alarm within, it is impossible but the Disturbance will be discover'd without.

Mark the Man of Crime; sit close to him in Company, at the End of the most exuberant Excursion of his Mirth; you will never fail to hear his reflecting Faculty whisper a Sigh to him; he'll shake it off, you will see him check it and go on; perhaps he sings it off, but at the End of every Song, nay perhaps of every Stanza, it returns; a kind of involuntary Sadness breaks upon all his Joy; he perceives it, rouses, despises it, and goes on; but in the Middle of a long Laugh, in drops a Sigh; it will be, it can be no otherwise; and I never convers'd closely with a Man of Levity in my Life, but I could perceive it most plainly; 'tis a Kind of Respiration, natural to a stiff'd Conviction; a Hesitation that is the Consequence of a captivated Vertue; a little Insurrection in the Soul against the Tyranny of profligate Principles.

But in the good Man the Calm is compleat; 'tis all Nature, no Counterfeit; he is always in Humour, because he is always compos'd.

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He's calm without, because he's clear within.

A stated Composure of Mind can really proceed from nothing but a Fund of Vertue; and this is the Reason why 'tis my Opinion, that the common Saying, That Content of Mind is Happiness, is a vulgar Mistake, unless it be granted, that this Content is first founded on such a Basis, as the Mind ought to be contented with; for otherwise a Lunatick in *Bedlam* is a compleatly happy Man; he sings in his Hutch, and dances in his Chain, and is as contented as any Man living: The Possession or Power, which that Vapour or Delirium has upon his Brain, makes him fancy himself a Prince, a Monarch, a Statesman, or just what he pleases to be; as a certain Dutchess, is said to have believ'd herself to be an Empress, has her Footmen drawn up; with Javelins, and dress'd in antick Habits, that she may see them thro' a Window, and believe them to be her Guards; is serv'd upon the Knee; call'd her Majesty, Imperial Majesty; and the like; and with this Splendor, her distemper'd Mind is deluded, forming Ideas of Things which are not, and at the same Time her Eyes are shut to the eternal Captivity of her Circumstances; in which she is made a Property to other Persons, her Estate manag'd by Guardianship, and she a poor demented Creature to the last Degree, an Object of human Compassion, and compleatly miserable.

The only Contentment which entitles Mankind to any Felicity, is that which is founded upon Vertue and just Principles; for Contentment is nothing more or less than what we call Peace; and what Peace, where Crime possesses the Mind,
which

which is attended, as a natural Consequence, with Torment and Disquiet? What Peace where the Harmony of the Soul is broken by constant Regret, and Self-Reproaches? What Peace in a Mind under constant Apprehensions and Terrors of something yet attending to render them miserable; and all this is inseparable from a Life of Crime.

For where there's Guilt, there always will be Fear.

Peace of Mind makes a Halcyon upon the Countenance, it guilds the Face with a cheerful Aspect, such as nothing else can procure; and which indeed as above, it is impossible effectually to counterfeit.

*Bow Mighty Reason, to thy Maker's Name,
For GOD and P E A C E, are just the same;
Heaven is the Emanation of his Face,
And want of Peace, makes Hell in every Place.*

*Tell us, ye Men of Notion, tell us why,
You seek for Bliss and wild Prosperity,
In Storms and Tempests, Feuds and War,
Is Happiness to be expected there?
Tell us what Sort of Happiness,
Can Men in want of Peace possess?*

*Blest Charm of Peace, how sweet are all those Hours
We spend in thy Society!
Afflictions lose their Acid Powers,
And turn to Joys when join'd to thee.*

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*The darkeſt Article of Life with Peace,
 Is but the Gate of Happineſs ;
 Death in its blackeſt Shapes can never fright,
 Thou can'ſt ſee Day, beyond his Night ;
 The Smile of Peace, can calm the Frown of Fate.
 And, Spight of Death, can Life anticipate :
 Nay, Hell itſelf, could it admit of Peace,
 Would change its Nature, and its Name would ceaſe.
 The Bright Transforming Bleſſing would deſtroy
 The Life of Death, and damn the Place to Joy ;
 The Metamorphoſis would be ſo ſtrange,
 'T would fright the Devils, and make them bleſs the Change
 Or elſe the Brightneſs would be ſo intense,
 They'd ſhun the Light, and flye from thence.*

*Let Heaven, that unknown Happineſs,
 Be what it will, 'tis beſt deſcrib'd by Peace.
 No Storms without, or Storms within;
 No Fear, no Danger there, becauſe no Sin :
 'Tis bright eſſential Happineſs,
 Becauſe He dwells within, whoſe Name is P E A C E.*

*Who would not ſacrifice for thee,
 All that Men call Felicity !
 Since Happineſs, is but an empty Name,
 A Vapour without Heat or Flame ;
 But what from thy Original derives,
 And Dyes with thee by whom it Lives.*

But

But I return to the Subject of Conversation; from which this Digression is made only to shew that the Fund of agreeable Conversation is, and can only be founded in Virtue; this alone is the Thing that keeps a Man always in Humour, and always agreeable.

They mistake much, who think Religion, or a strict Morality, discomposes the Temper, sowers the Mind, and unfits a Man for Conversation. 'Tis irrational to think, a Man can't be bright, unless he is wicked; It may as well be said, a Man cannot be merry till he is mad, not agreeable till he is offensive, not in Humour till he is out of himself. 'Tis clear to me, no Man can be truly merry, but he that is truly virtuous: Wit is as consistent with Religion, as Religion is with good Manners; nor is there any Thing in the Limitations of Virtue and Religion; I mean, the just Restraints which Religion and Virtue lay upon us in Conversation; that should abate the Pleasure of it, on the contrary they encrease it: *For Example:* Restraints from vicious and indecent Discourses. There's as little Manners in those Things, as there is Mirth in them; nor indeed does Religion or Virtue rob Conversation of one Grain of true Mirth: On the contrary, the religious Man is the only Man fully qualify'd for Mirth and good Humour; with this Advantage, that when the vicious and the virtuous Man appear gay and merry, but differ, *as they must do*, in the Subject of their Mirth, you may always observe the virtuous Man's Mirth is superiour to the other; more suitable to him, as a Man, as a Gentleman, as a wise Man, and as a good Man; and generally speaking, the other will acknowledge it; at least, afterward, when his Thoughts cool, and as his Reflections come in.

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But what shall we do to correct the Vices of Conversation? How shall we shew Men the Picture of their own Behaviour? There is not a greater Undertaking in the World, or an Attempt of more Consequence to the Good of Mankind than this; but 'tis as difficult also, as it is useful; and at best I shall make but a little Progress in it in this Work; *let others mend it.*



Of unfitting our selves for CONVERSATION.

BEfore I enter upon the Thing, which I call the Immorality of Conversation, let me say a little about the many weak and foolish Ways, by which Men strive, as it were, to unfit themselves for Conversation. Human Infirmities furnish us with several Things that help to make us unconvertible; we need not study to encrease the Disadvantages we lye under on that Score: Vice and Intemperance, *not as a Crime only, that I should speak of by itself, but even as a Distemper,* unfit us for Conversation; they help to make us cynical, morose, surly, and rude. Vicious People boast of their polite Carriage and their nice Behaviour, how gay, how good humour'd, how agreeable? for a While it may be so: But trace them as Men of Vice, follow them till they come to Years, and observe, while you live, you never see the Humour last, but they grow fiery, morose, positive, and petulant. An ancient Drunkard is a Thing indeed not often seen; because the Vice has one good Faculty with it, *viz.* That it seldom hands them on to *old Age*; But an ancient *and good humour'd Drunkard,* I think I never knew. It

It seems strange, that Men should affect unfitting themselves for Society, and study to make themselves unconvertible, whereas their being truly Sociable, as Men, is the Thing which would most recommend them, and that to the best of Men, and best answers to the highest Felicity of Life. Let no Man value himself upon being morose and cynical, sour and unconvertible, 'tis the Reverse of a good Man; a truly religious Man follows the Rule of the Apostle, *be Affable, be Courteous, be Humble; in Meekness, esteeming every Man better than our selves*; whereas Conversation now is the Reverse of the Christian Rule; 'tis interrupted with Conceitedness and Affectation, *a Pride, esteeming our selves better than every Man*; and that which is worse still, this happens generally, when indeed the Justice of the Case is against us; for where is the Man who thus overruling himself, is not evidently inferiour in Merit to all about him? Nay, and frequently those who put most Value upon themselves, have the least Merit to support it. *Self-Conceit* is the Bane of human Society, and generally speaking is the Peculiar of those who have the least to recommend them; 'tis the Ruin of Conversation, and the Destruction of all Improvement; for how should any Man receive any Advantage from the Conversation of others, who believes himself qualified to teach them, and not to have Occasion to learn any Thing from them?

Nay, as the Fool is generally the Man that is conceited most of his own Wit, so that very Conceit is the Ruin of him; it confirms him a Fool all the Days of his Life, for he that thinks himself a wise Man, is a Fool, and knows it not; nay, 'tis impossible he should continue to be

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a Fool,

a Fool, if he was but once convinc'd of his Folly.

*If Fools could their own Ignorance discern,
They'd be no longer Fools, because they'd learn.*

It will be objected here indeed, that Folly and Conceit may be hurtful to Conversation, may rob Men of the Advantage of it, unfit one Side for Conversing, and make it unprofitable, as well as unpleasant to the other; - But that this is nothing to the Immorality of Conversation; that Ignorance and Conceit may be an Infirmity, but is not always a Crime; that the Mischief of Mens being Fools is generally their own, but the Mischief of their being Knaves is to other People, and this is very true. But certainly, egregious Folly merits one Paragraph of Rebuke; perhaps it may touch the Senses of some weak Brethren one time or other, and the Labour may not be lost.

I never saw a more simple, or yet a more furious irconcilable Quarrel, than once between two of the most empty conceited People that ever I knew in the World; and it was upon one calling the other *Fool*, which on both Sides was unhappily very true; they fought upon the Spot, but were parted by the Company; they challeng'd, and could not meet, their Friends getting Notice of it; in short, it ruin'd them both; they made new Appointments, and at last deceiv'd their Friends, and fought again; they were both wounded, and one died, the other fled the Country, and never return'd. The first own'd he was a Fool, which was indeed some Diminution of his Folly. I say, he knew himself to be a Fool, but could not bear the other should tell him so, who
was

was more a Fool than himself. The other boldly asserted his own Capacities to be infinitely greater than they were, and despised the first to the last Degree, who indeed, if he had not more Wit, had more Modesty than the other; but both like Fools fought about *Nothing*, for such indeed the Question about their Wit might very well have been call'd.

But, it is true, after all, the Want of a conversible Temper, if from a Want or Defect of Sense may be an Infirmity, not an Immorality; that is to say, the Cause is not so in itself, but it may be so in its Consequences, that way also. *For the Conversation of Fools is Vanity in the Abstract.* I might here indeed find Subject for a large Tract, upon the infinite Diversity of Fools, and by consequence the wondrous Beauty of their Conversation: I have on this Occasion reckon'd up a List of about Seven and Thirty several Sorts of Fools, besides *Solomon's Fool*, whom I take to be *the wicked Fool* only; these I have diversified by their Tempers and Humours, and in the infinite Variety of their Follies of several Sorts, in every one of which they rob themselves, and all that keep them Company of the Felicity of Conversation, there being nothing in them but Emptiness, or a Fulness of what is Ridiculous, and only qualified to be laugh'd at, or found Fault with.

I have likewise describ'd some of their Conversation, their vain Repetitions, their Catch-Words, their Laughings and Gestures, and adapted them to make the World merry. I have Thoughts of running it on into foreign Characters, and describe *French, Spanish, Portuguese Fools*, and Fools of *Russia, China, and the East Indies*: But as this is something remote from the

Design in Hand, which is more serious, and done on a much better View, and likewise of an unmeasurable Length, like the weighty Subject it is upon (*for Folly is a large Field*) so I refer it to another Opportunity.

The Truth is, that Part of Conversation which I am now to speak of, or which I mean by what I have said upon this Subject, is the weighty and serious Part, and is not the meer common Talk, or a Conversation which Fools are capable of; 'tis exercised in a solid and well temper'd Frame, and when regulated as it ought to be, by Virtue, and good Morals, is qualified to make Mankind happy in the Enjoyment of the best Things, and of the best Company, and therefore, the Evils that creep into, and corrupt this Part of our Conversation, are of the more fatal Quality, and worth our exposing, that People may see and shun them, and that Conversation may be restored among us to what it should be.



I. *Of the Immorality of CONVERSATION in General.*

SOME may object against the Term *the Immorality* of Conversation, and think the Word improper to the Subject; but to save any Critick the dearly beloved Labour of cavilling in Favour of ill Manners and unbecoming Behaviour, I shall explain myself before I go any farther.

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I call Conversation immoral, where the Discourse is indecent, where 'tis irreligious or profane, where 'tis immodest or scandalous, or where 'tis slanderous and abusive. In these and such Cases, *loqui est agere*, thus talking lewdly, or talking profanely, is an immodest Action. Such is the Power of Words that Mankind is able to act, as much Evil by their Tongues, as by their Hands; the Ideas that are formed in the Mind from what we hear, are most peircing and permanent; and the Force of Example in this Case, is not more powerful than the Force of Argument.

Some of the worst Sins are not to be committed but by the Tongue, as the Sin of Blasphemy, speaking Treason against the Majesty of God, Cursings and Imprecations among Men, *Lies*, *Slanders*, and a vast Variety of petty Excursions, which are grown modish by Custom, and seem too small to be reproved.

We are here in *England*, after many Years Degeneracy, arriv'd to a Time, wherein Vice is in general discountenanc'd by Authority; God in Mercy to the Age has inspir'd our Government with a Resolution to discourage it: The King now, his Wars are over, and his foreign Enemies allow him some Rest, will, we hope, declare War against this Domestick Enemy.

The late Queen *Mary*, of heavenly Memory, for her Piety and blessed Example, appear'd in her Time gallantly in the Cause of Virtue: Magistrates were encourag'd to punish Vice, new Laws made to restrain it, and Justice seem'd to be at Work to reclaim it: But what can Kings, or Queens, or Parliaments do? Laws and Proclamations are weak and useless Things, unless some secret Influence can affect the Practices of those whom no Laws can reach.

To make Laws against Words, would be as fruitless as to make a shelter against the Lightning ; there are so many Inlets to the Breach, that the Informers would be as numerous as the Criminals, and the Trespafs as frequent as the Minutes we live in.

Conversation has received a general Taint, and the Disease is become a Charm ; the Way to cure it, is not by forcible Restraints on Particulars, but by some general Influence on the publick Practice ; when a Distemper becomes pleasant to a Patient, he is the harder to be cur'd ; he has a sort of Aversion to the Remedy because he has none to the Disease. Our modern People have such a Passion for the Mode, that if it be but the Fashion to be Lewd, they will scandalize their Honour, debauch their Bodies, and damn their Souls to be Gentile ; if the Beaux talk Blasphemy, the rest will set up for Athiests, and deny their Maker, to be counted witty in the Defence of it ; when our Tradesmen would be thought wise, and make themselves appear nice and learned in their Conversation, nothing will satisfy them but to criticize upon Things sacred ; - run up to discuss the Inscrutables of Religion ; search the Arcana even of Heaven itself ; The Divinity of the Son of God, the hypostatick Union, the rational Description of the State Everlasting, nay, the Demonstrations of undemonstrable Things, are the common Subject of their fancied affected Capacities.

Hence come Heresies and Delusions, Men affecting to search into what is impossible they should clearly discover, learn to doubt, because they cannot describe, and deny the Existence because they cannot explain the Manner of what they enquire after ; as if a thorow impossibility of their acting by their Sense upon Objects beyond its Reach, was
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an Evidence against their Being. Thus because the Trinity cannot appear to their Reasoning, they oppose their Reasoning to its Reality; they will divest the Son of God of his Divinity, and of the hypostatick Union of the Godhead in the Person of Christ, because they cannot distinguish between the Actions done by him in his Mediatorial Capacity, in Virtue of his Office, and those Actions, which he did in Virtue of his Omnipotence and Godhead.

This is not an Immorality and Error in Conversation only, or not so much, so as I think it is a Judgment upon it, a Blast from Heaven upon the Arrogance of the Tongue; when proud Men give themselves a Loose to talk Blasphemously to be thought witty, their Maker gives them up to suggest damnable Errors till they begin to believe them, and to broach their own wicked Hints, till they by Custom learn to espouse and defend them, as Children tell feigned Stories till they believe them to be true. If our Town Fopperies were visible only in the little Excursions of Dress and Behaviour, it would be Satisfaction enough for a wise Man, either to pity or laugh at them; but when Wit is set on work, and Invention rack'd to find out Methods, how they may be more than superlatively wicked, when all the Endowments of the Mind and Helps of Art, with the Accomplishments of Education are rang'd in Battel against Heaven, and joyn'd in Confederacy to make Mankind more wicked, than ever the Devil had the Impudence to desire of them; This calls out aloud for the Help of all the Powers of Government, and all the Strength of Wit and Virtue to detect and expose it.

Indeed I had some Thoughts to leave upon Record a melancholly kind of Genealogy, of this
horrid

horrid Perfection of Vice, which so increases in our Age, I mean as it respects this Nation, in which 'tis too ancient indeed to trace it back to its Original; yet since its visible Increase has been within the reach of our own Memory, and 'tis as I may say, the adopted Child of our Age, we may judge of the Extent of its Influence, and may take a short View of it in Miniature. None indeed can judge of the Extent of its Influence, but such as have conversed with all Sorts of People, from the Court to the Plough-tail, where you may too sadly see the Effect of it, in the general debauching both the Principles and Practice of all Sorts and Degrees of this Nation: But it will be an ungrateful Task, 'twould lead me to the Characters of Persons, and to write Satyrs upon the Times, as well those past, as these present, which indeed is not my Business in this Work; and therefore I throw by some keen Observations which I had made upon this Subject, my Business here, or at least my Design being rather to instruct the Age, than to reproach it; and as for the Dead, they are gone to their Place.

St. *Augustin* observes, *de Civitate dei*, that the Ancients justified their Liberty in all Excesses of Vice, which they practised in those Times from the Patterns of their Gods, that the Stories of the Rapes and Incest of *Jupiter*, the Lewdness of *Venus* and *Mars*; and the like, made those Crimes appear less heinous, since People had them frequent in the Histories of the Deities they worshipped; and that they must of Necessity be lawful, seeing they were practised by those famous Persons, who they had placed above the Skyes and thought fit to adore.

If modern Times have received unhappy Impressions from vicious Courts, and Princes, have not

not taken the needful Caution not to guide to Evil by their Example ; instead of turning this into Satyr upon those that are past, I choose to give it another Turn, which our Kings and People too in Time to come may make good Use of, and I hope will not be offended at supposing that they will do so.

1. To Kings or Sovereigns in future Reigns ; for I am not in this intending the present Reign ; it may without Offence be said, that they have a glorious Advantage put into their Hands, to Honour their Maker, and advantage their People, to the immortal Glory of their own Memory, by prompting Virtue and discouraging Vice by their happy Examples ; by removing the vicious Habits of Conversation from the Court-Modes, and making Vice unfashionable as it is unseemly ; why may not the Royal Example go as far to reform a Nation, as it has formerly done to debauch and ruin it ? But as this respects the (a) Heads of the People, I desire to speak it with the Deference of a Subject, and close this Discourse with only saying, that I pray and wish it may be so.
2. To the People with more Freedom I apply it thus ; Let past Examples be what they will, the present Reign encourages no Crime, why then should our modern Conversation receive this Taint ? why should we be Voluntiers in the Devil's Service ? while the Power we are under gives us neither Precept or Example ; if we are Guilty, 'tis by meer Choice, the Crime is all our own, and we are Patterns to our selves. But

(a) *This was all Written in King William's Reign and refers to that Time.*



2. Of reforming the Errors of Conversation.

BUT I leave this Part as less grateful, and perhaps not more significant than what I have yet to say upon this Subject; 'tis not so absolutely material to inquire how his Conversation came first to be corrupted, as how it shall be reform'd or recovered. The Question before us is, by what Method to retrieve this miserable Defection, and to bring back the Nation to some tolerable Degree of good Manners, that Morality at least may regain its Authority, and Virtue, and Sobriety, be valued again as it ought to be; this, I say, is a difficult Thing to direct.

— *Facilis descensus averni:*

Sed revocare gradum,

Hoc opus hic labor est.

Virg. *Æneid.* vi.

English'd thus:

'Tis easy into Hell to Fall,

But to get back from thence is all.

The Method might be easier prescrib'd than practis'd; tho' it cannot be perfectly prescrib'd neither, something may however be said by way of Observation, perhaps other Well-wishers, may hereafter throw

throw their Mites into this Treasury, and some zealous Reformers may at last make the Attempt upon these Foundations.

1. A strict Execution of the Laws against Vice; we have already, and are every Day making very good Laws to reform the People: But the Benefit of Laws consists in the executive Power, which if not vigorously put forth, Laws become useless, and it were better they were not made at all. I was once going to have added here a Treatise, entituled, an Essay upon the Insignificancy of Laws and Acts of Parliament in *England*; but upon second Thoughts, resolving to mingle no Satyr with my serious Observations, I omitted this also. The Deficiency of our Laws, is chiefly in the Want of Laws to reform the Law-makers, that the Wheel of executive Justice might be kept going; Of what Use else can Laws be?

(2) An exemplar Behaviour in our Gentry, after whose Copy the poor People generally write; not but that I acknowledge it will be harder, to reform a Nation, than it would to debauch it; though Virtue should obtain upon Custom; and become the Fashion, because Inclination does not stand neuter; but it would be a great Step to this Reformation, if we could all joyn to discourage Immorality by Example; That if a Man will be drunk or lewd, he shall as a *Thief robs a House*, do it in the Dark, and be ashamed of it. If these two Heads were brought to pass, I question not but Reformation would come to such an heighth, that if a poor Man happened to be drunk, he should come and desire the Constable to fet him in the Stocks, for fear of worse Punishment; and if a rich Man swore an Oath in his Passion, he should send his Footman to the next Justice of the Peace with his
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Fine, and get a Discharge for fear of being inform'd against and expos'd.

In order to the furthering this great Work, it would be very necessary, if possible, to draw the Picture of our modern Vices, to let Mankind see by a true Light what they are doing, and how ugly a Physz the Mistres they court really appears with, when Inclination which paints her in different Colours is taken off.

'Twill be impossible to bring Vice out of Fashion, if we cannot bring Men to an Understanding of what it really is: But could we prevail upon a Man to examine his Vice, to dissect its Parts, and view the Anatomy of it; to see how disagreeable it is to him as a Man, as a Gentleman, or as a Christian; how despicable and contemptible in its highest Fruition, how destructive to his Senses, Estate, and Reputation; how dishonourable, and how beastly, in its publick Appearances, such a Man would certainly be out of Love with it, and be but Mankind once out of love with Vice, the Reformation is half brought to pass.

I shall not pretend to invade the Province of the Learned, nor offer one Argument from Scripture or Providence; for I am supposed to be talking to Men that doubt or deny them both. Divinity is not my Talent, nor ever like to be my Profession, the Charge of Priestcraft and Schoolmen would not lie against me; besides, 'tis not the way of talking that the World relishes at this Time; in a Word, talking Scripture is out of Fashion: But I must crave leave to tell my Reader, that if there were no God or Providence, Devil or future State, yet they ought not to be Drunken and Lewd, Passionate, Revengeful or Immoral; 'tis so Unnatural, so Unruly, so Ingenteel, so Foolish and Foppish, that no wise Man as
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a Man can justify it so much as to his own Reason, or the Memory of his Ancestors. I suppose my self talking to Men that have nothing to do with God, and desire he should have nothing to do with them; and yet even to such, a vicious Conversation, look'd on without the Gust of Inclination, would appear too brutish to be meddled with, if we will but choose *like Men*, not to say *like Christians*; Virtue and Morality is more agreeable to human Nature, more manly than Vice and Intemperance; 'tis more suitable to all the Ends of Life, to the Being of Society, to the publick Peace of Families, as well as Nations. Mankind would rather be virtuous than vicious, if they were to choose only for their own Case and Convenience. Vice tends to Oppression, War and Confusion; Virtue is peaceable and honest; Vice is a Poison to Society, no Man is safe if Men have neither Sobriety or Honesty; for the Innocent will be robb'd by the Thief, ravisht by the Lewd, and murder'd by the Drunkard.

It might not be a needless Digression if I should examine here, whether Whoring and Drunkenness be not the two Mother Sins of the Times, the Spring and Original of all our fashionable Vices; I distinguish this because other Sins, as Murders, Thefts, Rapes and the like, are now come so much in Vogue; we are content the Laws should be executed for them, but should think it very hard a Man shou'd be hang'd for Whoring, or transported for being Drunk.

I would not have any of our Gentlemen think, that my laying the Charge of our Debauchery on the Examples of the Gods, has taken off any Thing of the Blame from those who have industriously propogated the spreading Evil, among their Tenants and Neighbours, by their own vicious

cious Example; and I could turn the whole Observation into a Satyr on the Manners of our Gentlemen, and describe with what Easiness our Magistrates let fall the Reins of their Authority, and connive at the Practice of all manner of Intemperance and Excess among the People; with what Eagerness the poor Country-men are call'd in to be made drunk upon every Occasion; with what Contempt any Person is look'd upon either in Town or Country, that either will not be drunk, or cannot bear an excessive Quantity of Wine: How out common Mirth is fill'd with Songs and Poems, recommending Drunkenness and Lewdness, and rampant Vice rides Riot through the Nation. But as above I avoid Satyr, I shall endeavour to treat this foul Subject, in as civil Terms as the Case will bear, and only examine general Conversation in particular Heads, with some vulgar Errors of Behaviour which are crept in, and which seem authorized by Custom.



3. *Of Athiestical and Prophane Discourse.*

GOD Almighty himself is the least beholding to this Age, of any that ever was from the Beginning of Time; for that being arriv'd to a Degree of Knowledge superior to all that went before us, or at least fancying it to be so. Whereby the greater Glory might accrew to himself the Author of all Wisdom, that very Gift, the brightest of all the heavenly Blessings, is made use of to put the greatest

cest Contempt upon his Majesty that Mankind is capable of, to deny his Essence: Such an Affront that the Devils themselves never had the Impudence to suggest to the World, till they found Man arriv'd to a Degree of Hardness fit for something never done before. All the Heathen Nations in the World came short of this; the most refin'd Philosophers own'd a *first Cause* of all Things, and that something was superior, whose Influence govern'd, and whose being was Sacred and to be Ador'd. The Devil himself, who is allow'd to be full of Enmity against the supreme Being, has often set up himself to be worshipp'd as a God, but never prompted the most barbarous Nations to deny the Being of a God; and 'tis thought that even the Devil himself believ'd the Notion was too absurd to be impos'd upon the World. But our Age is even with him for his Folly; for since they cannot get him to joyn in the Denial of a God, they will deny his Devilship too, and have neither one nor other.

'Tis worth Observation, after the most convincing Arguments that Nature and Reason can produce for the Existence of a Deity, what weak, foolish, ridiculous Shifts the most refin'd of our Atheistical Disputants fly to in Defence of their Notion; with what senseless Pains they Labour to reason themselves into an Opinion, which their own Constitution, Nature and way of Living gives the Lie to, every Moment; with how little Consistency they solve all the other *Phænomena* of Nature, and Creation; that when in all other Points they are capable of arguing strenuously, and are not to be satisfied but with Strength of Reason and sound Argument; here they admit Sophisms, delusive Suppositions, and miserable Shams and Pretences to prevail upon their own Judgments. This

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is touch'd at in the following Lines upon the System of *Prometheus*, which I could not omit upon this Occasion, relating to the Heathens Ignorance in the great Doctrine of first Causes.

*The Great Promethean Artist, Poets say,
First made the Model of a Man in Clay,
Contriv'd the form of Parts, and when he had done,
Stole vital Heat from the Prolifick Sun:
But not a Poet tells us to this Day,
Who made Prometheus first, and who the Clay,
Who gave the great Prolifick to the Sun,
And where the first productive Work began.*

Also *Epicurus* his Philosophy will satisfy some People, who fanciës the World was made by a strange fortuitous Conjunction of Atoms, without any pre-existent Influence, or without any immediate Power, which *Mr. Creech* very well translates thus:

*But some have dreamt of Atoms strangely hurl'd,
Into the decent Order of the World,
And so by Chance combin'd, from whence began
The Earth, the Heaven, the Sea, and Beast, and Man.*

To which I crave leave to subjoin one Complement, by way of Confutation of this Folly;

*Forgetting first that something must bestow,
Existence on those Atoms that did so.*

The Arguments for the Existence of a Deity, are so many, so nicely handled, and so unanswerable

ble, that 'tis needless to attempt any Thing that Way, no Man in his Wits needs any further Demonstration of it, than what he may find within himself; nor is it any Part of the Work I am upon, I have only a few Things to ask of our modern Atheists.

1. Whether their more serious Thoughts do not reflect upon them in the very Act, and give the Lie to their Arguments. My Lord *Rochester*, who was arriv'd to an extraordinary Pitch in this Infernal Learning, acknowledg'd it on his Death Bed; the Sense Nature has upon her of the Certainty of this great Truth, will give some Convulsions at so horrid an Act.

*Nature pays Homage with a trembling Bow,
And Conscious Men but faintly disallow,
The secret Trepidation racks the Soul,
And while he says, no God, replies, Thou Fool.*

2. I would ask the most confident Atheist, what Assurance he has of the Negative, and what a Risque he runs if he should be mistaken? This we are sure of, if we want Demonstration to prove the Being of a God, they are much more at a Loss for a Demonstration to prove the Negative. Now no Man can Answer it to his Prudence, to take the Risque they run, upon an uncertain supposititious Notion; for if there be such a Thing as a first Cause, which we call God, they have very little Reason to expect much from him, who have made it their Business to affront him by denying his Existence. Nor have they acted in their Denial like wise Men, for they have not used so much as the Caution of good Manners, but as

if they were as sure of his Non-entity, as of the strongest Demonstration, they have been witty upon the Thing, and made a jest of the Supposition, turn'd all Matters of Faith into Ridicule, burlesqu'd upon Religion it self, and made Ballads and Songs on the Bible; thus *Rocheſter* has left us a long lewd Song, beginning thus :

Religion's a Politick Cheat

Made up of many a Fable,

Ne're trouble the Wise or the Great,

But only amuses the Rabble.

Now, I am not in this Discourse entering into any of the Arguments in these grand Questions on one side or other, that would be to make this Work a Collection of Polemicks; nor am I Casuist enough for such a Work; but I am observing or remarking upon the Wickedness of the treating these Subjects with Levity and Ignorance in the common Road of Conversation.

Methinks these Gentlemen act with more Courage than Discretion; for if it should happen at last, that there should be a God, and that he has the Power of Rewards and Punishments in his Hand, as he must have or cease to be Almighty, they are but in an ill Case.

If it should so fall out, as who can tell,

But there may be a God, a Heaven, a Hell,

Mankind had best consider well for fear,

T'hou'd be too late when their Mistakes appear.

Nor do they in my Opinion discover any great Wit in it; there is if I might pass for a Judge,
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something flat, something that shocks the Fancy, in all the Satyr upon Religion that ever I saw; as if the Muse were not so much an Atheist as the Poet, but banks the Hint, and could not favour a blasphemous Flight with so much Freedom and Spirit that at other Times it has shown; which is a Notice that there is a *tacit* Sense of the Deity, though they pretend to deny it lodg'd in the Understanding, that it is not stifled without some Difficulty, and struggles hard with the Fancy, when the Party strives to be more than ordinary Insolent with his Maker.

In the next Place as 'tis one of the worst Immoralities of Conversation when it is prophane, so Blasphemy is the Extream of Prophaneness; you cannot come into Company with an Atheist, but you have it in his common Discourse; he is always putting some Banter or foolish Pun upon Religion, affronting the invisible Power, or ridiculing his Maker; all his Wit runs out into it, as all Diseases run, into the Plague in a Time of Infection, and you must have Patience to hear it or quarrel with him.

Below these we have a Sort of People who will acknowledge a God, but he must be such a one as they please to make him; a fine well bred good natur'd Gentleman like Deity, that cannot have the Heart to damn any of his Creatures to an Eternal Punishment, nor could not be so weak as to let the *Jews* crucify his own Son; these Men expose Religion, and all the Doctrines of Repentance, and Faith in Christ, with all the Means of a Christian Salvation, as matter of Banter and Ridicule. The Bible they say is a good History in most Parts, but the Story of our Saviour they look upon as a meer Novel, and the Miracles of the New Testament as a Legend of Priestcraft.

Further, besides these we have *Arians*, and *Socinians*, the Disciples of an ancient Heretick, who went out of the Church always at the singing the *Gloria Patri*, that he might be out of the Noise, and would sit down at the Doxology of the Prayers, to note his disowning the Godhead of Jesus Christ.

These are Iniquities, as Job said, should be punished by the Judges, cap. xxii. v. xx, and these are the Things which have given such a Stroke to the Ruin of the Nation's Morals; for no Method can be so direct to prepare People for all Sorts of Wickedness, as to persuade them out of a Belief of any supreme Power to restrain them; make a Man once cease to believe a God, and he has nothing left to limit his Appetite but meer Philosophy; if there is no supreme Judicature, he must be his own Judge and his own Law, and will be so; the Notion of Hell, Devil, and Infernal Spirits are empty Things, and have nothing of Terror in them, if the Belief of a Power superior to them be obliterated.

But to bring this particular Case nearer to the Point of Conversation, the Errors of which lie before me; though we live in an Age where these horrid Degrees of Impiety are too much practised; yet we live in a Place where Religion is professed, the Name of God owned and worshipped, Religion and the Doctrines of Christianity established; and as it is so, it ought as much to be preserved by the Civil Power, from the horrid Invasion of Atheists, Deists, and Hereticks, as the Publick Peace, ought to be defended against Freebooters, Thieves, and Invaders.

'Tis very improbable any Reformation of Manners should be brought to pass, if the debauching the religious Principles of the Nation, goes on
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with an unrestrain'd Liberty. How incongruous is it to the Decoration of Government, that a Man shall be punished for Drunkenness, and set in the Stocks for Swearing, but shall have Liberty to deny the God of Heaven, and dispute against the very Sum and Substance of the Christian Doctrine, shall banter the Scripture, and make Ballads of the Pentateuch, turn all the Principles of Religion, the Salvation of the Soul, the Death of our Saviour, and the Revelation of the Gospel, into Ridicule? And shall we pretend to Reformation of Manners, and suppressing Immoralities, while such as this, is the general Mixture of Conversation? If a Man talk against the Government, or speak scurrilously of the King, he is had to the *Old Bayly*, and from thence to the Pillory, or Whipping-Post, and 'tis fit it should be so: But he may speak Treason against the Majesty of Heaven, deny the Godhead of his Redeemer, and make a Jest of the Holy Ghost, and thus affront the Power we all adore, and yet pass with Impunity; perhaps some in the Company may have Courage enough to blame him, and vindicate their Religion with a *Why do ye talk so?* But where is the Man, or the Magistrate, that ever vindicated the Honour of his Maker, with a Resentment becoming the Crime? If a Man give the Lie to a Gentleman in Company, he takes it as an Affront, flies into a Passion, quarrels, fights, and perhaps murders him; nay, some have done it for an absent Friend, whom they have heard abused: But where is the Gentleman that ever thought himself so much concern'd in the Quarrel of his Maker, but that he could bear him affronted, his Being deny'd, the Lie given to his divine Authority, nay, to his divine Being, and all his Commands ridicul'd and expos'd, without any

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Motion of Spirit to punish the Insolence of the Party, and without drawing his Sword in the Quarrel, or letting him know he does not like it.

Methinks, I need not make an Apology for this, as if I meant, that Quarrelling and Fighting were a proper Practice in the Case; the Law does not admit it in any Case; nor is it reasonable it should, and God Almighty is far from desiring us to run any Risque in his Service: But I chuse to bring the Cases into a Parallel, to signify, that I think 'tis a vulgar Error in our Behaviour, not to show our Repentment, when we hear the Honour and Essence of God slighted and denied, his Majesty abused, and Religion banter'd and ridicul'd in common Discourses. I think it would be very reasonable, to tell a Gentleman he wants Manners, when he talks reproachfully of his Maker, and to use him scurvily if he repented it. It would very well become a Man of Quality to cane a lew'd Fop, or kick him down Stairs, when his Insolence took a Loose at Religion in his Company, else Men may be bullied out of their Christianity, and lampoon'd into Prophaneness, for Fear of being counted Fools.

Besides, 'tis in in this as in all other like Cases; he that will talk atheistically in my Company, either believes me to be an Atheist like himself, or ventures to impose upon me; and by imposing upon me, either accounts me a Fool that can't tell when I am put upon, or a Coward that dare not resent it.

Upon which Account, even in good Manners, it ought to be avoided; for it can't be introduc'd into any Part of Conversation; where the Company are not all alike, without the greatest Affront upon the rest that can be offered them.

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4. *Of Lewd and Immodest Discourse,*



Alking Bawdy, that Sodomy of the Tongue has the most of ill Manners, and the least of a Gentleman in it, of any Part of common Discourse. Sir *George Mackenzie* has very handsomely expos'd it in its proper Colours: But it may not be an Intrenchment at all upon his Province, to say something to it in these Observations.

This Part is the puculiar Practice of such Person as are hardened to a Degree beyond other Men; Proficients in Debauchery, whose Lives are so continually devoted to Lewdness, that their Mouths cannot contain it; who can govern their Tongues no better than their Tails, and are willing to be thought what really they are. In these, it is neither so strange, nor so much a Crime as in others; these are Persons not to be reclaim'd. This Part of my Observation is not designed for their Use; they are not to be talk'd out of their Vice; they must go on and run their Length: Nothing but a Goal or an Hospital ever brings them to a Reformation; they repent sometimes in that Emblem of Hell, a fluxing House, and under the Surgeons Hands, wish a little they had been wiser; but they follow one Sin with another, till their Carcass stinks as bad as their Discourse, and the Body becomes too nasty, for the Soul to stay any longer in it: From these no Discourse is to be expected, but what is agreeable to the Tenor of their Lives; for them to talk otherwise, would be strain'd and excentrick, and become them as little,

tle, as it would be tedious to them ; but for a Gentleman, a Man of seeming Modesty, and a Man of Behaviour, not arriv'd to that Class in the Devil's School, for such a one to mix his Discourse with lew'd and filthy Expressions, has something in it of a Figure, which inrends more than is express'd.

Either we must believe such a one to be very lew'd in his Practice ; or else, that not being able yet to arrive to such a Degree of Wickedness as he desires, he would supply that Defect with a Cheat, and perswade you to believe he is really worse than he is.

Which of these two Characters I would chuse to wear, I cannot tell ; for he that desires to be worse than he thinks he is, is certainly as bad as he desires to be ; and he that is so bad as to let fly the Excrescencies of it at his Mouth, is as wicked as the Devil can in Reason desire of him.

But I descend from the Wickedness to the Indecency of the Matter ; its being a Sin against God, is not so much the present Argument, as its being unmannerly, a Sin against Breeding, and Society, a Breach of Behaviour, and a saucy insolent Affront to all the Company.

I do not deny, but that Modesty, as it respects the Covering our Bodies, was at first an Effect of the Fall of our Parents into Crime ; and is therefore said still to be the Consequences of criminal Nature, and no Virtue in itself, because no Part of the Body had been unfit to be exposed, if Vice had not made the Distinction necessary.

But from this very Argument, lewd Discourse appears to be a Sin against Custom and Decency ; for why must the Tongue industriously expose Things and Actions at which Nature blushes, and which Custom, *let the Original be what it will,* has dedi-

cated

ated to Privacy and Retirement? What, if it be true, that Shame is the Consequence of Sin, and that Modesty is not an original Virtue; it cannot but be allowed, that Sin has thereby brought us to a Necessity of making Modesty be a Virtue, and Sin would have a double Influence upon us, if after it had made us ashamed, it should make us not ashamed again.

'Tis in my Opinion a Mistake, when we say, Sin was the immediate Cause of Shame; 'twas Sin indeed gave a Nudity to our Natures and Actions; the Innocence which serv'd as a Glory and Covering, being gone, then Shame came in as the Effect of the conscious Sinner; so the Text says, *They knew that they were naked*; Shame was the Effect of Nakedness, as Nakedness was the Effect of Sin.

From hence then I argue, and this is the Reason of my naming it, That to be ashamed of our Nakedness, is a Token of our Wisdom, and a Monument of our just Sense of the first Sin that made it so, and as much a Duty now, as any other Part of our Repentance.

To give the Tongue then a Liberty in that which there is so much Reason to blush at, argues no Sense of the Original Degeneracy. Where is the Man that partakes not of *Adam's* Fall, has no vicious contracted Habit and Nature convey'd to him from his Grand-Predecessor? Let him come forth, let him go naked, and live by himself, and let his Posterity partake of his Innocence; his Tongue cannot offend, nothing can be indecent for him to say, nothing uncomely for him to see.

But if these Gentlemen think it proper to cover their Nakedness with their Clothes, methinks they should not be always uncovering it again
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with their Tongues; if there are some needful Things, which Nature requires to be done in secret, and which they by Inclination chuse to act in Private: What Reason can they give for speaking of them in Publick.

There is a strange Incongruity in the Behaviour of these People, that they fill their Mouths with the foul Repetition of Actions, and Things which their own Practicing in Private condemns them for, nay, which they would be asham'd to do in Publick; such Men ought to act the common Requirements of Nature, in the most publickest Places of the Streets, bring their Wives or Whores to the Exchange, and to the Market Places, and lye with them in the Street, or else hold their Tongues, and let their Mouths have no more the Stench of their Vices in Publick, than their Actions.

And why of all the rest of the Parts of Life, must the Tongue take a peculiar Licence to revel thus upon Nature? as if she had a Mind to reproach her with the Infirmities she labours under: The Customs we are obliged to, tho' they are Cloggs upon Nature, and a Badge of original Defection; yet neither is there any thing so odious, or so burdēsome, that these Gentlemen should triumph over the Nurse that brought them up.

Take the lewdest and most vicious Wretch that ever gave his Tongue a Loose in this hateful Practice, and turn him about to his Mother, you shall hardly prevail upon him to talk his lewd Language to her; there is something nauseous and surfeiting in that Thought: This talking Bawdy, is like a Man going to debauch his own Mother; for 'tis raking into the *Arcana*, and exposing the Nakedness of Nature, the common Mother of us all.

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If, as a famous Man of Wit pretended, lying with a Woman was *the homliest thing that Man can do*; 'tis much more true, that talking of it is the homliest thing that Man can say.

Not is there *to me* any Jest in these things, no Appearance of Mirth: There may be some Pleasure in wicked Actions, as the World rates Pleasure, but I must profess 'tis dull, and for Want of other more regular Tastes, that there should be Pleasure in the Discourse: 'Tis a prophaning of Nature, and bringing forth those Things she has hallowed to Secresy and Retirement, to the scandalous Indecency of publick Banter and Jest.

But Men, who have always something to say for their Folly, tell us, 'tis Custom only which has made any of these things uncommon; and there's no Sin in speaking that which there is no Sin in doing.

Let us grant them, that Custom only has done this: But if Custom has made these things uncommon, and conceal'd, or at least, banish'd them from the Voice of Conversation. 'Tis a Sin then against Custom to expose them again. Lawful Customs become allowed Virtues, and ought to be preserved. Custom is a good Reason in such Concealments; if Custom has lock'd them up, let them remain so; at least, till you can give a better Reason for calling them abroad again, than Custom has given for restraining them. Custom has made these things uncommon, because that Sin, which first made Nature naked, left her so captivated, by some of her Parts more than others, that she could not but blush at those, where Sin had taken up its peculiar Residence. Now, as I noted before, no Man can with any tolerable Satisfaction, expose the Parts, till he has first abstracted and separated the Sin, which having possess'd them,

them, cover'd them at first with Shame: He that can do this, may go naked, and talk any thing.

And for the same Reason, no Man can justify talking lewdly, but he that at the same Time throws away his Clothes, for to cover himself with his Hands, and uncover himself with his Tongue, are Contradictions in their own Nature, and one condemns the other. He that scorns the Decency of Words, should also scorn the Decency of Clothes, let his Body be as bald as his Discourse, and let him scorn the Shame of one, as well as the Shame of the other.

It is no Sin, they say, to talk of, what it is no Sin to do; and I may add, 'tis no Sin at all to shew, what 'tis no Sin to describe. Why is the Eye to be less offended than the Ear, since both are but the common Organs of the Understanding?

But the Weather and Inconveniencies of the Climate, are urged for clothing our Bodies, and I urge, Decency and good Manners for the Government of our Tongues; and let any one contend it with me, that thinks he can prove, that the Obligation of the first is greater than the Obligation of the last.

Much more might be said to this, but I make but an Essay, and am unwilling to run out into a long Discourse.



of



Of Talking falsely.

BY Talking falsely, I do not design to enter upon a long Dissertation upon the Sin of Lying in general, I suppose all Men that read me will acknowledge Lying to be one of the most scandalous Sins between Man and Man; a Crime of a deep Dye, and of an extensive Nature leading into innumerable Sins; That is, as Lying is practised to deceive, to injure, betray, rob, destroy, and the like. Lying in this Sense is the concealing of all other Crimes, 'tis the Sheeps Clothing hung upon the Wolves back, 'tis the Pharisee's Prayer, the Whore's Blush, the Hypocrite's Paint, the Murderer's Smile, the Thief's Cloke, 'tis *Joab's Embrace*, and *Judas's Kifs*; in a Word, 'tis Mankind's Darling-Sin, and the Devil's distinguishing Character.

But this is not the Case I am upon, this is not the talking falsely I am upon, but a strange Liberty which (particularly in Conversation) People take to talk falsely, *without charging themselves with any Offence in it, either against God or Man*. This is to be considered in two or three Parts, not but that it has many more.

i. The Liberty of telling Stories, a common *Vice in Discourse*; the main End of this extraordinary Part of Tittle Tattle, is to divert the Company, and make them laugh; but we ought to consider; whether that very empty Satisfaction either to ourselves or Friends, is to be purchased at so great

great an Expence as that of Conscience, and of a Dishonour done to Truth.

'Tis scarce fit to say, how far some People go in this Folly, to call it no worse, even till sometimes they bring the general Credit of their Conversation into decay, and People that are used to them, learn to lay no Stress upon any Thing they say.

For once we will suppose a Story to be in its Substance true, yet to what monstrous a Bulk doth it grow, by that frequent Addition put to it in the Relation, till not only it comes to be improbable, but even impossible to be true; and the ignorant Relator is so tickled with having made a good Story of it, whatever it was when he found it, that he is blind to the Absurdities and Inconsistencies of Fact in Relation, and tells it with a full Face, even to those that are able to confute it, by proving it to be impossible.

I once heard a Man who would have taken it very ill to be thought a Lyar, tell a Story, the Facts of which were impossible to be true; and yet assert it with so much Assurance, and declare so positively, that he had been an Eye-Witness of it himself, that there was nothing to do but in respect to the Man, *let him alone and say nothing.* A Gentleman who sat by, and whose good Breeding restrained his Passion, turn'd to him, and said, did you see this Thing done, Sir? yes, I did Sir, says Relator: *Well Sir,* replies the Gentleman, *since you affirm that you did see it, I am bound in regard to you to believe it; but upon my Word, 'tis such a Thing, that if I had seen it my self, I would not have believed it:* This broke the Silence, set all the Company a laughing, and expos'd the Falshood, more than down right telling him it was a Lye, which might besides have made a Broil about it.

'Tis

'Tis a strange Thing, that we cannot be content to tell a Story as it is, but we must take from it on one Side, or add to it on another; till the Fact is lost among the *Addenda*, and till in Time even the Man himself remembering it only as he told it last, really forgets how it was Originally; this being so generally practised now, nothing is more common, than to have two Men tell the same Story quite differing one from another, yet both of them Eye-Witnesses to the Fact related. These are that sort of People, who having once told a Story falsely, tell it so often in the same or like manner, till they really believe it to be true.

This supplying a Story by Invention, is certainly a most scandalous Crime and yet very little regarded in that Part, it is a sort of Lying that makes a great Hole in the Heart, at which by Degrees a Habit of Lying enters in: Such a Man comes quickly up, to a total disregarding the Truth of what he says; looking upon it as a Trifle, a Thing of no import, whether any Story he tells be true or no, so it but commands the Company as they call it; that is to say, procures a Laugh, or a kind of Amusement Things equally agreeable to these Story-Tellers; for the Business is to affect the Company, either startle them with something wonderful, never heard of before; or make them laugh immoderately, as at something prodigiously talking, witty, and diverting.

It is hard to place this Practice in a Station equal to its Folly, 'tis a Meanness below the Dignity of common Sense: They that lye to gain, to deceive, to delude, to betray as above, have some End in their Wickedness; and though they cannot give the Design for an excuse of their Crime, yet it may be given as the Reason and Foundation of it: But to lye for Sport, for *Fun, as the*

I

Boys

Boys express it, is to play at Shuttle-cock with your Soul, and load your Conscience for the meer sake of being a Fool, and the making A meer Buffoonry of a Story, the Pleasure of what is below even Madnefs itself.

And yet, how common is this Folly? How is it the Character of some Men's Conversation, that they are made up of Story? And how mean a Figure is it they bear in Company? Such Men always betray their Emptiness by this, and having only a certain Number of Tales in their Budget, like a Pedlar with his Pack, they can only at every House shew the same Ware over again, tell the same Story over and over, 'till the Jest is quite worn out; and to convince us, that much of it, *if not all*, is born of Invention, they seldom tell it the same Way twice, but vary it even in the most material Facts: So that though it may be remembred, that it was the same Story, it ought never to be remembred, that it was told by the same Man.

With what Temper should I speak of these People? What Words can express the Meanness and Baseness of the Mind, that can do thus? that sin without Design, and not only have no End in the View, but even no Reflection in the Act: the Folly is grown up to a Habit, and they not only mean no Ill, but indeed mean nothing at all in it.

It is a strange Length that some People run in this Madness of Life, and it is so odd, so unaccountable, that indeed 'tis difficult to describe the Man, tho' not difficult to describe the Fact. what Idea can be form'd in the Mind, of a Man, who does ill without meaning ill? that wrongs himself, affronts Truth, and imposes upon his Friends, and yet means no Harm; or to use his own Words, means nothing? That if he thinks any
Thing

Thing, 'tis to make the Company pleasant, and what is this but making *the Circle* a Stage, and himself the *Merry Andrew*.

The best Step such Men can take is to LYE ON; and *this shews the Singularity of the Crime*; it is a strange Expression, but I shall make it out; their Way is, I say, to Lye on; 'till their Character is compleatly known, and then they can lye no longer; for he whom no Body believes, can deceive no Body, and then the Essence of Lying is removed; for the Description of a Lye is, that 'tis spoken to deceive, or 'tis a Design to deceive. Now, he that no Body believes, can never lye any more, because no Body can be deciev'd by him. Such a Man's Character is a Bill upon his Forehead, by which every Body knows, *Here dwells a Lying Tongue*: When every Body knows what is to be had of him, they know what to expect; and so no Body is deceiv'd; if they believe him afterwards, 'tis their Fault as much as his.

There are a great many Sorts of those People, who make it their Business to go about telling Stories; it would be endless to enumerate them, some tell formal Stories forg'd in their own Brain without any Retrospect either on Persons or Things; I mean, as to any particular Person, or Passage known, or in Being; and only with the ordinary Introduction of, *There was a Man*, or, *there was a Woman*, and the like.

Others again, out of the same Forge of Invention, hammer out the very Person, Man or Woman, and begin, *I knew the Man*, or *I knew the Woman*, and these ordinarily vouch their Story with more Assurance than others; and vouch also, that they knew the Persons who were concern'd in it.

The selling or writing a Parable, or an allusive allegorick History is quite a different Case,

and is always Distinguished from this other Jest-
ing with Truth ; that it is design'd and effectually
turn'd for instructive and upright Ends, and has
its Moral justly apply'd: Such are the historical
Parables in the holy Scripture, such the Pilgrims
Progress, and such in a Word the Adventures of
your fugitive Friend, *Robinson Crusoe*.

Others make no Scruple to relate real Stories
with innumerable Omissions and Additions: I
mean, Stories which have a real Existence in Fact,
but which by the barbarous Way of relating, be-
come as romantick and false, as if they had no real
Original. These Tales, like the old Galley of
Venice, which had been so often new vamped,
doubl'd and redoubl'd, that there was not one
Piece of the first Timber in her, have been told
wrong so often, and so many Ways, 'till there
would not be one Circumstance of the real Story
left in the relating.

There are many more Kinds of these, such
namely, as are personal and malicious, full of
Slander and Abuse; but these are not of the
Kinds I am speaking of; the present Business is
among a Kind of white Devils, who do no
Harm or Injury to any but to themselves; they
are like the Grasshopper, that spends his Time
to divert the Traveller, and does nothing but
starve himself. The Conversation of these Men
is full of *Emptiness*, their Words are Levity itself,
and according to the Text, they not only tell Un-
truths, but *the Truth is not in them*. There is not
a settl'd Awe or Reverence of Truth upon their
Minds; 'tis a Thing of no Value to them, 'tis
not regarded in their Discourse, and they give
themselves a Liberty to be perfectly unconcern'd
about the Thing they say, or the Story they tell,
whether it be true, or no.

*

This

This is a most abominable Practice on another Account; namely, that these Men make a Jest of their Crime; they are a Sort of People that Sin laughing; that play upon their Souls as a Man plays upon a Fiddle, to make other People dance and wear itself out; they may be said to make some Sport indeed, but it is all at themselves, they are the Hearers Comedy and their own Tragedy; and like a penitent Jack-pudding, they will at last say, I have made others merry, but I have been the Fool.

I would be glad to shame Men of common Sense, out of this horrid Piece of Buffoonry; and one Thing I would warn them of, namely, that their learning to Lye so currently in Story, will insensibly bring them to a bold entrenching upon Truth, in the rest of their Conversation; the Scripture Command is, *Let every Man speak Truth unto his Neighbour*; if we must tell Stories, tell them as Stories, add nothing willfully to illustrate or set it forth in the Relation; if you doubt the Truth of it, say so, and then every one will be at Liberty to believe their Share of it.

Besides, there is a spreading Evil in telling a false Story as true, namely, that you put it into the Mouths of others, and it continues a brooding Forgery to the End of Time; 'tis a Chimney-corner Romance, and has in it this distinguishing Article, that whereas Parables, and the Inventions of Men publish'd Historically, are once for all related, and the Moral being drawn, the History remains allusive only, as it was intended, as in several Cases (a) may be instanced within our Time (b)

(a) *The Pilgrims Progress.*

(b) *The Family Instructor and others.*

and without ; here the Case alters, Fraud goes unto the World's End, for Story, never dies every Relator Vouches, it for Truth, tho' he knows nothing of the Matter.

These Men know not what Foundations they are laying for handing on the Sport of Lying, for *such they make of it* to Posterity, not only leaving the Example, but dictating the very Materials for the Practice ; like Family-Lies handed on from Father to Son, till what begun in Forgery Ends in History, and we make our Lies be told for Truth, by all our Children that come after us.

If any Man object here, that the preceeding Volumes of this Work seem to be hereby condemn'd, and the History which I have therein publish'd of my self, censur'd ; I demand in Justice, such Objector stay his Censure, till he sees the End of the Scene, when all that Mystery shall discover it self, and I doubt not, but the Work shall abundantly justify the Design, and the Design abundantly justify the Work.



CHAP.



CHAP. IV.

An ESSAY on the present State of RELIGION in the World,

IN that Part of my Work, which may be called History, I have frequently mention'd the unconquerable Impressions which dwelt upon my Mind, and fill'd up all my Desires immoveably pressing me to a wandering travelling Life, and which push'd me continually on, from one Adventure to another, as you have heard.

There is an inconsiderate Temper which reigns in our Minds; that hurries us down the Stream of our Affections, by a kind of involuntary Agency, and makes us do a thousand things, *in the doing of which*, we propose nothing to our selves, but an immediate Subjection to our WILL, that is to say, our Passion, even without the Concurrence of our Understandings, and of which we can give very little Account, *after 'tis done*.

You may now suppose me to be arriv'd, after a long Course of infinite Variety, on the Stage of the World; to the Scene of Life, we call *Old Age*; and that I am writing these Sheets in a Season of my Time, when (if ever) a Man may be supposed

capable of making just Reflections upon things past, a true Judgement of things present, and tolerable Conclusions of things to come.

In the Beginning of this Life of Composure ; for now, and not till now, I may say, that I begun to live, that is to say, a sedate and compos'd Life, I enquir'd of my self very seriously one Day, what was the proper Business of *old Age*? The Answer was very natural, and indeed return'd quick upon me, namely, that two things were my present Work, as above.

1. Reflection upon things past.
2. Serious Application to things future.

Having resolv'd the Business of Life into these Heads, I began immediately with the First; and as some Times I took my Pen and Ink to disburthen my Thoughts, when the Subject crowded in fast upon me; so I have here communicated some of my Observations for the Benefit of those that come after me.

About the Time that I was upon these Enquiries, being at a Friend's House, and talking much of my long Travels, *as you know Travellers are apt to do*; I observ'd an antient Gentlewoman in the Company listen'd with a great deal of Attention, and as I thought, with some Pleasure, to what I was saying: And after I had done, Pray Sir, *says she*, turning her Speech to me, give me Leave to ask you a Question or two? *With all my Heart, Madam, said I*; so we began the following short Dialogue.

Old Gent. Pray Sir, in all your Travels, can you tell what is the World a-doing? What have you observ'd to be the principal Business of Mankind?
Rob.

Rob. Cru. Truly Madam, 'tis very hard to answer such a Question, the People being so differently employ'd, some one Way, and some another; and particularly, according to the several Parts of the World, thro' which our Observations are to run, and according to the differing Manners, Customs, and Circumstances of the People in every Place.

Old Gent. Alas! Sir, that is no Answer at all to me, because I am not a Judge of the differing Customs and Manners of the People you may speak of: *But*, Is there not one common End and Design in the Nature of Men, which seems to run thro' all their Actions, and to be form'd by Nature, as the main End of Life, and by Consequence is made the chief Business of Living? Pray, how do they spend their Time?

R. C. Nay; now Madam you have added a Question to the rest, of a different Nature from what, *if I take you right*, you meant at first.

Old Gent. What Question, Sir?

R. C. Why! how Mankind spend their Time; for I cannot say, that one half of Mankind spend their Time in what they themselves may acknowledge to be the main End of Life.

Old Gent. Pray, don't distinguish me out of my Question, we may talk of what is the true End of Life, as we understood it here in a Christian Country another Time: But take my Question as I offer it, What is Mankind generally a doing as their main Business?

R. C. Truly, the main Business that Mankind seems to be doing, is to eat and drink, that's their Enjoyment, and to get Food to eat is their Employment, including a little, their eating and devouring one another.

Old Gen

Old Gent. That's a Description of them as Brutes.

R. G. It is so in the First Part, namely, their Living to eat and drink: But in the last Part they are worse than the Brutes; for the Brutes destroy not their own Kind, but all prey upon a different Species; and besides, they prey upon one another, for Necessity, to satisfy their Hunger, and for Food: But Man for baser Ends, such as Avarice, Envy, Revenge, and the like; devours his own Species, nay, his own Flesh and Blood, as my Lord *Rocheſter* very well expresses it.

*But judge your ſelf, I'll bring it to the Teſt,
Which is the beſt Creature, Man or Beaſt.
Birds feed on Birds, Beaſts on each other Prey,
But Savage Man alone does Man betray,
Preſ'd by Neceſſity, they kill for Food,
Man; undoes Man, to do himſelf no Good.
With Teeth and Claws, by Nature arm'd they hunt,
Nature's Allowance to ſupply their Want:
But Man with Smiles, embraces, Friendſhip, Praise,
Inhumanly his Fellows Life betrays.
With voluntary Pains works his Diſtreſs,
Not for Neceſſity, but Wantonneſs.*

Old Gent. All this I believe is true; but this does not reach my Queſtion yet: There is certainly ſomething among them, which is eſteemed as more particularly the End of Life, and of Living, than the reſt; to which they apply in common, as the main Buſineſs, and which it is always eſteemed to be their Wiſdom to be employ'd in: Is there not

not something that is apparently the great Business of Living?

R. C. Why really, Madam, I think not. For Example: Great Part of the World, and a greater Part by far than we imagine, is resolv'd into the lowest Degeneracy of human Nature, I mean the Savage Life; where the chief End of Life seems to be meerly to eat and drink, that is to say, to get their Food, just as the brutal Life is employ'd, and indeed with very little Difference between them; for except only Speech and Idolatry, I see nothing in the Life of some whole Nations of People, and for ought I know, containing Millions of Souls, in which the Life of a Lion or an Elephant in the Desarts of *Arabia*, is not equal.

Old Gent. I could mention many things, Sir, in which they might differ, but that is not the present thing I enquire about: But, pray Sir, Is not Religion the principal Business of Mankind in all the Parts of the World; for I think you granted it when you nam'd Idolatry, which they, no doubt, call Religion?

R. C. Really, Madam, I cannot say it is; because, what with Ignorance on one hand, and Hypocrisy on the other, 'tis very hard to know where to find Religion in the World.

Old Gent. You avoid my Question too laboriously, Sir, I have nothing to do either with the Ignorance or Hypocrisy of the People, whether they are blindly devout, or knavishly and designedly devout, is not the Case; but whether Religion is not apparently the main Business of the World, the principal apparent End of Life, and the Employment of Mankind?

R. C. What do you call Religion?

Old Gent.

Old Gent. By Religion, I mean, the Worshipping and Paying Homage to some supreme Being, some God, *known or unknown*, is not to the Case, so it be but to something counted supreme.

R. C. It is true, Madam, there are scarce any Nations in the World so stupid, but they give Testimony to the Being of a God, and have some Notion of a supreme Power.

Old Gent. That I know also, but that is not the main Part of my Question: But my Opinion is, that paying a divine Worship, Acts of Homage and Adoration, and particularly, that of Praying to the Supreme Being, which they acknowledge, is deriv'd to Mankind from the Light of Nature, with the Notion or Belief itself.

R. C. I suppose Madam, you mean by the Question then, Whether the Notion or Belief of a God in general, and the Sense of Worship in particular, are not one and the same natural Principle.

Old Gent. I do so, if you and I do but agree about what we call Worship.

R. C. By Worship, I understand Adoration.

Old Gent. But there you and I differ again a little; for by Worship, I understand Supplication.

R. C. Then you must take them both in together; for some Part of the *Indian Savages* only adore.

Old Gent. I confess there is much Adoration, where there is little Supplication.

R. C. You distinguish too nicely, Madam.

Old Gent. No, no, I do not distinguish in what I call Worship; I alledge, that all the Adoration of those poor Savages is mere Supplication; You say they lift up their Hands to their Idols, for Fear they should hurt them.

R. C. I do say so, and it is apparent.

Old Gent.

Old Gent. Why, that is the same thing, for then they lift up their Hands to him, that is to say, pray to him not to hurt them; for all the Worship in the World, especially the outward Performance, may be resolv'd into Supplication.

R. R. I agree with you in that, if you mean the apparent End of Worship.

Old Gent. Why! did not your Man *Friday* and the *Savage* Woman you tell us of, talk of their old Idol they call'd *Benamuckee*? And what did they do?

R. C. It is very true they did.

Old Gent. And did not *Friday* tell you they went up to the Hills, and said *O* to him? Pray, what was the Meaning of saying *O* to him: But *O* do not hurt us; for thou art Omnipotent, and canst kill us: *O* heal our Distempers; for thou art Infinite, and canst do all things: *O* give us what we want; for thou art Bountiful; *O* spare us; for thou art Merciful: And so of all the other Conceptions of a God?

R. C. Well, Madam, I grant all this, pray what do you infer from it? What is the Reason of your Question?

Old Gent. *O* Sir, I have many Inferences to draw from it for my own Observation, I do not set up to instruct you.

I thought this ferious old Lady would have entertain'd a farther Discourse with me on so fruitful a Subject; but she declin'd it, and left me to my own Meditation, which indeed she had rais'd up to an unusual Pitch: And the first thing that occur'd to me, was to put me upon enquiring after that nice thing, I ought to call Religion, in the World; seeing really I found Reason to think, that

that there was much more Devotion than Religion in the World ; in a Word, much more Adoration than Supplication : And I doubt, as I come nearer Home, it will appear, that there is much more Hypocrisy than Sincerity : Of which I may speak by itself.

In my first Enquiries, I look'd back upon my own Travels, and it afforded me but a melancholy Reflection, that in all the Voyages and Travels which I have employ'd two Volumes in giving a Relation of, I never set my Foot in a Christian Country, no not in circling three Parts of the Globe ; for, excepting the *Brafils*, where the *Portuguese* indeed profess'd the Roman-Catholick Principles, which however, in Distinction from Paganism, I will call the Christian Religion ; I say, except the *Brafils*, where also I made little Stay, I could not be said to set Foot in a Christian Country, or a Country inhabited by Christians, from the Bay of *La'rache*, and the Port of *Sallee*, by the *Straits* Mouth, where I escap'd from Slavery, thro' the *Atlantick* Ocean, the Coasts of *Africk* on one Side, and of *Carribbea* on the *American* Shore, on the other Side ; from thence to *Madagascar*, *Malabar*, and the Bay and City of *Bongale*, the Coast of *Sumatra*, *Malacca*, *Siam*, *Cambodia*, *Cochinchina*, the Empire and Coast of *China*, the Defarts of *Karakathay*, the *Mongul Tartars*, the *Siberian*, the *Samoiede Barbarians*, and till I came within four or five Days of *Arch-Angel* in the *Black Russia*.

It is, I say, a melancholy Reflection to think, how all these Parts of the World, and with infinite Numbers of Millions of People, furnish'd with the Powers of Reason, and Gifts of Nature, and many Ways, if not every Way, as capable of the Reception of sublime things, as we are, are yet
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abandon'd to the grossest Ignorance and Depravity; and that not in Religion only, but even in all the desirable Parts of humane Knowledge, and especially Science and acquir'd Knowledge.

What the Divine Wisdom has determined concerning the Souls of so many Millions, it is hard to conclude, nor is it my present Design to enquire; but this I may be allow'd here, as a Remark: If they are received to Mercy in a Future State, according to the Opinion of some, as having not sin'd against saving Light, then their Ignorance and Pagan Darknes is not a Curse, but a Felicity; and there are no unhappy People in the World, but those lost among Christians, for their Sins against reveal'd Light; nay, then being born in the Regions of Christian Light, and under the Revelation of the Gospel Doctrines, is not so much a Mercy to be acknowledged as some teach us, and it may in a negative Manner be true, that the Christian Religion is an Efficient in the Condemnation of Sinners, and loses more than it saves, which is impious but to imagin: On the other Hand, if all those Nations are concluded under the Sentence of eternal Absence from God, which is Hell in the Abstract; then what becomes of all the sceptical Doctrines of its being inconsistent with the Mercy and Goodness of an infinite and beneficent Being, to condemn so great a Part of the World, for not believing in him of whom they never had any Knowledge or Instruction? But I desire not to be the Promoter of unanswerable Doubts in Matters of Religion; much less would I promote Cavils at the Foundations of Religion, either as to its Profession or Practice, and therefore I only name Things. I return to my Enquiry after Religion as we generally understand the Word.

And

And in this I confine my self in my present Enquiries to the particular Nations professing the Christian Religion only, and I shall take Notice afterward, what influence the want of Religion has upon the Manners the Genius, and the Capacities of the People, as to all the improvable Parts of human Knowledge.

The *Moors* of *Barbary* are *Mahometans*, and that of the most degenerate and unpolished Sort, especially of that Part of the World where they live; they are cruel as Beasts, vicious, insolent, and inhuman as degenerated Nature can make them: Moral Vertues have so little recommended themselves to any among them, that they are accounted no Accomplishment, and are in no Esteem; nor is a Man at all respected for being grave, sober, judicious, or wise, or for being just in his Dealings, or most easy in his Conversation; but Rapine and Injury is the Custom of the Place; and it is to recommend a great Man, that he is rich, powerful in Slaves, merciless in his Government of them, and imperiously haughty in his whole Household. Every Man is a King within himself, and regards neither Justice or Mercy, Humanity or Civility, either to them above him, or them below him, but just as his arbitrary Passions guide him.

Religion here is confin'd to the *Biram* and the *Ramadan*, the Feast and the Fast, to the Mosque and the Bath; reading the Alcoran on one Hand, and performing the Washings and Purifications on the other, make up their religious Exercises; and for the rest, Conversation is eaten up with Barbarisms and Brutish Customs; so that there's neither Society, Humanity, Confidence in one another, or Conversation with one another; but Men live like the wild Beasts, for every Man here really would destroy and devour the other if he could.

This

This guided me to a just Reflection, in Honour of the Christian Religion, which I have often since made Use of, and which on this Occasion I will make a Digressiou to, *viz.* That it is to be said for the Reputation of the Christian Religion in general, and by which it is justly distinguish'd from all other Religions, that where-ever Christianity has been planted or profess'd nationally in the World, even where it has not had a *Saving* Influence, it has yet had a *Civilizing* Influence: It has operated upon the Manners, the Morals, the Politics, and even the Tempers and Dispositions of the People: It has reduc'd them to the Practice of Virtue, and to the true Methods of Living, has wean'd them from the *Barbarous* Customs they had been used to, infusing a Kind of Humanity and Softness of Disposition into their very Natures; civilizing and softning them, teaching them to love a Regularity of Life, and filling them with Principles of generous Kindness and Beneficence one to another; in a Word, it has taught them to live like Men, and act upon the Foundations of Clemency, Humanity, Love, and good Neighbourhood, suitable to the Nature and Dignity of God's Image, and to the Rules of Justice and Equity, which it instructs them in.

Nay farther, I must observe also, That as the Christian Religion has worn out, or been removed from any Country, and they have returned to Heathenism and Idolatry, so the Barbarisms have return'd, the Customs of the Heathen Nations have been again restor'd; the very Nature and Temper of the People, have been again lost; all their generous Principles have forsaken them, the Softness and Goodness of their Dispositions have worn out; and they have returned to Cruelty, Inhumanity, Rapin, and Blood.

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to

- It is true, and it may be nam'd as an Objection to this Remark of mine, that the *Romans* tho' Heathens, and the *Grecians* by the Study of Philosophy, in particular Persons, and by the Excellency of their Government in their general or national Capacity, were fill'd with Notions of Virtue and Honour, with most generous and just Principles, and acted with an heroic Mind in many Occasions; practising the most sublime and exalted Height of Virtue, such as sacrificing their Lives for their Country, with the utmost Zeal; descending to great Examples of Humanity and Beneficence, scorning to do base or vile Actions, as unworthy the *Roman* Name, to save their Lives; and a great many most excellent Examples of Virtue and Gallantry, are found in the Histories of the *Roman* Empires.

This does not oppose, it rather indeed illustrates what I say; for with all the Philosophy, all the Humanity and Generosity they practis'd, they had yet their Remains of Barbarity, were cruel and unmerciful in their Natures, as appear'd by the Barbarity of their Customs, such as throwing Malefactors to wild Beasts, the Fightings of their Gladiators, and the like; which were not only appointed as Punishments and Severities, by the Order of Public Justice; but to shew it touch'd the very Article I am upon, it was the Subject of their Sport and Diversion, these Things were exhibited as Shows to entertain the Ladies; the Cutting in Pieces fourty or fifty Slaves, and the Seeing twenty or thirty miserable Creatures thrown to the Lyons and Tygers, was no less pleasant to them, than the Going to see an Opera, a Masquerade, or a Puppet Show, is to us; So that I think, the *Romans* were very far from a People civiliz'd and soften'd in their Natures by the Influences

encess of Religion And this is evident, because that as the Christian Religion came among them, all those cruel Customs were abhorr'd by them, the famous Theatres and Circles for their publick Sports, were overthrown, and the Ruines of them testify the Justice of my Observation at this very Day.

Nor will it be deny'd, if I should carry this yet farther, and observe, That even among Christians, those who are more reform'd, and farther and farther christianiz'd, are still in Proportion rendred more human, more soft and tender; and we do find, without being partial to our selves, that even the Protestant Countries are much distinguish'd in the Humanity and Softness of their Tempers, the meek merciful Disposition extends more among Protestants, than among the Papists, as I could very particularly demonstrate from History and Experience.

But to return back to the Moores, where I left off, they are an Instance of that Cruelty of Disposition, which was anciently in their Nature, and how in a Country abandon'd of the true Christian Religion, after it has been first planted and profess'd among them, the Return of Heathenism or Mahometanism has brought back with it all the Barbarisms of a Nation void of Religion and good Nature.

I saw enough of these dreadful People to think them at this Time the worst of all the Nations of the World; a Nation, where no such thing as a generous Spirit, or a Temper with any Compassion mixt with it, is to be found; among whom Nature appears stripp'd of all the additional Glories, which it derives from Religion, and yet whereon a Christian flourishing Church had stood several hundred Years,

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From

From these I went among the Negroes of *Africa*; many of them I saw without any the least Notion of a Deity among them, much less any Form of Worship; but I had not any Occasion to converse with them on Shore. other than I have done since by Accident; but went away to the *Brazils*: Here I found the Natives, and that even before the *Portuguese* came among them, and since also, had Abundance of Religion, *such as it was*: But it was all so bloody, so cruel; consisting of Murders, human Sacrifices, Witchcrafts, Sorceries, and Conjurings, that I could not so much as call them honest Pagans, as I do the Negroes.

As for the Cannibals, as I have observ'd in the Discourse of them, on Account of their Landing on my Island, I can say but very little of them: As for their eating human Flesh, I take it to be a Kind of martial Rage, rather than a civil Practice; for 'tis evident, they eat no human Creatures, but such as are taken Prisoners in their Battles; and as I have observ'd in giving the Account of those things, they do not Esteem it Murder, nor so much as unlawful. I must confess, saving its being a Practice in itself unnatural, especially to us, I say, saving that Part, I see little Difference between that and our Way, which in the War is frequent in Heat of Action, *viz.* refusing Quarter; for as to the Difference between Eating and Killing those that offer to yield, it matters not much. And this I observed at the same Time, that in their other Conduct, those Savages were as human, as mild, and gentle, as most I have met with in the World, and as easily civiliz'd.

From these Sorts of People, I come to the *Indians*; for as to the *Madagascar* Men, I saw very little of them, but that they were a Kind of Negroes, much like those on the Coast of *Guinea*, only,

ly, a little more used and accustomed to the *Europeans*, by their often Landing among them.

The *E. Indians* are generally Pagans or Mahometans, and have such Mixtures of Savage Customs with them, that even Mahometanism is there in its Corruption; neither have they there, the upright just Dealing in Matters of Right and Wrong, which the *Turks* in *Europe* have, with whom 'tis generally very safe trading: But here they act all the Parts of Thieves and Cheats, watching to deceive you, and proud of being thought able to do it.

The Subjects of the great *Mogul* have a seeming polite Government; and the Inhabitants of *Ceylon* are under very strict Discipline; and yet what Difficulty do we find to trade with them? Nay, their very Oeconomy renders them fraudulent, and in some Places they cannot turn their Thoughts to being honest.

China is famous for Wisdom, *that is to say*, that they, having such a boundless Conceit of their own Wisdom, we are oblig'd to allow them more than they have; the Truth is, they are justly said to be a wise Nation among the foolish ones, and may as justly be called a Nation of Fools among the wise ones.

As to their Religion, 'tis all summ'd up in *Confucius* his Maxims, whose Theology, I take to be a Rhapsody of Moral Conclusions; a Foundation, or what we may call Elements of Polity, Morality and Superstition, huddl'd together in a Rhapsody of Words, without Consistency, and indeed with very little Reasoning in it: Then 'tis really not so much as a refin'd Paganism, for there are in my Opinion much more regular Doings among some of the *Indians* that are Pagans in *America*, than there are in *China*: And if I may be-

lieve the Account given of the Government of *Montezuma* in *Mexico*, and of the *Unca's* of *Cusco* in *Peru*; their Worship and Religion such as it was, was carry'd on with more Regularity than these in *China*. As to the human Ingenuity, as they call it, of the *Chineses*, I shall account for it by itself: The utmost Discoveries of it to me appear'd in the *Mechanicks*, and even in them infinitely short of what is found among the *European Nations*,

But let us take these People to Pieces a little, and examine into the great Penetration, they are so fam'd for: First of all, their Knowledge has not led them that Length in religious Matters, which the common Notions of Philosophy would have done, and to which they did lead the wise Heathens of Old among the *Grecian* and *Roman Empires*; for they having not the Knowledge of the true God, preserv'd notwithstanding, the Notion of a God to be something Immortal, Omnipotent, sublime; exalted above in Place, as well as Authority; and therefore made Heaven to be the Seat of their Gods, and the Images by which they represented the Gods and Goddesses, had always some Perfections that were really to be admir'd; as the Attendants of their Gods, as *Jupiter* was call'd the Thunderer, for his Power; Father of Gods and Men, for his Seniority; *Venus* ador'd for her Beauty; *Mercury* for Swiftnes; *Apollo* for Wit, Poetry, Musick; *Mars* for Terror and Gallantry in Arms, and the like: But when we come to these polite Nations of *China*, which yet we cry up for Sense, and Greatness of Genius, we see them groveling in the very Sink and Filth of Idolatry; their Idols are the most frightful monstrous Shapes, not the Form of any real Creature, much less the Images of Virtue, of Chastity, of Literature; but horrid Shapes of their Priests Invention;

tion ; neither helijsh or human Monsters compos'd of invented Forms, with neither Face or Figure, but with the utmost Distortions, form'd neither to walk, stand, fly, or go; neither to hear, see, or speak, but meerly to instill horrible Ideas of something nauseous and abominable, into the Minds of Men that ador'd them.

If I may be allow'd to give my Notions of Worship, I mean, as it relates to the Objects of natural Homage, where the Name and Nature of God is not reveal'd, as in the Christian Religion. I must acknowledge, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Elements, as in the Pagan and Heathen Nations of old; and above all these, the Representations of superiour Virtues and Excellencies among Men, such as Valour, Fortitude, Chastity, Patience, Beauty, Strength, Love, Learning, Wisdom, and the like ; The Objects of Worship in the *Grecian* and *Roman* Times, were far more eligible, and more rational Objects of divine Rites, than the Idols of *China* and *Japan*; where with all the Oeconomy of their State Maxims and Rules of Civil Government, which we insist so much on, as Tests of their Wisdom, their great Capacities, and Understandings; their Worship is the most brutish, and the Objects of their Worship, the coarsest, the most unmanly, inconsistent with Reason or the Nature of Religion of any the World can shew ; bowing down to a meer Hob-goblin, and doing their Reverence not to the Work of Mens Hands only, but the ugliest, basest, frightfullest things that Man could make ; Images so far from being lovely and amiable, as in the Nature of Worship is implied, that they are the most detestable and nauseous, even to Nature.

How is it possible these People can have any Claim to the Character of wise, ingenious, polite,

that could suffer themselves to be overwhelm'd in an Idolatry repugnant to common Sense, even to Nature, and be brought to chuse to adore that which was in itself the most odious and contemptible to Nature ; not meerly terrible, that so their Worship might proceed from Fear, but a Complication of Nature's Aversions.

I cannot omit, that being in one of their Temples, or rather in a kind of Oratory or Chapel, annexed to one Part of the great Palace at *Pequin*, there appear'd a Mandarin with his Attendants, or, as we may say, a great Lord and his Retinue, prostrate before the Image, not of any one of God's Creatures, but a Creature of meer human Forming, such as neither was alive, nor was like any thing that had Life, or had ever been seen or heard of in the World.

The like Image, or something worse, if I could give it a true Representation, may be found in a Garden Chapel, if not defac'd by wiser Heads, of a great *Tartarian* Mandarin, at a small Distance from *Nanquin*, and to which the poor abandon'd Creatures, pay their most blinded Devotions.

It had a thing instead of a Head, but no Head ; it had a Mouth distorted out of all Manner of Shape, and not to be described for a Mouth, being only an unshapen Chasm, neither representing the Mouth of a Man, Beast, Fowl, or Fish : The Thing was neither any of the four, but an incongruous Monster : It had Feet, Hands, Fingers, Claws, Legs, Arms, Wings, Ears, Horns, every Thing mixt one among another, neither in the Shape or Place that Nature appointed, but blended together, and fix'd to a Bulk, not a Body ; form'd of no just Parts, but a shapeless Trunk or Log ; whether of Wood or Stone, I know not ;
a thing

a thing that might have stood with any Side forward, or any Side backward, any End upward, or any End downward, that had as much Veneration due to it on one Side, as on the other, a kind of celestial Hedge-hog, that was rolled up within itself, and was every thing every Way; that to a Christian could not have been worthy to have represented even the Devil; and to Men of common Sense, must have been their very Souls Averfion: In a Word, if I have not represented their monstrous Deities right, let Imagination supply any thing that can make a misshapen Image horrid, frightful, and surprizing; And you may with Justice suppose, those sagacious People, called the *Chineses*, whom forsooth we must admire, I say, you may suppose them prostrate on the Ground, with all their Pomp and Pageanty, which is in it self not a little, worshipping such a mangled, promiscuous gendred Creature.

Shall we call these a wise Nation, who represent God in such hideous monstrous Figures as these, and can prostrate themselves to things ten thousand Times more disfigured than the Devil? Had these Images been contriv'd in the *Romans* Time, and been set up for the God of Ugliness, as they had their God of Beauty, they might indeed have been thought exquisite; but the *Romans* would have spurn'd such an Image out of their Temples.

Nothing can render a Nation so compleatly foolish and simple, as such an Extravagance in Matters of religious Worship; for if gross Ignorance in the Notion of a God, which is so extremely natural, will not demonstrate a Nation unpolish'd, foolish, and weak, even next to Ideotism, I know nothing that will.

But

But let me trace this wise Nation that we talk so much of, and who not only think themselves wise, but have drawn us in, to pay a Kind of Homage to their low-priz'd Wit.

Government, and the Mechanick Arts, are the two main things in which our People in *England*, who have admir'd them so much, pretend they excel; as to their Government, which consists in an absolute Tyranny, which, by the Way, is the easiest Way of Ruling in the World, where the People are dispos'd to obey, as blindly as the *Mandarin* commands or governs imperiously; what Policy is required in governing a People, of whom 'tis said, that if you command them to hang themselves, they will only cry a little, and submit immediately? Their Maxims of Government may do well enough among themselves, but with us they would be all Confusion. In their Country it is not so, only because, whatever the *Mandarin* says, is a Law, and God himself has no Power or Interest among them to contradict it, unless he pleases to execute it *brevi manu* from Heaven.

Most of their Laws consist in immediate Judgment, swift Executions, just Retaliations, and fair Protection from Injuries: Their Punishments are cruel and exorbitant, such as Cutting the Hands and the Feet off for Theft, at the same Time releasing Murders and other flagrant Crimes.

Their *Mandarines* are their Judges in very many Cases, like our Justices of the Peace; but then they judge by Customs, Oral Tradition, or immediate Opinion, and execute the Sentence immediately, without room, or Time to reflect upon the Justice of it, or to consider of Mitigations, as in all Christian Countries is practis'd, and as the Sense of human Frailty would direct.

But

But let me come to their Mechanics, in which their Ingenuity is so much cry'd up, I affirm there is little or nothing sufficient to build the mighty Opinion we have of them upon, but what is founded upon the Comparisons which we make between them and other Pagan Nations, or proceeds from the Wonder which we make, that they should have any Knowledge of Mechanics Arts, because we find the remote Inhabitants of *Afric* and *America*, so grossly ignorant, and so entirely destitute in such things; whereas we do not consider, that the *Chineses* inhabit the Continent of *Asia*; and tho' they are separated by Desarts and Wilderesses, yet they are a continuous Continent of Land, with the Parts of the World once inhabited by the politer *Medes*, *Persians*, and *Grecians*; that the first Ideas of Mechanic Arts were probably receiv'd by them from the *Persians*, *Assyrians*, and the banish'd transplanted *Israelites*, who are said to be carry'd into the Regions of *Parthia*, and the Borders of *Karacathay*, from whence they are also said to have communicated Arts, and especially Handicraft, in which the *Israelites* excell'd, to the Inhabitants of all those Countries, and consequently in Time to those beyond them.

But let them be received from whom they will, and how long ago soever; let us but compare the Improvement they have made, with what others have made; and except in things peculiar to themselves by their Climate, we shall find the utmost of their Ingenuity amounts but to a very Trifle, and that they are out-done even in the best of their Works by our ordinary Artists, whose Imitations exceed their Originals, beyond all Comparison.

For Example, they have Gun-powder and Guns, whether they have learned to make them by Direction of *Europeans*, which is most likely, or that they

they found it out by meer Strength of Invention, as some would advance, tho' without Certainty, in their Favour: Be it which it will, as I say, it matters not much; their Powder is of no Strength for the needful Operations of Sieges, Mines, Batteries, no nor for shooting of Birds, as ours is, without great Quantities put together; their Guns are rather an Ostentation than for Execution, clumsy, heavy, and ill made; neither have they arriv'd to any tolerable Degree of Knowledge in the Art of Gunnery or Engineering; they have no Bombs, Carcasses, Hand-grenades; their artificial Fireworks are in no Degree comparable, or to be nam'd with ours; nor have they arriv'd to any thing in the military Skill, in martialling Armies, handling Arms, Discipline, and the Exercise in the Field, as the *Europeans* have; all which is depending on the Improvement of Fire-Arms, &c. in which, if they have had the Use of Gun-powder so many Ages as some Dream, they must be unaccountable Blockheads, that they have made no farther Improvement; and if it is but lately, they are yet apparently dull enough in the managing of it, at least, compar'd to what ought to be expected of an ingenious People, such as our People cry them up to be.

I might go from this to their Navigation, in which it is true they out-do most of their Neighbours: But what is all their Skill in Sailing compar'd to ours? Whither do they go? And how manage the little and foolish Barks and Jonks they have? What would they do with them to traverse the great *Indian, American, or Atlantic Oceans*? What Ships, what Sailors, what poor, awkward, and ignorant Doings is there among them at Sea? And when our People hire any of them, as sometimes they are oblig'd to do, How do our Sailors
kick

kick them about, as a Parcel of clumsy, ignorant, unhandy Fellows?

Then for building of Ships, What are they? And what are they able to do towards the glorious Art of building a large Man of War? 'Tis out of Doubt with me, that all the People of *China* could not build such a Ship as the *Royal Sovereign*, in a hundred Years, no not tho' she was there for them to look at, and take Pattern by.

I might go on to abundance more things, such as Painting, making Glasses, making Clocks and Watches, making Bone-lace, Frame-work Knitting; of all which, except the two first, they know little or nothing; and of the two first, nothing compar'd to what is done in *Europe*.

The Height of their Ingenuity, and for which we admire them with more Colour of Cause than in other things, is their Porcellain or Earthenware Work, which, in a Word, is more due to the excellent Composition of the Earth they make them of, and which is their Peculiar, than to the Workmanship; in which, if we had the same Clay, we should soon outdo them, as much as we do in other things. The next Art is, their Manufacturing in fine Silks, Cotton, Herba, Gold, and Silver, in which they have nothing but what is in common with our ordinary poor Weavers.

The next Mechanic Art is, their Lacquering, which is just as in the *China* Ware, a Peculiar to their Country, in the Materials, not at all in the Workmanship: And as for the Cabinet Work of it, they are manifestly out-done by us; and abundance is every Year sent thither fram'd and made in *England*, and only lacquer'd in *China*, to be return'd to us.

I might

I might run the like Parallel thro' most of the things these People excel in, which would all appear to be so deficient,, as would render all their fam'd Wisdom and Capacity most scandalously imperfect: But I am not so much upon their Cunning in Arts, as upon their Absurdity and ridiculous Folly in Matters religious, and in which I think the rudest *Barbarians* out-do them.

From this wise Nation, we have a vast Extent of Ground, near 2000 Miles in Breadth; partly under the *Chinese* Government, partly under the *Muscovite*, but inhabited by *Tartars* of *Mongul Tartary*, *Karkathay*, *Siberian*, and *Samoïdes* Pagans; whose Idols are almost as hideous as the *Chineses*, and whose Religion is all Nature; and not only so, but Nature under the greatest Degeneracy, and next to Brutal. *Father La Comte* gives us the Pictures of some of their House Idols, and an Account of their Worship; and this lasts, as I have observ'd, to within a few Days of *Arch-Angel*: So that, in a Word, from the Mouth of the *Straits*, that is to say, from *Sallee* over to *Caribbea*, from thence round *Africa* by the Cape of good Hope, cross the vast *Indian Ocean*, and upon all the Coast of it, about by *Malacca* and *Sumatra*, thro' the Straits of *Sincapore* and the Coast of *Siam* Northwards to *China*, and thro' *China* by Land over the Desarts of the *Grand Tartary*, to the River *Dwina*, being a Circuit three Times the Diameter of the Earth, and every jot as far as the whole Circumference. The Name of God is not heard of, except among a few of the *Indians* that are *Mahometan*; the Word of God is not known, or the Son of God spoken of.

Having some Warmth in my Search after Religion, occasion'd by this Reflection, and so little of it appearing in all the Parts which I had travel'd,

vel'd, I resolv'd to travel over the rest of the World in Books, for my wandring Days are pretty well over; I say, I resolv'd to travel the rest in Books; and sure, said I, there must appear abundance of serious Religion in the rest of the World, or else I know nothing at all of where I shall find it.

But I find by my Reading, just as I did in Travelling, that all the Customs of Nations, as to Religion, were much alike; that one with another, they are more devout in their Worship of something, *whatever it be*, than inquisitive after what it is they worship; and most of the Altars of Worship in the World, might to this Day be inscrib'd to the Unknown God.

This may seem a strange thing; but that Wonder may cease, when farther Enquiry is made into the particular Objects of Worship, which the several Nations of the World bow down to, some of which, are so horrid, so absurd, as one would think human Nature could not sink so low, as to do her Homage in so irrational a Manner.

And here, being to speak of Religion as idolatrous, it occurs to me, that it seem'd strange, that except in *Persia*, and some Part of *Tartary*, I found none of the People look *Up* for their Gods, but *Down*; by which it came into my Mind, that even in Idolatry itself, the World was something degenerated, and their Reason was more hoodwink'd than their Ancestors.

By looking up, and looking down, I mean, they do not as the *Romans*, look up among the Stars for their Idols, place their Gods in the Skies, and worship, as we might say, like Men; but look down among the Brutes, form Idols to themselves out of the Beasts, and figure things like
Mon-

Monsters, to adore them for their Ugliness and horrible Deformity.

Of the Two, the former, in my Opinion, was much the more rational Idolatry, as particularly, the *Persians* worshipping the Sun; and when I had a particular Account of that at *Bengale*, it present-ly occur'd to my Thought, that there was something awful, something glorious, and *God-like* in the Sun, that, in the Ignorance of the True God, might rationally bespeak the Homage of the Creatures; and to whom it seem'd reasonable, *where Reason was its own Judge only, without the Helps of Revelation*, to pay an Adoration, as the Parent of Light, and the Giver of Life to all the Vegetative World, and as in a visible Manner, enlivening and influencing the rational and sensitive Life, and which might, for ought they knew, at first create, as it did since, so plainly affect all things round us.

This Thought gave Birth to the following Excursion, with which I shall close this Observation.

*Hail! Glorious Lamp, the Parent of the Day,
Whose Beams not only Heat, and Life convey;
But may that Heat and Life, for ought we know,
On many many distant Worlds bestow.
Immense, amazing Globe of heavenly Fire;
To whom all Flames ascend, in whom all Lights expire.
Rolling in Flames, emits eternal Ray,
Yet Self-sufficient suffers no Decay.
Thy Cent'ral Vigour never never dies,
But Life the Motion, Motion, Life supplies.*

When

*When lesser Bodies rob us of thy Beams,
 And intercept thy flowing heavenly Streams;
 Fools by Mistake eclipse thee from their Sight,
 When 'tis the Eye's eclips'd, and not thy Light.
 Thy Absence constitutes effectual Night,
 When rolling Earth deprives us of thy Light:
 And Planets all opaque and beggerly,
 Borrow thy Beams, and strive to shine like thee.
 In their mock life-less Light we starve and freeze,
 And wait the Warmth of thy returning Rays.*

*Thy Distance leaves us all recline and sad,
 And hoary Winter governs in thy Stead:
 Swift thy returning Vigor, warm and mild,
 Salutes the Earth, and gets the World with Chila.*

*Great Soul of Nature, from whose vital Spring
 Due Heat and Life's diffus'd, thro' every thing:
 Govern'st the Moon and Stars by different Ray,
 Shee Queen of Night, thee Monarch of the Day,
 Thee Moon, and Stars, and Earth, and Plants obey }
 When darker Nations see thee plac'd on high,
 And feel thy Warmth, their Genial Heat supply:
 How imperceptible thy Influence
 Slides thro' their Veins, and touchés every Sense;
 By glimmering Nature led, they bow their Knee,
 Mistake their God, and sacrifice to thee.
 Mourn thy declining Steps, and hate the Night,
 But when in Hope of thy approaching Light,
 Bless thy Return, which brings the chearful Day,
 And to thy wond'rous-Light false Adorations pay.*

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Nor

*Nor can we blame the Justice of the Thought,
 In Minds by erring Reason only, taught.
 Nature it seems instructs a Deity,
 And Reason says, there's none so bright as thee.
 Nor is the Influence so much a Jest,
 There's something shocks our Nature in the Rest :
 To make a God, and then the Tool adore,
 And bow to that, that worshipp'd us before.
 The Nonsense takes off all the Reverence,
 That can't be worshipping that is not Sense.
 But when the Spring of Nature shews its Face,
 The Glory of its Rays, the Swiftness of its Race.
 Stupendous Height, and Majesty Divine,
 And with what awful Splendor it can shine :
 Who that no other News from Heaven could hear,
 Would think but this was God, would think and fear,
 No other Idöl ever came so near.*

Certain it is, that the *Persians* who thus paid
 their Adoration to the Sun, were at that Time
 some of the wisest People in the World. Some
 tell us, that the great Image that *Nebuchadnezzar*
 set up for all his People to worship, was repre-
 sented holding the Sun in his Right-hand; and
 that it was to the Representation of the Sun that
 he commanded all Nations and Kindreds to bow
 and to worship: If so, then the *Assyrians* were Wor-
 shippers also of the Sun, as well as the *Persians*;
 which is not at all improbable; we read also in
 the Scripture, of those Nations who worshipped
 all the Host of Heaven, a Thing much more ra-
 tional, and nearer of Kin to Worshipping the
 Great God of Heaven, than worshipping the
 whole

whole Host of the Earth; and worshipping the most abject and loathsome Creatures, or but even the Representations of those Creatures; which was still worse than the other.

But what are all the Absurdities of Heathenism, which at last are resolv'd into the Degeneracy of Mankind, and their being fallen from the Knowledge of the true God, which was once, as we have Reason to believe, diffused to all Mankind.

I say, What are these? And how much Ground for just Reflection do they afford us, compar'd to the gross things in Practice, which we find every Day among those Nations, who profess to have had the clear Light of Gospel Revelation?

How many Self-contradicting Principles do they hold? How contrary to their Profession do they act? How do one Side burn for what another Side abhors? And how do Christians, *taking that venerable Name for a general Appellation*, doom one another to the Devil, for a few disagreeing Clauses of the same Religion, while all profess to worship the same Deity, and to expect the same Salvation?

With what preposterous Enthusiasms do some mingle their Knowledge, and with as gross Absurdities others their Devotion? How blindly superstitious? How furious and raging in their Zeal? How cruel, inexorable, and even inhuman and barbarous to one another, when they differ? as if Religion divested us of Humanity, and that in our worshipping a God of Mercy, and in whose Compassions alone it is that we have room to hope, we should to please and serve him, banish Humanity from our Nature, and shew no Compassion to those that fall into our Hands.

In my Travelling thro' *Portugal*, it was my Lot to come to *Lisbon*, while they held there one of their

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Courts

Courts of Justice, call'd *Auto de fe*, that is to say a Court of Justice of the Inquisition: It is a Subject has been handled by many Writers, and indeed expos'd by some of the best Catholics; and my present Business is not to write a History, or engage in a Dispute, but to relate a Passage.

They carry'd in Procession all their Criminals to the great Church; where eight of them appear'd first, dress'd up in Gowns and Caps of Canvas, upon which was painted all that Man could devise, of Hell's Torments, Devils broiling and roasting human Bodies; and a thousand such frightful things, with Flames and Devils besides in every Part of the Dress.

Those I found were eight poor Creatures condemn'd to be burnt, and for they scarce knew what; but for Crimes against the Catholick Faith, and against the Blessed Virgin, and they were burnt. One of them, it was said, rejoic'd that he was to be burnt; and being ask'd, Why? Answer'd, That he had much rather die, than be carry'd back to the Prison of the Inquisition, where their Cruelties were worse than Death: Of those eight, as I was told, some were Jews, whose greatest Crime, as many there did not scruple to say, was, that they were very rich; and some Christians were in the Number at the same Time, whose greatest Misery was, that they were very poor.

It was a Sight that almost gave me a Shock in my Notion of Christianity itself, till I began to reflect, that it might be possible, that Inquisitors were scarce Christians, and that *I knew* many Catholic Countries do not suffer this abominable Judicature to be erected among them.

I have seen much, and read more, of the unhappy Conduct in Matters of Religion, among the other Nations of the World, professing the Christian

stian Religion; and upon my Word, I find some Practices infinitely scandalous, some which are the common receiv'd Customs of Christians, which would be the Abhorrence of Heathens; and it requires a strong Attachment to the Foundation, which is indeed the principal Part in Religion, to guard our Minds against being offended, even at the Christian Religion itself; but I got over that Part afterward.

Let it not offend the Ears of any true Lover of the Christian Religion, that I observe some of the Follies of the Professors of the Christian Religion, assuring you, 'tis far from being my Design to bring the least Scandal upon the Profession itself.

And here therefore let me give the Words of a judicious Person who travell'd from *Turkey* thro' *Italy*: His Words are these.

“ When I was in *Italy*, I rang'd over great Part
 “ of the Patrimony of *St. Peter*, where one would
 “ think indeed, the Face of Religion would be
 “ plainest to be seen, and without any Disguise;
 “ but in short I found there the Face of Reli-
 “ gion, and no more.

“ At *Rome* there was all the Pomp and Glory
 “ of religious Habits: The Pope and the Cardi-
 “ nals walk'd with a religious Gravity, but liv'd
 “ in a religious Luxury, kept up the Pomp of Re-
 “ ligious, and the Dignity of religious Titles:
 “ But like our Lord's Observation on the *Phari-
 “ sees*, I found within they were all ravening
 “ Wolves.

“ The religious Justice they do there, is par-
 “ ticularly remarkable, and very much recommends
 “ them. The Church protects Murthers and Af-
 “ fassins, and then delivers the Civil Magistrates
 “ over to Satan, for doing Justice. They inter-
 “ dict whole Kingdoms, and shut up the Churches

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“ for

“ for Want of paying a few Ecclesiastic Dues,
 “ and so put a Stop to Religion for Want of their
 “ Money. I found the *Courtezans* were the most
 “ constant Creatures at the Church, and the most
 “ certain Place for an Affignation with another
 “ Man’s Wife, was at Prayers.

“ The Court of Inquisition burnt two Men for
 “ speaking dishonourably of the Blessed Virgin,
 “ and the Missionaries in *China* tolerated the Wor-
 “ shipping the Devil by their new Convert. A
 “ Jew was likewise burnt for denying Christ, while
 “ the Jesuits join’d the Paganism of the Heathen
 “ with the High Mass, and sung Anthems to
 “ the immortal Idols of *Tonquin*.

“ When I saw this, I resolv’d to enquire no more
 “ after *Religion* in *Italy*, till by Accident meeting
 “ with a Quietist, he gave me to understand, that
 “ all Religion was internal, that the Duties of
 “ Christianity were summ’d up in Reflection
 “ and Ejaculation, He inveigh’d bitterly against
 “ the Game of Religion, which he said was
 “ playing over the whole World by the Clergy;
 “ and said, *Italy* was a Theatre, where Religion
 “ was the Grand *Opera*, and the Popish Clergy
 “ were the Stage Players. I lik’d him in many
 “ of his Notions about other Peoples Religion;
 “ but when I came to talk with him a little close-
 “ ly about *his own*, it was so wrapp’d up in his
 “ Internals, conceal’d in the Cavities and dark
 “ Parts of the Soul, *viz.* Meditation without
 “ Worship, Doctrine without Practice, Reflecti-
 “ on without Reformation, and Zeal with-
 “ out Knowledge; that I could come to no
 “ Certainty with him, but in this, that Religion
 “ in *Italy* was really *invisible*.

This was very agreeable to my Notions of *Ita-
 lian* Religion, and to what I had met with from
 other

other People that had travel'd the Country; But one Observation of Blindness and Superstition I must give within my own Knowledge, and nearer Home; when passing thro' *Flanders*, I found the People in a certain City there, in a very great Commotion: The Case was this; A certain *Sceberate*, so they call an abandon'd Wretch given up to all Wickedness, had broken into a Chapel in the City, and had stoln the Pix or Casket wherein the sacred Host was deposited; which Host, after rightly consecrated, they believe to be the real Body of our Blessed Saviour, being transubstantiated, as they call it, from the Substance of Bread.

The Fact being discover'd, the City, as I said above, was all up in a Tumult; the Gates were shut up, no Body suffer'd to go out; every House was searched, and the utmost Diligence used; and at length, as it was next to Impossibility he should escape, he was discover'd.

His Execution was not long deferr'd: But first he was examin'd, and I think by Torture, What he had done with the sacred thing which was in the Pix, which he had stoln? And at length he confess'd, That he had thrown it into a House of Office; and was carry'd with a Guard to shew them the Place.

As it was impossible to find a little Piece of a Wafer in such a Place, tho' no Pains was spar'd in a most filthy Manner to search for it; but, as I say, it could not be found, immediately the Place was judg'd consecrated *ipso facto*, turn'd into an Oratory, and the devout People flock'd to it, to expiate by their Prayers, the Dishonour done to the Lord God, by throwing h's precious Body into so vile a Place. It was determin'd by the Wiser part, that the Body would not fall down into the Place, but be snatch'd up by its inherent Power, or by the holy

Angels, and not be suffer'd to touch the Excrements in that Place. However, the People continu'd their Devotions for some Time, just in the Place where it was, and afterwards a large Chapel was built upon it, where the same Prayers are continued, as I suppose, to this Day.

I had a particular Occasion to come at a very accurate Account of *Poland*, by a *Rolish* Gentleman, in whose Company I travell'd, and from whom I learn'd all that was worth enquiring of, about religious Affairs in *Prussia* on one Side, and *Muscovy* on the other.

As for *Poland*, he told me they were all Confusion, both in Church and in State; that notwithstanding their Wars, they were Persecutors of the worst Kind; that they let the Jews live among 'em undisturb'd, to such a Degree, that in the Country about *Lemberg* and *Kiow*, there were reckon'd above 30000 Jews: That these had not Toleration only, but many Privileges granted them, tho' they deny'd Christ to be the Messiah, or that the Messiah was come in the Flesh; and blasphemed his Name upon frequent Occasions; and at the same Time they persecuted the Protestants, and destroy'd their Churches, where-ever they had Power to do it.

On the other Hand, when I came to enquire of those Protestants, and what Kind of People they were, who suffer'd so severely for their Religion, I found they were generally a Sort of Protestants, call'd *Socinians*, and that *Lelius Socinus* had spread his Errors so universally over this Country, that our Lord Jesus Christ was reduc'd here to little more than a good Man sent from Heaven to instruct the World, and far from capable of effecting by the Influence of his Spirit, and Grace, the glorious Work of redeeming the World; As for the

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Divinity of the Holy Ghost, they have no Trouble about it.

Having given this Account of Knowledge and Piety in the Countries inhabited by Christians of the *Roman Church*, it seems natural to say some thing of the *Greek Church*.

There are in the *Czar of Muscovy's Dominions* abundance of Wooden Churches; and had not the Country been as full of Wooden Priests, something might have been said for the Religion of the *Muscovites*; for the People are wonderfully devout there, which would have been very well, if it had not been attended with the profoundest Ignorance that was ever heard of in any Country, where the Name of Christian was so much as talk'd of.

But when I came to enquire about their Worship, I found our Lord Jesus Christ made so much a meaner Figure among them than *St. Nicholas*, that I concluded Religion was swallow'd up of Superstition; and so indeed I found it was upon all Occasions; as to the Conduct of the People in religious Matters, their Ignorance is so establish'd upon Obstinacy, *which is the Muscovite's national Sin*, that it would be really to no Purpose to look any longer for a Reformation among them.

In short, no Man will, I believe, say of me, that I do the *Muscovites* any Wrong, when I say they are the most ignorant, and most obstinate People in the Christian World, when I tell the following Story of them.

It was after the Battle at *Narva*, where the late King of *Sweden Charles XII.* defeated their great Army, and after the Victory, extended his Troops pretty far into their Country, and perhaps plunder'd them a little, as he advanc'd; when the *Muscovites*, we may be sure, being in the utmost
Distress

Distress and Confusion, fell to their Prayers: We read of nothing they had to say to God Almighty in that Case; but to their Patron Saint they address'd this extraordinary Prayer.

O Thou our perpetual Comforter in all our Adversities! Thou infinitely Powerful St. NICHOLAS, by what Sin, and how have we highly offended thee in our Sacrifices, Genuflexions, Reverences and Actions of Thanksgiving, that thou hast thus forsaken us? we had therefore sought to appease thee entirely, and we had implor'd thy Presence and thy Succour against the Terrible, Insolent, Dreadful, Enrag'd, and Undaunted Enemies and Destroyers; when like Lyons, Bears, and other Savage Beasts, that have lost their young ones, they attack'd us after an insolent and terrible Manner; and terrify'd and wounded, took and killed us by thousands, us who are thy People: Now as it is impossible that this should happen without Witchcraft, and Enchantment, seeing the great Care that we had taken to fortify our selves after an impregnable Manner, for the Defence and Security of thy Name. We beseech thee, O St. Nicholas, to be our Champion, and the Bearer of our Standard, to be with us, both in Peace and in War, and in our Necessities, and at the Time of our Death to protect us against this horrible and Tyrannical Crew of Sorcerers, and to drive them far enough off from our Frontiers, with the Recompence which they deserve.

It may be hoped I may give a better Account of Religion among Protestants than I have among the Roman and Grecian Churches; and I will, if in Justice it is possible.

The next to the Nations I have been mentioning, I mean, in Geographical Order, are those reform'd Christians, call'd Lutherans; to say

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no worse of them, the Face of Religion indeed is alter'd much between these and the latter: But I scarce know what Name to give it, at least as far as I have enquir'd into it, or what it is like.

It was *Popery* and *no Popery*; there was the *Consub.* but not the *Transub.* The Service differ'd indeed from *the Mass*, but the Deficiency seem'd to be made up very much with the Trumpets, Kettle-Drums, Fiddles, Hautboys, &c. and all the merry Part of the Popish Devotion; upon which it occur'd to me presently, that if there was no Danger of *Popery* among the *Lutherans*, there was Danger of *Superstition*; and as for the pious Part, I saw very little of it in either of them.

By *Religion* therefore, the Reader is desired to understand here, not the Principles upon which the several Nations denominate themselves so much, as the Manner in which they discover themselves to be sincere in the Profession which they make. I had no Inclination here to enter into the Enquiry after the Creeds, which every Nation profess'd to believe; but the Manner in which they practis'd that Religion which they really profess'd; for, What is Religion to me without Practice? And altho' it may be true, that there can be no true Religion, where it is not profess'd upon right Principles; yet that which I observe here, and which to me is the greatest Grievance among Christians, is the Want of a religious Practice, even where there are right Principles at Bottom, and where there is a Profession of the Orthodox Faith.

In Brief, I am not hunting after the Profession of Religion, but the Practice: The first I find almost in every Nation, *Nulla gens tam barbara* — But the last I am like to travel thro' the Histories of all Christendom with *[my Search]*, and perhaps

haps may hardly be able, when I have done, to tell you where it is.

All the Satyr of this Enquiry will look this Way; for where God has not given a People the Blessing of a true Knowledge of himself, it would call for our Pity, not Reproach. It would be a very dull Satyr indeed, that a Man should be witty upon the Negroes in *Africa* for not knowing Christ, and not understanding the Doctrine of a Saviour: But if turning to our modern Christians of *Barbadoes* and *Jamaica* for not teaching them, not instructing them, and for refusing to baptize them; there the Satyr would be pointed and seasonable, as we shall hear farther by and by.

But to return to the *Lutherans*, for there I am supposed to be at this Time, I mean, among the Courts and Cities of *Brandenburgh*, *Saxony*, &c. I had Opportunity here to view a Court; affecting Gallantry, Magnificence, and gay things, to such a Height, and with such a Passion, to exceed the whole World in that empty Part of human Felicity, call'd *Show*, that I thought it was impossible to pursue it with such an impetuous Torrent of the Affections, without sacrificing all things to it, which wise Men esteem more valuable.

Nor was my Notion wrong; for the first thing I found sacrific'd, as I say, to this voluptuous Humour, was the Liberties of the People, who being by Constitution or Custom, rather under absolute Government, and at the arbitrary Will of the Prince, are sure to pay, not all they can spare, but even all they have, to gratify the unbounded Appetite of a Court given up to Pleasure and Exorbitance.

By

By all I have read of the Manner of Living there, both Court and People; the latter are entirely given up to the former; not by Necessity only, but by the Consent of Custom, and the general Way of Management thro' the whole Country; nay, this is carry'd to such a Height, that as I have been told, the King's Coffers are the general Cess-Pool of the Nations, whither all the Money of the Kingdoms flow, and only disperses again, as that gives it out; whether by running over or running out at its proper Vent, I do not enquire; so that as all the Blood in the human Body circulates in 24 Houres thro' the Ventricles of the Heart, so all the Money in the Kingdom is said to pass once a Year thro' the King's Treasury.

How far Poverty and Misery may prompt Piety and Devotion among the poor Inhabitants, I cannot say: But if Luxury and Gallantry, together with Tyranny and Oppression to support it, can subsist with true Religion in the great Men, than for ought I know, the Courts of *Prussia* and *Dresden* may be the best qualify'd in the World to produce this Thing call'd Religion, which I have hitherto seen, is hard to be found.

It is true, that the Magnificence of the wisest King in the World in *Jerusalem*, was esteemed the Felicity of his People: But it seems to be express'd very elegantly, not as a Testimony of his Glory only, but of the flourishing Condition of his People at the same Time, under the prosperous Circumstances which his Reign brought them to, *viz.* That he made Gold to be for Plenty like the Stones in the Streets, amply expressing the flourishing Condition of his People under him.

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I have likewise read indeed, and heard much of the same Kind of the King of *Prussia*, and that even from his own Subjects, who were always full of the generous and truly royal Qualities of that Prince: He was the first King of the Country, which before was a Dukedom or Electorate only: The Summ of their Discourse is, That his Majesty was so true a Father of his Country and of his People, that his whole care was the Flourishing of their Trade, establishing their Manufactures, encreasing their Numbers, planting Foreigners, *French, Swiss*, and other Nations, among them, to instruct and encourage them; and being noway accessory to any of their Oppressions, but relieving and redressing all their Grievances, as often and as soon as they came to his Knowledge: And indeed, I could not but entertain a great Regard to the Character of so just and good a Prince. But all I could infer from that was, That a Government may be tyrannical, and yet the King not be a Tyrant; but the Grievances to the People are oftentimes much the same: And every Administration, where the Constitution is thus stated, as it seems to be in most, if not all of the Northern Courts, Protestant as well as others, seems inconsistent with the true Ends of Government; the thing we call Government was certainly established for the Prosperity of the People; Whereas, on the contrary, in all those *German* Courts, where I have made my Observations, the Magnificence of the Court, and the Prosperity of the People, stand like the two Poles; what Excess of Light you see at one, is exactly balanced by so much Darkness at t'other.

And where, pray, is the Religion of all this? That a whole Nation of People should appear miserable, that their Governours may appear gay,
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the People starve, that the Prince may be fed; or rather, the People be lean, that their Sovereign may be fat; the Subjects sigh, that he may laugh; be empty, that he may be full; and all this for meer Luxury, not for the needful Defence of the Government; resisting Enemies, preserving the public Peace, and the like; but for meer Extravagance, Luxury, and Magnificence, as in *Prussia*; or for Ambition, and pushing at Crowns, and the Lust of Domination, as in *Saxony*.

But to come back to the religious Transactions of these Countries; How are the Ecclesiastics jealous of their Hierarchy, afraid to reform farther, least, as they gave a mortal Stabb to the Perquisites and Vails of God Almighty's Service in the *Roman Church*, modern Reformation might give the like to them? For this Reason they set a Pale about their Church, and there; as well as in other Places, they cry to their Neighbours, *Stand off, I am holier than thou*; and with what Persecution and Invasion, persecuting for Religion, and invading the Principles of one another. If there was any Peace among them, it was that only which *passes all Understanding*. It presently occur'd to me, what Charity can here be, where there is no Peace? And what Religion, where is no Charity? And I began to fear I should find little of what I look'd for in those odd Climates.

I had travell'd personally thro' the Heart of *France*. I had Occasion to look round me often in my Rout from the Foot of the *Pyrenean Mountains* to *Thoulouse*, from thence to *Paris* and *Cadats*. Here I found the People so merry, and yet so miserable, that I knew not where to make any Judgment. The Poverty of the Poor was so great, that it seem'd to leave them no
room

room to sigh for any thing, but their Burthens, or to pray for any thing, but Bread: But the Temper of the People was so volatile, that I thought, they went always dancing to Church, and came finging out of it.

I found a World of Teachers here, but no body taught: The Streets were every where full of Priests, and the Churches full of Women, But as for Religion, I found most of the Clergy were so far from having much of it, that few of them knew what it was. Never sure was a Nation so full of truly *blind Guides*; for nothing can be more grossly ignorant of Religion, than many of their Clergy are; nothing more void of Morals, than many of those to whom other People go to confess their Sins.

I made some Enquiry about Religion; and among the rest, I happen'd to fall in Company with a good honest Hugonot *incognito*; and he told me very honestly, that the State of Religion in *France* stood thus: First, That for some Years ago it was put to the Test by the King, and that was, when the Edicts came out to banish and ruin the Hugonots; at which Time, *said he*, we thought there had been a great deal of Religion in it: But really when it came to the Push, *said he*, it was hard to tell where we should find it. The Persecution, as it was thought at first, would be ingrateful to the more religious Roman-Catholicks, and that some would be found too good to do the Drudgery of the Devil: But we were mistaken, the best fell in with Persecution, when it was done by other Hands, and not their own; and those that would not do it, acknowledg'd they rejoic'd that it was done; which shew'd, *said he*, that the Catholicks
either

either had no Principle, or acted against Principle, which is much at one. And as for us Hugonots; *says he*, we have shewn that we have no Religion lost among us: For first, some run away for their Religion, and yet left it behind them, and we that stay'd behind did it at the Price of our Principles: For now, *says he*, we are meer Hypocrites, neither Papists nor Hugonots, for we go to Mass with Protestant Hearts; and while we call our selves Protestants, we bow in the House of *Rimmon*, Where then, *said I*, is the Religion, once boasted of here, to be found? Indeed, *said he*, it is hard to tell you, and except a little that is in the Gallies, I can give you no good Account of it. This indeed was confining the Remains of a flourishing Church to about 350 Confessors, who really suffer'd Martyrdom for it, for it was no less; so I minuted down *French Religion*, tugging at the Oar, and would have come away.

But it came into my Thought to ask him, What he meant by telling me, that those who run away for their Religion out of *France*, left most of it behind them? He answer'd; I should judge of it better, if I observ'd them when I came into my own Country; where, if I found they liv'd better than other People, or shew'd any thing of Religion suitable to a People that suffer'd Persecution for their Profession, I should send Word of it; for he had heard quite otherwise of them, which was the Reason why he and Thousands of others did not follow them.

It happen'd, while I was warm in my Enquiries thus after Religion, a Proclamation came out in *London*, for appointing a General Thanksgiving, for a great Victory obtain'd by the *English* Forces and their Confederates, over the *French* at — I care not to put Names to the particular Times of things. M I started

I started at the Noise, when they cry'd it in the Streets: Hah, *said I*, then I have found it at last; and I rejoyc'd in particular, that having look'd so much abroad for Religion, I should find it out at home: Then I began to call myself a thousand Fools, that I had not sav'd myself all this Labour, and look'd at home first; tho' by the By, I had done no more in this than other Travellers often, or indeed generally do, *viz.* go abroad to see the World, and search into the Curiosities of foreign Countries, and know nothing of their own.

But to return to my Observations: I was resolv'd to see the Ceremonies of this pious Piece of Work; and as the Preparations for it were prodigious great, I enquir'd how it would be; but nobody could remember that the like had ever been in their Time before: Every one said, it would be very fine, that the Queen would be there herself, and all the Nobility; and that the like had never been seen since Queen *Elizabeth's* Time.

This pleased me exceedingly; and I began to form Ideas in my Mind, of whar had been in former Times among religious Nations; I could find nothing of what I was made to expect, unless it was *Solomon's* Dedication of the Temple, or *Josiah's* Great Feast of the Reformation; and I expected God would have a most royal Tribute of Praise.

But it shock'd me a little, that the People said there had never been such a Thanksgiving since Queen *Elizabeth's* Time. What thought I can be the Reason of that? and musing a little, O! says I to myself, now I have found it: I suppose, nobody gives God Thanks in our Country, but Queens: But this look'd a little harsh; and I rumag'd our Histories a little for my farther Satisfaction, but could make nothing of it: At last, talking of it
to

to a good old Cavalier, that had been a Soldier for King *Charles*, O, *says he*, I can tell you the Reason of it: They have never given Thanks, *says he*, because they have had nothing to give Thanks for. Pray, *says he*, When have they had any Victories in *England* since Queen *Elizabeth's* Time; except two or three in *Ireland* in King *William's* Time; and then they were so busy, had so many other Losses with them abroad, that they were asham'd to give Thanks for them.

This I found had too much Truth in it, however bitter the Jest of it: But still heighten'd my Expectation, and made me look for some strange Seriousness, and religious Thankfulness in the Appearance that was to be on the Occasion in Hand; and accordingly I secur'd myself a Place, both without and within the Church, where I might be a Witness to every Part of the Devotion and Joy People.

But my Expectations were wound up to a yet greater Pitch, when I saw the infinite Crowds of People throng with so much Zeal, *as I, like a charitable Coxcomb, thought it to be*, to the Place of the Worship of God; and when I considered, that it was to give God Thanks for a great Victory, I could think of nothing else than the Joy of the *Israelites*, when they landed on the Banks of the Sea, and saw *Pharaoh's* Army, Horses, and Chariots, swallow'd up behind them; and I doubted not I should hear something like the Song of *Moses* and the Children of *Israel*, on the Occasion, and should hear it sung with the same Elevation of Soul.

But when I came to the Point, the first thing I observ'd was, That nine Parts of ten of all the Company, came there only to see the Queen, and the Show, and the other tenth Part, I think, might be said to make the Show.

M 2

When

When the Queen came to the Rails, and descended from her Coach, the People, instead of crying out *Hosannah*, blessed be the Queen that cometh in the Name of the Lord; I say, the People cry'd Murder, and Help, for God's sake; treading upon one another, and stifling one another, at such a rate, that in the Rear of the two Lines or Crowds of People, thro' which the Queen Pass'd, it look'd something like a Battle, where the wounded were retir'd to die, and to get Surgeons to come to them, for there lay Heaps of Women and Children dragg'd from among the Feet of the Crowd, and gasping for Breath. I went among some of them, and ask'd them, What made them go into such a Crowd? And their Answer was all the same, O Sir, I had a Mind to see the Queen, as the rest did.

Well, I had my Answer here indeed; for in short, the whole Business of the Thanksgiving without Doors, was to see the Queen, that was plain; so I went away to my Stand, which, for no less than three Guineas, I had secur'd in the Church.

When I came there, it was my Fate to be plac'd between the Seats, where the Men of God perform'd the Service of his Praise, and sung out the Anthems and the *Te Deum*, which celebrated the religious Triumph of the Day.

As to the Men themselves, I lik'd their Office, their Vestments, and their Appearance; all look'd awful and grave enough, suitable in some Respects to the Solemnity of a religious Triumph; and I expected they would be as solemn in their Performances, as the *Levites* that blow'd the Trumpets at *Solomon's Feast*, when all the People shouted and praised God.

But

But I observed these grave People, in the Intervals of their worshipping God, when it was not their Turn to sing, or read, or pray, bestow'd some of the rest of their Time in taking Snuff, adjusting their Perukes, looking about at the fair Ladies, whispering, and that not very softly neither to one another, about this fine Lady, that pretty Woman, this fine Dutchess, and that great Fortune, and not without some Indecencies, as well of Words, as of Gestures. Well, *says I*, you are none of the People I look for, where are they that give God Thanks?

Immediately the Organ struck up for the *Te Deum*; up starts all my Gentlemen, as if inspir'd from above, and from their talking together, not over modestly, fall to praising God with the utmost Precipitation, singing the heavenly Anthems, with all the Grace and Music imaginable.

In the Middle of all this Musick and these exalted things, when I thought my Soul elevated with divine Melody, and began to be reconcil'd to all the rest, I saw a little rustling Motion among the People, as if they had been disturb'd or frighted: Some said it thunder'd, some said the Church shook. The true Business was, the *Te Deum* within was answer'd without by the Thunder of 100 Pieces of Cannon, and the Noise of Drums, with the Huzza's and Shouts of great Crowds of People in the Streets. This I did not understand, so it did neither disturb or concern me; I found indeed no great Harmony in it; it bore no Consort in the Music, at least, as I understood it; but it was over pretty soon, and so we went on.

When the Anthem was sung, and the other Services succeeded them, I that had been a little disturb'd with the lucid Intervals of the Choristers, and the Gentlemen that sat crowded in with

M 3

them,

them, turn'd my Eyes to other Places, in Hopes I should find some Saints among the Crowd, whose Souls were taken up with the exalted Raptures of the Day.

But alas, it was all one, the Ladies were busy singling out the Men, and the Men the Ladies. The Star and Garter of a fine young Nobleman, beautiful in Person, rich in Habit, and sparkling in Jewels, his blew Ribbond intimating his Character, drew the Eyes of so many Women off of their Prayer Books, that I think his Grace ought to have been spoken to by the Vergers, to have withdrawn out of the Church, that he might not injure the Service, and rob God Almighty of the Homage of the Day.

As for the Queen, her Majesty was the Star of the Day, and infinitely more Eyes were directed to her than were lifted up to Heaven, tho' the last was the Business of the whole Procession.

Well, *said I*, this is mighty fine, that's true; But where's the Religion of all this? Heavens bless me, *said I*, out of this Crowd, and I'll never mock God any more here, when the Queen comes again. Cannot these People go and see the Queen, where the Queen is to be seen, but must they come hither to prophane the Church with her, and make the Queen an Idol? And in a great Passion I was both at the People and at the Manner of the Day, as you may easily see by what follows.

N. B. I had made some other satyrical Reflections upon the Conduct of the Day; but as it looks too near home, I am not willing, that poor *Robinson Crusoe* should disoblige any body.

I confess, the Close of the Day was still more extravagant; for there the Thanksgiving was adjourned from the Church to the Tavern, and to the

the Street; and instead of the Decency of a religious Triumph, there was indeed a Triumph of religious indecency, and the Anthems *Te Deum* and Thanksgiving of the Day ended in the Drunkenness, the Bonfires, and the Squibs and Crackers of the Street.

How far Religion is concern'd in all this, or whether God Almighty will accept of this noisy Doings for Thanksgivings, that I have nothing to do with; let those People consider of it, that are concern'd in it.



Of Differences in Religion.

IS known alone to the Divine Wisdom, why he has been pleased to suffer any Part of Religion, and the Adoration paid to his Majesty, the Supplications made to him, and the Homage which his Creatures owe to his glorious Being, to be so doubtfully directed, or so differently understood by his Creatures, as that there should be any Mistakes or Disagreements about them.

How comes it to pass, that the paying a Reverence to the Name and Being of God, should not be as incapable of being disputed in the Manner of it, as in the thing itself? That all the Rules of Worshipping, Believing in, and Serving the Great God of Heaven and Earth, should be capable of being understood any more than one Way? And that the Infallible Spirit of God, who is our Guide

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to

to Heaven, should leave any one of its Dictates in a State of being misunderstood?

Why have not the Rules of Religion, as well those of Doctrine as of Life, been laid down in Terms so plain, and so impossible to be mistaken, that all Men in the World in every Age, should have the same Notions of them, and understand them in every Title of them exactly alike? Then as Heaven is but one blessed great Port, at which all Hope to arrive, there would have been but one Road to travel the Journey in; all Men would have gone the same Way, steer'd the same Course; and Brethren would no more have fallen out by the Way.

God alone, who for wise and righteous Reasons, because he can do nothing but what is wise and righteous, has otherwise order'd it, and that is all we can say of it: As to the Reason and Justice of it, that is a thing, of which, like as of the Times and of the Seasons, we may say, *Knoweth no Man.*

In the State of Uncertainty we are now in, so it is; two Men believing in the same God, holding the same Faith, the same Saviour, the same Doctrine, and aiming at the same Heaven; yet cannot agree to go to that Heaven, or worship that God, or believe in that Saviour the same Way, or after the same Manner: Nay, they cannot know, or conceive of God, or of Heaven, or of the Redeemer, or indeed of any one Principle of the Christian Religion, in the same Manner, or form the same Ideas of those things in their Minds.

It is true, the different Capacities and Faculties of Men, are in Part a Reason for this; by which it is occasioned, that scarce two Men together have the same Notions and Apprehensions even of one and the same thing, because their Understandings

dings are led by different Guides, and they see by different Lights.

But this is not all; they are not alike honest to the Light they have: Three Men read the same doctrinal Article, say it be of the Trinity, or of any other, and they all examine the Foundation of it in the Scripture. One thinks verily he has found out the Mystery effectually, goes on with his Enquiries, and brings every Scripture and every Passage to correspond exactly with his first Notion; and thus he confirms himself immoveably in his Opinion; and it is so clear to him, that he can not only never be argued out of it, but can entertain no good Opinion of any Man, that conceives of it in any other Way, but takes him for an Enemy to the Orthodox Doctrine, and that he merits to be expell'd out of Christ's Church, deny'd the Christian Communion; and in short, treats him with no Respect, no nor thinks of him with Charity.

Another comes to the same Scripture, and in quest of the same Doctrine, and he reads over the same Texts, and receives Notions from them directly opposite to the other, or at least, very remote from them: He follows in his Search thro' all the corroborating Texts, and is confirm'd in his first Opinion from them all: He grows as immoveable in his receiv'd Construction of the Scripture, as the other; and all is so clear to him, that he not only can never be argued out of his Opinion, but can entertain no good Opinion of any Man that conceives of it any other Way, but takes him for an Enemy to the Orthodox Doctrine.

The third Man, he reads over all the same Texts of Scripture, but doing it with an Indifference as to the Substance, and whether he receives right information or no, truly he comes
away

way with a Calmness of Mind as to the Substance ; and as he went with no great Concern about being certain, so he comes back as uncertain as he went.

These three Men are enough to fill the whole World full of Disputes about Religion. The first two meet, and being equally positive of their being infallibly guided, equally warm in defending their Opinions, and equally tenacious of them, and above all equally void of Charity to the other ; truly they fall out, Part, condemn, censure, revile, and as Opportunity and Power offers, at last, persecute one another, and all one anothers Adherents.

The third, half inform'd indifferent Man, he comes in between these two, laughs at them both, says they are a Parcel of furious Christians, that the thing is not absolutely necessary to be known, that it is no Article of Faith, so as that without deciding it, a Man cannot be sav'd ; says, they are a Parcel of Fools to fall out thus about what they cannot be certain of, and which they may go to Heaven tho' they should not understand it till they come there : And thus the World comes to be divided.

Could they differ with Humility, they would differ with Charity ; but it is not to be, in Religion, whatever it may be in civil or politick Affairs ; for there is a thing call'd *Zeal*, which Men call a *Grace* in Religion, and esteem a *Duty* ; and this makes Men fall out in religious Matters, with a more fatal Warmth, and more Animosity, than in other Cases, according to *Hudibras*.

“ Zeal makes men fight like mad or drunk,
“ For Dame Religion as for Punk.

Nor is this the Fate only of the Christian Religion, tho' 'tis more so there than in any other ; but 'tis the
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the same in other Cases, as between the *Perfians* and the *Turks*, about the Successors of their Prophet *Mahomet*. It was so of Old between the *Heathen* and the *Jews*: And the *Assyrian* Monarch prepar'd a fiery Furnace for those that would not fall down and worship the great Image that he had set up.

In the Primitive Times of God's Church, the Heathen did the like by the Christians, and *Christianos ad Leones* was the common Cry: But when the Church came to its Halcyon-Days, *Constantine the Great* gave Peace to the Christians, and it was but a little While that they enjoy'd that Peace, before they fell out by the Way, the Arian Heresies rose up, and differing Opinions rent the State into Factions, the Church into Schisms, and in the Space of two Reigns, the Arians persecuted the Orthodox, and the Orthodox the Arians, almost with the same Fury as the Heathen had persecuted them both with before.

From thence to our Time, Persecution has been the Practice even of all Parties, as they have been clothed with Power, and as their Differences have mov'd them: For Example, in all the Christian Countries, there is a mortal Feud between Popish and Protestant; and tho' indeed the former have carry'd their Zeal farthest, yet the latter have not been able to say they have not persecuted in their Turn, tho' not with Fire and Faggot.

What Wars and Bloodshed molested *Europe* on the Account of Religion in *Germany*? especially till the general Pacification of those Troubles at the Treaty of *Westphalia*? when the Protestants having had the apparent Advantage of the War, obtain'd the everlasting Settlement of their Religion, as well as Liberties thro' the whole Empire.

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Since those times, what Persecution in the same Country, between the Lutheran and Calvinist Churches? And how little Charity is among them? insomuch, that the Lutherans to this Day will not allow the reformed Evangelick Churches, so the Calvinists are call'd, Liberty to assemble for Worship within the Gates of their Cities, or give them Christian Burial.

I avoid looking too near Home, or searching in *Scotland* and *England* among the unhappy Divisions of Episcopal and Presbyterian, Church of *England* and Dissenter; and this I do, because it is at Home: But it is too evident, that all these come either from Mens being negligent of right Informations, or too tenacious when they have it; for 'tis evident, if all Men would be honest to the Light they have, and favourable to their Neighbours, we might hope, that how many several Ways soever, we chose to walk towards Heaven, we should all meet there at last.

I look upon all the Seeds of religious Dissention, as Tares sow'd by the Devil among the Wheat: And it may be observed, that tho', as I have already said, the *Assyrians* persecuted the Jews, and the *Romans* the Christians; yet where the Devil is immediately and personally worshipp'd, there we meet with little or no Persecution; for Satan having a kind of peaceable Dominion there, offers them no Disturbance: He desires no Innovation for ever; he finds the Sweetness of it, and lets it all alone.

But if once they talk of *other Gods before him*, he is far less easy; there he is continually sowing Strife, and hatching Divisions among them; for like all other *Monarchs*, the Devil loves to reign alone.

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It would be too long a Task here, to reckon up the several Sorts of Differences in Religion, even among us in *England*; where, if two happen to differ, presently like *St. Paul* to *St. Peter*, they *withstand one another to the Face*; that is to say, carry on the Dispute to the utmost Extremity.

But there is another Question before me, and that is not only, Why there are such Differences in the Points of Religion? And, why are religious Differences hotter and more irreconcilable than other Breaches? But, why are there more Differences of this Kind among us, than among any other Nation in the World?

Certainly this pushing on our religious Broils to the Extremity, is the Peculiar of this Country of *England*, and is not the same thing in other Places; and the Variety is such here, that 'tis said, there are more several Communions or Communities of religious Kinds in *England*, than in all the other Protestant Countries in the World.

The best and most charitable Answer that I can think of to give for this, is to compliment our selves, and say, 'tis because we are the most religious Nation in the World; that is to say, that we in general set more seriously to work, to enquire into the Substance and Nature of Religion; to examine Principles, and weigh the Reasons of things, than other People; being more concern'd for, and anxious about, the Affairs of God, of Heaven, and our Souls; that thinking, as we ought to do, that Religion is of the utmost Concern to us, and that it is of the last Moment to us to be certain about it, and well grounded in the Points before us, particularly whether we are rightly inform'd or not; this anxious Concern makes us jealous of every Opinion and Tenacious of our own, breaks much in upon the Custom of submitting
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our Judgments to the Clergy, as is the Case in Countries, where People are more indifferent in their Search after these things, and more unconcern'd in the Certainty or Uncertainty of them.

I must acknowledge, that I think the true and the only just Reason that can be given for this Matter, is not, that we are more furious than other People, more censorious and rash in our Judgment, that we have less Charity, or less Patience, in debating religious Points, than other People: But the Truth is, that we have less Indifference about them; and we cannot sit down contented with a Slight and overly Enquiry, or a Cursory or School Answer to the Doubts in Question: But we make it a Thing of absolute necessity, to be fully inform'd of, and therefore are earnest in the Enquiry, and knowing the Scripture to be the great Rule of Faith, the Standard for Life and Doctrine, we flie thither and search for our selves, not having Popery enough to expect an infallible Judge, not Indifference enough to acquiesce in the Judgment of the Clergy; and perhaps a little too tenacious of our own Interpretation, even in things we are uninstructed about.

This indeed I take to be the true Reason why religious Disputes encrease so much here, and why there are such Separations and Schisms among us, more than they are in any other Nation in the World.

I know much of it is laid to the Door of the Confusions they were all in here, during the bloody intestine Wars in the Years 1640 to 1656, and the Liberty given to all Opinions to set up themselves at that Time: But I wave that as a Question that tends to more Division. I believe, the Reason I have given for it, stands as well grounded, and as likely

likely to be approved as any I can give, or as any that has been given in this Case.

There is another difficult Question, which still remains before us; and that is, What Remedy can we apply to this Malady? And first, I must answer negatively; not to have us be less religious, that we might differ less about it: But to have us exercise more Charity in our Disputes, that we might differ more like Men of Temper, and more like Christians, than we do: This is striking at the Root of religious Differences; for if they were carry'd on mildly with a peaceable Spirit, willing to be inform'd, a Disposition to Love as Brethren, tho' in every thing not like minded: Our Variety of Opinions would not then have the Name of Differences, we should not separate in Communion and in Charity, tho' we did not agree in every thing we were to believe or not believe, about Religion.

It is hard that we should say these Differences are the Consequences of a Nation, having more Religion than their Neighbours, since we have still this one Part too little; and as I suppose us to have more Religion, I must be oblig'd to grant we have not *enough more*; for if, as we have just so much more Religion, as is sufficient to make us quarrelsome in religious Disputes; we had yet as much more, as were sufficient to make us peaceable again after it, then we should be religious to Purpose.

So that, in a Word, our being so religious, as above, is only an unhappy middle Composition between the enquiring and fully inform'd Christian on one Hand, and the careless, indifferent, unconcern'd Temper, that takes up with any thing, on the other Hand: And this I take to be a just tho' short

short Account of our *Differences in England about Religion.*

It might be a very useful Question to start here, namely where all our unhappy religious Differences will end. I that am not willing to give the worst natur'd Answer, where the best and kindest will hold Water, am for the present dispos'd to answer in general, rather than descend to Particulars, *viz.* in *Heaven*: There all our unkind, unchristian, unneighbourly, unbrotherly Differences will end: We shall freely shake Hands there with many a pardon'd Sinner, that here *we bid stand off*; embrace many a Publican, that here we think it a Dishonour to converse with; see many a Heart that we have broken here with Censures, Reproachings, and Revilings, made whole again by the Balm of the same Redeemer's Blood:

There we shall see, that there have been other Flocks than those of our Fold, other Paths to Heaven than those we shut Men out from; that those we have excommunicated have been taken into that superiour Communion; and those we have plac'd at our Left-hands, have been there summon'd to the Right-hand; all Separations will be there taken away, and the Mind of every Christian be entirely reconcild to one another; no Divisions, no Differences, no charging sincere Minds with Hypocrisy, or embracing painted Hypocrites for Saints; every thing to be seen, and to be known, as it really is, and by a clear Light; none will desire to deceive, none be subject to be deceived.

There we shall look upon all we have done and said in Prejudice of the Character of our Brethren with a just Change, and sufficiently repair to one another all the injurious things we have said, or indeed but thought of one another, by rejoicing
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in the common Felicity, and praising the sovereign Glory, that had receiv'd those we had foolishly rejected, and let those into the same Heaven, whom we had in the Abundance of our Pride, and the Pentury of our Charity, shut out.

How many Actions of Men, which we, seeing only their Out-side, have now censur'd, shall we find there, by that Penetration that cannot err, be accepted for their in-side Sincerity? How many an Opinion, that we condemn here, shall we see then to be Orthodox? In a Word, How many contradicting Notions and Principles, which we thought inconsistent with true Religion, shall we find then to be reconcilable to themselves, to one another, and to the Fountain of Truth?

All the Difficulties in our Conceptions of things invisible, will then be explain'd; all the Doctrines of the Immutability of the divine Councils will then be reconcilable to the changeable Events of things, and to the Varieties often happening in the World: The Unchangeableness of the eternal Decrees will then appear; and yet the Efficacy of praying to God to do this, or not do that, to pardon, forgive, spare, and forbear, which we now say is inconsistent with those unchangeable Decrees, shall be reconcilable to that Unchangeableness, in a Manner to us now inconceivable.

And this is the Foundation of what I now advance, *viz.* That in Heaven all our Differences in Religion will be reconcil'd, and will be at an End. If any Man ask me, whether they cannot be ended before? I answer, If we were all thoroughly convinc'd, that they would be reconcil'd then, we should certainly put an End to them before; but 'tis impossible to be done. Mens Convictions of the greatest and most certain Truths, are not equal to one another, or equal to the

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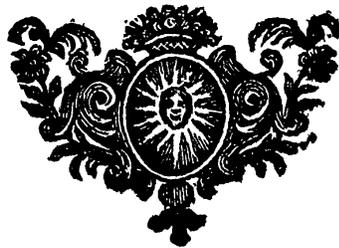
Weight and Significancy of those Truths; and therefore, such a general Effect of this Affair cannot be expected on this Side of Time.

There is one very great Reconciler of religious Differences in this World, which has sometimes been made use of by Providence to heal the Breaches in Christian Charity among religious People; and it is, generally speaking, very effectual: But it is a bitter Draught, a Potiõn that goes down with great Reluctance, and that is PERSECUTION. This generally reconciles the Differences of Christians, about the lesser Matters in Religion: The Primitive Churches, while under the *Roman* Persecutions, had a much greater Harmony among themselves, and very few Schisms and Divisions broke out among them. When they did differ in any Particular Points, they wrote healing Epistles to one another, contended with Modesty and with Charity, and referr'd willingly their Notions to be decided by one another. They did not separate Communion, and excommunicate whole Churches and Nations, for a Dispute about the Celebration of *Easter*, or unchurch one another for the Question of receiving and re-baptizing of Penitents, as was afterwards the Case. The Furnace of Affliction burnt up all that Dross, the Fury of their Persecutors kept their Minds humble, their Zeal for Religion hot, and their Affection for, and Charity to one another increased as their Liberty, and their Number was lessened.

Thus Bishop *Ridley*, and Bishop *Hooper*; the first, a rigid Church of *England* Bishop, the other, almost a Presbyterian, or at least a Calvinist, like *Peter* and *Paul*, differ'd hotly, and withstood one another to the Face, in the very Beginning of the Reformation: But when they came to burn for their Religion, Fire and Faggot shew'd them the Reconcilableness

concileableness of all their Disputes; convinc'd them, that it was possible for both to hold fast the Truth in Sincerity, and yet entertain differing Notions of the Rites and Outsides of the divine OEconomy, and at the Stake they ended all their Disputes, wrote healing Letters to one another, and became Fellow-Martyrs and Confessors for that very Profession which was so intermix'd with Censure and Dislike before.

And let all that think of this Remedy remember, that whenever these quarrellsome Christians come, by Persecution, or any other Incident, to be thus reconcil'd in their Charity, they find always a great deal to ask Pardon of one another for, with respect to what is past; all their Violence, Heat of Zeal, and much more Heat of Passion, all their Breach of Charity, their Reproaches and Censures, and hard Words, which have pass'd between them, will only then serve to bring them together with more Affection, and to Embrace more warmly; for, depend upon it, all the Differences in Religion among good Men, (*for I do not mean Essential, Doctrinal, and Fundamental Differences*) serve only to make them all asham'd of themselves at last.



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Of



*Of the wonderful Excellency of
Negative Religion, and Negative
Virtue.*

Negative Virtue sets out like the Phari-
see, with *God I thank thee* ; 'tis a Piece
of religious Pageantry ; a jointed Baby
drefs'd up gay, but stript of its Gew-
gaws, it appears a naked Lump, fit only to please
Children and deceive Fools. 'Tis *the Hope of the
Hypocrite*, 'tis a Cheat upon the Neighbourhood,
a Drefs for without Doors, for 'tis of no Use
within ; 'tis a Mask put on for a Character, and
as generally 'tis used to cheat others, 'tis so igno-
rantly embrac'd, that we cheat even ourselves
with it.

In a Word, *Negative Virtue* is *Positive Vice*, at
least when it is made use of in any of the two last
Cases ; namely, Either as a *Mask* to deceive others,
or as a *Mist* to deceive ourselves. If a Man were
to look back upon it, to see in what Part he
could take up his Nest, or lay a Foundation of
Hope for the Satisfaction of his Mind, as to fu-
ture things, he would find it the most uncom-
fortable Condition, to go out of the World with,
that any Man in the World can think.

The Reason is plain, compare it with the Pub-
lican, whom such a Man despises : Here is my
Landlord is a Drunkard, one of my Tenants is a
Thief, such a poor Man is a Swearer, such a rich
Man

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Man a Blasphemer, such a Tradesman is a Cheat, such a Justice of the Peace is an Atheist, such a rakish Fellow is turn'd Highwayman, such a Beau is debauch'd ; But I! I that am cloath'd in Negatives, and walk in the Light of my own Vanity, I live a sober, regular, retir'd Life, I am an honest Man : *Vide Page* . I defraud no body, no Man ever heard me swear, or an ill Word come out of my Mouth ; I never talk irreligiously or prophanely, and I am never miss'd out of my Seat at Church. God I thank thee ! I am not debauch'd, I am no Highwayman, no Murderer, &c. Now, what's the Difference of all these ? I must confess, speaking of all these together, and of what is usually the End of them, I think a Man had better be any of them, nay, almost all of them together, *than the Man himself* ; and my Reason is, in a few Words as follows :

All these know themselves to be wicked Persons ; Conscience, tho' for a Time oppress'd and kept under, yet upon all Occasions tells them plainly what their Condition is, and oftentimes they repent. 'Tis true, sometimes they do not, God is pleas'd sometimes to treat them in the vindictive Attribute, and they are cut off in their Crimes, insensible and stupid, without a Space or a Heart to repent ; and therefore, let none take Hope in their profligate Living, from what I am going to say.

Again ; others, tho' they do repent, and God is pleas'd to give them the Grace to return to him as Penitents, come to it very late, and sometimes under a severe Hand, as perhaps on a Death-Bed, or under some Disaster, and oftentimes at the *Gallows*.

But still I say, those Men tho' they sin, they do it as a Crime, and when they come to be told

of it often, they are brought to repent: But the Negative Christian I speak of, is so full of himself, so perswaded, that he is good enough, and religious enough already, that he has no Thoughts of any thing, unless it be to pull off his Hat to God Almighty now and then, and thank him, that he has no Need of him; this is the Opiat that doses his Soul even to the last Gasp; and it is ten thousand to one, but the Lethargic Dream shoots him thro' the Gulph at once, and he never opens his Eyes till he arrives in that Light, where all things are naked and open; where he sees too late, that he has been a Cheat to himself, and has been hurry'd by his own Pride in a Cloud of Negatives, into a State of positive Destruction, without Remedy.

I am reading no particular Man's Fate; God forbid! I restrain it to no Circumstances, I point out no Persons; 'tis too solemn a thing to make it a Satyr; 'tis the State, not the Man, I speak of; let the guilty apply it to themselves, and the proud good Man humble himself, and avoid it.

I have observ'd, that many fall into this Case by the excessive Vanity of being thought well of by their Neighbours, obtaining a Character, &c. 'tis a Delusion very fatal to many; a good Name, is indeed a precious Ointment, and in some Cases is better than Life: But with your Pardon, Mr. *Negative*, it must be a good Name for good Deeds, or otherwise, a good Name upon a bad Life is a *painted Whore*, that has a gay Countenance upon a rotten, diseas'd, corrupted Carcass.

Much to be preferr'd is the general Slander of a prejudic'd Age, and a State of universal Calumny, where the Mind is free from the Guilt they charge: Such a Man, tho' the World spits upon and despises

ses him, looks in with Comfort, and looks up with Hope.

————— *Hic murus Aeneus esto,
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.*

Virg.

General Contempt, universal Reproach, is a Life that requires a world of Courage and Steadiness of Mind to support: But, be this my Portion in this World, with a Heart that does not reproach me with the Guilt, much rather than to be a Man of Negatives only, and who all the World caresses with their good Wishes, and good Opinion, but is himself empty of real Virtue, a Hypocrite at Bottom, a Cheat, and under the Delusion of it; whose Portion is with Hypocrites, and who can neither look in, or look up with Pleasure, but must look without himself, for all that can be call'd Good, either by others, or by himself.

As at the Great and Last Day, the Secrets of all Hearts shall be disclosed, so I am perswaded, the Opinion we have of one another here, will be one of the Things which will be there, and perhaps not till then fully rectify'd; and as we shall be there thorowly enlightened, we shall find Room to see, that we have been much mistaken in our Notions of Virtue and Vice, Religion and Irreligion, in the Characters of our Neighbours. And I am perswaded; we shall see many of our Acquaintances placed at the Right-hand of a righteous Judge, whose Characters we have oppressed with Slanders, and who we have censoriously placed at his Left-hand here: And many a painted Hypocrite, who has insulted his Neighbour with, *Stand off, I am holier than thou,* or whom he has turned from

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with

with Disdain, and with a *This Publican!* plac'd at the Left-hand, who we made no Doubt we should have seen at the Right-hand in Triumph.

This is a Support to the Mind of a good Man, even when his Enemies, as *David* says, *gnash upon him with their Teeth,* and *have him in Derision,* that is to say, when he is run down by universal Clamour, and damn'd by the Tongues of Men, even for this World and another.

*Happy the Man, who with exalted Soul,
Knows how to rate the great the prosp'rous Fool,
Who can the Insults of the Street contemn,
And values not the Rage or Tongues of Men?
He like the Sun exists on his own Flame,
And when he dies, is to himself a Fame.*

But take this with you as you go, that as negative Praise will build no Man Comfort, so negative Virtue will not support the Mind under universal Contempt. *Scandal* is much worse than *Slander*; for the first is founded upon real Guilt, the other attacks Innocence. Nothing is a Scandal, but what *is true*: Nothing is a Slander, but what *is false*.

He that fortifies himself against Reproach, must do it with a certain Reserve of Real, and solid Virtue, and Piety; it must be Uprightness and Integrity that must preserve him; nothing but a Fund of what is good can support the Mind under the Reproach of being all that is bad; I do not mean neither, that the Man must be perfect, have no Follies or Failings, have made no Excursions, have nothing to be laid to the Charge of his Character; for where then shall the Man be found I am speaking of? And I may be said to be describing the
Black-

~~Black-swan~~, Person that is not, and never was to be found: But the right Way of judging Men, and the Way which alone can be just, is to judge of them by their general Conduct; and so a Man may in his own Mind justly denominate himself: As every good Action does not denominate me to be a good Man, so neither does every Failing, every Folly, no nor every scandalous Action, denominate me a Hypocrite, or a wicked Man; otherwise, some of the most eminent Saints in Scripture, and of every Age since the Scripture was written, are gone to the Devil; and 'twill be hard to say, there was ever a good Man in the World.

But I return to my Subject, the negative good Man; and let me examine him a little in his just Character, in his Conduct, publick and private: He is no Drunkard, but is intoxicated with the Pride of his own Worth: He is a good Neighbour, a common Arbitrator and Peace-maker in other Families, but a cursed Tyrant in his own: He appears in a publick Place of Worship for a Show, but never enters into his Closet and shuts the Door about him, to pray to him that sees in Secret: He is covered with the vain-glorious, and ostentatious Part of Charity, but does all his Alms before Men, *to be seen of them*: He is mighty eager in the Duties of the second Table, but regardless of the first; appearingly religious to be seen and taken Notice of by Men; but between God and his own Soul, no Entercourse, no Communication: What is this Man? And what Comfort is there of the Life he lives? He knows little, or perhaps nothing of Faith, Repentance, and a Christian mortified Life: In a Word, he is a Man perfect in the Circumstances of Religion, and

and perfectly a Stranger to the essential Part of Religion.

Take this Man's Conversation apart, enter into the private and retir'd Part of it, What Notions has he of mispent Hours, and of the natural Reflex of all our Minutes, on to the great Center and Gulph of Life, *Eternity*? Does he know how to put a right Value upon *Time*? Does he esteem it *the Life-Blood of his Soul*, as it really is, and act in all the Moments of it, as one that must account for them? Alas! this is of no Weight with such a Man; he is too full of himself to enter into any Notions about an Account, either for mispent Time, or any thing else misdome; but perswading himself, that he never did any thing amiss, entertains no Notion of Judgment to come, *Eternity*, or any thing in it.

What Room has a Man to expatiate in his Thoughts upon so immense and inconceivable a Subject, as that of eternal Duration, whose Thoughts are all taken up, and swell'd Top-full with his own extraordinary self. It would be impossible for any Man in the World to entertain one proud Thought of himself, if he had but one right Idea of a future State. Could such a Man think, that any thing in him, or any thing he could do, could purchase for him, a Felicity that was to last to *Eternity*? What! that a Man should be capable in one Moment (for Life is not that in Length compar'd to *Eternity*) to do any thing for which he should deserve to be made happy to *Eternity*?

If then you can form no Equality between what he can do, and what he shall receive; less can it be founded upon his negative Virtue, or what he has forborn to do; and if neither his negative nor his positive Piety can be equal to the Reward, and to the *Eternity* that Reward is to last for; What then

then is become of the Pharisee? he must think no more of himself, for all his Boasts; neither of his Negatives nor his Positives, but of a rich unbounded Grace, that rewards according to itself, not according to what we can do; and that to be judged at the last Day according to our Works, if literally understood, would be to be undone; but we are to be judged by the Sincerity of our Repentance, be rewarded according to the infinite Grace of God, and Purchase of Christ, with a State of Blessedness to an endless Eternity.

Indeed this Eternity is not a Meditation suitable to the Man I-am talking of, 'tis a sublime Thought, which his bloated Imagination has never descended to, or engag'd in; and when it comes, he is like to have as little Comfort of it, as he has had Thought about it.

This Thought of Eternity raises new Ideas in my Mind, and I cannot go forward without a Digression upon so important a Subject; if the Reader approves the Thought, he will not quarrel about its being a Digression.

E T E R N I T Y.

Hail mighty Circle, unconceived Abyss,
 Center of Worlds to come, and Grave of this:
 Great Gulph of Nature in whose mighty Womb,
 Lyes all that Thing call'd Past, that nothing call'd to
 (come.

Ever and never, both begun in thee,
 The weak Description of Eternitie,
 Meer Sounds which only can thy Being confess;
 or how should finite Words thee Infinite express.

Thou

*Thou art Durations modern Name,
To be, or to have been, in thee are all the same.*

*Thy Circle holds the pre-existent State
Of all that's early, or that shall be late,
Thou know'st no Past or Future ; all in thee,
Make up one Point, Eternity :
And, if things mortal measure things sublime,
Are all one great Ubiquity of Time.*

*To end, begin, be born, and dye,
The Accidents of Time and Life,
Are Nonsense in thy Speech, Eternity
Swallows them all, in thee they end their Strife,
In thee the Ends of Nature form one Line.
And Generation with Corruption join.*

*Ages of Life describe thy State in vain,
Even Death itself, in thee, lives o'er again.
Thy radiant Bright, unfaded Face,
Shines over universal Space.
All Limits from thy vast Extent must flee,
Old Everlasting's but a Point to thee
Ten Everlastings, make, not one Eternitie.*

*To thee things past, exist as things that are ;
And things to come, as if they were ;
Thou wast the first Great When, while there was yet No
Where.*

Even

*Even Time itself's a little Ball of Space,
Borrowing a Flame from thy illustrious Face,
Which wheeling round in its own Circle burns,
Rolls out from thy first Spring, and into thee returns.*

*What we have been, and what we are,
The present and the Time that's past,
We can resolve to nothing here,
But what we are to be in thee, at last.*

*Deeds soon shall dye, however nobly done,
And Thoughts of Men, like as themselves decay:
But Time when to Eternity roll'd on,
Shall never, never, never waste away.*

*Years, Ages, Months, Weeks, Days, and Hours,
Wear out, and Words to number them shall fail,
One Endless all the wild Account devours,
And thy vast Unit casts up all the Tale.*

*Numbers, as far as Numbers run
Are all in thy Account but one,
Or rather are thy Reck'ning just begun.*

*Thou art the Life of Immortalitie,
When Time itself drowns, and expires in thee.
All the great Actions of aspiring Men,
By which they build that trifling thing call'd Fame,
In thy Embrace lose all their Where, and When,
Reserving not so much, as a meer empty Name.*

How

*How vain are Sorrows of a human State,
 Why mourn th' Afflicted at their Fate?
 One Point, one Moment's longer far
 Than all their Days of Sorrow shall appear,
 When wrapt in Wonders we shall see,
 And measure their Extent by thee.*

*In vain are glorious Monuments of Fame,
 Which Fools erect t' immortalise a Name,
 Not half a Moment when compar'd with thee,
 Lives all their fancy'd Immortalitie.*

*Start back my Soul! and with some Horror view,
 If with these Eyes thou can'st look thro'
 Enquire what gives the Pain of Loss a Sting,
 Even Hell itself's a Hell, in no one other thing.*

*Then with a Brightness on thy Face,
 An Emanation from that glorious Place;
 A Joy which no dark Cloud can over-cast,
 And which, Eternity itself cannot out-last.
 Reflect' my Soul! Duration dwells on high,
 And Heaven itself's made Heaven, by blest Eternity.*

But to the Purpose in Hand; for I have not done with this Man of Negatives yet: And now let us bring him more nearly and seriously to a Converse with the invisible World: He looks into it with Horror and dreadful Apprehensions; as *Felix*, when St. Paul reasoned of Temperance, Righteousness, and of Judgment to come. *Felix*, was
 a moral

a moral Heathen, that is to say, a Man of Negatives, like him I am speaking of. What was then the Case? he trembl'd; Pray, what is it reasonable to think *Felix* trembled at? if I may give my Opinion, who am but a very mean Expofitor of Texts, it was this or something like it.

Felix was a Philosopher, as well as a Man of Power; and by his Wisdom, as also by his Reverence of the Gods, which at that Time was the Sum of Religion, had been a Man of Morals, a Man that had practic'd Temperance and Righteousness, as the Life which was unquestionably to be rewarded by the Powers above, with an Elysian Felicity; that is to say, according to the Roman Maxim, That the Gods were the Rewarders of Virtue.

But when the blessed Apostle came to reason with *Felix*, how unlikely it was, that these Negatives should purchase our Happiness hereafter, he shew'd him, that the Gods could not be in Debt to us for the Practice of Virtue, which was indeed no more than living most suitable to our Reason, that a Life of Virtue and Temperance was its own Reward, by giving a healthy Body, a clear Head, a compos'd Life, &c. fitting the Man for all other worldly Enjoyments, adequate to his Reason, and his present Felicity as a Man: But eternal Happiness must come from another Spring, namely from the infinite unbounded Grace of a provok'd God, who having erected a righteous Tribunal, where every Heart should be searched, and where every Tongue would confess itself guilty, and stand self-condemn'd. Jesus Christ, whom *Paul* preach'd, would separate such as by Faith and Repentance he had brought home, and united to himself by the Grace of Adoption, and on the
Foot

Foot of his having laid down his Life a Ransom for them, had appointed them to Salvation.

When poor Negative *Felix* heard of this, and that all his Philosophy, his Temperance, and Righteousness, if it had been ten thousand Times as great, could weigh nothing, and plead nothing for him at that Judicature; and that he began to see the Justice and Reason of this; for *Paul* reasoned him into it; I say, when he saw this, he trembl'd indeed, as well he might, and as all negative People will.

What a strange Idea must that Pharisee have of God, who went up with the Publican to the Temple to pray: 'Tis observable, he went with a good Stock of Assurance in his Face, that could come to the Altar, as he did, not to offer any Sacrifice; we don't find he carry'd any Offering, or bespoke the Priest to make any Attonement; he wanted no Priests to make any Confession to: Good Man, as he thought he was, he had no Sins to confess; he rather came up to the Altar to even Accounts with Heaven; and like the other Man in the Gospel, tell God, that he had fulfill'd the whole Law, and had done all those things that were commanded, even from his Youth; so, as before, he only pulled off his Hat to his God, and let him know, that there was nothing between them at present, and away he goes about his Business.

But the poor Wretch, whom he despis'd, and whom he had left behind him, for he durst come no farther, acted quite another Part. He had at first indeed, in Sence of his Duty, resolv'd to go up to the Temple; But when he saw the Splendor and Majesty of God represented by the Glory of that elevated Building; I say, when he saw that, tho' a great Way off, and then look'd into his own Heart, all his negative Confidences failing him,
and

and a Sense of miserable Circumstances coming upon him, he stops short, and with a Blow of Reflection and perfectly unmixt with any of the Pharisees Pride; he looks down in Humility, but lifts up his Heart in a penitential Faith, with a *Lord be merciful to me a Sinner.*

Here was Faith, Repentance, Duty, and Confession, all conjoin'd in one Act, and the Man's Work was done at once, *he went away justified*; when the negative Pharisee went home, the same-self vain Wretch, that he came out with *God I thank thee* in his Mouth, and a Mass of Pride in his Heart, that nothing could convince.

In what glorious Colours do the Scriptures upon all Occasions represent those two *Hand in Hand* Graces, *Faith* and *Repentance*? There is not one Mention of Faith in the whole Scripture, but what is recommending some Way or other to our Admiration, and to our Practice; 'tis the Foundation and the Top-stone of all Religion, the Right-hand to lead, and the Left-hand to support, in the whole Journey of a Christian, even thro' this World, and into the next: In a Word, 'tis the Sum and Substance of the Gospel Foundation.

Religion seems to have been founded upon three Establishments in the World; in all which the Terms of Life are laid down at the End of our Acceptance of it.

The First Establishment was with *Adam* in *Paradise*; the Terms of which were, **FORBEAR and Live.**

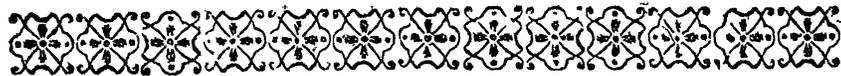
The Second Establishment was with the Children of *Israel*, in the giving of the Law; the Terms of which were, **DO and Live.**

The Third Establishment is that of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; the Terms of which are, **BELIEVE and Live.**

O

So

So that in a Word, Faith is the Substance and Fulfilling of Gospel Religion, the Plan of Righteousness, and the great Efficient of eternal Life. Let me break out here upon this glorious Subject, and pardon the Excursion, I entreat you.



F A I T H.

HAil MYSTICK! *realizing Vision Hail!*
Heavens duplicate, Eternity's Entail;
 GOD's Representative to hand us on,
And for us claim a Station near his Throne.

*Not the eternal Battlements of Brass,
 Gates, a whole Hell of Devils could never pass;
 Not Angels, not the bright Seraphick Train,
 Which drove out Adam from the Sacred Plain:
 Not all the Flaming Swords Heaven ever drew,
 Shall shut thee out, or intercept thy View.*

*Boldly thou scal'st the Adamantin Wall,
 Where Heaps of fainting Suppliants fall,
 Where Doubt has thousands and ten thousands slain,
 And Hypocrites knock hard in vain.*

*Soaring above the dark Abyfs of Fear,
 Quite out of Sight, behind, thou leav'st Despair,*

*

Who

*Who fainting, and unable to keep Pace,
Gives up the Prize, gives out the Race,
Faints by the Way, and Fainting cries,
I can't, and so, for Fear of Dying, dies.*

*While thou, on Air of Hope, fanning thy Wings,
With gentle Gales of Joy, from whence Assurance
springs,
Mount'st on, and passing all th' Ætherial Bounds,
Thy Head with beatifick Rapture crowns.*

*Great Pilot of the Soul, who goes before
The Dangers of the dreadful Voyage t' explore,
Enters the very Place, and when 'tis there,
Sends back Expresses to support us here,
Negotiates Peace, gains the great Pledge of Love,
And gets it ratify'd above.*

*With awful Confidence at Heaven's high Throne,
It rather humbly claims than meerly prays.
Pleads, promises, and calls them all its own,
And trusts to have, even then, when Heaven denies.*

*On Earth what Wonders has it wrought !
Rather what Wonders has it not ?
'Twas parted Rivers, dry'd up Seas,
Made Hills of those, and Walls of these.
And if to this great Mountain it should say,
Move off, O Hill, and roll to yonder Sea,
The Sea and Mountain too must both obey.*

O 2

If

2
S

*If towards Heaven it looks, 'tis ne'r in vain,
 From thence 't has brought down Fire, 't has brought
 down Rain,
 And thither it ascends in Flame again.*

*Its Influence is so vigorous and intense,
 It peirces all the Negatives of Sense.
 Things quite invisible to Sight, it sees
 Things difficult performs with Ease:
 Things imperceptible to us it knows,
 Things utterly impossible it does:
 Things unintelligible it understands,
 Things high (superior to itself) commands,
 Things in themselves unnatural reconciles,
 Weakness to Strength, and to its Sorrows smiles.
 Hopes against Hope, and in Despair's resign'd,
 And Spight of Storms without, it calms the Mind.*

*Say unborn Lamp, what feeds thy Flame,
 In all Varieties the same?
 What Wonder-working-hand thy Power supplies
 Nature and Reason's just Surprise.*

*Nature and Reason join thee Hand in Hand,
 And to thy just Dominion stoop the Mind:
 But neither can thy Workings understand,
 And in thy swifter Pace thou leav'st them both
 behind.*

'Twas

'Twas from thy Motion fortify'd by thee,
 Peter ask'd Leave to walk upon the Sea,
 When his Great Lord said Come, and Faith said Go;
 What Heart could fear? What Coward Tongue say No?
 Boldly he stept upon the flowing Wave,
 And might ha' march'd thro' Fire, or thro' the }
 Grave, }
 While he stood by, who had the Power to save :

But soon as Peter lost his Hold of thee,
 He sunk like Lead into the Sea.
 All thy Magnetic Power dispers'd and gone,
 The heavenly Charm was broke, and Peter quite un-
 And had not Help been just at Hand, (done ;
 Peter had gone the nearest Way to Land.

Made up of Wonders, and on Wonders fixt
 Of contradicting Qualities thou'rt mixt.
 Small as a Grain, yet as a Mountain great,
 A Child in Growth, yet as a Giant strong;
 A Beggar, yet above a King in State:
 Of Birth but short, yet in Duration long.
 How shall we reconcile thee to our Sence?
 Herethou wouldst pass for meer Impertinence.
 Thy teasing Nature would thy End defeat,
 So Humble, and yet so Importunate.

See the great Test of Faith, the greatest sure,
 That Heaven e'er put a Mortal to endure.

*She cry'd, she beg'd, nay she believ'd, and pray'd,
Yet long neglected, and as long deny'd ;*

*At last, as if commanded to Despair,
She's almost told it was not in his Power,
That she was out of his Commission plac't,
Shut out by Heaven, by Race accurst.*

WOMAN! I am not sent to thee!

WOMAN! thou hast no Share in me!

*Was ever Creature born, but this could bear,
Such Words proclaim'd from Heaven, and not
Despair.*

*But still she prays, adheres, petitions, cries,
And on the Hand that thrusts her back relies :
Till mov'd, as 'twere with her Impertinence,
He calls her Dog, and challenges her Sence,
To tell her, whether such as she are fed,
With Food appropriate, or the Household Bread.*

*But all was one ; her Faith so often try'd
Too strong to fail, too firm to be deny'd :
She follows still, allows her out-cast State,
The more thrust off, the more importunate :
Every Repulse she meets, revives her Prayer,
And she builds Hope, because she's bid Despair :
He calls her Dog, she calls her self so too,
But pleads as such the Fragments that are due,
The Case so doubtful, the Repulse so long,
Her Sex so weak, and yet her Faith so strong,*

Heaven

Heaven yields ! *The Victory of Faith's obtain'd,*
And all she ask'd, and all she sought for, gain'd.

Mysterious Flame ! *tell us from whence*
Thou drawst that Cleaving Confidence.
That strange, that irresistible D fire,
That with such Magic Force sets all the Soul on Fire ;
By which thou canst to Heaven itself apply,
In Terms, which Heaven itself can not deny.

A Power so great, an Influence so sure,
Not Heaven itself, the Wrestlings can endure.
See how the struggling Angel yields the Day,
When Jacob's Faith bids Jacob pray.
Let me alone, the heavenly Vision cries,
No, no, says conquering Faith, never without my Prize.
Heaven yields ! Victorious Faith prevail'd,
And all the Blessings ask't for, he entail'd.

Blest humble Confidence that finds the Way,
To know we shall be heard before we pray ;
Heaven's High Insurance Office, where we give,
The Premium Faith, and then the Grant receive.

Stupendous Gift ! from what strange Spring below,
Can such a Supernatural Product flow ?
From Heaven, and Heaven alone it must derive ;
For Heaven alone can keep its Flame alive.

No Spring below can send out such a Stream,
 No Fire below emit so bright a Flame
 Of Nature and original Divine,
 It does all other Gifts of Heaven out-shine.

Thou art the Touch-stone of all other Grace,
 No Counterfeits can keep thy Pace.

The weighty Standard of our best Desires,
 The true Sublime, which every Breast inspires,
 By thee we rise to such a Height of Flame,
 As neither Thought can reach, nor Language name,
 Such as St. Paul himself could hardly know,
 Whether he really was alive or no:
 When cloth'd in Raptures lifted up by thee,
 He saw by Faith, what none without it see.

Just Heaven, that in thy Violence delights,
 And easily distinguishes thy Flights
 From the thin Out-side Warmth of Hypocrites,
 Approves, accepts, rewards, and feeds thy Flame,
 And gives this glorious Witnesses to thy Fame,
 That all our Gifts are hallow'd by thy Name.

By thee our Souls on Wings of Joy ascend,
 Climb the third Heaven, an Entrance there demand,
 As sure those Gates to thee shall open wide,
 As without thee we're sure to be deny'd.
 No Bars, no Bolts; no flaming Swords appear,
 To shock thy Confidence, or move thy Fear.

To

To thee the Patent Passage always free,
 Peter himself receiv'd the Keys from thee;
 Or which we may conceive with much more Ease,
 Thou art thy self the Gate, thy self the Keys.

Thine was the fiery Chariot, thine the Steeds,
 That fetch't Elijah from Old Jordan's Plains;
 Such a long Journey, such a Voiture needs,
 And thou the steady Coach-man held the Reins.

Thine was the wondrous Mantle he threw down,
 By which successive Miracles were wrought;
 For 'Twas the Prophets Faith, and not his Gown,
 Elisha so importunately sought.

Bright Pole-Star of the Soul for ever fix't,
 The Mind's sure Guide, when anxious and Perplex't;
 When wandring in the Abyss of Thoughts and
 Cares,
 Where no Way out, and no Way in, appears,
 When Doubt and Horror, the Extrems of Fear,
 Surround the Soul, and prompt her to Despair.

Thou shin'st aloft, openst a Gleam of Light,
 And show'st all Heaven to our Sight,
 Thou guil'dst the Soul with suddain Smiles and
 Joy,
 And Peace, that Hell itself can ne'er destroy.

If

If all this be to be said, and all indeed but a Poetical Trifle upon this exalted Subject, What is become of our Negative Christian in all this? There is not a Word of Negative Religion in all the Description of Faith, any more than there is of Faith in all our Negative Religion.

Now let us follow this poor Negative Wretch to his Death-bed, and there having very little other Notion of Religion; for 'tis the Fate of those that trust to their Negatives, to have little else in their Thoughts; If a good Man come to talk with him, if he talks out of that Way, he puts him all into Confusion; for if he cannot swim upon the Bladders of his Negatives, he drowns immediately, or he bouys himself up above your Reproofs, and goes on as before: He is a little like the *Polish* Captain *Uratz*, who was executed for the Murder of Mr. *Thynne*, who, when they talk't to him of Repentance, and of Jesus Christ, said, he was of such and such a Family, and he hop'd God would have some Respect to him as a Gentleman.

But what must a poor Minister do, who being fill'd with better Principles, prays for this vain glorious Man? Must he say, Lord accept this good Man, for he has been no Drunkard, no Swearer, no debauch'd Person; he has been a just, a charitable Man, has done a great deal of Good among his Neighbours, and never wilfully wrong'd any Man; he has not been so wicked as it is the Custom of the Times to be; nor has he shewn bad Examples to others; Lord be merciful to this excellent good Man?

No, no, the poor sincere Minister knows better things; and if he prays with him, he turns him quite in-side-out, represents him as a poor mistaken Creature, who now sees, that he is nothing,
and

and has nothing in himself, but casts himself entirely, as a miserable lost Sinner, into the Arms of a most merciful Saviour, praying to be accepted on the Merits of Jesus Christ, and no other; so that there's all his Negative Bottom unravell'd at once; and, if this is not his Case, it must be worse.



CHAP.



C H A P. V.

Of listning to the Voice of P R O -
V I D E N C E,



WE are naturally backward to inform our selves of our Duty to our Maker, and to our selves; 'tis a Study we engage in with great Reluctance, and 'tis but too agreeable to us, when we meet with any Difficulty which we think gives us a just Occasion to throw off any farther Enquiries of that kind.

Hence I observe the wisest of Men often run into Mistakes about the Things, which speaking of Religion we call *Duty*, taking up slight Notions of them, and believing they understand enough of them; by which they rob themselves of the Advantage, as well as Comfort of a farther search. Or on the other hand, taking up with the general Knowledge of religious Principles, and the common Duties of a Christian Life, are satisfy'd with knowing what they say is sufficient to carry them to Heaven, without enquiring into those Things which are helpful and assistant to make that strait Path easy and pleasant to themselves; and to make them useful to others by the Way.

Solomon was quite of another Opinion, when he bid us *cry after Knowledge, and lift up our Voice for*

for Understanding ; dig for her as for Silver, and search for her as for hid Treasure. It is certain here that he meant religious Knowledge ; and it is explained in the very next Words, with an encouraging Promise to those that shall enter upon the Search. (*viz.*) *Then shalt thou understand the Fear of the L O R D, and find the Knowledge of G O D.*

I am of Opinion that it is our unquestioned Duty, to enquire after every Thing in our Journey to the eternal Habitation, which God has permitted us to know, and thus to raise Difficulties in the Way of our just search into divine Discoveries is to act, like *Solomon's* Sluggard, who saith, *There is a Lion without, I shall be slain in the Streets,* Prov. xxii. 13. that is, he sits down in his Ignorance repuls'd with imaginary difficulties, without making one Step in the search after the Knowledge, which he ought to *dig for, as for hid Treasure.*

Let us then be encourag'd to our Duty ; let us boldly enquire after every Thing that God has permitted us to know ; I grant that secret Things belong to God, and I shall labour to keep my due Distance. But I firmly believe, that there are no secret Things belonging to God, and which as such we are forbidden to enquire into, but what also are so preserv'd in Secrecy, that by all our Enquiries we cannot arrive to the Knowledge of them ; and it is a most merciful, as well as wise Dispensation ; that we are only forbid enquiring after these Things which we cannot know ; and that all those Things are effectually lock'd up from our Knowledge, which we are forbidden to enquire into. The Case is better with us, than it was with *Adam*. We have not the Tree of Knowledge first planted in our View, as it were tempting us with its Beauty, and within our Reach, and then a Prohibition upon Pain of Death : But
blessed

bleſſed be God, we may eat of all the Trees in the Garden; and all thoſe of which we are not allow'd to take, are plac'd both out of our Sight, and out of our Reach.

I am making Way here to one of the Trees of ſacred Knowledge, which tho' it may grow in the thickeſt of the Wood, and be ſurrounded with ſome Briars and Thorns, ſo as to place it a little out of Sight; yet I hope to prove, that it is our Duty to taſte of it: and that the Way to come at it, is both practicable and plain.

But to wave the Allegory, as I am entring into the niceſt Search of divine things, that perhaps the whole Scheme of Religion directs us to; 'tis abſolutely neceſſary at our Entrance, *if poſſible*, to remove every Difficulty, explain every Principle, and lay down every Foundation ſo undeniably clear, that nothing may appear dark or myſterious in our firſt Conceptions of things; no Stumbling-block lye at the Threshold, and the humble Reader may meet with no Repulſe from his own Apprehenſions, of not underſtanding what he is going to read.

Listening to the Voice of Providence, is my Subject: I am willing to ſuppoſe in the firſt Place, that I am writing to thoſe who acknowledge the two grand Principles upon which all Religion depends. 1. That there is a God, a firſt great moving Cauſe of all things, an eternal Power, *Prior*, and conſequentially *Superior* to all Power and Being. 2. That this eternal Power, which I call God, is the Creator and Governour of all things, *viz.* of Heaven and Earth.

To avoid needleſs Diſtinctions concerning which of the Perſons in the God-head, are exerciſed in the creating Power, and which in the governing Power. I offer that glorious Text, *Pſalm xxxiii. 6.* as a
Repulſe

Repulse to all such cavilling Enquiries, where the whole Trinity is plainly entitled to the whole creating Work, by the WORD (*God the Son*) of the LORD (*God the Father*) were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them, by the BREATH (*God the Holy Ghost*) of his Mouth.

Having thus presupposed the Belief of the Being, and the creating Work of God, and declar'd, that I am writing to such only, who are ready to own, they believe that *God is*, and that he created the Heaven, and the Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is. I think I need not make any Preamble, to introduce the following Propositions, *viz.*

1. *That this Eternal God guides by his Providence the whole World, which he has created by his Power.*

2. *That this Providence manifests a particular Care over, and Concern in the governing and directing Man, the best and last created Creature on Earth.*

Natural Religion proves the first, reveal'd Religion proves the last of these beyond Contradiction. *Natural Religion* intimates the Necessity of a Providence guiding and governing the World, from the Consequence of the Wisdom, Justice, Prescience, and Goodness of the Creator.

It would be absurd to conceive of God exerting infinite Power to create a World, and not concerning his Wisdom, which is his Providence, in guiding the Operations of Nature, so as to preserve the Order of his Creation, and the Obedience and Subordination of Consequences and Causes throughout the Course of that Nature, which is in Part the inferior Life of that Creation.

Reveal'd

Reveal'd Religion has given such a Light into the Care and Concern of this Providence in an especial Manner, in and over that Part of the Creation call'd *Man*, that we must likewise deny Principles, if we enter into dispute about it.

For him the Peace of the Creation is preserv'd, the Climates made habitable, the Creatures subjected and made nourishing, all vegetative Life made medicinal; so that indeed the whole Creation seems to be entail'd upon him as an Inheritance, and given to him for a Possession, subjected to his Authority, and governed by him, as Viceroy to the King of all the Earth; the Management of it is given to him as Tenant to the great Proprietor, who is Lord of the Mannor, or Landlord of the Soil. And it can not be conceiv'd, without great Inconsistency of Thought, that this World is left entirely to Man's Conduct without the supervising Influence and the secret Direction of the Creator.

This I call *Providence*, to which I give the whole Power of guiding and directing of the Creation, and managing of it, by Man who is his Deputy or Substitute, and even the guiding, influencing, and over-ruling Man himself also.

Let critical Annotators enter into specifick Distinctions of Providence, and its Way of acting, as they please, and as the Formalities of the Schoolmen direct. The short Description I shall give of it is this, That it is that Operation of the Power, Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness of God, by which he influences, governs, and directs, not only the Means, but the Events of all things, which concern us in this World.

I say, it is *that Operation*, let them call it what they will, which acts thus; I am noway concern'd to shew how it acts, or why it acts thus and thus in particular; we are to reverence its Sovereignty,

as

as it is the Finger of God himself, who is the sovereign Director, and we are to observe its Motions, obey its Dictates, and *listen to its Voice*, as it is, and because it is particularly employ'd for our Advantage.

It would be a very proper and useful Observation here, and might take up much of this Work, to illustrate the Goodness of Providence, in that it is, *as I say*, particularly employ'd for the Advantage of Mankind: But, as this is not the main Design, and will come in naturally in every Part of the Work I am upon, I refer it to the common Inferences, which are to be drawn from the Particulars, as I go on.

It is indeed the most rational Foundation of the whole Design before me; 'tis therefore that we should *listen to the Voice of Providence*, because it is principally determin'd, and determines all other things for our Advantage.

But I return to the main Subject, *The Voice of Providence*, the Language or the Meaning of Providence.

Nothing is more frequent, than for us to mistake Providence, even in its most visible Appearances: How easy then must it be, to let its silent Actings, which perhaps are the most pungent and significant, pass our Observation.

I am aware of the Error many fall into, who determining the universal Currency of Events to Providence, and that not the minutest thing occurs in the Course of Life, but by the particular Destination of Heaven, by Consequence entitle Providence to the Efficiency of their own Follies; as if a Person, presuming to smoke his Pipe in a Magazin of Gun-Powder, should reproach Providence with blowing up the Castle, for which indeed he ought to be hang'd; or a Man leaving his
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House or Shop open in the Night, should charge Providence with appointing him to be robb'd, *and the like*: Nay, to carry it farther, every Murtherer or Thief may allege Providence, that determines and directs every thing, directed him to such Wickedness; whereas Providence itself, notwithstanding the Crimes of Men, is actively concern'd in no Evil.

But I pass all these things; the Subject I am treating upon, is of another Nature: The Design here, is to instruct us in some particular things relating to Providence and its Government of Men in the World, which it will be worth our While to observe, without enquiring how far it does or does not act in other Methods.

There is, 'tis true, a Difficulty to shake off all the wry Steps, which People take to amuse themselves about Providence; and for this Reason, I take so much Pains at first to avoid them: Many Men entitle Providence to things, which it is not concern'd about, *speaking abstractedly*; but, *which is a much worse Error*, many also take no Notice of those things, which Providence particularly, and even in a very remarkable Manner, distinguishes it self by *its Concerns* in.

If Providence guides the World, and directs the Issues and Events of things, if it commands causes, and forms the Connection of Circumstances in the World, as no Man, that owns the Principles mentioned above, will deny: And above all, if the general Scope of Providence, and of the Government of the World by its Influence, be for our Advantage; then it follows necessarily, that it is our Business, and our Interest, *to listen to its Voice*.

By Listening to the Voice of Providence, I mean, to study its Meaning in every Circumstance of

of Life, in every Event; to learn to understand the End and Design of Providence in every thing that happens, what is the Design of Providence in it, respecting our selves, and what our Duty to do upon the particular Occasion that offers. If a Man were in Danger of drowning in a shipwreck'd Vessel; and Providence presented a Boat coming towards him; he would scarce want to be told, that it was his Business to make Signals of Distress; that the People in the said Boat might not pass by ignorant of his Condition, and give him no Assistance; if he did, and omitted it, he would have little Cause to concern Providence in his Ruine.

There is certainly a Rebellion against Providence, which Heaven itself will not always concern itself to over-rule; and he that throws himself into a River to drown himself, he that hangs himself up to a Beam, he that shoots himself into the Head with a Pistol, shall die in Spite of all the Notions of Decree, Destiny, Fate, or what ever we weakly call Providence; in such Cases, Providence will not always concern itself to prevent it; and yet 'tis no Impeachment of the Sovereignty of Heaven, in directing, decreeing, and governing all Events in the World.

Providence decrees, that Events shall attend upon Causes in a direct Chain, and by an evident Necessity, and has doubtless left many Powers of Good and Evil, seemingly to our selves, and, as it were, in our Hands, as the natural Product of such Causes and Consequences, which we are not to limit, and cannot expressly determine about, but which we are accountable for the good or evil Application of; otherwise we were in vain exhorted and commanded to do any good thing, or to avoid any wicked one: Rewards and Punish-

ments would be incongruous with sovereign Justice; and Promises, and Threatnings, be perfectly unmeaning useles things, Mankind being no free Agent to himself, or entrusted with the necessary Powers, which those Promises and Threatnings imply.

But all these things are out of my present Enquiry; I am for freely and entirely submitting all Events to Providence; but not to be supinely and unconcernedly passive, as if there was nothing warning, instructing, or directing in the Premonitions of God's Providence; and which he expected we should take Notice of, and take Warning by. *The prudent Man foreseeth the Evil, and hideth himself*: How does he foresee it, since 'tis not in Man to direct himself? There are Intimations given us, by which a prudent Man may sometimes foresee Evil, and hide himself; and I must take these all out of the Devil's Hands, if possible, and place Providence at the Head of the invisible World, as well as at the Helm of this World; and tho' I abhor superstitious and sceptical Notions of the World of Spirits, of which I purpose to speak hereafter, either in this Work, or in some other by itself; I say, tho' I am not at all a Sceptick, yet I cannot doubt, but that the invisible Hand of Providence, which guides and governs this World, does with a secret Power likewise influence the World, and may, and I believe does, direct from thence silent Messengers on many Occasions, whether sleeping or waking, whether directly or indirectly, whether by Hints, Impulses, Allegories, Mysteries, or otherwise, we know not; and does think fit to give us such Alarms, such previous and particular Knowledge of things, that if listen'd to, might many Ways be useful to
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the prudent Man to foresee the Evil, and hide himself.

The only Objection, and which I can see no Method to give a Reason for, and no Answer to, is, Why, if it be the Work of Providence, those things should be so imperfect, so broken, so irregular, that Men may either never be able to pass any right Judgment of them, as is sometimes the Case, or make a perfect Judgment of them, which is often the Case, and so the End of the Intimation be entirely defeated, without any Fault, Neglect, or Omission of the Man.

This we can no more account for, than we can for the Hand-writing upon the Wall at the great Feast of *Belsazzar*, viz. why it was written in a Character, which none could understand; and which, if the Prophet had not been found, had perhaps never been known, or at least, not till the King's Fate, which was even then irretrievable, had been over.

This, indeed, we cannot account for, and can only say, 'tis our Duty to study these things, to listen to the Voice of them, and obey their secret Dictates, as far as Reason directs, without an over superstitious Regard to them, any more than a total Neglect, leaving the Reason of Providence's acting thus, to be better understood hereafter.

But to describe a little what I mean by Listening to the Voice of Providence; it is the Reverse of the supine stupid Man, whose Character I shall come to by and by. The Man I would recommend, lives first in a general Belief, that Providence has the supreme Direction of all his Affairs, even of his in particular, as well as those of the World; that 'tis his Mercy that it is so, that 'tis the Effect of an infinitely wise and gracious Disposition from above, that he subsists; and that 'tis

not below the Dignity any more than 'tis remote from the Power of an infinite, wise, and good Being, to take Cognizance of the least thing concerning him.

This in the Consequence obliges him to all I say, for to him who firmly believes, that Providence stoops to concern itself for him, and to order the least Article of his Affairs, it necessarily follows, that he should concern himself in every thing that Providence does, *which comes within his Reach*, that he may know whether he be interested in it or no.

If he neglects this, he neglects himself; he abandons all Concern about himself, since he does not know, but that the very next particular Act of Providence, which comes within his Reach to distinguish, may be interested in him, and he in it.

It is not for me to dictate here to any Man, what particular things, relating to him, Providence is concern'd in, or what not; or how far any Incident of Life is or is not the particular Act and Deed of the Government of Providence: But as it is the receiv'd Opinion of every good Man, that nothing befalls us without the active or passive Concern of Providence in it; so it is impossible this good Man can be unconcern'd in whatever that Providence determines concerning him.

If it be true, as our Saviour himself says, *That not a Hair falls from our Heads without the Will of our heavenly Father*, then not a Hair ought to fall from our Heads, without our having our Eyes up to our heavenly Father in it.

I take the Text in its due Latitude, namely, that not the minutest Incident of Life, befalls us without the active Will of our Father directing it,
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or the passive Will of our Father suffering it, so I take the Deduction from it in the same Latitude; that nothing of how mean a Nature soever can befall us, but we ought to have our Eyes up to our heavenly Father in it, be resign'd to him in the Event, and subjected to him in the Means; and he that neglects this, lives in Contempt of Providence, and that in the most provoking Manner possible.

I am not answerable for any Extremes these Things may lead weak People into; I know some are apt to entitle the Hand of God, to the common and most ridiculous Trifles in Nature; as a religious Creature, I knew, seeing a Bottle of Beer being over ripe burst out, the Cork fly up against the Ceiling, and the Froth follow it like an Engin, cried out, *O! the Wonders of Omnipotent Power*: But I am representing, how a Christian with an awful Regard to the Government of Providence in the World, and particularly in all his own Affairs, subjects his Mind to a constant Obedience to the Dictates of that Providence, gives an humble Preference to it in all his Conclusions, waits the Issues of it with a cheerful Resignation; and in a Word listens carefully to the Voice of Providence, that he may be always obedient to the heavenly Vision.

Whether this divine Emanation has any Concern in the Notices, Omens, Dreams, Voices, Hints, Forebodings, Impulses, &c. which seem to be a kind of Communication with the invisible World, and a Converse between the Spirits embodied and those unembodied, and how far without Prejudice to the Honour and our Reverence of Providence, and without Danger of Scepticism, and a kind of radicated Infidelity, those Things may be regarded, is a nice and difficult

difficult Thing to resolve, and I shall treat of it by itself.

It has been the Opinion of good Men of all Ages, to say how far they are to be depended upon, that such Things are not to be totally disregarded, I am not to take upon me, How far they may or may not be concerned in the Influence of Providence, I also dare not say : But as the Verity of Astronomy is evidenced by the Calculation of Eclipses, so the Certainty of this Communication of Spirits is established by the Concurrence of Events with the Notices they sometimes give ; and if it be true, as I must believe, that the Divine Providence takes Cognisance of all Things belonging to us, I dare not exclude it from having some Concern, *how much I do not say*, in these Things also ; But of this in its Place.

Whenever Providence discovers any thing of this *Arcanum*, I desire to listen to the Voice of it ; and this is one of the Things I recommend to others : Indeed I would be very cautious, how I listen to any other Voices from that Country, than such as I am sure are conveyed to me from Heaven for my better understanding the whole Mystery.

If then we are to listen to the Voice of Nature, and to the Voices of Creatures, *viz.* to the Voice of the invisible Agents of the World of Spirits as above, much more are we to listen to the Voice of God.

I have already hinted that he that made the World, *we are sure* guides it, and his Providence is equally wonderful as his Power : But nothing in the whole Course of his Providence is more worthy our Regard, especially as it concerns us his Creatures, than the silent Voice, *if it may be allowed me to call it so*, of his managing Events and Causes ; he that listens to the Providence of God, listens to the Voice of God, as

as he is seen in the Wonders of his Government, and as he is seen in the Wonders of his Omnipotence.

If then the Events of Things are his, as well as the Causes, it is certainly well worth our Notice, when the Sympathy or Relation between Events of Things and their Causes, most eminently appears; and how can any Man, who has the least Inclination to observe what is remarkable in the World, shut his Eyes to the visible Discovery, which there is in the Events of Providence, of a supreme Hand guiding them; for Example, when visible Punishments follow visible Crimes, who can refrain confessing the apparent Direction of supreme Justice? When Concurrence of Circumstances directs to the Cause, Men that take no Notice of such remarkable Pointings of Providence, openly contemn Heaven, and frequently stand in the Light of their own Advantages.

The Concurrence of Events, is a Light to their Causes, and the Methods of Heaven in some Things, are a happy Guide to us to make a Judgment in others; he that is deaf to these Things, shuts his Ears to Instruction, and like *Solomon's Fool*, *hates Knowledge*.

The Dispositions of Heaven to approve or condemn our Actions, are many of them discovered by Observation; and 'tis easy to know, when that Hand of Providence opens the Door for, or shuts it against our Measures, if we will bring Causes together, and compare former Things with present, making our Judgment by the ordinary Rules of Heaven's dealing with Men.

How, and from what Hand come the frequent Instances of severe Judgment, following rash and hellish Imprecations? when Men call for God's
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Judgment; and Providence, or Justice, rather obeys the Summons and comes at their call: A Man calls God to Witness to an Untruth, and wishes himself struck dumb, blind, or dead if it is not true; and is struck dumb, blind, or dead; is not this a Voice, does not Heaven with the Stroke, cry, *Castigo te, Be it to thee as thou hast said*: He must be deaf who cannot hear it, and worse than deaf that does not heed it; such Executions from Heaven are *in Terrorem*, as Offenders among Men are punished as well for Example to others, as to prevent their doing the like again.

Innumerable Ways the merciful Disposition of Providence takes to discover to us, what he expects we should do in difficult Cases, and doubtless then, it expects at the same Time we should take Notice of those Directions.

We are short-sighted Creatures at best, and can see but a little Way before us, I mean as to the Events of Things; we ought therefore to make use of all the Lights and Helps we can get; these if nicely regarded, would be some of the most considerable to guide us in many difficult Cases.

Would we carefully listen to the Concurrence of Providence, in the several Parts of our Lives, we should stand in less need of the more dangerous Helps of Visions, Dreams, and Voices, from less certain Intelligences.

A Gentleman of my Acquaintance, being to go a Journey into the North, was twice taken very ill the Day he had appointed to begin his Journey, and so was oblig'd to put off going; this he took for a Direction from Heaven, that he should not go at all; and in very few Days after, his Wife was taken sick and died, which made it absolutely necessary for him, to be at Home, to look after his

his Affairs, and had he gone away before, must certainly have been obliged to come back again.

The *Romans* had certainly the Foundation of this Principle, in their prudent Observation of Days and Circumstances of Days; nor is Scripture it self void of the like, but rather points out to the Observation, particularly that of the Children of *Israel*, who after 430 Years were expired from their coming into *Egypt*, *Even in the self-same Day departed they thence*, Exod. 12, 41, 42. This is the Day, that remarkable Day, several other Scriptures mention periodical Times, *dies Infaustus*, the Prudent shall keep Silence in that Time; for it is *an evil Time*.

We find Providence stoops to restrain not the Actions of Men only, but even its own Actions to Days and Times; doubtless for our Observation, and in some Things for our Instruction; I do not so much refer to the Revolutions of Things and Families on particular Days, which are therefore by some People called lucky and unlucky Days, as I do to the observing, how Providence causes the Revolutions of Days, to form a Concurrence between the Actions of Men, which it does not approve or does approve, and the Reward of these Actions in this World; by which Men may if they think fit to distinguish, and observe right upon them, see the Crime or Merit of those Actions in the divine Resentment, may read the Sin in the Punishment, and may learn Conviction from the Revolution of Circumstances in the Appointment of Heaven.

I have seen several Collections of such Things made by private Hands, some relating to Family Circumstances, some to Public; also in the unnatural Wars in *England*, between the King and the Parliament, I have heard many such things have been observ'd;

er'd: For Example, the same Day of the Year and Month, that Sir *John Hotbam* kept out *Hull* against King *Charles* the 1st, and refused him Entrance, was the same Sir *John Hotbam* put to Death, by the very Parliament that he did that Exploit for; that King *Charles* himself was sentenced to die, by the high Court of Justice, as it was then called, the same Day of the Month, that he sign'd the Warrant for the Execution of the Earl of *Strafford*, which as it was then said by some of his Friends, was cutting off his own Right-hand. The same Day that King *James* the 2d came to the Crown against the Design of the Bill of Exclusion, the same Day he was voted Abdicated by Parliament, and the Throne fill'd with the Prince of *Orange* and his Princess.

These, or such as these, seem to be a kind of silent Sentence of Providence upon such Actions, animadverting upon them in a judicial Manner, and intimating plainly, that the Animadversion had a retrospect to what was passed, and those that listen to the Voice of Providence in such Things, should at least lay them up in their Hearts.

Eminent Deliverances in sudden Dangers are of the most significant kind of Providences, and which accordingly have a loud Voice in them, calling upon us to be thankful, to that blessed Hand, that has been pleased to spare and protect us. The Voice of such signal Deliverances, is frequently a just Call upon us to Repentance and looks directly that Way; often 'tis a Caution against falling into the like Dangers we were exposed to, from which nothing but so much Goodness could deliver us again. In how many Occasions of Life, if God's Providence had no greater Share in our Safety than our own Prudence, should

should we plunge and precipitate our selves into all manner of Misery and Distress? and how often for want of listening to those Providences do we miscarry?

Innumerable Instances present themselves to us every Day, in which the Providence of God speaks to us, in Things relating to ourselves; in Deliverances to excite our Thankfulness, in Views of Dangers to awaken our Caution, and to make us walk wisely and circumspectly in every Step we take; those that are awake to these Things, and have their Ears open to the Voice of them, many Times reap the Benefit of their Instruction by being protected, while those who neglect them, are of the Number of the Simple, who pass on and are punished.

To be utterly careless of ourselves in such Cases, and talk of trusting Providence, is a Lethargy of the worst Nature; for as we are to trust Providence with our Estates, but to use at the same Time, all Diligence in our Callings; so we are to trust Providence with our Safety, but with our Eyes open to all its necessary Cautions, Warnings, and Instructions; many of which Providence is pleased to give us in the Course of Life, for the Direction of our Conduct, and which we should ill place to the Account of Providence, without acknowledging that they ought to be regarded, and a due Reverence paid to them upon all Occasions.

I take a general Neglect of these Things, to be a kind of practical Atheism, or at least a living in a kind of Contempt of Heaven, regardless of all that Share, which his invisible Hand has in the Things that befall us.

Such a Man receives good at the Hand of his Maker, but unconcerned at the very Nature or Original of it, looks not at all to the Benefactor:
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Again, he receives Evil, but has no Sense of it, as a judicial dispensing of Punishment from Heaven; but insensible of one or other, he is neither thankful for one, nor humble under the other, but stupid in both, as if he was out of God's Care, and God himself out of his Thoughts; this is just the reverse of the Temper I am recommending, and let the Picture recommend it self to any according to its Merit.

When Prince *Vandemont* commanded the confederate Army in *Flanders*, the same Campaign that King *William* was besieging *Namure*, some Troops were order'd to march into the flat Country towards *Newport*, in Order to make a Diversion, and draw down the Count *de Montal*, who commanded a flying Body about *Menin*, and to keep him from joyning the Duke *de Villeroy*, who commanded the main Body of the *French Army*.

The Soldiers were order'd upon Pain of Death not to stir from their Camp, or to plunder any of the Country People; the Reason was evident, because Provisions being somewhat scarce, if the Boors were not protected they would have fled from their Houses, and the Army would have been put to great Straits, being just entred into the Enemies Country.

It happened that five *English* Soldiers straggling beyond their Bounds were fallen upon, near a Farm-House, by some of the Country People (for indeed the Boors were oftentimes too unmerciful to the Soldiers) as if they had plunder'd them, when indeed they had not: The Soldiers defended themselves; got the better, and kill'd two of the Boors; and being, as they thought, justly provok'd by being first attack'd; they broke into the House, and then used them roughly enough indeed.

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They found in the House a great Quantity of Apples, the People being fled had left them in Possession, and they made no Haste to go away, but fell to work with the Apples; and heating the Oven put a great Quantity of Apples into the Oven to roast. In the mean Time the Boors, who knew their Number to be but five, and had got more Help on their Side, came down upon them again, attack'd the House, forced their Way in, master'd the *Englishmen*, kill'd two, and took a third, and barbarously put him into the Oven, which he had heated, where he was smother'd to Death; it seems it was not hot enough to burn him.

The other two escaped, but in coming back to the Camp, they were immediately apprehended by the Provosts, and brought to a Court Martial, where they were sentenc'd not for Plundering, for that did not appear, but for being out of the Bounds appointed by the general Order, as above.

When the Sentence came to be executed, the General was prevail'd upon to spare one of them, and to order them to cast Lots for their Lives. This, as it is known is usually done by throwing Dice upon a Drumhead; and he that throws highest or lowest, as is appointed before is to die; at this time he that threw lowest was to live.

When the Fellows were brought out to throw, the first threw two Sixes, and fell immediately to wringing his Hands, crying he was a dead Man; but was as much surpriz'd with Joy, when his Comrade throwing, there came up two Sixes also.

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The Officer appointed to see Execution was a little doubtful what to do, but his Orders being positive, he commanded them to throw again; they did so, and each of them threw two Fives; the Soldiers that stood round shouted, and said neither of them was to die: The Officer being a sober thinking Man, said it was strange, and look'd like something from Heaven, and he would not proceed without acquainting the Council of War, which was then fitting; they consider'd a while, and at last order'd them to take other Dice and to throw again, which was done, and both the Soldiers threw two Fours.

The Officer goes back to the Council of War, who were surpriz'd very much, and looking on it as the Voice of Heaven, respited the Execution till the General was acquainted with it.

The General sends for the Men and examines them strictly, who telling him the whole Story, he pardon'd them with this Expression to those about him, *I love, says he, in such extraordinary Cases to listen to the Voice of Providence.*

While we are in this un-inform'd State, where we know so little of the invisible World, it would be greatly our Advantage, if we knew rightly, and without the Bondage of Enthusiasm and Superstition, how to make use of the Hints given us from above, for our Direction in Matters of the greatest Importance.

It has pleas'd God very much to streighten the special and particular Directions, which he gives to Men immediately from himself; but I dare not say, they are quite ceased; we read of many Examples in Scripture, how God spake to Men by Voice immediately from Heaven, by Appearance of Angels, or by Dreams and Visions of the Night, and by all these not in Public and more
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extraordinary Cases only, but in private, personal, and family Concerns.

Thus God is said to have appeared to *Abraham*, to *Lot*, and to *Jacob*; Angels also have appeared in many other Cases, and to many several Persons, as to *Manoah*, and his Wife, to *Zackariah*, to the Virgin *Mary*, and to the *Apostles*; others have been warned in a Dream, as King *Abimelech*, the false Prophet *Balaam*, *Pontius Pilate's* Wife, *Herod*, *Joseph*, the *Apostles* also, and many others.

We cannot say, but these and all the miraculous Voices, the prophetic Messages prefac'd boldly by the Ancients, with *thus saith the Lord* are ceas'd, and as we have a *more sure Word of Prophecy* handed to us by the Mission of Gospel Ministers; to which the Scripture says, *We do well that we take heed*; and to whom our blessed Lord has said, *Lo, I am with you to the End of the World*: I say, as we have this Gospel back'd with the Spirit and Presence of God, we are no Losers, if we observe the Rule laid down, *viz. that we be obedient to the heavenly Vision*, for such it is, as well as that of the Apostle *Peter's* Dream of the Sheet let down from Heaven.

I mention this to pay a due Reverence to the Sufficiency of Gospel Revelation, and to the guiding of the Spirit of God, who in spiritual Things is given to *lead us into all Truth*, nor would I have any Thing, which I am going to say, tend to lessen these great Efficients of our eternal Salvation.

But I am chiefly upon our Conduct in the inferior Life, as I may call it; and in this, I think, the Voice of God, even his immediate Voice from Heaven, is not entirely ceased from us, though it may have changed the Mediums of Communication.

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I have heard the Divines tell us by Way of Distinction, that there is a Voice of God in his Word, and a Voice of God in his Work; the latter I take to be a Subject very awful and very instructing.

This Voice of God in his Works, is either heard in his Works which are already wrought, such as of Creation, which fill us with Wonder and Astonishment, Admiration and Adoration; *When I view the Heavens, the Work of thy Hands, the Moon and the Stars, which thou hast made, then I say, What is Man, &c.* Or 2. His Works of Government and Providence, in which the infinite Variety affords a pleasing and instructing Contemplation; and it is without Question, our Wisdom and Advantage to study and know them, and to listen to the Voice of God in them: For this listening to the Voice of Providence, is a Thing so hard to direct, and so little understood, that I find the very Thought of it is treated with Contempt, even by many pious and good People, as leading to Superstition, to Enthusiasm, and vain Fancies, tainted with Melancholly, and amusing the Mind with the Vapours of the Head.

It is true, an ill Use may be made of these Things, and to tye People too strictly down to a Rule, where their own Observation is to be the Judge, endangers the running into many foolish Extrems, entitling a distemper'd Brain, too much to the Exposition of the sublimest Things; and tacking the awful Name of Providence to every fancy of their own.

From Hence I think, too much proceeds the extraordinary (Note, *I say, Extraordinary*) Homage paid to Omens, flying of Birds, Voices, Noises, Predictions, and a thousand foolish Things

Things, in which I shall endeavour to state the Case fairly between the Devil and Mankind : But at present I need say no more here, than that they have nothing to do with the Subject I am now upon, or the Subject I am upon with them.

But as my Design is serious, and I hope pious, I shall keep strictly to the Exposition I give of my own Meaning, and meddle with no other.

By the Voice of Providence therefore, I shall confine myself to the particular Circumstances incident and accident which every Man's Life is full of, and which are in a more extraordinary manner, said to be peculiar to himself or to his Family.

By listening to them, I mean, making such due Application, of them to his own Circumstances, as becomes a Christian, for Caution in his Conduct, and all manner of Instruction, receiving all the Hints as from Heaven, returning all the Praise to, making all the Improvement for, and reverencing the Sovereignty of his Maker in every Thing; not disputing or reproaching the Justice of Providence; and which is the main Thing I aim at, taking such Notice of the several Providences, that happen in the Course of our Lives, as by one Circumstance to learn how to behave in another.

For Example, supposing from my own Story, When a young Fellow broke from his Friends, trampled upon all the wise Advices, and most affectionate Perswasions of his Father, and even the Tears and Entreaties of a tender Mother, and would go away to Sea; but is check'd in his first Excursions by being Shipwreck'd, and in the utmost Distress sav'd by the Assistance of another Ship's Boat, seeing the Ship he was in, soon after sink to the Bottom; ought not such a young Man

to have listened to the Voice of this Providence, and have taken it for a Summons to him; that when he was on Shore, he should stay on Shore, and go back to the Arms of his Friends, hearken to their Council, and not precipitate himself into farther Mischiefs; what Happiness might such a prudent Step have procured, what Miseries and Mischiefs would it have prevented in the rest of his unfortunate Life.

An Acquaintance of mine, who had several such Circumstances befel him, as those which I am inclin'd to call Warnings, but entirely neglected them, and laugh'd at those that did otherwise, suffered deeply for his dis-regard of Omens; he took Lodgings in a Village near the City of *London*, and in a House, where either he sought bad Company, or at best could meet with little that was good. Providence that seemed to animadvert upon his Conduct, so ordered it that something or other mischievous always happened to him there, or as he went thither; several Times he was robbed on the Highway going thither, once or twice taken very ill; at other Times his Affairs in the World went ill, while he diverted himself there; several of his Friends caution'd him of it and told him, he ought to consider that some superior Hand seemed to hint to him, that he should come there no more; he slighted the Hint, or at least neglected it after some Time, and went to the same Place again: But was so terrified with a most dreadful Tempest of Thunder and Lightning, which fell as it were more particularly upon that Part of the Country than upon others; that he took it as a Warning from Heaven; and resolv'd not to go there again, and some Time after a Fire destroyed that House, very few elcaping that were in it.

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It would be an ill Account we should give of the Government of divine Providence in the World, if we should argue, that its Events are so unavoidable, and every Circumstance so determined, that nothing can be altered; and that therefore these Warnings of Providence are inconsistent with the Nature of it. This besides that I think it would take from the Sovereignty of Providence, and deny even God himself the Privilege of being a free Agent, it would also so contradict the Experience of every Man living, in the Varieties of his respective Life, that he should be unable to give any Account for what End many Things, which Providence directs in the World, are directed, and why so many Things happen which do happen; why are Evils attending us so evidently foretold, that by those Fore-tellings they are avoided, if it was not determined before that they should be avoided, and should not befall us?

People that tie up all to Events and Causes, strip the Providence of God which guides the World of all its Superintendency, and leave it no room to act as a wise Disposer of Things.

It seems to me that the immutable Wisdom and Power of the Creator, and the Notion of it in the Minds of Men, is as dutifully preserved, and is as legible to our Understanding, though there be a Hand left at Liberty to direct the Course of natural Causes and Events; 'Tis sufficient to the Honour of an immutable Deity, that for the common Incidents of Life, they be left to the Disposition of a daily Agitator, namely, divine Providence, to order and direct them as it shall see good, within the natural Limits of Cause and Consequence.

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This seems to me a much more rational System, than that of tying up the Hands of the supreme Power to a Road of Things, so that none can be acted or permitted, but such as was so appointed before to be acted and permitted.

But what, if after all, we were to sit down and acknowledge, that the immutability of God's Being, and the Unchangeableness of his Actings, are not easy to be comprehended by us, or that we may say we are not able to reconcile them with the infinite Variation of his Providence, which in all its Actings seems to us to be at full Liberty to determine anew, and give Events a turn this Way or that Way, as its Sovereignty and Wisdom, shall direct; does it follow, that these Things are not reconcileable, because we cannot reconcile them? why should we not as well say, nothing of God is to be understood, because we cannot understand it? or that nothing in Nature is intelligible, but what we can understand?

Who can understand the Reason, and much less the Manner of the Needle tending to the Pole, by being touch'd with the Loadstone, and by what Operation the magnetic Vertue is convey'd with a Touch? why that Vertue is not communicable to other Metals, such as Gold, Silver, or Copper, but to Iron only? what Sympathetic Influence is there between the Stone and the Star, or the Pole? why tending to that Point in the whole Arch, and not to any other, and why face about to the South Pole as soon as it has pass'd the Equinox? yet we see all these Things in their Operations and Events, we know they must be reconcileable in Nature, though we cannot reconcile them, and intelligible in Nature, though we cannot understand them: Sure it is as highly reasonable then for us to believe, that
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the various Actings of Providence, which to us appear changeable; one Decree, as it were, reversing another, and one Action superseding another, may be as reconcilable to the Immutability of God, and to the Unchangeableness of his Purposes, tho' we cannot understand, how it is brought to pass, as it is to believe, that there is a Reason to be given for the Agreement and sympathetick Correspondence between the *Magnet* and the *Pole*, tho' at present the Manner of it is not discover'd, and cannot be understood.

If then the Hand of divine Providence has a spontaneous Power of acting, and directed by its own Sovereignty, proceeds by such Methods, as it thinks fit, and as we see daily in the Course of human things: Our Business is to converse with the acting Part of Providence, with which we more immediately have to do, and not confound our Judgment with things which we cannot fully comprehend, such as the Why, to what End, and the how in what Manner, it acts so and so.

As we are then conversant with the immediate Actions of divine Providence; it is our Business to study it as much as may be in that Part of its Actings, wherein it is to be known; and this includes the silent Actings of Providence, as well as those which are more loud, and which being declar'd, speak in publick.

There are several silent Steps, which Providence takes in the World, which summon our Attention; and he that will not listen to them, shall deprive himself of much of the Caution and Council, as well as Comfort, which he might otherwise have in his Passage thro' this Life, particularly by thus listening to the Voice, as I call it, of Providence, we have the Comfort of seeing, that really an

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invisible and powerful Hand is employ'd in, and concern'd for our Preservation, and Prosperity in the World; And who can look upon the manifest Deliverances which he meets with in the infinite Variety of Life, without being convinc'd that they are wrought for him without his own Assistance, by the wise and merciful Dispositions of an invisible and friendly Power.

The bringing good Events to pass by the most threatening Causes, as it testifies a Power that has the Government of Causes and Effects in its Hand, so it gives a very convincing Evidence of that Power, being in good Terms with us; as on the contrary, when the like Providence declares against us, we ought to make a suitable Use of it another Way, that is to say, take the just Alarm, and apply to the necessary Duties of Humiliation and Repentance.

These things may be jested with by the Men of Fashion; but I am supposing myself talking to Men that have a Sense of a future State, and of the Oeconomy of an invisible World upon them, and neither to Atheists, Scepticks, or Persons indifferent, who are indeed near of Kin to them both.

As there are just Reflections to be made upon the various Conduct of Providence in the several Passages of Man's Life, so there are infinite Circumstances, in which we may furnish our selves with Directions in the Course of Life, and in the most sudden Incidents, as well to obtain Good, as avoid Evil.

Much of the Honour due to the Goodness of Providence, is unjustly taken away from it, by Men that give themselves a Loose in a general Neglect of these things: But that which is still more absurd to me is, that some Men are obstinately

nately resolv'd against paying the Homage of their Deliverances to their Maker, or paying the Reverence due to his Terrors, in any thing that befalls them ill, where it ought to be paid, that they will give all that Honour to another. If it was well, they tell you, they know not how, but so it happen'd, or it was so by good Chance, and the like. This is a Sort of Language I cannot understand : It seems to be a felonious Thought in its very Design, robbing Heaven of the Honour due to it, and lifting our selves in the Regiment of the Ungrateful.

But this is not all, for one Crime leads on to another, if this Part is Felony or Robbery, the next is Treason, for resolving first to deny the Homage of good or evil Events to God from whose Hands they come, they go on and pay it to the Devil, the Enemy of his Praise, and Rival of his Power.

Two of these Wretches travell'd a little Journey with me some Years ago ; and in their Return, some Time after I was gone from them, they met with a very different Adventure, and telling me the Story, they express'd themselves thus, *They were riding from Huntington towards London, and in some Lanes betwixt Huntington and Caxton, one happen'd by a Slip of his Horse's Foot, which lam'd him a little, to stay about half a Mile behind the other, was set upon by some Highway-men, who robb'd him, and abus'd him very much ; the other went on to Caxton, not taking Care of his Companion, thinking he had stay'd on some particular Occasion, and escap'd the Thieves, they making off cross the Country towards Cambridge.*

Well, says I to the first, How came you to escape ? *I don't know not I,* says he, *I happen'd not to look behind me, when his Horse stumbl'd, and I went forward, and by good Luck, adds he again,*

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I heard nothing of the Matter; here was, *it hap- pen'd*, and *by good Luck*, but not the least Sense of the Government of Providence in this Affair, or its Disposition for his Good, but an empty Idol of Air, or rather an imaginary nonsensical *Nothing*, an Image more inconsistent than those I mention'd among the *Chineses*; not a Monster indeed of a frightful Shape, and ugly Figure; loathsome and frightful, but a meer *Phantasm*, an Idea, a Non-Entity, a Name without being a miscall'd, unborn, nothing, hap, luck, Chance, that is to say, a Name put upon the *Medium*, which they set up in their Imagination, for Want of a Will to acknowledge their Maker, and recognize the Goodness which had particularly preserv'd him.

This was the most ungrateful Piece of Fool-ry, or to speak more properly, the maddest and fool-lishest Piece of Ingratitude that ever I met with.

Well, if this was foolish and preposterous, the other was as wicked and detestable; For when the first had told his Tale, I turn'd to the other, and ask'd him, What was the Matter? *Why! How-came this to pass?* said I, *why this Disaster has fallen all upon you? How was it?* Nay, says he, I don't know, I was a little behind, and my Horse chanc'd to slip, and lame himself, and he went for-ward, and left me; and as the Devil would have it, these Fellows came cross the Country, and chopt upon me; &c.

Here was first *Chance*, the same Mock-Goddes, as before, lam'd his Horse, and next, the Devil order'd the Highway-men to chop upon him that Moment. Now, tho' it may true, that the High- way-men were even by their Employment, doing the Devil's Office of going to and fro, seeking whom they might plunder; yet 'twas a higher Hand

Hand than Satan's, that deliver'd this poor blind Fellow into their Power.

We have a plain Guide for this in Scripture Language, in the Law of Man-slaughter, or Death, *as we call it foolishly enough*, by Misadventure it is in the 21 *Exod.* 13. in the Case of casual killing a Man, it is express'd thus, *If a Man lye not in Wait, but God deliver him into his Hand.* This was not to be accounted Murther, but the Slayer was to fly to the City of Refuge.

Here it is evident, that God takes all these Misadventures into his own Hand; and a Man kill'd by Accident, is a Man whom God has deliver'd up, for what End in his Providence is known only to himself, to be kill'd in that Manner, perhaps vindictively, perhaps not.

With what Face can any Man say, this was *as the Devil would have it*, or *as bad Luck would have it*, or it *happen'd*, or *chanc'd*, or *fell out*; all which are our simple and empty Ways of talking of things that are order'd by the immediate Hand or Direction of God's Providence.

The Words last quoted from the Scripture of *God's delivering a Man into another Man's Hand to be killed unwillingly*, are fully explained in another Place, *Deut.* xix. 5.

As when a Man goeth into the Wood with his Neighbour, to hew Wood, and his Hand fetches a Stroke with the Ax to cut down the Tree, and the Head slipeth from the Helve, and lighteth upon his Neighbour, that he die; he shall flee unto one of those Cities, and live.

The wicked thoughtless Creature, I have just mentioned, whose Horse fell lame, and stopt his Travelling, till he might come just in the Way of those Thieves, who it seems were crossing the Country, perhaps upon some other Exploit, ought
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to have reflected, that Providence, to chastise him, and bring him to a Sense of his Dependance upon, and being subjected to his Power, had directed him to be separated from his Companion, that he might fall into the Hands that robb'd and abus'd him; and the other had no less Obligation to give Thanks for his Deliverance: But how contrary they acted in both Cases, you have heard.

We have had abundance of Collections, in my Remembrance, of remarkable Providences, as they are call'd; and many People are forward to call them so: But this does not come up to the Case in Hand.

Tho' contemning Providence, and giving the Homage due to it, as above, to the Devil, or to Chance, Fate, and I know not what Embrio's of the Fancy are impious; yet every one that avoids this Evil, does not come up to the particular Point I am speaking of; for there is a manifest Difference between acknowledging the Being and Operations of Providence, and *listening to its Voice*, as many People acknowledge a God, that obey none of his Commands, and concern themselves in nothing of their Duty to him.

To listen to the Voice of Providence, is to take strict Notice of all the remarkable Steps of Providence, which relate to us in particular, to observe, if there is nothing in them instructing to our Conduct; no Warning to us for avoiding some Danger; no Direction for the taking some particular Steps for our Safety or Advantage; no Hint to remind us of such and such things *omitted*; no Conviction of something *committed*; no vindictive Step, by Way of Retaliation, marking out the Crime in the Punishment; You may easily observe the Differences between the Directions and War.

Warnings of Providence, when duly listned to, and the Notices of Spirits from an invisible World, *viz.* that these are dark Hints of Evil, with very little Direction to avoid it : But those Notices, which are to be taken from the Proceedings of Providence, tho' the Voice be a Kind of silent or soft Whisper ; yet 'tis generally attended with an Offer of the Means for escaping the Evil, nay, very often leads by the Hand to the very proper Steps to be taken ; and even obliges us, by a strong Conviction of the Reason of it, to take those Steps.

It is in vain for me to run into a Collection of Stories ; for Example, where the Variety is infinite, and things vary as every particular Man's Circumstances vary : But as every Event in the World is manag'd by the Superintendency of Providence ; so every Providence has in it some thing instructing, some thing that calls upon us to look up, or look out, or look in.

Every one of those Heads are big with particular Explanations ; but my Business is not Preaching ; I am making Observations and Reflections, let those make Enlargements who read it : In a Word, there is scarce any particular Providence attends our Lives, but we shall find, if we give due Weight to it, that it calls upon us, either.

1. To *look up*, and acknowledge the Goodness of God in sparing us, the Bounty of God in providing for us, the Power of God in delivering and protecting us, not forgetting to look up, and acknowledge, and be humble under the Justice of God, in being angry with, and afflicting us.

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2. Or to *look out*, and take the needful Caution and Warning given of evil approaching, and prepare either to meet or avoid it.

3. Or to *look in*, and reflect upon what we find Heaven animadverting upon, and afflicting us for, taking Notice of the Summons to repent and reform.

And this is; in a Word, what I mean by *Listening to the Voice of Providence*.



CHAP.



CHAP. VI.

Of the Proportion between the Christian and Pagan World.



Have said something of this already in my Enquiry after the State of Religion in the World; but upon some Reflections which fell in my Way since, I think it may offer further Thoughts, very improving, as well as diverting.

When we view the World geographically, take the Plan of the Globe, and measure it by Line, and cut it out into Latitude and Longitude, Degrees, Leagues, and Miles; we may see indeed that a pretty large Spot of the whole, is at present under the Government of Christian Powers and Princes, or under the Influence of their Power and Commerce, by Arms, Navies, Colonies, and Plantations; or their Factories, Missionaries, Residences, &c.

But I am loth to say we should take this for a Fulfilling the Promise made to the Messiah, that his Kingdom should be exalted above all Nations, and the Gospel be heard to the End of the Earth, I was going to say, *and yet without any Prophane-ness*; that we hope God will not *put us off* S O. I must acknowledge, I expect in the Fulfilling of these Promises, that the Time will come, *when the Know-*

Knowledge of God shall cover the Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea, that the Church of God shall be set open to the four Winds, that the Mountain of the Lords House shall be exalted above the Tops of the Mountains, and all the Nations shall flow into it, Isa. ii. 2. that is to say, that the Christian Religion, or the Profession of the Doctrine of the MESSIAH, shall be made national over the whole Globe, according to those Words, *Matth. xxiv. 14. Mark xiii. 13. Luke xxiv. 17.* But this may be a little too apocalyptical, or visionary for the Times; and 'tis no Business of mine, to enter upon the Interpretation of Scripture Difficulties, whatever I may understand, or believe my self about them; but rather to make my Observations, as I have begun, upon things which now are, and which we have seen and know, let what is to come, be as he pleases, who has ordered things past, and knows what is to follow.

The present Case is, to speak of the mathematical Proportion that there is now to be observed upon the Plain of the Globe, and observe how small a Part of the World it is, where the Christian Religion has really prevail'd; and is nationally profess'd; I speak of the Christian Religion, where it is, as I call it, National, *that is*, in its utmost Latitude; and I do so, that I may give the utmost Advantage, even against my self, in what I am going to say; and therefore, when I come to make Deductions for the Mixtures of barbarous Nations, I shall do it fairly also.

I have nothing to do with the Distinctions of Christians: I hope none will object against calling the Roman Church, a Christian Church, in this Respect, and the Professors of the Popish Church, *Christians*; neither do I scruple to call the Greek Church *Christian*, tho' in some Places so-blended
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with Superstition, and barbarous Customs, as in *Georgia*, *Armenia*, and the Borders of *Persia* and *Tartary*; likewise in many Parts of the *Czar* of *Muscovy's* Dominions, that (as before) the Name of Christ is little more than just spoken of, and literally known, without any material Knowledge of his Person, Nature, and Dignity; or of the Homage due to him as the Redeemer of the World.

The Nations of the World then; where Christ is acknowledged, and the Christian Religion is profess'd nationally, be it *Romish* Church or *Greek* Church, or even the Protestant Church, including all the several Subdivisions and Denominations of Protestants, take them all as Christians, I say, these Nations are as follow.

1. In *Europe*; *Germany*, *France*, *Spain*, *Italy*, *Great Britain*, *Denmark*, *Sweden*, *Muscovy*, *Poland*, *Hungary*, *Transylvania*, *Moldavia*, and *Walachia*.
2. In *Asia*, *Georgia*, and *Armenia*.
3. In *Africa*: No Place at all, the few Factories of *European* Merchants, only excepted.
4. In *America*: The Colonies of *Europeans* only, as follow:
 1. The *Spaniards*, in *Mexico* and *Peru*, the Coasts of *Chili*, of *Cartagena*, and *St. Martha*, and a small Colony at the *Buenos Ayres* on the *Rio de la Plata*.
 2. The *Portuguese*, in the *Brasils*.
 3. The *British*, on the Coast of *America*, from the Gulph of *Florida* to *Cape Britoon* on the Mouth of the Gulph of *St. Lawrence*, or the great River of *Canada*, also a little in *Newfoundland*, and *Hudsons Bay*.

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4. The *French* in the River of *Canada*, and the great River of *Mississippi*.
5. The *English*, *French*, and *Dutch*, on the Islands call'd the *Carribbees*, &c.

The chief Seat of the Christian Religion is at present in *Europe*: But if we measure the Quarter of the World, we call *Europe* upon the Plan of the Globe, and cast up the northern, frozen, and indeed uninhabitable Part of it, such *Laponia*, *Petzora*, *Candora*, *Obdora*, and the *Samoiedes*, with Part of *Siberia*, they are all Pagans, with the eastern unpeopl'd Desarts, bordering upon *Asia*, on the Way to *China*, and the vast Extent of Land on that Side, which tho' nominally under the Dominion of *Muscovy*, is yet all Pagan, even nationally so, under no real Government, but of their own Pagan Customs.

If we go from thence to the *South*, and take out of it the *European Tartars*, viz. of *Circassia*, the *Crimee*, and *Budziack*, if you go on, and draw a Line from the *Crim Tartary* to the *Danube*, and from thence to the *Adriatick Gulph*, and cut off all the Grand Seignior's *European Dominions*; I say, take this Extent of Land out of *Europe*, and the Remainder does not measure full two Thirds of Land in *Europe*, under the Christian Government, much of which is also Desart, and uninhabited, or at least, by such as cannot be call'd Christians, and do not concern themselves about it, as particularly, the *Swedish* and *Norwegian Lapland*, the more eastern and southern *Muscovy*, beyond the *Wolga*, even to *Karakathay*, and to the Borders of *Asia* on the Side of *India*; I say, taking in this Part, not above one half of *Europe* is really inhabited by Christians.

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The *Czar* of *Muscovy*, of the Religion, of whose Subjects I have said enough, is Lord of a vast extended Country; and those who have measur'd it critically, say, his Dominions are larger than all the rest of *Europe*; that is to say, that he possesses a full Half as much as *Europe*; and in those Dominions, he is Master of Abundance of Nations, that are Pagan or Mahometan, as in particular *Circassia*, being conquer'd by him, the *Circassian Tartars*, who are all Mahometans, or the most of them, are his Subjects.

However, since a Christian Monarch governs them, we must upon the Plan I laid down, call this a Christian Country; and that alone obliges me to give two Thirds of *Europe* to the Christians.

But this will bring another Account upon my Hands to ballance it, *viz.* That excepting this two Thirds, there will not come one Christian to be accounted for in any of the other three Parts of the World, except *Georgia* and *Armenia*; as for *Africa*, there is nothing to be mention'd on that Side: All the Christians that are on the Continent of *Africk*, consisting only of a few Merchants residing at the Coast Towns in the *Mediterranean*, as at *Alexandria*, *Grand Cairo*, *Tunis*, *Tripoli*, *Algier*, &c. The Factories of the *English* and *Dutch*, on the Coast of *Guinea*, the *Gold Coast*, the Coast of *Angola*, and at the *Cape of Good Hope*; all which put together, as I have calculated them, and as they are calculated by a better Judgment than mine, will not amount to 5000 People, excepting Christian Slaves in *Sallee*, *Algier*, *Tunis*, *Tripoli*, &c. which are not so many more.

America is throng'd with Christians, God wot, such as they are; for I must confess, the *European* Inhabitants of some of the Colonies there,

as well *French* and *English*, as *Spanish* and *Dutch*, very ill merit that Name.

Some Part of *America* is entirely under the Dominion and Government of the *European* Nations; and having indeed destroy'd the Natives, and made desolate the Country, they may be said to be Christian Countries in the Sense, as above.

But what Numbers do these amount to, compar'd to the Inhabitants of so great a Part of the World, as that of *America*, which at least is three Times as big as *Europe*, and in which are still vast extended Countries, infinite Numbers of People of Nations unknown, and even unheard of; which neither the *English*, *French*, *Spanish*, or *Portuguese* have ever seen; Witness the populous Cities and innumerable Nations, which Sir *Walter Raleigh* met with in his Voyage up the great River *Oroonoke*; in one of which they talk of two Millions of People, Witness the Nations infinitely populous, spread on both Sides the River *de Amozones*, and all the Country between these two prodigious Rivers, being a Country above 400 Miles in Breadth, and 1600 Miles in Length, besides its Extent South even to the *Rio Paraguay*, and S. E. to the *Brasils*, a rich, fruitful, and populous Country; and in which, by the Accounts given, there must be more People inhabiting at this Time, than in all the Christian Part of *Europe* put together, being the Chief, if not the only Part of *America*, into which the *Spaniards* never came, and whether the frighted People fled from them, being so fortify'd with Rivers and unpassable Bays and rapid Currents, and so inaccessible by the Number of Inhabitants, the Heat of the Climate, and the Mountains, Waterfals, and such other Obstructions, that the *Spaniards* durst never attempt to penetrate the Way.

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What are the Numbers of Christians in *America*, put them altogether to the Inhabitants of these Parts of *America*, besides the Northern Parts of *America* not enquir'd into.

But we are not calculating of People yet, but the Extent of Land, that the Christians possess, the *British* Colonies in the *North*, are by far the most populous even more than the *Spaniards* themselves, though the latter extend themselves over more Land.

The *British* Colonies in the *North* of *America* are supposed to contain Three Hundred Thousand Souls, including *Nova Scotia*, *New England*, *New York*, *New Jersey*, *East* and *West Pennsylvania*, *Maryland*, *Virginia*, and *Carolina*, and these lye extended upon the Coast from the Latitude of 32 Degrees, to 47, or thereabouts, being about 750 Miles in Length; but then much of this is very thinly peopled, and the Breadth they lye *West* into the Country is little or nothing, 50 Miles or 60 Miles is in many Places the most; and except some Plantations in *Virginia* in *Rapahanock*, and *Janes River* in *Virginia*, occasioned by the great In-let of the *Bay* there, and of the Rivers that fall into it. We can see nothing an hundred Miles within that Land but waste and Woods, whose Inhabitants seem to be fled farther up into the Country from the Face of their Enemies the Christians.

So that all this planting though so considerable, amounts to no more compared to the Country itself, than a long narrow Slip of Land upon the Sea-Coast, there being very few *English* Inhabitants planted any where above twenty Miles from the Sea, or from some navigable River, and even that Sea-Coast itself very thinly inhabited, and particularly from *New-England* to *New York*,

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from *New-England* North to *Annapolis*, from *Virginia* to *Carolina*; so that all this great Colony or Collection of Colonies, nay, tho' we include the *French* at *Canada*, are but a Point, a Handful, compar'd to the vast Extent of Land lying West and North-West from them, even to the South-Sea, an Extent of Continent full of innumerable Nations of People unknown, undiscovered, never search'd into or indeed heard of, but from one another, much greater in its Extent than all *Europe*.

If we take the North Part of *America* exclusive of all the Country, which the *Spaniards* possess, and which they call the Empire of *Mexico*; and exclusive too of what the *English* and *French* possess on the Coast, and in the two Rivers of *Canada* and *Mississippi* as above, which indeed are but Trifles; the rest of that Country *which as far as it has been travelled into, is found exceeding populous*, is a great deal larger than all *Europe*, though we have not reckoned the most Northern, Frozen and almost uninhabitable Part of it, where no End can be found, and where it is no doubt, but there is a contiguous Continent with the Northern Part of *Asia*, or so near joyning, as to be only parted by a narrow Gulph and Streight of Sea, easily passed over both by Man or Beast, or else it would be hard to give an Account how Man or Beast came into that Part of the World; I say, this vast Continent full of People, and no doubt, inhabited by many Millions of Souls, is all wrapt up in Idolatry and Paganism, given up to Ignorance and Blindness, worshipping the Sun, the Moon, the Fire, the Hills their Fathers, and in a Word the Devil.

As to the Thing we call Religion, or the Knowledge of the true God, much less the Doctrine of the
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the Messiah, and the Name of Christ, they not only have not, but never had the least Intimation of it on Earth, or Revelation of it from Heaven, till the *Spaniards* came among them: Nay, and now Christians are come among them, 'tis hard to say, whether the Paganism is much abated, except by the infinite Ravages the *Spaniards* made where they came, who rooted out the Idolatry by destroying the Idolaters, not by converting them; having cruelly cut off, as their own Writers affirm, above seventy Millions of People, and left the Country naked of its Inhabitants for many hundred Miles together.

But what need we come to Calculations for the present Time with Respect to *America*, let us but be at the Trouble to look back a little more than a Hundred Years, which is as nothing at all in the Argument; how had the whole Continent of *America* extended almost from Pole to Pole, with all the Islands round it, and peopled with such innumerable Multitudes of People, been as it were entirely abandoned to the Devil's Government, even from the beginning of Time, or at least from the second Peopling the World by *Noah* to the 16th Century, when *Ferdinando Cortez*, General for the famous *Charles* the 5th, first landed in the Gulph of *Mexico*?

We have heard much of the Cruelty of the *Spaniards* in destroying such Multitudes of the Inhabitants there, and of cutting off whole Nations by Fire and Sword: But as I am for giving up all the Actions of Men to the Government of Providence, it seems to me, that Heaven had determined such an Act of Vengeance should be executed, and of which the *Spaniards* were Instruments, to destroy those People, who were come up (by the Influence of the Devil, no

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Doubt) to such a dreadful height, in that abhor'd Custom of human Sacrifices, that the innocent Blood cried for it, and it seem'd to be a Time to put a Stop to that Crime, lest the very Race of People should at last be extinct by their own Butcheries.

The Magnitude of this may be guess'd at, by the Temple consecrated to the great Idol of *Vistlipustli* in the City of *Mexico*, where at the Command of *Montezuma* the Pagan Monarch, twenty thousand Men were sacrificed in a Year, and the Wall hung a Foot thick with clotted Blood, dashed in Ceremony against the Side of that Place on those Occasions.

This Abomination God in his Providence, put an End to, by destroying those Nations from the Face of the Earth, bringing a Race of bearded Strangers upon them, cutting in Pieces Man, Woman and Child, destroying their Idols, and even the Idolatry it self by the *Spaniards*; who, however wicked in themselves, yet were in this to be esteem'd Instruments in the Hand of Heaven, to execute the divine Justice, on Nations, whose Crimes were come up to a full Height, and that call'd for Vengeance.

I make no doubt (to carry on this Digression a little farther) that when God cast out the Heathen, so the Scripture calls it, from before the *Israelites*, and the Iniquity of the People of the Land was full, *Joshua*, *Moses*, and the *Israelites* were tax'd with as much Cruelty and Inhumanity, in destroying the Cities, killing Man, Woman, and Child; nay, even destroying the very Cattle, and Trees, and Fruits of the Earth, as ever the *Spaniards* were charg'd with in the Conquest of *Mexico*.

This is apparent by the Terror that was spread upon the Minds of the People round about them, whereof

whereof thousands fled to other Parts of the World. That History tells us, that the first Builders of the City of *Carthage*, long before the *Roman Times*, or before the Fable of *Queen Dido*, were some *Phenicians*, that is to say, *Canaanites*, who flying for their Lives, got Ships and went away to Sea, planting themselves on the Coast of *Africk*, as the first Place of Safety they arriv'd at, and to prove this a Pillar of Stone, was found not far from *Tripoli*, on which was cut in *Phenician* Characters, these Words, *We are of those who fled from the Face of Joshua the Robber*.

The Cruelties of the *Israelites*, in destroying the Nations of the Land of *Canaan*, was commanded from Heaven; and therein *Joshua* was justify'd in what was done. The Cruelties of the *Spaniards*, however abhorr'd by us, was doubtless an Appointment of God, for the Destruction of the wickedest and most abominable People upon Earth.

But this is all a Digression; I come to my Calculation: It is true, that the *Spaniards*, whom I allow to be Christians, have possess'd the Empires of *Mexico* and *Peru*: But after all the Havock they made, and the Millions of Souls they dismiss'd out of Life there, yet the Natives are infinitely the Majority of the Inhabitants; and tho' many of them are christianiz'd, they are little more than subjected, and take all the *Spaniards*, Christians, and all the *Portuguese* in the *Brasils*, all the *English* and *French* in the *North*, and in a Word, all the Christians in *America*, and put them together, they will not ballance one Part of the Pagans or Mahometans in *Europe*: For Example, Take the *Crim Tartars* of *Europe*, who inhabit the Bank of the *Euxine* Sea, they are more in Number than all the Christians in *America*; so that setting one Na-
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tion against the other, and you may reckon that there is not one Christian, or as if there were not one Christian in those three Parts of the World, *Asia*, *Africa*, and *America*, except the *Greeks* of *Asia*.

This is a just but a very sad Account of the small Extent of Christian Knowledge in the World; and were it consider'd, as it ought, would put the most powerful Princes of *Europe* upon thinking of some Methods, at least to open a Way for the spreading Christian Knowledge. I am not much of the Opinion indeed, that Religion should be planted by the Sword: But as the Christian Princes of *Europe*, however few in Number, are yet so superior to all the rest of the World in martial Experience and the Art of War, nothing is more certain than that, if they could unite their Interest, they are able to beat Paganism out of the World. Nothing is more certain than this, that would the Christian Princes unite their Powers, and act in Concert, they might destroy the *Turkish* Empire, and the *Persian* Kingdom, and beat the very Name of Mahomet out of the World.

It is no Boast to say, That were there no intestine Broils among us, the Christian Soldiery is so evidently superior to the *Turks* at this Time, that had they all join'd after the late Battel at *Belgrade*, to have sent 80000 *Veteran* Soldiers to have join'd Prince *Eugene*, and supply'd him with Money and Provisions by the Ports of the *Adriatic* Gulph, and the *Archipelago*, that Prince would in two or three Campaigns, have driven the *Mahometans* out of *Europe*, taken *Constantinople*, and have overturn'd the *Turkish* Empire.

After such a Conquest, whether might not the Christian Religion have spread? The King of *Spain* with the same Ease would reduce the *Moors* of *Barbary*, and dispossess those Sons of Hell the
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Algerines, Tripolines, Tunizceens, and all the Mahometan Pyrates of that Coast, and plant again the antient Churches of *Africk*, the Sees of *Tertullian*, *St. Cyprian*, &c.

Nay, even the *Czar* of *Muscovy*, an enterprizing and glorious Prince, well assisted and supported by his Neighbours, the Northern Powers, who together are Masters of the best Soldiery in the World, would not find it impossible to march an Army of 36000 Foot and 16000 Horse, in Spite of waste and unhospitable Defarts, even to attack the *Chinese* Empire; who, notwithstanding their infinite Numbers, pretended Policy and great Skill in War, would sink in the Operation: And such an Army of disciplin'd *European* Soldiers, would beat all the Forces of that vast Empire, with the same (or greater) Ease, as *Alexander* with 30000 *Macedonians* destroy'd the Army of *Darius*, which consisted of 680000 Men.

And let no Man ridicule this Project, on Account of the March which I know they will call 3000 Miles and more: While there is no Obstruction, but the Length of the Way, it is not so difficult as some may imagine; 'tis far from impossible, to furnish sufficient Provisions for the March, which is indeed the only Difficulty that carries any Terror in it.

Such a Prince as the *Czar* of *Muscovy* cannot want the Assistance of innumerable Hands, for the Amassing or Carriage for conveying to proper Magazines, sufficient Stores of Provisions, for the maintaining a select chosen Body of Men to march over the Defarts; for in the grand March, no useless Mouths should be found to feed.

Why then should not the Christian Princes think it a Deed of Compassion to the Souls of Men, as well as an humble Agency to the Work of Providence,

dence, and to the Fulfilling the Promises of their Saviour, by a moderate, and as far as in them lyes, a bloodless Conquest, to reduce the whole World to the Government of Christian Power, and so plant the Name and Knowledge of Christ Jesus among the Heathens and Mahometans? I am not supposing, that they can plant real Religion in this manner; the Business of Power, is to open the Way to the Gospel of Peace, the Servants of the King of the Earth are to fight, that the Servants of the King of Heaven may preach.

Let but an open Door be made for the preaching of the Word of God, and the Ministers of Christ be admitted, if they do not spread Christian Knowledge over the Face of the Earth, the Fault will be their's. Let but the military Power reduce the Pagan World, and banish the Devil and Mahomet from the Face of the Earth, the Knowledge of God be diligently spread, the Word of God duly preach'd, and the People meekly and faithfully instructed in the Christian Religion; the World would soon receive the Truth, and the Knowledge of divine Things would be the Study and Delight of Mankind.

I know, some nice and difficult People would object here, how are the present Body of Christians, *as you call them*, qualified to convert the Pagan and Mahometan World, when they are not able to settle the main Point, *viz.* What the Christian Religion is, Or, what they would convert them to? That Christianity is subdivided into so many Parts, and particular Principles, the People so divided in their Opinion; and that which is still worse, there is so little Charity among the several Sorts, that some of them would rather side with *Mahomet* against their Neighbours, than assist to propagate that particular Doctrine in Religion, which they

they condemn. Thus the Members of the Protestant Faith would make it a Point of Principle, not to support or propagate the Interest of Popery in such a Conquest as this: And again, the Catholics would as much make it a Duty on them to root out Heresy, so they call the Protestant *Doctrinè*, as they would to root out Paganism and the Worship of Devils.

I would not answer for some Protestants, that they would not be of the same Mind as to particular Divisions among Protestants: The Difference among some Opinions is such, and their Want of Charity one to another, sets them at such Variance, that if they do not censure one another for Devil-Worshippers, yet we know they frequently call some of the opposite Principles, Doctrines of Devils; and persecute one another with as much Fury, as ever the Heathen persecuted the Primitive Churches.

Witness the Violences which have reign'd between the Episcopal and Presbyterian Parties, in the North of *Ireland*, and in *Scotland*, which has so often broken out into a Flame of War, and that Flame been always quench'd with Blood.

Witness the frequent Persecutions, Wars, Massacres, and other cruel and unnatural Doings, which have been in these Parts of the World among Christians, the Effect of a mistaken Zeal for the Christian Religion; which as it was not planted by Blood and Violence, so much less can Christians justify the Endeavours to erect this or that Opinion in it, by the Ruine and Blood of their Brethren.

But this is far from being a Reason, why we should not think it our Duty to subdue the barbarous and idolatrous Nations of the World; in Order to suppress the Worshipping the Devil, who

is the Enemy not only of God, and of all true Religion in the World, but who is the great Destroyer and Enemy of Mankind, and of his future or present Felicity; and whose Business is always to the utmost of his Power to involve and retain them either in Ignorance, or in Error.

I distinguish between forcing Religion upon People, or forcing them to entertain this or that Opinion of Religion; I say, I distinguish between that, and opening the Door for Religion to come among them: The former is a Violence indeed, inconsistent with the Nature of Religion it self, whose Energy prevails and forces its Way into the Minds of Men, by another Sort of Power; Whereas the latter is removing a Force unjustly put already upon the Minds of Men by the Artifice of the Devil, to keep the Christian Religion out of the World; so that indeed I propose a War not with Men, but with the Devil; a War to depose *Sathan's* infernal Tyranny in the World, and set open the Doors to Religion, that it may enter if Men will receive it; if they will not receive it, be that to themselves.

In a Word, to unchain the Wills of Men, set their Inclinations free, that their Reason may be at Liberty to influence their Understandings, and that they may have the Faith of Christ preach'd to them; whether they will hear or forbear, I say, as above, is no Part of the Question, let the Christian Doctrine and its spiritual Enemies alone to struggle about that: I am for dealing with the Temporalities of the Devil, and deposing that human Power which is armed in the Behalf of obstinate Ignorance, and resolute to keep out the Light of Religion from the Mind.

I think

I think this is a lawful and just War, and in the End, kind both to them and their Posterity : Let me bring the Case home to our selves.

Suppose neither *Julius Cesar* or any of the *Roman* Generals or Emperors, had cast their Eyes towards *Britain* for some Ages, or till the Christian Religion had spread over the whole *Roman* Empire. 'Tis true, the *Britains* might at last have received the Christian Faith in common with the rest of the Northern World ; but they had yet layn above 300 Years longer in Ignorance and Paganism, than they did ; and some hundred thousands of People, who prov'd zealous Christians, nay even Martyrs for the Christian Doctrine, would have dy'd in the profess'd Paganism of the *Britains*.

Now 'tis evident, the Invasion of the *Romans* was an unjust, bloody, tyrannical Assault upon the poor *Britains*, against all Right and Property, against Justice and Neighbourhood, and meerly carry'd on for Conquest and Dominion. Nor indeed had the *Romans* any just Pretence of War ; yet God was pleas'd to make this Violence be the kindest Thing that could have befallen the *British* Nation, since it brought in the Knowledge of God among the *Britains*, and was a Means of reducing a heathen and barbarous Nation to the Faith of Christ, and to embrace the *Messias*.

Thus Heaven serves it self of Mens worst Designs, and the Avarice, Ambition, and Rage of Men, have been made Use of to bring to pass the glorious Ends of Providence, without the least Knowledge or Design of the Actors : Why then may not the great Undertakings of the Princes of *Europe*, if they could be brought to act in Concert, with a good Design to bring all the World, to open their Doors to the Christian Religion, and by Consequence their Ears? I say, why may not such an Attempt

Attempt be blessed from Heaven with so much Success, at least as to make Way for bringing in nominal Christianity among the Nations? For as to obliging the People to be of this or that Opinion afterward, that is another Case.

There is a great Pother made in the World among the several Denominations of Christians about Coertion, erecting a Church, and compelling Men to come in; that is to say, one Sort of Christians persecuting another Sort of Christians, to make them worship Christ their Way, as if Christ had no Sheep but one Fold.

I distinguish much between using Force to reduce Heathens and Savages to Christianity, and using Force to reduce those that are already Christians, to be of this or that Opinion; I will not say but a War might be very just, and the Cause be righteous, to reduce the Worshipers of the Pagods of *India*, to the Knowledge and Obedience of Christianity, when it would be a horrible Injustice to commence a like War, to reduce even a Popish Nation to be Protestant.

But my propos'd War does not reach so far as that neither; for tho' I would have a Nation of Pagans conquer'd, that their Idols and Temples might be destroy'd, and their Idol Worship be abolish'd; yet I would be very far from punishing and persecuting the People for not believing in Christ: For if we believe that Faith, as the Scripture says is the Gift of God, How can we upon any Christian Foundation, punish or persecute the Man for not exercising that which God had not given him.

Hence, compelling Men to conform to this or that particular Profession of the Christian Religion, is to me impious and unchristian.

And

And shall I speak a Word here of the unhappy Custom among Christians, of reviling one another with Words, on Account of differing Opinions in Religion: It was a Part of *Apocryphal* Scripture, taken from one of the traditional Sayings of the Rabbies, *Thou shalt not mock at the Gods of the Heathens*. But Ribaldry, Satyr, and Sarcasms, are the Usage we give one another every Day on the Subject of Religion; as if Slander and the Severities of the Tongue, were not the worst kind of Violence in Matters of the Christian Religion.

In a Word, I must acknowledge, if I am to speak of Reproach in general, I know no worse Persecution than that of the Tongue; *Solomon* says, *There are that speak, like the piercing of a Sword*; and King *David* was so sensible of the Bitterness of the Tongue, that he is full of Exclamations upon the Subject; among the rest, he says of his Enemies, *They have compassed me about with Words of Hatred. He clothed himself with Cursing like as with his Garment*, Psalm cix. 3, 18.

It is indeed remote from the Subject I am upon, to talk of this kind of uncharitable Dealing, but as just Observations are never out of Season, it may have its Uses: Let no Man slight the Hint, tho' it were meant of Religion only, for that indeed is my present Subject; there is doubtless as severe a Persecution by the Tongue, as that of Fire and Faggot, and some think 'tis as hard to be born.

I have never met with so much of this any where in all my Travels as in *England*, where the Mouths of the several Sects and Opinions are so effectually open against one another, that albeit common Charity commands us to talk the best of particular Persons in their Failings and Infirmities; yet here, censuring, condemning and re-
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proaching

proaching one another on Account of Opinions, is carried on with such a Gust, that lets every one see nothing but Death and Destruction can follow, and no Reconciliation can be expected.

I have liv'd to see Men of the best Light be mistaken, as well in Party as in Principles, as well in Politicks as in Religion, and find not only Occasion, but even a Necessity to change Hands or Sides in both; I have seen them sometimes run into contrary Extremes, beyond their first Intention, and even without Design: Nay, in those unhappy Changes, I have seen them driven into Lengths they never designed, by the fiery Repentment of those whom they seem'd to have left; and whom they differ'd from; I have lived to see these Men acknowledge even publickly and openly, they were wrong and mistaken, and express their Regret for being misled very sincerely; but I cannot say, I have liv'd to see the People, they have desir'd to return to, forgive or receive them: Perhaps, the Age I have lived in, has not been a proper Season for Charity, I hope Futurity will be furnish'd with better Christians, or perhaps 'tis appointed so, to illustrate the divine Mercy, and let Mankind see, that they are the only Creatures that never forgive. I have seen a Man in the Case I speak of, offer the most sincere Acknowledgments of his having been mistaken, and this not in Matters essential either to the Person's Morals or Christianity, but only in Matters of Party, and with the most moving Expressions, desire his old Friends to forgive what has been pass'd; and have seen their Return, be mocking him with what they call'd a Baseness of Spirit, and a mean Submission: I have seen him expostulate with them, why they should not act upon the same Terms with a Penitent, as God himself
not

not only prescribed, but yields to ; and have seen them in Return, tell him, God might forgive him if he pleased, but they would never ; and then expose all those Offers to the first Comer in Banter and Ridicule : But take me right too, I have seen at the same Time, that to wiser Men it has been always thought to be an exposing themselves, and an Honour to the Person.

I speak this *too feelingly*, and therefore say no more ; there is a Way by Patience, to conquer even the universal Contempt of Mankind ; and though two Drams of that Drug be a Vomit for a Dog, it is in my Experience the only Method ; there is a secret Peace in it, and in Time the Rage of Men will abate, a constant steady adhering to Vertue and Honesty, and shewing the World, that whatever Mistakes he might be led into, supposing them to be Mistakes, that yet the main Intention and Design of his Life, was sincere and upright ; he that governs the Actions of Men by an unbia's'd Hand, will never suffer such a Man to sink under the Weight of universal Prejudice and Clamour.

I ROBINSON CRUSOE, grown old in Affliction, born down by Calumny and Reproach, but supported from within, boldly prescribe this Remedy against universal Clamours and Contempt of Mankind ; Patience, a steady Life of Vertue and Sobriety, and a comforting Dependance on the Justice of Providence, will first or last restore the Patient to the Opinion of his Friends, and justify him in the Face of his Enemies ; and in the mean time ; will support him comfortably, in despising those who want Manners and Charity, and leave them to be cursed from Heaven with their own Passions and Rage.

This very Thought made me long ago claim a kind of Property in some good old Lines of the famous *George Withers* Esq; made in Prison in the *Tower*; he was a poetical Gentleman, who had in the Time of the Civil Wars in *England*, been unhappy in changing of Sides too often, and had been put into the *Tower* by every Side in their Turn; once by the King, once by the Parliament, once by the Army, then by the Rump, and at last again, *I think*, by General *Monk*; in a Word, what ever Side got up, he had the Disaster to be down, the Lines are thus :

*The World and I may well agree,
as most that are offended;
For I slight her, and she slights me,
and there's our Quarrel ended,*

*For Service done and love exprest,
Tho' very few regard it,
My Country owes me Bread at least :
But if I am debarr'd it,
Good Conscience is a daily Feast,
and Sorrow never marr'd it.*

But this Article of verbal Persecution, has hurried me from my Subject, which I must return to.

I have spoken of a Project for the Czar of *Muscovy*, worthy of a Monarch, who is Lord of so vast an extent of Country, as the *Russian* Empire reaches to; which is in Effect as I have said, much more than half *Europe*, and consequently an eighth Part of the World. I have given my Thoughts how a War to open a Door for the
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Christian Religion may be justifiable, and that it has not the least Tincture of Persecution in it; If the Christian Princes of the World, who now spend their Force so much to an ill Purpose, in real Persecution, would join in an universal War against Paganism and Devil-worship, the savage Part of Mankind would in one Age, be brought to bow their Knees to the God of Truth, and would bless the Enterprize it self in the End of it, as the best Thing that ever befel them: Nor could such an Attempt fail of Success, unless Heaven in Justice had determined to shut up the World longer in Darkness, and the Cup of their Abominations was not yet full; But I may venture to say, there would be much more Ground for such Christian Princes to hope and expect the Concurrence of Heaven in such an Undertaking, than in sheathing their Swords in the Bowels of their Brethren, and making an Effusion of Christian Blood upon every slight Pretence, as we see has been the Case in *Europe* for above thirty Years past.

I had intended to remark here, that as the Country possessed by Christians is but a Spot of the Globe, compared to the Heathen, Pagan, and Mahometan World; so the Number of real Christians among the Nations professing the Christian Name, is yet a more disproportioned Part, a mere Trifle, and hardly to be compar'd with the infinite Numbers of those who tho' they call themselves Christians, yet know as little of God and Religion as can be imagin'd to be known, where the Word Christian is spoken of, and neither seek or desire to know more; in a Word, who know but little of God or Jesus Christ, Heaven or Hell, and regard none of them.

This is a large Field, and being throughly search'd into, would I doubt not, reduce the real faithful Subjects of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, to a much fewer Number than those of *Mahomet*; nay, than those of the Monarch of *Germany*; and make our Lord appear a weaker Prince, speaking in the Sense of Kingdoms, than many of the King's of the Earth. And if it be true that the old King of *France* should say, That he had more loyal Subjects than King Jesus; I do not know, but in the Sense his Most Christian Majesty meant it, the Thing might be very true.

But this Observation is something out of my present Road, and merits to be spoken of by itself. The Number of true Christians will never be known on this Side the great Bår, where they shall be critically separated. No political Arithmetick can make a Calculation of the Number of true Christians, while they live blended with the false ones, since it is not only hard, but impossible to know them one from another in this World.

We shall perhaps be surpris'd at the last Day, to see some People at the Right-hand of the righteous Judge, whom we have condemned with the utmost Zeal in our Opinions, while we were Contemporary with them in Life; for Charity, as it is generally practis'd in this World, and mix'd with our human Infirmities, such as Pride, Self-opinion, and Personal-prejudice, is strangely mis-guided, and makes us entertain Notions of Things and of People, quite different from what they really deserve; and there is hardly any Rule to prescribe ourselves, except it be of the Text, *In Meekness, every one esteeming other better than themselves*, which by the Way, is difficult to do.

But

But though we shall thus see at the great *Audit*, a Transposition of Persons from the Station they held in our Charity, we shall only thereby see that our Judgment was wrong; that God judgeth not as Man judgeth, and that we too rashly condemn, whom he has thought fit to justify and accept.

Let then the Number of Christians be more or less, as he that makes them Christians determines, this is not for us to enter into, and this brings me back to what I said before, that though we cannot make Christians, we both can and may, and indeed ought to open the Door to Christianity, that the Preaching of God's Word, which is the ordinary Means of bringing Mankind to the Knowledge of Religion, may be spread over the whole World.

With what Vigour do we consult, and how do the labouring Heads of the World club together to form Projects, and to raise Subscriptions to extend the general Commerce of Nations into every Corner of the World: But 'twould pass for a Bubb.e of all Bubbles, and a Whimsy that none would engage in, if ten Millions should be asked to be subscribed, for sending a strong Fleet and Army to conquer Heathenism and Idolatry, and protect a Mission of Christians, to be employ'd in Preaching the Gospel to the poor Heathens, say it were on the Coast of *Cormandel*, the Island of *Ceylon* and Country of *Malabar*, or any of the Dominions of the *Great Mogul*, and yet such an Attempt would not only be just, but infinitely advantageous to the People who should undertake it, and to the People of the Country, on whom the Operation should be wrought.

In the occasional Discourses I had on this Subject, in Conversation with Men of good Judgment

ment and Principles, I have been often ask'd in what Manner I would propose to carry on such a Conquest as I speak of, and how it should answer the End; and that I may not be supposed to suggest a Thing impracticable in itself or for which no rational Scheme might be proposed; I shall make a brief Essay, at the Manner, in which the Conquest I speak of should be, or ought to be carried on; and if it be considered seriously, the Difficulties and perhaps all the reasonable Objections might vanish in an Instant. I will therefore first, *for the Purpose only*, suppose that an Attempt was made by a Christian Nation, to conquer and subdue some Heathen or *Mahometan* People at a Distance from them, place the Conquest where, and among whom we will: For Example, Suppose it was the great Island of *Madagascar*, or that of *Ceylon*, *Borneo* in the *Indies*, or those of *Japan*, or any other where you please.

I would first suppose, the Place to be infinitely populous as any of those Countries, though they are Islands, are said to be; and because the *Japonnese* are said to be a most sensible sagacious People, under excellent Forms of Government, and capable more than ordinarily of receiving Impressions, supported by the Argument and Example of a vertuous and religious Conqueror.

For this Purpose you must grant me, that the Island or Islands of *Japan* were in a Situation proper for the undertaking, and that a powerful *European* Army being landed upon them, had in a great Battle or in divers Battles, over-thrown all their Military Force, and had entirely reduced the whole Nation to their Power: As to go back to Examples, the *Venetians* had done by the *Turks* in the *Morea* in a former War, or as the *Turks* did in the Isles of *Candia*, *Cyprus*, and the

the like. The short Scheme for establishing the Government in those Countries should be this ;

First, As the War is pointed chiefly against the Kingdom of the Devil, in behalf of the Christian Worship, so no Quarter should be given to Satan's Administration ; and as nothing else should willingly be treated with Violence ; so indeed no Part of the Devils OEconomy should have any Favour, but all the Idols should immediately be destroyed, and publicly burnt, all the Pagods and Temples burnt, and the very Face and Form of Paganism and the Worship attending it, be utterly defaced and destroyed.

Secondly, The Priests and dedicated Persons of every kind, by whatsoever Names or Titles known or distinguished, should be at least removed, if not destroyed.

Thirdly, All the Exercise of profane and idolatrous Rites, Ceremonies, Worship, Festivals, and Customs, should be abolished entirely, so as by Time to be forgotten, and clean wiped out of the Minds, as well as out of the Practice of the People.

This is all the Coertion I propose, and less than this cannot be proposed, because though we may not by Arms and Force compel Men to be religious, because if we do, we cannot make them sincere,

sincere, and so by Persecution we only create Hypocrites; yet I insist that we may by Force, and that with the greatest Justice possible, suppress Paganism, and the Worship of God's Enemy the Devil, and banish it out of the World; nay, that we ought to do it to the utmost of our Power: But I return to the Conquest.

The Country being thus entirely reduced under Christian Government, the Inhabitants if they submit quietly, ought to be used with Humanity and Justice; no Cruelty, no Rigour; they should suffer no Oppression, Injury, or Injustice, that they may not receive evil Impressions of the People that are come among them; lest entertaining an Abhorrence of Christians, from their evil Conduct, Cruelty, and Injustice, they should entertain an Abhorrence of the Christian Religion for their Sakes; as the poor Wretches the *Indians* in *America*, who when they were talked to of the Future State, the Resurrection of the Dead, Eternal Felicity in Heaven, and the like, enquir'd where the *Spaniards* went after Death, and if any of them went to Heaven? and being answered in the Affirmative, shook their Heads, and desired they might go to Hell then, for that they were afraid to think of being in Heaven, if the *Spaniards* were there.

A just and generous Behaviour to the Natives, or at least to such of them as should show themselves willing to submit, would certainly engage them in their Interest, and accordingly would in a little while bring them to embrace that Truth, which dictated such just Principles to those who espoused it.

Thus Prejudices being removed, the Way to Instruction would be made the more plain, and then would be the Time for Gospel-Labourers to enter upon the Harvest; Ministers should be instructed to

to teach them our Language, to exhort them to seek the Blessings of Religion and of the true God, and so gradually to introduce right Principles among them at their own Request.

From hence they should proceed, to teach all the young Children the Language spoken by them, who would then be their Benefactors, rather than Conquerors, and a few Years wearing the old Generation out, the Posterity of them, and of their Conquerors, would be all one Nation.

In Case any rejected the Instruction of religious Men, and adher'd obstinately to his Idolatry, and would not be reclaimed by gentle and christian Usage, suitable Methods are to be taken with such, that they might not make a religious Faction in the Country, and gain others to side with them, in order to recover their Liberty, as they might call it to serve their own Gods, that is to say Idols; for it must be for ever as just, not to permit them to go back to Idolatry by Force, as it was to pull them from it by Force.

By this kind of Conquest, the Christian Religion would be most effectually propagated among innumerable Nations of Savages and Idolaters, and as many People be brought to worship the true God, as may be said to do it at this Time in the whole Christian World.

This is my *Cruisado*, and it would be a War as justifiable on many Accounts, as any that was ever undertaken in the World, a War that would bring Eternal Honour to the Conquerors, and an Eternal Blessing to the People conquer'd.

It were easy now to cut out Enterprises of this Nature for other of the Princes of the World than the Czar of *Muscovy*; and I could lay very rational Schemes for such Undertakings, and the Schemes that could, if througly pursued never fail

fail of Success: For Example, An Expedition against the *Moors* of *Africa*, by the *French*, *Spanish* and *Italian* Princes, who daily suffer so much by them, and the last of whom are at perpetual War with them; how easy would it be to those Powers to join in a Christian Confederacy, to plant the Christian Religion again in the *Numidian* and *Mauritanian* Kingdoms; where was once the famous Church of *Carthage*, and from whence Thousands of Christians have gone to Heaven; the Harvest of the primitive Labours of *St. Cyprian*, *Tertullian*, and many more, whose Posterity now bow their Knees to that latest and worst of all Impostors, *Mahomet*.

But unchristian Strife was always a Bar against the Propagation of Christian Religion, and unnatural Wars carried on among the Nations I speak of, are made so much the Business of the Christian World, that I do not expect in our Time, to see the Advantages taken hold of, that the Nature of the Thing offers: But I am persuaded, and leave it upon Record as my settled Opinion, that one Time or other, the Christian Powers of *Europe*, shall be inspired from Heaven for such a Work, and then the Easiness of subduing the Kingdom of *Africa* to the Christian Power, shall shame the Generations past, who had the Opportunity so often in their Hands, but made no Use of it.

Note, In this Part of the Subject I am upon, I must acknowledge there is a double Argument for a War: 1. In Point of the interfering Interests, *Europe* ought to take Possession of those Shoars, without which it is manifest her Commerce is not secured; and indeed, while that Part of *Africk* bordering on the Sea, is in the Hands of Robbers, Pyrates cannot be secur'd: Now, this is a Point of undisputed Right, for a War-Trade claims the
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Protection of the Powers to whom it belongs, and we make no Scruple to make War upon one another, for the Protection of our Trade, and it is allowed to be a good Reason why we should do so. Why then is it not a good Reason to make War upon Thieves and Robbers? If one Nation takes the Ships belonging to another, we immediately reclaim the Prize from the Captors, and require of the Prince, that Justice be done against the Aggressor, who is a Breaker of the Peace; and if this is refused, we make War.

But shall we do thus to Christians, and scruple to make an universal War for the rooting out a Race of Pyrates and Rovers who live by Rapin, and are continually employed like the Lions and Tygers of their own *Lybia* in devouring their Neighbours: This, I say, makes such a War not only just on a religious Account, but both just and necessary upon a civil Account.

The War then being thus proved to be just on other Accounts, why should not 2. The Extirpation of Idolatry, Paganism, and Devil-Worship, be the Consequence of the Victory. If God be allow'd to be the Giver of Victory, how can it be answered to him, that the Victory should not be made Use of, for the Interest and Glory of the God of War, from whom it proceeds? But these Things are not to be offered to the World, till higher Principles work in the Minds of Men, in their making War and Peace, than yet seems to take up their Minds.

I was tempted upon this Occasion, to make an Excursion here, upon the Subject of the very light Occasions, Princes and Powers, States and Statesmen make use of, for the engaging in War and Blood one against another; one for being ill satisfied with the other, and another for preserving the

the Ballance of Power ; this for nothing at all, and that for something next to nothing ; and how little Concern the Blood that is necessarily spilt in these Wars produces among them : But this is not a Case that will so well bear, to be entred upon in a publick Manner at this Time.

All I can add is, I doubt, no such Zeal for the Christian Religion, will be found in our Days, or perhaps in any Age of the World, till Heaven beats the Drums itself, and the glorious Legions from above come down on Purpose to propagate the Work, and to reduce the whole World to the Obedience of King *Jesus* ; a Time which some tell us is not far off : But of which I heard nothing in all my Travels and Illuminations, *no not one Word.*

F I N I S.



T H E



A
VISION
OF THE
ANGELICK WORLD.



THEY must be much taken up with the Satisfaction of what they are already, that never spare their Thoughts upon the Subject of what they shall be.

The Place, the Company, the Employment which we expect to know so much of hereafter, must certainly be well worth our while to enquire after here.

I believe the main Interruptions which have been given to these Enquiries, and perhaps, the Reason why those that have entred into them

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have

have given them up, and those who have not entred into them, have satisfied themselves in the utter Neglect, have been the wild chimerick Notions, enthusiastick Dreams, and unsatisfying Ideas, which most of the Conceptions of Men have led them into, about these Things.

As I endeavour to conceive justly of these Things, I shall likewise endeavour to reason upon them clearly, and, if possible, convey some such Ideas of the invisible World to the Thoughts of Men, as may not be confused and indigested, and so leave them darker than I find them.

The Locality of Heaven or Hell is no Part of my Search; there is doubtless a Place reserv'd for the Reception of our Souls after Death; as there is a State of Being for material Substances, so there must be a Place; if we are to BE, we must have a *where*; the Scripture supports Reason in it, *Judas* is gone to his Place, *Dives* in Hell lift up his Eyes, and saw *Lazarus* in *Abraham's* Bosom; the Locality of Bliss and Misery seems to be positively asserted in both Cases.

But there is not so clear a View of the Company as of the Place; it is not so easy to enquire into the World of Spirits, as it is evident that there are such Spirits, and such a World; we find the Locality of it is natural, but who the Inhabitants are, is a Search of still a sublimer Nature, liable to more Exception, encumber'd with more Difficulties, and exposed to much more Uncertainty.

I shall endeavour to clear up as much of it as I can, and intimate most willingly, how much I rejoyce in the Expectation, that some other Enquirers may go farther, 'till at last, all that Providence has thought fit to discover of that Part may be perfectly known.

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The Discoveries in the Scripture which head to this, are innumerable; but the positive Declaration of it seems to be declin'd. When our Saviour walking on the Sea, frighted his Disciples, and they cried out, what do we find terrify'd them? Truly, they thought they had seen a Spirit. One would have thought such Men as they, who had the Vision of *God manifest in the Flesh*, should not have been so much surpriz'd, if they had seen a Spirit, that is to say, *seen an Apparition*; for to see a Spirit, seems to be an Allusion, not an Expression to be us'd literally, a Spirit being not visible by the Organ of human Sight.

But what if it had been a Spirit? if it had been a good Spirit, what had they to fear? And if a bad Spirit, what would *crying out* have assisted them? When People cry out in such Cases, it is either for Help, and then they cry to others; or for Mercy, and then they cry to the Subject of their Terror to spare them. Either Way it was either the foolishest, or the wickedest Thing that ever was done by such grave Men as the Apostles; for if it was a good Spirit, as before; they had no Need to cry out; and if it was a bad one, who did they cry to? For 'tis evident they did not pray to God, or cross and bless themselves, as was afterwards the Fashion; but they *cried out*, that is to say, they either cried out for Help, which was great Nonsense, to call to Man for Help against the Devil; or they cried to the Spirit they saw, that it might not hurt them, which was, in short, neither less, or more, than praying to the Devil.

This put me in Mind of the poor Savages in many of the Countries of *America* and *Africa*, who really instructed by their Fear, that is to say, by meer Nature, worship the Devil, that he may not hurt them.

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Here I must digress a little, and make a Transition from the Story of a Spirit, to the strange Absurdities of Mens Notions at that Time; and particularly, of those upon whom the first Impressions of Christ's Preachings were wrought, and if it be look'd narrowly into, one cannot but wonder what strange ignorant People, even the Disciples themselves were, at first; and indeed their Ignorance continued a great while, even to after the Death of Christ himself; witness the foolish Talk of the two Disciples going to *Emmaus*. It is true they were wiser afterwards when they were better taught; but the Scripture is full of the Discoveries of their Ignorance; as in the Notions of sitting at his Right-hand and his Left, in his Kingdom, ask'd for by *Zebedee's* Children; no doubt but the good Woman their Mother thought one of her Sons should be Lord Treasurer there, and the other Lord Chancellor, and she could not but think those Places their Due, when she saw them in such Favour with him here. Just so in their Notion of seeing a Spirit here, which put them into such a Fright, and indeed they might be said, according to our dull Way of Talking, to be frighted out of their Wits; For had their Senses been in Exercise, they would either have rejoic'd in the Appearance of a good Angel, and stood still to hear his Message, as from Heaven; or pray'd to God to deliver them out of the Hands of the Devil, on their supposing it, as above, to be a Vision from Hell.

But I come to the Subject. It is evident that the Notion of Spirits, and their intermeddling with the Affairs of Men, and even of their appearing to Men, prevail'd so universally in those Ages of the World, that even God's own People, who were instructed from himself, believ'd it,
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nor is there any Thing in all the Old Testament Institution to contradict it, tho' many Things to confirm it; such particularly, as the Law against what is call'd a familiar Spirit, which was esteem'd nō better or worse than a conversing with the Devil, that is to say, with some of the evil Spirits of the World I speak of.

The Witch of *Endor*, and the Story of an Apparition of an old Man personating *Samuel*, which is so plainly asserted in Scripture, and which the learned Opposers of these Notions have spent so much weak Pains to disturb our Imaginations about, yet assure us, that such Apparitions are not inconsistent with Nature, or with Religion; nay, the Scripture allows this Woman to *Paw waw*, as the *Indians* in *America* call it, and conjure for the raising this Spectre, and when it is come, allows it to speak a great prophetick Truth, foretelling the King in all its terrible Particulars what was to happen to him, and what did befall him the very next Day.

Either this Appearance must be a good Spirit, or a bad; if it was a good Spirit, it was an Angel, as it is express'd in another Place of the Apostle *Peter*, when he knock'd at the good People's Door in *Jerusalem*, *Acts* xii. 15. and then it supports my Opinion of the Spirits unembodied, conversing with, and taking Care of the Spirits embodied; if it was an evil Spirit, then they must grant God to be making a Prophet of the Devil, and making him personate *Samuel* to foretell Things to come; permitting Sathan to speak in the first Person of God's own Prophet, and indeed to preach the Justice of God's Dealing with *Saul*, for rejecting his Prophet *Samuel*; which in short, is not a little odd, putting the Spirit of God into the

Mouth of the Devil, and making Sathan a Preacher of Righteousness.

When I was in my Retirement, I had abundance of strange Notions of my seeing Apparitions there, and especially when I happen'd to be abroad by Moon-shine, when every Bush look'd like a Man, and every Tree like a Man on Horse-back; and I so prepossess'd myself with it, that I scarce durst look behind me for a good while, and after that durst not go abroad at all at Night; nay, it grew upon me to such a Degree at last, that I as firmly believ'd I saw several Times real Shapes and Appearances, as I do now really believe and am assur'd, that it was all Hypochondriack Delusion.

But however, that the Reader may see how far the Power of Imagination may go, and judge for me whether I shew'd any more Folly and Simplicity than other Men might do, I'll repeat some little Passages, which for a while gave me very great Disturbances, and every one shall judge for me, whether they might not have been deluded in the like Circumstances as well as I.

The first Case was, when I crept into the dark Cave in the Valley, where the old Goat lay just expiring, which, wherever it happen'd, is a true History, I assure you.

When first I was stopp'd by the Noise of this poor dying Creature, you are to observe, that the Voice was not only like the Voice of a Man, but even articulate, only that I could not form any Words from it; and what did that amount to more or less than this, namely, that it spoke, but only it was in a Language that I did not understand. If it was possible to describe the Surprise of my Spirits on that Occasion, I would do it here; how all my Blood run, *or rather stood still,*
child

chill'd in my Veins; how a cold Dew of Sweat fat on my Forehead; how my Joints, like *Belfazzar's* Knees, shook one against another; and how, as I said, my Hair would have lifted off my Hat, if I had had one on my Head.

But this is not all. After the first Noise of the Creature which was a faint dying Kind of imperfect Bleating, not unusual, as I found afterward; I say, after this, he fetch'd two or three deep Sighs as lively, and as like human, as it is possible to imagine, as I have also said.

These were so many Confirmations of my Surprise, besides the Sight of his two glaring Eyes, and carried it up to the Extreme of Fright and Amazement; how I afterwards conquered this childish Beginning, and muster'd up Courage enough to go into the Place with a Firebrand for Light; and how I was presently satisfy'd with seeing the Creature whose Condition made all the little accidental Noises appear rational, I have already said.

But I must acknowledge, that this real Surprise left some Relicks or Remains behind it, that did not wear quite off a great while, tho' I struggl'd hard with them: The Vapours that were rais'd at first were never so laid, but that on every trifling Occasion they return'd; and I saw, nay, I felt Apparitions, as plainly and distinctly as ever I felt or saw any real Substance in my Life.

The like was the Case with me before that, when I first found the Print of a Man's Foot upon the Sand, by the Seaside on the North Part of the Island.

And these, I say, having left my Fancy a little peevish and wayward, I had frequently some Returns of these Vapours on differing Occasions, and sometimes even without Occasion; nothing

but meer Hypochondriack Whimfies, fluttering of the Blood, and rising of Vapours, which nobody could give any Account of but myself.

For Example : It was one Night, after my having seen some odd Appearances in the Air, of no great Significance, that coming home and being in Bed, but not asleep, I felt a Pain in one of my Feet; after which it came to a kind of Numb'dness in my Foot, which a little surpriz'd me; and after that, a kind of Tingling in my Blood, as if it had been some Distemper running up my Leg.

On a sudden I felt, as it were, something alive lye upon me, as if it had been a Dog lying upon my Bed, from my Knee downwards about half Way my Leg, and immediately afterwards I felt it heavier, and felt it as plainly roll itself upon me upwards upon my Thigh, for I lay on one Side; I say, as if it had been a Creature lying upon me with all his Weight, and turning his Body upon me.

It was so lively and sensible to me, and I remember it so perfectly well, though it is now many Years ago, that my Blood chills and flutters about my Heart at the very writing it. I immediately flung my self out of my Bed, and flew to my Musquet, which stood always ready at my Hand, and, naked as I was, laid about me upon the Bed in the dark, and every where else that I could think of where any Body might stand or lye, but could find nothing. *Lord deliver me from an evil Spirit*, said I! *What can this be?* And being tired with groping about, and having broke two or three of my Earthen Pots with making Blows here and there to no Purpose, I went to light my Candle, for my Lamp which I us'd to burn in the Night, either had not been lighted, or was gone
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When I lighted a Candle, I could easily see there was no living Creature in the Place with me, but the poor Parrot, who was wak'd and frighted, and cry'd out, *Hold your Tongue*, and, *What's the Matter with you?* Which Words he learn'd of me, from my frequent saying so to him, when he used to make his ordinary wild Noise and Screaming that I did not like.

The more I was satisfy'd that there was nothing in the Room, at least to be seen, the more another Concern came upon me. Lord! *says I aloud*, this is the Devil. *Hold your Tongue*, says Poll. I was so mad at the Bird, tho' the Creature knew nothing of the Matter, that if he had hung near me, I believe I should have killed him. I put my Clothes on, and sat me down, for I could not find in my Heart to go to Bed again; and as I sat down, *I am terribly frighted*, said I. *What's the Matter with you?* says Poll. You Toad, *said I*, I'd knock your Brains out if you were here. *Hold your Tongue*, says he again, and then fell to chattering, *Robin Crusoe*, and, *Poor Robin Crusoe*, as he us'd to do.

Had I been in any Reach of a good Temper, it had been enough to have compos'd me; but I was quite gone, I was fully possess'd with a Belief, that it was the Devil, and I pray'd most heartily to God, to be deliver'd from the Power of the evil Spirit:

After some Time, I compos'd my self a little, and went to Bed again, and lying just in the Posture as I was in before, I felt a little of the Tingling in my Blood which I felt before, and I resolv'd to lye still, let it be what it would; it came up as high as my Knee, as before, but no higher; and now I began to see plainly that it was all a Distemper, that it was something Paralitick,
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and that affected the Nerves ; but I had not either Experience of such a thing, or Knowledge of Diseases, enough to be fully satisfy'd of the Nature of them, and whether any thing natural, any Numbness or Dead Palsie affecting one Part of the Thigh, could feel as that did ; till some Months after that, I felt something of the very same again at my first lying down in my Bed for three or four Nights together, which at first gave me a little Concern as a Distemper, but at last gave me such Satisfaction, that the first was nothing but the same thing in a higher Degree ; that the Pleasure of knowing it was only a Disease, was far beyond the Concern at the Danger of it ; Tho' a dead Palsie to one in my Condition might reasonably have been one of the most frightful Things in Nature ; since having no body to help me, I must have inevitably perish'd for meer Want of Food, not being able to go from Place to Place to fetch it.

But to go back to the Case in Hand, and to the Apprehension I had been in ; all the several Months that pass'd between the first of this and the last, I went about with a melancholy heavy Heart, fully satisfy'd that the Devil had been in my Room, and lay upon my Bed.

Sometimes I would trye to argue my self a little out of it, asking my self, Whether it was reasonable to imagine the Devil had nothing else to do than to come thither, and only lye down upon me, and go away about his Business, and say not one Word to me ? What End it could answer ? and whether I thought the Devil was really busy'd about such Trifles ? Or whether he had not Employment enough of a higher Nature, so that such a Thing as that could be worth his while ?

But still then I was answer'd with my own Thoughts, returning thus, What could it be ? Or, if

if it was not a Devil, what was it? This I could not answer by any Means at all; and so I still sunk under the Belief, that it was the Devil, and nothing but the Devil.

You may be sure, while I had this Fancy in my Head, I was of Course over-run with the Vapours, and had all the Hypochondriack Fancies that ever any melancholy Head could entertain; and what with ruminating on the Print of a Foot upon the Sand, and the Weight of the Devil upon me in my Bed, I made no Difficulty to conclude, that the Old Gentleman really visited the Place; and in a Word, it had been easy to have possess'd me, if I had continued so much longer, that it was an enchanted Island, that there were a Million of evil Spirits in it, and that the Devil was Lord of the Manor.

I scarce heard the least Noise, near or far off, but I started, and expected to see a Devil; every distant Bush upon a Hill, if I did not particularly remember it before, was a Man, and every Stump an Apparition; and I scarce went twenty Yards together by Night or by Day, without looking behind me.

Sometimes indeed I took a little Heart, and would say *well*, let it be *the Devil* if it will, *God* is Master of *the Devil*, and he can do me no Hurt, unless he is permitted; he can be no where, but he that made him is there too; and as I said afterwards, when I was frighted with the old Goat in a Cave, he is not fit to live all alone in such an Island for 20 Years that would be afraid to see the Devil.

But all these Things lasted but a short while, and the Vapours that were raised at first, were not to be laid so easily; for, in a Word, it was not meer Imagination, but it was the Imagination ras'd up to Disease: Nor did it ever quite wear
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off till I got my Man *Fryday* with me, of whom I have said so much; and then having Company to talk to, the Hypo wore off, and I did not see any more Devils after that.

Before I leave this Part, I cannot but give a Caution to all vapourish melancholy People, whose Imaginations run this Way; I mean, about seeing the Devil, Apparitions, and the like; namely, that they should never look behind them, and over their Shoulders as they go up Stairs, or look into the Corners and Holes of Rooms with a Candle in their Hands, or turn about to see who may be behind them in any Walks or dark Fields, Lanes, or the like; for let such know, they will see the Devil whether he be there or no; nay, they will be so perswaded, that they do see him, that their very Imagination will be a Devil to them where-ever they go.

But after all this is said, let nobody suggest, that because the brain-sick Fancy, the vapourish Hypochondriack Imagination represents Spectres and Spirits to us, and makes Apparitions for us, that therefore there are no such Things as Spirits both good and evil, any more than we should conceive that there is no Devil, because we do not see him.

The Devil has Witnesses of his Being and Nature, just as God himself has of his; they are not indeed so visible or so numerous, but we are all able to bring Evidence of the Existence of the Devil from our own Frailties, as we are to bring Evidence of the Existence of God from the Faculties of our Souls, and from the Contexture of our Bodies.

As our Propensity to Evil rather than Good, is a Testimony of the original Depravity of human Nature; so the Harmony between the Inclination
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and the Occasion, is a Testimony which leaves the Presence of the evil Spirit with us out of Question.

Not that the Devil is always the Agent in our Temptations; for tho' the Devil is a very diligent Fellow, and always appears ready to fall in with the Allurement, yet the Scripture clears him, and we must do so too, of being the main Tempter; 'tis our own corrupt debauch'd Inclination which is the first moving Agent; and therefore the Scripture says, *A Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Lusts, and enticed.* The Devil who, as I said, is a very diligent Fellow in the infernal Work, and is always ready to forward the Mischief, is also a very cunning Fellow, and knows how most dextrously to suit alluring Objects to the allurable Dispositions; to procure ensnaring Things, and lay them in the Way of the Man whom he finds so easy to be ensnar'd, and he never fails to prompt all the Mischief he can, full of Stratagem and Art to ensnare us by the Help of our corrupt Affections, and these are call'd *Sathan's Devices*.

But having charg'd Sathan home in that Part, I must do the Devil that Justice, as to own, that he is the most slander'd, most abus'd Creature alive; Thousands of Crimes we lay to his Charge that he is not guilty of; Thousands of our own Infirmities we load him with which he has no Hand in; and Thousands of our Sins, which, as bad as he is, he knows nothing of; calling him our Tempter, and pretending we did so and so, as the Devil would have it, when on the contrary the Devil had no Share in it, and we were only *led away of our own Lusts, and enticed.*

But now, having made this Digression in the Devil's Defence, I return to the main Question, that
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of the Being of the Devil, and of evil Spirits ; this, I believe, there is no Room to doubt of ; but this, as I have observ'd, is not the Thing ; these are not the Spirits I am speaking of, but I shall come directly to what I mean, and speak plain without any Possibility of being misunderstood.

I make no Question, but that there is not only a World of Spirits, but that there is a certain Knowledge of it, tho' to us impossible as to the Manner of it ; there is a certain Converse between the World of Spirits, and the Spirits in this World ; that is to say, between Spirits uncase'd or unembod'y'd, and Souls of Men embody'd or case'd up in Flesh and Blood, as we all are on this side Death.

It is true, that we cannot describe this Converse of Spirits, as to the Way of it, the Manner of the Communication, or how things are mutually convey'd from one to another. How Intelligences are given or receiv'd we know not ; we know but little of their being convey'd *this Way*, from the Spirits unembod'y'd, to ours that are in Life ; and of their being convey'd *that Way*, namely, from us to them ; of that we know nothing : The latter certainly is done without the Help of the Organ, the former is convey'd by the Understanding, and the retir'd Faculties of the Soul, of which we can give very little Account.

For Spirits, without the help of Voice, converse.

Let me, however, give, as Reasons for my Opinion, some Account of the Consequences of this Converse of Spirits ; I mean such as are quite remote from what we call Apparition or Appearance of Spirits ; and I omit these, because I know they are objected much against, and they bear much Scandal from the frequent Impositions of our Fancies

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ties and Imaginations upon our Judgments and Understandings, as above.

But the more particular Discoveries of this Converse of Spirits, and which to me are undeniable, are such as follows; namely,

Dreams,	Impulses,	Involuntary Sad-
Voices,	Hints,	ness, &c.
Noises,	Apprehensions,	

Dreams are dangerous Things to talk of; and we have such dreaming about them, that indeed the least Encouragement to lay any Weight upon 'em, is presently carry'd away by a sort of People that dream waking; and that run into such wild Extreams about them, that indeed we ought to be very cautious what we say of them.

It is certain, Dreams of old were the Ways by which God himself was pleased to warn Men, as well what to do, as what not to do; what Services to perform; what Evils to shun. *Joseph*, the Husband of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*, was appear'd to in both these, *Matt. ii. 13. 19.* He was directed of God, in a Dream, to go into *Egypt*, and he was bid return out of *Egypt* in a Dream; and in the same Chapter, the Wise-men of the East were warn'd of God in a Dream, to depart into their own Country another Way, to avoid the Fury of *Herod*.

Now as this, and innumerable Instances thro' the whole Scripture, confirm, that God did once make use of this Manner to convey Knowledge and Instruction to Men, I wish I could have this Question well answer'd, (*viz.*) *Why are we now to direct People to take no Notice of their Dreams?*

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But farther, it appears that this was not only the Method God himself took by his immediate Power, but 'tis evident he made use of it by the Ministry of Spirits; the Scripture says in both the Cases of *Joseph* above-nam'd, *That the Angel of the Lord appear'd to Joseph in a Dream.* Now every unembod'y'd Spirit is an Angel of the Lord in some Sense, and, as Angels and Spirits may be the same thing in respect of this Influence upon us in Dreams, so it is still; and when any Notice for Good, or Warning against Evil, is given us in a Dream, I think 'tis no Arrogance at all for us to say, the Angel of the Lord appear'd to us in a Dream; or to say, some good Spirit gave me Warning of this in a Dream; take this which Way you will.

That I may support this with such undeniable Arguments, drawn from Examples of the Fact, as no Man will, or reasonably can oppose, I first appeal to the Experience of observing People; I mean such People as observe these things without a superstitious Dependence upon the Signification of them, that look upon Dreams but with such a moderate Regard to them, as may direct to a right Use of them: The Question I would ask of such is, Whether they have never found any remarkable Event of their Lives so evidently foretold them by a Dream, as that it must of Necessity be true, that some invisible Being foresaw the Event, and gave them Notice of it? And that had that Notice been listen'd to, and the natural Prudence used, which would have been used if it had been certainly discovered, that evil Event might have been prevented?

I would ask others, whether they have not, by Dreams, been so warn'd of Evil really approaching, as that taking the Hint, and making use of
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the Caution given in those Dreams the Evil has been avoided. If I may speak my own Experience, I must take leave to say, That I never had any capital Mischief befall me in my Life, but I have had Notice of it by a Dream ; and if I had not been that thoughtless unbelieving Creature, which I now would caution other People against, I might have taken many a Warning, and avoided many of the Evils that I afterwards fell into, merely by a total obstinate Neglect of those Dreams.

In like Manner, I have in some of the greatest Distresses of my Life, been encouraged to believe firmly and fully, that I should one Time or other be delivered ; and I must acknowledge, that in my greatest and most hopeless Banishment, I had such frequent Dreams of my Deliverance, that I always entertained a firm and satisfying Belief, that my last Days would be better than my first ; all which has effectually come to pass.

From which I cannot determine, *as I know some do*, that all Dreams are meer Dosings of a delirious Head, Delusions of a waking Devil, and Relicks of the Day's Thoughts, and Perplexities, or Pleasures : Nor do I see any Period of Time fixed between the two opposite Circumstances ; namely, when Dreams were to be esteemed the Voice of God, and when the Delusion of the Devil.

I know some have struggled hard to fix that particular Article, and to settle it as a Thing going hand in hand with the *Jewish* Institutions ; as if the Oracle ceasing in the Temple with the Consummation of the typical Law, all the Methods which Heaven was pleased to take in the former Times for revealing his Will to Men, were to cease also at the same Time, and the Gospel Revela-

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tion being fully and effectually supplied by the Mission of the Holy Spirit, Dreams and all the Uses and Significations of Dreams were at an End, and the Esteem and Regard to the Warnings and Instructions of Dreams was to expire also.

But the Scripture is Point-blank against this, in the History of Fact relating to *Ananias*, and the Conversion of *St. Paul*; and in the Story of *St. Peter* and *Cornelius* the devout Centurion at *Antioch*; both of them eminent Instances of God's giving Notice of his Pleasure to Men, by the Interposition or Medium of a Dream. The first of these is in *Acts* ix. 10. *There was a certain Disciple at Damascus named Ananias, To him said the Lord in a Vision, &c.* the Words spoken in this Vision to *Ananias*, directing to go to seek out one *Saul* of *Tarsus*, go on thus v. 12. *And hath seen in a Vision, a Man named Ananias coming in.*

The other Passage is of *St. Peter* and *Cornelius* the Centurion, *Acts* 10. v. 3, 10, 11. in the third Verse it is said, *Cornelius* Fasting and Praying, *saw a Vision*, which afterwards in the 22d Verse, is called *an holy Angel warning him*, in the 30th Verse it is said, *a Man stood before me in bright Cloathing*; at the same Time, v. 10. it is said, *St. Peter* was Praying and fell into a *Trance*; this we all agree to be a Possession of Sleep or a deep Sleep; and in this *Trance* 'tis said, *he saw Heaven opened*, that is to say, he dreamed that he saw Heaven opened; it could be nothing else; for no Interpreters will offer to insist that Heaven was really opened; also the hearing a Voice, v. 13, 15. must be in a Dream; thus 'tis apparent the Will of God concerning what we are to do or not to do, what is or is not to befall us, is and has been thus conveyed by Vision or Dream, since the

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Expiration of the *Levitical Dispensation*, and since the Mission of the Holy Ghost.

When then did it cease? and if we do not know when it ceased, how then are we sure it is at all ceased, and what Authority have we now to reject all Dreams or Visions of the Night, *as they are called*, more than formerly?

I will not say, but there may be more nocturnal Delusions now in the World, than there were in those Times; and perhaps the Devil may have gain'd more upon Mankind in these Days, than he had then, though we are not let into those Things enough, to know whether it is so or not; nor do we know, that there were not as many un-signifying Dreams in those Days as now, and perhaps as much to be said against depending upon them; though I think there is not one Word in Scripture said, to take off the Regard Men might give to Dreams, or to lessen the Weight which they might lay on them.

The only Text that I think looks like it, is the Flout *Joseph's* Brethren put upon him, or threw out at him, when they were speaking of him with Contempt, *Genesis xxxvii. 19. Behold this Dreamer cometh*; and again, *v. 20. Let us slay him and cast him into some Pit, and we shall see what will become of his DREAMS.*

This indeed looks a little like the present Language against Dreams; but even this, is sufficiently rebuked in the Consequences, for those Dreams of *Joseph's* did come all to pass, and proving the superior Influence such Things have upon the Affairs of Men, in spite of all the Contempt they can cast upon them.

The Maxim I have laid down to my self for my Conduct in this Affair is in few Words, that

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we should not lay too great Strefs upon Dreams, and yet not wholly neglect them.

I remember, I was once present, where a long Dispute was warmly carried on between two Persons of my Acquaintance upon this very Subject, the one a Layman, the other a Clergyman, but both very pious and religious Persons: The first thought there was no heed at all to be given to Dreams, that they could have no justifiable Original, that they were Delusions and no more, that it was Atheistical to lay any Strefs upon them, and that he could give such Objections against them, as that no Man of good Principles could avoid being convinced by; that as to their being a Communication from the invisible to the visible World, 'twas a Chimæra, and that he saw no Foundation for believing any Reality in such a Thing, unless I would set up for a Popish *Limbus* or Purgatory, which had no Foundation in the Scripture.

1. He said, If Dreams were from the Agency of any prescient Being, the Notices would be more direct, and the Discoveries clear; not by Allegories and emblematick Fancies, expressing Things imperfect and dark: For to what Purpose should Spirits un-embodied sport with Mankind, warning him of approaching Mischiefs by the most ridiculous Enigmas, Figures, &c. leaving the Wretch to guess what awaited him, though of the utmost Consequence, and to perish if he mistook the Meaning of it; and leaving him sometimes perfectly at a Loss, to know whether he was Right or Wrong, and without any Rule or Guide to walk by in the most difficult Cases.

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2. He objected, that with the Notice of Evil, suppose it to be rightly understood, there was not given a Power to avoid it; and therefore it could not be alledged, that the Notice was any way kind, and that it was not likely to proceed from a beneficent Spirit, but meerly Fortuitous and of no Significancy.

3. He objected, That if such Notices as those were of such Weight, why were they not Constant: But that sometimes they were given, and sometimes omitted, though Cases were equally important; and that therefore they did not seem to proceed from any Agent, whose Actions were to be fairly accounted for.

4. He said, That oftentimes we had very distinct and formal Dreams, without any Signification at all, that we could neither know any Thing probable or any Thing rational of them; and that it would be profane to suggest that to come from Heaven, which was too apparently foolish and inconsistent.

5. As Men were not always thus warned, or supplied with Notices of Good or Evil, so all Men were not alike supplied with them; and what Reason could we give, why one Man or one Woman should not have the same Hints as another.

The Clergyman gave distinct Answers to all these Objections, and to me, I confess, very satisfactory; whether they may be so to those that read them, is no Concern of mine, let every one judge for himself.

1. He said, that as to the Signification of Dreams, and the Objections against them, because dark and doubtful, that they are express'd generally by Hieroglyphical Representations, Similies, Allusions, and figurative emblematick

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Ways of expressing Things was true, and that by this Means, for want of Interpretation, the Thing was not understood, and consequently the Evil not shun'd. This, he said, was the only Difficulty that remained to him in the Case, but that he could see nothing in it against the Signification of them, because thus it was before ; for Dreams were often allegorick and allusive, when they were evidently from God ; and what the End and Design of Providence in that was, we could not pretend to enquire.

2. To the Second he said, *we charged God foolishly*, to say he had given the Notice of Evil without *the Power to avoid it*, which he denied ; and affirmed, that if any one had not Power to avoid the Evil, it was no Notice to him, that it was want of giving due Heed to that Notice, not for want of the Notice being sufficient that, any Evil followed, and that Men first neglected themselves, and then charg'd the Judge of all the Earth with not doing right.

3. Likewise he said, the Complaint that these notices were not constant, was unjust, for he doubted not but they were so, but our discerning was crazed and clouded by our Negligence in not taking due Notice of it, that we hoodwink'd our Understanding by pretending Dreams were not to be regarded ; and the Voice really spoke, but we refused to hear being negligent of our own Good.

4. In the same Sense he answered the Fourth, and said, it was a Mistake to say, that sometimes Dreams had no Import at all, he said it was only to be said, none that we could perceive the Reason of, which was owing to our Blindness and supine Negligence to be secure at one Time, and our Heads too much alarmed at another ; so that the Spirit which we might be said to be converging

ing with in a Dream, was constantly and equally kind and careful, but our Powers, not always in the same State of Action, nor equally attentive to, or retentive of the Hints that were given; or Things might be rendered more or less intelligible to us, as the Powers of our Soul were more or less doz'd or somniated with the Oppression of Vapours from the Body, which occasions Sleep; for tho' the Soul cannot be said to sleep itself, yet how far its Operations may be limited, and the Understanding perscribed by the Sleepiness of the Body, *says he*, I will not undertake, let the Anatomist judge of it, who can account for the Contexture of the Parts, and for their Operations, which I cannot answer to.

5. As to the last Question, why People are not equally supplied with such Warnings, he said, this seem'd to be no Question at all in the Case; for Providence itself might have some Share in the Direction of it, and then that Providence might perhaps be limited by some superiour Direction, the same that guides all the solemn Dispositions of Nature, and was a Wind blowing where it listeth: that as to the Converse of Spirits, tho' he allowed the Thing itself, yet he did not tie it up to a stated Course of Conversing, that it should be the same always, and to all People, and on all Occasions; but that it seem'd to be spontaneous, and consequently Arbitrary, as if the Spirits unembodied had it left to them to converse as they thought fit, how, where, and with whom they would; that all he answered for in that Discourse was for the Thing itself, that such a Thing there was, but why there was so much of it, or why no more, was none of his Business, and he believed a Discovery was not yet made to Mankind of that Part.

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I thought it would be much to the Purpose to remark this Opinion of another Man, because it corresponded so exactly with my own, but I have not done with my Friend, for he led me into another Enquiry, which indeed I had not taken so much notice of before, and this was introduced by the following Question.

You seem, says he, to be very inquisitive about Dreams, and to doubt, *tho' I think you have no Reason for it*, of the Reality of the World of Spirits, which Dreams are such an Evidence of. Pray, says he, what think you of waking Dreams, Trances, Visions, Noises, Voices, Hints, Impulses, and all these waking Testimonies of an invisible World, and of the Communication that there is between us and them, which are generally entertained with our Eyes open.

This led me into many Reflections upon past Things, which I had been Witness to as well in myself as in other People, and particularly in my former Solitudes, when I had many Occasions to mark such Things as these; and I could not but entertain a free Conversation with my Friend upon this Subject, as often 'as I had Opportunity, of which I must give some Account.

I had one Day been conversing so long with him upon the common received Notions of the Planets being habitable, and of a Diversity of Worlds, that I think verily, I was for some Days like a Man transported into these Regions myself; whether my Imagination is more addicted to realizing the Things I talk of, as if they were in View, I know not; or whether by the Power of the Converse of Spirits I speak of, I was at that Time enabled to entertain clearer Ideas of the Invisible World, I really cannot tell; but I certainly made a Journey to all those supposed habitable

bitable Bodies in my Imagination, and I know not but it may be very useful to tell you what I met with in my Way, and what the wiser I am for the Discovery ; whether you will be the wiser for the Relation at second Hand, I cannot answer for that.

I could make a long Discourse here of the Power of Imagination, and how bright the Ideas of Distant Things may be found in the Mind, when the Soul is more than ordinarily agitated : It is certain the extraordinary Intelligence conveyed in this Manner is not always regular, sometimes it is exceeding confused, and the Brain being not able to digest it, turns round too fast ; this tends to Lunacy and Distraction, and the Swiftnefs of the Motion these Ideas come in with, occasions a Commotion in Nature, the understanding is mobb'd with them, disturb'd, runs from one Thing to another, and digests nothing ; this is well expressed in our common Way of talking of a mad Man, namely, that his Head is turned. Indeed I can liken it to nothing so well as to the Wheels of a Wind-mill, which if the Sails or Wings are set, and the Wind blow a Storm, run round so fast, that they will set all on Fire, if a skilful Hand be not ready to direct and manage it.

But not to enter upon this whymfical Description of Lunacy, which perhaps may be no Bodies Opinion but my own, I proceed thus. That when the Head is strong, and capable of the Impressions ; when the Understanding is impowered to digest the infinite Variety of Ideas, which present to it from the extended Fancy ; then, I say, the Soul of Man is capable to act strangely upon the Invisibles in Nature, and upon Futurity, Reallizing every Thing to itself in such a lively Manner, that what it thus thinks of, it really sees, speaks to, hears,

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converses with, &c. as lively, as if the Substance was really before his Face ; and this is what I mean by those that dream waking, by Visions, Trances, or what you please to call them ; for it is not necessary to this Part, that the Man should be asleep.

I return to my Share of these Things. It was after my conversing with my learned Friend about the heavenly Bodies, the Motion, the Distances, and the Bulk of the Planets, their Situation, and the Orbits they move in, the Share of Light, Heat and Moisture, which they enjoy, their Respect to the Sun, their Influences upon us, and at last, the Possibility of their being habitable, with all the Arcana of the Skies ; it was on this Occasion, I say, that my Imagination, *always given to wander*, took a Flight of its own ; and as I have told you that I had an invincible Inclination to travel, so I think I travelled as sensibly, to my understanding, over all the Mazes and Wastes of infinite Space, in Quest of those Things, as ever I did over the Desarts of *Karakathay*, and the uninhabited Wafts of *Tartary*, and perhaps may give as useful an Account of my Journey.

When first my Fancy rais'd me up in the Confines of this vast Abyss, and having now travelled thro' the misty Regions of the Atmosphere could look down as I mounted, and see the World below me, tis scarce possible to imagine, how little, how mean, how despicable every Thing look'd ; let any Man but try this Experiment of himself, and he shall certainly find the same Thing ; let him but fix his Thoughts so intensely upon what is, and must necessarily be seen in a Stage or two higher, than where we now live removed from the particular Converse with
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the World, as to realize to his Imagination what he can suppose to be there, he shall find all that is below him, as distant Objects always do, lessen in his Mind as they do in his Sight.

Could a Man subsist without a supply of Food, and live but one Mile in perpendicular Height from the Surface, he would despise Life and the World at such a Rate, that he would hardly come down to have it be all his own; the Soul of Man is capable of being continually elevated above the very Thoughts of human Things, is capable of travelling up to the highest and most distant Regions of Light, but when it does, as it rises above the earthly Globe, so the Things of this Globe sink to him.

When I was at first lifted up in my imaginary Travels, this was the first Thing of Moment I remarked; namely, how little the World and every Thing about it seemed to me: I am not given to preach or drawing long Corollaries as the Learned call them, but I commend it to my Friends to observe, that could we always look upon the Things of Life with the same Eyes, as we shall do when we come to the Edge of Time, when one Eye can as it were look back on the World, and the other look forward into Eternity, we should save ourselves the Trouble of much Repentance, and should scorn to touch many of those Things, in which now we fancy our chief Felicity is laid up; believe me we shall see more with half an Eye then, and judge better at first Glance, than we can now with all our pretended Wisdom and Penetration. In a Word, all the Passions and Affections suffer a general Change upon such a View, and what we desire before, we condemn then with Abhorrence.

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Having begun to soar, the World was soon out of Sight, unless that as I rose higher, and could look at her in a due Position as to the Sun, I could see her turned into a Moon, and shine by Reflection: *Ay, shine on, said I, with thy borrowed Rays, for thou hast but very few of thy own.*

When my Fancy had mounted me thus beyond the Vestiges of the Earth, and leaving the Atmosphere behind me, I had set my firm Foot upon the Verge of Infinite, when I drew no Breath, but subsisted upon pure *Æther*, it is not possible to express fully the Vision of the Place; first you are to conceive of Sight as unconfined, and you see here at least the whole solar System at one View. Nor is your Sight bounded by the narrow Circumference of one Sun, and its Attendants of Planets, whose Orbits are appropriated to its proper System, but above and beyond, and on every Side you see innumerable Suns, and attending on them, Planets, Satellites, and inferior Lights proper to their respective Systems, and all these moving in their subordinate Circumstances, without the least Confusion, with glorious Light and Splendor inconceivable.

In this first Discovery 'tis most natural to observe, how plainly it is to be seen, that the Reason of the Creation of such immense Bodies as the Sun, Stars, Planets, and Moons in the great Circle of the lower Heaven, is far from being to be found in the Study of Nature, on the Surface of our Earth: But he that will see thorowly, why God has formed the Heavens the Work of his Hands, and the Moon and the Stars which he has made, must soar up higher; and then as he will see with other Eyes than he did before, so he will see the God of Nature has form'd an infinite Variety which we know
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nothing of, and that all the Creatures are a Reason to one another for their Creation.

I could not forget myself however, when I was got up thus high, I say, I could not but look back upon the State of Man in this Life, how confined from these Discoveries, how vilely employed in biting and devouring, envying, and maligning one another, and all for the vilest Trifles that can be conceived.

But I was above it all here, and all those Things which appeared so afflicting before, gave me not the least Concern now; for the Soul being gone of this Errand, had quite different Notices of the whole State of Life, and was neither influenced by Passions or Affections as it was before.

Here I saw into many Things by the Help of a sedate Inquiry, that we can entertain little or no Notion of in a State of common superficial Life, and I desire to leave a few Remarks of this imaginary Journey, as I did of my ordinary Travels.

When I came, I say, to look into the solar System as I have hinted, I saw perfectly the Emptiness of our modern Notions, that the Planets were habitable Worlds, and shall give a brief Description of the Case, that others may see it too, without the Necessity of taking so long a Journey.

And first for the Word Habitable, I understand the meaning of it to be, that the Place it is spoken of, is qualify'd for the Subsistence and Existence of Man and Beast, and to preserve the vegetative and sensitive Life; and you may depend upon it, that none of the Planets except the Moon, are in this Sense habitable; and the Moon, a poor little watery damp Thing, not above as big as *Yorkshire*, neither worth being called a World, nor capable

capable of rendring Life comfortable to Mankind, if indeed supportable; and if you will believe one's Mind capable of seeing at so great a Distance, I assure you I did not see Man, Woman or Child there in all my Contemplative Voyage to it; my Meaning is, I did not see the least Reason to believe there was or could be any there. As to the rest of the Planets, I'll take them in their Order. *Saturn*, (the remotest from the Sun, which is in the Centre of the System,) is a vast extended Globe, of a Substance cold and moist, its greatest Degree of Light is never so much as our greatest Darknes may be said to be in clear Weather, and its cold unsufferable; and if it were a Body composed of the same Elements as our Earth, its Sea would be all Brass, and its Earth all Iron; that is to say, both would be continually frozen, as the North-Pole in the Winter Solstice. What Man or Men, and of what Nature, could inhabit this frigid Planet, unless the Creator must be supposed to have created animal Creatures for the Climate, not the Climate for the Creatures. All the Notions of *Saturns* being a habitable World, are contrary to Nature, and incongruous with Sense; for *Saturn* is at so infinite a Distance from the Sun, that it has not above one ninetieth Part of the Light and Heat that we enjoy on our Earth; so that the Light there, may be said to be much less than our Star-light, and the cold ninety Times greater than the coldest Day in our Winter.

Jupiter is in the same Predicament, his Constitution, however in its Degree much milder than *Saturn*, yet certainly is not qualify'd for human Bodies to subsist, having only one twenty-seventh Part of the Light and Heat that we enjoy here, consequently its Light is at best as dim as our Twilight, and its Heat so little in the Summer of
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its Situation, as to be as far from comfortable, as it is in its Winter Situation insupportable.

Mars, If you will believe our ancient Philosophers, is a fiery Planet in the very Disposition of its Influence, as well as by the Course of its Motion; and yet even here, the Light is not above one Half, and its Heat one Third of ours. And on the other Hand, as *Saturn* is cold and moist, so this Planet is hot and dry, and would admit no Habitation of Man, through the manifest Intemperance of the Air, as well as want of Light to make it comfortable, and Moisture to make it fruitful; for by the Nature of the Planet, as well as by clear-sighted Observation, there is never any Rain, Vapour, Fog, or Dew in that Planet.

Venus and *Mercury* are in the extreme the other Way, and would destroy Nature by their Heat and dazzling Light, as the other would by their Darkness and Cold, so that you may depend upon it, I could see very clearly, that all these Bodies were neither inhabited or habitable; and the Earth only as we call it, being seated between these Intemperances appeared habitable, surrounded with an Atmosphere to defend it, from the Invasion of the inconsistent *Æther*, in which Perspiration could not be performed by the Lungs, and by which the needful Vapour it sends forth, is preserv'd from dissipating into the Waste and Abyss, and is condensed and timely returns in Showers of Rain to moisten, cool, and nourish the exhausted Earth.

It is true the Way I went was no common Road, yet I found Abundance of Passengers going to and fro here, and particularly innumerable Armies of good and evil Spirits, who all seem'd busily employ'd, and continually upon the Wing, as
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if some Expresses pass'd between the Earth, which in this Part of my Travels I place below me, and some Country infinitely beyond all that I could reach the Sight of; for by the Way, though I take upon me in this sublime Journey to see a great deal of the invisible World, yet I was not arriv'd to a Length to see into any Part of the World of Light, beyond it all; that Vision is beyond all, and I pretend to say nothing of it here, except this only, that a clear View of this Part with Opticks unclouded is a great Step to prepare the Mind for a Look into the other.

But to return to my Station in the highest created World, flatter not yourselves that those Regions are uninhabited, because the Planets appear to be so. No, no, I assure you this is that World of Spirits, or at least is a World of Spirits.

Here I saw a clear Demonstration of Satan being *the Prince of the Power of the Air*; 'tis in this boundless Waste he is confined, whether it be his busie restless Inclination has posted him here, that he may affront God in his Government of the World, and do Injury to Mankind in meer Envy to his Happiness, as the fam'd Mr. *Milton* says it, or whether it is that by the eternal Decree of Providence he is appointed to be Mans continual Disturber for divine Ends, to us unknown; this I had not wandred far enough to be informed of, those Secrets being lodg'd much higher, than Imagination itself ever travelled.

But here, I say, I found Sathan keeping his Court, or Camp we may call it, which we please. The innumerable Legions that attended his immediate Service were such, that it is not at all to be wondred that he supplied every Angle of this World, and had his Work going forward, not in every Country only, but even in every individual

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Inhabitant of it, with all the Dexterity and Application imaginable.

This Sight gave me a just Idea of the Devil as a Tempter, but really let me into a Secret, which I did not so well know before, or at least did not consider; namely, that the Devil is not capable of doing half the Mischief in the World that we lay to his Charge; that he works by Engines and Agents, Stratagems and Art is true, and a great deal is owing to his Vigilance and Application; for he is a very diligent Fellow in his Calling: But 'tis plain, his Power is not so great as we imagine, he can only prompt to the Crime, he cannot force us to commit it; so that if we sin 'tis all our own, the Devil is only to be charged with the Art of Insinuation; just as he began with *Eve*, he goes on with us; in short he reasons us out of our Resolutions to do well, and wheedles us to an Agreement to do ill; working us up to an Opinion, that what Evil we are about to do is no Sin, or not so great a Sin as we feared, and so draws us by Art into the Crime we had resolved against; this indeed the Scripture intimates when it speaks of *Satan's Devices*, the *Subtilty of the wicked one*, his *lying in wait*, &c. But to charge the Devil with forcing us to offend, is doing the Devil a great Deal of Wrong: Our doing Evil is from the native Propensity of our Wills: *Humanum est peccare*. I will not enter here into the Dispute about an original Corruption in Nature, which I know many good Men and learned Men dispute, but that there is a secret Aptness to offend, and a secret Backwardness to what is Good, which if it is not born with us, we can give no Account how we came by, this I think every Man will grant; and that this is the Devil that tempts us, the Scripture plainly tells us, when it says, *Every Man is*

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tempted when he is drawn away of his own Lust and enticed.

There is a secret Love of Folly and Vanity in the Mind, and Mankind are hurry'd down the Stream of their own Affections into Crime, 'tis agreeable to them to do this, and 'tis a Force upon Nature not to do it.

*Vice is down Hill, and when we do offend,
'Tis Nature all, we act as we intend.*

*Vertue's up Hill, and all against the Grain
Resolv'd reluctant, and pursued with Pain.*

But to return to the Devil; his Power not extending to Creation, and being not able to force the World into an open Rebellion against Heaven, as doubtless he would do if he could, he is left to the Exercise of his Skill; and in a Word we may say of him, *that he lives by his Wits*; that is to say, maintains his Kingdom by Subtilty and most exquisite Cunning; and if my Vision of his Politics is not a new Discovery, I am very much mistaken.

His innumerable Legions as I hinted above, like *Aid du Camps* to a General, are continually employed to carry his Orders, and execute his Commissions in all Parts of the World, and in every individual to oppose the Authority of God, and the Felicity of Man to the utmost of his Power.

The first and greatest Part of his Government, is over those Savage Nations where he has obtained to set himself up as God, and to be worshipped instead of God; and I observed, that though having full Possession of these People, even by whole Nations at a Time, that is the easiest Part of his Govern-

Government, yet he is far from neglecting his Interest there, but is exceeding vigilant to keep up his Authority among those People. This he does by sending Messengers into those Parts to answer the *Pawawings* or Conjurings, even of the most ignorant old Wizard, raising Storms and making Noises and Shreiks in the Air, Flashes of infernal Fire, and any Thing but to fright the People, that they may not forget him, and that they may have *no other Gods but him*.

He has his peculiar Agents for this Work, which he makes Detachments of, as his Occasions, require, some to one Part of the World, some to another, as to the North *America*, even as far as to the frozen Provinces of *Groenland*; to the North of *Europe*, to the *Laplanders*, *Samoredes*, and *Mon-gul-Tartars*, also to the *Gog* and *Magog* of *Asia*, and to the Devil-makers of *China* and *Japan*, again to the Southern Parts of *Asia*, to the Isles of the *Indian* and *South Seas*, and to the South Part of *America* and *Africa*.

Through all these Parts he has an uncontroll'd Power, and is either worshipped in Person, or by his Representatives, the Idols and Monsters which the poor People bow down to, and *Satan* has very little Trouble with them:

He employs indeed some Millions of his Missionaries into those Countries, who labour *ad propagand. fid.* and fail not to return and bring him an Account of their Success, and I doubt not but some of them were at Hand in my Island, when the Savages appear'd there; for if the Devil had not been in them, they would hardly have come straggling over the Sea so far, to devour one another:

In all these Countries the Brutality, the Cruelty and ravenous bloody Dispositions of the People, is to me a certain Testimony that the Devil has full Possession of them.

But to return to my Observations in the exalted State of my Fancy, I must tell you, that though the Devil carried on his Schemes of Government, in those blinded Parts of the World with great Ease, and all Things went to his Mind; I found he had more Difficulty in the northern Parts of the temperate Zone, I mean, our Climate and the rest of Christendom, and consequently he did not act here by whole Squadrons and by Generals; but was obliged to carry on his Business among us by particular Solicitations, to act by particular Agents upon particular Persons, attacking the personal Conduct of Men in a Manner peculiar to himself: But so far was this Difficulty from being any Advantage to the World, or Disadvantage to the Devil, that it only obliged him to make Use of the more Engines; and as he had no want of Numbers, I observed that his whole Clan seemed busy on this Side, the Number of which consists of innumerable Millions; so that in short, there was not a Devil wanting, no, not to manage every individual Man, Woman, and Child in the World.

How and in what Manner evil Angels attend us, what their Business, how far their Power extends, and how far it is restrained, and by who, were all made plain to me at one View in this State of *Eclatiffiment* that I stood in now, and I will describe it if I can in a few Heads of Fact; you may enlarge upon them as Experience guides.

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And first, the Limitations of the Devil's Power, are necessary to be understood, and how directed; *for Example*, you must know, that though the Numbers of these Evil Spirits, which are thus diligently employed in Mischief, are so infinitely great, yet the Numbers of good Angels or good Spirits, which are employed by a superior Authority, and from a Place infinitely distant and high above the Devils bounds, is not only equal; I say, equal at least in Number, but infinitely superior in Power, and it is this Particular which makes it plain, that all the Devil does, or that his Agents can do, is by continual Subtilty, extreme Vigilance and Application, under infinite Checks, Rebukes, and Callings off by the attendant Spirits, who have Power to correct and restrain him upon all Occasions; just as a Man does a Dog or a Thief when he is discovered.

On this Account, 'tis first plain, I say, that the Devil can do nothing by Force, he cannot kill, maim, hurt or destroy; if he could, Mankind would have but a very precarious State of Life in the World: Nay, the Devil cannot blast the Fruits of the Earth, cause Dearth, Droughts, Famine, or Scarcity, neither can he spread noxious Fumes in the Air to infect the World; if any of those Things were in his Power, he would soon unpeople God's Creation, and put his Maker to the Necessity of a new *F I A T*, or of having no more human Creatures to worship and honour him.

You will ask me, how I came to know all this? I say, ask me no Questions, till the Elevation of your Fancy carries you up to the outer Edge of the Atmosphere, as I tell you mine did: There you will see the Prince of the Air in his full State, managing his universal Empire with the most exquisite Art: But if ever you can come to a clear View

of his Person, do but look narrowly, and you'll see a great Clog at his Foot, in token of his limited Power, and though he is himself immense in Bulk, and moves like a Fiery Meteor in the Air, yet you always see a Hand with a Thunderbolt impending just over his Head; the Arm coming out of a fiery Cloud, which is a Token of the Sentence he is under, that at the End of his appointed Time that Cloud shall break, and that Hand strike him with the Thunder represented, Down, Down for ever, into a Place prepared for him.

But all this does not hinder him, who is prompted by infernal Rage against the Kingdom of God, and the Welfare of Man, from pushing Mankind as above, upon all the Methods of their own Ruin and Destruction, by alluring Baits, cunning Artifice, Night-whispers, infusing wicked Desires, and fanning the Flames of Men's Lufts, Pride, Avarice, Ambition, Revenge, and all the wicked Excursions of corrupt Nature.

It would take up a long Tract by itself, to form a System of the Devil's Politicks, and to lay down a Body of his Philosophy: I observ'd however, that some of his general Rules are such as these.

1. To infuse Notions of Liberty into the Minds of Men; that it is hard they should be born into the World with Inclinations, and then be forbidden to gratify them; that such and such Pleasures should be prepar'd in the Nature of Things, made suitable and proper to the Senses and Faculties, which on the other Hand, are prepared in mere Constitution, and placed in his Soul, and that then he should be forbidden under the Penalty of a Curse to taste them; that to place an Appetite in the Man, and a strong powerful Gust to these Delights, and then declare them fatal

tal to him, would be laying a Snare to Mankind in his very Constitution, and making his brightest Faculties be the Betrayers of his Soul to Misery, which would not consist with Justice, much less with the Goodness of a Creator.

2. To persuade from hence, that the Notions of future Punishments are Fables and Amusements, that it is not rational to think a just God would prepare infinite and eternal Punishments, for finite and trivial Offences; that God does not take Notice of the minute acts of Life, and lay every Slip to our Charge, but that the merciful Dispositions of God, who so bountifully directs the whole World to be assistant to the Profit and Delight of Mankind, has certainly given him leave to enjoy it at fill, and take the Comfort of it without fear.

3. Of late indeed the Devil has learn'd, *for Devils may improve as well as Men in the Arts of doing ill.* At last, I say, he has learned to infuse a wild Notion into the Heads of some People, who are first fitted for it, by having reasoned themselves in Favour of their loose Desires up to a Pitch, that there is no such Thing as a God or a future State at all.

Now as at first the Devil was not Fool enough to attempt to put this Jest upon Man, his own Antiquity and Eternity being a Contradiction to it; so I found among my new Discoveries, that the Devil took this Absurdity from Man himself, and that it went among Satan's People for a new Invention: I found also that there was a black Party employ'd upon this new Subtilty, these were a Sort of Devils, for Satan never wants Instruments, who were call'd *Insinuators*, and who were formerly employed to prompt Men to Crimes by Dreams; and here I shall observe, that I learned a Way how to make

any Man dream of what I please : *For Example*, suppose one to be found asleep, or as we say, in a deep Sleep, or dead asleep, let another lay his Mouth close to his Ear, and whisper any Thing to him so softly as not to awaken him, the sleeping Man shall certainly dream of what was so whispered to him.

Let no Man despise this Hint, nothing is more sure, than that many of our Dreams are the Whispers of the Devil, who by his *Insinuators* whispers into our Heads, what wicked Things he would have our Thoughts entertain and work upon ; and take this with you as you go, those insinuating Devils can do this as well when we are awake, as when we are asleep, and this will bring me to what I call *Impulses upon the Mind*, which are certainly whispers in the Ear and no other, and come either from good Angels attending us, or from the Devil's *Insinuators*, which are always at hand, and may be judged of according as the Subject our Thoughts are prompted to work upon, are Good or Evil.

From whence but from these Insinuators, come our causeless Passions, our involuntary Wickedness, sinning in Desire as effectually, as by actual committing the Crime we desire to commit ?

Whence comes Imagination to work upon wicked and vicious Objects, when the Person is fast asleep, and when he had not been under the Preparation of wicked Discourse, or wicked Thoughts previous to those Imaginations ? who forms Ideas in the Mind of Man ? who presents beautiful or terrible Figures to his Fancy, when his Eyes are clos'd with Sleep ? who, but these insinuating Devils, who invisibly approach the Man sleeping or waking, and whisper all manner of lewd abominable Things into his Mind.

Mr. Mil-

Mr. *Milton*, whose Imagination was carried up to a greater Height than I am now, went farther into the Abyſs of Satan's Empire a great Way, eſpecially when he form'd Satan's Palace of *Pandemonium*, I ſay, he was exactly of this Opinion, when he represented the Devil tempting our Mother *Eve*, in the Shape of a Toad lying juſt at her Ear, when ſhe lay faſt aſleep in her Bower, where he whiſper'd to her Ear all the wicked Things which ſhe entertained Notions of by Night, and which prompted her the next Day to break the great Command, which was the rule of her [Life; and accordingly he brings in *Eve* telling *Adam* what an uneaſy Night's Reſt ſhe had, and relating her Dream to him.

This Thought, however laid down in a kind of Jeſt, is very ſeriouſly intended, and would, if well digeſted, direct us very clearly in our Judgment of Dreams; *viz.* not to ſuggeſt them to be always Things of meer Chance; but that ſometimes they are to be heeded as uſeful Warnings of Evil of Good by the Agency of good Spirits, as at other Times they are the artful Inſinuations of the Devil to inject wicked Thoughts and abhorr'd abominable Ideas into the Mind; which we ought not only as much as poſſible to guard againſt, but even to repent of, ſo far as the Mind may have entertained and acted upon them.

From this general Viſion of the Devil's Management of his Affairs, which I muſt own I have had with my Eyes wide open, I find a great many uſeful Obſervations to be made; and firſt, it can be no longer ſtrange, that while the Commerce of Evil Spirits is ſo free, and the intercourſe between this World and that, is thus open, I ſay, it can be no longer ſtrange, that there are ſo many ſilent
Ways

Ways of Spirits conversing, I mean Spirits of all Kinds.

For as I have observed already; there is a Residence of good Spirits, but they are placed infinitely higher out of the Reach, and out of the Sight of this lower Orbit of Satan's Kingdom; as those pass and repass invisible, I confess, I have yet had no Ideas of them, but those which I have received from my first View of the infernal Region: If I should have any superior Elevations, and should be able to see the OEconomy of Heaven in his Disposition of Things on Earth, I shall be as careful to convey them to Posterity as they come in.

However, the Transactions of good Spirits with Man are certainly the same; for as God has for a Protection and Safeguard to Mankind, limited the Devil from affrighting him, by visible Appearances in his native and hellish Deformity, and the horrid Shape he would necessarily bear: So for Man's Felicity, even the glorious Angels of Heaven are very seldom allowed, at least not lately, to appear in the glorious Forms they formerly took, or indeed in any Form, or with a Voice; the restraint of our Souls in the Case of Flesh and Blood we now wear not admitting it, and not being able to familiarize those Things to us; Man being by no Means, in his incorporated State, qualified for an open and easy Conversation with unembodied Spirit.

Moreover, this would be breaking into the Limits, which the Wisdom and Goodness of God has put to our present State, I mean as to Futurity; our Ignorance in which, is the greatest Felicity of human Life; and without which necessary Blindness Man could not support Life, for Nature is no way able to support a View into Futurity; I mean

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not into that Part of Futurity which concerns us in our State of Life in this World.

I have often been myself among the Number of those Fools, that would be their own Fortune-tellers; but when I look thus beyond the Atmosphere, and see a little speculatively into Invisibles, I could easily perceive, that it is our Happiness that we are short-sighted Creatures, and can see but a very little before us: *For Example*, were we to have the Eyes of *our Souls* opened through the Eyes of *our Bodies*, we should see this very immediate Region of Air which we breath in, throng'd with Spirits, to us, *blessed be God*, now invisible, and which would otherwise be most frightful: We should see into the secret Transactions of those Messengers who are employ'd when the passing Soul takes its Leave of the Reluctant Body, and perhaps see Things Nature would shrink back from with the utmost Terror and Amazement. In a Word, the Curtain of Providence for the Disposition of Things here, and the Curtain of Judgment for the Determination of the State of Souls hereafter, would be alike drawn back, and what Heart could support here its future State *in LIFE*, much less that of its future State *after LIFE* even good or bad.

It is then our Felicity, that the Converse of Spirits, and the Visions of Futurity, are silent, emblematick, and done by Hints, Dreams, and Impulses, and not by clear Vision and open Discovery; they that desire a fuller and plainer Sight of these Things, ask they know not what; and it was a good Answer of a Gypsy, when a Lady of my Acquaintance, ask'd her, to tell her Fortune; *Do not ask me, Lady*, said the Gypsy, *to tell you what you dare not hear*. The Woman was a little honefter than her Profession intimated, and freely confes'd it was all a Cheat, and that they knew nothing of Fortunes,
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but had a Course or Round of doubtful Expressions, to amuse ignorant People and get a little Money.

Even the Devils Oracles, for such no doubt they were at *Delphos*, and at other Places, though the Devil seemed at that Time to have some Liberties granted him, which it is evident have since been denied him, were allowed to be given only in doubtful Expressions, double Entendres, Ecchoes of Words, and such like: *For Example*, A Man going to Sea and enquiring of the Oracle, thus;

Have I just cause the Seas and Storms to Fear ?

Eccho. ————— *Fear.*

Another.

Shall we the Parthian Bowmen fight or Fly ?

Eccho. ————— *Fly.*

Such dark Replies, and other Words doubtful and enigmatic, were frequently given and taken for Answers, by which the deluded World were kept in doubt of that Futurity they hunted after: But Satan even then, was not permitted to speak plain, or Mankind to see what awaited him behind the dark Veil of Futurity, nor was it proper on any Account whatsoever, that it should be otherwise.

But before I come to this, let me put some Limits to the Elevations and Visions I have mentioned before; for as I am far from Enthusiastic in my Notions of Things, so I would not lead any one to fancy themselves farther enlightned than is meet, or to see Things unseeable, as *St. Paul* heard Things unutterable.

And therefore let me add here, that the highest Raptures, Trances and Elevations of the Soul, are bounded by the eternal Decree of Heaven and let
Men

Men pretend to what Visions they please, it is all Romance, all beyond what I have talked of above, is fabulous and absurd, and it will for ever be true, as the Scripture says, not only, *those Things are hid from the Eye*, but even from the Conception.

Upon this Occasion I must own, that I think 'tis Criminal to attempt to form Ideas either of Hell or of Heaven in the Mind, other than as the Scripture has described them, by the State rather than the Place; we are told in plain Words, *it hath not entred into the Heart of Man to conceive*, either of what is prepared for the future State of the Happy or Miserable; 'tis enough for us to entertain the general Notion, the Favour of God is Heaven, and the Loss of it the most dreadful of all Hell.

*A HEAVEN of Joy must in his Presence dwell;
And in his Absence every Place is HELL.*

My Meaning is this, all Visions, or propounded Visions either of Heaven or Hell, are meer Delusions of the Mind, and generally are Fictions of a waking bewildred Head; and you may see the Folly of them in the meannest of the Descriptions, which generally end in shewing some glorious Place, fine Walks, noble illustrious Palaces, Gardens of Gold, and People of shining Forms, and the like. Alas! these are all so short, that they are Unworthy the Thoughts of a Mind elevated two Degrees above Darkness and Dirt: All these Things amount to no more than *Mahomet's* Alchoran, and the glorious State of Things represented by him to his Believers. In short, all this makes only a Heaven of Sense, but comes to infinitely short of what alone must or can be
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a Heaven to an exalted glorified Spirit, that I as much want Words to express how contemptible the best of these Descriptions are as to a true Description of Heaven, as I do to express a true Idea, or Description of Heaven myself.

And how should this be done? We can Form no Idea of any Thing that we know not and have not seen, but in the Form of something that we have seen. How then can we form an Idea of God or Heaven, in any Form but of something which we have seen or known? By what Image in the Mind can we judge of Spirits? By what Idea conceive of eternal Glory? Let us cease to Imagin concerning it, 'tis impossible to attain, 'tis criminal to attempt it.

Let me therefore hint here, that supposing myself, as before, in the Orbit of the Sun, take it in its immense Distance as our Astronomers conceive of it, or on the Edge only of the Atmosphere with a clear View of the whole *Solar System*, the Region of Satan's Empire all in View, and the World of Spirits laid open to me.

Yet let me give you this for a Check to your Imagination, that even here the Space between Finite and Infinite is as impenetrable as on Earth, and will for ever be so, till our Spirits being un-cas'd shall take their Flight to the Center of Glory, where every Thing shall be seen as it is; and therefore you must not be surprized, if I am come down again from the Verge of the World of Spirits, the same short sighted Wretch, as to Futurity and Things belonging to Heaven and Hell as I went up; for Elevations of this Kind are meant only to give us a clearer View of what we *are*, not of what we *shall be*; and 'tis an Advantage worth Travelling for too. All this I thought necessary to prevent the whimsical Building of

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erroneous Structures on my Foundation, and fancying themselves carried farther than they are able to go.

I come therefore back to talk of Things familiar, and particularly to mention in the next Place, some of those other Ways by which we have Notice given of this Converse of Spirits which I have been speaking of ; for the Whispers and Insinuators I have mentioned, go sometimes farther than ordinary.

One of those other Methods is, when by *strong Impulses* of the Mind, as we call them, we are directed to do, or not to do, this or that particular Thing that we have before us to do, or, are under Consultation about. I am a Witness to many of these Things, as well in my own Life, as in my Observation of others.

I know a Man, who being at some Distance from *London*, not above six or seven Miles, a Friend that came to visit and dine with him urged him to go to *London*. What for, says his Friend, is there any Business wants me? Nay, nothing, says the other, but for your Company ; I do not know of any Thing wants you ; and so gave over importuning him : But as his Friend had given it over, a strong Impulse of Mind seized him and follow'd him like a Voice with this, *Go to London, go to London*. He put it by several Times, but it went on still, *Go to London, go to London*, and nothing else could come upon his Thoughts but, *Go to London*. He came back to his Friend, Hark ye, says he, tell me sincerely, is all well at *London*? Am I wanted there? Did you ask me to go to *London* with you on any particular Account. Not I, says his Friend, in the least ; I saw all your Family, and all is very well there ; nor did they say, they had any particular Occa-
sion.

sion for you to return ; I only ask it as I told you, for the Sake of your Company : So he put off going again, but could have no Quiet, for it still followed him, and no doubt, a good Spirit communicated it, Go to *London* ; and at length he resolved he would go, and did so ; and when he came there he found a Letter and Messengers had been at his House, to seek him, and to tell him of a particular Business, which was first and last worth above a thousand Pounds to him, and which if he had not been found that very Night, would have been in Danger of being lost.

I seriously advise all sober thinking Persons not to disregard those powerful Impulses of the Mind, in Things otherwise indifferent or doubtful, but believe them to be Whispers from some kind Spirit, which sees something that we cannot see, and knows something that we cannot know.

Besides, unless infinite Power should take off the Silence that is imposed upon the Inhabitants of the invisible World, and allow them to speak audibly, nothing can be a plainer Voice ; they are Words spoken to the Mind, tho' not to the Ear, and they are a certain Intelligence of Things unseen, because they are given by Persons unseen, and the Event confirms it beyond all Dispute,

I know a Man, who made it his Rule always to obey these silent Hints, and he has often declared to me, that when he obeyed them he never miscarried, and if he neglected them, or went on contrary to them, he never succeeded ; and gave me a particular Case of his own, among a great many others, wherein he was thus directed. He had a particular Case befallen him, wherein he was under the Displeasure of the Government, and was prosecuted for a Misdemeanor,

nor, and brought to a Tryal in the King's-Bench Court, where a Verdict was brought against him, and he was cast; and Times running very hard at that Time against the Party he was of, he was afraid to stand the Hazard of a Sentence and absconded, taking Care to make due Provision for his Bail, and to pay them whatever they might suffer. In this Circumstance he was in great Distress, and no Way presented unto him but to fly out of the Kingdom, which being to leave his Family, Children and Employment, was very bitter to him, and he knew not what to do; all his Friends advising him not to put himself into the Hands of the Law, which tho' the Offence was not Capital, yet in his Circumstances seemed to threaten his utter Ruin. In this Extremity he felt one Morning, (just as he had awaked, and the Thoughts of his Misfortune began to return upon him;) I say, he felt a strong Impulse darting into his Mind thus, *Write a Letter to them*: It spoke so distinctly to him, and as it were forcibly, that as he has often said since, he can scarce persuade himself not to believe but that he heard it; but he grants that he did not really hear it, too.

However it repeated the Words daily and hourly to him, till at length walking about in his Chamber where he was hidden, very pensive and sad, it Jogg'd him again, and he answered aloud to it, as if it had been a Voice, *Who shall I write to?* It returned immediately, *Write to the Judge*. This pursued him again for several Days, till at length he took his Pen, Ink and Paper, and sat down to write, but knew not one Word of what he should say, but *Dabitur in hac hora, he wanted not Words*: It was immediately impressed on his Mind, and the Words flowed up-

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on his Pen in a manner, that even charm'd himself, and filled him with Expectations of Success.

The Letter was so strenuous in Argument, so pathetick in its Eloquence, and so moving and perswasive, that as soon as the Judge read it, he sent him Word he should be easie, for he would Endeavour to make that Matter light to him, and in a Word never left, till he obtained to stop Prosecution, and restore him to his Liberty and to his Family.

These Hints, I say, are of a Nature too significant to be neglected; whence they come is the next Enquiry. I answer, They are the Whispers of some subsisting Spirit communicated to the Soul, without the Help of the Organ, without the Assistance of a particular Sound, and without any other Communication; but take it as you go, not without the merciful Disposition of that Power, that governs that World, as well as this that we are sensible of; How near those Spirits are to us, who thus foresee what concerns us, and how they convey these Hints into our Minds as well waking as sleeping, or how they are directed, that I could not discover, nor can yet resolve, no not in the highest of my imaginary Elevation, any more than in what Manner they are Limited and restrained.

I have been asked by some, to whom I have talked freely of my frequent Applications to these Things, If I knew any Thing by those Observations, of the Manner of the Disposition of human Soul after its Departure out of the Body? I mean as to its middle State, and whether, as some, it has a wandering Existence in the upper Part of the Waste or Abyfs near to, but not in a present State of Felicity? Whether it is still confined within the Atmosphere of the Earth

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according to others, as in a *Limbus*, or Purgatory; or in the Circle of the Sun, as others say? Whether I knew or perceived any Thing of our Saviour's being ascended into the Body of the Sun only, and not into the highest Heaven receiving his redeemed Souls to himself, and into an Incorporation with his Glory there, *till the Restitution of all Things*? Whether I perceived any Thing of Satan being possessed of the reprobate Souls as they departed; and of his Substitutes as Executioners, being empowered and employed to torment them according to the received Notions of the wise Contemplators of such Things.

I answered, as I do now, that not only nothing of all this appears, but on the contrary, such serious Contemplations as mine give a great and abundant Reason to be satisfied, that there is nothing in it all but meer Dream and enthusiastick Conjecture: I own that the Agents I mentioned, make use of all those Things to terrify and affright poor ignorant People out of their Senses, and to drive them often into Desperation, and after to restore them by a Cure that is worse than the Distemper, namely, by a Hardness and Coldness of Temper, rejecting entirely all the Notions of Eternity and Futurity, and so fitting them to go out of the World as they lived in it, (*viz.*) without troubling themselves with what is to come after it.

But I return to the Article of Impulses of the Mind, for I lay greater Weight upon these than upon any of the other Discoveries of the Invisible World, because they have something in them relating to what we are about, something directing, something to guide us in avoiding the evils that attend us, and to accepting, or

rather embracing Opportunities of doing ourselves good when they present, which many Times for want of the knowledge of our Way, we irrecoverably let slip.

Voices, Apparitions, Noises, and all the other affrighting Things, which unavoidably follow the Neighbourhood of Spirits in the Air we breath in, seem to have much less Signification, *as to us*, than these seasonable kind Whispers to our Souls, which it is plain, are directed for the Advantage of Life.

It seems hard that Mankind should be so open to the secret Insinulators the whispering Devils I have been speaking of, who are Night and Day, sleeping and waking, working upon his Senses by the Arts and Subtilties of Hell, to fill his Imagination with a thousand devilish Contrivances to gratify his Vanity and Lust; and that our Thoughts should be always ready to receive the Impressions they make, pressed to follow the infernal Counsel, be awake to listen to all his Directions, but should be deaf to the Instructions of any kind Spirits that would influence us for our Advantage, and insensible of those Impressions which are made upon us for our immediate Good, by an Agent Good in itself, and acting from a Principle whatever it be, of Good to us.

We have a foolish Saying, though taken from Something that is more significant than we imagine when any Danger has surpris'd us. Well, *my Mind misgave me*, when I was going about it: Well, I knew some Mischief would come of it; *did you so?* And why then did you do it? Why did you go on? Why, when *your Mind misgave you*, did you not obey the friendly Caution? Whence do you think your Mind received the speaking, tho' silent Impression? Why did you not

not listen to it, *as to a Voice?* For such a one it was no doubt; and let all those unthinking People who go on in any Thing they are upon, contrary to those secret silent Impressions upon their Minds; I say, let them know and observe it, they will very seldom fail of meeting some Mischief in the Way. They will very seldom fail of miscarrying in the Way; *I say very seldom*, because I would not take upon me to prescribe Things positively, which the Reader will take me up short in, and say, how do I know it? But I will take the Liberty to say, I durst be positive in it, relating to my self, and I durst be positive from the Nature and Reason of the Thing.

As to my own Experience, I wave saying much of it, but that in general I never slighted these Impulses, but to my great Misfortune; I never listen'd to and obey'd them, but to my great Advantage, but I choose to argue from the Reason of them, rather than from my own Experience.

As they are evident Warnings of what is to come, and are testified daily and hourly by the Things coming to pass afterwards, so they are undeniable Testimonies, that they proceed from some Being, intelligent of those Things that are at Hand, while they are yet to come. If then I am satisfied that it is a Notice given from a Something, *be it what it will*, which is fully inform'd of what is attending me, tho' conceal'd from me; why should I slight the Hint given me from any Thing that knows, what I know not, and especially, for Example, for avoiding Evils to come.

I know a Person, who had so strong an Impression upon her Mind, that the House she was in would be burnt that very Night, that she could not go to sleep, the Impulse she had upon her

Mind press'd her not to go to Bed, which however she resisted and went to Bed, but was so terrified with the Thought, which as she call'd it, run in her Mind, that the House would be burnt, that she could not go to sleep.

She had made so much Discovery of her Apprehensions in the Family, that they were all in a Fright, and applied themselves to search from the Top of the House to the Bottom, and to see every Fire, and every Candle safe out, so that, as they all said, it was impossible any Thing could happen in the House, and they sent to the Neighbours on both Sides to do the like. Thus far they did well, but had she obeyed the Hint, which press'd upon her strangely not to go to Bed, she had done much better, for the Fire was actually kindled at that very Time, tho' not broken out.

In about an Hour, after the whole Family was in Bed, the House just over the Way, directly opposite, was all in a Flame, and the Wind which was very high, blowing the Flame upon the House this Gentlewoman lived in, so fill'd it with Smoke and Fire in a few Moments, the Street being Narrow, that they had not Air to breath, or Time to do any Thing, but jump out of their Beds and save their Lives; had she obey'd the Hint given, and not gone to Bed, she might have saved several Things of Value, which she lost; but as she neglected that, and would go to Bed, the Moments she had spar'd to her, were but just sufficient to get out of Bed, get some Cloaths on, and get down Stairs, for the House was on Fire in half Quarter of an Hour.

It might be ask'd here, why could not the same kind Spirit have intimated by the same

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Whispers, where the Danger lay, and from what Quarter it was to be expected; in what Manner the Fire would attack them, and that it would come from the other Side of the Street, the Wind blowing it directly upon them?

To this, I answer, that it is our Business the more vigilantly to observe and listen to the Hints which are given, seeing the Intimations are not so Particular as we might wish, without enquiring into the Reasons, why they are given no plainer. We have a great deal of Reason to believe the kind Spirit that gives these Intimations and Whispers, thus to us; gives us all the Light it is permitted to give, and whispers as much, either as it knows, or as it is allow'd to communicate; otherwise, why does it give any Intimations at all? But on the other Hand, it may be alledg'd, that enough is intimated to suffice for our Safety, if we will obey the Intimation; and it would be a much more reasonable Question, to ask, why we slight and disobey the Impression that we acknowledge to have received, rather than why the Intimation was no plainer.

A Person of my Acquaintance being to go to *New-England* by Sea, two Ships presented, and the Masters earnestly solicited to take him as a Passenger; he asked my Advice, professing, that as well the Ships, as the Captains, were perfectly indifferent to him, both the Men being equally agreeable to him, and the Vessels equally good. I had my Eye upon this Notion of Impulses, and prest him to observe strictly, if he had not some secret Motion of his Mind to one Ship rather than another, and he said he had not.

After some Time he accidentally met one of the Captains, and falling into Terms with him, agreed for his Passage, and accordingly prepar'd

to go on board ; but from the very Time that he made the Agreement, nay, even while he was making the Bargain, he had a strong Impression on his Mind, that he should not go in that Ship.

It was some Days after this, that he told me of these Impressions, which increas'd on him every Day ; upon which I prest him earnestly not to go, but to take Passage with the other. After he had resolv'd upon this, he came to me, and told me, that he had with some Difficulty, and some Loss, put off the first Ship, but that now he had the same, or rather stronger Averfion to going in the second Ship, and had a strong Impression on his Mind, that if he went in the second Ship he should be drowned ; I bid him consider it a little, and tell me if he had any farther Intimations of it ; and he continued to tell me, that he had no Rest about his going in either of those Ships, and yet his Affairs lay so, that he was under a Necessity of going, and there was no other Ship put up upon the *Exchange* for going.

I prest'd him, however, not to venture by any Means ; I convinc'd him, that those Impulses of his Mind were the Whispers of some kind Spirit, that saw Things farther than he could, and were certainly given him as Cautions to save him from some Mischief which he might not foresee ; that it could be no evil Spirit, because the keeping him back could be no Injury to him, of such a Nature as would gratify the Devil in any Part of his usual Desires ; it must therefore be something for his Good, and he ought to be very cautious how he slighted the silent Admonition. In a Word, I prepossess'd him so much in aid of the secret Impulses of his own Mind, that

that he resolv'd not to go that Year, and he saw clearly afterwards, that the secret Intimation was from a good Hand, for both the Ships miscarried; the first being taken by the *Turks*, and the latter cast away and all the Men lost, the Ship foundring at Sea, as was suppos'd, for she was never heard of.

I could fill this Tract with Accounts of this Nature, but the Reason of the Case is stronger than the Example; for as it is an Intimation of something future, and that is to come to pass, it is certain, there is a State in which what is Future and must come to pass is known, and why should we not believe the News, if it comes from the Place where the Certainty of it is known?

Some give all this to a Prescience peculiar to the Soul it self, and of kin to that we call the *Second Sight*; but I see no Ground for this, but mere Presumption. Others call it an *Afflatus*, which they think is a Distemper of the Brain. Others call it a *Sympathetick Power in the Soul*, foreboding its own Disasters. But all this is short of the Thing, for here is not a Foreboding only, which indeed is often felt, but is express'd another Way; but here is a direct Intelligence; a plain Intimation of the Evil, and warning to avoid it: This must be more than an *Afflatus*, more than a *Sympathy*; this must be from a certain Knowledge of a Thing that *exists not*, by a Something that *does exist*; and must be communicated by a Converse of Spirits unembodied, with the Spirit embodied, for its Good; unless you will call it *Divine Revelation*, which I see no Ground for.

All these Reasonings make it abundantly our Concern to regard these Things, as what we are greatly concern'd in; However that is not the chief Use

Use I make of them here, but (1.) they abundantly explain the Nature of the World of Spirits, and the Certainty of an Existence after Death; (2.) they confirm that the Disposition of Providence concerning Man, and the Event of Things, are not so much hidden from the Inhabitants of that World as they are from us; as also (3.) that Spirits unembodied see with a Sight differing from us, and are capable of knowing what attends us, when we know nothing of it our selves.

This offer'd many useful Reflections to my Mind, which, however, 'tis impossible for me to communicate with the same Vivacity, or to express with the same Life, that the Impression they make on my own Thoughts came with.

I. The Knowledge of there being a World of Spirits, may be many Ways useful to us, and especially that of their seeing into Futurity, so as to be able to communicate to us, by what Means soever they do it, what we shall, or shall not do, or what shall, or shall not befall us; to communicate Dangers before us, so as they may be avoided, and Mischiefs awaiting us, so as they may be prevented, and even Death it self, so as we may prepare for it; For we may certainly, if we would attend to these Things, encrease our Acquaintance with them, and that very much to our Advantage.

I would be far from prompting the crazy Imaginations of Hypochondriac Distemper'd Heads, which run Men out to so many Extravagancies, and which in fixing their Thoughts upon the real World of Spirits, make *this* an imaginary World of Spirits to them; who think they are talk'd to from the invisible World, by the Howling of every Dog, or the Screeching of every Owl. I believe it was much of this vapourish dreaming Fancy, by which the *Augurs* of the *Romans* determin'd Events from the
Fly-

Flying of Birds, and the Entrails of Beasts. It will be hard for me to be prevail'd on to suppose; that even those intelligent Spirits which I speak of, who are able by such easy Ways, as the Impulses of our Minds, Dreams, and the like, to convey the Knowledge of Things to us, can be put to the Necessity, or find Reason to make Use of the Agency of Dogs and Birds, to convey their Notices by; this would be to suppose them to be much more confin'd in their Converse with us, than we evidently find they are; and on the other Hand would suppose the inanimate World to have more Knowledge of the invisible, than we have, whereas on the other Hand we know they have nothing at all to do with it.

There is only this to be said for it, namely, that those inanimate Creatures do it involuntarily, and as it were, under the Power of a Possession.

I will not affirm, but that the invisible Inhabitants I have been speaking of, may have Power to act upon the brute Creatures, so as to employ them, or make use of their Agency in the Warnings and Notices which they give to us of Things to come; but that the Brutes have otherwise any farther Sight of Things than we have, I can see nothing at all of that. It is true, *Balaam's* Ass saw the Angel with the flaming Sword, standing in the Road, when the Prophet did not, but the Reason is plainly express'd; the Angel was really there, and actually presenting Terror to them with a flaming Sword in his Hand, only the Prophets Eyes were miraculously withheld, that he could not see him.

I shall unriddle this Mystery of the Agency of Beasts, and Birds, as far as Reason dictates; and it seems to be Easy upon the Scheme of the
Near-

Nearness of the Spirits I am speaking of to us, and their Concern to convey Intelligence to us ; They may, I say, have Power to Terrify the Brutes by horrible Apparitions to them, so as to force those Howlings and Screichings we have been told of, and to do this in such Places, and at such Times as shall suit with the Circumstances of the Family or Person concern'd, and so far their said extraordinary Howlings and Screichings may be significant ; but that the Brutes can either by Sense, or by extraordinary Sight have any Foreknowledge of Things in Futurity relating to us, or to themselves ; this has no Foundation in Reason or Philosophy any more than it has in Religion. Matter may act upon material Objects, and so the Understanding or Sense of a Brute may act upon visible Objects, but Matter cannot act upon immaterial Things, and so the Eye of a Beast cannot see a Spirit, or the Mind of a Brute act upon Futurity, Eternity, and the sublime Things of a State to come.

What Use then the Spirits we speak of, inhabiting the invisible World, can make of the inanimate World to direct them, as Missionaries to us, I do not see, neither did I in all my Altitudes perceive they employ'd any such Agents.

It is from the Misunderstanding of these Things that we place abundance of Incidents meerly fortuitous to the Devils Account, which he knows nothing of ; many a Storm blows that is none of his raising ; many a Mid-night Noise happens that is none of his making ; if Satan or his Instruments had one Tenth Part of the Power, either of the Air, or in the Air, or over the Elements, that we give them in our Imaginations, we should have our Houses burnt every Night, Hurricanes raised in the Air, Floods made in the Coun-

Country, and in a Word, the World would not be habitable : But you remember I told you, as powerful as he is, he is chain'd, he has a great Clog at his Foot, and he can do nothing by Violence, or without Permission.

I might hint here at abundance of idle ridiculous Devils, that we are daily told of, that come and only make Game among us, put out our Candles, throw Chairs and Stools about the House, break Glasses, make a Smoak, a Stink of Brimstone, &c. whereas after all, the Devil has no more Sulphur about him than other Folks, and I can answer for it, that Satan is not disposed for Mirth ; all the Frolicks and Gambols we ascribe to him, I dare say, are Anticks of our own Brain. I heard of a House in *Essex*, which they told me was haunted, and that every Night the Devil or a Spirit, call it which you will, came into such a Room, and made a most terrible Knocking, as if it had a Hammer or a Mallet, and this for two or three Hours together : At length, upon looking about in an empty Closet in that Room, there was found an old Mallet, and this was presently concluded to be the Mallet which the Devil made such a Noise with, so it was taken away : But the next Night they said, the Devil made such a Racket for want of the Mallet, that they were much more disturb'd than before, so they were obliged to leave the Mallet there again, and every Night the Devil would come and knock in the Window, for two or three Hours together with that Mallet. I have seen the Room, and the Mallet, in neither of which was any Thing extraordinary, but never heard the Noise, though I sat up to wait for it ; nor after causing the Mallet to be taken away, was there any Noise ; be like

like the mannerly Spirit would not disturb us who were Strangers.

This pass'd for a most eminent Piece of Walking or Haunting, and all the Difficulty was to enquire, to what Purpose all this Disturbance was made, seeing there was no End answered in it, and I always thought the Devil was too full of Business to spend his Time to no manner of Purpose.

At last, all the Cheat was discovered, *viz.* that a Monkey kept in a House three or four Houses from it, had found the Way into that Room, and came every Night almost about Midnight, and diverted himself with the Frolick, and then went Home again.

If these Things were not frequently detected, it would be a great Scandal upon the Devil, that he had nothing to employ himself in, more significant, than Rapping all Night with a Hammer to fright and disturb the Neighbours, making Noises, putting out Candles, and the like : When we come into the invisible State, of which we now know so little, we shall be easily convinced, that the Devil is otherwise employ'd, and has Business of much more Importance upon his Hands.

It would be very insignificant, to have us so frequently warned against Satans Devices, to have us be caution'd to be sober and vigilant, knowing that our Adversary the Devil, goes about like a roaring Lion, seeking, &c. All these Things import, that he is diligent in attacking us, watching all Advantages, hunting us down, circumventing, waiting, and constantly plying us with Snares that he may trapan and devour us : This admits not any of those simple, ludicrous, and senseless Digressions, which we set him to work upon in our Imaginations.

Perhaps

Perhaps, it may be expected I should enter here upon the Subject of Apparitions, and discourse with equal Certainty of that yet undecided Question, concerning the Reality of Apparitions, and whether departed Souls can revisit the Place of their former Existence, take up Shapes, Bodies, and visible and apparent Beings, assume Voices, and concern themselves with the Affairs of Life, of Families, Persons, and even of Estates, and the like, as many have affirmed they have been Witnesses to.

I must be allowed to leave this where I find it; there are some Difficulties which I am not yet got over, in it, nor have I been elevated high enough to determine that Point, and shall not venture to decide it, without more certainty than I am yet arriv'd to.

I would warn all People not to suffer their Imagination, to form Shapes and Appearances where there are none; and I may take upon me to say, that the Devil himself does not appear half so often, as some People think they see him; Fancy governs many People, and a sick Brain forms strange Things to itself: But it does not follow from thence that nothing can appear, because nothing does at that Time.

However, as my Design is to instruct, not amuse, so I say, I forbear to enter upon a Subject, which I must leave as doubtful as I find it, and consequently talk of to no Purpose.

I have heard of a Man that would allow the Reality of Apparitions, but would have it be nothing but the Devil, that the Souls of Men departed or good Spirits never appeared, it happen'd that to this very Man something appear'd, as he said, and insisted upon it to the last: He said he saw the Shape of an ancient Man pass by him in the
Dusk

Dusk of the Evening, who holding up his Hand, as it were in a threatenng Posture, said aloud, *O wicked Creature, repent, repent.* He was exceedingly terrified, and consulted several People about it, who all advised him seriously to take the Advice; for his Life made it well known it seems, that he stood in need of it: But being seriously debating about it, one of his Friends asked what he thought of the Apparition, and whether it was any of the Devils Business to bid him *Repent*; this puzzled his Thoughts, and in a Word, he grew a very sober Man: But after all, it was a real Man, and no Apparition that spoke to him, though his frightened Fancy made him affirm that he vanish'd out of his Sight, which he did not. And the Person who did it, being a Grave and pious Gentleman, met him by mere Accident without any Design, and spoke as he did, from the Knowledge he had of his being indeed a most wretched wicked Fellow: By the Way, the Gentleman had the Opportunity to hear the Use that was made of it, and to hear himself mistaken for an Apparition of the Devil, but he was so prudent as not to discover it to the Man, lest the Reformation, which was the Consequence of the Fright, should wear off, when he should know, that there was nothing in the Thing but what was common.

If we would always make the like good Use of *Satan's* real Appearances, I do not know but it would go a great Way to banish him from the visible World; for I am well assur'd he would very seldom visit us, if he thought his Coming would do us any Good; at least he would never come, but when he was sent, he would never come willingly: For he is so absolutely at the Divine Disposal, that if Heaven Commands, he must go, though it were to do the good he abhors; not that

*

that I believe Heaven ever thinks fit to employ him in doing Good, if ever he is let loose, 'tis to act in Judgment as an Instrument of Vengeance, and some are of Opinion, he is often employed as a destroying Angel, tho' I do not grant that; I can hardly think the Justice of God would gratify Satan's Gust of doing Evil, so far as to suffer him to be even so much as an Executioner: But that is by the Way.

I have another Turn to give this Part of my Observations, which tho' perhaps some may not think so much to the Purpose, as entering into a critical Enquiry after the Devils particular Mission in these Cases: Yet I think otherwise.

I have observ'd, that some desperate People make a very ill use of the general Notion, that there are no Apparitions, nor Spirits at all; and really the Use they make of it, is worse than the extreme of those, who, as I said, make Visions and Devils of every Thing they see or hear: For these Men persuade themselves there are no Spirits at all, either in the visible or invisible World, and carrying it on farther, they next annihilate the Devil, and believe nothing about him, either of one kind or another.

This would not be of so much bad Consequence, if it was not always followed by a worse; namely, that when they have prevailed with themselves to believe there is no Devil, the next Thing is, and they soon come to it, *That there is no God*, and so Atheism takes its rise in the same Sink, with a Carelessness about Futurity.

I have no Mind to enter upon an Argument to prove the being of our Maker, and to illustrate his Power by Words, who has so many undeniable Testimonies in the Breasts of every rational Being to prove his Existence: But I have a Mind to con-

E e

clude

clude this Work with a short History of some Atheists, which I met with many Years ago, and whether the Facts are testified or not, may be equally useful in the Application, if you do not think them a little too Religious for you.

Some Years ago, there was a young Gentleman, a Scholar at the University, eminent for Learning and Vertue, of prompt Parts, and great Proficiency, infomuch that he was taken great Notice of by the Masters and Fellows, and every one promised fair in their Thoughts for him, that he would be a great Man. It happened, whether from his earnest Desire of more Knowledge, or the Opinion of his own great Capacity, I know not which; that this Gentleman falling upon the Study of Divinity, grew so opinionative, so very positive and dogmatic in his Notions in religious Things, that by Degrees it came to this Height, that his Tutor saw plainly, he had little more than Notions in all his religious Pretences to Knowledge, and concluded, he would either grow Enthusiastic or obstinately Profane and Atheistick.

He had three *Chums* or Companions in his Studies, and they all fell into the same Error, as well by the Consequence of a great deal of Wit and little Grace, as by the Example and Leading of this other young Gentleman, who was indeed their Oracle, almost in every Thing.

As his Tutor who was a very good Man, fear'd for him, so it came to pass with him, and all the rest; for they ran up their superficial Notions in Divinity to such a Height, that instead of Reasoning themselves into good Principles of Religion, they really reason'd themselves out of all Religion whatsoever; running on to expunge every right Idea from their Minds, pretending those
Things

Things really *were not*, of which they could not define both how and what *they were*; they proceeded to deny the Existence of their Maker, the Certainty of a future State, a Resurrection, a Judgment, a Heaven, or a Hell.

They were not contented to satisfy themselves with these impious Foundations, but they set up to dispute in private Societies against all revealed Religion; thereby bringing on themselves the Curse denounced in Scripture against those, that do Evil and *teach Men so to do*; in a little Time they grew so publick, that more Company came in, and which was worse, many joined with them in Principle, or as I should rather have said, in casting off all Principles, and they began to be famous in the Place, *though to the Offence of all good Men*, and were call'd, *The Atheistical Club*.

They soon began to see sober, religious People shun them, and in some Time, upon Information given, they were obliged by Authority, to separate for Fear of Punishment, so that they could not hold their publick Disputations, as they began to do; yet they abated nothing of their wicked Custom; and this dreadful Creature, who set up at the Head of the rest, began to be so open in his Blasphemies, that he was at Length oblig'd to fly from the Univerfity.

However, he went a great while before it came to that; and though he had been often admonished, yet instead of reclaiming, he grew the more impious, making the most Sacred Things his Jest, and the Subject of his Ridicule: He gave out, That he could frame a new Gospel, and a much better *System* of Religion, than that which they call'd *Christian*; and that if he would trouble himself to go about it, he would not fail to draw in as great a Part of the World to run after him,

as had been after *any other*. I care not to repeat any of his blasphemous Words, it is not to be supposed there can be any blasphemous abominable Thing, that this Set of wicked wretched young Men did not run into, neither any Wickedness of that kind within their Reach, which they did not commit.

It would be too long to enter into the particular History of these Men, and how it pleased God to dispose of them ; they might be in Number before they separated about twenty-two in all, I shall tell you of some of them however, who did not run such Lengths as the rest : There was a young Man, who frequented their Society, though *as he afterwards said*, he was rather persuaded to be *among them*, than to be *one of them* ; he had however too much yielded to their Delusions ; and though they made him very much their Jest, because they found he still retained some little Sense of a God, and of a future State in his Mind, yet he had yielded dreadfully to them, and began to do so more and more every Day.

It happen'd one Day, this young Man was going to their hellish Society, and not minding the Weather, the Clouds gathered over his Head, and he was stopp'd by a sudden Shower of Rain in the Street : It rained so very hard, that it obliged him to stand up in the Gate-way of an Inn for some Time ; while he was standing here, a great Flash of Lightning more than ordinarily surpriz'd him ; it seems the Fire coming so directly in his Face, that he felt the very Warmth of it, and was exceedingly startled ; in the same Moment almost, *as is natural in the Case*, followed such a Clap of Thunder that perfectly astonished him. The Rain continuing, kept him in the Gate-way, as I said, for a good While, till he had Time for such Reflect ons,
as

as these, *Where am I going! What am I going about! Who is it has stopt me thus! Why are these Thunders, these Rains, and this Lightning thus Terrible? and whence are they!* and with the rest came in this Thought, warm and swift as the Lightning, which had terrified him before, *What if there should be a God! What will become of me then!* Terrified with these Things, he starts out of the Gate-way into the Street notwithstanding the Wet, and runs back through the Rain, saying to himself as he went, *I will go among them no more!* When he came Home to his Chambers, he fell into dreadful Agonies of Mind, and at length broke out thus: *What have I been doing! have I been denying the Power that made me! Despising that God whose Fire flash'd just now in my Face! And which, had not that Mercy I have abused interposed, might have burnt me to Death! What kind of Creature am I!* While he was thus giving vent to his Reflections, a near Relation of his, a pious good Man, who had often used to speak very plainly to him of the horrid Sin he was guilty of, happened to come to visit him.

The young Man had thrown himself upon his Bed, and had with the deepest Sense of his Madness, and most serious Reproaches of himself for his horrid Life, been expressing himself to his Friend, and he had been comforting him in the best Manner he could, when after a while he desir'd his Friend to retire, that he might be a little alone, and might give vent to his Thoughts with the more Freedom, and his Friend, taking a Book in his Hand, staid in the outer Room.

In this Interval came another Scholar to the Door, who was one of the wicked Company I mention'd just now: He came not to visit this first Gentleman, but to call him to go with him to the usual Meeting of their dreadful Society. And

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knocking

knocking at his Chamber Door; this Gentleman, who was left in the Chamber, stept to the Door, and looking through a little Grate, not only knew the Person, but knew him to be one of the wicked Company I have been speaking of: Now as he was very loath, his Friend should have such an Interruption to the good Disposition he was then in, so above all, he was loth he should be persuaded to go any more among that miserable Gang; wherefore he opened the Door a little Way, so as he was not very distinctly seen, and speaks aloud in the Person of his Friend thus: O SIR, *Beseech them all to repent; for depend upon it, There is a God, tell them, I say so;* and with that he shut the Door upon him violently, giving him no Time to reply, and going back into his Friends Room, took no Notice of any Body having been at the Door at all.

The Person who knocked at the Door, you may suppose, was one of the Leaders of the Company, a young Scholar of good Parts and Sense, but debauch'd by that horrid Crew; and one that had made himself eminent, for his declar'd Opposition to all the common Notions of Religion; a complete Atheist and publicly so, without God or the Desire of God in the World: However, (*as he afterwards confessed*) the Repulse he met with at the Door, *and which he thought came from his Friend,* gave him a strange Shock at first, and fill'd him with Horror: He went down the College-Stairs in the greatest Confusion imaginable, and went musing along a good Way, not knowing where he was, or whither he went, and in that Embarrassment of Thought went a whole Street out of the Way; the Words had made an unusual Impression upon his Mind, but he had* his other Surprises too; for he Thought his Friend, *for he*
believ'd

believ'd firmly, that it was he that had spoken to him, had treated him very rudely.

Sometimes he repented it, and reflected upon it as an Affront, and once or twice was upon the Point of going back again to him, to know the Reason of his using him so, and to demand Satisfaction: But still the Words, **THERE IS A GOD**, dwelt upon his Mind, *and what if it should be so?* says he, *what then?* Upon this Question to himself, the Answer immediately occur'd to his Mind, *What then! Why, then I am undone; for, have not I declar'd War against the very Notion, defy'd all the Pretenders to it, as mere Enthusiasts and Men of Whimsy?* However, after these Thoughts his Mind cool'd a little again, and it offer'd to him, *no doubt injected by an Evil Spirit*, that he should not trouble himself with enquiring into it one Way or another, but *be easy*.

This pacified him for a little While, and he shook off the Surprise he was in; the hardened Temper seem'd to return, and he kept on his Way towards the hellish Society, that he was going to before: But still the Words returned upon him, **THERE IS A GOD**, and began to bring some Terror with it upon his Mind; and the last Words of his Friend came into his Mind often, *tell them, I say so*, this fill'd him with a Curiosity which he could not withstand, *viz.* of going back to his Friend, and enquiring of him, what Discoveries he had made of this Kind? how he came to have changed his Mind so suddenly? and especially, how he was arriv'd to a Certainty of the Thing?

I told you, that there had been a great Shower of Rain, which had stopp'd the first young Gentleman in his Way out; it seems the Day was still showery and 'a little Rain happening to fall again, as this Gentleman went by a Bookseller's Shop,

he stops at the Door to stand up a little out of the wet.

There happens to be fitting in the Shop reading a Book, a Gentleman of his Acquaintance, though far differing from him in his Principles, being a very sober, studious, religious young Man, a Student in Divinity of the same College, who looking up called him in, and after a few common Salutes, he whispers in his Ear.

Student, I was looking in an old Book *here* just now, and began the following short Dialogue ; and I found four Lines written on the Back of the Title Page, which put me in Mind of you.

Atheist, Me ! why did they put you in Mind of me ?

Stud. I'll tell you presently, * come hither.

* *He retires into a back Room, and calls the other after him.*

Ath. Well, now tell me.

Stud. Because I think they are very fit for *such an atheistical Wretch* as you to read.

Ath. You are very Civil.

Stud. You know you deserve it.

Ath. Come, let me see them however.

Stud. Let me look in your Face all the While then.

Ath. No you shan't.

Stud. Then you shan't see them.

Ath. Well, let it alone then.

Stud. Come give me your Hand, you shall see them, if you will promise to read them over three Times.

Ath. There's my Hand, I'll read them out to you.

Stud.

Stud. I'll hold your Hand all the While, because
I'll be sure of your Performance.

Ath. I'll warrant you I'll * read them.

* *He reads.*

But if it should *fall out*, as who can tell?

That there M A Y B E a God, a Heaven and

* Hell :

Had I not best consider well, for fear

'T thou'd be *too late* when my Mistakes appear.

* *He held him by the Hand till that Word,
and then let it go: pressing gently one of
his Fingers.*

Stud. Well, what do you say to them?

Ath. I'll tell you my Thoughts farther by and
by, but first tell me what did you press my Hand
for when you let it go.

Stud. Did you feel no Motion within you, when
you read those Words, *There may be a God.*

Ath. What Motion? What do you talk of?

Stud. Come do not deny it, for I am a Witness
against you.

Ath. Witness, for what? I have kill'd no Body,
I have robb'd no Body; if you would turn Informer,
I value not your Evidence.

Stud. No, no, I shall not turn Informer of that
Kind, but I am a Witness in your Maker's Behalf.

Ath. What can you Witness?

Stud. I'll tell you what I can Witness, I can te-
tify, that your own Conscience is against you, in
your impious denying the Existence of that God
that gave you Life; you could not conceal it, I tell
you *I felt it.*

Ath.

Ath. How do you pretend to know, what my Conscience dictates to me, or what the Result of secret Reflections may be in the Mind? You may be mistaken, *have a Care*; you know *you are not to bear false Witness*.

Stud. It's in vain to struggle with it, 'tis not to be conceal'd, you betray'd yourself, I tell you,

Ath. How betray'd myself? you are mighty dark in your Expressions.

Stud. Did I not tell you, I would look in your Face all the While you read? Did I not see into the Distraction of your Soul? Did you not turn pale at the very Words, when your Tongue said, *There may be a God*? Was there not a visible Horror in your Countenance, when you read the Word HEAVEN? A Horror, which signified a Sense of your having no Share in it, or Hope about it? And did I not feel a *Trembling* in your very Joints, as I held you by the Hand, when you read the Word HELL?

Ath. And was that it you held me by the Hand for?

Stud. Indeed it was; I was persuaded I should find it; for I could never believe, but an Atheist had always a Hell within him, even while he bray'd it out against a *Hell* without him.

Ath. You speak enough to fright one; how can you say so positively a Thing, which you cannot be sure of?

Stud. Never add Sin to Sin, 'tis in vain to deny it.

Ath. Well, well, its none of * your Business; who made you my Father Confessor?

* *He is a little Angry.*

Stud. Nay do not be angry with your Friend, and though you are, do but take the Hint, and be as Angry as you will.

Ath. *What*

Ath. *What Hint*, what is it you aim at ? your Hints are all so general, I can make nothing of them.

Stud. I aim at nothing but your eternal Felicity, I thought those Lines very apposite to your Case, and was wishing you had them, before I happen'd to see you ; I thought, that such a Reflection in the Case of Atheism, so natural, so plain, especially blessed from him, whose secret Voice can effectually reach the Mind, might be some Means to open your Eyes.

Ath. Open mine Eyes ! to what ?

Stud. To something that I am persuaded you see already in Part, though I find you struggle hard against your own Convictions.

Ath. What is this something you speak of ?

Stud. I mean in a few Words, what the Lines you have read mean, viz. That perhaps there may be a God, a Heaven, and Hell.

Ath. I don't know * but there may.

* *He observes Tears stands in his Eyes.*

Stud. Well, I see it begins to touch you, if you are uncertain, that is a Step to Conviction ; and the rest of the Words you have read, are a most natural Inference in your Case.

— You'd best consider well for Fear,
'T shou'd be too late when your Mistakes appear.

Ath. What would you have me consider ?

Stud. I am not able to enter into that Part now ; the first Thing is to persuade you to look in ; listen to the Voice of Conscience, I am satisfied you stand convicted at that Bar, you cannot plead *Not guilty* there.

Ath. Con-

Atb. Convicted of what ?

Stud. Of having acted contrary to the Light of Nature, of Reason, and indeed of common Sense; most impiously denied the God whose Air you breath in, whose Earth you tread on, whose Food you eat, whose Cloaths you wear, who is your Life, and will be your Judge

Atb. I do not absolutely deny; I tell you, I don't know, but *there may be a God.*

Stud. Don't you know but there may! O SIR, I beseech you repent; for certainly **THERE IS A GOD**, depend upon it, I SAY SO.

Atb. You *Fright me.

* *He starts and looks surpriz'd.*

Stud. Indeed I think it may well Fright you.

Atb. But you fright me upon a quite differing Account from what you imagine; I am indeed very much surpriz'd, and so would you too if you knew the Circumstance.

Stud. What Circumstance ?

Atb. Pray did you hear those Words spoken any where to Day before you spoke them.

Stud. No, not I.

Atb. Was you at Mr. ——'s Chamber about half an Hour ago ?

Stud. I have not been there this Month past, I have given over visiting him, and all such as he is, long ago.

Atb. Have you seen him to Day, or when did you last see him, did he speak those Words to you, or you to him.

Stud. I have not seen him, since I saw him with you about fourteen Days ago, when your Discourse (even both of you) was so Blasphemous and so Atheistical, as made my very Heart tremble, and I re-

I resolv'd never to come into Company with either of you again, and it was that very Discourse, that made me think of you when I found those Lines in this Book; I should think it an evident Discovery of God, and what I might hope should best forward your Conviction, if his Providence should have sent you to this Door at that Minute, to receive the Hint on this Occasion.

Ath. There is something more than common, in every Thing that has happened to me to Day!

Stud. If you would explain yourself a little, I might say more; but you know very well, I cannot make the least guess at what you mean.

Ath. Ask me no more Questions, there must be A * GOD or A DEVIL in Being.

* *He looks wildly and amaz'd.*

Stud. Dear Friend, there are both, depend upon it, but I beseech you compose your Mind, and do not receive the Conviction with Horror, but with Comfort and Hope.

Ath. One or other of them has been concern'd in what has happen'd to me to Day; it has been a strange Day with me.

Stud. If it relates only to these Things, perhaps it may be of Use to you to communicate the Particulars, at least it may give some vent to the Oppression of Thought, which you seem to be under, you cannot open your Mind to One, that has more earnest Desires to do you Good, tho' perhaps not sufficiently furnish'd to advise you.

Ath. I must tell it or * Burst;

Here he gave him the whole Story of his going to his Friend's Chamber, in order to take him with him to the wicked Club they had kept,

kept, and how he had met him at the Door, and said the same Words to him, that the Student had repeated, and when he had done, says he to his Friend ;

and who now do you think must dictate the same Words to him, and afterwards to you, to say to me on the same Occasion.

Stud. Who do I think ! Nay, who do you think ?

Ath. Who ! The Devil, if there is a Devil.

Stud. Why, do you think the * Devil preaches Repentance !

* *He stands Stock-still, and says not a Word, which the other perceiving, goes on.*

Pray think seriously, for I see it does a little touch your Reason ; is it likely the Devil should bid either of us, or both of us, *intreat you to repent* ? Is it the Devil *think you*, that would pronounce the Certainty of the great Truth I speak of ? Is it his Business to convince you that *there is a God* ?

Ath. That's very true.

Stud. One Thing however, I'll say in Satan's Behalf ; *and that is*, that he never came up to your height of Sinning. The Devil has frequently set up himself, and persuaded poor deluded People to worship him as a God ; but *to do him Justice*, he never had the Impudence to deny the Being of a God ; that's a Sin purely Human, and even among Men very Modern too, the Invention of witty Men, *as they call themselves* ; a Way they have lately found out to cherish superlative Wickedness, and flatter themselves, that they shall have no *Audit* of their Accompts in a Future State ; of whom it may indeed be said in that Particular, *they have out-sinn'd the Devil.*

✱

Ath.

Ath. Indeed I think we have.

Stud. I wish you would consider a little farther of it.

Ath. What can Men consider that have gone that Length?

Stud. Yes, yes, remember what *St. Peter* said to *Simon* the Sorcerer.

Ath. What was that?

Stud. Read *Acts* viii. 22. *Repent therefore of this thy Wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine Heart may be forgiven thee.*

Ath. No, No, the last of your Verses is against me there most directly.

Its all TOO LATE now my Mistakes appear.

Stud. No, no, Remember what you said, that it must be a *God* or a *Devil*.

Ath. What is that to the Purpose?

Stud. Why you seem'd satisfied, that it could not be from the *Devil*.

Ath. But what the better am I for that, if the other is my *Enemy*?

Stud. Much the better if it was from *God*, if the Words you heard were from *God*, and that two unconcerted Persons so eminently concurr'd in speaking to you, you cannot believe *God* would bid you **REPENT**, if it was too late, or if he were your irreconcilable *Enemy*; on the contrary, if you believe it to be the *Voice* of his *Providence*, you ought to listen to and obey it.

Ath. You have a strange Power of Persuasion, there's no resisting your Argument.

Stud. It is not in me to persuade, but *Heaven* may make use of me to convince.

Ath. To convince is to persuade, I am convinc'd that I have been a dreadful Wretch.

Stud. I am persuaded you were convinc'd of that before.

Ath. I

Ath. I cannot deny but my Heart always struck me, a kind of chill Horror ran through my Veins, when I have utter'd the blasphemous Opinions that I have been drawn into, my very Blood stagnated at the Thought of it, and I look back on it with Astonishment.

Stud. I tell you, I felt a Tremor even in your Flesh, when you read the Words, a God, a Heaven, a Hell.

Ath. I confess to you my very Heart sunk within me at the Words *who can tell*; my Soul answer'd that I could tell myself, that it both is, and must be so.

Stud. Conscience is a faithful and never-failing Evidence in his Maker's Behalf.

Ath. It is a very terrible Evidence against me, and where will it End?

Stud. I hope it will End where it began, I mean in a heavenly Call to you to Repentance.

Ath. That is not always the Consequence of Conviction.

Stud. You must therefore distinguish again of what proceeds from Heaven, what from Hell, the Voice of God, and the Voice of the Devil; the first calls upon you to repent, the last prompts you to despair.

Ath. Despair seems to be the natural Consequence of denying God; for it shuts out the Power that can alone restore the Mind.

Stud. The greater is that Love which refuses to be shut out, that sends such a heavenly Summons to you to repent, and in so eminent a Manner; it is not your having been an Enemy, a Blasphemer, a Denyer of God; *Peter* denied Christ three Times, nay, the third Time he even abjur'd him, and yet *mark the Words*, The Lord look'd on him, and immediately he repented.

Ath.

Ath. My Case is worfe than *Peter's*.

Stud. And yet you see you are call'd on to repent.

Ath. I think you are call'd to make me repent, there's no answering you.

Stud. *Amen* ; may I have the Blessing of being an Instrument to so good a Work, there seems to be something extraordinary in it all.

Ath. It's all a Surprise to me, how came I hither !

Stud. Nay, how came I hither ! how came this Book here ! who writ the Lines in the Frontispiece ! how came I to read them ! 'tis all a Dream to me.

Ath. How came you to think of me upon the reading them ! and how came I here just at the *Moment, and out of my Way too !

* *He lifts up his Hands and cries out, There is a God, certainly there is, I am convinc'd of it, it must be so.*

Stud. Nothing more certain ; nor is there any Doubt but all these Things are of him.

Ath. But there are yet greater Things behind, I wish you would go with me to my Friend Mr. _____'s Chamber, I am perswaded something yet more extraordinary must have befallen him.

Stud. With all my Heart. †

† *They both go to the first Gentleman's Chamber, and found him at Home very much out of Order, but willing enough to discourse with them.*

F f

Ath.

Ath. Well, *Friend of mine*, I hope you are better dispos'd to your Friends than when I saw you last.

Gent. Truly when I saw you last, I was dispos'd of by the Devil, and so I doubt was you; I hope I shall never come into that horrid Place again.

Ath. What horrid Place?

Gent. You know where I mean, I tremble at the very Thoughts of the Place, and much more of the Company; I wish I could prevail upon you to come no more among them too; I assure you if I know myself, and if God would assist me to do it, I would much rather go to a Stake to be burnt.

Stud. I rejoice in such an Alteration, Sir, upon you, I hope our Friend here is of the same Mind, long may it continue in you both.

Ath. Well, pray tell us something of the Occasion of this happy Alteration; for it will seem still more strange, how you came to be instrumental to my Change, if I know nothing of the Means that brought about your own.

Gent. Mine! I assure you, it was all from Heaven: Not the Light that shone about *St. Paul*, was more immediately from Heaven, than the Stroke that touch'd my Soul; it is true, I had no Voice without, but a Voice has spoken (I hope) effectually to my Understanding, I had Voice enough to tell me, how I was in the Hands of that Power, that Majesty, that GOD, whom I had wickedly, and with a Hardness not to be expressed, disown'd and deny'd.

Stud. Pray Sir, if you care to have it known, give us some Account of the Particulars of this wonderful Thing.

Gent.

*

Gent. Sir, I shall do it * freely, I think I ought not to conceal it.

* *Here he gives an Account of the Surprise he was in by the Lightning, how he was stopt in his Way to his wicked Company, and went back to his Chamber.*

Ath. Well, now I will no more wonder at the Salutation you gave me, when I came to call you, but thank you for it.

Gent. What Salutation ?

Ath. Why, when I was at your Chamber about two Hours ago.

Gent. You at my Chamber !

Ath. Nay, you need not conceal it, for I have told our Friend here all the Story.

Gent. I know nothing of what you talk of, much less what you mean.

Ath. Nay, what need you go about to conceal it ? I tell you I do not take it ill, I hope I may have Reason to be thankful for what you said to me, and look upon it as spoken from Heaven ; for I assure you, it has been an Introduction to that Light in my Thoughts, which I hope shall never be extinguish'd.

Gent. Dear Friend, as I believe you are serious, so I hope you believe I am so ; I profess I know nothing of all you talk about.

Ath. Why, was I not at your Door this Afternoon, a little after the great Shower of Rain ?

Gent. Not that I know of.

Ath. Why, did not I knock at your Chamber-Door, and you come to the Door yourself and speak to me ?

Gent. Not to Day, I am very sure of it.

F f 2

Ath.

Ath. Am I awake! are you Mr. ——— am I sure we are all alive, and know what we are saying, and to who?

Gent. I beseech you unriddle yourself, for I am surpris'd.

Ath. Why, about three a Clock this Afternoon, I came to this Chamber-Door; I knock'd; you came and open'd the Door; I began to speak, you interrupted me, and ———

Here he repeats the Passage at large, and his own Thoughts, and Resentment as before.

Gent. Depend upon it, 'twas some Voice from Heaven, it was nothing of mine; I have not been at the Door since two of the Clock, when I came first in, but have been on the Bed or in my Study ever since, wholly taken up with my own Thoughts, and very much indispos'd.

The young Man turns Pale, and falls into a Swound.

There was a great deal more belonging to this Story, but 'tis too long for the present Purpose, I have related this Part on several Accounts, and it hits the Purpose I am upon many Ways.

1. Here is a visible Evidence of God, and of his Being and Nature fix'd so in the Mind, that not the most hardn'd Atheist can deny it, Nature recoils at every Endeavour to suppress it, and the very Pulsation of his Blood shall discover and acknowledge it.

2. Yet

2. Yet even in this, we see how the Power of Imagination may be work'd up, by the secret Agency of an unknown Hand, how many Things concurr'd to make this Man believe he had seen an Apparition, and heard a Voice, and yet there was nothing in it but the Voice of a Man unseen and mistaken; the young Man was so surpris'd at his Friends declaring that he knew nothing of his coming there, that he concluded it had been all a Vision or Apparition that opened the Door, and that it was a Voice that had spoken to him, of what Kind he knew not; and the Reflection upon this surpris'd him so much as threw him into a Swound, and yet here was neither Vision or Voice, but that of an ordinary Person, and one who meant well, and said well.

It is not to be doubted, but that many an Apparition related with a great deal of Certainty in the World, and of which good Ends have follow'd, has been no more than such a serious Mistake as this.

But before I leave it, let me observe, that this should not at all hinder us from making a very good Use of such Things; for many a Voice may be directed from Heaven, that is not immediately spoken from thence; as when the Children cried *Hosannah* to our Saviour, they fulfilled the Scripture, which said out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings thou hast ordain'd Praise; so doubtless he that made all Things and created all Things; may appoint Instruction to be given by fortuitous Accidents, and may direct concurring Circumstances to touch and affect the Mind as much, and as effectually, as if they had been immediate and miraculous.

Thus

Thus was the two Persons happening to say the same Words to the Atheist, the strange reading of those Lines, when the Person came into the Book-feller's Shop, the incident of his running into the Shop for Shelter, and many the like Things of the same Nature, and order'd in the same Manner as the Cock crowing when *Peter* denied Christ, which though wonderfully concurrent with what his blessed Master had foretold, yet was no extraordinary Thing in a Cock, who naturally Crows at such a Time of the Morning.

In a Word, all these Things serve to convince us of a great Super-intendency of Divine Providence in the minutest Affairs of this World, of a manifest Existence of the invisible World, of the Reality of Spirits, and of the Intelligence between us and them. I hope I have said nothing of it to mis-guide any Body, or to assist them to delude themselves, having spoken of it with the utmost Seriousness in my Design, and with a sincere Desire for a general Good.



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