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THERON and *ASPASIO*:

OR, A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES

AND

LETTERS,

UPON THE

Most *Important* and *Interesting* SUBJECTS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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

My Mouth shall daily speak of thy Righteousness *and* Salvation; *for I know no End thereof.* Psal. lxxi. 13.

VOL. II.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

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A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES.

DIALOGUE IX.

THERON, impreſſed with the laſt Converſation, was very deſirous to reſume the Subject, and renew the important Debate. With this View, He conducted his Friend into a Retirement, commodious for the Purpoſe.

They enter a ſpacious *Lawn*; which lay oppoſite to the Houſe, and ſtretched itſelf in the Form of an expanded Fan. The Mounds, on either Side, were dreſſed in Verdure; and ran out in a ſlanting Direction. The whole, to an Eye placed at a Diſtance, bore the Reſemblance of a magnificent *Viſta*; contracting, by ſlow Degrees, its Dimenſions; and leſſening, at laſt, into a Point. Which, the regular

and graceful Seat, with all imaginable Dignity, supplied.

Nature had sunk the Lawn into a gentle *Decline*, On whose ample Sides, were Oxen browzing, and Lambs frisking. The lusty Droves lowed, as they passed; and the thriving Flocks, bleated welcome Music in their Master's Ear.—Along the Midst of this verdant Slope, ran a spacious and extensive *Walk*. Which, coated with Gravel, and fenced with Pallisadoes, looked like a plain Stripe of Brown, intersecting a Carpet of the brightest Green.—At the Bottom, two handsome *Canals*, copiously stocked with Fish, floated to the Breeze. Whose Waters, beheld from every front Room in the House, had a fine Effect upon the Sight; not without a refreshing Influence on the Imagination.—At the Extremity of one, stood a stately *Colonade*. The Roof was elevated on Pillars of the *Ionic* Order; and the Area slabbed with Stones, neatly ranged in the Diamond-Fashion. Several Forest-chairs accommodated the Anglers with a Seat, while the bending Dome supplied them with a Shade.

Corresponding, and on the Margin of the other Canal, was erected a *Summer-house*, of a very singular Kind.—The lower Part, had an Opening towards the North. It was cool; it was gloomy; and had never seen the Sun. It carried the romantic Air of a *Grotto*, or rather the pensive Appearance of a *Hermit's Cell*. The Outside was coarse and rugged with protuberant Stones. Partly over-spread with Ivy, partly covered with Moss, it seemed to be the Work of antient Years.—You descend, by Steps of Turf, through a low and narrow Door. A scanty iron Grate, instead of a large sweeping Sash, transmits

mits a glimmering Light; just sufficient to discover the inner Structure. Which appeared, like one continued Piece of Rock-work; a Cavern cut, You would imagine, from the surrounding Quarry.—*Above*, hung an irregular Arch; with an Aspect, rather threatening, than inviting. *Below*, lay a Paving of homely Pebbles; in some Places, a little furrowed, as though it had been worn by the frequent Tread of solitary Feet. *All around*, were Rusticity and Solemnity; Solemnity, never more visibly seen, than through a Gloom.—The Furniture, of the same *groteſque* Fashion, with the Apartment. A Bench hewed, You would suspect, by Nature's Chizzel, out of the solid Stone. A Sort of Couch, composed of swelling Moss, and small fibrous Roots.—From one Corner, trickled a pure Spring, which crept, with a bubbling Moan, along the channeled Floor; till its healthy Current was collected into a Bason, rudely scooped from the Ground. On the Edge of this little Receptacle, lay chained a rusty Bowl; and over it, stood an antique worm-eaten Table.—On the least obscure Part of the Wall, you discern, *dimly* discern, a Parchment Scroll; inscribed with that sage, but mortifying Admonition; VANITY OF VANITIES! ALL IS VANITY!

Over this Recess, so pleasingly horrid, and adapted to solemn Musings, arose an open and airy *Belvidere*. You ascend by winding Stairs; and coming from the *uncouth* Abode below, are sweetly surprised with an *elegant* Hexagon.—The Cieling lofty, and decorated with the softest, richest, almost flowing Fret-work. The Wainscot, in large Pannels of Oak, retained its native Auburn: so *beautifully plain*, that, like an amiable Countenance, it would have

been disfigured, rather than improved, by the most costly Paint. On this were disposed, in gilded Frames, and to great Advantage, a Variety of entertaining *Landschapes*. But none surpassed, none equaled, all were a Foil to, the noble lovely Views, which the Windows commanded.—The Chimney-piece, of white shining Marble, streaked with Veins of vivid Red. *Over it*, was carved a fine Festoon of artificial, *in it*, was ranged a choice Collection of natural Flowers.—On a Table of glossy Walnut, lay a portable *Telescope*; attended with *Thomson*'s *Seasons*, and *Vanierii Prædium Rusticum* *.

The Whole was fitted up in the highest Taste, and furnished with every pleasurable Ornament. On purpose to harmonize with that *lavish Gaiety*, which seemed to smile over all the Face of Nature. On purpose to correspond with that *vernal Delight*, which came breathing on the Wings of every fragrant Gale. I may add, on purpose to remind the Beholder of those *immortal Mansions*, which are decorated with Images infinitely more splendid, with Objects unspeakably more glorious: where holy Beings will spend, not a few vacant Hours in refined Amusement, but a boundless Eternity in the Consummation of Joy.—For, to a well-turned Mind, Nature is

* *Vanierii Prædium Rusticum*——A most elegant *Latin Poem*: which treats of every remarkable Peculiarity, relating to the Business of a Country Life, or the Furniture of a Country Seat.——It entertains us with a Description of the most *agreeable* Objects; in an easy Flow, of the *purest* Language, and most *musical* Numbers.

'It is, I think, one continued Beauty. Superior to every Thing of the Kind, I have met with among the Moderns; and scarcely, if at all, unworthy the first Genius of the *Augustan* Age. *Uni Virgilio secundus, & pæne par.*

is a Preceptor; and these are her *instructive* Lessons. To the pure in Heart, even Sense is edifying; and these are its *delicate* Moralities.

The redundant Waters of the Canal, rolled off in a spreading *Cascade*. Which, tumbling from many a little Precipice, soothed the Air with a Symphony of soft and gurgling Sounds. Nor ever intermitted the obliging Office,

From Morn to Noon, from Noon to dewy Eve.

But, when the fanning *Breezes* dropt their Wings; when the feathered Choir were hushed in Sleep; when not so much as a chirping Grashopper, was heard throughout the Meads; this liquid Instrument still played its *Solo:* still pursued its busy Way, and warbled, as it flowed, melodious Murmurs.

Asp. Such, *Theron*; so uniform, uninterrupted, and invariable, should be *our* Conformity to the divine Law.—But alas! those sacred Precepts are so *exceeding broad*, that the most inlarged human Obedience, is far from being commensurate to their Extent: so *absolutely holy*, that our highest Attainments fall vastly short of their exalted Perfection.—How then can We expect Justification, from such a consummate Rule? How dare We place our Dependence, upon such imperfect Duties? Especially, before a GOD of unerring Discernment, and immaculate Purity.

Ther. Because Mankind are incapable of pleasing their MAKER, by yielding an *absolute* and *invariable* Obedience to the moral Law; does it follow from thence, that they cannot render themselves acceptable to Him, by an universal Course of sincere Obedience?

Asp. I think, it follows from what has been already obſerved. If You deſire new Arguments, they are at hand.

The Law, ſays the Teacher of the *Gentiles*, *is the Miniſtration of Condemnation* *. How can this be true, if it requires no more than a *ſincere* Obedience; ſuch as is proportioned to our infirm State? If this be ſufficient to juſtify, and intitle Us to our CREATOR's Favour; the Law ceaſes to be the Miniſtration of Condemnation. It becomes (which is flatly contradictory to the Apoſtle's Doctrine) the Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs.

The Law is ſtyled, by the ſame inſpired Teacher, *A School-maſter to* bring Us to *CHRIST* †. How can it, upon your Suppoſition, be qualified for ſuch an Office? If a ſincere Obedience be the Whole of its

* 2 *Cor.* iii. 7. In *this* Place, I apprehend, the Apoſtle means the *moral* Law, and that principally. As that alone was *written and engraven on Stones*. Elſewhere, I believe, He uſes the Word in a larger Senſe; and intends to exclude *all* Law whatever, from bearing any Share in our Juſtification.

† *Gal.* iii. 24. Παιδαγωγος, *A School-maſter*: Who pretends not to *finiſh* the Education of Youth; but directs them to, and prepares them for, higher Studies, or nobler Employs. The Law, in like manner, aims not at furniſhing Us with a Title to Happineſs; but *fits*, *diſpoſes*, and *diſciplines* Us, for the All-ſufficient REDEEMER.

Some have thought, that εις Χριστον ſignifies, *Until the Coming of CHRIST*. But this will hardly conſiſt with the Genius of the Language, or with the Import of the following Clauſe, *That We might be juſtified by Faith.*—— Beſides, this would confine the Efficacy of the Law, to that Period of Time, which preceded our LORD's Incarnation. Whereas, it *ſtill* does, and *always* will *act*, (until this Corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption) in a Way of Subſerviency to his Merits.

its Demands, it can no longer direct Us to *CHRIST*; it will no longer deliver Us over to a REDEEMER's Merit; but must draw and attach Us to *itself*. Teaching Us to look upon its Precepts, and our own conscientious Observance of them, as the Tenure of eternal Life.

Do You insist upon a third Proof? A third presents itself. Not so much founded on Argumentation, as deduced from Example.—How was *Abraham* *, the Friend of GOD, and Father of the Faithful, justified? By a Course of sincere Obedience? No; but by Faith in the promised MESSIAH. *Abraham worked not*, with a View to obtain Justification; *but believed on Him, who justifieth the Ungodly.*——How was *David* *, the Man after GOD's own Heart, justified? By his Zeal for the LORD, and by his eminent Services? No; but by a Righteousness imputed: even that Righteousness of the blessed REDEEMER, through which *Iniquity is forgiven, and Sin pardoned.*—And can We be said to walk *humbly*, or can We be thought to walk *surely*, if, refusing to tread in the Steps of these exemplary

* These two Examples are, with the truest Judgment selected, and with the utmost Propriety applied. *Rom.* iv. 1, *&c. Rom.* iv. 6, *&c.*——*Abraham* was the most illustrious Pattern of Piety, among the *Jewish* Patriarchs: *In Glory there was None like Him*, Ecclus. xliv. 19. *David* was the most zealous and seraphic of their Kings: *A Man after GOD's own Heart*, 1 Sam. xiii. 14. If neither of these was justified by *his own* Obedience; but each by *an imputed* Righteousness: If they both obtained Acceptance with GOD, not as *upright* Beings, who might claim it; but as *sinful* Creatures, who must implore it; the Consequence is glaring. It is such, as must strike every attentive Understanding, and must affect every individual Person.

emplary Saints, We divert into a Path of our own deviſing?

Ther. "Of our own deviſing!"—No, my Friend: there is a *milder* Law introduced by the Goſpel, condeſcending and merciful to our Infirmities, which accepts of Sincerity inſtead of perfect Obedience.

Aſp. When was this milder Law introduced, and the ſtricter abrogated?—Not upon the Entrance of Sin, I preſume. At this Rate, the original Law muſt be the Creature of a *few Days*, perhaps of a *few Hours* only. But can We imagine, that the All-wiſe and unchangeable GOD would ordain a Syſtem of Precepts, to be diſannulled, as ſoon as enacted?—Not in our LORD's Time, I am very certain. That holy Commandment, which requires *ſupreme* Love to GOD, and *perfect* Charity to Men, He aſſures Us, was ſtill in Force *. Nay, it is evident, from the Nature of the DEITY, and from our Relation to one another, That it always will be in Force; that it never can ceaſe; but is neceſſary and everlaſting.

"A milder Law, condeſcending to our Infirmi-
"ties."—What can be the Purport of ſuch an Inſtitution? It muſt be ſuppoſed to ſpeak the following Language; "Be it known unto You, O Children
"of *Adam*, that You are no longer injoined to love
"the LORD with all your Strength, nor to love
"your Neighbour as Yourſelves.—*Once*, indeed, I
"inſiſted upon abſolute Purity of Heart; *now* I can
"diſpenſe with ſome Degree of evil Concupiſcence.
"—Since *CHRIST* is come, and his Goſpel
"preached, You need not always be clothed with
"Humility; but may feel ſome little Emotions of
"Pride.

* Matt. xxii. 37, 38, 39.

" Pride.—In short; because You are *weak*, I will " *connive*; or even accommodate my Demands to " your infeebled and depraved Condition."

Not to urge, (what must be shocking to every Ear) That such a Doctrine would make the HOLY ONE of GOD, a Minister of Sin; and the Gospel of our Salvation, a Patent for Licentiousness. Let me only ask—Does this agree with our LORD's Declaration? *One Jot or Tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled* *.—Is this suitable to the Perfections of the Divine LEGISLATOR? *With whom is no Variableness, nor Shadow of Turning* †?—Will this consist with the avowed Resolution of the Almighty JEHOVAH? *He will magnify the Law, and make it honourable* ‡.

Ther. However You may decry, what I call the milder Law, St. *Paul* asserts it to be the *Christian* Scheme. This he strenuously argues for, as the only Scheme by which any Man can be justified in the Sight of GOD.

Asp. Does He, *Theron?* In what Epistle? What Chapter? What Verse?—He says, addressing Himself to the *Galatian* Converts; *I do not frustrate the Grace of GOD; for, if Righteousness come by the Law, CHRIST is dead in vain* ‖. From which Passage, We learn two very momentous Truths. That, were we to derive a justifying Righteousness from the Law, this would not only be *derogatory* to the Honour of Grace, but *subversive* of its very Being.—That, by seeking Justification through our own conscientious Behaviour, We make, as far as in Us

* Matt. v. 18. † Jam. i. 17. ‡ Isa. xlii. 21.
‖ Gal. ii. 21.

Us lies, the Death of *CHRIST* a *vain* Thing; for which there was no Occaſion, and of which there is no Uſe.

To the ſame Purpoſe it is written in that invaluable Epiſtle to the *Romans* *; *If they which are of the Law be Heirs*; if they, who truſt to their own Performance of the Law, are thereby intitled to the heavenly Inheritance; *Faith is made void, and the Promiſe made of none Effect*.—See now, my Friend, the Tendency of your Opinion! It is not a mere ſpeculative Miſtake; an Error of inconſiderable Conſequence; but ſuch as ſtrikes at the Fundamentals of the Goſpel. Inſtead of being the only *Chriſtian* Scheme, it totally overthrows † *Chriſtianity* itſelf. For, it would render the Promiſe abortive, and ſuperſede the Neceſſity of Faith. It would deſtroy the very Exiſtence of Grace, and make even the Death of *CHRIST* a ſuperfluous Tranſaction.

Ther. This I ſee, *Aſpaſio*; That the Method of obtaining Acceptance on Account of our own Sincerity,

* Rom. iv. 14.

† St. *Paul* ſays of thoſe Preachers, who taught Juſtification by the Works of the Law, *They would pervert*, or (as the Original μεταστρεψαι may be tranſlated) ſubvert and overthrow *the Goſpel of CHRIST*.—To pervert, give a *wrong Turn*, or a *falſe Colour*, ſeems not to expreſs fully the Apoſtle's Idea, nor to preſerve the native Energy of his Argument. The *Greek* Word is equivalent to the *Hebrew* הפך, which we generally render *evertere*. Gal. i. 7.

It may be worth our while, to tranſcribe *Beza*'s Deſcant upon the Paſſage: which is no leſs pertinent, than it is important. *Quid enim magis contrarium eſt Fidei, ſive gratuitæ Juſtificationi, quàm Juſtificatio ex Lege, ſive Meritis, non CHRISTI ſed noſtris? Itaque qui volunt iſta duo conciliare, magis etiam ſunt inepti, quàm ſi quis conetur Lucem cum Tenebris, Mortem cum Vitâ conjungere.*

rity, is a benign Expedient; such as corresponds with the compassionate Nature of the DEITY; and is, what the Apostle styles, *being justified by Faith, without the Deeds of the Law.*

Asp. How! To be justified by Faith, and justified by Sincerity, the *same* Thing!—Is it possible, that these should be *equivalent* Terms?—Let me illustrate my Query by a Similitude, which our present Situation suggests. Sometimes, an easy Comparison is more convincing, than a laboured Argument.

From this pleasing Eminence, We command an extensive View of the Country. Our Eye connects the artless Grandeur of Nature, with the elegant Embellishments of the Summer-house. Nor is the public Road the least entertaining Part of the Scene. Because, it presents Us with a *moving Picture*; with a perpetual Succession of new Objects.—How many Travelers have passed in Review, since We took our Seat in this agreeable Elevation! Just at this Instant, a *Stage-coach* bolts out of the Lane: filled, I presume, with Passengers, that reside in the Neighbourhood, or are to lodge in the next Market-town. We will suppose them set down at their Journey's End. An Acquaintance visits them: congratulates them on their Arrival: and asks that customary Question, "How they came?"—"We came, say "they, without walking a Step ourselves; yet by "walking, as well, and as far, as We were able."——Is this Answer *intelligible?* Are these Methods of traveling *consistent?* So intelligible is my Friend's Doctrine. So consistent is Justification, vouchsafed *without* the Deeds of the Law; and Justification obtained, by performing the Deeds of the Law, *as well* as We are able.

Ther.

Ther. Without the Law, signifies, Without the Necessity of an exact and unerring Conformity to it.

Asp. This is not *without*, but *by* the Law, qualified in the Rigour of its Demands, and departing somewhat from the Perfection of its Precepts. Could You affirm, with any Propriety, that this Part of the Hemisphere is *without the Sun?* Because, an intervening Cloud has moderated its Fervour, and abated its Glare.

What says the Apostle? His Words in another Place, will determine his Meaning in this. If a State of Acceptance with GOD, be *of Works*; be referable to our own Obedience, whether sincere or perfect; *it is no more of Grace* *. Works and Grace, in Point of Justification, are irreconcilable Opposites †. On this Pinnacle they cannot stand together. One must supplant and overthrow the other.

But why do I speak of Grace? If my Friend's Opinion prevail, Grace is at an end. What We took to be the Gospel, turns out a Covenant of Works. Salvation ceases to be a free Gift, and becomes a necessary Payment. For, *to Him that worketh*, that performeth what the Law requires, *is the Reward not reckoned of Grace*; *but* He may claim it,

* *Rom.* xi. 6. The Passage produced by *Aspasio*, refers *immediately* to the Doctrine of Election, and but *remotely* to the Privilege of Justification. However, as the former includes the latter, if *that* be perfectly free, *this* cannot be the Consequence of Works. The Argument, therefore, I apprehend, is conclusive, though the Proof is not so direct.

† *E diametro inter se opponuntur, Moses & JESUS CHRISTUS: Lex & Promissio: facere & credere: Opera & Fides: Merces & Donum.* BENGEL.

it, as his Due; it must be paid Him, as Matter *of Debt* *.

Ther. You take no Notice of what I urged, concerning the *Benignity* of this Scheme; and how much it magnifies the *Clemency* of the great LEGISLATOR.

Asp. But why should Clemency erect its Throne, on the *Ruins* of almost every other Attribute?—This Method would dishonour the *Veracity* of GOD; which has denounced a Curse, upon every Deviation from his revealed Will.—It would depretiate the *Administration* of his Justice; which cannot but punish, whatever violates his sacred Precepts.——It would greatly derogate from the *Dignity* of his Law; and make it a mere Thing of Wax. To bend; and truckle; and take its Form, from the Sin and Weakness of human Nature.

Ther. Will the divine Law then make no favourable Allowances for human Infirmities, for constitutional Faults, and Strength of Passion?

Asp. Far be it from me to represent the Law of the MOST HIGH, either more strict, or more yielding, than it really is. To avoid all Possibility of such a Mistake, let Us hear the Declaration of the Law itself. *Cursed is every One that continueth not in all Things, that are written in the Book of the Law to do them* †.

Every One; without any Exception of Persons; without any Regard to Pleas, either of human Weakness, or violent Temptation.—*That continueth not*; it is not enough to observe these holy Commandments, in the general Tenour of our Conversation. Our Course

* Rom. iv. 4. † Gal. iii. 10.

Course of Obedience must be without any Intermission; from the earliest Dawn of Reason, to the latest Period of Life. — *In all Things*; We must refrain from all the Sins that are forbidden, and from every Approach towards them. We must practise all the Virtues, that are injoined, and in their full Extent of Perfection.

In a Word; the Law insists upon Obedience, perfect in its *Principle*; perfect in all its *Parts*; perfect in every *Degree*; and in each of these Respects *perpetual**.—The least Deficiency in any one Particular, renders Us liable to Vengeance; and, notwithstanding any Repentance for Transgressions, notwithstanding all Pretensions to Sincerity of Heart, subjects Us to the Curse.

Theron paused.—He seemed to be struck with Surprize.—But rallying his Thoughts, replied. If this be the Sense of the Passage, Who of all Flesh can be saved?

Asp. Say rather; If the Extent of the divine Law be so inlarged, if its Demands be so high, and its Sanction so awfully rigorous; then must every Mouth be stopped—then is all the World become guilty before GOD—and, *by the Works of the Law shall no Man living be justified.*

Ther. Will not such excessively severe Doctrine, drive People into Despondency, or even drown them in *Despair?*

Asp.

* That the Law insists upon an Obedience *absolutely perfect*, will be farther evident to the attentive Reader; if He considers the Tenour of St. *Paul's* Argumentation, in his Epistle to the *Romans*, and to the *Galatians*. Particularly *Rom.* iii. 23. iv. 15. *Gal.* iii. 21.

Asp. No, *Theron*; unless it be *such* a Despair, as is the Parent of heavenly Hope; and productive of those amiable Twins, Peace and Joy. A Despair, I mean, of being reconciled to our offended GOD, and of obtaining eternal Happiness, by any Satisfaction or any Duties of our own.

Ther. Surely, You forget the gracious *Manifesto*, published by the condescending KING of Heaven; *If there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted, according to what a Man hath, not according to what He hath not* *. Is it not plain from this Text, that infinite Goodness will admit our honest, though imperfect Endeavours. And, since We are not able to pay an *unsinning*, will mercifully accept our *best* Obedience.

Asp. I do not forget, but possibly my Friend may misapply the gracious *Manifesto*.—To whom was the Word of this Consolation sent? To true Believers; who had *given their ownselves to the LORD* †; who *were established in CHRIST* ‡; *and abounded in Faith* §.—If You likewise, my dear *Theron*, acknowledge Yourself a vile Sinner in your worst, and an unprofitable Servant in your best Estate: if, in consequence of this Acknowledgment, You fly for Refuge to the Wounds of a *crucified* SAVIOUR; and rely, for Salvation, only on *his Obedience* unto Death: then, You imitate those *Corinthian* Converts. Then You may apply that indulgent Declaration to Yourself. And then would I venture to address You, in the elegant and chearing Language of the royal PREACHER; *Go thy Way, eat thy Bread with Joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry Heart; for GOD*

* 2 Cor. viii. 12. † 2 Cor. viii. 5. ‡ 2 Cor. i. 21. § 2 Cor. viii. 7.

now *accepteth* * both thy Person, and thy Performances.

But, if You overlook the Righteousness of the blessed *JESUS*; if You depend upon Yourself and your own Attainments; You are (how shall I speak it!) not accepted, but accursed. In such a Case, You have already heard your Doom denounced by the Leader of the *Jews*, and may hear it ratified by the Apostle of the *Gentiles*; *As many as are of the Works of the Law*, who seek Justification by their own Observance of its Commands, *are under the Curse* †.

Ther. Under the Curse! Because, our Attempts to obey, though faithfully exerted, are attended with Defects! Is not this unreasonable and shocking? *Unreasonable*, that the GOD of Justice should establish a Law of such consummate Perfection, as no Child of *Adam* can, even with his utmost Assiduity and Care, fulfil? *Shocking*, that the GOD of Mercy should thunder out so severe a Denunciation, on the least inadvertent Breach, on every unavoidable Failure?—This exceeds the relentless Rigour of *Draco*, or the tyrannical Impositions of the *Ægyptian* Task-

* *Eccles.* ix. 7.—*Aspasio*'s Remark discovers an *Ambiguity* in the Word *accepted*.—If People mean, That sincere Obedience shall be accepted, as *their justifying* Righteousness; as that which constitutes their Title to everlasting Felicity: the Proposition is extremely false.—If they mean, That the sincere Obedience of Believers, though very imperfect in itself, shall be *graciously regarded* in *CHRIST*, and find Favour through his all-recommending Merit: the Sentiment is unquestionably true.—Is Sincerity the *Effect of Faith?* Then We may rejoice in it, with the happy Apostle, 2 *Cor.* i. 12. Would Sincerity be the *Condition of our Justification?* Then We must renounce it, with holy *Job*, Chap. ix. 15.

† Gal. iii. 10.

Task-masters. *Draco* is said to have written his Laws in Blood. Yet He never enacted such Institutions, as were absolutely too strict and difficult to be observed. And, though the *Ægyptian* Task-masters insisted upon the full Tale of Bricks, without allowing the necessary Proportion of Straw, yet the Punishment they inflicted, was incomparably less than everlasting Destruction.

Asp. If GOD Almighty, in delivering his Law to fallen Mankind, intended to propose the *Means* of their *Justification*; your Argument would be valid, and your Inference undeniable. But the SUPREME LEGISLATOR had a very different, a far more mysterious Design.—However, before I proceed to touch upon this Point, let me desire to know *your* Opinion.

For what Reasons, think you, was the Law ordained?

Ther. For what Reasons?—To deter Men from the Commission of Vice, and excite them to the Practice of Virtue.—To set before them a Rule for their Conduct; which if they diligently observe, they shall be *rewarded* with eternal Happiness; which if they presumptuously transgress, they shall be *punished* with eternal Misery.

Asp. If Man had never fallen, this Doctrine had been sound Divinity; and this Method, a practicable Scheme. But, ever since the *Fall*, such a Way of Salvation, is somewhat like the *North-East* Passage. As Mountains of Ice, and the severest Rigours of Winter, block up *this*: so, extreme Impotence in Man, and the utmost Perfection in the Law, bar up *that*.—*The Law*, saith the Apostle, *is weak*; is incapable of furnishing Us with a Title to the hea-

venly Felicity *. Not through any Defect in its Precepts, but *through the Flesh*; through the Inability of our degenerate Nature.

Yet I must confess, You are not alone in your Opinion. Multitudes have unwarily entertained the same Notion. Not apprehensive, that they frustrate hereby the Grace of GOD, and render it of none Effect with regard to themselves.—If You examine the *scriptural* Account, You will find it quite of another Strain.

Ther. Pray let me hear the scriptural Account. For, whenever those DIVINE ORACLES speak, I am all Attention. Where-ever they interpose their Authority, I am all Submission.

Asp. By the Law is the Knowledge of Sin †. Far from being our Justifier, it is our Accuser. It arraigns and proves Us guilty. It demonstrates, beyond all Possibility of Contradiction, that the very best among Us, have failed and come short of our Duty; nay, that, the very best among Us, have done amiss, and dealt wickedly.

I was alive without the Law once, says the Apostle ‡. I thought myself upright and holy; and intitled, by virtue of these Qualifications, to Life eternal. *But when the Commandment came*, shining in its Purity, and operating with Power, *Sin revived*; a clear and lively Sense of Guilt shot, like a piercing Ray, through

* *Rom.* viii. 3. Therefore he says in another Place; *IF there had been a Law given, which could have given Life.* Gal. iii. 21. It is the same way of speaking, and intended to denote the very same *Impossibility*, which is implied in that Speech of *JEHOVAH* to *Abraham*; *IF a Man can number the Dust of the Earth.* Gen. xiii. 16.

† Rom. iii. 20. ‡ Rom. vii. 9.

through all my Soul. I saw myself chargeable with many past Provocations, I felt myself subject to much remaining Corruption. In consequence of which, *I died*; my vain Conceits were blasted; my presumptuous Hopes expired; I could not but acknowledge myself, justly liable to Condemnation and Death.

Ther. It had this Effect on *Saul*, when He was a malignant and barbarous Persecutor. But, when People are *virtuous* and *benevolent*, what Purpose does it then serve?

Asp. A very important one. Yet such as may, probably, at the first Hearing, affect You with a little Surprise. *The Law entered*, says the Apostle, *that the Offence might*—

Ther. Be *restrained*, no doubt.

Asp. That the Offence might *abound* *, is the Assertion.

Ther. Surprising indeed! Is it possible that GOD's Law should give Countenance to Sin? Nay, add Spurs to the Sinner?

Asp. Let Us beware of mistaking our sacred Casuist. The Law entered, not that the *Commission* of Sin might be *authorized*, but that the *Abundance* of our Sins might be *manifested*. That all Mankind, even your virtuous Persons, may perceive the great Multitude of their Iniquities; the greater Impurity of their Hearts †; together with the utter Imperfection of their highest Attainments, and best Services.

This End could not be answered by a Law, relaxed in its Demands, or warping to our Weakness;

* Rom. v. 20.

† *And* therefore *was Law giv'n them, to evince*
Their natural Pravity. MILT. B. XII. 287.

only by a System of Precepts, *every* Way exact, and in *all* Degrees perfect.—Whoever would represent to his Neighbour, the Spots that sully, or the Scars that disfigure his Countenance, must effect the Design, not by a stained, but by a pure Mirror.

Ther. *The Knowledge of Sin, and a Conviction of our exceeding Sinfulness!*—These are Intentions, which I should not have suspected.

Asp. These are not all. There is another Intention of the Law, equally necessary, and no less awful. *It reveals the Wrath of* GOD, *against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men* *.—Having set before the Sinner, his innumerable Offences, and enormous Guilt; it denounces the Doom, which He deserves. It unsheaths the Sword of Justice, and threatens the Offender with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the LORD.

Ther. A modern Writer supposes, that GOD may *set aside* the Law, in favour of frail Men. I might far more reasonably suppose, that He would *mitigate* the Law, on the same Consideration. But what You urge, makes me afraid to lean on so precarious a Prop.

Asp. To look for Comfort and Salvation from this Quarter, would be *to lean*, as the *Arabian* Proverb speaks, *on a Wave of the Sea:* which will not only fail to support, but will certainly swallow up, the unadvised and rash Depender.

No, *Theron*; rather than the divine Law should lose its Honours, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were laid in Ashes; the antient World was destroyed with a Deluge; the present Frame of Nature is destined to the Flames, and all its unholy Inhabitants will be condemned

* Rom. i. 18.

demned to Hell.—Nay, rather than the *leaſt Tittle* ſhould paſs unaccompliſhed, its Curſe has been executed on GOD's own SON, and all its Injunctions have been fulfilled in the Perſon of *JESUS CHRIST*.

Ther. As I dare not confide in the modern proviſionary *Salvo*, ſo neither can I accede to your ſevere and terrifying Notions.—The Laws of a wiſe and beneficent Governor, are calculated for the *Good* of his Subjects. What Good, what Advantage can accrue to Us, from receiving ſuch a Sentence, and poſſeſſing ſuch Convictions?

Aſp. Though I might mention many Advantages, I ſhall content myſelf with ſelecting one. Which is not only valuable in itſelf, but the Introduction to *every* ſpiritual Bleſſing.—When, by the Inſtrumentality of the Law, and the Illumination of the SPIRIT, We are brought under ſuch Convictions; then We are taught to *ſee* our Danger; then We are made to *feel* our Miſery: and then We ſhall no longer ſleep in Security, but ſolicitouſly look out for Deliverance, and gladly accept the ſovereign Remedy.

Ther. The Law, according to your Repreſentation, is intended to *accuſe* me—to *convict* me—to *condemn* me. So it becomes, inſtead of a ſalutary, a killing Syſtem.

Aſp. The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life *. If We adhere to the literal Senſe, without attending to the ſpiritual Deſign: if we regard only the Precept and the Sanction, as they ſtand in *themſelves*; and neither conſider, nor improve them, as acting in *Subſerviency* to the MEDIATOR's Righteouſneſs; they are doubtleſs a killing Ordinance, and

* 2 Cor. iii. 6.

bind Us down under a Sentence of Death.—But rightly improved—Hold! Let me proceed no farther with the Argument.

You are a Sportsman, *Theron*, and delight in the manly Recreations of the Field. You must therefore have read that fine Poem, which so elegantly describes your favourite Diversion.

Ther. *The* CHACE, I suppose, You mean.

Asp. The same.—Do You remember the large Description of the *royal Stag Chace?*

Ther. Perfectly well. It is not a Week, since I perused the whole Passage; and with as much Pleasure, as if it had been intirely new.

Asp. Then You can give me a Summary of the agreeable Narrative.

Ther. I can. But will not this Chace lead Us away very far from our Subject?

Asp. Perhaps, not so far as You imagine. I have a Reason for my Request.

Ther. What Reason, I beseech You?

Asp. You shall soon know. Only favour me with the Account.

Ther. I protest, I cannot discern the least Connection, between these rural Sports, and the grand Topic of our Conversation. However, since You command, I will implicitly obey.

The Stag, roused from his Lair, shakes his dappled Sides; tosses his beamy Head; and, conscious of superior Agility, seems to defy the gathering Storm. —You see, speaking of Poetry, I have catched something of the poetical Strain.

Asp. This inlivened Manner excites my Eagerness, and makes me more desirous to hear the Sequel.

Ther.

Ther. First, He has recourse to Stratagem, and evasive Shifts. He plunges into the Copse; darts across the Glade; and wheels about in doubling Mazes; as though he would pursue, even the Foe He avoids. The full-mouthed Pack unravel all his Windings, and drive Him from his wily Arts.

Now, He betakes Himself to Flight, and confides in his Speed. He bursts through the Woods; bounds over the Lawns; and leaves the lagging Beagles far behind. The Beagles slow, but sure, trace his Steps, through Woods, through Lawns, through half the extended Forest. Unwearied, still unwearied, they urge their ardent Way, and gain upon the alarmed Object of their Pursuit.

Again He flies. Flies with redoubled Swiftness. Shoots down the Steep; strains up the Hill; and takes shelter in the inmost Recess of some sequestered Grove. The sagacious Hounds hang, with greedy Nostrils, on the Scent. They recover, by indefatigable Assiduity, the Ground they had lost. Up they come a third Time; and, joining in a general Peal of Vengeance, hurry the affrighted Animal from his short Concealment.

Perplexed, and in the utmost Distress, He seeks the numerous Herd. He would loose Himself, and elude his Pursuers, amidst the Multitude of his Fellows. But they, unconcerned for a Brother's Woe, shun the miserable Creature, or expel him from the selfish Circle.—Abandoned by his Associates, and haunted with Apprehensions of approaching Ruin, He trembles at every Leaf that shakes. He starts; He springs; and wild, and swift as the Wind, flies he knows not where, yet pours all his Soul in Flight.—Vain, vain

are

are his Efforts. The horrid Cry, lately leſſened, thickens upon the Gale, and thunders in his Ear.—Now, the poor breathleſs Victim is full in View. His Sprightlineſs forſakes Him. His Agility is ſpent. See! how He toils in yonder Valley, with faultering Limbs, and a hobling Gait. The Sight of their Game, quickens the Pace, and whets the Ardour, of the impetuous Hounds. With tumultuous Violence they ruſh in, and with clamarous Joy demand their Prey.

What can He do? Surrounded as He is, with inſulting Tongues, and ravenous Jaws? Deſpair is capable of inſpiriting even the timorous Breaſt. Having nothing to hope, He forgets to fear. He faces about, and makes a reſolute Stand. The Trunk of a ſturdy Tree, covers his Rear; and his own branching Horns, defend Him in Front. He ruſhes upon his Adverſaries; goars ſome; lays others groveling on the Turf; and makes the whole coward Pack give way.

Encouraged by this unexpected Succeſs, his Hopes revive. He rallies once again his drooping Spirits; exerts the little Remainder of his Strength; and ſprings through the Midſt of the retiring Rout.—It is his laſt, laſt Chance. He ſtretches every Nerve; once more loſes Sight of the Rabble from the Kennel; and, finding no Security on the Land, takes to the Water. He throws his burning Sides into the River; ſails down the cooling Stream; and ſlinks away to the Verge of ſome little ſhelving Iſland. There, finding a Reſting-place for his Feet, He ſkulks cloſe to the ſhady Margin. All immerſed in the Wave, excepting only his Noſtrils, He baffles, for

a-while,

a-while, the prying Eye of Man, and the keener Smell of Brute.

Discovered, at length, and forced to quit this unavailing Refuge, He climbs the slippery Bank. Unable to fly any longer, He stands at bay against an aged Willow. Stands, all faint with Toil, and sobbing with Anguish. The Crouds that gather round Him, with mercileſs and outrageous Transport, triumph in his Misery. A Multitude of bloody-thirsty Throats, joined with the sonorous Horn, ring his funeral Knell.—The Tears, till this fatal Instant unknown, gush from his languishing Eyes, and roll down his reeking Cheeks. He casts one more Look on the Woods, the Lawns, the pleasing Scenes of his former Delights; and, determined to die, prepares to sell his Life as dear as possible.

At this most critical Juncture, the *royal* Sportsman comes up. He sees the distressed Creature; and, as soon as he sees, He pities. The Clemency, which attends the Throne, accompanies even the Diversions of Majesty. He issues the high Command. The prohibitory Signal is given. The Pack, though raving for Blood, are checked in a Moment. And not checked only, but called off from the Prey. Disappointed and grumbling, they retire: and leave the intended Victim of their Fury, to enjoy his Liberty, his Safety, and his Ease again.

I have now followed the Stag, till I have tired your Patience. Why did You suffer me to run on, at this extravagant Rate? You know, I am, on these favourite Topics, an everlasting Talker.

Asp. Why this Apology, *Theron?* I am sure You did not see my Mouth yawn, or my Head nod, while You was pursuing your Subject. Besides, I

intend to make Reprizals, and put *your* Attention to the same Tryal.

Thus the Strictness of the *Law* pursues the Soul; dislodges it from every Refuge of Lies; and never remits its terrifying Menaces, till the poor Delinquent ceases from Self-confidence, and fixes on *CHRIST* for his whole Salvation *.

The Man, perhaps, is awakened into a serious Concern for his eternal State. In consequence of which, He relinquishes his profane and iniquitous Practices. Breaks the Sabbath, and defrauds his Neighbour no more.—But the Law quickly represents, and in a glaring Light, that a *negative* Obedience is by no means sufficient.

Upon this, He betakes Himself to a Course of *positive* Holiness. Gets acquainted with religious People, and performs religious Duties. Prays in secret, and attends public Ordinances. Conscientiously observes the LORD's Day, and regulates his Behaviour by the Rule of GOD's Commandments. Now, He is ready to congratulate Himself on his remarkable and hopeful Reformation.

Soon he perceives, that all his Proficiency is but Skin-deep: a mere *outside* Varnish: which has not penetrated the inner Man. He begins, therefore, to watch over the Motions, and bewail the Evils of his Heart.

* *Lex Hominem urget, donec is ad* CHRISTUM *confugit. Tum ipsa dicit; Asylum es nactus; desino Te persequi; sapis, salvus es.* That is; The *Law* urges and pursues the *Sinner*, till He flies for Refuge to *JESUS CHRIST*. Then the Law speaks to this Effect; "You "are entered into the *Strong-hold*; my Demands are "satisfied; my Curses are silenced; I remit the Pursuit. "You are wise; You are safe; You are happy."

BENGEL.

Heart. He labours to ſubdue Pride, and curb Paſſion; to purge out filthy Luſts, and to baniſh ſpiritual Wickedneſs. Notwithſtanding all his Vigilance, Conſcience flies in his Face, either for the Neglect of ſome Virtue, or the Commiſſion of ſome Sin. The Law rings in his Ear that dreadful Denunciation; "Curſed is He, that performeth not *all* Things."

Struck by this Conviction, his Wounds bleed afreſh. He is obliged to ſeek ſome new Balm for his Sore. In order to appeaſe an offended GOD, and atone for his ſinful Relapſes, He makes many ſorrowful Confeſſions; poſſibly, ſubmits to voluntary Sufferings. He denies Himſelf, and beſtows liberally on the Poor. He ſighs deeply, and mourns bitterly.—But can Waters that are muddy, cleanſe the Garment that is filthy? Wilt Thou ſatisfy, O vain Man, wilt Thou ſatisfy for one Sin, by committing another? In *theſe* penitential Exerciſes, were thy Thoughts ſteadily devout? In *thoſe* Acts of Beneficence, was thy Heart warmly affectionate? If not, ſuch fanſied Reparations of paſt Faults, only aggravate the heavy Score.

What ſhall He do? He cannot *pay*. To *beg* He is aſhamed. Fain would He enter into Life, yet not be too much indebted to Grace. He attempts therefore to *compound* with Heaven. He binds Himſelf by ſolemn, perhaps by ſacramental Engagements, to uſe greater Circumſpection for the future. Then turns his Eye to the divine MEDIATOR; not with a View of relying wholly on his Righteouſneſs; but only to obtain ſuch a Supply, as may make up the Deficiencies of his own.—Somewhat like this was the Miſtake of the *Galatian* Converts; againſt

against which St. *Paul*, in his Epistle to that People, so solidly disputes, and so sharply inveighs *.

For a while, He holds fast his purposed Integrity. At length, falling notoriously short, in executing his Part, a startling Voice sounds in his Ear that dreadful Alarm; "Cursed is He that *continueth* not." His Heart sinks with Discouragement, and all his Resolutions hang their enfeebled Heads. He has tried every Method, that He can devise; and has found every Method ineffectual. All his Expedients are a Spider's Web, and his Hope is as the giving up of the Ghost.

His Soul, pursued by the Law, and hunted by Terror, is brought to the Gates of Death, or the very Brink of Despair. And now the KING of Kings, now the LORD our Righteousness, appears for his Rescue. Now is accomplished that gracious Declaration; *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy Help* †.—Driven from every false Refuge, and drawn by the blessed SPIRIT, He comes weary and heavy laden to *CHRIST*. Convinced of the Sin of his Nature, the Sin of his Life, and the Sin of his best Duties, He renounces Himself in every View. This is all his Salvation, and all his Desire, that He may win *CHRIST*, and be found

* *Sharply* indeed! For, instead of saluting them, under the honourable Title of *Saints, and Faithful in CHRIST JESUS*; He stigmatizes them with that severe Appellation, *O foolish Galatians!*—And as to their Practice, which was a Departure from Justification by *CHRIST alone*, He styles it, not merely an Error, but an Error of the most mischievous and horrid Kind—*an Infatuation—a Bewitchery*, Τις Βασκανει. Gal. iii. 1.

† Hos. xiii. 9.

found in Him. Did that poor afflicted Woman say, *If I may but touch his Garment, I shall be whole?* With equal Ardour does this inlightened Sinner cry; "If I may but have Fellowship with the glorious "EMMANUEL, in his Merits and in his Be- "nefits, I am alive from the Dead; I am happy for "ever."

Having seen a Glimpse of the transcendent Excellency of the REDEEMER's Person; having received a Taste from the inexhaustible Fulness of his Grace; O! how He longs for brighter Manifestations! How He thirsts after more plentiful Draughts! —None that come to *CHRIST*, are cast out. He that awakens these ardent Desires, in his due Time gives the desired Blessings. After various Conflicts, a comfortable and established Faith is wrought in the Penitent's Soul. He believes, that the SON of the MOST HIGH died in *his* Stead, and was obedient for *his* Justification. Believes, that all the unsearchable Riches of the adored MEDIATOR's Life and Death are his Portion *.

By this Faith, his Heart is purified; his Heart is quickened: He is fitted for every good Work. — Though

* See this Work of Grace, and Procedure of Conversion, more copiously displayed, in a valuable little Piece intitled, *Human Nature in its fourfold State*, by Mr. *Thomas Boston*, page 227.—Which, in my Opinion, is one of our best Books for common Readers. The Sentences are short, and the Comparisons striking. The Language is easy, and the Doctrine evangelical. The Method proper, the Plan comprehensive, the Manner searching, yet consolatory.—If another celebrated Treatise is styled, *The whole Duty of Man*, I would call this *The* WHOLE *of Man*: as it comprises—what He *was* originally—what He *is* by Transgression—what He *should be* through Grace—and then what He *will be* in Glory.

Though Temptations assault Him, He derives Strength from his SAVIOUR; resists the Devil; and is faithful unto Death.—Though Corruptions defile Him, He flies to the *Fountain opened for Uncleanness* *; makes daily, hourly Application of the Blood of Sprinkling; and goes on his Way, rejoicing in GOD his SAVIOUR.

Ther. Your Discourse puts me in mind of *Absalom*'s Procedure, when *Joab* refused to make Him a Visit. The Prince ordered his Servants to set on fire the General's standing Corn †. This Stratagem had its intended Effect. The Apprehension of Danger *drove* Him, when the respectful Invitation would not *lead* Him, to a personal Interview. You seem to suppose, that the Law was delivered with such a Design; to lay Us under a *Necessity* of flying to the Atonement of *CHRIST*.

Asp. I do, *Theron*. And for this Opinion, I have a far better Authority, than my own Supposition. We are assured by unerring Wisdom, That *CHRIST is the End of the Law* ‡. It points invariably to Him. It terminates wholly in Him. And *then* obtains its first, its principal Purpose, when Sinners are brought to their Divine REDEEMER, for Righteousness and Strength: for that *Righteousness*, which intitles to Heaven; that *Strength*, which capacitates for Obedience.

The Law hath concluded all Mankind *under Sin* ‖. Yet not with an Intention, that any should be discouraged

* Zech. xiii. 1. † 2 Sam. xiv. 30. ‡ Rom. x. 4. ‖ *Gal.* iii. 10. The sacred Original is somewhat more comprehensive than *Aspasio*'s Interpretation. It is not πασας

couraged now, or perish for ever: but that every One may see his inexpressible Need, of a SAVIOUR's Death, and a SAVIOUR's Obedience *. That, being thus prepared, both to value and receive so precious a Blessing, *the Promise* of Justification *by Faith in JESUS CHRIST may be given to them that believe.*

πάντας, but πᾶσι. Which denotes *Things*, as well as *Persons:* And implies, that nothing We *have*, nothing We *do*, is free from Sin; till the Merits of *CHRIST* intervene, and the Blood of *CHRIST* be sprinkled.

* *Witsius*, speaking of the Law delivered at *Sinai*, says; *Facta est ista Fœderis Operum Commemoratio, ad Israelitas Peccatorum & Miseriæ suæ convincendos, ex seipsis expellendos, de Necessitate Satisfactionis edocendos, & ad CHRISTUM compellendos: & sic inservit Fœderi Gratiæ.*

Animadv. IREN. p. 99.

The *Genius* and *Design* of the Law were, I think, emblematically taught, by the Circumstances attending its *Delivery*.—The Mountain, not to be trodden by any *Israelite*, or touched by any Beast, on pain of Death—The Voice of Thunder, and the Glare of Lightning—The Sound of the Trumpet, and the Clouds of Smoke—The vast Range of Hills and Rocks, trembling to their Center—Six hundred thousand Men struck with inexpressible Consternation—And *Moses*, even *Moses* himself, the Favourite of Heaven, terrified exceedingly—All these indicated the *righteous*, the *rigorous*, and the *awful* Import of "The Word spoken."

Nor was the *Effect* of these astonishing Incidents, without a spiritual Meaning. The People durst not adventure upon a *personal* Approach, but had recourse to a *Mediator*. They requested, that *Moses* might interpose; and transact Affairs, between the terrible JEHOVAH, and the guilty Congregation.—Such an Impression, the Purity and the Rigour of the Law, should make on our Hearts: should drive Us from Self to a SAVIOUR; deter Us from confiding in our *legal*, and prompt Us to seek an *evangelical* Righteousness.

Let Us advert to this grand Aim of the Law. Then, We shall see Goodness, unquestionable and sovereign Goodness, in forming its Constitution so *sublimely perfect*, and making its Threatenings so *inflexibly severe*. Exclusive of this wholesome Severity, We should supinely disesteem, perhaps, wantonly reject, the Grace of the Gospel.—The *prodigal Son* would never have returned to his Father, in that humble, submissive, supplicating Posture; if He had not found his Circumstances utterly ruined, and felt Himself perishing with Hunger. No more would the conceited Sons of *Adam*, disclaiming all Pretence to any Merit of their own, and with nothing but the Halter * of Self-condemnation about their Necks, fall down at the Feet of a merciful REDEEMER: if they were not instigated by the sharp Goad, or rather driven by the flaming Sword of the Law.

Ther. Has the Law then nothing to do with our Temper and Conversation? Is it no longer to be considered as a System of Duties? No longer to be regarded as a Rule of Life?

Asp. When it has forced the Lines of Self-righteousness, and driven Us to *JESUS CHRIST*, that only Citadel of Safety, for Acceptance and Salvation; *then*, it serves as a Rule for our Conduct. *Then* it shews Us, like a Friend and a Guide, how to order our Conversation, and adorn our Profession; how to glorify GOD, and express our Gratitude to *CHRIST*. But, till it has accomplished the fore-

* Alluding to those remarkable Words of *Benhadad*'s Servants; *Let Us put Sackcloth upon our Loins*, and Ropes upon our Heads, *and go out to meet the King of Israel; peradventure He will save thy Life*, 1 Kings xx. 31.

fore-mentioned End, it thunders Vengeance; it flashes Terror; it is, as *Moses* speaks, *a fiery Law* *.

And is it, my dear *Theron*, a fiery Law? Then let it constrain Us to take shelter in that meritorious Obedience, which will be to our guilty Souls *as the Cold of Snow in the Time of Harvest* †.—Is it a Law, which *worketh Wrath?* Let it endear to our Affections that inestimably precious Gospel, which *preacheth Peace by JESUS CHRIST* ‡.—Is it *the Ministration of Condemnation* ‖? O! let it quicken our Flight to that All-gracious SURETY, who was condemned at *Pilate*'s Bar, that we may be acquitted at GOD's Tribunal.

To all this agrees our celebrated *Milton*. Whose Divinity is as faultless, as his Poetry is matchless. You will give me Leave to quote a few of his beautiful Lines. Which *recapitulate*, as it were, the whole preceding Conversation: and, while they recapitulate the Conversation, *confirm* the Doctrine. This will make you some Amends, for my late tedious Harangue. This will tip the Lead with Gold.

So Law appears imperfect; and but giv'n
With Purpose to resign them, in full Time,

* *Fiery Law*, Deut. xxxiii. 2. I dare not affirm, that this is the exact Import of the Original, nor do I presume to determine the precise Signification of a Phrase, so remarkably difficult. But as this is our received Version; as it suggests a very *useful* Truth; and a Truth, which, in the present Age, is peculiarly *needful* to be inculcated; I am inclined to acquiesce in the common Rendering.

† Prov. xxv. 13. ‡ Acts x. 36. ‖ 2 Cor. iii. 19.

Up to a better Cov'nant; disciplin'd
From shadowy Types to Truth; from Flesh to Spirit;
From Imposition of strict Laws, to free
Acceptance of large Grace; from servile Fear,
To filial; Works of Law, to Works of Faith *.

* Book XII. 300.

DIALOGUE X.

ASPASIO.

AGAIN, *Theron!* Must we never lay aside the Weapons of Controversy?— You put me in mind of the resolute *Athenian*; who, having fought with distinguished Bravery on the Field of *Marathon*, pursued the vanquished *Persians* to their Fleet. At that very Instant, a Galley full of the Enemies Troops, was putting off to Sea. Determined, if possible, to prevent their Escape, He laid hold on the Vessel with his Right-hand. Which was no sooner fixed, than chopped off by the Sailors. The Warrior, not at all discouraged, seized it with his Left. When that also was cut away, He fastened his Teeth in its Side; and never quitted his Gripe, till He resigned his Breath *.

* The *Athenian*'s Name was *Cynægyrus*. The Author, who relates this extraordinary Story, is *Justin*. If the Reader should think it a *Rhodomontade*, I believe, He will not judge amiss. And I promise myself, the same good Sense will enable Him to distinguish, between what is *hinted* by way of *Pleasantry*, and what is *urged* by way of *Argument*.

Ther. I have been reconsidering the Case of *imputed Righteousness*; and am by no means satisfied, as to the Propriety of the Phrase, or the Truth of the Doctrine; especially, in the Sense which You espouse. — Objections arise, more substantial and weighty, than any that have hitherto been urged. And which, if I mistake not, You will find it a more difficult Task to answer.

Asp. I must do my best. And if my best Attempts prove unsuccessful, I shall say with the gallant *Iphicrates*, when overpowered by the Eloquence of his Antagonist; "My Adversary is the better "Actor, but mine is the better Play."

I say *better* — For, to You, *Theron*, I will freely own, what to another Person I should not be so willing to disclose; That I receive no Comfort, but from the habitual Belief, and daily Application of this precious Doctrine.—Whenever I read the most *correct* and *beautiful* Writings, that proceed in the contrary Strain, I feel my Spirits heavy; I find my Prospects gloomy; and not one Ray of Consolation gleams upon my Mind. Whereas, *much meaner* Compositions, which breathe the Savour of this evangelical Unction, seldom fail to quicken my Hopes; to brighten my Views; and put into my Mouth that piously alert Profession of the Psalmist, *I will run the Way of thy Commandments, now thou hast set my Heart at liberty**.—Though I am far from laying any considerable Stress upon this Observation; farther still from advancing it into the Place of an Argument; yet I may be permitted to mention it, in the Confidence and Familiarity of Friendship.

Ther.

* Psal. cxix. 32.

Ther. An Opinion proposed with so much Modesty, and so nearly connected with my *Aspasio*'s Comfort, has doubtless a Claim to my serious Attention. Otherwise, it might possibly provoke my Raillery. For, You must know, I am no great Admirer of inward Feelings. I cannot think them a very solid Method of demonstrating your Point. It must be inforced by better Reasons, if you would gain it Access to *my* Heart.

We must place, You say, a Dependence upon the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in all that He has *done* and *suffered*. What HE has done and suffered, You add, is our only justifying Righteousness: and, to place our Dependence on it, is the only Method to obtain Pardon of our Sins, and Life eternal.

Asp. I have said it, *Theron*, and I abide by it. This being the Righteousness of GOD, is—

Ther. Give me Leave, before You proceed farther, to propose a Query. Does the Righteousness of GOD signify the active and passive Obedience of *CHRIST?*

Asp. Righteousness is a Conformity to the Law, in Heart, and in Life. As the SON of GOD voluntarily made Himself subject to the Law; perfectly fulfilled its Precepts; and suffered to the utmost its Penalty; this, I should imagine, furnishes Us with the *truest* and *noblest* Signification of the Phrase.

Ther. What, if I or Others should imagine quite the Reverse?

Asp. I thank my Friend for his Admonition. It is indeed unreasonable, that *my bare* Imagination

ſhould paſs for Orthodoxy and Truth. Let Us then inquire after better Proof.

When the divine Name, in the ſacred Phraſeology, is added to a Subſtantive, it expreſſes ſome very extraordinary Property.—*The Trees of the* LORD *, denote thoſe ſtately and magnificent Foreſts, which the Hand of the MOST HIGH planted.—*The Mountains of GOD* †, are thoſe prodigiouſly large Elevations of the Earth, which none but an Almighty Arm could eſtabliſh.—The Righteouſneſs of GOD likewiſe means, A Righteouſneſs of the *moſt ſupereminent* Dignity; ſuch as is worthy to be called by his Name; and may juſtly challenge his Acceptance. And where ſhall We find this, but in the Conduct and Perſon of his bleſſed SON?—This has a moſt unexceptionable Claim to the exalted Title: being, as a maſterly Critic explains the Phraſe, "A Righteouſneſs deviſed by GOD the "FATHER, from all Eternity; wrought out by "GOD the SON, in the Perſon of *JESUS "CHRIST*; applied by GOD the HOLY "GHOST, to the Sinner's Soul."

Ther. This Doctrine of yours, if I rightly underſtand it, would make Remiſſion of Sins but one *half* of our Juſtification; and ſomething elſe neceſſary, in order to obtain eternal Life. Which is juſt as rational, as to ſuppoſe, That though one Cauſe may expel Darkneſs, another muſt ſupervene, in order to introduce Light.

Aſp. The Nature of Juſtification, and the Nature of Condemnation, are two *Oppoſites*, which will mutually

* Pſal. civ. 16.

† This is the Import of the Original, הרי אלהים *Pſal.* xxxvi. *ver.* 7. *Heb.* ver. 6. *Eng.*

tually illuſtrate each other.—What is implied in the Condemnation of a Sinner? He forfeits eternal Life, and is doomed to eternal Death.—What is included in the Juſtification of a Sinner? It ſuperſedes his Obligation to Puniſhment, and inveſts Him with a Title to Happineſs.—In order to the *firſt*, there muſt be a Remiſſion of Sins. In order to the *ſecond*, an Imputation of Righteouſneſs. *Both* which are derived from *CHRIST*'s Mediation in our Behalf; and *both* take place, when we are united to that Divine HEAD.—So that We do not derive them from two different Sources, but aſcribe them to one and the ſame great, All-ſufficient CAUSE.

Your Compariſon, though intended to overthrow, I think, fully eſtabliſhes the Sentiment.—When yonder bright Orb makes his firſt Appearance in the Eaſt, what Effects are produced? The Shades of Night are diſperſed, and the Light of Day is diffuſed.—To what are they owing? Each to a ſeparate, or both to the ſame Origin? Every one's Experience will anſwer the Queſtion. Thus, when the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* ariſes in the Soul, He brings *at once* Pardon and Acceptance. Remiſſion and Salvation are under his Wings. Both which conſtitute the *Healing* * of the Nations: and both owe their Being to *CHRIST*'s Obedience, embraced as active, and not rejected as paſſive.

Ther. This, I know, is the fine-ſpun Theory of your ſyſtematic Divines. But where is their *Warrant* from Scripture? By what Authority do they introduce ſuch ſubtle Diſtinctions?

Aſp. I cannot think the Diſtinction ſo ſubtle, or the Theory ſo finely ſpun. To be releaſed from the *damnatory*

* Mal. iv. 2.

damnatory Sentence, is one Thing; to be treated as a *righteous* Person, is evidently another.—*Absalom* was pardoned, when He received a Permission to remove from *Geshur*, and dwell at *Jerusalem*. But this was very different from the Recommencement of filial Duty, and parental Endearment *. A Rebel may be *exempted* from the capital Punishment, which his traiterous Practices deserve; without being *restored* to the Dignity of his former State, or the Rights of a loyal Subject. In *Christianity* likewise, to be freed from the Charge of Guilt, and to be regarded as a righteous Person, are two several Blessings; really distinct in themselves, and often distinguished in Scripture.

Ther. Where are they distinguished? In what Texts of Scripture? This is what I called for—your scriptural Warrant.

Asp. What think You of *Job*'s Reply to his censorious Friends? *GOD forbid, that I should justify You* †! That He *forgave* them, there is no Doubt. Yet he could not *justify* them: could not allow their Reflections to be equitable, or their Behaviour charitable.

What think You of *Solomon*'s Supplication? *Then hear Thou in Heaven, and do, and judge thy Servants; condemning the Wicked, to bring his Way upon his Head; and justifying the Righteous, to give Him according to his Righteousness* ‡. To condemn, in this Passage, evidently signifies to pronounce guilty, and obnoxious to Punishment. By Parity of Reason, to *justify*

* 2 Sam. xiv. 24.

† *Job* xxvii. 5. *Vos justos in Causâ vestrâ adversus me pronuntiem.* SCHULT.

‡ 1 Kings viii. 32.

justify must denote to pronounce righteous, and entitled to Happiness.

What says *Solomon*'s Father? *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O LORD! For, in thy Sight, shall no Man living be justified* *. A Man might be *pardoned*, if judged according to the Tenour of his own Obedience. But no Man could be *declared righteous*, in consequence of such a Tryal: this were absolutely and universally impossible.

From all which Passages I conclude, That to be justified, is different from, is superior to, the bare Remission of Sin.

Ther. All these Instances are derived from the *Old* Testament: the *New*, if I mistake not, speaks another Language. Consider the Case of the penitent *Publican*. What does He request? *GOD be merciful to me a Sinner!* What does He obtain? *He went down to his House justified* †. If then the Petition and the Grant may be deemed correspondent, Pardon and Justification must be reckoned equivalent.

Asp. The Old and the New Testament are, in their Style and Contents, exactly correspondent. *Echo*, in yonder Cloysters, does not more punctually reverberate the Speaker's Voice, than those divine Books harmonize with each other.

Yet it will not follow, from the *Publican*'s Request and the *Publican*'s Blessing, That Pardon and Justification are the same. Only, that GOD's Bounty frequently *exceeds* our Prayers, and is larger than our Expectations; or, that the Blessing which was implored, and the Blessing which was vouchsafed,

* Psal. cxliii. 2. † Luke xviii. 13, 14.

safed, are *inseparably* connected, and always accompany each other.

St. *Paul* mentions *A Justification of Life:* not barely an Exemption from the Sentence of Death; but such a Justification, as gives *a Title* * to the Reward of Life. The Words are very emphatical. We shall injure the Dignity of their Meaning, if We understand them in a more contracted Sense.—Towards the Close of the same Chapter, We have another Passage, rich with Consolation, and full to our Purpose. *Grace reigneth through Righteousness unto eternal Life* †: Here, is pointed out the *prime Source* of all our Blessings, infinitely free and triumphant Grace: The *meritorious Cause*, not any Works of Man, not any Qualifications of our own, but the perfect Righteousness of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST:* The *Effect* or *End* of all; which is, not barely an Absolution from Guilt, but an Instatement in Life; a Life of holy Communion with GOD in this World, to be crowned with an eternal Fruition of Him in another ‡.

Let me produce one Text more, which just at this Instant occurs to my Memory. You will find it, in the Apostle's Defence of Himself, before *Festus* and *Agrippa*. He opens, as it were, his apostolical Commission, and repeats the Words of his royal MASTER. *I send thee to* ignorant and inslaved,

* *Rom.* v. 18. Δικαιωσις ζωης *est Declaratio divina illa, qua Peccator, Mortis reus,* Vitæ *adjudicatur, idque* jure. BENGEL. in loc.

† Rom. v. 21.

‡ Accordingly, eternal Life is called *The Hope,* not of Forgiveness, but *of Righteousness,* Gal. v. 5. And it is bestowed, not barely because of Absolution, but *because of Righteousness,* Rom. viii, 10.

slaved, guilty and ruined Creatures; *to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto GOD; that they may receive Forgiveness of Sins, and Inheritance among all them which are sanctified by Faith that is in me* *. The great PREACHER of the *Gentiles*, or rather the Supreme LORD of all Preachers, has distinguished between *Remission of Sins*, and the *Inheritance of Saints*; between the *Pardon* that delivers from Hell, and the *Justification* that intitles to Heaven. So that the former does by no means constitute the latter; but is connected with it, as a Link in the same sacred Chain; or included in it, as Part of the same glorious Whole.

Ther. Admitting your Distinction to be proper; Is not the Satisfaction, made by the Death of *CHRIST*, sufficient of *itself* to obtain, both our full Pardon, and our final Happiness?

Asp. Since my Friend has started the Question, I may venture, with all Reverence to the divine Counsels, to answer in the Negative: it being necessary, that the REDEEMER of Men should *obey*, as well as *suffer*, in their Stead.—For this We have the Testimony of our LORD Himself. *This Commandment*, says He, *have I received of my FATHER, that I should lay down my Life* †. *Thus it becometh Us*, adds He in another Place, *to fulfil all Righteousness* ‡. To which his Apostle subjoins; that, if We *reign in Life*, it must be, not only through those Sufferings which expiate, but also *through* that *Righteousness* ‖ which merits.

Ther.

* Acts xxvi. 18. † John x. 18. ‡ Matt. iii. 15. ‖ Rom. v. 17.

Ther. Our LORD's Teſtimony relates only to a *poſitive* Inſtitution, and is quite foreign to your Purpoſe.—I have often been diſguſted at ſuch ſtrained Applications of Scripture. The Partizans of a Syſtem wreſt the ſacred Book. They deal with divine Truth, as the Tyrant *Procruſtes* ſerved thoſe unhappy Creatures, who fell into his mercileſs Hands. Is a Text too ſhort, to ſuit their Deſign? Our *Procruſtean* Expoſitors can ſtretch it on the Rack, and lengthen its Senſe. Is it too full, to conſiſt with their Scheme? They can lop off a Limb, ſecrete a Sentence, or contract the Meaning.—Is this to reverence the great GOD? Is this to treat reſpectfully his holy Word?

Aſp. I have been grieved, I aſſure You, and diſguſted at this Practice, as well as Yourſelf. A Practice, not only very irreverent, but very injudicious alſo. It really prejudices the Cauſe, it would unfairly recommend. Such a Support is like *a broken Tooth, or a Foot out of joint* *; not only unſerviceable, but hurtful; an Obſtruction, rather than a Furtherance.—However, I am not conſcious of committing any Violence on this Paſſage, or of forcing it into my Service. The Circumſtance You object, rather ſtrengthens, than invalidates the Concluſion. If it was ſo requiſite for our bleſſed MEDIATOR, to obſerve a *poſitive* Inſtitution; how much more neceſſary, to fulfil thoſe *moral* Precepts, whoſe Obligation is unalterable and everlaſting.

Beſides; it ſhould be conſidered, Whether *CHRIST*'s Sufferings were a complete Satisfaction to the Law? Complete they were, with regard to

* Prov. xxv. 19.

to the *Penalty*, not with regard to the *Precept*. A Distinction obvious and important. From whence arises the following Argument; which, for once, You will allow me to propose in the *logical* Form.

By what alone the Law was not satisfied; by that alone Sinners could not be justified:

By *CHRIST*'s Sufferings alone, the Law was not satisfied:

Therefore, by *CHRIST*'s Sufferings alone, Sinners could not be justified.

But when We join the active with the passive Obedience of our LORD; the Efficacy of the One, with the Perfection of the Other; how does our Justification stand firm, in the *fullest* Sense of the Word! We have *all* that the Law demands, both for our Exemption from the Curse, and as a Title to the Blessing.

Ther. Does not the Scripture ascribe the *Whole* of our Salvation to the Death of *CHRIST*? Delivering it, as a never-to-be-forgotten Maxim in Christianity; That *We have Redemption through his Blood* *: *are brought near through the Blood of CHRIST* †: nay, that *We are justified* (the very Point under Debate) *through his Blood* ‡.—Would the inspired Writer have assigned these various Blessings to this *one* Cause; if it had been a Price inadequate to the Purchase, or a Means insufficient to accomplish the End?

Asp. This *Part* of our LORD's meritorious Humilition, is, by a very usual Figure, put for the *Whole*. The Death of *CHRIST* includes, not only his Sufferings, but his Obedience. The Shedding

* Eph. i. 7. † Eph. ii. 13. ‡ Rom. v. 9.

ding of his precious Blood, was at once the grand Instance of his Suffering, and the finishing Act of his Obedience. In this View it is considered, and thus it is interpreted, by his own Ambassador. Who, speaking of his Divine MASTER, says, *He was* obedient *unto Death, even the Death of the Cross* *.

By the same Figure, Faith is sometimes said to be a lively influential Persuasion, *That CHRIST died for our Sins* †. At other Times, it is represented as a firm practical Belief, That *GOD hath raised Him from the Dead* ‡. Neither of which can, without the utmost Contrariety to the Analogy of Scripture, be taken in the *exclusive* Sense. Each Act must be understood, not separately, but jointly. Each as implying both, or reciprocally inferring one another.

In like manner, when the Scripture ascribes our Justification to the Death of *CHRIST*; We are not to think, that it would *set aside*, but *imply* his Obedience. It is not because his active Obedience has no Concern, in procuring the Blessing; but because his bitter Passion was the most conspicuous, and the completing Stage of his ever-glorious Undertaking. Then, and not till then, He could truly say; *FATHER, I have finished the Work, Thou gavest me to do* ‖.

Ther. According to your Account then, it should be possible for a Man to have all his Sins done away, yet not attain to *complete* Justification. Which is as contrary to sound Sense, and true Divinity, as to imagine, that Crookedness may be removed, and the Object not become straight.

Asp.

* Phil. ii. 8. † 1 Cor. xv. 3. ‡ Rom. x. 9.
‖ John xvii. 4.

Asp. No, *Theron.* According to my Account, it is impossible, that the active and passive Obedience of our REDEEMER should be disjoined. To whomsoever the one is imputed, from Him the other is not with-held. They were *undivided in CHRIST* the illustrious Head, and they are *undivided* in their Application to his mystical Body. As *CHRIST* in suffering obeyed, and in obeying suffered; so, whoever receives *CHRIST* as an Atonement, receives Him also as a Righteousness.

This has been observed before; and if this be real Fact, what an *inestimably precious* Gift, is the Gift of *CHRIST!* Never was the most sovereign Remedy, so admirably suited to any Malady, as this is adapted to all our Wants. In HIM may We be found, living and dying! How safe, how happy then!—Let me not weary your Patience, if I repeat a Passage from our excellent Dr. *Lightfoot.* Which, though artless and remarkably simple, has very much affected my Mind; and, I hope, will leave some valuable Impression on my Friend's. "Justification, "says that judicious Divine, is a Man's being in-"terested in all *CHRIST*'s Righteousness. And "if any Thing is to be longed for, sure that is, "to be interested in *all CHRIST*'s Righteous-"ness."

Ther. You don't weary my Patience; neither do You satisfy my Doubts. For You take no notice of the *Absurdity* objected, and the Comparison that inforces it.

Asp. Your Comparison, my dear Friend, is not founded on a *parallel* Case. Neither Sense, nor Philosophy find a Medium, between the Removal of Crookedness, and the Succession of Straightness. But

Reaſon diſcerns an *apparent*, and Revelation maintains an *important* Difference, between the Pardon of Guilt, and a Title to Life. This has already been proved from Scripture; and is, to me at leaſt, evident from the very Nature of Things. For, if a King, in favour of ſome condemned Malefactor, revoke the Sentence of Death; this is one very conſiderable Act of Clemency. But if He pleaſes to make the pardoned Criminal, a *Partaker* of his Kingdom, or an Heir of his Crown: This ſurely is a new, and a much higher Inſtance of royal Bounty.

If You inſiſt upon a *Similitude*, the Word of GOD, which always ſpeaks with conſummate Propriety, will furniſh Us with one. *Zechariah* illuſtrates the Doctrine of Juſtification. He repreſents the Sinner by a Perſon arrayed in *filthy Garments*. His Pardon is deſcribed by *taking away* this ſordid Apparel. By which Benefit, He ceaſes to be defiled; yet is He not hereby clothed; yet is He not hereby juſtified. This is an additional Bleſſing; ſignified by putting on *Change of Raiment* *, and wearing beautiful Robes. Here, the Circumſtances tally. The two conſtituent Parts of Juſtification, are ſeverally diſplayed, and ſtrongly marked. Here We have the Removal of Filth, and the Robe of Righteouſneſs; that which frees Us from being abhorred, and that which renders Us accepted. Which, though diſtinguiſhable in themſelves, and diſtinguiſhed by the ſacred Writer, are always united in the divine Donation.

Ther.

* Zech. iii. 3, 4, 5.

Ther. This Notion is founded on a *chimerical* Covenant, that *CHRIST* would take upon Him the Obedience due from Man, of which there is not the leaſt Intimation in holy Scripture.

Aſp. That *CHRIST* undertook every Thing neceſſary, to redeem *loſt Sinners* from Guilt and Condemnation; every Thing neceſſary, to procure for *attainted Rebels* a freſh Title to Life and Glory; this cannot be reckoned chimerical. This muſt be as real, as that loſt Sinners are redeemed, or attainted Rebels reſtored. Every Proof of the one, proves and eſtabliſhes the other. This is what We call a *Covenant*; and, from its benign Nature, THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

Without *undertaking* this, I ſee not how our LORD could ſuſtain the Character of a SURETY; nor, without *fulfilling* it, how He could execute the Office of a REDEEMER.—And I believe, You yourſelf will be at a loſs to ſhew, with what Kind of Juſtice the Eternal FATHER could *lay* * our Iniquities on the innocent *JESUS*, unleſs He had *conſented* to be anſwerable for our Guilt.

Ther. This is no Anſwer to my Objection. I ſaid —and it has been aſſerted by a very eminent and able Pen—that there is no Intimation of any ſuch Covenant in the whole Scriptures.

Aſp. What then can be the Meaning of thoſe remarkable Words, in the Prophecy of *Zechariah*? *The Counſel of Peace ſhall be between them both* †. Here, I think,

* Iſa. liii. 6.

† *Zech.* vi. 12, 13. Theſe two Verſes contain a brief, but very fine Deſcription of the REDEEMER; of his Perſon, his Office, and his Glory; together with the

I think, the Covenant is mentioned, and the Parties are specified.—*The Counsel of Peace*, if I mistake not, signifies the mysterious and unsearchable Contrivance, formed for the Recovery of ruined Man.—Formed and carried into Execution by the LORD Almighty,

all-gracious Cause, and ever-blessed Fruit of our Redemption.

His *Person:* He is *the Man*; or, as the *Hebrew* imports, the *real*, but at the same Time, the *illustrious* Man. —*Whose Name is the BRANCH*; being the new Origin of a new Race; the Father of a spiritual Seed, who are Children, not of the Flesh, but of the Promise.—A Branch that shall spring, not from a common Root, not from any human Planting, but מתחתיו *from under Himself*; being born of a pure Virgin, and by the Power of his own SPIRIT, He shall be both Stock and Stem to Himself.

His *Office:* It is to *build the Temple*, the Church of the Elect; which is the House of the living GOD. In which he dwells, and by Whom He is worshiped. Laying the Foundation of this spiritual Edifice in his Cross, and cementing it with his Blood.—Which He shall rule as a *King*, after having redeemed it as a *Priest*; uniting the sacerdotal Censer with the regal Diadem, and being *a Priest upon his Throne*. Hence proceeds his *Glory:* For, he *stands* not, like other Priests, offering daily the same Oblations; but having, by one Sacrifice, obtained eternal Redemption for Us, is *set* down at the Right-hand of the MAJESTY on High.

What is the *Cause* of these great Events? What, but that most sacred and august Convention, *the Council of Peace?* Which was settled *between them both*; between the LORD JEHOVAH on one Hand, and the Man whose Name is the *BRANCH* on the other.—Called a *Council*, from the intire Consent, which actuated each Party; and the transcendent Wisdom, displayed in the whole Scheme.—The Council of *Peace*, because of its sovereign Efficacy, to make Peace with an offended GOD, Peace in the accusing Conscience, Peace among People of jarring Tempers and discordant Principles.

mighty, or GOD the FATHER; and that illustrious Person, who is to *build the Temple, and bear the Glory.* A Character, which None can claim; a Task, to which None is equal; but the blessed *JESUS* only.

In *Psalm* the xlth, the *Conditions* of the Covenant are circumstantially recorded: Which were the Incarnation and Obedience of the eternal SON: *A Body hast Thou prepared me. Lo! I come to do thy Will* *.—The *Accomplishment* of these Conditions, is alledged and pleaded by our great MEDIATOR, in the Introduction to his last solemn Prayer †. What He implores, in the Process of his Supplications, may be looked upon as the *Recompence* ‡, decreed Him by the FATHER, and stipulated in this magnificent Treaty. *Implores*, did I say? 'Tis very observable, that our LORD makes a *Demand*, rather than a *Request*. The Expression is not ερωτω, but θελω ‖: A Word of Authority, not of Supplication. He claims what, by the FATHER's Engagement, and by his own Obedience, was become his unquestionable Right.

Here are the Parties of the Covenant; the Conditions of the Covenant; the Performance of the Covenant; and the Reward, which, by virtue of such Performance, is merited, is claimable, is due. All this, I should imagine, amounts to an *Intimation*, and somewhat *more* than an Intimation of the Covenant.

* Heb. x. 5, 7. † John xvii.

‡ This Recompence is specified and promised, in another authentic Copy of the same grand Treaty, recorded, *Isa.* xlix. 1—6.

‖ Not I *beg*, but I *will*. John xvii. 24. *Sic volo, sic jubeo.*

Ther. This you call the Covenant of Grace: But if We are juſtified by *CHRIST*'s fulfilling of the Law, We are juſtified by Works. So that, before You can ſtrike out ſuch a Way of Salvation, You muſt *contradict* Yourſelf: And, what is more adventurous, You muſt aboliſh that fundamental Principle of the Goſpel; *By the Works of the Law, ſhall no Fleſh be juſtified.*

Aſp. We *are*, I grant it, juſtified by Works. But whoſe? The Works of *CHRIST*, not our own.—This is very far from contradicting Ourſelves; equally far is it from aboliſhing, what You call the *Goſpel-principle.* Which, though an undeniable Truth, is not an evangelical Doctrine. Becauſe, it only ſhews Us our miſerable State, and the utter Impoſſibility of relieving Ourſelves. Whereas, nothing is *genuine* Goſpel, but what ſpeaks Comfort, and adminiſters Recovery.

Between the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, this, I apprehend, is the Difference: By the former, Man was indiſpenſibly bound to obey, in his *own Perſon.* By the latter, the Obedience of *his Surety* is accepted, inſtead of his own. The Righteouſneſs required by both, is not *ſincere*, but *complete*; not proportioned to the Abilities of fallen Man, but to the Purity of the Law, and the Majeſty of the LAWGIVER.—By this means, the Glory of GOD as an awful Sovereign, and the Glory of his Law as an inviolable Syſtem, are intirely preſerved and illuſtriouſly diſplayed. The Salvation of Sinners, neither claſhes with the Truth, nor interferes with the Juſtice of the Supreme LEGISLATOR. On the contrary, it becomes a *faithful* and

juſt

just * Procedure of the most High GOD, to justify *Him that believeth on JESUS.*

Ther. When You make this Difference between the two Covenants, where is your Authority from Scripture? Which of the sacred Writers have taught Us, that, though one demanded personal, the other is content with *vicarious* Obedience?

Asp. Which?—*The first Three.* The most eminent Historian; the most inraptured Poet; and the most zealous Preacher. I need not inform You, that I mean *Moses*, *David*, and *Paul.*

The Testimony of *David* has been already recited. —*Moses* gives Us a concise, but very instructive Account of the second Covenant. With *Whom*, according to his Representation, was it made? Not with *Adam*, or any of his Posterity; but with the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in the Room and Stead of both. None of the Articles are proposed to a poor, impotent, ruined Creature; but the whole is consigned over to the interposing SAVIOUR, significantly described by *the Seed of the Woman.* It is not said, "Thy best Endeavours, *O Adam*, thy true "Repentance and sincere Obedience, shall retrieve "this fatal Miscarriage; but, *the Seed of the Woman* "*shall bruise the Serpent's Head* †: the SON of the "MOST HIGH, by taking thy Nature, submitting to thy Obligations, and suffering Death for "thy Sins, shall fully repair thy Loss."

CHRIST, We see, undertook to execute the Conditions. *CHRIST* was our Representative in this great Transaction. For which Reason He is styled by St. *Paul*, *The second Man* ‡, and *the Surety*

* 1 John i. 9. † Gen. iii. 15. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 48.

of a better Covenant *—Our Help being laid upon ONE, that is so mighty; upon ONE, that is so faithful; the Covenant is said to be, *In all Things well ordered and sure* †. Admirably well ordered indeed, for the Comfort of the *Christian*, and the Security of his Salvation.—" 'Tis true, may He argue, " I cannot fulfil the Conditions; and 'tis equally " true, that this is not required at my Hands. The " *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, of his adorably " rich Goodness, has performed all that was condi- " tionary ‡; and has established, for me and for his " People, a *valid Title* to the Promises, the Privi- " leges, and—

Ther. " has thereby released me from all Obliga- " tion to Duty."—Farewel then to our own Obedience. No more Occasion for any Holiness of Life. Nay; the Sluice is opened for an Inundation of Ungodliness.—Fine Divinity truly! Should I not rather say? Downright *Antinomianism!*

Asp. No, my Friend: *CHRIST came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil* §. He has fulfilled it, to [the

* Heb. vii. 22. † 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

‡ *Witsius*, instead of representing the *Covenant of Grace* as a *chimerical* Thing, most affectionately and charmingly displays its Excellency; *Si quicquam ergo attentissima Consideratione dignum censeri debeat, sane id Fœdus Gratiæ est. Hic Via ostenditur ad meliorem terrestri Paradisum, & ad certiorem stabilioremque Fœlicitatem, eâ qua Adamus excidit. Hic nova Spes perditis Mortalibus allucet, quæ eo gratior esse debet, quo inexspectatior obvenit. Hic Conditiones offeruntur, quibus æterna Salus annexa est; Conditiones non a Nobis rursus præstandæ, quod Animum despondere faceret; sed ab EO, qui Vitâ non excedet, antequam vere dixerit,* Consummatum est. De Oecon. Lib. II. Cap. i.

§ Matt. v. 17.

the very uttermoſt, in his own Perſon. He has alſo merited for Us, thoſe Supplies of the SPIRIT, which alone can enable weak corrupt Creatures, to yield faithful and acceptable Obedience.—Though our *LORD JESUS died*, and was obedient *for the Ungodly*; though He *finds* Us ungodly, when He juſtifies Us; yet He never *leaves* his People in this abominable State. On the contrary, He *teaches them to deny all Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts* *.

Pray, let us conſider the Tenour of this Covenant; ſince You are ſo very apprehenſive of its Conſequences.—" *I will put my Laws into their Minds, and on* " *their Hearts will I write them* †. They ſhall diſ- " cern ſuch a Beauty and Glory in my Precepts, as " will engage their Deſires, and win their Affections. " So that it ſhall be no longer their *Burden*, but their " *Delight*, even their Meat and Drink, to do the " Will of their FATHER in Heaven."—This, this is one of the Privileges, purchaſed by our great MEDIATOR. And it ſeems wondrous ſtrange, that the *Purchaſe* of an Eſtate for You or me, ſhould be reckoned the ſure Means, to *deprive* Us of the Poſſeſſion, or *debar* Us from the Enjoyment.

How often is this *weak Surmiſe* urged as an Argument? All whoſe Plauſibility is owing, to a palpable Miſtake, or an egregious Fallacy: to a ſuppoſed Separation of Things, which are abſolutely inſeparable; I mean our Juſtification and our Sanctification ‡.—You are a Philoſopher, *Theron*. Try, if You can ſeparate *Gravity* from the Stone, or *Heat* from the Fire.

* Tit. ii. 12. † Heb, viii. 10.

‡ See *Iſa.* xlv. 24. 1 *Cor.* i. 30. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. Where theſe Bleſſings walk Hand in Hand; and never *were*, never *will*, never *can* be parted.

Fire. If these Bodies and their essential Properties, are indissolubly connected; so are a genuine Faith, and a conscientious Obedience. To suppose them disunited, is as contrary to *sound Divinity*; as it would be contrary to *true Philosophy*, if You should talk of a burning Substance that has no Warmth, or of a solid Substance that has no Weight.—Never therefore, my dear Friend, repeat this stale Objection; never propagate this ungrounded * Clamour; nor adopt a Cavil, which is altogether as unphilosophical, as it is anti-evangelical.

Ther.

* This puts me in mind of what *Theodorus* replied to *Philocles*; who was often insinuating, That He preached *licentious* Doctrine; because He inlarged, with peculiar Assiduity, upon Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*; and frequently chose such Texts as, *Believe in the LORD JESUS, and Thou shalt be saved.*

" I preach Salvation by *JESUS CHRIST*; and " give me Leave to ask, Whether You know, what Sal- " vation by *CHRIST* means?"—*Philocles* paused. He began to blush; would have eluded the Question, and declined an Answer.—" No, said *Theodorus:* You must " permit me to insist upon a Reply. Because, if it be a " *right* one, it will justify me and my Conduct: if it be " a *wrong* one, it will prove, that You blame You know " not what; and have more Reason to inform yourself, " than to censure others."

This disconcerted Him still more. Upon which *Theodorus* proceeded. " Salvation by *CHRIST* means, not " only a Deliverance from the *Guilt*, but also from the " *Power* of Sin. *He gave Himself for Us, that He might* " *redeem Us from all Iniquity; redeem Us from our vain* " *Conversation*, as well as deliver Us from the Wrath to " come.—Go now, *Philocles*, and tell the World, that " by teaching these Doctrines, I promote the Cause of " Licentiousness. And You will be just as *rational*, just " as *candid*, just as *true*, as if You should affirm; That " the *Firemen*, by playing the Engine, and pouring in " Water, burnt your House to the Ground, and laid " your Furniture in Ashes."

Ther. We digreſs from the Point. My principal Objection is not ſatisfied. I was obſerving that, according to *your* Manner of ſtating the Affair, Salvation is no longer free, but founded upon Works.—They are the Works of the Law, though *CHRIST* performs them. To maintain, that We are juſtified by theſe Works, is to confound the Difference between the Law and the Goſpel.

Aſp. Though We ſhould admit your Premiſes, We cannot acquieſce in your Concluſion. The ſame Righteouſneſs, by which We are juſtified, is both legal and evangelical. *Legal*, in reſpect to *CHRIST*, who was made under the Law, that He might obey all its Commands. *Evangelical*, in reſpect to Us, who work not Ourſelves, but believe in the great FULFILLER of all Righteouſneſs.—This is much of the ſame Nature, with that other momentous Diſtinction in Divinity; Salvation is freely given, yet dearly bought. *Freely given*, with regard to Us; *dearly bought*, with regard to *CHRIST*. So, We are juſtified *by* Works, if You look forward to our SURETY: We are juſtified *without* Works, if You caſt a retroſpective View on Ourſelves.

Theron was ſilent. *Aſpaſio*, after a ſhort Interval, renewed the Diſcourſe.—I know not, whether my Friend is yielding to my Arguments, or ſearching after Objections; deliberating upon a Capitulation, or muſtering his Forces for a freſh Sally. However, let me take this Opportunity of dropping a Hint, and ſuggeſting a Caution.

The grand Reaſon, which inclines ſome People to reject this comfortable Doctrine, lies concealed, if not in an abſolute Diſbelief of our LORD's eternal

nal Glory and GODHEAD, yet in *unsettled* Apprehensions of it, or an habitual *Inattention* to it.— If our SAVIOUR was not really GOD, as some Writers, unhappily mistaken themselves, endeavour to persuade the World; it would be a reasonable Practice, and intirely consistent with their Scheme, to disavow the Imputation of his Righteousness. Because, upon such a Supposition, his Obedience was no more than bounden Duty; in which there could not be the least Pretence to Merit, and which could be profitable to None but Himself.— Whereas, if We verily believe Him to be the incarnate GOD, his Submission to the Law becomes an Act of *voluntary* Humiliation. Which Circumstance, together with the *transcendent* Dignity of his Person, render his Obedience, not meritorious only, but inexpressibly and *infinitely* meritorious.

As the Blood of *CHRIST* is called GOD's *own Blood* *; so the Obedience of *CHRIST* was performed in the Person of that adorable MEDIATOR, *who is* GOD *over all* †. He acted through the whole Course of his Life, and suffered Death at the last, not merely as Man, but as GOD-Man; as JEHOVAH-JESUS; EMMANUEL.— Let me intreat You to remember, nay, let me intreat You never to forget this *all-important* Article of our Faith. And may the SPIRIT of Wisdom give Us an Understanding, to know the weighty, the extensive Influence of so glorious a Truth!

Ther. Far be it from me, to derogate from the Dignity of our SAVIOUR's Person, or to depreciate

* Acts xx. 28. † Rom. ix. 5.

ciate the Merits of his mediatorial Office. Place them as high, as Words can reach; exalt them as far, as Thought can ſoar; I ſtedfaſtly believe, You will ſtill fall ſhort, unmeaſurably ſhort, of their real Worth.—But this Conſideration ſeems to increaſe the Abſurdity of your Notion. For, if *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, *his very* Righteouſneſs be imputed; then, the true Believers are altogether as righteous, as *CHRIST* himſelf. Whereas, if You maintain, that his Righteouſneſs is imputed only *as to its Effects*, You will keep clear of this Rock.

Aſp. This, I apprehend, will be like keeping clear of *Scylla*, only to fall foul upon *Charybdis*.—What are the Effects of the MEDIATOR's Righteouſneſs? Pardon of Sin, Juſtification of our Perſons, and the Sanctification of our Nature. Shall We ſay, Theſe Effects, theſe Benefits are imputed?—To *talk* of their Imputation, I think, is an Affront to ſound Senſe; as, I am ſure, to be *put off* with their Imputation, would be a fatal Diſappointment of our Hopes. —All theſe Benefits are, not imputed, but imparted; they are not reckoned to Us, but are really enjoyed by Us; ours they are, not barely in the divine Eſtimation, but by proper and perſonal Poſſeſſion.

Yet, it does by no means follow, that Believers are altogether as righteous, as *CHRIST* Himſelf: unleſs You can prove, that to be the *Receiver* is, in all Reſpects the ſame, as to be the *Author* and *Finiſher* *.—The Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* ariſes wholly from Himſelf, the Source of ours ſubſiſts in Another. *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs is originally and abſolutely *his own*; whereas, it is made ours in a way

* Heb. xii. 2.

a way of Favour and gracious Imputation. Circumstances these, which create a material Difference, which yield Room for a vast Pre-eminence.

Ther. But if *CHRIST*'s perfect Obedience be accounted ours, methinks, We should have no more Need of *pardoning* Mercy, than *CHRIST* himself.

Asp. Yes; because, *before* this Imputation, We were sunk in Guilt, and dead in Sins. Because, *after* it, We are defective in our Duty, and in many Things offend.

Ther. Does not this Doctrine render the Intercession of our SAVIOUR *superfluous?* What Occasion have *they* for an Advocate with the FATHER, whose Righteousness has neither Blemish nor Imperfection?

Asp. They stand in need of an Advocate; first, that they may be brought Home to *the REPAIRER of their Breaches* *, and made Partakers of his Righteousness by a living Faith. Next, that their Faith may be preserved, notwithstanding all Opposition, stedfast and immoveable; or rather, may be carried on, victorious and triumphant, even to the End.

Ther. You say, "*CHRIST* performed all that "was conditionary;" then He *repented* for Us, and *believed* for Us. This must be admitted in Pursuance of your Principles. But this is so wild a Notion, so contrary to Reason and Scripture, that to mention it, is to refute it.

Asp. CHRIST performed whatever was required by the Covenant of Works, both before it was violated, and after it had been transgressed. But neither *Repentance* nor *Faith* were comprehended in this Institution.

* Isa. lviii. 12.

ſtitution. It knew nothing of the One, and it would not admit of the Other.—It was not therefore neceſſary, neither indeed was it poſſible, for our ſpotleſs and Divine LORD, to repent of Sin, or believe in a SAVIOUR. But he did unſpeakably more. *He put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himſelf* *. He is Himſelf the SAVIOUR of all the Ends of the Earth. And He has Power to beſtow that bleſſed SPIRIT, which worketh Faith, and produceth Repentance.

Ther. However, from what You have advanced, *this* will unavoidably follow — That a Man is to be juſtified, under the Character of a notorious Tranſgreſſor of the Law; and juſtified under the Character of a ſinleſs Obſerver of the Law. And what is this, but a *glaring Inconſiſtency?*

Aſp. Not at all inconſiſtent, but abſolutely needful, if We conſider thoſe diſtinct Branches of the divine Law, the *preceptive* and the *penal.* Both which, in caſe of Guilt already contracted, muſt neceſſarily be ſatisfied.—Not at all inconſiſtent, but perfectly harmonious, if We take in the two *conſtituent Parts* of Juſtification, The Acquittance from Guilt, and a Title to Life. The former ſuppoſes Us to be Tranſgreſſors of the Law; and ſuch the higheſt Saints in the World are. The latter requires Us to be Obſervers of the Law; and ſuch muſt the Inheritors of Heaven be. — Much leſs is this inconſiſtent, if We conſider Believers in their *perſonal* and *relative* Capacity; as they are in themſelves, and as they are in their SURETY. Notorious Tranſgreſſors in Themſelves, they have a ſinleſs Obedience in *CHRIST.*

* Heb. ix. 26.

CHRIST. The Conſciouſneſs of *that*, will be an everlaſting Motive to Humility; the Belief of *this*, an inexhauſtible Source of Joy.

All this is no more inconſiſtent, than the Union of a gloomy Contexture, and a lightſome Splendor, in thoſe detached Clouds, which float amidſt the Firmament. In themſelves, they are a *louring* and *dark* Collection of Vapours; by the Impreſſion of the Sunbeams, they are *fair* and *bright* as the poliſhed Silver.

Ther. After all, the Imputation taught in Scripture, is not the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, but of our *own Faith*. Agreeably to the Apoſtle's expreſs Declaration, *Abraham believed GOD, and it was imputed to Him for Righteouſneſs* *.

Aſp. This Objection admits the Thing in Diſpute, though it controverts the Way and Manner of obtaining it. Admits the Neceſſity of ſome *active*, *poſitive* Righteouſneſs, in order to our Juſtification. In this Particular, I am glad to agree with my *Theron:* and in this Particular, I believe, the Generality of ſerious People agree with Us both.—Whenever their Conſciences are awakened, and ſeek to eſtabliſh the Hope of eternal Life, they conſtantly turn their Eyes to *ſome* Righteouſneſs: which, they apprehend, may, either in Whole or in Part, anſwer the Demands of the Law. Some look to their own *ſincere* Obedience. Others call in to their Succour Works of *Supererogation*. My Friend would aſſign this Office to his *Faith*.

Ther. Is this a proper Anſwer to my Objection, *Aſpaſio?* The Text is point-blank againſt Your Tenet.

* Rom. iv. 3.

net. You do wisely therefore, not to confront, but to elude the Evidence.

Asp. I did not intend it for an Answer; only as an *occasional* Observation, which nevertheless has a pretty close Connection with the Subject.—Neither would I use so mean a Subterfuge, as to elude an Argument, which I could not confute. If my Friend had allowed me Leisure to explain myself, this should have been my Reply.

That a Man is not justified by Works, is a Position most clearly demonstrated, and a Doctrine most zealously inculcated by St. *Paul*. That Faith is a Work *, exerted by the human Mind, is equally certain. Unless therefore We would render the Apostle inconsistent with Himself, We must understand the Passage in a qualified Sense.—Why should We not suffer Him, to be his own Interpreter? Why should We not take the *Narrative* of his Experience, for a *Comment* on his Doctrine? He declares, that the Ground of his own Comfort, the Cause of his own Justification, was, not the *Grace* of *Faith*, but *the Righteousness which is of GOD* by Faith †. Not the Act of Believing, but that grand and glorious Object of a Sinner's Belief, *The LORD our Righteousness*.

Besides; what was that Faith of *Abraham*, to which the Apostle refers? And which He proposes, as the invariable Model of our Justification?—It was Faith in the *promised Seed*; in *JESUS CHRIST* the

* So it is called by HIM, who knew what was in Man, and what were the Differences of Things; *This is* THE WORK *of GOD, that Ye believe on Him whom He hath sent*, John vi. 29.

† Phil. iii. 9.

Righteous *. It was a firm Perſuaſion, that this illuſtrious PERSON ſhould ſpring from his Loins; and be the Author of Forgiveneſs, Acceptance, and Salvation to Himſelf, and to a Multitude of Believers, numberleſs as the Stars of Heaven. Let Us tread in theſe Steps of the holy Patriarch, and We ſhall aſcribe *little*, aſcribe *nothing* to our Faith, but *all* to the infinitely excellent Obedience of our REDEEMER.

Ther. Sure, *Aſpaſio*, You will not preſume to correct Inſpiration! The inſpired Writer makes no mention of a REDEEMER's Obedience. He ſays expreſly and poſitively — *It*, that is, *Abraham*'s Faith, and not any Thing elſe, *was counted unto Him for Righteouſneſs.*

Aſp. True, *Theron*; as thoſe Windows are reckoned, are counted, *The Lights* of your Houſe. Why? Becauſe they illuminate? No; but becauſe they afford a Paſſage to the illuminating Rays. Through them, the firſt and beſt of Elements, is diffuſed into all your Habitation.—So *We are ſaved by Grace through Faith*; by Grace imputing, through Faith accepting, the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*. Grace is the magnificent Source of this nobler Light; Faith is the Means of tranſmitting it into all the Faculties of the Soul.

When our LORD declares to the diſeaſed Woman, *Thy Faith hath made thee whole* †: how are We to underſtand his Words? That the Patient's Belief, and not the Agency of *CHRIST*, wrought the Cure? To ſuppoſe this, would be extremely derogatory to the Power of our great PHYSICIAN.

And

* Compare *Gen.* xv. 5, 6. with *Gal.* iii. 16.

† Matt. ix. 22.

And if We ascribe Justification to the Act of Believing, this will be equally derogatory to the Obedience of our great MEDIATOR. In the *former* Case, *CHRIST* and his omnipotent Operation, were All in All. In the *latter* Case, *CHRIST* and his infinite Merit, are All in All. In *both* Cases, Faith is only the Eye to discern, or the Hand to receive, the sovereign Good.

I would farther observe, That Faith is very particularly *distinguished from* the Righteousness which justifies. We read of the Righteousness which is *by* Faith, which is *of* Faith *. This Form of Expression, puts an apparent Difference between the evangelical Faith, and the evangelical Righteousness. Since, whatever is *by* another, and *of* another, cannot, without the greatest Violence to Reason and Language, be reckoned that other.—If Faith was the Cause of our Acceptance with GOD, then We should be justified by a Righteousness, which is confessedly *imperfect*. For, who has ever attained to the highest Degree of this Virtue? Or whose Faith is not mixed with an Alloy of Unbelief?—If Faith itself was the Matter of our Justification, I see not how Boasting could be *excluded*; how the Law could

* *Rom.* ix. 30. *Phil.* iii. 9. The Apostles, I believe, never make use of this Phrase, δικαιωθεντες υπερ πιστεως, or δια την πιστιν, but εκ πιστεως or δια της πιστεως: Not *for*, or on *Account of* our Faith, but *by* or *through* Faith. Making this Grace, not the procuring Cause, but only the Instrument of Application.—Such Language as the former, seems contrary to the sound Words of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Yet, if *Theron*'s Sense of the Text were admitted, the Doctrine contained in this unscriptural and offensive Style, is the unavoidable Consequence.

be *magnified*; or what Reason the Apostle could have, to account all Things, but the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, meaner than Dross *.

Say not, that We presume to correct Inspiration. We only interpret the inspired Word in an harmonious *Consistency* with itself. This Sense is agreeable to the prevailing Doctrine, and to the current Language of Scripture.—To the *prevailing Doctrine*; which is *A Believing in HIM, who justifieth the Ungodly.* Sift and examine this Expression; *Him* who justifieth. You will find, that the Work is *CHRIST*'s; *CHRIST*'s and no *Other*'s. The HOLY GHOST assigns not the least Share, not so much as a Co-efficiency, to any other Cause. Faith therefore, if it presumes to arrogate this exalted Prerogative, or if it pretends to the least Part in this important Business, is a sacrilegious Usurper.—To the *current Language*; as when GOD is called our Fear †, our Hope ‡, our Joy ‖. In these Places, the Act is undoubtedly put for the Object. So, in the Passage before Us, the *Act* must denote the *Object* of Faith. It is to be understood, not absolutely, but as some Divines speak, objectively, instrumentally, relatively.

Ther. In the Name of Wonder, what can You mean by this Heap of harsh and obscure Expressions! Let me intreat You, *Aspasio*, to speak in your own Style, not in the Dialect of *Aquinas*. I have

* *Phil.* iii. 8. The Original is Σκυβαλα—A Word of the most contemptible Meaning; it signifies the *worthless* Scraps, and *sordid* Offals, that are cast to the Dogs. The Reader may see this Passage more fully explained in *Letter* V.

† Gen. xxxi. 42, 53. ‡ Psal. lxxi. 5. Jer. xiv. 8.
‖ Psal. xliii. 4.

have an irreconcilable Averſion to theſe ſcholaſtic Terms. They are the *Barbariſms* of Divinity. I know but one Uſe, they are fitted to ſerve; that is, to perplex and puzzle a Cauſe, You cannot maintain. Somewhat like the Liquor, which a certain Fiſh, when cloſely purſued, is ſaid to emit: by which the Water is darkened, and the Foe eluded.

Aſp. This, *Theron*, is the Meaning of our uncouth Phraſes: It is not Faith itſelf, which juſtifies; but that Righteouſneſs, which Faith continually *views*; which Faith delightfully *apprehends*; and on which it finally *terminates*.

To be plainer ſtill — We are juſtified by Faith, in the ſame Manner, as We are fed by the Hand; or as We are ſaid, to drink of a Cup. Neither the Hand nor the Cup are the *Cauſe* of our Suſtenance, but the *Inſtruments*, one of conveying it, the other of receiving it *.—If an Apoſtle affirms, *We are juſtified by Faith:* Faith itſelf declares, *In the LORD I have Righteouſneſs.* Put theſe Paſſages together, and

* Though I am intirely of *Theron*'s Mind, and can by no means admire our *ſcholaſtic* Divines, or their *logical* Terms; yet a Remark from *Paræus*, couched in this Style, is ſo pertinent to the Purpoſe, and ſo full an Explication of the Point, that it would be an Injury to the Cauſe, not to make it a Part of my Notes. And ſome Readers, I apprehend, not much acquainted with this old-faſhioned Dialect, may be well enough pleaſed to view a Specimen: may like it, as they do the *Ruſt* of a *Medal*, merely for its Uncouthneſs and Antiquity.

" Faith juſtifies, ſays my Author, not *effectively*, as " working an habitual Righteouſneſs in Us; not *mate-* " *rially*, as though it were itſelf the conſtituent Cauſe " of our Juſtification; but it juſtifieth *objectively*, as it " apprehendeth *CHRIST*; and *inſtrumentally*, as it ap- " plieth his Righteouſneſs."

You will have the true Sense of our Doctrine, and the true Doctrine of the Gospel.

When *Themistocles* fled from the Malice of his Countrymen, what recommended Him to the Protection of King *Admetus?* — Not his Name; that was obnoxious — Not his Actions; they had been hostile — But the Person of the *young Prince*; whom the distressed Refugee caught up in his Arms; and, charged with these Credentials, presented Himself to the royal Parent *. — So, Faith recommends to GOD, and justifies the Soul, not for itself, or its own Worth; but on Account of what it *presents*, and what it *pleads*.

Ther. Is not this a fanciful Distinction, and an excessive Refinement? Has it any Foundation in Scripture?

Asp. It is implied in almost all the Representations of *CHRIST*, and all the Descriptions of Faith, which occur in the sacred Writings.

CHRIST is likened to *Clothing*; and Believers are said to *have put on CHRIST* †. Now, it cannot be the Act of putting on, that covers our Bodies, or keeps them warm; but the commodious Garment, which is wore.—He is compared to *Bread: I am the Bread of Life* ‡. Shall we say? It is the Act of Eating, which strengthens the Constitution, and recruits our Spirits. No surely; but the Food eaten and

* This, says *Plutarch*, was a Custom peculiar to that Country; was reckoned the most solemn Method of supplicating Favour; and *seldom* met with a Repulse.— To which I may add, It is a Custom that *Christians* should imitate, in all their Addresses to the GOD and FATHER of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. When thus used, thus improved, it will *never* fail of Success.

† Gal. iii. 27. ‡ John vi. 35.

and digested.—*CHRIST* was typesied by the *Cities of Refuge* *; and Sinners, by the obnoxious Manslayer. Who, if He fled to one of those privileged Abodes, and there remained, was safe. No Prosecution against Him could be valid. He had nothing to fear from the Avenger of Blood. In this Case, was it the bare Act of Flying, that screened the Criminal? By no means. This *conveyed* Him to a Place of Security. But the *Place itself* was his Sanctuary, his Asylum, his Safeguard.

Faith is styled, *A Receiving of CHRIST* †: *As many as received Him, to them gave He Power*, or granted the Privilege, *to become the Sons of GOD*. The Office of Faith is, according to this Definition, not to contribute its Quota, much less to deposit the whole Sum, but to take and use the inestimable Gift. — Faith is called, *A Looking unto JESUS* ‡; in Allusion, I suppose, to the famous Expedient, provided for the wounded *Israelites* ‖. Our crucified LORD was prefigured, by the brazen Serpent; our Guilt, by the Stings of the fiery Serpents; and our Faith, by looking to the miraculous Remedy.

* Numb. xxxv. 13.

† *John* i. 12. See also *Rom.* v. 17. Where a Critic of accurate Judgment, and delicate Taste (though little known in *England*) makes this Remark on the Word λαμβανουσι, *Non justificat Actus sumendi, quatenus est Actus; sed illud quod sumitur aut apprehenditur.* BENGELIUS in loc. —His Annotations on the New Testament are comprised in a small *Quarto* Volume. They present the Reader with many refined Observations, on the Elegancies of the Style, and Sublimity of the Doctrines. They are a Pattern of the *concise* Manner; and, which is perhaps the *crowning* Excellency, they all along indicate a Heart warm and glowing with the Love of its Subject.

‡ Heb. xii. 2. ‖ Numb. xxi. 8.

Did the healing Power, I would ask, reside in the mere Act of viewing? No: but in the Emblem of a dying SAVIOUR, elevated on the Pole, and ordained for the Recovery of the People. *Here* all the Efficacy was lodged. *From hence* it was all derived. The Action of the Eye, like the Office of Faith, was only to fetch home, and apply the sanative Virtue.

Once more; Faith is represented, as *laying hold* on GOD our SAVIOUR *; *leaning* upon our BELOVED †; *cleaving* to the LORD ‡.— Please to take notice of yonder Vine. Its Shoots are weak, and its Branches flimsy. Being absolutely unable to support themselves, they are furnished with a very remarkable Set of *Claspers*. Which, like so many Fingers, lay hold on the Pegs of the Wall, or fasten themselves to the Poles within their Reach. Without such a Provision, the Boughs must lie prostrate on the Ground, and be exposed to the Insults of every Foot. Whereas, by this kind Contrivance of Nature, so *creeping* a Plant, will climb into the Air, and enjoy the Breeze; so *feeble* a Plant, will stand out the Winter, and defy the Storms. — An instructive Admonition to Sinners! And no contemptible Illustration of Faith, especially in its principal and most distinguishing Employ! Thus let Us apprehend the blessed *JESUS*; hold Us fast by our adored REDEEMER; cleave to his ineffable Worthiness, as those twining Tendrils, by repeated Circumvolutions, adhere to their substantial Supporters. Then shall We rise, by Merits *not our own*,

* Isa. xxvii. 5. † Cant. viii. 5. ‡ Acts xi. 23.

own, from the most abject and miserable Condition, to a State of everlasting Honour and Joy.

Ther. Some People, I believe, would hardly forbear smiling at the Peculiarity of your Diction; and might be inclined to call your Discourse *Canting*, rather than *Reasoning*. For my own Part, I must acknowledge, that, as all your peculiar Phrases are derived from the Scriptures, I hear them with Reverence, rather than any Disposition to sneer. Was my Friend delivering a *Latin* Oration, it would be a sufficient Warrant for any of his Expressions, to prove that they came from the *Ciceronian* Mint. And will it not be, at least, an equally sufficient Authority, for any Modes of Speech used in a *theological* Essay, to alledge that they bear the Stamp of the *Bible*.

Though I make no Objection to your Language, I have yet another Scruple with regard to your Doctrine.—Do the *antient Fathers* adopt or inculcate this imputed Righteousness? If it was so important an Article of our Faith, surely it could not be *unknown* in those early Ages, which were so near the apostolical Fountain. It would not have been *omitted* by those zealous Preachers, who chose to endure all the Rigours of Persecution, rather than renounce their holy Profession.

Asp. I think, it were sufficient to answer this Question, by asking another—Do the Apostles, does the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD speaking in Scripture, inculcate this Doctrine, or display this Privilege? If so, We need not be very solicitous for any farther Authority. *To the Law, and to the Testimony* *, is our grand, our final Appeal. Amidst all the Darkness and Uncertainty, which evidently run through the

* Isa. viii, 20.

the Writings of the beſt of Men, this is our unſpeakable Happineſs, That *We have a more ſure Word of Prophecy; to which We do well to take heed* *.

However; to be a little more particular—It cannot be expected, that We ſhould find many Paſſages in thoſe pious Authors, very ſtrong and very explicit, upon the Point. Becauſe, in their Days, it was not ſo profeſſedly oppoſed; and therefore could not be ſo exactly diſcuſſed, as in later Ages. Nevertheleſs, they have left enough behind them, to avouch the Subſtance of what We aſſert; *That a Man is not juſtified by any Works, Duties, or Righteouſneſs of his own, but only by Faith in JESUS CHRIST.*—I cannot ſay, that I have charged my Memory with their very Words; and for that Reaſon, muſt not attempt at preſent to make any Citation. But, when a proper Opportunity offers, and their Works are before me, I may poſſibly produce a few of their Teſtimonies.

In the mean Time, I can mention a Set of Writers, whoſe Atteſtation will, I imagine, carry as much Weight with my Friend, as the united Voice of the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers.

Ther. Who are they?

Aſp. Our venerable *Reformers.* The Homilies compoſed by thoſe excellent Divines, are as expreſs to my Purpoſe, as they are unexceptionable in their Evidence. This is their Language—"The true Un-
"derſtanding of this Doctrine, *We be juſtified freely*
"*by Faith without Works*, is not, that this our *Act to*
"*believe*, or this our Faith in *CHRIST*, doth
"juſtify Us: for that were to count Ourſelves to
"be juſtified by ſome Act or Virtue, that is *within*
"*Our-*

* 2 Pet. i. 19.

" *Ourſelves.* But the true Meaning thereof, is, " That although We hear GOD's Word, and " believe it; although We have Hope and Faith, " Charity and Repentance, and do never ſo many " good Works: Yet We muſt renounce the Merit " of all our Virtues and good Deeds, as Things " that be far too weak and inſufficient, to deſerve " Remiſſion of Sin, and our Juſtification. We muſt " truſt only in GOD's Mercy, and that Sacrifice " which our High Prieſt and Saviour *JESUS* " *CHRIST*, the SON of GOD, offered for " Us upon the Croſs."

The Homily ſubjoins a very appoſite Illuſtration; which may conclude our Diſcourſe with perfect Propriety, and I hope with equal Efficacy.—" So that " as St. *John Baptiſt*, although He were never ſo " virtuous and godly a Man, yet in the Matter of " forgiving Sin, He did put the People from Him, " and appoint them unto *CHRIST*; ſaying thus " unto them, Behold! Yonder *is the LAMB of* " *GOD, which taketh away the Sins of the World:* " Even ſo, as great and as godly a Virtue as the " lively Faith is, yet it *putteth Us from itſelf*, and " remitteth Us unto *CHRIST*, for to have only " by Him Remiſſion of Sins or Juſtification. So " that our Faith in *CHRIST*, as it were, ſaith " unto Us thus, It is not I that take away your Sins, " but it is *CHRIST* only; and to Him only I ſend " You for that Purpoſe, forſaking therein all your " good Words, Thoughts, and Works, and only " putting your Truſt in *CHRIST**."

Ther-

* See the ſecond Part of the *Homily on Salvation.*

Ther. If there be any tolerable Senſe of the Notion under Debate, I think, it muſt be underſtood as follows. — *CHRIST*'s Performance of the Law of his Mediation, or, in other Words, his unſinning Obedience to the moral Law, and the ſpotleſs Sacrifice of Himſelf to the vindictive Juſtice of GOD; theſe are the *only* valuable Conſideration, on Account of which, the *gracious* GOD reſtores guilty Creatures to a State of Acceptance with his Divine MAJESTY.

Aſp. I am far from denying your Propoſition. I rejoice in the Propriety of my *Theron*'s Sentiments. May his Faith, which is *thus far* advanced, be carried on by Grace, till it is completed in Glory!— That unſinning Obedience, and that ſpotleſs Sacrifice, are indeed the only valuable, they are alſo the *truly*, or rather the *infinitely* valuable Conſideration; which has fully merited for Us the Remiſſion of Sins, and the Enjoyment of Life; and this not only from the gracious, but even from the *juſt*, the faithful, the righteous GOD.

But then, they muſt be *imputed*, in order to furniſh Us with a Claim, and inveſt Us with a Right, to the purchaſed Privileges.—Suppoſe them not imputed; and what becomes of our *Intereſt* in them? They are like a Medicine prepared, but not applied. —Suppoſe them imputed; and they lay a firm, an apparent, a rational *Foundation*, for every pleaſing Hope, and for every heavenly Bleſſing.

Ther. I fear, I have acknowledged too much.— My Thoughts fluctuate. My Mind is unſettled.— I would not withſtand the Truth. I would not diſbelieve any Doctrine of the Goſpel. Yet—what

ſhall

ſhall I ſay? While I *liſten* to your Reaſoning, I am half a Convert. When I *recollect* the Objections, I revert to my firſt Opinion.

Of this, however, I am convinced; That human Righteouſneſs is *inſufficient* for our Juſtification. Here your Arguments have carried their Point. I ſhall henceforth place my Hopes of everlaſting Happineſs, not upon any Works of my own, but upon the free Goodneſs, and unbounded Beneficence, of the Supreme BEING. Purſuant to that Maxim of Scripture, *The Gift of GOD is eternal Life.*

Aſp. You do right, *Theron*, to expect eternal Life as the Gift of GOD, not as the Wages of your own obediential Service. But be pleaſed to remember, that all the Gifts of Grace, though perfectly *free* to Sinners, are founded upon a grand and ineſtimable *Price*, paid by their SAVIOUR. — Are they intirely abſolved from Guilt? It is becauſe *CHRIST* gave his Life for their Ranſom.—Are they heard with Acceptance when they pray? It is becauſe their exalted HIGH-PRIEST intercedes in their Behalf.—Are they completely juſtified, and inſtated in endleſs Bliſs? It is becauſe their REDEEMER's conſummate Obedience, is the glorious Equivalent for this and every other Bleſſing. —Therefore, when You mention eternal Life as the Gift of GOD, You ſhould not forget to add with the Holy Apoſtle, *through JESUS CHRIST our LORD**.

——— Well, my *Theron*; what ſay You farther? Is your Quiver emptied? Are your Scruples ſatisfied? May I interpret this Silence, as an Act of Aſſent?

Ther.

* Rom. vi. 23.

Ther. Observe, how the *Ranunculuses*, on yonder gay Parterre, have contracted their spreading Tufts, and the *Tulips* have closed their expanded Cups. While all the neighbouring Flowers, have shut their ivory Doors, or drawn their Velvet Curtains.—Such is the State of my Thoughts. They are all bent inwards; *collected* in themselves; and *pondering* upon your Discourse. Which has inclined me, before I was aware, to contemplate, rather than talk.—You will excuse my Thoughtfulness, *Aspasio*. Or, if it wants an Apology, You must blame Yourself. For, had your Reasons been less cogent, my Attention had been more disengaged.

Asp. My dear *Theron*, I shall only wish, in Allusion to your own Simile, and in the Language of the best of Books; That these Truths may *distil as the Dew* * upon your Mind, and *lie all Night upon your Branches* †. This, I am persuaded, is the only Way to have all your Comforts *green before the Sun*, and all your Virtues *flourish as an Herb*. Whereas, under the Influence of any other Faith, I am afraid, they will be as the Garden, that is visited with a Drought; or as the Leaves, that are smitten with a Blast.

Ther. I shall attentively consider, both your Doctrine, and your Arguments. Which that I may execute, with more Ease, and to better Purpose, be pleased to *sum up*, in a few Words, the Substance of what has passed.—This done, it will be Time to withdraw. The Flowers, You see, are our Monitors. They have folded up their Robes, and veiled their Beauties. A Custom which they seldom use, till the *rising Damps* render it unsafe, for their Master to

* Deut. xxxii. 2. † Job xxix. 19.

to be among them; and the *ſurrounding Gloom* renders it difficult, for his Eye to diſtinguiſh them.

Aſp. You could not oblige me more, than by giving me ſuch a Command.—We truſt for Salvation,

Not on our own *external Duties*. This were to build our Houſe upon the Sand. Which, when the Rains deſcend, when the Torrents pour, when the Winds blow with tempeſtuous Violence, will certainly fall; and bury the Builder, with all his vain Hopes, in irretrievable Ruin.

Not on the *Sincerity* of our *Hearts*. This, if oppoſed to *CHRIST*, and made the Rival of his Merits, will be a "deſpiſed broken Idol." *Deſpiſed*, by the infinitely ſublime and majeſtic RULER of the World. *Broken*, with regard to the Streſs We lay, or the Confidence We repoſe, on ſo deceitful a Prop. No more able to ſtand in the Judgment of the Great Day, than *Dagon* was able to maintain his Station, before the Ark of the LORD GOD of Hoſts*.

Not upon our *Faith*. This is often weak, as the rickety Child: ſometimes quite faint, like the Perſon in a deep Swoon: always imperfect, like every other Peformance of ours. Alas! To what afflicting Fears, to what grievous Deſpondency ſhould I, for my Part, be perpetually liable, if my own Faith was the Ground of my Juſtification. Bleſſed be the FATHER of Mercies! We have a ſurer Support. Not upon Faith, not upon Faith, but upon its gracious AUTHOR, and glorious OBJECT, is the Hope of *Iſrael* founded. Yet

Not

* 1 Sam. v. 3, 4.

Not upon our LORD's Righteouſneſs, conſidered only as paſſive; but upon his *active* and *paſſive* Obedience united. All that He *did*, in Conformity to the Commands of the Law; and all that He *ſuffered*, in Submiſſion to its Penalty. Both which, immenſely dignified by his divine Nature, are a Baſis for our Faith, which nothing can ſhake; are a Foundation for our Affiance, which can never be removed. —Nothing elſe, in any Creature, or in all Worlds, could expiate the *leaſt Sin*. This, not only expiates all Sin, but gives a Title to *every Bleſſing*—to the Bleſſings of Grace, and of Glory—of evangelical Holineſs, and everlaſting Happineſs.

DIALOGUE XI.

ASPASIO.

I HAVE often purpoſed, and as often forgot, to aſk my *Theron*—What *Picture* He was ſo attentively ſurveying, when I ſtole unperceived upon Him, in this favourite Arbour *.

Ther. I was indulging a penſive Pleaſure, in viewing the Ruins, and contemplating the Fate of *Babylon*—that renowned and opulent City! Once the Reſidence of the *Aſſyrian* Monarchs, and Capital of one of the greateſt Empires in the World. The Draught I held in my Hand, repreſented ſome of its Remains. And indeed this was the very laſt Subject, which employed my Thoughts. In the Morning, my Son brought me his Obſervations upon the Scene; which I have juſt now been reviſing.

For, I frequently ſet Him, to exerciſe his Judgment, or diſplay his Fancy, on remarkable Paſſages, which occur in Hiſtory.—He was lately commiſſioned to determine a Controverſy, between the illuſtrious

* *See* Dialogue V.

Leonidas, and the leſs celebrated *Pædaretus*. This was the Point in Debate: Which of them diſcovered the *trueſt* Generoſity of Spirit, and the *moſt heroic* Love of their Country? The former, who willingly ſacrificed his Life in its Defence? Or the latter, who, when He was Candidate for a Seat among the Three Hundred, and loſt his Election; inſtead of being chagrined or diſſatisfied, went home unfeignedly rejoicing, "That there were found in *Sparta* three "hundred Men, more worthy than Himſelf?"—The Taſk of this Day was, To give a *deſcriptive Picture* of thoſe wonderful Ruins.

Aſp. Pray, let me have the Pleaſure of hearing the young Gentleman's Performance.

Ther. It will be too long, and too puerile: tire your Patience, and offend your Taſte.

Aſp. I don't uſe to make either of theſe Complaints, when I am entertained with *Theron*'s Compoſitions. And, as the Son has ſo much of his Father's Genius, I am not at all apprehenſive of any ſuch Diſappointment.—We have a moſt agreeable Situation, and more than an Hour's Leiſure. I muſt therefore repeat my Requeſt.

Ther. 'Tis true, I have retouched the Sketch: which may render it ſomewhat more tolerable. And ſince You perſiſt in your Demand, I will read the Paper.—Only deſiring ſome Allowance for a little *Luxuriancy* of Imagination. Which, in young Writers, it may be adviſeable to indulge, rather than repreſs. As Age and Judgment will, probably, come with the pruning Knife, and make the proper Retrenchments.—I muſt farther obſerve, that, contrary to the Cuſtom which prevails in our Schools, I generally

rally chooſe to have Him expreſs his Sentiments in *Engliſh*. Becauſe, it is in this Language, He muſt communicate *his own*, and become acquainted with the Ideas of *Others*. Becauſe, to acquire ſome good Degree of Propriety and Fluency in this his native Tongue, will be incomparably more ſerviceable, than to ſpeak *Latin* with the *Terentian* Elegance, or to write it with the *Ciceronian* Copiouſneſs.

Is this *Babylon?* The Glory of Kingdoms! The Beauty of the *Chaldean* Excellency!

Where once the gorgeous Eaſt, with richeſt Hand,
Shower'd on her Kings barbaric Pearl and Gold.

How is She fallen! Fallen from the Height of Magnificence, into the Abyſs of Confuſion! What was once the Object of univerſal Admiration, is now a Spectacle of Aſtoniſhment and Horror.

The *Palace*, where Majeſty ſat inthroned like ſome terreſtrial Deity, is a Heap of Rubbiſh: no longer diſtinguiſhed by an Air of ſuperior Elegance, but by ſtronger and more melancholy Marks of departed Dignity *.—Where, the Nobles of that *ſumptuous Court*, trailed along the marble Pavements their Robes of Purple and Embroidery; there, the creſted Snake hiſſes, or the fierce invenomed Adder glides.

* *Benjamin*, a Jew of *Tudela*, in his *Itinerary*, written about the Year of our LORD 1170, tells Us—"That "He was upon the Place, where this City formerly "ſtood, and found it wholly deſolated and deſtroyed. "Only ſome Ruins of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Palace were ſtill "remaining; but Men were afraid to go near them, "by reaſon of the many Serpents and Scorpions, that "were then in the Place."

How changed is the hoſpitable *Hall*, and how diſgraced the *Room* of *State!* The firſt afforded a conſtant and cordial Reception to the welcome Gueſts; in the laſt, the great King gave Audience to his cringing, his adoring Vaſſals. Now, Thorns over-run the Circumference, and "Deſolation ſits in "the Threſhold of them both."—Where are the Roofs of Ivory, painted with *Vermilion*, and adorned with *Sculpture?* The radiant Roofs, whoſe Lamps of burniſhed Silver, pendent in many a blazing Row, yielded Light as from another Sky? Swept from their Foundations, they lie clotted with defiling Dirt, or claſped with tangling Briars.—*Muſic* no longer pours her Harmony, through the ſpacious and extended Apartment; but the Night-Owl, neſtling in ſome Cleft of the Ruins, ſcreams her harſh and portentous Diſſonance. *Joy* no longer leads up the ſprightly Dance, amidſt the Luſtre of that artificial Day; but the ſolitary Batt flits in ſilent Circles, or flaps her ſooty Wings. All thoſe gay Delights—let the *Sons* of *Senſuality* hear the Tale, and take Warning from the Cataſtrophe!—all thoſe gay Delights are extinguiſhed, like one of their feebleſt Tapers; which, having illuminated for a-while the feſtive Aſſembly, ſhone itſelf to the Edges of the exhauſted Socket, and in a Moment flaſhed into Stench and Darkneſs.

The *Walls*, though cemented with Bitumen *, and conſolidated into the Firmneſs of a Flint, are become like

* The Walls were built of Brick, and cemented with a *glutinous* Kind of Slime; which binds more firmly than any Mortar, and ſoon grows harder, than the Brick or Stones themſelves.—Theſe Fortifications were, according to the Account given by *Herodotus*, in *Breadth* eighty-ſeven

like the broken Bubble. There was a Time, when the Inhabitants, confiding in the Strength of their Bulwarks, and the Multitude of their Towers, looked down with fearleſs Diſdain on the Army of Beſiegers. But now the Prophet's Threatening is moſt terribly fulfilled: *The Fortreſs of the high Fort of thy Walls hath HE brought down, laid low, and brought to the Ground, even to the Duſt* *.—Where are the *Gates*, the grand and glittering Gates †, which admitted the triumphant Hoſts, or poured forth their numerous Legions againſt the Day of Battle? Not one Trace remains, to tell the inquiſitive Stranger; "Here the "ſpacious Avenues opened: Here the maſſy Portals "roſe."—Commodious *Walks*, in which the cluſtering Merchants raiſed the buſy Hum, and planned the Schemes of Commerce; ample *Streets*, in which Induſtry drove the toiling Car, or ſmote the ſounding Anvil; are ſhrouded with matted Graſs, or buried beneath the rankeſt Weeds. Silence, in both Places, a ſullen Silence reigns; and Inactivity, a death-like Inactivity, ſlumbers.

What is become of thoſe *Hanging-gardens*, which for curious Contrivance and ſtupendous Workman-

 ſhip,

ſeven Feet, in *Height* three hundred and fifty Feet, and reckoned to be abſolutely *impregnable*. Inſomuch that the Inhabitants, when beſieged by *Cyrus*, inſulted Him from the Walls, and laughed at his Attempt, as a vain impracticable Project,—Οι δε εν τω τειχει καλεσαντες την στρατιαν. XENOPH. *Inſt. Cyr.* Lib. VII.

* Iſa. xxv. 12.

† There were no leſs than an hundred Gates, all of *ſolid Braſs*. Hence it is, that when JEHOVAH promiſes to make *Cyrus* Maſter of *Babylon*, He ſpeaks in this very remarkable and particularizing Manner; *I will break in Pieces before Thee the Gates of Braſs*, Iſa. xlv. 2.

ſhip, were never equaled in any Nation under Heaven? *Terraces*, that overlooked the talleſt Houſes! *Parterres*, exalted to the Clouds, and opening their flowery Beauties in that ſtrange Region! *Groves*, whoſe very Roots were higher than the Tops of the loftieſt Trees* !—They are now ſmitten by a dreadful Blaſt. Their Beauty is decayed, like a withered Leaf. Their very Being is gone, like the Chaff of the Summer Threſhing-floors; which the Wind carrieth away, and its Place is no where found †. What was once the favourite Retreat of a Queen, and the Admiration of the whole World, is now a Neſt for poiſonous Reptiles, and a Kennel for ravenous Beaſts. —The Traveler, inſtead of expatiating with Delight, where this *penſile Paradiſe* flouriſhed, is ſtruck with Horror; keeps at a trembling Diſtance; and ſurveying the rueful Spot, cries out, *Righteous art Thou, O LORD, and true are thy Judgments!*

Here ſtands an *Obeliſk*, maimed by the Stroke of revolving Years, like a Mountain-Oak ſhattered by the flaming Bolt. Another, all unhinged and quite disjointed, ſeems to tremble before every Blaſt that blows.—There, the *Pyramid* ‡; firm as the ſolid Rock,

* *Penſiles Horti ſunt, ſummam Murorum Altitudinem æquantes, multarumque Arborum Umbra & Proceritate amœni.* CURT. Lib. V.

† Dan. ii. 35.

‡ *Strabo* calls the Temple of *Belus* a *Pyramid*. Lib. XV. But if the Critics in Hiſtory ſhould queſtion or deny the Exiſtence of Pyramids among the *Babylonians*, for this and other Liberties uſed by our young Declaimer, *Horace* ſhall make an Apology:

——— *Pictoribus atque Poetis*
Quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua Poteſtas.

Rock, and ſtable, One would have thought, as the everlaſting Hills; wrenched from its mighty Baſe, is tumbled headlong in enormous Ruin, and has cruſhed many a Structure by its Fall.—See yonder, the *triumphal Arch*; which exhibited, through its extenſive and beautiful Bend, an advantageous View of the Firmament. It was, once, the graceful Memorial of ſome celebrated Victory; it is, now, converted into a Trophy of a very different Kind. Juſt retaining two uneven, battered, ragged Stumps, it ſerves to recognize the deſtructive Ravages of Time.—*Spires*, that pierced the Clouds, and ſhot into the Skies, are leveled with the trodden Soil. On *Pinacles*, to which the ſtrong-winged Bird could hardly ſoar, the groveling Worm crawls, and the ſordid Snail leaves her ſlimy Track.—*Baths*, that contained the tranſlucent Wave, and were ſo often perfumed with odoriferous Unguents, are choked with Filth; the grand *Colonade*, that ſurrounded them, is ſhivered to pieces; and the elevated *Dome*, that covered them, is daſhed to the Ground.—The public *Aqueducts*, which conveyed Cleanlineſs and Health along their cryſtal Currents, are degenerated into a ſtagnating Lake; while croking Vermine ſwarm among the Weeds, and noiſome Exhalations ſteam from the Mire.

Auguſt and ſtately *Temples*, that ſeemed to affect the Neighbourhood of Heaven *, are ſunk to the very

* A Tower in the Temple of *Belus*, and dedicated to his Worſhip, was moſt amazingly high. It conſiſted of eight Piles of Building, erected one above another. It aroſe to the Elevation of ſix hundred Feet perpendicular. And is thought, by the learned *Bochart* to have been

very Duſt.—Who can point the Spot, where the conſecrated Victim bled, or the ſacred Fire glowed? Where the ſceptred Image lifted its majeſtic Head, or the venerating Crouds bowed the ſuppliant Knee *? Degraded are thoſe ſplendid Vanities, and caſt (according to the Denunciation of the ſacred Oracles) *to the Bats and to the Moles* †. All is low; low as the ſpurious Dignity of the Idols they complimented; low *as the Straw, that is trodden down for the Dunghil* ‡.

Sepulchres, the once venerable Repoſitories of the Dead, awful Manſions, deſtined to everlaſting Concealment; are cleft and rent aſunder. They diſcloſe the horrid Secrets of the Pit, and frightfully yawn upon the blaſted Day. Poſſibly, ſome ravenous Creature lurks within, that has already rifled the Tomb of its Hero; given the putrid Bones a new Grave; and waits only for the Approach of Night, to repeat his funeral Dirge in Yells.—*Inſcriptions*, deſigned to perpetuate ſome illuſtrious Character, or eternize ſome heroic Deed, are blended in the promiſcuous Maſs.

In

Part of that ſuperb Work, which was begun when *the whole Earth was of one Language:* but miſcarried, or rather was providentially defeated, by the Confuſion of Tongues. In this Structure, there were doubtleſs very ſtrong Traces of that arrogant Boaſt; *Let Us build Us a City and a Tower, whoſe Top may reach to Heaven*, Gen. xi. 4.

* Alluding to that prodigious Inſtance of Profuſeneſs, Oſtentation, and idolatrous Madneſs, *the golden Image ſet up in the Plain of* Dura: *whoſe Height* (that is, the Height of the Statue and Pedeſtal taken together) *was threeſcore Cubits*, Dan. iii, 1. See PRIDEAUX's *Connection*, Vol. I, p. 95, *&c.* p. 567, *&c.*

† Iſa. ii, 20. ‡ Iſa. xxv. 10.

In vain, would the prying Antiquary ſearch for a legible or conſiſtent Sentence: in vain, attempt to find the memorable Names of a *Nebuchadnezzar* or a *Nimrod*. Theſe, though engraved on Plates of Braſs, or cut in Blocks of Marble, are loſt amidſt the ſtupendous Lumber; as Prints on the unſteady Sand are effaced, when returning Tides ſmooth the furrowed Beach.

Here and there a ſtraggling Cypreſs riſes, as it were with funeral Solemnity, amidſt the Waſte *. Somewhat like the black Plumes, nodding over the mournful Hearſe, they augment the Sadneſs of the Scene, and throw a deeper Horror on all below.—No human Voice is heard, nor human Face ſeen, amidſt theſe deſolated Heaps. Too dreary, even for the Roam of hoary Hermit, or the Cell of gloomy Monk. Abandoned they are, totally abandoned, to the Dominion of Solitude; or elſe, to the unmoleſted Reſort of ſhaggy Monſters, and feathered Hags; which ſtun the midnight Hours—*theſe*, with their importunate Shrieks—*thoſe*, with their execrable Howls.

See! to what a deſpicable, what an abhorred State, the proudeſt Monuments of earthly Grandeur, and the moſt coſtly Apparatus for earthly Felicity, may be reduced! A pregnant and alarming Proof, that, for *laſting Honour*, or *real Happineſs*,

They

* *Rauwolf*, a *German* Traveler, who paſſed that Way, in the Year of our LORD 1574, ſays; "This Country "is ſo dry and barren, that it cannot be tilled; and ſo "bare, that I ſhould have doubted, whether the potent "*Babylon* did ſtand there, if I had not known it by ſeve-"ral antient and delicate Antiquities, that are ſtill ſtand-"ing hereabout in great Deſolation."

They build too low, who build beneath the Skies.

Asp. I very much approve the Choice of your Subject. The Ruins of *Persepolis*, would have given Us a View of Magnificence in Abasement. The Ruins of *Palmyra*, might have shewed Us Elegance in the Dust. But the Ruins of *Babylon* display at once, Magnificence and Elegance under an Eclipse, *Scripture* and *Revelation* in their Glory.—The utter Destruction of this City, which was absolutely unequaled * in every Instance of Dignity, and seemingly invincible by any Enemy, must certainly have been looked upon as the *most improbable* of Events. Nevertheless its utter Destruction was decreed by JEHOVAH, and denounced by his Prophet, several Ages before the Execution took place. The awful *Sentence* was not only denounced, but recorded; and is still remaining, in the public Archives of our Religion.

Ther. Where is this Sentence recorded, and remaining?

Asp. In the Prophecy of *Isaiah*. And not only recorded, but in the most circumstantial Manner, and with a minute Detail of the horrible Desolations. These are the Words of the inspired Writer; BABYLON, *the Glory of Kingdoms, the Beauty of the Chaldees Excellency, shall be as when GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited; neither shall it be dwelt in from Generation to Generation:*

* *Unequaled*—Represented therefore by the *golden* Head, in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s prophetic Dream, and emblematic Image. *Dan.* ii. 38.—And described by an antient Author, as *Omnium quas unquam Sol aspexit Urbium maxima.* PAUSAN. in Arcad.

tion: Neither shall the Arabian pitch Tent there; neither shall the Shepherds make their Fold there. But wild Beasts of the Desart shall lie there, and their Houses shall be full of doleful Creatures, and Owls shall dwell there, and Satyrs shall dance there. And the wild Beasts of the Islands shall cry in their desolate Houses, and Dragons in their pleasant Palaces *.

In the two first Sentences, is comprized the most finished Picture of Prosperity and Grandeur. *The Glory of Kingdoms*; beyond every other royal Seat, spacious, ornamented, and wealthy; revered by many conquered and tributary Dominions, as their Mistress, and their Sovereign.—*The Beauty of the Chaldees Excellency:* The *Chaldeans*, who excelled all the Nations of the Earth in Riches, in Splendor, and in Power, *even they* gloried in this wonderful City. This was the highest Honour of the most illustrious, and chief Strength of the most victorious People; fairest, where all was conspicuously fair; noblest, where all was supereminently noble. — Yet this distinguished, this crowning City, *shall*, at the blasting of the Breath of JEHOVAH, *be* totally, totally destroyed, even *as when GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.*

In describing the Overthrow, the Prophet is equally admirable; and rises, by a most judicious Gradation, into all the Pomp of Horror. *q. d.* "Now, indeed, "it is thronged with Citizens; but, the Hour is "coming, when it shall be intirely depopulated, and "not so much as a single Inhabitant left. — Lest "You should think, that in Process of Time it may "be re-edified, and again abound with joyful Mul-"titudes, *it shall never be inhabited* more; no, *never* "*be*

* Isa. xiii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

" *be dwelt in* any more, *from Generation to Gene-*
" *ration*; but shall continue a dismal Waste, through
" all succeeding Ages. — A Waste so dismal, that
" none of the neighbouring *Shepherds* shall *make*
" *their Fold*, or find so much as an occasional Shel-
" ter for their Flocks; where Kings, Grandees, and
" Crouds of affluent Citizens, reposed themselves in
" profound Tranquility. Even the rude and roving
" *Arabian*, shall not venture to *pitch his Tent*, nor be
" able to procure for Himself the poor Accommo-
" dation of a Night's Lodging; where Millions of
" polite People basked in the Sunshine of profuse
" Prosperity.—In short; it shall neither be *habitable*,
" nor *accessible*; but a *Dwelling-place for Dragons, an*
" *Astonishment, and a Hissing* *. What was once the
" *golden City* †, and the Metropolis of the World,
" shall be an everlasting Scene of Desolation and
" Horror; a fearful Monument of divine Vengeance,
" and an awful Admonition to human Pride."

All this is foretold in Scripture; and, though to human Appearance impossible, though to human Apprehension incredible, was, in the appointed Time, most minutely accomplished. The Memorials and Evidences of the Accomplishment remain to this very Day ‡. They are so *authentic*, that the most inqui-

* Jer. li. 37. † Isa. xiv. 4.

‡ It is said, by a very learned Author; *Babylonem usque eo concidisse, ut Nemo eam Fiducia illius Locum amplius demonstrare queat.* i. e. " *Babylon* is now so totally destroy-
" ed, that the most skilful Geographers cannot, with
" Certainty, determine the Place on which it stood."
Should any of my Readers prefer this Account, I shall neither litigate the Point, nor be anxious for the Consequence. It may indeed rank *Eugenio*'s Composition among the Works of Fancy. But it will realize *Aspasio*'s Asser-

tion,

inquisitive Curiosity cannot doubt; and so *incontestable*, that the most bigotted Incredulity will not deny. And should not this teach Us, to reverence the Authority, to admire the Wisdom, and confide in the Promises of that heavenly Volume?

I know, You are not fond of Compliments, *Theron*. Therefore, instead of speaking my Opinion of your Son's Performance, I will endeavour to return your Favour.—You have entertained me with an Account of the most memorable Ruins, extant in the material World. Let me present my Friend with a Picture of Ruins, no less *remarkable*, far more *deplorable*, and unspeakably *interesting* to Us all. I shall give it, in the Colouring of a great Master; whose Works, this very Day, I happened to be perusing.

The Passage displays a Doctrine, of the utmost Importance in the Christian Scheme; and by one of the finest Pieces of Imagery, to be met with in elegant Writing. I think, it may be looked upon, as a *practical Improvement* of *Eugenio*'s Declamation. It pleased me so much, that I transcribed it; and I make no Apology for reading it, because I shall expect your Thanks.

tion, and corroborate his Argument. If We find *no Memorials* of the City, We have the *most evident* Verification, and the *fullest* Accomplishment, of the Prophecy.

If this be the Case, it gives an amazing Emphasis to that just, but terrible Decree, issued from the supreme Tribunal; *I will sweep it with the Besom of Destruction, saith the* LORD *of Hosts.* "I will not only lay it in "Ruins, but extirpate it from the Earth. I will efface "the very Footsteps of its Existence; and not leave so "much as a *Fragment* or a *Trace* of the magnificent, but "wicked *Babylon*. Isa. xiv. 23.

Thanks.—Only let me hint, that it conſiders the human Soul, as originally an Habitation of GOD through the SPIRIT; and then, ſpeaking of its fallen Condition, proceeds.

" That He *hath withdrawn Himſelf*, and left " *this his Temple* deſolate, We have many ſad and " plain Proofs before Us. The *ſtately Ruins* are " viſible to every Eye, that bear in their Front (yet " extant) this doleful Inſcription; HERE GOD " ONCE DWELT. Enough appears of the ad- " mirable Frame and Structure of the *Soul of Man*, " to ſhew the divine Preſence did ſometime reſide " in it; more than enough of vicious *Deformity*, to " proclaim He is now *retired* and *gone*. The *Lamps* " are extinct, the *Altar* overturned; the *Light* and " *Love* are now vaniſhed, which did the one *ſhine*, " with ſo heavenly Brightneſs; the other *burn*, with " ſo pious Fervour. The *golden Candleſtick* is diſ- " placed, and thrown away as an uſeleſs Thing, to " make room for the Throne of the *Prince of Dark-* " *neſs*. The *ſacred Incenſe*, which ſent rolling up " in Clouds its rich Perfumes, is exchanged for a " poiſonous helliſh Vapour; and here is, *inſtead of a* " *ſweet Savour*, *a Stench*. The comely Order of this " Houſe is turned all into Confuſion. The *Beau-* " *ties of Holineſs* into *noiſome Impurities*. The *Houſe* " *of Prayer* to a *Den of Thieves*, and that of the " worſt and moſt horrid Kind; for every *Luſt* is a " *Thief*, and every *Theft* is *Sacrilege*. Continual " Rapine and Robbery is committed upon *holy* " *Things*. The noble Powers, which were deſigned " and dedicated to *divine Contemplation* and *Delight*, " are alienated to the Service of the moſt deſpicable

" Idols,

" Idols, and employed unto the vileſt Intuitions and " Embraces; to behold and admire *lying Vanities*, " to indulge and cheriſh Luſt and Wickedneſs.

" There is not now a Syſtem, an intire Table of " *coherent Truths* to be found, or a *Frame of Holi-* " *neſs*, but ſome ſhivered Parcels. How many At- " tempts have been made, ſince that fearful Fall and " Ruin of this Fabric, to compoſe again the Truths " of ſo many ſeveral Kinds into their diſtinct Or- " ders, and make up Frames of Science or uſeful " Knowledge! and after ſo many Ages, nothing is " finiſhed in any Kind. Sometimes, Truths are " miſplaced, and what belongs to *one Kind*, is tranſ- " ferred to *another*, where it will not fitly match; " ſometimes, *Falſhood inſerted*, which ſhatters or diſ- " turbs the whole Frame. And what with much " fruitleſs Pains, is done by one Hand, is daſhed in " pieces by another; and it is the Work of a *fol-* " *lowing* Age to ſweep away the fine-ſpun Cobwebs " of a *former*. And thoſe Truths, which are of " greateſt Uſe, are leaſt regarded; their Tendency " and Deſign are overlooked, or they are ſo looſened " and torn off, that they cannot be wrought in, ſo " as to take hold of the Soul; but hover as *faint* " *ineffectual Notions*, that ſignify Nothing. Its very " fundamental Powers are ſhaken and disjointed, " and their Order towards one another confounded " and broken. So that what is judged *conſiderable*, " is not *conſidered*; what is recommended as *eligible* " and *lovely*, is not loved and choſen. Yea, the " Truth which is after Godlineſs, is not ſo much " *diſbelieved*, as *hated*, *held in Unrighteouſneſs*: and " ſhines as too feeble a *Light*, in that malignant " Dark-

" Darkneſs, which *comprehends it not*. You come,
" amidſt all this Confuſion, as into the ruined Pa-
" lace of ſome great Prince, in which You ſee here
" the Fragments of a noble Pillar, there the ſhat-
" tered Pieces of ſome curious Imagery: and all ly-
" ing neglected and uſeleſs amongſt Heaps of Dirt.
" He that invites You to take a View of the Soul
" of Man, gives You but ſuch another Proſpect,
" and doth but ſay to You, *Behold the Deſolation*,
" all Things rude and waſte. So that ſhould there
" be any Pretence to the divine Preſence, it might
" be ſaid, *If GOD be here, why is it thus?* The
" faded Glory, the Darkneſs, the Diſorder, the Im-
" purity, the decayed State in all reſpects of this
" Temple, too plainly ſhew, *The GREAT IN-*
" *HABITANT is gone* *."

Ther. Your Painter, I muſt own, is a Maſter in his Profeſſion; and ſeems to have a peculiar Talent for a *Night-piece*.—But why, I beſeech You, ſo much of his Shades and Solemnity? Has He no Colours, but the dark? No Lineaments, but the ſour? Could He not allow Us one bright Tint, one ſmiling Feature? when He was copying the nobleſt Being in this ſublunary World?—Is it for the Honour of the great CREATOR, to give ſuch a deformed Draught of his moſt finiſhed Workmanſhip?

Aſp. It reflects no kind of Diſhonour upon the Architect of *Babylon*, that its Palaces are fallen, its Edifices demoliſhed, and its Walls leveled with the Ground. They might have been built with the exacteſt Symmetry, and once embelliſhed with every graceful

* See Mr. *Howe*'s Treatiſe, intitled *The living Temple*.

graceful Ornament; notwithstanding the Stroke of Violence, or the Sap of Years, have now reduced them to Heaps of Rubbish.—The human Soul, when recent from the Inspiration of the ALMIGHTY, was bright with Knowledge, amiable with Virtue, and in every Respect excellent. But *How*—to speak in the Language of the mourning Prophet; a Language never more pertinent than on the present Occasion—*How is the Gold become dim! How is the most fine Gold changed!*

Ther. Man's Soul is rational and eternal; is the Offspring of the DEITY, and capable of resembling its MAKER.

Asp. What *Milton* allows to the fallen Archangel, I can readily allow to fallen Man:

——————— *He had not lost*
All his original Brightness.

The grand and distinguishing Faculties of the Soul remain. Just as, when a Fountain is poisoned, the Waters continue to flow: but flow no longer with *Health*, flow rather with *Death* in the Stream. These very Faculties, unless renewed and regulated by the Influence of Religion, must be our present Misery, and will prove our everlasting Curse.—"The Soul," You say, "is rational, is eternal." And do not even the Devils possess the Powers of Reason? Is not *their* Existence also of an endless Duration? Yet are they of all Creatures, the most execrable and the most miserable.

You call the human Soul, the Offspring of the DEITY. And You call it properly. Must We not then adopt the Prophet's Exclamation, "*How*

" *art Thou fallen, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning* * ! " How art Thou degenerated, O Man, Son of the " MOST HIGH! Thy glorious Original ſerves " only to ſet forth, with more glaring Evidence, thy " deplorable Apoſtacy."

Capable, You add, of reſembling its MAKER. This, I acknowledge, is a valuable Prerogative. In this the infernal Spirits have no Share. But this Capacity will always lie dormant; will never awaken into Act; never be eſtabliſhed in Habit; unleſs Almighty GRACE intervene.

Ther. The moſt celebrated Philoſophers of Antiquity, frequently exhort their Readers to *follow Nature*; as a certain Guide to true Excellence.—Many eloquent Writers of our own Country, inlarge upon the *Dignity* of human Nature; and from this Topic derive very forcible Arguments, for a correſpondent Dignity both of Sentiment and Behaviour.—Upon what can thoſe Principles of the antient Sages, and of our later Moraliſts, be founded?

Aſp. Indeed, *Theron*, I am at a loſs to tell. If they have any Foundation, it is merely imaginary; not laid in Truth, nor confirmed by Experience.—According to my Apprehenſion, they invert the Order of Things. They take that for a *Poſtulatum*, which ought to be ranked among the *Deſiderata*; and make an Axiom of a mere Figment.

Had Man continued, as He was created; to act according to Nature, and according to the Law of GOD, would have been one and the ſame Thing. For which Reaſon, We find no Precepts of Religion, no Delineation of Morality, given to *Adam* in Paradiſe.

* Iſa. xiv. 12.

diſe. Becauſe, Religion and Morality were engraven on his Heart: or rather, they reſulted from the very Bent and Tendency of his perfect Frame. — But ſince the Fall it is quite otherwiſe.

Ther. Have not many of the antient Worthies been *living Confutations* of your Opinion? Wiſe Philoſophers, judicious Lawgivers, and ſteady Miniſters of Juſtice? Their Deſires refined, their Affections benevolent, their whole Conduct upright?

Aſp. I cannot forbear wondering, that You ſhould inſtance in Lawgivers and Miniſters of Juſtice. Since the very Inſtitution of their Office *preſuppoſes* the Depravity of Mankind. Was human Nature agitated by no irregular or vicious Inclinations, the Barrier of Laws would be as needleſs in civil Societies, as the vaſt Banks of *Holland* are needleſs in our upland Counties.

But this, You will ſay, is a digreſſive Obſervation. Your Queſtion requires a poſitive Anſwer. And it is eaſy to anſwer, That the Painting is beyond the Life. If my Author has been too free with the *dark*, my Friend has been too laviſh of the *glittering* Colours.—Thoſe famous Men might aim, perhaps, at the Excellency You deſcribe. Not one of them came up to the Mark.—Or, ſuppoſe they did, this would not invalidate my Tenet.

Ther. This not invalidate your Tenet! Then Demonſtration carries no Conviction.

Aſp. Pray, who is your greateſt Favourite, among all the renowned Perſons of Antiquity?

Ther. Socrates. — He ſtands at the Head of the Claſs; and was, indiſputably, the wiſeſt and the beſt of the Heathen World.

Asp. I think so too.—Be pleased, however, to recollect the Story of the *Physiognomist*; who pretended to discover the Disposition of the Mind, by the Cast of the Countenance. The Professor of this occult Science undertook, You know, to exercise his Skill upon *Socrates*; and pronounced Him, after an Examination of his Features, lascivious, passionate, and morose.—This Judgment, so extravagantly wide of the Truth, was bringing a Storm of Ridicule and Resentment upon the poor Fortune-teller. When the ingenuous Philosopher interposed, and owned the Description to be exactly true. That *such* was his *natural* Temper; and if his Conversation had been of a different Turn, it was owing to the Aids of Philosophy.—So that, even in your most finished * Character, there was no *innate* Dignity. All was *adventitious*.

Ther.

* Though I love and admire the Character of *Socrates*, yet I cannot approve the whole of his Conduct. One Thing which gives me particular Offence is, the *habitual* Practice of *Swearing*, which occurs in all his Conferences with his Pupils. Μα τον Δια, Νη Δι', or some such Appeal to the DEITY, is used, not only in every Discourse, but almost in every Page; and that upon the most *unnecessary* Occasions.—I have often wondered, that so polite a Writer as *Xenophon*, should admit this flagrant Impropriety into his Dialogues. Which, besides its *irreligious* Air, is somewhat like the *Crambe repetita*; and recurs, and recurs, and recurs, till it is really tiresome. But much more I wonder, that his excellent Master, should suffer the Sanction of an Oath, to become so *trivial*; and the Honour of his *Jupiter*, so *cheap*.

This proves the deplorable *Blindness* of human Reason; which could mistake so notorious a Profanation of the Divine Name, for a genteel Embellishment of Speech—It shews

Ther. If Corruption was derived unto all Men from their Forefather *Adam*; methinks, all ſhould be equally corrupt. But this is contrary to known Fact. Some We ſee naturally loving and lovely; gentle in their Manners; and ſubject to no inordinate Appetites.

Aſp. Some Perſons may be of *more compoſed*, or, if You pleaſe, of *leſs diſſolute* Manners, than the Generality of other People. Thanks to a better Temperature of their Conſtitution, or a more watchful Care in their Education.—But ſhew me the unregenerate Man, who is ſubject to *no* inordinate Appetites? One vile Affection may check another, or a Senſe of Decency may hold the Curb upon all. But it is one Thing, to have the wild Beaſt in the Heart chained; another, to have Him expelled, or the Lion transformed into a Lamb.

Ther. Have We not often obſerved heroic Courage, and a Generoſity of Spirit, where the Education has been none of the ſtricteſt? To what can we aſcribe theſe laudable Qualities, but to the innate Virtue and Nobleneſs of the Temper, working without any auxiliary Succours?

Aſp. Virtue, *Theron*, is a *complete* Aſſemblage, not ſome *disjointed* Shreds, of laudable Qualities. Thoſe You mention, if not accompanied with the whole Circle of amiable Accompliſhments, are no more to be called Virtue; than two or three ſcattered Frag-

ſhews Us, likewiſe, our extreme Need of that *revealed* Law, which, among other refined Precepts, unknown to the Religion of Nature, injoins; *Above all Things, ſwear not*—And *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the* LORD *thy* GOD *in vain.*

ments of an Edifice, are to be honoured with the Appellation of an Houſe.—How often are thoſe very Perſons, with all their Fortitude, Slaves to ignoble Pleaſures, or in Bondage to the baſeſt Luſts. A moſt infallible Indication, that they have no *uniform* Generoſity, nor any *real* Courage.—Deſire of Fame, may prompt to many ſuch Acts, as *dazzle* the ſuperficial Eye: which yet are far, very far from *genuine* Virtue.

Ther. Do You then attribute the *Grecian* Politeneſs and the high *Roman* Spirit, all the gallant Actions of their Heroes and Generals, to a Deſire of Fame?

Aſp. There is Reaſon to ſuſpect, that they derived their Origin from ſome improper Motive. And no Motive was more artfully inſtilled, or more aſſiduouſly cheriſhed, than the Spirit of Ambition.—View their Crowns, their Statues, their triumphal Solemnities — Read their Orators, their Hiſtorians, their Poets—The former were the *School*, the latter were the *Maſters*, to inculcate this grand Leſſon.

Let Us conſider the *Romans* a little more attentively; and not amidſt the Dregs of their Community, but in their very beſt Ages; when their Republic ſubſiſted, and their *Scipios* flouriſhed. Many great and ſhining Deeds were undoubtedly performed. But did they ſpring from a *reverential Regard* to the Supreme BEING; from Obedience to his Will, or Zeal for his Honour?

If this Principle ſhould be thought too refined, did they proceed from a *Love* to their *Fellow-creatures?* In caſe, neither of theſe Motives * actuated their

* A Zeal for the Honour of GOD, and a Concern for the Good of our Fellow-creatures, are the true Sources of

their Conduct, it can never be placed to the Account of Virtue. — Had Benevolence been their leading Principle, why such *Inhumanity* to *Carthage*? Why must that opulent City be laid in Ashes, and her numerous Citizens be put to the Sword? Were they Enemies to Mankind, or a Nuisance in the World? You well know, that they were only too industrious, and too powerful. By which means, they would be in a Condition, to eclipse the Magnificence of the *Roman* Name, and dispute the Prize of Sovereignty with the *Roman* State. For this Crime—a Crime, in Ambition's Eye, absolutely inexcusable — even *Cato*'s upright Soul, shall doom them to utter Destruction; and *Scipio*'s gentle Hand, shall execute the horrid Decree.

Is *this* Virtue? Does Virtue ravage Countries, from the mere Wantonness of Pride, or Lust of Preeminence? Does Virtue destroy Millions of Lives, only to aggrandize a particular People, or extend the Dominion of some favourite Empire? If *this* were Virtue, *Brutus* thought too honourably of her Character, when he termed Her an *empty Name*.—I am sure, my *Theron* has juster Notions of Things. He need not be informed, that true Virtue, far from personating the rapacious Harpy, acts as a Father to Others, as a Father to All. And, like HIM, who

of Virtue, 1 *Cor.* x. 24, 31. When our Actions flow not from these Principles, Reason will put a *Query* upon them, and Revelation will *expunge* them from the List of Virtues.—They may be specious in themselves; they may be costly to the Performer; they may even be serviceable to Others. But can no more deserve the Title of *Virtue*, than the Activity of our Sun-fire Officers, in extinguishing the Flames on some insured House, can merit the Name of *Charity*.

is both its Pattern and its Author, *goes about doing Good.*

Ther. The moſt elegant Cane, if plunged into yonder Baſon, while the Waters are curled by the Breeze, will appear both crooked and coarſe. I cannot but think, the Accuſers of human Nature examine her State with a *prejudiced* Underſtanding. Which has the ſame perverſe Effect upon their Judgment, as thoſe ruffled Waves have upon the Sight. —Or elſe, they contemplate her Condition with a *melancholy* Mind; which, like a jaundiced Eye, gives every Object a diſtempered Aſpect; darkens the chearful; diſcolours the beautiful; and hangs even the Sun in Mourning.

Aſp. Rather let this be the Compariſon, to illuſtrate our Point.—View the meaneſt Piece of Earth, through the *Priſmatic* Glaſs; and it will appear, not beautiful only, but perfectly ſplendid. Remove the deluſory Medium, and all the ſophiſticated Finery vaniſhes. The Indigo, the Orange, the Violet are gone: and leave nothing to be ſeen, but a rude unornamented Lump of Clay.—So, if We conſider human Nature, according to the *partial* Repreſentations of Self-love; or contemplate it, in the *flattering* Mirror of ſome popular Writings; it may ſeem regular, holy, excellent. But, if We behold it under the Light, the unerring Light of Revelation, its fanſied Charms diſappear; it ſtands clothed with Deformity; and is a Spectacle of Commiſeration, if not of Horror.

Ther. What Reaſon have You to father ſuch a Notion upon the ſacred Writings?—The ſacred Writings inform Us, that Man was made *after the Image*

Image of GOD. This, ſure, could not be ſo diſhonourable and depraved a Pattern, as your Diſcourſe would inſinuate.

Aſp. Far, very far from a diſhonourable Pattern! The Image of GOD is the *conſummate Standard* of all Perfection.—In conformity to this admirable Exemplar, our firſt Parents were created; and in this admirable Condition they continued, till by Tranſgreſſion they *fell.* Fell from the moſt holy and happy State, into Guilt, Condemnation, and Ruin.—Therefore, when this fatal Cataſtrophe had taken place, the ſacred Hiſtorian varies his Style; and with a remarkable Peculiarity, as well as Propriety of Speech, ſays, *Adam begat a Son in his own* *, not in the DIVINE, *Likeneſs.* That every Reader may advert to this melancholy, but important Truth; it is marked more ſtrongly ſtill; it is inforced by a very emphatical Repetition. *After his own Image* †, *Moſes* adds; as contradiſtinguiſhed to the Image of GOD, mentioned in a preceding Verſe. Which Expreſſions are evidently intended, to denote the Difference between the State, in which *Adam* was created, and *Seth* was begotten.

Ther. Pray, let me have a ſuccinct, but full Account of this tragical Story. Since all your orthodox Divines lay ſuch a mighty Streſs upon the Doctrine of the *Fall.*

Aſp. GOD, having formed the human Body out of the Ground, animated the Structure with a living Soul; and tranſcribed upon this Soul the Image of his

* This is affirmed, not of *Cain,* but of *Seth,* the moſt excellent of *Adam*'s Children, and Father of the holy Seed.

† בדמותו בצלמו Gen. v. 3. *Corruptus corruptum.*

his blessed SELF. All was Light in the Understanding; all was Rectitude in the Will; and nothing but Harmony in the Affections.—Man, thus endowed, was placed in the delightful Garden of *Eden*; and furnished with every Accommodation, which was necessary to support his Being, or desirable to gratify his Senses.—He was constituted Lord of this lower Creation; and, amidst numberless Indulgencies, received only *one—easy—negative* Command—*not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.*—From this He was to abstain, as a Pledge of his Subjection, and as an Exercise of his Obedience, Bliss and Immortality were to be the Reward of Duty; Misery and Death the Punishment of Disobedience. *In the Day Thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die* *, was the Sanction of the divine Law.

How equitable! How gracious the Terms! Yet, neither the Goodness of GOD, could induce Him to keep them; nor the Authority of GOD, deter Him from breaking them.—Unreasonably discontented even with such advantageous Circumstances, and presumptuously aspiring to be like the MOST HIGH, He hearkened to the Suggestions of the evil Spirit.—In a Word; He violated the Precept, and incurred the Penalty. GOD was just, and Man was undone. He lost his Uprightness †; became subject to Mortality; and, as the nervous Original expresses it, *Died the Death.*

Ther.

* Gen. ii. 17.

† ——— *Innocence, that as a Veil*
Had shadow'd them from knowing Ill, was gone,
Just Confidence, and native Righteousness.

MILT. Book IX. 1054.

Ther. True; He became subject to many bodily Infirmities, and to the Neceſſity of final Diſſolution. —But, what has this Sentence, or what have theſe Sufferings to do with *your* Notion of univerſal Depravity in the Mind? The Death, which the Almighty LEGISLATOR threatened, can be oppoſed only to the Life, which the Almighty CREATOR gave.

Aſp. Be it ſo.—The CREATOR gave, and Man poſſeſſed a Life, incomparably more excellent, than that which the Pulſe imparts, or the Beaſts enjoy. He poſſeſſed a *divine Life*; which, according to the Definition of the Apoſtle, conſiſted *in Knowledge, in Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs* *. This—which was the diſtinguiſhing Glory, and the ſupreme Felicity of his Nature—this, alas! was extinct.

His Underſtanding, originally inlightened with Wiſdom, was clouded and overwhelmed with Ignorance.—His Heart, once filled with religious Veneration, and warmed with heavenly Love, became alienated from GOD his MAKER.—His Paſſions and Appetites, inſtead of moving on, in orderly Array, according to the beauteous Meaſures of Truth and Duty, grew mutinous; ſhook off the Government of Reaſon; and ran wild into the moſt lawleſs Extravagancies.—In a Word; the whole moral Frame was unhinged, diſjointed, broken.

Ther. What Cauſe have You to ſuppoſe, that all this Miſery was either included in the Threatening, or introduced by the Fall?

Aſp. The *Ignorance* of fallen *Adam* was palpable. Witneſs that abſurd Attempt, to hide Himſelf from the Eye of OMNISCIENCE, among the Trees

* Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10.

Trees of the Garden.—His *Averſion* to the All-gracious GOD was equally plain. Otherwiſe, He would never have fled from his MAKER; but rather have haſted, and on the Wings of Deſire, into the Place of the divine Manifeſtation.

A ſtrange Variety of *diſorderly Paſſions* *, were evidently predominant in his Breaſt—*Pride*; for He refuſes to acknowledge his Guilt, though he cannot but own the Fact—*Ingratitude*; for He obliquely upbraids the CREATOR with his Gift, as though it had been a Snare, rather than a Bleſſing; *The Woman, whom* Thou *gaveſt me*—*Want of natural Affection*; for, He endeavours to caſt all the Blame upon the weaker Veſſel; and to acquit his obnoxious Self, by impeaching the Wife of his Boſom.—The female Criminal acts the ſame unhumbled Part: neither takes Shame to Herſelf; nor gives Glory to GOD; nor puts up a ſingle Petition for Pardon.

As all theſe Diſaſters enſued, upon the Breach of the Commandment; they furniſh Us, I think, with the beſt *Key* to open the Meaning of the prohibitory Sanction.

* *Milton*, ſpeaking of the unhappy Pair, and deſcribing the Conſequences of their Fall, ſays;

——Nor only Tears
Rain'd at their Eyes; but high Winds within
Began to riſe; high Paſſions, Anger, Hate,
Miſtruſt, Suſpicion, Diſcord, and ſhook ſore
Their inward State of Mind; calm Region once,
And full of Peace; now toſt and turbulent!
For, Underſtanding rul'd not, and the Will
Heard not her Lore! But, in Subjection now
To ſenſual Appetite, who from beneath
Uſurping, over ſovereign Reaſon claim'd
Superior Sway.

Book IX. 1121.

Sanction. They prove, beyond any Argument, that ſpiritual Death, and all its Conſequences, were comprehended in the Extent of the Threatening.

Ther. How could *one* Act of Diſobedience produce ſuch deſtructive Effects? Eraſe the fair Image of the GODHEAD; and ſtamp the Monſter, ſtamp the very Devil, in its Stead?—And ſo *ſmall* an Act of Diſobedience too!

Aſp. The *Prohibition*, if You pleaſe, was ſmall; not ſo the Tranſgreſſion. It was committed againſt the cleareſt Knowledge of Duty, and the ſtrongeſt Obligations to Obedience. It argued Ingratitude for the richeſt Favours, and Unbelief of the moſt ſolemn Declarations. It was an Act of the moſt horrid Preſumption in the Creature, and of the moſt impious Rebellion againſt the CREATOR.

As to the Smallneſs, or rather the *gentle* and *benign* Import of the Command, this aggravates, beyond meaſure, the Crime of Diſobedience. Alluding to the Words, once addreſſed to the *Syrian* General, we may juſtly expoſtulate—"O thou *Adam*, if thy "LORD had bid Thee do ſome great Thing *; "in Submiſſion to his high Authority, and out of "Gratitude for his unſpeakable Goodneſs, oughteſt "Thou not to have done it? How much more, "when He ſays to Thee?—Freely eat of all, ex- "cept this ſingle Tree. *Thouſands*, *Thouſands* of "Honours, Privileges, and Gifts be thine; only "*one* Acknowledgment of thy Subjection, mine. "And that the *eaſieſt*, which thy Heart can wiſh, or "even thy Fancy conceive."

You aſk, *How* could one Act of Diſobedience produce ſuch deſtructive Effects?—I anſwer; The *Reality*

* 2 Kings v. 13.

Reality of the Fact, in numberleſs Inſtances of material Nature, is plain to a Demonſtration; while the *Manner* of Operation, remains an impenetrable Secret. Every Child perceives the former; *Newton* himſelf is at a loſs for the latter.—For which Reaſon, I have always thought it better, to believe what GOD has taught, than attempt to explain, what GOD has concealed. Let us forego this curious, perhaps fruitleſs Inquiry; and ſubſtitute a Remark, which naturally ariſes from the Subject, and may conſiderably ediſy our Minds.

Ther. Ediſy! Is it poſſible to render this diſhonourable and afflictive Notion *edifying?* Can any generous Fruit ſpring from ſuch a penurious Soil?

Aſp. Samſon, I believe, had no Expectation of finding any Thing valuable, in the Reliques of his ſlain Lion. But, to his agreeable Diſappointment, *there was Honey in the Carcaſe* *. If our Doctrine appear *ghaſtly* as the One, it may yield a Benefit *ſweet* as the Other.

From hence We may learn (what, when rightly learnt, is more ſerviceable than all the Sciences) the *extreme Malignity* of Sin.—When *Volcanos* open their tremendous Jaws, and diſgorge a fiery Inundation; they confine their Fury to a ſingle Territory.—When *Famine* lifts her mildewed Hand, and deſtroys the Supports of animal Life; She is content with ruining a Kingdom or a Nation.—When *War* drenches his Sword in Blood, or the *Peſtilence* impregnates the Air with Poiſon; they alſo, even they obſerve ſome Limits, and never make the whole Compaſs of Nature the Scene of their Ravages.—But *Sin* leveled its Blow at the whole human Race. SIN poured Con-

* Judg. xiv. 8.

Contagion, and ſpread Deſtruction, through *all* Countries, and *all* Ages. One *ſingle* Act of Sin brought Confuſion and a Curſe upon the material, and Miſeries, *infinite Millions* of Miſeries, on the rational World *.—How then ſhould We fear this *moſt pernicious* of all Evils! With what Careſulneſs guard againſt its inſidious Allurements! With what Reſolution fly from its killing Careſſes!

Ther. I muſt obſerve, that You take for granted, what remains to be proved. For, ſuppoſing your Account true, with regard to *Adam*; yet, how does this affect his Children? Why muſt all his Poſterity be contaminated, becauſe their Forefather has played the Prodigal? Such a heavy Charge againſt the whole Body of Mankind will not be admitted, without very cogent Proofs.

Aſp. The Proofs are cogent; perhaps irrefragable.—Reaſon offers to turn Evidence in the Caſe. Reaſon, in concurrence with Revelation, demands; *Who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean* †? If the Fountain be polluted, how can the Streams be pure? And if the Root is corrupt, 'tis impoſſible to conceive, how the Branches ſhould be ſound, or the Fruit good ‡.

The

* St. *Chryſoſtom* calls the firſt Tranſgreſſion, η παλαι λυμαινομενη αμαρτια. Which is, in a Manner, tranſlated by *Milton*; who, ſpeaking of the ſame tragical Act, ſays

——————————*It*
Brought Death into the World, and all our Woe.

† Job xiv. 4.

‡ *Milton* has anticipated *Theron*'s Objection; and, in *Adam*'s Soliloquy, very judiciouſly ſolved it.

——*Ah!*

The ſcriptural Teſtimonies are almoſt innumerable. They pour their Evidence from every Quarter; and conſtitute, not two or three only, but a whole Cloud of Witneſſes.—*GOD made Man upright*, ſays the royal Preacher; the human Nature in its primitive State, was without any wrong Bias. *But* at, and ever ſince the firſt Tranſgreſſion, *they have found out* and followed *many* perverſe *Inventions* *.

Ther. I don't deny, but Multitudes of People, ſeduced by bad *Example*, or betrayed by their own *Inadvertency*, have departed from the Rule of Duty. Have, as the wiſe Man affirms, tried many fooliſh Experiments to acquire Happineſs, and deviſed as many idle Excuſes for their Folly. But, this is no ſuch irrefragable Proof, that they were *originally* bad. It only implies, that not taking proper heed to their Ways, they warped from their native Uprightneſs. As yonder *Tulips*, though perfectly beautiful at preſent, if not attended with the neceſſary Cultivation, will degenerate into homely Flowers; and, at length, be no better than tawdry Weeds.

Aſp. No, my Friend. Iniquity is not an adventitious Thing, catched from Example, or contracted by Careleſneſs. Theſe may increaſe, but theſe do not occaſion, the *moral Malady*. A ſinful Diſpoſition is

———*Ah! why ſhould all Mankind*
For one *Man's Fault, thus guiltleſs* be condemn'd,
If guiltleſs? But from me what can proceed
But all corrupt, both Body and Mind deprav'd;
Not to do only, but to will the ſame
With me? How can they acquitted ſtand
In Sight of GOD?

Book X. 822.

* Eccleſ. vii. 29.

is as early as our Being: the very Mould, in which all our Faculties are cast.—*David* bears very express Testimony to this humbling Truth. *Behold!* He sets his *N. B.* upon the Passage. 'Tis a sad, but certain Fact. Such as should never depart from my Memory, nor ever be omitted in my Confessions; and is much to be regarded by every Reader. *I was shapen in Wickedness, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me**. As though he had said—"Alas! LORD, "this Crime, though extremely horrid, is but a little "Part of my Guilt. I have not only sinned in Prac- "tice, but I am totally and universally corrupt in "my very Nature."

This He acknowledges, not to extenuate his Offence, but to lay open his excessive Vileness. And indeed it is not possible, to form a *right Judgment* of Ourselves, or to be *duly humbled* before GOD, unless We add the Depravation of our Nature to the Transgressions of our Life. Just as it is impossible to discern, what monstrous and voracious Animals lie hid in the Ocean, if We only glance an Eye upon the Surface of the Waters.

Ther. This, You know, was written by the royal Penitent, under the Pangs of severe Remorse. Does not a Sense of his enormous Iniquity, together with the Apprehension of divine Wrath, make his Hand shake, and lead Him to *aggravate* Features?—Or suppose it were true of the adulterous King, is it equally applicable to Others, who have escaped such gross Pollutions?

Asp. It is no exaggerating Draught, but a faithful Delineation; and exactly represents every Child of *Adam*.—It was written with the utmost Deliberation;

* Psal. li. 5.

and therefore is introduced with that Call for peculiar Attention, *Behold!*—And, though *David* was ſcandalouſly criminal in his Intrigue with the Wife of *Uriah*; yet, the *general* Tenour of his Life was not only irreproachable, but exemplary. Who ſo zealous for the Houſe of his GOD, or ſo devoted an Admirer of the divine Word? His Heart was an Altar, ever flaming with heavenly Love; and his Tongue a Trumpet, to ſound the Praiſes of JEHOVAH through all Generations.—And if *He* had Reaſon to make this abaſing Confeſſion; who is the Perſon, that can think Himſelf aggrieved, by ſharing in the Imputation?

One of our moſt eminent Martyrs *, when He heard of any Malefactor, condemned to ſuffer an ignominious Death, uſed to lay his Hand upon his Breaſt, and ſay—" The Seeds of all thoſe Villanies, " which brought that unhappy Wretch to the Gib- " bet were ſown *Here*. And, if they have not " ſprung up into the ſame deteſtable Deeds, unto " divine Grace, unto divine Grace *alone*, be all the " Glory?"

Ther. Your Martyrs had honeſt Hearts, but not always the cleareſt Heads. I admire their Zeal, and reverence their Memories: but I can no more receive their Opinion, as an Oracle, than I can be perſuaded to worſhip their Relics.

Aſp. I have no Intention to palm Popery on my Friend, nor any Deſire to calumniate the human Species. If it be diſingenuous and ſinful, to aſperſe a particular Character; how much more unjuſtifiable, to traduce our Nature in general!

My

* Mr. *Bradford*.

My Account, dark and disgustful as it is, stands confirmed by a higher Authority, than any private Opinion. It is confirmed from an universal *Survey* of Mankind; taken by the Eye of the CREATOR Himself, and left upon Record in the Books of Revelation. *The LORD looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if there were Any that did understand, and seek after GOD.*—What is the Result of this grand Inquiry? It must, without all Peradventure, be infallibly true. Because GOD's Inspection is too keen, to be eluded; and his Judgment too impartial, to be biassed. This is the Report, made by the infinitely wise OBSERVER: *They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy**; *there is None that doeth Good, no not One.*

Ther. This, I apprehend, is the Character of those besotted Creatures, those most egregrious of all Fools, *Who say, There is no GOD.* To them the *Psalm* relates, and to them the abandoned Character is appropriated. They have it, if I may so speak, *Cum Privilegio.*

Asp. It is meant rather of practical, than of speculative Atheists. Who say, not *explicitly* with their Mouths, but *implicitly* in their Hearts, There is no GOD. Who live, as if there was no ALL-SEEING EYE, to take Cognizance of their present Conduct; no Supreme JUDGE, to call

 them

* *Psal.* xiv. 2, 3. The two original Words סר נאלחו are metaphorical Expressions; taken from — *Wines*, that are become *sour*—and *Meats*, that are in a State of *Putrefaction*. I believe, it is impossible to find Images, more strongly expressive of a *total* Depravity, and of the utmost Degeneracy.

them to a future Reckoning.—And I dare appeal to Yourself, though perhaps the fondeſt of Fathers, Whether this Inſtance of *Fooliſhneſs*, *is not bound up in the Hearts of our Children**. Nay, whether it be not natural to Us all, both in Youth and Manhood, to forget our CREATOR?

In this Caſe, *Theron*, there is no Monopoly. Your Right and mine, are too ſtrongly eſtabliſhed by Experience, and too clearly expreſſed in the preceding Scripture, to admit of any Controverſy.—If there were *Any*, that underſtood—They are *all* gone out of the Way—There is *None*, that doeth Good—No, not *One*.—Could any Conveyancer in *Europe* have contrived a Form of Words, more fully to aſcertain our unhappy Title?

Ther. There may be ſome Texts in Scripture, which ſeem to countenance your Aſſertion. But theſe refer to the worſt of Men, in the worſt of Times. And can You, with any Juſtice, aſcribe the Properties of a few Reprobates to the whole Species?

Aſp. This very Paſſage, and others of a like Import, are adopted by St. *Paul*, and applied both to

Jews-

* *Prov.* xxii. 15. Let none think, that by *Fooliſhneſs* the ſacred Writer means only thoſe *ſilly* Tricks, which diſcover a Weakneſs of Underſtanding in Children. *Solomon*'s Fool is not the *Idiot*, but the *Sinner*; and the Folly, ſtigmatized throughout the *Proverbs*, denotes, not a Failure in the intellectual, but in the religious and moral Character.

The Words, in this Paſſage, are peculiarly forcible. *Fooliſhneſs is in the Heart*; implanted in the very Nature; ſunk deep into the inmoſt Faculties.—And not only ſunk deep, but adheres almoſt inſeparably: קשורה is *wrapt*, *tied*, and *bound:* twines like the Ivy, and is rooted like the Oak.

Jews and *Gentiles*; with this professed Design, *that* every *Mouth may be stopped, and all the World may be found guilty* * *before GOD.* Which evinces, I should think, beyond all Doubt, the *Universality* of its Extent.

If to the Universality, We add the *Antiquity* of this Fact, it will bear the two grand Characteristics of Truth. Far from being a novel Opinion, it was received as a Maxim, in the early Age of *Job. What is Man, that he should* pretend to *be clean? And He that is born of a Woman, that He should* presume to *be righteous?* Righteous before the infinitely JUST and HOLY ONE! *Behold! He putteth no Trust in his Saints*, though the most exalted of all intelligent Beings. *Yea, the Heavens*, those brightest Parts of the material Creation, *are not clean in his Sight. How much more abominable and filthy is Man* †*? Who drinketh Iniquity*; though lothesome to GOD, and worse than Poison to his own Soul; yet drinketh it *like Water*; without any Hesitation or the least Fear, with an eager and profuse Delight.

* *Rom.* iii. 19. Ὑποδικος γενηται, "May *become* guilty," does not so exactly answer the Scope of the Context, neither does it so solidly establish the Apostle's Argument, as "may be *found* guilty;" be fully convicted, and apparently liable to most just Condemnation.—Those Things were written of Old, and were quoted by St. *Paul*, not to *render* Men criminal, but to *prove* them so.

† *Job* xv. 14, 15, 16. The immaculate Purity of the blessed GOD, and the utter Depravity of fallen Man, are Points of so great Importance in the scriptural System of Divinity, that they are inculcated no less than *three Times*, within the Compass of this single Book. And by much the *same* noble Contrast of striking Images. *Chap.* iv. 17, 18.—xv. 14, 15, 16.—xxv. 4, 5, 6.

This, You will observe, was alledged in a Dispute, carried on with no small Vehemency. Yet is admitted, on all hands, as unexceptionably true.—Be pleased also to take notice, That the Charge is not confined to some very notorious Sinners, but is laid against the whole Body of Mankind. Whatever Figure they may make, each in his own Conceit; they are all described in the Word of GOD—as *Beings*, insatiably athirst after Evil—from *Objects*, that We cannot endure to behold; or cannot behold without Abhorrence *.—*Such* is Man by Nature! People must have Eyes very different from mine, to discern any *Dignity* in this Draught.

Ther. As to innate Dignity, We will let it pass. But this I must insist upon, and several Writers of the first Repute are on my Side—That we enter the Stage of Life, in a State of *Indifference* either to Good or Evil.—That the Affections are like a Balance, nicely poised, and preponderating neither one Way nor the other.—The whole Soul, like a Sheet of fair Paper, is equally susceptible of strait or crooked Lines; and will as readily receive the amiable Features of an Angel, as the hideous Deformity of a Devil.

Asp. With regard to your first Illustration.—The Simile, I think, confutes the Sentiment. For, to be *in suspense*, whether we shall love the LORD our

* The original Words are תועבה ותאלה—One is used to signify that *abominable* Practice, which the *Ægyptians* could not bear to see. *Exod.* vii. ver. 22. *Heb. Bib.* ver. 26. *Engl. Bib.*—The other denotes an Object, too *squalid* to be viewed without lothing.

our GOD, the Giver of all Good, and the Source of all Perfection; this, surely, must be condemned as an irreligious Temper.—This is a criminal Halting between GOD and *Baal*.—A Neutrality, which is no better than Hostility.

I fear, the Writers You mention, pay but little Deference to the inspired Volume. Our Escutcheon is very differently blazoned, in that Office of spiritual Heraldry. *A Transgressor from the Womb* *, is one of our hereditary Titles. Transgressors We are, by strong internal Propensity; even before We transgress, in outward Act.

Observe the young *Hawthorn* Plants, which have unfolded their green Leaves, in yonder Nursery; but have scarce learned to spread the gay Blossom. Is there in those an equal Aptitude, to produce the luscious juicy Grape, or their own coarse and husky Berry? By no means. They will (unless grafted with some generous Cyon) *certainly*, *universally*, *constantly* bear the same harsh Fruit with their parent Tree.—So certainly will the human Mind, if not renewed by the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, branch out into ungodly Tempers, and bring forth wicked Practices.

Ther. The Nobleman, mentioned by *Xenophon* †, when overcome by an alluring Temptation, devised for his Excuse the Notion of two Souls; one, that

* *Isa.* xlviii. 8. A Truth so apparent and undeniable, that *Seneca* could not but *discern* it, though He was an *unlightened* Heathen: could not but *acknowledge* it, though He was one of the *proud Stoic* Sect. *Hac Conditione* nati sumus. *Animalia obnoxia non paucioribus Animi quam Corporis Morbis.* De Ira. Lib. II. c. 9.

† *Cyropæd.* Lib. VI.

inclined Him to Vice; another, that prompted Him to Virtue. This was a moderate *Caricatura* *, compared with my Friend's. He will allow nothing regular or graceful in the human Heart.—You have metamorphoſed the Maſter-piece of the Creation, into ſuch a deformed Object; as may juſtly render Him a Terror to Himſelf. Can there be a groſſer Libel upon the CREATOR, or a greater Diſcouragement to our Fellow-creatures?

Aſp. If this be a diſtorted Piece, what will You call the following Deſcription? *GOD ſaw that the Wickedneſs of Man was great upon the Earth; and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only evil continually* †.—This, perhaps, may be reckoned a more monſtrous Drawing ſtill. Yet it came from *that* Hand, which painted the Canopy of the Skies, and touched all the Pictures of Nature into ſuch inimitable Perfection.

Pray, let us examine the moſt diſtinguiſhing Features in this Draught.—Not barely the Works of his Hand, or the Words of his Tongue, but the *Imaginations of his Heart*, are evil. The Contagion has ſpread itſelf thro' the inner Man. It has tainted the Seat of his Principles, and the Source of his Actions ‡.—Is there not,

* A Term uſed by the *Italian* Painters, to ſignify a Reſemblance *horrid*, or *ridiculous*.

† Gen. vi. 5.

‡ The Original is very nice in its Structure, and no leſs emphatical in its Meaning.—לב The *Heart*, or grand Principle—מחשבות The *Thoughts* of the Heart, or the various Actings of that Principle—יצר The *Imagination* of the Thoughts, or the Produce and Reſult of thoſe Actings; namely, Deſires and Affections, Counſels and Purpoſes.—Not one, a few only, or the greateſt Part, but *all* theſe are evil.

not, You will say, some Mixture of Good? No; they are *only* Evil. There is no hopeful Tendency. Not so much as a little Leaven of Piety; that may have a Chance to diffuse itself, and meliorate the whole Lump.—But are there no lucid Intervals? No happy Moments, when Virtue gains the Ascendency? None: He is only evil *continually*. The Usurpation of Sin is total, and its Tyranny perpetual.

What I have advanced, therefore, is no Libel upon the CREATOR's Benignity. Because, it is the very Echo of his own Determination.—Neither is it so properly discouraging, as humbling and alarming to our Fellow-creatures. *Humbling*, to make Us sensible of our Ruin: *Alarming*, to make Us desirous of a Recovery.

Ther. Is not the Description, which You have produced, peculiar to the Men of that wicked Generation? Whose Guilt was as unparalleled, as their Punishment?

Asp. It is applicable both to them and their Successors. The Wisdom of GOD *repeats* the Charge, and fixes it upon the Race, which survived the Flood *. The Depravity of human Nature continued, nor could the Waters of an universal Deluge purge it away.

* *Gen.* viii. 21. Where, I think, the Particle כִּי is used in the *adversative*, not the *causal* Signification; and should be rendered *though*, rather than *for*.—Where it seems likewise, that the Forbearance of the righteous GOD, is ascribed to the great Atonement; typefied by *Noah*'s Burnt-offerings, and expressed by St. *Paul* in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*; who probably alludes to this Passage. *The LORD* smelled a sweet Savour, *and the LORD said in his Heart, I will not again curse the Earth any more for Man's sake*, though *the Imagination of Man's Heart be evil from his Youth*, Eph. v. 2.

away. So deep alas! is the Stain, and so incorrigible the Virulency, of original Corruption; that it will yield to nothing—to nothing will it yield, but to the *Washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST* *. Till this takes place, every Heart of Man must wear the Prophet's stigmatizing Motto, *Deceitful above all Things, and desperately wicked.*

Ther. This Passage, I am informed, is not rightly translated; especially, in the *last* Expression. The *Hebrew* Original does not bear so hard upon the human Character, as the *English* Version.

Asp. You allow then, that the Heart is *deceitful.* And of this We have a glaring Proof, in the Conduct of *Hazael.* He thought it impossible, that He should ever perpetrate such horrid Barbarities, as the Prophet foresaw. *Is thy Servant a Dog, that He should do this great Thing* †? Yes, *Hazael*; however Thou mayest imagine Thyself gentle as a Lamb, thou art fierce as a Dog, and savage as a Tyger.—Which was most terribly demonstrated by the Event.

Suppose, we translate the other Word somewhat more accurately. The little Alteration will be of less Service to your Cause. Instead of desperately wicked, You may, if You please, read *deplorably disordered* ‡. This is the exact Import of the Phrase.—It is a Metaphor, derived from a very distempered Body. In which, the whole Head is sick, and the whole Heart faint. *From the Crown of* whose *Head, to the Sole of* whose *Feet*, there is nothing but consuming

* Tit. iii. 5. † 2 Kings viii. 13. ‡ Jer. xvii. 3. אנוש

ſuming Diſeaſe, and enfeebling Languors *.—The Rules of Civility may ſet a ſpecious Varniſh on the Converſation. But until Grace, ſanctifying Grace adminiſters the Remedy, the moſt civilized Heart will be like the pale emaciated Cheek, that is poorly inlivened with Paint.

Ther. What ſay the Writers of the New Teſtament? Is not *their* Way of thinking more liberal and benign?—If human Nature wore ſo *hideous* an Aſpect, under the legal Diſpenſation; ſince the Coming of our LORD, and the Publiſhing of his Goſpel, One may expect an improved and more pleaſing Face of Things.

Aſp. Human Nature in every Period of Time, and under every Diſpenſation of Religion, is ſtill the *ſame*. It was the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, who indited the Old Teſtament, and He cannot vary from Himſelf, in the Declarations of the New.

I am very much inclined to believe, That all the *bodily* Diſeaſes, which our Divine PHYSICIAN healed, during his Abode on Earth, were ſo many emblematical Repreſentations of *ſpiritual* Diſorders. Which, like certain Family Diſtempers, may be ſaid to run in the Blood of all Mankind.—Will you give me leave, *Theron*, to explain myſelf? I don't like to engroſs the Diſcourſe. Yet I would willingly inlarge upon this Subject.

Ther. By all means. The Laws of Argument, ſeparate from the Indulgencies of Friendſhip, give you a Warrant to urge, whatever may ſupport your Cauſe.

* *Iſa.* i. 6. Agreeable to this Doctrine, and conſonant to this Metaphor, is the Confeſſion of our Liturgy, *There is no Health in Us.*

Cauſe.—Beſides, I ſhall be glad to hear your Sentiments upon a Point ſo curious.

Aſp. The poor *Leper*, covered with noiſome Sores, is the very Picture of a *polluted Sinner*. Was the One, for his contagious Impurities, ſeparated from the Society of his Fellow-citizens? So ſhall the other, for his abominable Uncleanneſs, be baniſhed from the beatific Preſence: Unleſs He be cleanſed by the Blood, and juſtified by the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS*.

You pity the Condition of that unhappy Creature, who was born *blind*. His Eyes rolled, but rolled in vain, to find the dawning Ray. Such is the benighted State of the human Mind, till Almighty GOODNESS command the Scales of Ignorance to fall off, and pour heavenly Day through all the intellectual Faculties. Then, and not till then, we begin to know the Holineſs, the Juſtice, the adorable Excellencies of GOD.—We ſee the ſublime Purity of his Law, and the extreme Depravity of our own Hearts.—We are brought acquainted with the tranſcendent Glories of our REDEEMER's Perſon, and apprehend that moſt comfortable Myſtery of his Subſtitution in our Stead. We diſcern the ineffable Perfection of his Merits, and the divinely rich Freeneſs of his Grace *. Truths, incomparably more delightful to the Soul, than all the delectable Scenes of Creation are to the Sight.

The

* This, and the preceding Particulars, are Leſſons of the laſt Importance in the *Chriſtian* School. The Knowledge of them deſerves to be moſt ſolicitouſly ſought, both by attentive Contemplation, and by earneſt Prayer. For, to know them, is to be *truly wiſe*; to be influenced by them, is to be *ſubſtantially happy*.

The Paralytic's *enervated* Limbs too truly represent the Impotence of our Nature. Was He unable to grind at a Mill; to run in a Race; or to turn Himself on His Bed? So unable are We, to fight the good Fight of Faith; to exercise the Graces of Christianiaty; or even to turn Ourselves unto GOD. —Do not *you*, my Friend, experience something of this Inability? For *my* Part, I must lay my Hand on my Breast, and daily, hourly confess, "*The Palsy is* "*Here.* Though not altogether dead in Sin (blessed "be *CHRIST JESUS*, and his quickening "SPIRIT!) yet how languid is my Zeal, how "enfeebled my Industry, in the great Affair of ever-"lasting Salvation!—I would fain believe, and with "a full Assurance of Faith, the Promises of the "unchangeable JEHOVAH. But how often "do I stagger through Unbelief!—I would fain love, "and with the warmest Gratitude, my ever-merci-"ful and most beneficent GOD. But Oh! what "Coldness benumbs my Affections!—I wish to be "humble in every Thought; heavenly in all my "Desires; and wholly resigned to the divine Will. "But, alas! my Sufficiency for these Things, is "like the *flaccid* Sinew, or the *withered* Arm."

It would be endless to particularize all the Maladies, which were Emblems of our Misery, and the Triumphs of our LORD's Power. Let me only remark—That their Bodies were afflicted with a *single* Disorder; our Souls labour under a *Complication* of Evils.—They *felt* their Affliction, and were desirous, importunately desirous of Relief. We are, till awakened from above, insensible of our calamitous Case. We add, to all our other Indispositions, a stupifying Lethargy, or an extravagant Delirium.

Ther.

Ther. Such allegorical Expositions of Scripture are pretty enough. But, I presume, You yourself cannot reckon them *demonstrative*. For my own Part, I must appeal from the Surmises of Fancy, to the Verdict of Reason.

Asp. I cannot think, that the allegorical Sense, when *soberly* introduced, is unworthy our Regard, or without its Weight. However, I have no Design to preclude your Appeal.—Will the avowed, will the reiterated Decision of an Apostle, satisfy my Friend, and be admitted as the Verdict of Reason?—St. *Paul* has declared of Himself; *in me, that is, in my Flesh*, or unrenewed Nature, *dwelleth no Good* *; no good Temper, nor so much as any good Desire.—Elsewhere he affirms; That *the carnal Mind*, or unregenerate Soul, *is not subject to the Law of GOD*. Nay, is an Enemy, or rather *Enmity* itself † — against what?—Against Sin? That were a noble Antipathy, —Against the World? That were a laudable Disaffection.—No; but against GOD and his Law. Amazing Perverseness! To be Enmity against GOD; who is boundless Benignity, and consummate Goodness. Enmity against his Law; which is the Transcript of his amiable Perfections, and the faultless Model of all Virtue.

Ther. This, I suppose, is the Character of *Saul* the *Pharisee*, not of *Paul* the Apostle. Descriptive of his Condition, when He was "a Blasphemer, a Perse-"cutor, and injurious."

Asp. It relates not to Himself alone, but is applicable to All, who continue in a State of Nature.—The blessed AUTHOR of our Being, speaking of

* Rom. vii. 18. † Rom. viii. 7.

of Mankind in general, says; That *He is even Flesh* *: mere Flesh, altogether Flesh, his very Soul, and all its Powers, are wholly inslaved to fleshly Appetites.—The beneficent RESTORER of our Happiness, pronounces the same Sentence, in the very same Words: *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh* †: The Faculties, which Men receive by their natural Birth, have a carnal Bias; incline to nothing, but sordid Pleasures, and ignoble Pursuits.—Our SAVIOUR reinculcates the Admonition, and illustrates it by a very remarkable Allusion. You cannot forget his Answer to a procrastinating Disciple; *Let the Dead bury their Dead* ‡: Intimating, that as many as are unsanctified by the HOLY GHOST, though possessed of an animal, are destitute of the divine Life: are no more fit for the Kingdom of Heaven, for its Converse or its Joys, than a pale Corpse in the Coffin, or dry Bones in the Charnel-house, are qualified to transact any secular Business.

St. *Paul* sets the Seal of Heaven to this momentous Truth, in various Passages of his Epistles. From a Multitude let me select one, and recommend it to your

* *Gen.* vi. 3. The Word *Flesh*, by which the All-wise CREATOR characterizes Man, signifies, in the sacred Writings, whatever is *dishonourable* in itself; *provoking* to GOD; or introductory to the *Ruin* of Man.—The *Works of the Flesh*, are a Compendium of all Iniquity. *Gal.* v. 19, 20, 21.—To *walk after the Flesh*, is the very Reverse of walking in the SPIRIT; diametrically opposite to the divine Law and true Holiness, *Rom.* viii. 4.—To be *carnally minded*, or to have the Influence, the Savour, the Relish of the Flesh (φρονημα σαρκος) predominant in our Minds, is the spiritual Death of the Soul; and a Presage of eternal Death, both in Body and Soul, *Rom.* viii. 6.

† John iii. 6. ‡ Matt. viii. 22.

your ſerious Conſideration. *You, that were ſometime alienated and Enemies:* the *Coloſſians*, and all Mankind were alienated from the living GOD; had no true Knowledge of Him; and, what is worſe, had no ſincere Deſire after Him. Nay; they were not only Strangers, but Enemies; in a State of Hoſtility to his holy Nature and heavenly Will.—What can expreſs a greater Degeneracy? Nothing, unleſs it be the following Clauſe: *by a Mind intent upon wicked Works* *. A Mind, not only averſe to all Good, but paſſionately prone to all Evil.

Ther. A few picked Paſſages, of a figurative Import, and artfully cogged by ſome dextrous Interpretation, may ſeem to ſupport your Cauſe.

Aſp. Ah! *Theron*, there is no need to uſe Sleight of Hand. He that runs, may read this Doctrine in the ſacred Authors. It is interwoven with the whole Series of their *hiſtorical*, and makes a profeſſed Part of their *practical* Writings.

What is more common with the inſpired Penmen, than to expreſs a profligate Courſe of Life, by *following our own Imaginations, and walking in our own Ways?* When Immorality and Licentiouſneſs were predominant in *Iſrael*; knew no Reſtraints, and kept no Bounds; how does the unerring Hiſtorian deſcribe this horrible State of Things? *Every One did that*

* *Coloſſ.* i. 21. Τῃ διανοιᾳ εν τοις εργοις τοις πονηροις, *Mente malis Operibus intenta.* An eminent Critic would thus point, and thus tranſlate the Words. And aſſigns, for his Alteration, the following Reaſon; *Mens enim dicitur eſſe in ea Re, quam ſemper cogitat, ad quam Cupidine fertur & inclinatur.* DAVENANT in loc.—Let the Words be pointed and tranſlated, either in *this* or the *received* Manner, they ſpeak the Language, and confirm the Sentiments, of this whole Dialogue.

that which was right in his own Eyes *. Nothing can more ſtrongly imply the extreme Depravity of Mankind, than ſuch a Phraſeology. Which makes it one and the ſame Thing, to purſue our *natural* Inclinations, and to act the abandoned Sinner.

St. *Jude* cannot write a few Lines, but He muſt touch upon this Subject; muſt teach this humbling Leſſon. *Senſual* †, He ſays, *not having the SPIRIT.* According to *his* Eſtimate, not to be actuated by the Power of eſpecial Grace, is to remain under the Dominion of Senſuality. If We may credit this Servant of *CHRIST*, *every* Man, while unrenewed by the Divine SPIRIT, is governed by Fleſh and Senſe. Can *any* Man then pretend to be originally free from the Influence of Corruption?

St. *Paul* exempts not Himſelf, no, nor any of the higheſt Saints, from the opprobrious Charge: *We all walked according to the Deſires of the Fleſh and of the Mind.* Which Deſires in *Us*, as well as in the idolatrous *Heathens*, were baſe, ſordid, and contaminating. Inſomuch that We, who are *Jews* by Birth; who are Sons of GOD by our new Birth; even We were *by Nature the Children of Wrath* ‡. And if liable to Wrath; then, doubtleſs, ſubject to Depravity, and chargeable with Sin.

* Judg. xviii. 6.—*See alſo* Pſal. lxxxi. 12. Eccl. xi. 9. Acts xiv. 16.

† *Jude* 19. The original Expreſſion is Ψυχικοὶ, and denotes Perſons, who have no higher a Principle, than the *animal* Life, and the *rational* Soul.

‡ *Eph.* ii. 3. *Hoc uno Loco*, ſays BEZA, *quaſi Fulmine, totus Homo, quantus quantus eſt, proſternitur. Neque enim Naturam dicit* læſam, *ſed* mortuam, *per Peccatum; ideoque* Iræ *obnoxiam.*

Ther. What says St. *James?* You have suppressed, and I had almost forgot, his Testimony; though it is so very pertinent to my Purpose, and so very explicit in my Favour. *Men, who are made after the Similitude of* GOD. — The Similitude of GOD signifies, in the sacred Books, those moral Endowments, which distinguish the Possessor both from the Brute and the Devil. And if Men are made after this Image; if they are created with these Endowments; *where* is your Doctrine of original Sin?

Asp. I began to flatter myself, that your Objections were exhausted. But, since I am mistaken in this Particular, surely it must be as great a Mistake to imagine, that our Apostle would maintain an Opinion, so repugnant to the aforementioned Texts, and so contrary to universal Observation.—Do not You perceive the very Reverse true, with regard to your own *Children?* Why do You address them with such tender Intreaties; such warm Exhortations; such repeated Arguments? Why do You allure them to Duty by Promises, and deter them from Transgression by Threatenings? Is all this Regimen, all this Discipline, necessary for Creatures, that bear the holy Image of GOD.

They *made after the Similitude of* GOD!—Then they have no need of the *renewing* Influences of the HOLY GHOST, in case they live; and no need of the *Atonement* of *CHRIST*'s Blood, in case they die. Would *James* the LORD's Brother assert such an egregious Error; as not only opposes a single Article, but undermines the *whole* Constitution of Christianity? Sets aside the Sanctification of the Divine SPIRIT, and the Propitiation of the

RE-

REDEEMER's Death? — Impossible for Him to assert! Impossible, I should think, for Us to suppose!

St. *James* speaks of a Fact that is *past*: speaks of Men *collectively*, as they were all included in their first Parent. The Passage, I apprehend, should be translated, not, Men that *are*, but, Men that *were* * created, *&c.*—The Scripture considers *Adam*, as the common Parent of Us all: nay more, considers Us all as existing in our great Progenitor. Which is so far from overthrowing, that it establishes, the Point in Debate. For, if We were all created after the Similitude of GOD, in and with *Adam*; it must follow, that We all fell from our Conformity to GOD, in and with *Adam*. And if so—let me for once retort my Friend's Interrogatory—Where is *not* original Sin?

I am very sure, it runs through our *Liturgy*; is an essential Part of our *Articles*; and most strongly delineated in our *Homilies*. Shall I produce some of those Testimonies; which are as clear, as they are copious?

Ther. No more of your Testimonies, good *Aspasio*. Inform me rather, what *Advantages* can accrue from your inculcating, or my adopting such a Doctrine. Suppose, it were undeniably true; disagreeable Truths, like disagreeable Objects, should be consigned over to Obscurity, not obtruded upon our

* *Jam.* iii. 9. That this is the precise Signification of the Participle γεγονοτας, may be gathered from 1 *Tim.* v. 9. Where γεγονια is translated *having been*; and must necessarily refer, not to the *present*, but to the *past* Condition of the Widow.

View.—On such an Occasion, the Reply of *Themistocles* should be mine. One of the *Literati* of *Greece*, offered to communicate an elaborate and curious Invention. By means of which, his Memory should be so wonderfully strengthened, as to retain whatever He read or heard. "My Friend, replied the Hero, "You quite mistake the Way to serve me. I want "to learn the Art, not of *remembering*, but of *for-*"*getting.*"

Asp. If to forget our Disease, were a likely Method to *restore* our Health, I should readily concur in your Hero's Way of Thinking. As this will hardly be allowed, I cannot but judge it more adviseable, to remember our Disease, that We may inquire after a Remedy.

Ther. Where is this Remedy to be had?

Asp. Not on Earth, but from Heaven.—The Schools of Science cannot discover it. The Courts of Kings are unable to procure it. The College of Physicians know not how to prescribe it. But the Gospel of our Salvation prescribes, prepares, and dispenses it. The Language of *CHRIST* in his holy Word is, *I will bring Her Health and Cure* *. And the Beginning of our Cure is, to be sensible of our Disorder.

Hence We are taught to be *humble*.—To review the Catalogue of our actual Transgressions, is a mortifying Employ. But that which lays the Soul in the lowest Abasement, is the Conviction of *inbred* Iniquity. This strikes at the Root of human Vanity, and cuts asunder the very Sinews of Self-conceit. Blindness in the Understanding; Impotency in the Will; Disorder in the Affections; these are not *Visi-*

tants,

* Jer. xxxiii. 6.

tants, but * *Inhabitants*; congenial with our Frame, and ingrained in our Conſtitution. How then—O! how can *We* be vain of our moral Beauty, who have an hereditary Defilement cleaving to all our Faculties? Surely, this muſt baniſh the *Phariſee* from our Breaſt, and inſpire Us with the Sentiments of that ſincere Penitent, *Behold! I am vile* †! Muſt teach Us the Language of the abaſhed Leper, *Unclean! Unclean* ‡!

Ther. I ſhould think, it would make Us *melancholy*, rather than humble. Serve no other Purpoſe, than to introduce an afflictive Senſe of extreme Wretchedneſs.

Aſp. Did we intend to reſt Here, your Apprehenſions would be juſt. But We urge the Doctrine of original Corruption, as a *Preparative* for the Redemption of *CHRIST*.

It is obſervable, that very Few applied to the bleſſed *JESUS* in the Days of his Fleſh, but the Sons and Daughters of Affliction. The Levee of that PRINCE of Peace, was crouded by the Lame, the Blind, the Diſeaſed. Theſe, being ſenſible of Diſtreſs, and longing for Relief, fell as humble Supplicants at his Feet. While Others, who were firm in their Health, and gay in their Spirits, rejected Him with contemptuous Scorn.—When We perceive "the Plague of our Heart," and feel thoſe worſe than ulcerous Sores, which overſpread our Nature; We alſo ſhall ardently ſeek to *the LORD our Healer*. When we find Ourſelves ſubject to the

* Called therefore η οικουσα εν εμοι αμαρτια, *Sin that dwelleth in me*, Rom. vii. 17.

† Job xl. 4. ‡ Lev. xiii. 45.

Curse of the Law, in Bondage to the Tyranny of Satan, and liable to everlasting Damnation; *then* the Divine PHYSICIAN, and the Divine REDEEMER will be precious indeed.—Whereas, if We remain insensible of our Misery, the Gospel, which is *saving Health* to the contrite Soul, will be an unaffecting Story to our Ears. We may hear it, We may read it, as an amusing Narrative; but shall not *receive* it, as a sovereign Remedy.

Ther. Not receive the Gospel, *Aspasio!* I hardly understand what You mean. I often study the Gospel; I believe it to be a divine Revelation; and endeavour to follow its Directions.—I look upon it, as containing the most refined System of Morality; as inforcing every Virtue, by the strongest Motives; and recommending all, by the most perfect Example.

Asp. To which You should add — as revealing that great MEDIATOR, who has fulfilled all Righteousness, to effect our Justification; who has also the Fulness of the SPIRIT, to accomplish our Regeneration. Otherwise, what You mention, is infinitely short of the *Gospel*.—It brings no glad Tidings to fallen Creatures. It administers no Succour to ruined Sinners. It is like writing a Copy for the Blind, or setting a Task to the Disabled. Which would rather be an Insult on their Impotence, than a Relief of their Distress.

The first Particular I wave at present. Only let me ask your Opinion of the last; which is a grand Doctrine, and a very distinguishing Privilege of the Gospel. I mean the Doctrine and the Privilege of *spiritual Regeneration*. Exclusive of which, all your Endeavours to possess Virtue and practise Morality, wil

will be no better than Endeavours, to fly without Wings, or to run without Feet.

While unimpreſſed with a Senſe of our original Depravity, We ſhall probably ſit down contented with ſome *ſuperficial* Reformation, and not aſpire after a Renewal of the Heart. *Civility* will paſs for Sanctity, and a *temperate* Diſpoſition for a gracious Habit.—Why is the New Birth, why are all the ſaving Operations of the bleſſed SPIRIT, diſregarded by ſome, derided by Others? Becauſe, theſe Perſons are inſenſible of their utter Inability to all Good, and of their abject Slavery to all Evil. Therefore, they ſee no Reaſon for *this* divine Agency, or for *that* univerſal Change.

You alſo, my dear Friend, while unacquainted with your natural Corruption, cannot apprehend either the Reaſonableneſs or the Neceſſity, of being *renewed in the Spirit of your Mind* *. But when Experience has taught You the former, You will want no Arguments to convince You of the latter.—Can Creatures, who are *blind* in their Underſtandings, diſcern the Things which belong to their eternal Peace?—Can Creatures, who are *dead* in Sin, exerciſe the Graces, or diſcharge the Duties, of a Chriſtian Life?—Can Creatures, whoſe Hearts are *Enmity* againſt GOD, either delight to do his Will Here, or be meet for his beatific Preſence Hereafter?

Under the Influence of ſuch Convictions, that New Birth, which the Goſpel of *CHRIST* promiſes, which the SPIRIT of GOD produces,

* Eph. iv. 23.

will appear as neceſſary for your State, and be as welcome to your Soul, as theſe gentle *Dews* are neceſſary for the languiſhing Herbs, and welcome to the thirſty Soil.

Ther. The Dews, though refreſhing to the Flowers, may be too chilly for our Conſtitutions. And ſee! The Star of Evening, by proclaiming the Approach of Night, has given Us a Warning to quit our Arbour.—Some other Time We muſt reſume this Inquiry. For I am by no means ſatisfied, that your Theory agrees with Experience.

Aſp. I fear, I have already kept You out too long. Let me juſt obſerve, as We go in — That the Doctrine, however diſagreeable in itſelf, is conducted to an *advantageous* Iſſue. It is productive of a much more ſubſtantial Conſolation, than Hiſtory aſſigns to the great, but exiled *Marius*. When he fled, with his ruined Circumſtances, to linger out the poor Remains of Life among the Ruins of *Carthage*, what was his chief Support? "Contemplating, ſays my Author, that famous City in the "Duſt, He was the leſs afflicted with his own "Downfal *."

We have not been put off with ſuch cold Comforts, ſuch *negative* Benefits. The Belief of original Sin has a Tendency — To make Us *humble* — To ſhew Us our *Need* of *CHRIST* — To create in Us a Hunger and Thirſt after the *renewing* Influences

* *Inopem Vitam in Tugurio Ruinarum Carthaginenſium toleravit: cum Marius aſpiciens Carthaginem, illa intuens Marium, alter alteri poſſent eſſe Solatio.*

VELL. PATERC.

ences of his SPIRIT, and the justifying Merit of his Righteousness.—So that it must be owing to our own Perverseness, or our own Negligence, if We do not levy a *Tax* upon our *Loss*, and *rise* even by our *Fall*.

DIALOGUE XII.

THE Sun was fiercely bright, and the Sky without a Cloud.—Not a Breath fanned the Woods; nor a Gale curled the Stream.—The Fields, expoſed to all the fiery Beams, were like a glowing Hearth.—The little Birds, overcome by the potent Influence, loſt for a while their tuneful Notes. Nothing was heard in the Garden, but the drowſy Hum of Bees, and the Moan-like Buz of winged Inſects.—All Nature ſeemed to *languiſh*. The flouriſhing Meads looked ſickly; the gayeſt Bloſſoms began to fade; the ſprightlieſt Animals, if not repoſed under ſome cooling Shelter, panted for Breath, and hung their drooping Heads, amidſt the all-ſurrounding Blaze and the unſufferable Heat.

Aſpaſio diſappeared ever ſince Dinner, and none could tell, whither He was gone.—*Theron*, as ſoon as the Tea-Equipage was removed, took his Way to the *Wood*. Deſirous of the thickeſt Shade, He haſtened to the Center. A ſerpentine Walk compoſed the Avenue; which, after ſeveral Windings, delivered Him into a large circular Area: not covered

with

with a *Grecian* or *Roman* Temple, unmeaning Imitation of Pagan Idolatry: but ſurrounded with aged and princely Oaks. The Coalition of whoſe Branches, threw over the graſſy Plat a majeſtic rural Dome; and their unpierced Foliage, *imbrowned the Noon-tide Hours.*

In the Midſt, and elevated on a ſquare Baſe, was a Statue repreſenting the venerable *Elijah*—on his bended Knees—with Hands ſtretched out, and Eyes lifted up to Heaven. His Attitude, his Air, his every Feature, were a moſt lively Comment on thoſe ſtrong energetic Expreſſions of Scripture; *take hold on GOD**; *wreſtle with the ALMIGHTY*†; *pour out your Hearts before Him*‡.—On one Side of the Pedeſtal, were engraven the Prieſts of *Baal*; in frantic Emotions calling upon their ſenſeleſs Deity, and gaſhing themſelves with unavailing Wounds.—On the other was exhibited, in Baſſo-relievo, the adoring *Tiſhbite*'s Altar; his Victim burning with Fire from the LORD, even while the Water ran from every Limb, and overflowed the Trench below.

A remote Caſcade tumbled from a craggy Rock. The Stream, after having waſted its ſilver Foam in a winding Progreſs, ſtraggled into this grand Arbour. Here, it juſt appeared, gliding down a gentle Slope, with a flaunting Air, and a prattling Noiſe. Impreſſed, as it were, with the unexpected *Solemnity* of the Scene, it ſeemed to check its wanton Waves, and turned aſide into a more ſequeſtered Path. As ſome *heedleſs* Trifler, who bolts unawares into the royal

* Iſa. lxiv. 7.

† Coloſſ. iv. 12. Αγωνιζομενος υπερ υμων εν ταις προσευχαις.

‡ Pſal. lxii. 8.

royal Preſence, ſtands ſtruck with Reverence and Awe, or retires with Precipitance and Confuſion.

The deep Gloom, ſhedding a Kind of Night, even while the Sun glared in the Sky—Not a Whiſper ſtirring, among ſo many Millions of Leaves; and all their warbling Natives huſhed in Silence—The ſonorous *Toll* of the diſtant Caſcade, and the tinkling *Chime* of the nearer Rill—The profound Adoration, and fervent Devotion, which lived in the Lineaments of the impaſſioned Stone—All theſe Circumſtances rendered the Place prodigiouſly auguſt and ſtriking. Not much unlike the antient *Oratoryes* *; where holy People retired from the giddy Ring,

* It is thought by ſome eminent Critics, that, when our LORD continued all Night εν προσευχη Θεου, Luke vi. 12. the Phraſe denotes his Continuance in *an Oratory*; a Place ſet apart for Prayer, and a devout Intercourſe with GOD.

That there were Places of this Kind among the *Jews*, is indiſputable; and that the Opinion is ingenious, cannot be denied. But I very much doubt, whether it gives Us the true Meaning of the Evangeliſt.—Having mentioned *a Mountain*, it would hardly ſuit his conciſe Manner, to be more particular with regard to the Place; neither was the Circumſtance ſo important, as to deſerve a ſecond Mention.—I am apt to think alſo, that *ſuch a Place* would have defeated the Deſign of our SAVIOUR's Retirement, which ſeems to have been Privacy; and that *ſuch* a *Title*, as GOD's Place of Prayer, was wholly appropriated to the Temple.

I apprehend, We ſhall have a more *defenſible*, and I am perſuaded, We ſhall have a more *exalted* Senſe, if We ſuppoſe the Expreſſion to ſignify—the Copiouſneſs and Fervour of our LORD's Devotion—the vaſt Importance, and the unequaled Succeſs, of this his prolonged and ſolemn Prayer. Which could no way be more emphatically declared, than by the Addition of the Divine Name: *He continued all Night in* the Prayer of GOD.—See *Aſpaſio*'s Remark, *p.* 40.

Ring, and the bustling Croud, to ennoble their Minds, with sublime Contemplation. Where, they bid a temporary Adieu to the tumultuous World, its gay Impertinence and solemn Dulness; in order to maintain a more uninterrupted Communion with that Mighty BEING, who *sitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are as Grashoppers* before HIM *.

Welcome to *Theron*, was the shady Bower; welcome the cool Aspect, and the musical Flow of the Water; but more welcome than all, was the Sight of his Friend. Who lay reclined at the Foot of an Oak; with a Book half open in his Hand, and his Eye fixed upon the Statue.

Ther. I know not, *Aspasio*, whether I must make an Apology, for breaking in upon your Retirement; or call You to an Account, for depriving the Ladies of your Company at the Tea-table.

Asp. Indeed, *Theron*, I have been so much delighted with the Place; with the Companion in my Hand; and the noble Object before me; that I scarce observed, how the Time stole away. And I flatter myself, if You will take a Seat by my Side, and share

* *Isa.* xl. 22. What a noble *Image* is here, and what an exquisitely fine *Contrast!* GOD, the great GOD, sitteth on those lofty and immense Heavens, which, at an inconceivable Distance, surround this pensile Globe. From that most sublime and magnificent Throne, he looks down upon the Inhabitants of the Earth. Who—in all their Pomp and Splendor—amidst all their admired Works and boasted Acquisitions—are *mean* and *impotent* in his Sight. Mean and impotent as the poor Insects, which wander over the parched Heath for Sustenance: which spend all the Day in idle insignificant Chirpings: and, at Night, take up their contemptible Habitation on a Blade of Grass.

share my Entertainment; You will be more inclined to excuse, than to aggravate my Fault.

Ther. Is *Tully* then (for I observe his Name on the Volume) your Companion? And can such a devoted Admirer of the *Bible*, be so highly charmed with a *Heathen Classic?*—St. *Augustine* somewhere declares, that, though passionately fond, before his Conversion, of *Tully*'s Writings; yet, after that memorable Change, He could no longer relish those admired Compositions; because they were not sweetened, as He expresses Himself, with the *mellifluous* Name of *JESUS*.

Asp. I am far from pretending to such an exalted Pitch of Devotion, as that seraphic Father attained. I can spend a vacant Minute on the delicate Odes of *Horace*; and taste a refined Entertainment in *Virgil*'s beautiful Poem. But when I hear a *Sermon*, or peruse a *religious* Treatise, which borrows neither Dignity nor Charms from that amiable and glorious Name, I own myself extremely disappointed. Without the Offices, the Merits, or the Grace of *CHRIST*, the Sermon and the Treatise appear as *defective*, as a Body that is neither adorned with the Head, nor inlivened with the Heart.

Ther. I suppose then You cultivate an Acquaintance with the *Grecian* and *Roman* Authors, in order to improve your Taste, and polish your Style.

Asp. These, and I am apt to think, more considerable Advantages than these, may be derived from an occasional Application to their Works. They may serve as so many Shades, to set off, with *heightened* Lustre, the Beauty and Glory of the sacred Oracles.

While

While I peruse *Plato*'s ornamented Page, or listen to *Cicero*'s flowing Periods, I am somewhat like the Person, who amuses Himself in a Gallery of *painted* Flowers. He is pleased with the curious Creation of the Pencil. But, finds none of that *delicious* Fragrace, none of those *breathing* Sweets, which meet Him in the Garden, and regale his Sense from the blooming Parterre.—So, here are brillant Sentiments, and a florid Diction; delicate Touches of Wit, and bold Strokes of Description. But, no Discovery of *CHRIST JESUS*—no Displays of his ineffable Love—no Overtures of Reconciliation with the blessed GOD. Nothing to yield Us *solid* Comfort, in our present State; or any *joyful* Expectations, with regard to the approaching Eternity.

Besides; when I converse with those celebrated Geniuses of Antiquity, who were at once the most erroneous, and the most judicious—the *most judicious*, in their Taste of polite Literature; the *most erroneous*, in their Apprehensions of invisible Things; they shew me, what they never intended, the inexpressible Need of *Revelation*. They teach me to set a higher Value on that inestimable Gift. I bless the distinguishing Goodness of Providence, which has cast my Lot *, not at *Athens*, but in EMMANUEL's Land. I say, with Wonder and Gratitude—"Why did not "*my* Existence commence, in those Æras of reli-"gious Dotage? Why was not *my* Portion con-

"fined,

* Alluding to the Story of the Philosopher, who used to bless the Gods for three Privileges.—That He was made, not a *Brute*, but a *rational* Creature.—That He was born, not in *barbarous* Climes, but in *Greece*.—That He lived, not in the more *uncultivated* Ages, but in the Time, and under the Tuition of *Socrates*.

" fined, to those Regions of Barbarism and Delu-
" sion? Why am not I burning Incense to Idols;
" paying senseless Adoration to sculptured Stone; or
" worshipping, with detestable Ceremonies, a Set of
" lascivious, debauched, and scandalous * Deities?"
—Surely, *Theron*, from every Perusal of those Volumes, attended with such a Reflection, We shall see the utmost Reason to magnify *the tender Mercies of our GOD; whereby the Day-spring from on high hath visited Us* †, and brought Us out of Darkness into the marvelous Light of the Gospel.

Permit me to mention another Benefit, which may result from a Correspondence with those masterly Writers.—The Streams may lead Us to the inexhaustible Fountain. Lead Us to admire the *only wise* GOD our SAVIOUR, who has given such a shining Vein of Ingenuity to his rational Creatures. As I read their Works, and am charmed with their Beauties, I would frequently reflect—" If
" the Essays of a finite Mind, and the Composi-
" tions of a mortal Pen, yield such *high Satisfaction*;
" what rapturous, what unknown Delight must arise,
" from an uninterrupted Communion with infinite
" Wisdom?

* This, I think, gives Us the most deplorable and horrid Idea of the *Blindness* of our fallen Nature. The Heathens, even amidst all the Politeness of their Taste, and notwithstanding their superior Advancement in the Sciences, were Haters of the true GOD, and robbed Him of his Honour: nay, what is unspeakably worse, they paid it to *Monsters*—Monsters of Lewdness and Treachery, Vice and Immorality. Egregious, sottish, almost incredible Stupidity! To *worship* those Beings, which deserved universal *Abhorrence!* To *deify* those Characters, which could never be sufficiently *detested!*

† Luke i. 78.

" Wisdom? To stand—not at the Feet of *Homer*,
" and attend the Flights of his elevated Imagination
" —not in the Presence of *Socrates*, and hear the
" Dictates of his sagacious Soul—but, to stand in
" the Courts of the LORD, and before the
" Throne of the LAMB. There to contemplate,
" without any interposing Veil, the Counsels of his
" unerring Providence; to have the Mysteries of
" his redeeming Love, laid fully open to our View;
" and receive the brightest Manifestations of all his
" amiable, his adorable, his unspeakable Attri-
" butes!"

Ther. These are Advantages, truly desirable, and equally obvious. Methinks, it *surprises* me, that I should never so much as propose them; and *grieves* me, that I should so long be deprived of them. A View to such very superior Improvements will, I hope, render my future Intercourse with those favourite Authors, still more agreeable, and abundantly more beneficial.

But let me ask, what Passage was engaging your Attention, this Afternoon?

Asp. The great Orator's Treatise, concerning the *Nature of the Divine* BEING *. That Part especially, which proves his Existence and Perfections, from the Formation of the *human Body*.

Ther. And don't You perceive, that He is almost as deficient in the Knowledge of his Subject; as he is mistaken in his Ideas of the Supreme CAUSE?—The exquisite Contrivance and inimitable Workmanship of the human Frame, were, in those early Ages, but dimly discerned. It was the *Infancy* of Anatomy: when the very Professors had scarcely the Qualifica-

* *De Natura Deorum.*

tions of a modern Pupil. Many of the received Notions, were childish; almost all of them, superficial.

Asp. Will my *Theron* then entertain me with a more accurate Description of this wonderful Structure?

Ther. How could You take occasion, *Aspasio*, from the Hint I dropped, to conceive any such Expectation? It is one Thing to *discover*, another to *correct*, what is amiss. Many Spectators can point out an accidental Defect in some celebrated Statue, or a small Indelicacy in some valuable Piece of Painting; who are absolutely incapable of retouching the One, or supplying the Other.

Asp. Since We are fallen upon this Point, You must give me leave to renew and urge my Request. I shall be extremely glad to hear your Remarks upon the Subject. Especially, as You have made this Branch of Science, a Part of your Amusement; and not without the Advantage of *anatomical* Dissections. Whereas, I have very seldom applied my Thoughts to the former, and never had an Opportunity of being present at the latter.

Let me also observe, that our very Situation favours, or rather suggests such a Topic of Conversation. All the fine Prospects of the Country are excluded. We have scarce any Thing left, but *Ourselves*, to contemplate. And shall this be the only Theme We neglect?

Ther. It is somewhat preposterous, I must confess, to pry into the Archives of Colleges; to ransack the Cabinets of the *Virtuosi*; to carry our Search through the whole Compass of external Nature; and, at the same Time, overlook the far more surprising Curiosities,

sities, which abound in the Composition of our own Bodies.

Since you insist upon it, my Observations, crude and extemporaneous as they are, shall submit themselves to your Judgment. Provided, You will be content to receive, only a *few* of the *Outlines*, and nothing like a *finished* Draught.

Asp. Let me just hint, that the more *circumstantial* your Account is, so much the more welcome will it be to your Friend, and so much the more honourable to our common CREATOR. For, I really think, that *Galen*'s Declaration upon this Head is perfectly just: which I have read in my favourite Commentator *Beza*, and which speaks to the following Effect *.—"Such Treatises, as display the Excellencies of the great CREATOR, compose one of the noblest and most *acceptable* Hymns. To acquaint Ourselves with his sublime Perfections; and point out to Others his infinite Power, his unerring Wisdom, and his boundless Benignity; this is a more *substantial* Act of Devotion, than to slay Hecatombs of Victims at his Altar, or kindle Mountains of Spices into Incense."—*Theron*, after pausing a few Minutes, thus resumed the Discourse.

Ther. When some Master-builder undertakes to erect a magnificent Edifice, He begins with the less decorated, but more solid Parts. Those which are to *support*, or those which are to *contain* the rest. This Order, if You please, We will follow, in

* *Vid.* Bez. Annot. ad, *Rom.* i. 20.

conſidering " the earthly Houſe of our Taber-" nacle *."

Firſt, You have a Syſtem of *Bones*; caſt into a Variety of Moulds; inlarged or contracted into a Variety of Sizes. All *ſtrong*, that they may commodiouſly bear up the fleſhy Machine: yet *light*, that they may not depreſs the Animal with an incumbering Load.—*Bored* with an internal Cavity, to contain the moiſtening Marrow; and *perforated* with exceedingly fine Ducts, to admit the nouriſhing Veſſels.—Inſenſible themſelves, they are *covered* with a Membrane † of exquiſite Senſibility. Which warns them of the Approach, and ſecures them from the Annoyance, of any injurious Friction: and, at the ſame time, preſerves the muſcular Parts, from being fretted in their Action, by the hard and rough Subſtance of the Bones.—Their *Figures* are always moſt preciſely fitted to their Uſes. They are generally larger at the Extremities, than in the Middle; that they may be joined more firmly, and not ſo eaſily diſlocated.—The Manner of their *Articulation* is truly

* 2 *Cor.* v. 1. St. *Paul* very pertinently compares the bodily Structure to *a Houſe*. And adds, in that Strain of godly Edifying, which runs through all his Writings, our *earthly and tent-like* Habitation, επιγειον οικια τε σκηνες. Referring to its *mean Original*, as it was formed out of the Duſt; and to its *ſhort Continuance*, as it muſt ſoon return to Duſt again. Being, though commodious as a Houſe, yet tranſitory as a Tent: not like the *everlaſting Mountains*, which ſtand fixed and rooted to the Center; but like thoſe *portable Tenements*, which are ſet up in the Evening, are taken down in the Morning, and then their Place is known no more.

† The *Periofteum*.

truly admirable *, and remarkably various: yet never varied, without demonstrating some wise Design, and answering some valuable End. Frequently, when two are united, the one is nicely rounded, and capped with a smooth Substance; the other is scooped into a Hollow of the same Dimensions, to receive the polished Knob; and both are lubricated with an unctuous Fluid, to yield the readiest Rotation in the Socket.

The *Feet* compose the firmest and neatest Pedestal: infinitely beyond all that Statuary or Architecture can accomplish; capable of altering its Form, and extending its Size, as different Circumstances require. Besides performing the Office of a Pedestal, they contain a Set of the nicest Springs; which help to place the Body in a Variety of graceful Attitudes, and qualify it for a Multiplicity of advantageous Motions.—The undermost Part of the Heel, and the Extremity of the Sole, are shod with a tough, insensible, sinewy Substance. This We may call, a Kind of *natural Sandal*. It never wears out; never wants Repair; and always prevents that undue Compression of the Vessels, which the Weight of the Body, in walking or standing, might otherwise occasion.—The *Legs* and *Thighs*, are like substantial and stately Columns †; articulated in a such a Manner, that

* *Mirabiles Commissuras habent.* Cic.

† Styled therefore by the sacred Philosopher, *The strong Men*, Eccles. xii. 3. And compared, by the same beautiful Writer, to *Pillars of Marble*, Cant. v. 15.—As these are the strongest Parts of the Body, and the Support of all the other, hence, I presume, arose that *proverbial* Expression, which occurs in the History of *Samson*, שׁוֹק עַל-יָרֵךְ Judg. xv. 8. Rendered by the *Septuagint*, not very exactly, κνημην επι μηρον; by our *English* Translators, rather too vulgarly,

that they administer most commodiously to the Act of Walking, yet obstruct not the easy Posture of Sitting. The Legs swell out, towards the Top, with a genteel Projection; and are wrought off, towards the Bottom, with neat Diminutions. Which Variation lessens their Bulk, at the same Time that it increases their Beauty.

The *Ribs*, turned into a regular Arch, are gently moveable, for the Act of Respiration. They form a secure Lodgment for the Lungs and the Heart: which, being some of the most distinguished and important Organs of Life, have their Residence fortified by this strong semicircular Rampart *.—The *Backbone* is intended, not only to strengthen the Body, and sustain its most capacious Store-rooms; but also to bring down that Communication of the Brain, which is usually termed the *spinal Marrow*. As an open Channel, it conveys, as a well-closed Case, it guards this vital Silver †; and, by several commodious Outlets, transmits the animating Treasure

vulgarly, *Hip and Thigh*. I believe, the Word שוק signifies Here, as it certainly signifies in many other Places, what the *Latins* call *Armus*. And that the Image is taken from some robust and fierce Animal, whose *Shoulders* before, and whose *Thighs* behind, are broken in pieces. Then, what Mischief can He do? What Resistance can He make? He is utterly disabled. So that the Expression seems to denote, (and might perhaps, without Violence to the Original, be translated) *A total Overthrow*.

* *Thou hast fenced me*, secured my inward and vital Parts, *with Bones and Sinews*, Job x. 11.—*Crates Pectoris*, is *Virgil*'s Expression.

† This is supposed to be the Part, which *Solomon* describes by *The silver Cord*: and is indeed like a Cord, on Account of its *Shape*; like Silver, on Account of its *Colour*, Eccles. xii. 6.

ſure into all the inferior Parts. Had it only been large, ſtrait, and hollow, it might have ſerved theſe ſeveral Purpoſes. But then the Loins muſt have been inflexible, and every Man impaled (not by the Executioner, but by Nature) on a Stake co-eval with his Exiſtence. To avoid which, it conſiſts of very ſhort Bones, cloſely knit together by intervening Cartilages. This Peculiarity of Structure prevents Diſlocation; and gives the main Pillar of our Frame the *Pliancy* of an *Oſier*, even while it retains the *Firmneſs* of an *Oak*.—By this means, it is a Kind of continued Joint; capable of various Inflections, without bruiſing the ſoft medullary Subſtance, which fills its Cavity; without intercepting the nervous Fluid, which is to be detached from this grand Reſervoir; or diminiſhing that Strength, which is neceſſary to ſupport all the upper Stories.—A Formation ſo very peculiar in any other of the Solids, muſt have been attended with great Inconveniencies. Here, it is unſpeakably ſerviceable. Is, both for Workmanſhip and Situation, a Maſter-piece of creating Skill, never enough to be admired.

The *Arms*, pendent on either Side, are exactly proportioned to each other; that the Equilibrium of the Structure may not be diſconcerted. Theſe, being the Guards which defend *, and the Miniſters which ſerve the whole Body, are fitted for the moſt *diverſified* and *extenſive* Operations. Firm with Bone, yet not weighty with Fleſh; and capable of performing, with ſingular Expedition and Eaſe, all Manner of uſeful Motions. They bend inwards, and turn

* Called, in *Solomon*'s figurative but elegant Sketch of Anatomy, *The Keepers of the Houſe*, Eccleſ. xii. 3.

outwards; they rise upwards, and stoop downwards; they wheel about, and throw themselves into whatever Direction We please.—To these are annexed the *Hands*; and all terminated by the *Fingers*. Which are, not like the Arms, of the same Length, and of an equal Bigness; but in both Respects different. Which gives them a more graceful Appearance, and a much greater Degree of Usefulness. Were they all Flesh, they would be *comparatively* impotent: were they one intire Bone, they would be *utterly* inflexible. But consisting of various little Bones, and a Multitude of Muscles, what Shape can they not assume? What Service can they not perform?—Being placed at the End of the Arm, the Sphere of their Action is exceedingly inlarged. This advantageous Situation realizes the Fable of *Briareus*; and renders a Pair of Hands, as serviceable as an Hundred.—The Extremities of the Fingers, are an Assemblage of fine tendonous Fibres, most acutely sensible *. Which, notwithstanding the Delicacy of their Texture, are destined to almost incessant Employ, and frequently exercised among rugged Objects. For this Reason, they are overlaid with the *Nails*,

* So very acute is the Sensibility of these Parts, that, I am informed, it furnishes the *Tribunal* of *Inquisition*, with one of the most refined Expedients in the *Art* of *Torture*. A strong Quill, sharpened by the Pen-knife, and dipped in some inflammable Liquor, is thrust deep between the Nail and the Finger. When the Quill has cut its Way through the shivering Nerves; and stands planted, like a Dagger, amidst the gushing Blood; some barbarous Hand sets Fire to the Extremity. The keen Point, the slow Flame, and both in the Seat of the most lively Sensation, put the miserable Sufferer to the *most excruciating* Pain.

Nails, a Sort of horny Expanſion: which, like a Ferule, hinders the Fleſh from being ungracefully flattened; and, like a Sheath *, preſerves the tender Parts from injurious Impreſſions.

In the Miniſtry of the Hands, and Activity of the Fingers, We poſſeſs a Caſe of the *fineſt Inſtruments*, or a Collection of the *nobleſt Utenſils*. Qualifying Us for the Execution of every Work, which the projecting Genius can deviſe, or the laviſh Fancy crave.—To theſe We are obliged for the beautiful Statues, which have often entertained our Eyes, in yonder ſolitary Walks; and even for that melodious Trumpet, which now addreſſes our Ears, from the Summer-houſe on the Fiſh-pond.—Theſe raiſe the lofty Column, and turn the ſpacious Arch. Theſe ſwell the majeſtic Dome, and adjuſt the commodious Apartment. Architecture, with all her ſtriking Beauties, and all her rich Benefits, are the Creation of the human Hand.—Yielding to the Strength of the Hand, the talleſt Firs fall to the Ground, and the largeſt Oaks deſcend from the Mountains. Faſhioned by the Dexterity of the Hand, they accommodate the Sailor with a *floating Warehouſe*; and circulate, from *Britain* to *Japan*, the Productions of Nature, and the Improvements of Art.—Obedient to the human Hand, Metals aſcend from their ſubterranean Beds; and compoſe the moſt ſubſtantial Parts of that *curious Machine* †, which tranſmits far and near, to the Monarch's Palace, and to the Peaſant's Hut, ſuch Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, as *the Gold and Cryſtal cannot equal* ‡.

Among

* *Digitis Munimina.* † The Printing-preſs.
‡ Job xxviii, 17.

Among the *Egyptians*, the Hand was the Symbol of Strength: among the *Romans*, it was an Emblem of Fidelity: and I think, it may, among all Nations, be looked upon as the Enſign of *Authority*. It is the original and the univerſal Sceptre; that which not only repreſents, but aſcertains our Dominion, over all the Elements, and over every Creature.—Though Providence has not given Us the Strength of the Horſe, the Swiftneſs of the Greyhound, or the ſagacious Scent of the Spaniel; yet, directed by the Underſtanding, and enabled by the Hand, We can ſubject them to our Will; turn them to our Advantage; and, in this Senſe, make them all *our own*.—Theſe Hands (ſurpriſing to relate!) theſe *ſhort* Hands have found out a Way, whereby they can dive to the Bottom of the Ocean; can penetrate the Bowels of the Earth; and reach from Shore to Shore. Theſe *feeble* Hands can manage the Wings of the Wind; can arm themſelves with the Rage of the Fire; and preſs into their Service the forcible Impetuoſity of the Waters.—How eminent is the Dignity! How extenſive the Agency of the Hand! It would require more Eloquence, than your Orator poſſeſſed, to diſplay the former; and more Pages, than your Book contains, to deſcribe the latter.—How greatly then are We indebted to our indulgent CREATOR, for accommodating Us with this noble, this diſtinguiſhing, this invaluable Member!

Above all, is the *Head*; a majeſtic Dome, deſigned for the Reſidence of the Brain. It is framed in exact Conformity to this important Purpoſe; ample, to receive it; ſtrong, to uphold it; and firm, to defend it.—As the Head reſembles the *General*'s Tent in an Army, or the *Monarch*'s Palace in a City; it has

has a Communication eſtabliſhed with all, even the moſt inferior and remote, Parts of the Syſtem. Has Outlets and Avenues, for the ready Diſpatch of Couriers to all Quarters; and for the Reception of ſpeedy Intelligence, on every intereſting Occaſion. It is furniſhed with Lodgments, wherein to poſt Centinels of various Characters, and appointed for various Offices.—To expedite their Operations; whether they are employed in reconnoitring what paſſes *without*, or examining what claims Admittance *within*; the whole turns upon a curious Pivot, moſt nicely contrived, to afford the largeſt and freeſt Circumvolutions.

This ſtately Capital, is ſcreened from Heat; defended from Cold; and at the ſame time very much beautified, by a copious Growth of *Hair*. Which flows down from the parted Forelock in decent Curls; and hangs, mantling on the Cheeks, cluſtering on the Shoulders.—A Decoration *, incomparably more *delicate*,

* *Abſalom*'s Hair was reckoned a diſtinguiſhing Part of his Beauty, 2 *Sam.* xiv. 26.—The Amiableneſs of the Church, in the exemplary Converſation of true Believers, is diſplayed by the ſame Ornament. *Thy Hair is as a Flock of Goats, that* are ſeen afar off, and *appear* in a pendent Attitude *from* the Summit of *Mount Gilead*; moſt agreeably adorning the Place, and detaining the Spectator's Eye. *Cant.* iv. 1. I prefer the Expoſition of *Arias Montanus*, שגלשו *quæ pendent, quæ prominent*. As it takes in a Circumſtance, which correſponds with the *penſile* Poſition of the Hair; renders the Compariſon more *full* and *exact*; and is, according to the Obſervation of a moſt accurate Judge, one of the chief *Remarkables* in ſuch a Proſpect;

Non Ego vos poſthac, viridi projectus in Antro,
Dumoſâ pendere procul de Rupe videbo.

VIRG.

licate, than any or all the Orders of Architecture can ſupply; and ſo perfectly *light*, that it no way incumbers or incommodes the Wearer.

While many Animals creep on the Ground: while all of them are prone in their Poſture, or their Aſpect: the Attitude of Man is *erect*.—Which is by far the moſt *graceful*; has an Air of Dignity, and beſpeaks Superiority.—It is by far the moſt *commodious*; fits Us for the Proſecution of every grand Scheme, and facilitates the Succeſs of all our extenſive Deſigns.—It is likewiſe attended with the greateſt *Safety*; being, if not leſs than any other Poſition expoſed to Dangers, yet more happily contrived to repel or avoid them.

Aſp. May it not likewiſe be intended, to remind Us of our exalted Original, and our ſublime End? Our *Original*, which was the Breath of the ALMIGHTY, and the Spirit of the MOST HIGH. Our *End*, which is, not the Soil We tread on, or any of its low Productions, but the Heaven of Heavens, and the *Things that are above*.

But not to divert from our Subject; which, in my Friend's Manner of handling it, is as entertaining, as it is inſtructive.—The Bones (to carry on your own Alluſion) are only the *Rafters*, the *Beams*, the *Shell* of the living Edifice. You have raiſed the Walls, and laid the Floors; You have made the proper Diviſions, and left the neceſſary Apertures. But, in every finiſhed Houſe, the Roof is covered, and the Rooms are wainſcoted. The Saſhes are hung, and the Doors turn upon their Hinges. The Grates are fixed, and the Stairs aſcend. *Within*, the Lodgings are furniſhed; *without*, the Front is ornamented.

All

All is rendered commodious for domeſtic Uſe, and graceful to the external View.

Ther. This likewiſe is executed by the great, the Divine ARTIFICER.—Here are *Ligaments*; a tough and ſtrong Arrangement of Fibres; to unite the ſeveral Limbs; and render, what would otherwiſe be a disjointed unwieldy Jumble, a well-compacted and ſelf-manageable Syſtem.—*Membranes*; or thin and flexile Tunicles; appointed to inwrap the fleſhy Parts; to form a Connection between ſome, and make a Separation between others *.

Arteries, the Rivers of our little World †, or the Aqueducts of the organized Metropolis. Some of which aſcend to the Head: others ſpread themſelves over the Shoulders: ſome extend to the Arms: ſome deſcend to the Feet: and ſtriking out, as they go, into numberleſs ſmaller Canals, viſit the Streets, the Alleys, and every *individual* Apartment of the vital City.—Theſe, being wide at their Origin, and leſſening as they branch themſelves, check the rapid Impetus of the Blood. To ſuſtain this Shock, they are endued with uncommon Strength: by performing this Service, they oblige the crimſon Current to paſs into the *narroweſt Defiles*, and diſtribute itſelf into all Quarters.—The Blood, thrown from the Heart, dilates the Arteries, and their own elaſtic Force contracts them. By which means, they *vibrate*, in proper

* The Inteſtines are *faſtened* to each other by the *Meſentery*. The Breaſt is *divided* into two Cavities by the *Mediaſtinum*. Both which are reckoned among the Membranes.

† A human Body was called by the Antients, The *Microcoſm*; that is, a little World, or the World in Miniature.

per Places, very perceivably againſt the Finger; bring Advices of the utmoſt Importance to the Phyſician; and very much aſſiſt Him, both in diſcovering the Nature of Diſeaſes, and preſcribing for their reſpective Cures. — The larger Arteries, where-ever the Body is formed for Incurvation, are ſituate on the *bending* Side: leſt, being ſtretched to an improper Length by the Inflection, their Dimenſions ſhould be leſſened, and the circulating Fluid retarded.—They are not, like ſeveral of the conſiderable Veins, laid ſo near the Surface, as to be protruſive of the Skin; but are depoſited to a *proper Depth* in the Fleſh. This Situation renders them more ſecure from external Injuries. It conceals likewiſe thoſe Starts and Reſilitions of the Pulſe, which, if apparent, would diſcompoſe the moſt ſedate, and disfigure the moſt comely Countenance.—Could We caſt our Eye upon the River, which runs through the neighbouring Meadow, We might obſerve ſeveral Mills interſecting the Stream. The Waters at thoſe Places, if not intirely ſtopped, drain away very ſlowly. In conſequence of this Obſtruction, the lower Channels would be ſunk dry, and the upper Ones ſwelled into a Flood. To obviate both theſe Inconveniencies, *Low-ſhots* are provided: which, carrying off the Surcharge, prevent a Glut above, and ſupply the Banks below. In thoſe Parts of the Body, which are moſt liable to Preſſure, much the ſame Expedient takes place. The Arteries *inoſculate*; or, breaking into a new Track, they fetch a little Circuit, in order to return and communicate again with the main Road. So that, if any Obſtacle blocks up or ſtraitens the direct Paſſage; the Current, by diverting to this new Channel,

eludes the Impediment; maintains an uninterrupted Flow; and soon regains its wonted Course.

Veins are appointed to receive the Blood from the Arteries, and reconvey it to the Heart.—Small at their Rise, and inlarging as they advance, they are void of any Pulsation. In these, the Pressure of the circulating Fluid, is not near so forcible as in the arterial Tubes: for which Reason, their Texture is considerably slighter. Such an exact *Oeconomist* is Nature, even amidst all her *Liberality* *!—In many of these Canals, the Current, though widening continually, and acquiring a proportionable Increase of Gravity, is obliged to push its Way against the Perpendicular. By which Circumstance, it is exposed to the Hazard of falling back, and overloading the Vessels; if not of suppressing the animal Motion. For a Security against this Danger, *Valves* are interposed at proper Distances. Which are no Hindrance to the regular Passage, but prevent the Reflux; sustain the augmented Weight; and facilitate a Progress to the grand Receptacle. This auxiliary Contrivance comes in, where the Blood is constrained to climb; but is dismissed where the steep Ascent ceases, and such a Precaution would be needless.

Here are *Glands*, whose Office it is, to filtrate the passing Fluid. Each of these Glands is an Assemblage of Vessels, complicated and intervolved, with seeming Confusion, but with perfect Regularity. As some kind of Sieves transmit the Dust, and retain the Corn;

* A parallel Instance of Frugality is observable in the Arteries. Whose Coats are spun *thinner*, as the Diameter of the Vessels becomes *smaller*, and the Pressure of the Blood *weaker*.

Corn; others bolt out the Meal, and hold back the Bran; ſo, ſome of theſe glandulous Strainers draw off the fineſt, others the groſſeſt Parts of the Blood. Some, like the Diſtiller's Alembic, *ſublimate* *; others, like the common Sewers, *defœcate* †. Each forms a Secretion, far more curious than the moſt admired Operations of Chemiſtry; yet all, neceſſary for the Support of Life, or conducive to the Comfort of the Animal.—*Muſcles*, wove in Nature's niceſt Loom; compoſed of the ſlendereſt Fibres, yet endued with incredible Strength; faſhioned after a Variety of Patterns, but all in the higheſt Taſte for Elegance, Conveniency, and Uſefulneſs.—Theſe, with their *Tendons* annexed, conſtitute the Inſtruments of Motion. The former, contracting their Subſtance, operate ſomewhat like the Pulley in Mechanics. The latter, reſembling the Cord, are faſtened to a Bone, or ſome Partition of Fleſh; and, following the muſcular Contraction, actuate the Part into which they are inſerted. This, and all their Functions they execute, not like a ſluggiſh Beaſt of Burden, but quick as the Lightning.—*Nerves*, ſurpriſingly minute Tubes; derived from the Brain, and permeated by an exquiſitely ſubtle Fluid. Which, gliding into the Muſcles, ſets them on work; diffuſes the Power of Senſation through the Body; or, returning upon any Impreſſion

* The glandulous Subſtance of the *Brain*; which ſecretes the animal Spirits.

† The *Liver* and *Kidneys*. The former of which ſeparates the *Gall*; the latter drains off a *Fluid*, which, being ſufficiently known, need not be named. I could wiſh, it had not been ſo explicitly and coarſely mentioned, in our Tranſlation of the beſt of Books. But that We had rendered the Original, in 1 *Kings* xiv. 10. *Every Male*; in *Iſa.* xxxvi. 12. *Eat and drink their own Excrements.*

sion from without, gives all needful Intelligence to the Soul.—*Vesicles*, distended with an unctuous Matter; in some Places, compose a soft Cushion * for Nature; in other Places, they fill up her Vacuities, and smooth the Inequalities of the Flesh. *Inwardly*, they supple the several Movements of the active Machine. *Outwardly*, they render its Appearance plump, well proportioned, and graceful.

The *Skin*, like a curious Surtout †, exactly fitted, is superinduced over the whole. Formed of the most delicate Net-work; whose Meshes ‡ are minute, and whose Threads ‖ are multiplied, even to a Prodigy.—

The

* The *Calf* of the *Leg*, for instance. Whose large Collection of Muscles, intermingled with Fat, is of singular Service to those important Bones. It flanks and fortifies them, like a *strong Bastion*. It supports and cherishes them, like a *soft Pillow*. And what is no less pleasing to observe, it accommodates and defends them on that very Side, where they most frequently rest their Weight, and where they are least capable of being guarded by the Eye.

† *Thou hast cloathed me with Skin and Flesh*, Job x. 11. —The Word *Surtout* is used according to the *French* Etymology; signifies a Garment, coming *over the whole* Body; and is most beautifully expressed by our LORD's ἀμφιεννυσι. Matt. vi. 30.

‡ The Pores of the *Cuticula*.

‖ The nervous Fibres, and other Vessels of the *Cutis*. —Nature is somewhat like *Solomon*'s virtuous Woman. *Who is not afraid of the Snow for her Houshold, because her Houshold are clothed in Scarlet:* or, as it may be rendered, are clothed *with Pairs*, have two Coats a-piece, *Prov.* xxxi. 21. (See *Gen.* vi. 19, 20. where the Word שנים occurs in this Signification.)—The Body also is accommodated with a double Covering. The *outermost* is that soft whitish Tegument, which rises in the Pustule of a Blister. The *innermost* is that reddish and exquisitely

The Meshes so *minute*, that nothing passes them, which is discernable by the Eye; though they discharge, every Moment, Myriads and Myriads of superfluous Incumbrances from the Body. The Steam, arising from the warm Business transacted within, is carried off by these real, though imperceptible Funnels *. Which constitutes, what We usually call *insensible Perspiration*.—The Threads so *multiplied*, that neither the Point of the smallest Needle, nor the incomparably nicer Spear of a Gnat, nor even the invisible Lancet of a Flea, can pierce any single Part, without causing an uneasy Sensation and a Suffusion of Blood: consequently, without wounding, even by so small a Puncture, both a Nerve and a Vein †.

The

tender Part, which appears when the Blister is broke, and the dead Skin taken off.—The first is void of Sense, and intended to screen the second, not only from the Stroke of Injuries, but even from the Impressions of the Air: which, mild as it may feel to the *sheathed*, would be too rough and sharp for the *naked* Nerves.

There seems to be an Allusion to this Particular, in that remarkable Expression, *Skin for Skin*, עור בעד עור Job ii 4 *Skin even unto Skin*; the very inmost Skin, which cannot be taken away, without the greatest Loss, and severest Pain. Yet, even this *Loss* a Man would suffer, this *Pain* He would endure, in order to preserve *precious* Life.

* These are somewhere prettily styled, *cutaneous Chimneys*; and no Wonder they are imperceptible, if, as Mr. *Lewenhoeck* affirms, a single Grain of Sand will cover no less than 125,000.

† A *Blood-Vessel* at least. Compared with these Vessels, the fine *filmy Threads*, which, on some bright autumnal Morning, float in the Air, or hang on the Stubble, must be *large* as a Bell-rope, or *bulky* as a Cable.—Such Tubes, One would think, should *burst* at every Breath We draw, or even *break* with their own Fineness.

Yet,

The Veins, either pervading, or lying parallel with, this fine transparent Coat, *beautify* the human Structure; those Parts especially, which are most conspicuous, and intended for public View. The pliant Wrist, and the taper Arm, they variegate with an Inlay of living Sapphire. They spread Vermillion over the Lips *, and plant Roses in the Cheeks. While the Eye, tinged with glossy Jet, or sparkling with the Blue of Heaven, is fixed in an Orb of polished Crystal. Insomuch that the earthly Tabernacle exhibits the nicest Proportions, and richest Graces. Such *nice Proportions*, as afford the most correct Model for Statuary: such *rich Graces*, as the Canvass never bore, as Painting imitates in vain.

Asp. How just in itself, and how pertinent to our Purpose, is that well-known Acknowledgment of the sacred and royal Anatomist; "*I am curiously wrought* †! "There is a Variety, a Regularity, and an Ele- "gance, in the Texture of my Body; in the For- "mation and Arrangement of these Bones and "Muscles, these Veins and Arteries;—resembling,

Yet, they are the Conduit-pipes, which convey the vital Fluid from and to the grand Reservoir. And so exquisite, so admirable is their Texture, that they will out-last the Strength of Lead, or the Heart of Oak: *these* wearing away, *those* growing stronger, by Use.

* *Thy Lips are like a Thread of Scarlet*, Cant. iv. 3. Like a *Thread*, for their delicate *Shape*; like a Thread of *Scarlet*, for their glowing *Colour*.

† The Original רקמת signifies *finely wrought*, or *elegantly flourished with a Needle*.—The Translation adopted by our Liturgy is, in this Place, flat and inexpressive. The *English* Word *fashioned*, has just the same Inferiority to the beautiful *Hebrew* Phrase; as the *Badge*, tacked upon some poor Pensioner's Coat, has to the *Star* embroidered on a Nobleman's Breast. *Psal.* cxxxix. 14.

" ſhall I ſay?—rather, infinitely ſurpaſſing, the moſt " coſtly and admired Pieces of Embroidery."

It is one of the fineſt Similitudes, which the whole Circle of polite Arts could afford. Yet every Compariſon, fetched from the Performances of Mankind, muſt neceſſarily debaſe the noble Subject. All the Enrichments, which the Needle can give, or the moſt *ſplendid Silks* receive, are rude, are coarſe, are mere Sack-cloth, when ſet in oppoſition to the exquiſite Delicacy of the fleſhly Web. As indeed all the celebrated *Palaces*, *Amphitheatres*, *Temples*, which ever adorned the moſt magnificent Cities in the World, are but a Heap of Confuſion, if compared with the Symmetry and Beauty of the bodily Fabric. —And, what is beyond meaſure marvelous, all theſe Wonders of Mechaniſm and Decoration aroſe—not from the purer Elements—not from the more refined Parts of the Creation—but from the *Duſt* of the Ground *. How eaſily, *Theron*, can that ſtupendous ARTIFICER *renew* our Hearts, and transform our Souls into his own Image; who could raiſe ſuch delicate and ſtately Edifices, from Particles — deſpicable Particles of the trodden Soil!

I could not forbear interpoſing this Remark. Becauſe, it tends to manifeſt our CREATOR's Glory, to encourage our Hopes, and ſtrengthen our Faith. Otherwiſe, I ſhould be angry with myſelf, for interrupting your Diſcourſe.—Pray, go on with your Deſcription of the animal Oeconomy. Only let me obſerve, That ſuch a Courſe of inceſſant Action, muſt *exhauſt* the Fluids; muſt *waſte* the Solids;

* *The* LORD GOD *formed Man of the Duſt of the Ground*, Gen. ii. 7.

lids; and, unleſs both are ſupplied with proper Recruits, muſt gradually weaken, and at length totally deſtroy, the Machine.

Ther. For this Reaſon, it is furniſhed with the Organs, and endued with the Powers of *Nutrition*. —*Teeth*; the foremoſt, thin and ſharp; fitted to bite aſunder the Food, or cut * off ſuch a Portion, as the Mouth can conveniently manage. The hindermoſt, broad and ſtrong; indented, like the Surface of a Mill-ſtone †, with ſmall Cavities, and jagged with little Aſperities. Which qualify them to grind in pieces, whatever is tranſmitted to their Operation.—Were the Teeth, like our other Bones, covered with the uſual Membrane, the Act of *Chewing* would always occaſion great Uneaſineſs; and, when any hard Subſtance is eaten, might even lacerate the tender Tegument. Were they left without any Sort of Covering; they would ſuffer from the Inclemencies of the Air, and be liable to the Penetration of Liquors. In which Caſe, they muſt ſoon become ſoft and unfit for Service, or be corrupted, and intirely periſh. To guard againſt theſe Diſadvantages, they are curiouſly *glazed*, or overlaid with a neat *Enamel*; as white as Ivory, and harder than the Bone

 itſelf.

* Called therefore, *Inciſivi*.

† Styled accordingly, *Molares*.—We find neither of theſe Kinds in the new-born Babe. As Milk is, for a conſiderable Time, its appointed Food, Teeth would be of no Service to the Infant itſelf. As it is to preſs the tender Nipple for this milky Suſtenance, Teeth would be painful and prejudicial to the Nurſe. Therefore Nature has *poſtponed* the Formation of theſe fine Implements, till they become both neceſſary and beneficial.

itſelf. Which renders them an Ornament to the Mouth *; ſecures them from various Injuries; and exempts them from Pain in the Office of Maſtication.

As the Rims and Cuſhions of a Billiard-Table, keep the Ball from flying off; and ſend it back into the green Area, for repeated Eſſays of Skill; ſo the *Lips* prevent the Food from ſlipping out of the Mouth; and, aſſiſted by the Tongue, return it to the renewed Attrition of the Grinders.—While the Lips, in Concert with the Cheeks, are employed in this Work, their Motion compreſſes the circumjacent Glands; and, from innumerable little Orifices, a thin *pellucid Liquor* exſudes. Which moiſtens the attenuated Food, and prepares it for more eaſy Digeſtion. —When the Mouth remains inactive, theſe Fountains of Spittle are, in a manner, cloſed. But, when it is exerciſed, either in ſpeaking or eating, their Moiſture then being peculiarly neceſſary, they never fail to give out a ſufficient Quantity.

When the Soldier charges his Carbine, the Cartridge could not make its way to the Bottom, with-

* This ornamental Furniture of the Mouth, is, in the grand *oriental* Manner, deſcribed by *Solomon*. *Thy Teeth are like a Flock of Sheep, that are even ſhorn, which come up from the Waſhing*, Cant. iv. 2. Growing, not ſingle, like the Noſe; not in Pairs, like the Eyes; but in Rows conſiderably numerous, *like a Flock*.—None riſing higher than the other; none ſtanding unduly prominent beyond another; but all ſet as true, as if they were ranged by the Compaſs; and making as regular an Appearance, as the Flocks *that are even ſhorn*.—They are clean alſo as the Fleeces which have no Spot, and white as the Colour of the pureſt Wool, like the Flocks *juſt come up from the Waſhing*.

without the Protrusion of the Rammer *. Neither would the Food, which We receive at the Mouth, descend, by the Force of its own Weight, through a narrow and clammy Channel, into the Stomach. To effectuate therefore, and expedite its Passage, Muscles, both *strait* and *circular*, are provided. The former, inlarge the Cavity of the Throat, and afford a more easy Admittance; the latter, closing behind the descending Aliment, press it downwards, and finish the Deglutition.—Before the Food enters the Gullet, it must of necessity pass over the Orifice of the *Wind-pipe*; consequently, must be in very imminent Danger of falling upon the Lungs. Which would, if not intirely obstruct the Breath, yet occasion violent

* This, and the other Similitudes, are undoubtedly *too mean* for the noble Occasion. Neither do they, in *every* Circumstance, quadrate with the Functions described. The Motion of the Muscles, which minister to the Act of Deglutition, is different from the perpendicular Protrusion of the Rammer. And it is mentioned, only to demonstrate the Necessity of *some propelling* Force, in order to convey the Aliment into the proper Receptacle.

When We descant upon a Subject, of such extensive Contrivance, and such finished Perfection, as the human Structure; it is scarce possible to find Similitudes, that will correspond in *all* Particulars, or that can rise to the *Dignity* of the Original. Yet if they tend, in any tolerable Degree, to explain its Formation, to display its Uses, and render its wonderful Oeconomy somewhat more intelligible, perhaps they may be allowed to take place.

I hope, it will be remembered, that *Theron* speaks, not as an Adept in the Science, but as One whose highest Pretensions are, to admire the Work, and adore the ARTIFICER. Which Acknowledgment may intitle Him to some candid Indulgence, in case He should offend against the *precise anatomical* Exactness, either of Sentiment, or Expression.

Coughing *, and great Inconveniencies. To obviate this Evil, the all-foreseeing CONTRIVER has placed a *moveable Lid*, or hung a *cartilaginous Draw-bridge* †. Which, when any the smallest Particle of Food advances to enter the Stomach, is pulled down and shut close; but, the very Moment the Morsel is swallowed, it is set loose and stands open. By this two-fold Artifice, the important Passage is always barred and made sure, against any noxious Approaches; yet, is always left free for the necessary Accession of Air, and commodious for the Purposes of Respiration.

When the Malster prepares his Grain for the Transmutations of the Brewhouse; He suffers it to lie, several Hours, steeping in the Cistern; before it is fit, to be spread upon the Floor, or dried on the Kiln. The Meat and Drink likewise must remain, a considerable Time, in the *Stomach*; before they are of a proper Consistence and Temperature, either for the tender Coats, or the delicate Operation of the Bowels. For which Purpose, that great Receiver is made—strong to bear—capacious to hold—and so curiously contrived, as to lay a *temporary Embargo* ‡ upon its Contents. Here, they are lodged in the very Center of Warmth, and concocted by the most kindly Combination of Heat and Humidity. Here, they are saturated with other fermenting or diluting Juices;

* This is what We experience, when, in eating or drinking, any Thing goes (as is commonly, and not improperly said) *the wrong Way*.

† Called the *Epiglottis*.

‡ Which is quite *contrary* to the Oeconomy of the Gullet; though they are not only contiguous to each other, but a Continuation of the *same* Tube.

Juices; and are kneaded, as it were, by the Motion of the Stomach, and Compreſſion of the neighbouring Parts. So that every the minuteſt Fragment is ſeparated; the Whole is reduced to a *Tenuity*, abundantly finer than the exacteſt Grinding could effect; and all is worked up into the ſmootheſt, moſt *nicely mixed* Pulp imaginable.—From hence it is diſlodged, by a gently acting Force; and paſſes, by a gradual Tranſition, into the Cavity of the Inteſtines.

Near the Entrance, punctual as a Porter in his Lodge, waits the *Gall-bladder* *; ready to transfuſe its acrimonious, but ſalutary Juices, on the advancing Aliment. Which *diſſolve* its remaining Viſcidities; *ſcour* the Paſſage of the Inteſtines; and keep all its fine Apertures clear.—This Bag, as the Stomach fills, is elevated by the Diſtention; as the Stomach empties, is proportionably depreſſed. The former Poſture brings on a Diſcharge, the latter occaſions a Suppreſſion, of the *Bile*. It is furniſhed alſo with a Valve, of a very peculiar, but moſt convenient Form †; through which the deterſive Liquid, cannot haſtily pour, but muſt gently ooze.—Admirable Conſtruction! Which, without any Care or Conſciouſneſs of ours, prohibits an *immoderate* Effuſion, yet aſcertains the *needful* Supply.

Sufficiently charged with this adventitious Fluid, the nutritive Maſs purſues its Way through the *Inteſtines*. Whoſe wonderful Meanders, are incomparably more curious, than the Mazes of the *Dædalean* Labyrinth. They are actuated with a worm-like or undulatory

* The *Gall-bladder* is ſituate upon the lower Margin of the Liver; and to ſecrete the *bilious* Juice, is ſuppoſed to be the principal Uſe of that largeſt of Glands.

† A *ſpiral* Form.

undulatory Motion *: which protrudes the received Aliment, and forces its fine milky Particles into the *Lacteal Veſſels*. Theſe are a Series of the moſt delicate *Strainers*; ranged, in countleſs Multitudes, all along the Sides of the winding Paſſage. Each ſo nicely framed, as to admit the nutrimental balmy Juices, and reject the groſs excrementitious Dregs.—Had the Inteſtines been *ſtrait* and *ſhort*, the Food might have gone through them, without reſigning a ſufficient Quantity of its nouriſhing Particles. Therefore, this grandeſt of all the vital Ducts, is artfully convolved, and greatly extended; to afford Nature an Opportunity, of *ſifting* more thoroughly whatever paſſes, and of detaining whatever may ſerve her Purpoſes.—Leſt ſuch Lengths of Entrails, ſhould be intangled among themſelves, or be cumbrous to the Wearer, they are packed into the neateſt Folds, and lie within a narrow Compaſs. They are at leaſt ſix Times longer †, than the Body which contains them. Yet are they *lodged*, not *crouded*; in a *Part*, not in the *whole* Region, of the lower Belly. And amidſt this ſmall Space, have ſufficient Room to execute the niceſt and moſt important Functions.—Though the alimentary Subſtance can never miſtake its Way; yet it may, through ſome accidental Impediment, attempt to return backward. In this Caſe, a Valve intervenes; and renders, what would be extremely pernicious, almoſt always impracticable.—As the Whole proceeds in this ſerpentine Courſe, it is perpetually ſend-

* Styled *vermicular* or *periſtaltic*.

† According to this Calculation, they muſt meaſure, in a pretty tall Man, more than *thirty-ſix Feet*.—The Subſtance of the Bowels, though *thin* to a Delicacy, is *ſtrong* to a Wonder. The Skin of an Ox Gut, I am told, will endure the Blows of the Gold-beater's Hammer, for many Months, nay for ſeveral Years.

ſending off Detachments of *nutritious* Juices. In conſequence of which, it would loſe its ſoft Temperature; might become rugged, and pain the tender Parts; perhaps, be hindered from ſliding on to its final Exit. To prevent ſuch an Obſtruction, Glands are poſted in proper Places *, and diſcharge a *lubricating* Fluid; which aids the Progreſs of the Maſs, and renews the Secretion of the Chyle. Till all that remains of the One, is clean drawn off; and the Other—But here You muſt excuſe me; and for my Neglect of farther Particularity, your Author ſhall make an Apology; *Quemadmodum autem Reliquiæ Cibi depellantur, tum aſtringentibus ſe Inteſtinis, tum relaxantibus, haud ſane difficile dictu eſt: ſed tamen prætereundum eſt, ne quid habeat Injucunditatis Oratio* †.

The *Chyle*, drawn off by all the ſecretory Orifices, is carried along Millions of the fineſt ‡ Ducts, and lodged

* In the Bowels, which lie neareſt the Stomach, theſe Glands are *ſmaller* or *fewer*: becauſe, in thoſe Parts, the Aliment is copiouſly furniſhed with Moiſture. Whereas, in the Bowels, which are more remote from the Stomach, and receive the Food drained of a conſiderable Quantity of its Chyle, the lubricating Glands are either *multiplied* or *inlarged*. A moſt admirable Proviſion! Apparently diverſified, according to the ſeveral Changes of the Aliment; yet exactly adapted to the Exigencies of the Animal.

† CICERO *De Nat. Deor.*—As *Theron* avoids meddling with a Subject, which is become uſeleſs and putreſcent, I think myſelf obliged to imitate his *Delicacy*. Only I would add one Remark in the Notes, and ſhall beg leave to expreſs it in *Greek*. That if it ſhould prove, in any degree, diſguſtful; it may have, at leaſt, the *negative* Merit, not to offend *many* Readers. Επει δε τα αποχωρουντα δυσχερη, απεστρεψε τους του των οχετους η φυσις, ϗ απηνεγκεν η δυνατον προσωτατω απο των αιθησεων. SOCRAT. Memorab.

‡ Fine indeed! Since their *Orifices*, through which they

lodged in several *commodious Cells* *. As a Traveler, by baiting upon the Road, and taking proper Refreshment, is better qualified to pursue his Journey: so the Chyle, diverting to those little Inns, is mixed with a thin, diluting, watery Substance; which renders it more apt to flow, and more fit for Use.— From hence it is conveyed to one *common Receptacle* †, and mounts through a perpendicular Tube. When Provision or Ammunition is transmitted to an Army, it generally passes under an Escort of able Troops. As this is the immediate Support, and principal Nourishment of the whole System, its Conveyance is guarded and ascertained with peculiar Caution. The *perpendicular Tube*, not having sufficient Force of its own, is laid contiguous to the great Artery; whose strong Pulsation drives on the creeping Fluid; enables it to overcome the steep Ascent, and unload its precious Treasure at the very Door of the Heart.— Here, it enters the Trunk of a large Vein, most conveniently opened for its Reception. It enters in a *slanting* or *oblique* Direction. By this Method of Approach, it avoids thwarting, and coincides with the purple Stream; which, instead of obstructing its Admission, expedites its Passage; and, instead of being a Bar to exclude it, becomes a Vehicle to waft it.— Its Entrance is farther secured by a Valve, admirably con-

they admit the Chyle, are not discoverable even by the very *best Microscopes*. To this prodigiously nice Construcure it is owing, that nothing enters the Substance of the Blood, but what is smaller than the smallest Arteries in the System: and thereby fitted to pass through the finest capillary Vessels, without causing any Obstruction.

* The Glands of the Mesentery.

† The *Receptaculum Chyli*; a Reservatory, placed near the left Kidney.

conſtructed, and moſt happily ſituate. Which *ſhuts* the Aperture againſt the refluent Blood, in caſe it ſhould offer to obtrude itſelf; but *opens* a free, ſafe, and eaſy Avenue, to introduce this Milk, this Manna of Nature.

The *Blood*, through every Stage of its ample Circuit, having ſuſtained great Expences; being laid under Contribution, by every Gland in the whole Syſtem; and having ſupplied Myriads of the capillary Veſſels, with Matter for inſenſible Perſpiration; muſt be very much impoveriſhed. But is moſt opportunely recruited, by this Acceſſion of Chyle.—Yet though *recruited*, it is not *refined*. In its preſent crude State, it is abſolutely unqualified to perform the vital Tour, or carry on the animal Functions. Therefore, by a grand Apparatus of muſcular Fibres, it is waſted into the *Lungs*; and pours a thouſand, thouſand Rills into either Lobe.—In the Cells, the ſpongy Cells of this *amazing Laboratory*, it imbibes the Influences of the external Air; its heterogeneous Parts are thoroughly incorporated; and its whole Subſtance is made cool, ſmooth, and florid.—Thus improved, thus exalted, it is tranſmitted to the left Ventricle of the HEART; a *ſtrong*, *active*, *indefatigable* * Muſcle; placed in the very Center of the Syſtem. Impelled by this beating Engine, Part ſhoots upward; and ſweeps, with a bounding Impetus, into the Head. There,

* *Indefatigable*—This is a very *diſtinguiſhing*, and no leſs *amazing* Property of the Heart. The large Muſcles of the Arm, or the much larger of the Thigh, are ſoon wearied. A Day's Labour, or a Day's Journey, will exhauſt their Strength. But the Muſcle, which conſtitutes the Heart, works through whole Weeks, whole Months, whole Years, and never becomes weary. Is equally a Stranger to *Intermiſſion* and *Fatigue*.

There, it impregnates the prolific Fields of the Brain; and forms those *subtle spirituous* Dews*, which impart Sense to every Nerve, and communicate Motion to every Limb. Part flows downward; rolls the reeking Current through all the lower Quarters; and dispenses the nutrimental Stores, even to the meanest Member, and the minutest Vessel.

Observe, how the stately *Thames*, and the rapid *Rhine*, refresh the Forests and the Groves; water the Towns, which croud their Banks; and make the Meadows they intersect, laugh and sing. So, only with an incomparably *richer* Fluid, and with infinitely *more numerous* Streams, this human River laves the several Regions of the Body. Transfusing Vigour, and propagating Health, through the Whole.

But, how shall a Stream, divided into Myriads of Channels, and pervading innumerable Tracts, how shall this be brought back again to its Source? Should any Portion, like your *Lake-Waters* after a Land-Flood, deviate from their Course, or be unable to return—Putrefaction would take place—A Nuisance would arise—Death might ensue. Therefore, the

* These are, what We call, *The animal Spirits*; and it is generally supposed, that Sensation is caused, by the *undulatory* Motion of this nervous Fluid.—Though some imagine, it is performed by the *vibratory* Motion of the Nerves themselves.—Others think, that neither of these Opinions will comport, with the Texture of those fine Tubes, or with the Nature of the Fluid they contain.—It is, I believe, one of those *Mysteries* in the material World, which may reconcile *thinking* and *unprejudiced* Minds, to the Mysteries of the *Christian* Revelation. Why should any One wonder, to find some Doctrines in the BIBLE, that surpass the Reach of human Understanding; when there are so many Operations in the Body, confessedly and absolutely inexplicable by the most acute Anatomist?

the All-wise CREATOR has connected the Extremity of the Arteries, with the Beginning of the Veins. So that the same Force, which *darts* the crimson Wave through the former, *drives* it through the latter. Thus it is reconducted, without the least Extravasation, to the great salient Cistern *. There played off afresh, it renews and perpetuates the vital Functions.

Where two *opposite* Currents would be in Danger of clashing, a fibrous Excrescence interposes † ; which, like a projecting Pier, breaks the Stroke of each, and throws both into their proper Receptacle.—When the Wafture is to be *speedy*, the Channels either forbear to wind in their Course ‡, or to lessen in their Dimensions ‖. When the Progress is to be *retarded*, the Tubes are twined into various Convolutions §, or their Diameter is contracted into a narrower Size. —Modeled by these judicious Rules; guarded by these wise Precautions; the living Flood never discontinues its interchangeable Tide: but, Night and Day, whether We sleep or wake, still perseveres to sally

* *Solomon* makes use of this Similitude—*Or ever the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain; or the Wheel broken at the Cistern.* The two *Ventricles* of the Heart, replenished with Blood, are fitly represented by a *Cistern*; and the *contractile* Force of their Fibres, acts like the *Water-wheel* in Hydraulics.—The *Pitcher*, which receives the Water at the Spring head, and conveys it away for the Owner's Service, may probably signify the *Aorta*, and the *pulmonary* Artery; whose Functions correspond with the Uses of such a Vessel. *Eccles.* xii. 6.

† In the Point, where the Streams, from the *Vena cava* and *Vena ascendens*, meet.

‡ In the great Artery, that descends to the Feet.

‖ In every Interval, between all the Ramifications.

§ In the Vessels, which carry the Blood to the Brain; which form the viscous Secretions; and indeed which constitute all the Glands.

sally *briskly* through the Arteries, and return *softly* through the Veins.

Such astonishing Expedients are used, to elaborate the Chyle—to blend it with the Blood—and to distribute both through the Body! By means of which, the animal Constitution is maintained. In Youth, its Bulk is increased; in Age, its Decays are repaired; and it is kept in tenantable Condition for the Soul, during the Space of seventy or eighty Years.

These are a few, and but a *very few* Instances of that Contrivance, Regularity, and Beauty, which are observable in the human Frame. Attentive Inquirers discover *deeper* Footsteps of Design, and *more refined* Strokes of Skill. Discover them, not only in the grand and most distinguished Parts, but in every Limb, and in every Organ: I may venture to add, in every Fibre that is extended, and in every Globule * that flows.

Asp. What a *various*, but *uniform* System, is the Body! I see the greatest Mutiplicity of Parts, yet the most perfect Harmony subsists between them all. No one hinders, but each assists, the Operation of another; and all conspire to the Benefit and Preservation of the Whole.—Most judiciously has the great Apostle touched this Subject; and most happily applied it, to illustrate the Reasonableness, and inforce the Practice, both of *personal* and *social* Duties, of private Content and public Concord †.

The

* The extreme *Minuteness* of the Globules, which form the *red* Part of our Blood, is one Exemplification of this Remark. If, as Mr. *Lewenhoeck* computes, every Globule be 125,000 times smaller, than the smallest Grain of Sand.

† See 1 *Cor.* xii, 12, &c.

The Body, He obſerves, *is not one Member, but many.* To each of which ſome peculiar and needful Office is aſſigned. So that the *Foot*, though placed in the loweſt Order, and deſtined to ſerve on the very Ground, has no Reaſon to reckon itſelf a worthleſs Outcaſt; or to ſay, *Becauſe I am not the Head, I am not of the Body.* Neither has the *Head*, in its exalted Station, and amidſt its honourable Functions, any Cauſe to deſpiſe the inferior Limbs; or to ſay, with Contempt and Self-ſufficiency, *I have no Need of You.* —If there were no Feet, what would become of the locomotive Faculty? Or how could the Body convey itſelf from one Place to another? If there were no Hands, what ſhould we do for the Inſtruments of Action? Or how could the animal Frame be defended and accommodated?—Nay, the Parts, *which ſeem to be leſs honourable*, are neceſſary. Even thoſe, which form the Sediments, or throw off the Dregs, are of the laſt Importance to Life and its Comforts. Should thoſe be obſtructed in their Action, the moſt raging Torment enſues; ſhould the Obſtruction continue, Death is the inevitable Conſequence.—By this wiſe Adjuſtment, *there is no Schiſm in the Body*; no ſeparate or interfering Ends are purſued by the Members; but the Safety and Support of each are the one undivided Care of all.

Thus ſhould it be among Men, and among Chriſtians; in the Civil Community, and in the Catholic Church. There is in both a *Subordination* of Perſons, but a *Concatenation* of Intereſts. For which Reaſon, a general Agreement ſhould take place, and a mutual Subſerviency to each other's Welfare.—The *Meaneſt* have no Cauſe to be diſſatisfied with

their Condition; but to acquiesce in the unerring Disposal of Providence, and chearfully contribute their Share to the common Good.—The *Highest* should condescend to Men of low Estate; and maintain a Regard to the Well-being of the Poorest, as that which is intimately connected with their own. —In a Word; *each* should feel a tender Concern for all; rejoicing in their Happiness, and studying to establish it; sympathizing with their Miseries, and endeavouring to heal them.

I am sure, my *Theron* will be pleased with this fine Comparison, used by the Apostle; and adapted to Purposes, at once so noble and so benevolent. Especially, as it receives additional Propriety and Force from his own Observations.—But I have one more Inquiry to make.

Your System, though *organized*, though endued with a Principle of *Motion*, and furnished with the Powers of *Nutrition*, is still destitute of *Sense*.—The Creation abounds with Objects, fitted to yield the most refined Entertainment. The Sun impurples the Robe of Morning, and Stars bespangle the Curtains of Night. Flowers of silver Whiteness, and of golden Lustre, enamel the Ground. Fruits of all radiant Hues, and of every delicious Taste, hang amiably dangling on the Boughs.

——— *Airs also, vernal Airs,*
Breathing the Smell of Field and Grove, attune
The trembling Leaves.

But We hear of no Capacities, formed for the *Enjoyment* of these various Delights. Without which, the Breath of Fields must lose its reviving Fragrance; the whispering Grove must degenerate into sullen Silence;

lence; and Nature's Book of Knowledge, all fair and instructive, be no better than a vast unmeaning Blank.

Ther. Therefore, the great CREATOR, profusely gracious to Mankind, has made Us a Present, an inestimable Present, of the *Senses*. To be the Inlets of innumerable Pleasures, and the Means of administering the most valuable Advantages.

High in the Head, bright and conspicious as a Star in the Brow of Evening, is placed the *Eye*. In this elevated Situation, like a Centinel posted in his Watch-tower, it commands the most inlarged Prospect.—Consisting only of simple Fluids, inclosed in thin Tunicles, it conveys to our Apprehension all the Graces of blooming Nature, and all the Glories of the visible Heavens.—How prodigiously wonderful! That an Image of the *hugest* Mountains, and a Transcript of the most *diversified* Landschapes, shall enter the small Circlet of the Pupil!—How surprisingly artful! That the Rays of Light, like an inimitable Pencil, should paint on the optic Nerves; paint in an Instant of Time; paint in their *truest* Colours, and *exactest* Lineaments, every Species of external Objects!

The Eye is so tender, that a slight Accident, scarce perceivable by some other Parts of the Body, would be very injurious to its delicate Frame. It is guarded therefore with remarkable Circumspection, and the most solicitous Care: with a Care, evidently proportioned to its nice Texture, and extensive Usefulness. It is *intrenched* deep in the Head; and *barricaded*, on every Side, with a strong Fortification of Bones.—As the Incursion of the smallest Fly would

incommode the polished Surface, it is farther defended by two substantial *Curtains*, hung on a most slender cartilaginous Rod. Which secure it, not barely from Blows, and from any hurtful Attrition, but also from every troublesome Annoyance. In Sleep, when there is no Occasion to exercise the Sense, but an absolute Necessity to protect the Organ, these Curtains *spontaneously* close, and never fail to lie shut. At any Time, they will *fly* together with a Motion, quick as the Alarm of Fear, I had almost said, quicker than Thought itself. At all Times, they are lined with an extremely fine Sponge *, wet with its own *native Dews*. Which lubricate the Eye-ball; oil, as it were, its Wheels; and fit it for a Course of unwearied Activity.—At the End of this skinny Mantelet (if I may use the military Style) is planted a Range of bristly *Palliſadoes* †. Which keep out the least Mote; ward off even the straggling Atom; and moderate the otherwise too potent Impressions of the Sun-beams ‡.

The

* The *Glandula Lachrymalis* and its Ducts; opening on the inner Part of the Eyelid, and secreting the Fluid, which *Theron* calls its Oil; because, it irrigates the Eye-ball, and facilitates its Motion.

† The Hairs, which arise upon the Extremities of the Eye-lash, grow only to a certain convenient Length, and never stand in need of cutting.—They are not flaccid and pendulous, like those of the Head; but *stiff* and *prominent*, like Bristles. The first Sort would be troublesome, the last is beneficial.—Add to this, that their Points stand out of the Way; those of the upper Eyelid being bent upwards, and those of the lower downwards.—So nice is Nature, even in such small Matters!

‡ The incessant, the more than fatherly Care, which the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY takes of his People, is represented in Scripture by this extraordinary Pro-

The *Brows* are a kind of natural *Pent-houſe*, thatched and arched with curious Wreaths of Hair. The Thatch is intended to divert the Sweat, from trickling into the Eyes, and offending them with its Brine. The *Arches* are ſo finely coloured, and ſo elegantly turned, that they ſet off the Whiteneſs of the Forehead, and beſtow additional Grace on the whole Countenance.—Becauſe, in our waking Hours, there is almoſt an inceſſant Call for thoſe little Orbs, they run upon the fineſt *Caſters*; rolling upwards or downwards, to the Right-hand or to the Left; with the utmoſt Speed, and with equal Eaſe. Which Circumſtance, added to the Flexibility of the Neck, renders our *two* Eyes as uſeful, as if the whole Body, like the living Creatures in St. *John*'s Viſion, was *full of Eyes before and behind* *.

The *Ear* conſiſts of an outward Porch and inner Rooms, with Tools of the moſt admirable Contrivance and finiſhed Workmanſhip. The Contrivance and the Workmanſhip incomparably nicer, than the Deſigns of *Palladio*, or the Architecture of *Solomon*'s Temple; though the former were drawn from the magnificent Monuments of *Rome*, though the latter was built in the Taſte of *Heaven*. Yea; ſo con-

 ſummately

Proviſion, made for the Security of the Eye. Which is one of the *fineſt* Images, that Fancy can form; and one of the moſt *conſolatory* Truths, that Faith can believe. *He kept Him as the Apple of his Eye*, Deut. xxxii. 10.—*He that toucheth You, toucheth the Apple of his Eye*, Zech. ii. 8.—The Reader will eaſily ſee, that the Compariſon, every Way beautiful, is carried to the *higheſt* Pitch of Energy and Beauty, by the ſacred Writers. Not barely the Eye, but the *Apple* or *Pupil* of the Eye; the tenderelt Part even of the moſt tender Member.

* Rev. iv. 6.

ſummately nice is the Structure of this Organ, that GOD, the only wiſe GOD, is not aſhamed to be called its Artificer. *He that planted the Ear* *, is to be found among the Titles of the exalted JEHOVAH.—In one very remarkable Peculiarity, this minute Fabric reſembles that ſacred Edifice, the Porch being loftier † than any other Part of the Building.

The *Porch* I call that ſemicircular Lodge, which ſtands ſomewhat prominent from the Head; and is—not *ſoft* and *ſinking* as Fleſh, leſt it ſhould abſorb the Sound, rather than promote the Repercuſſion; not *hard* and *ſtubborn* as Bone, leſt it ſhould occaſion painful Inconveniencies, when We repoſe Ourſelves on either Side—but of a *cartilaginous* Subſtance, covered with a tight Expanſion of Skin, and wrought into irregular Bends and Hollows. Which, like circling Hills, or ſurrounding rocky Shores ‡, collect the wandering Undulations of the Air; and tranſmit them, with a vigorous Impulſe, to the finely ſtretched Membrane of the Tympanum ‖.—The *Avenue*, or narrow Entry, is ſecured from the inſinuating

* Pſal. xciv. 9.

† Compare 1 *Kings* vi. 2. with 2 *Chron.* iii. 4.

‡ Alluding to thoſe expreſſive Lines, where *Echo* ſeems to live in the Sound, as well as in the Senſe;

——— *Vocemque incluſa volutant*
Littora, pulſati Colles Clamore reſultant.

VIRG.

‖ So called, becauſe it reſembles a *Drum*, both in Figure and Uſe. Being a fine Skin, expanded upon a Circle of Bones, and over a poliſhed reverberating Cavity.—It is affected by the Vibrations of the external Air, as the Covering of the War-drum is by the Impreſſions of the Stick.—It is alſo furniſhed with *Braces*, which ſtrain or relax it at pleaſure; and accommodate its Tenſion either to loud or languid Sounds.

sinuating Attempts of little Insects, by a *Morass* (shall I say?) of bitter and viscous Matter: disgustful to their Taste, and embarrassing to their Feet.—The *Hammer* and the *Anvil*; the *Stirrup* and the *Drum*; the winding Labyrinths *, and the sounding Galleries; these, and other Pieces of Mechanism, all instrumental to the Power of Hearing, are beyond Description curious.

Amazingly nice must be the Formation, and inconceivably exact the Tension, of the auditory Nerves: since they correspond with the smallest Tremors of the Atmosphere, and easily distinguish their most subtile Variations. With the gentle Gales that fan Us, or even with the ruder Blasts that assault Us, these delicate Strings are but little affected. Whereas, they are perfect *Unisons* with those fine, those *significant* Agitations of the Air, which the acutest Touch is unable to discern. These living Chords, tuned by an Almighty Hand, and diffused through the echoing Isles, and sonorous Cells—these receive the Impressions of Sound, and propagate them to the Brain. These † give Existence to the Charms of Music,

* Of this Kind is the auditory Tube; intended to *soften* and *qualify* the rushing Sound. Lest, if the Incursion were direct, it might be too impetuous, and injure the delicate Expanse of the Tympanum.—While this is designed to moderate, the Concavities of the inner Structure are prepared to *heighten* and *invigorate* the Sound, by calling in the auxiliary Force of an Echo.—Such Intentions, so *varying*, nay so *opposite*, concur to form this admirable Organ!

† Elegantly styled, *The Daughters of Music*. For this Phrase may refer, as well to the Organs which *distinguish*, as to those which *form*, the harmonious Accents. *Eccles.* xii. 4.—Methinks, I am always desirous to add any ap-

Music, and reciprocate the rational Entertainments of Discourse. These treat my *Aspasio* with the Melody of the Woodland Choirs, and afford *me* the superior Pleasure of my Friend's Conversation.

The Eye perceives only the Objects that are *before* it; whereas, the Ear warns Us of Transactions, that pass above Us, behind Us, all around Us.—The Eye is useless, amidst the Gloom of Night; and cannot carry its Observation, through the bolted Door, or the closed Window-shutter. But the Ear admits her Intelligence, through the *darkest* Medium, and the *minutest* Cranny.—The Eye is upon Duty, only in our waking Hours; but the Ear is always expanded, and always accessible *: a Courier, which never tires: a Centry, ever in his Box.—To secure a Resource, in case any Misfortune should disable *one* of the hearing or seeing Organs, our all-gracious MAKER has given Us *Duplicates* of each.

As there are tremulous Concussions impressed upon the Air, discernable only by the Instruments of Hearing; there are also *odoriferous* Particles, wafted by the same aerial Vehicle, which are perceivable only by the *Smell*.—The Nostrils are wide at the Bottom, that a large Quantity of Effluvia may enter; nar-

row

posite Expression, or parallel Passage from the BIBLE. As I find, Writers of Taste and Politeness are studious to embellish their Works, with Quotations from the *Classics*. And I persuade myself, the Reader will allow me to gratify this favourite Inclination. Because, every Portion of that inestimable Book, however minute, is like the Filings of Gold, or the Sparks of a Diamond. Is sure, when properly applied, to add *Worth*, and impart *Beauty*.

* *Auditus autem semper patet. Ejus enim Sensus etiam dormientes egemus. A quo, cum Sonus est acceptus, etiam e Somno excitimur.* De Nat. Deor.

row at the Top, that, when entered, they may close their Ranks, and act with greater Vigour.—Fine, beyond all Imagination, are the Steams which exhale from fetid or fragrant Bodies. The very best Microscopes, which discover *Thousands* and *Thousands* of Animalcules in a Drop of putrified Water, cannot bring *one* Individual, among all these evanescent Legions, to our Sight. They sail, in numberless Squadrons, close to our Eyes, close by our Ears; yet are so amazingly attenuated, that they elude the Search of both. Nevertheless, so judiciously * are the *olfactory*

* The *Keenness* and *Sagacity* of this Sense, furnished the evangelical Prophet with a beautiful Metaphor, to display the *Accuracy* of the MESSIAH's Judgment in spiritual Things. *Isa.* xi. 3.

והריחו implies his Faculty or Sense of *Smelling*; which Expression is accommodated to our Language, and properly enough translated, *Shall make Him of quick Understanding*. q. d. "He shall judge, not according to external Appearance, but according to the State of the "inner Man. Unfeigned Self-abasement, Affiance in a "REDEEMER's Righteousness, and Faith purifying "the Heart; these Endowments, though not observed, "or, if observed, not valued by the World; *these* shall "be the Test of his Approbation, and the Objects of "his Esteem. These constitute, what is called in the "next Words, *The Fear of the* LORD.

"In determining the Reality of these Qualities, He "shall be *unerringly* exact, and *infallibly* true. Let Hypocrisy put on every Mask, and practise all her Wiles, "they shall avail nothing before the ROOT and OFF-"SPRING of *David*. (Ver. 1.) As those extremely "subtile Effluvia, which escape the Inquisition of every "other Sense, are easily and perfectly distinguished by "the *Smell*; so, those Recesses of the Breast, and those "Secrets of the Heart, which lie too deep for all human Discernment; even they are naked and open, are "obvious and palpable, to *his* divinely sagacious Understanding."

factory Nets laid, and so artfully their Meshes sized, that they catch these vanishing Fugitives. They catch the roaming Perfumes, which fly off from the opening Honeysuckle; and take in the stationed Sweets, which hover round the expanded Rose. They imbibe all the balmy Fragrance of Spring, all the aromatic Exhalations of Autumn, and enable Us to banquet even on the *invisible* Dainties of Nature.

Furnished with these several Organs,

——————————— *Not a* Breeze
Flies o'er the Meadow, not a Cloud *imbibes*
The setting Sun's Effulgence, not a Strain
From all the Tenants of the warbling Shade
Ascends, but whence our Senses *can partake*
Fresh Pleasure *.

Another Capacity for frequent Pleasure, our bountiful CREATOR has bestowed, in granting Us the Powers of *Taste*. By means of which, the Food that supports our Body, feasts our Palate; first, treats Us with a pleasing Regale; then, distributes its beneficial Recruits.—The Razor, whetted with Oil, becomes more exquisitely keen. The *Saliva*, flowing upon the Tongue, and moistening its Nerves, quickens them into the liveliest Acts of Sensation.—This Sense is circumstanced, in a Manner peculiarly benign and wise; so as to be a standing, though silent Plea for *Temperance*. Without recurring to the Vengeance of GOD, or the Terrors of eternal Judgment, it is a powerful Dissuasive from irregular and excessive Indulgencies. Because, the Exercise of Sobriety,

* See that very elegant Poem, *The Pleasures of Imagination*. Book III.

Sobriety, sets the finest Edge on its Faculties; and adds the most *poignant* Relish to its Enjoyments. Whereas, Riot and Voluptuousness *pall* the Appetite; blunt its Sensibility; and render the Gratifications extremely languid, if not perfectly insipid. — The Sight, the Smell, the Taste are, not only so many separate Sources of Delight, but a joint Security to our Health. They are the *vigilant* and *accurate* Inspectors, which examine our Food, and inquire into its Properties; whether it be pleasant or disagreeable; wholesome or noxious. For the Discharge of this Office, they are excellently qualified, and most commodiously situate. So that nothing can gain Admission through the Mouth, till it has undergone the Scrutiny, and obtained the Passport of them all.

To all these, as a most necessary and advantageous Supplement, is added the Sense of *Feeling*. Which renders the whole Assemblage complete. — While other Senses have a particular Place of Residence; this is diffused throughout *the whole* Body. In the Palms of the Hands, on the Tips of the Fingers, and indeed through all the extreme Parts of the Flesh, it is most quick and lively: as the advanced Guards, or Scouts upon the Frontiers, are or ought to be peculiarly attentive and wakeful.—Scouts did I say? The whole Army of *Xerxes*, drawn out in Battle array, with his *Millions* of supernumerary Attendants*, were but like a few *Gleaners* straggling in the Field; if compared, either in Number or Order, with those nervous

* The Soldiers and Attendants of *Xerxes*, amounted to five Millions two hundred and eighty Thousand. Another Army, so large and numerous, occurs not in all the Records of History.

Vid. Herod. Lib. VII.

nervous Detachments, which pervade the Texture of the Skin, and minister to the Act of Feeling.—How happily is this Sense tempered between the two Extremes! Neither so *acute*, as the Membranes of the Eye; nor so *obtuse*, as the Callus of the Heel. The former would expose Us to continual Pain; render our Clothes galling, and the very Down oppressive. The latter would quite benumb the Body, and almost annihilate the Touch.—Nor this alone, but *all* the Senses are most exactly adapted to their respective Offices, and to the Exigencies of our present State. Were they *strained* to a much higher Tone, they would be Avenues of Anguish. Were they *relaxed* into greater Insensibility, they would be so many useless Incumbrances.

Asp. How admirable and gracious is this Provision, which the blessed GOD has made, to accommodate Us with delightful Sensations, and instructive Ideas!—The Taste, the Touch, and the Smell, are somewhat *straitened* in the Extent of their Operations. The Ear carries on a Correspondence with a *larger* Circle of Objects. But the Sight most amply supplies, whatever is wanting in all the other Senses. The Sight spreads itself to an *infinite* Multitude of Bodies; and brings within our Notice some of the *remotest* Parts of the Universe.—The Taste, the Touch, the Smell, perceive nothing but what is brought to their very Doors. Whereas, the Eye extends its Observation, as far as the Orbit of *Saturn*; nay glances, and in an Instant of Time, to the inconceivable Distance of the Stars. The Compass of the Earth, and the Immensity of the Skies, are its unlimited Range.

From

From this remarkable Variety, with regard to the *Sphere* and *Activity* of the Senſes, St. *Paul* forms one of the fineſt, boldeſt, and moſt important Compariſons in the World. By this He illuſtrates the Difference between the Wiſdom, which is derived from the Word of divine Revelation; and the Wiſdom, which is acquired by Dint of human Application.—In his Oration to the *Athenians*, ſpeaking of their moſt celebrated Sages, He ſays; *If ſo be, they might* feel after, *and find HIM* *. In his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, ſpeaking of the Man *Moſes*, our Author obſerves; That *He endured as* ſeeing *Him who is inviſible* †. Writing to his *Corinthian* Converts, He adds, as a farther Heightening of the Contraſt; *We all* beholding *with open Face the Glory of the LORD* ‡. —The Knowledge of the *Philoſopher*, is like that obſcure and ſcanty Information, which is to be obtained by groping with the Hand, in a dark Night. The Knowledge of the *Chriſtian*, is like that copious Influx of clear and inlarged Ideas, which We receive by the Mediation of the Eye, amidſt the Shining of a bright Day.

Tully, We find, has, in the Book before us, hit upon ſome of the moſt general and obvious Uſes, to which the ſeveral Parts of the human Body are adapted. Yet how *ſuperficial* and *deficient* appears his Penetration, when We take in the much deeper Diſcoveries, and the much higher Improvements of our modern Anatomy! Thus, and abundantly more defective, is his Knowledge of moral Duties and divine Doctrines; when compared with what is taught Us,

* *Acts* xvii. 27. Ει αρα γε ψηλαφησειαν αυτον.
† Heb. xi. 27. ‡ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Us, in the *plain* Sermon on the Mount, and the unstudied Epistles of the *Jewish* Tent-maker.

Therefore, though I would bless the beneficent GOD, for the Ministration of all the Senses, and particularly for the noble Organs of Vision: I would be more especially thankful for that Light of the World, *CHRIST JESUS* and his glorious Gospel; as well as for that *spiritual Eye* *, by which the One is understood, and the Other seen — a *lively Faith*. I would also long for that Place of beatific Enjoyment, where our Views of the adorable GODHEAD, and our Acquaintance with the sublimest Truths, will as much transcend all our present Apprehensions, as the most inlightened *Saint* exceeds the benighted *Gentile*.

Ther. The crowning Gift—That which improves the Satisfaction, and augments the beneficial Effects, accruing from all the Senses, is *Speech*.—Speech makes me a Gainer, from the Eyes and Ears of other People; from the Ideas they conceive, and the Observations they make. And what an admirable Instrument, for articulating the Voice, and modifying it into Speech, is the *Tongue!*—The Tongue has neither Bone nor Joint; yet fashions itself, with the utmost Volubility, into every Shape and every Posture, which can express Sentiment, or constitute Harmony. This little Collection of muscular Fibres, under the conducting Skill of the CREATOR, is

* *Luke* xxiv. 45. *Then opened He their Understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.* Διηνοιξεν is the Word used in this Place, and the Word used by the evangelical Historian, when He relates that *supernatural* Act, which gave Sight to the Blind.

the Artificer of our Words *. By this We communicate the *Secrets* of the Breaſt, and make our very *Thoughts* audible. By this We inſtruct the Ignorant, and comfort the Diſtreſſed; We glorify GOD, and edify each Other †; the Academic explains the abſtruſeſt Sciences, and the Eccleſiaſtic preaches the everlaſting Goſpel.—This is likewiſe the Efficient of *Muſic*. It is ſoft as the Lute, or ſhrill as the Trumpet; it can warble as the Lyre, or reſound like the Organ. Connecting the ſacred Anthem with its tuneful Strains, We ſoothe the Cares, and beguile the Toils of Life: We imitate the Angelic Choirs, and anticipate, in ſome Degree, their celeſtial Joys.—As the Tongue requires full Scope, and an eaſy Play, it is lodged in an ample Cavity; and ſurrounded with Reſervoirs of Spittle, always ready to diſtil the lubricating Dews. It moves under a concave Roof, which ſerves

* I am ſenſible, that the *Glottis* has a conſiderable Share, in modulating the Sound, and forming the Voice. But, as the Nature and Office of this moſt *curious Aperture*, are very little known by the Generality of People; We chooſe to follow the popular Opinion, ſo neatly deſcribed by the Poet,

——————— *Dædala Lingua,*
Lingua figuratrix Verborum, Opifexque Loquelæ.
Anti-Lucret.

† The articulating Tongue is called *Our Glory*, Pſal. lvii. 8. And ſuch indeed it is, when devoted to *theſe* Purpoſes. It is then a Diſtinction, not only of Man from the brutal Herd, but of the Righteous from the Congregation of the Ungodly. It is then like *choice Silver*, or as *a Tree of Life*.

Who would not bleſs for this the Gift of Speech,
And in the Tongue's Beneficence be rich?

ſerves as a *Sounding-board* to the Voice; giving it much the ſame additional Vigour and Grace, as the Shell of a Violin adds to the Language of the Strings.

Wiſe—wonderfully wiſe, and eminently gracious, is the Regulation both of *ſpontaneous* and *involuntary* Motion. Was this Regulation reverſed, what deplorable Inconveniencies would take place; nay, what unavoidable Ruin muſt enſue!—*Deplorable Inconveniencies*; if the Diſcharges of the Bowels, or Evacuations of the Bladder, were quite independent on our Leave. *Unavoidable Ruin*; if the Action of the Heart, required the Co-operation of our Thoughts; or the Buſineſs of Reſpiration, waited for the Concurrence of our Will.

The Will, in ſome Caſes, has not ſo much as a ſingle Vote. In others, She *determines* and *commands*, like an abſolute Sovereign; nor is there a Monarch upon Earth ſo punctually obeyed, as this Queen of the human Syſtem. If She but intimate her Pleaſure, the Spirits run, they fly, to execute her Orders; to ſtretch the Arm, or cloſe the Hand; to furrow the Brow with Frowns, or dimple the Cheek with Smiles.—How *eaſily*, as well as *punctually*, are theſe Orders carried into Execution! To turn the Screw, or work the Lever, is laborious and wearisome. But We move the Vertebræ, with all their appendent Chambers; We advance the Leg, with the whole incumbent Body; We riſe from our Seat; We ſpring from the Ground; and, though much Force is exerted, though a very conſiderable Weight is raiſed, We meet with no Difficulty, We complain of no Fatigue.

That all this ſhould be effected, without any Toil, and by a *bare Act* of the Will, is very ſurpriſing. But

that these Motions should be made, renewed, continued, even while We remain *intirely* ignorant of the *Manner*, in which they are performed, is beyond measure astonishing.—Who can play so much as a *single* Tune upon the Spinnet, without learning the Difference of the Keys, or studying the Rudiments of Music? Impossible! Yet the Mind of Man touches *every* Spring of the human Machine, with the most masterly Skill; though She knows nothing at all, concerning the Nature of her Implements, or the Process of her Operations.—We walk, We run, We leap; We throw Ourselves into a Variety of Postures, and perform a Multitude of Motions; yet are utterly unable to say, Which Nerve should be active; which Muscle should swell; or which Tendon approximate.

Put a *German* Flute into the Hand even of a sensible Person: without a Master to instruct Him, He is at a loss to make the Instrument speak: much less is He able to sink and soften the Sound, to exalt and extend it, just as He pleases.—Yet We are self-taught in the Method of *forming*, *regulating*, and *varying* the Voice. Naturally, and with unpremeditated Fluency, We give it the languishing Cadence of Sorrow, or the sprightly Airs of Joy; the low faultering Accents of Fear, or the elevated Tone and rapid Sallies of Anger.

The Eye of a Rustic, who has no Notion of Optics, or any of its Laws, shall *lengthen* and *shorten* its Axis; *dilate* and *contract* its Pupil, without the least Hesitation, and with the utmost Propriety: adapting itself, even with mathematical Exactness, to the particular Distance of Objects, and the different De-

grees of Light. By which means, it performs some of the most curious Experiments in the improved *Newtonian* Philosophy, without the least Knowledge of the Science, or so much as any Consciousness of its own Dexterity.

I can never sufficiently admire this Multiplicity of animated Organs; their finished Form, and their faultless Order. Yet I must confess myself struck with greater Admiration as the Power, the *truly mysterious* Power and Sway, which the Soul exercises over them. Ten thousand Reins are put into her Hand: she is not acquainted with their Office, their Use, or their Name: she has not learnt so much as to distinguish one from another: nevertheless, she manages all, conducts all, without the least Perplexity or the least Irregularity: rather, with a Promptitude, a Consistency, and a Speed, which nothing else can equal!

Upon the Whole — Great Reason had *Euripides* to call the human Body,

Σοφα τεκτονος καλον ποικιλμα.

I believe, the preceding Observations will justify us, if we give a fuller Meaning to the Poet, and translate his Words—*The infinitely varied, and inimitably fine Workmanship, of a great, supreme, unerring ARTIST.* Or, as *Virgil* speaks, with a Pertinency and a Spirit, which epitomizes all I have said, and expresses all I would say; This bodily Structure is indeed—*Non enarrabile Textum* *.

Asp.

* That is, A Structure, not barely correct, or highly finished, but (as *Theron* has elsewhere expressed it) *beyond Description curious.*

Asp. Wonderfully, I perceive, *and fearfully are we made* * *!*—Made of such complicated Parts; each so correctly fashioned, and all so exactly arranged †; every one executing such curious Functions, and many of them operating in so mysterious a Manner; as may justly render Us *a Wonder to Ourselves*.—Since Health depends upon such a numerous Assemblage of moving Organs: since a single Secretion stopped, may destroy the salutary Temperature of the Fluids; or a single Wheel clogged, may put an End to the vital Motion of the Solids: with what holy *Fear*, *should We pass the Time of our Sojourning Here below* ‡*!* Trusting, for continual Preservation, not merely on our own Care, but on that Omnipotent Hand, which formed the admirable Machine. That the same Hand which formed it, may superintend its Agency, and support its Being ‖.

When We consider the extensive Contrivance, and delicate Mechanism—What Plans of Geometry, have been laid; what Operations of Chemistry, are performed; in a Word, what Miracles of Art and Elegance

* Psal. cxxxix. 14.

† St. *Paul*'s Language on the Subject is exceedingly beautiful and expressive, Συναρμολογουμενον και Συμβιβαζομενον. Eph. iv. 16. The several Parts most nicely *adapted* to each other, and most perfectly *harmonizing* with the whole. All *associated* with that Propriety, and *connected* with that Firmness, which are the very Foundation of Symmetry, Vigour, and Agility.

‡ 1 Pet. i. 17.

‖ Agreeably to that philosophical Maxim, *Creatio & Conservatio eadem est Actio*: and to those scriptural Acknowledgments, It is GOD, *who holdeth our Soul in Life*; *He is the Length of our Days*; *his Visitation prolongeth our Spirit*.

gance are executed; in order to furnish Us with the necessary Recruits, and the several Delights of Life— Is there not abundant Reason to cry out, with the same inspired Writer; "*How dear are thy Counsels* "*unto me, O GOD!* Thy Counsels of creating "Wisdom! Thou hast not been sparing, but even "lavish of thy indulgent Designs. Thou hast omit- "ted no Expedient, which might establish my Ease; "inlarge my Comforts; and promote, yea complete "my bodily Happiness!" And is not this a most endearing Obligation *to glorify the blessed GOD, with our Bodies, as well as with our Spirits* *?

Ther. Our Spirits! Ay; what is this Mansion of Flesh, though so exquisitely wrought, compared with the noble and immortal Inhabitant, which resides within?

——————— *That intellectual Being;*
Those Thoughts, which wander through Eternity †!

This Consideration inclines me to think, that, if the *Casket* be so highly polished, the *Jewel* cannot be so excessively coarse, as my *Aspasio*'s Doctrine of original Corruption supposes.

Asp. I perceive your Aim, *Theron.* But must beg leave, at present, to decline all Overtures for a Dispute. If my Arguments have failed, your Description has answered its End. — I cannot suffer my Thoughts to be diverted from a Subject, which is so very engaging, yet so rarely discussed. I have such a strong Desire to recollect and retain what has been observed, that even *your* Conversation will, at this Juncture,

* 1 Cor. vi. 20. † MILTON.

Juncture, lose its Relish. Here therefore I put a Period to our Discourse, and must break away from your Company, in order to ruminate and digest my Notions, in some sequestered lonely Walk. Unless You will permit me, before I retire, to make one Remark. — And let it not startle my Friend, if I venture to say, That, amidst all his curious Observations, He has forgot the principal Circumstance of *Honour* and *Excellence*, which dignifies the human Body.

Ther. I have omitted many fine and admirable Properties, I confess. But sure I have not forgot the *principal* and most distinguishing.

Asp. You need not be displeased with Yourself. It argues no Defect in your Dissertation. The Circumstance I have in my View, could never be discovered, by following the dissecting Knife. It is learnt, not from *Cheselden*'s Draughts, or the Tables of *Albinus*; but from the Word of Revelation. What I mean, is This—The human Body was exalted to a most intimate and *personal Union*, with the eternal SON of GOD. He who decorated the Heaven with Stars, and crowned the Stars with Lustre; *HE vouchsafed to be made Flesh* *, *and was found in Fashion as a Man* †.—Nay, this is, even *now*, the Apparel of that divine and adorable PERSON. He is clothed with our Nature; He wears our very Limbs; and appears in the Dress of Humanity, even at the Right-hand of GOD, and at the Head of all the heavenly Hosts.

What think You of another Privilege, mentioned by the Apostle? *Your Bodies are the Temple of the*

* John i. 14. † Phil. ii. 8.

HOLY GHOST *. Not your Souls only, but your very Bodies are the Shrine, in which *the High and Holy ONE, that inhabiteth Eternity*, condescends to dwell. HE, who sitteth between the Cherubim, and walketh in the Circuit of the Skies, is pleased to sanctify these earthly Tenements, for his own Habitation. And is not this a *much grander* Embellishment, than all their matchless Contrivance and masterly Workmanship? Just as the *Rod* which budded, and the *Manna* which was miraculously preserved; the sacred *Oracle* of *Urim* and *Thummim*, with the *Cloud* of Glory covering the Mercy-seat; were a much higher Distinction to *Solomon*'s Temple, than the most heightened Beauties of Architecture.

Nor must I omit the Dignity — the transcendent and amazing Dignity — which is reserved for these Systems of Flesh, at the *Resurrection* of the Just. They will then be refined and improved, into the most perfect State, and the most beauteous Form. Surpassing whatever is resplendent and amiable in the most ornamental Appearances of material Nature. They will be purer than the unspotted Firmament; brighter than the Lustre of the Stars; and, which exceeds all Parallel, which comprehends all Perfection, they will *be made like unto CHRIST's glorious Body* †. Like that incomparably glorious Body, which the blessed *JESUS* wears, in his celestial Kingdom, and on his triumphant Throne.

When We add all these *magnificent Prerogatives*, which are revealed in Scripture, to all those *inimitable*

* 1 Cor. vi. 19. † Phil. iii. 21.

table Niceties, which are displayed by Anatomists, what Thankfulness, what Admiration, can equal such a Profusion of Favours?

When all thy Mercies, O my GOD,
My rising Soul surveys,
Transported with the View I'm lost
In Wonder, Love, and Praise!

DIALOGUE XIII.

THE Morning had been wet. At Noon the Rain ceaſed. But the Heavens ſtill continued gloomy. — Towards Evening, a gentle eaſtern Gale ſprung up; which diſſipated the dead Calm, and cleared the Face of the Sky.—The Sun, which had been muffled in Clouds, dropped the Veil. Diſengaged from the duſky Shroud, He ſhone forth with *peculiar Splendor*. His Beams, endeared by their late Suſpenſion, were doubly welcome, and produced unuſual Gaiety.

At this Juncture, *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* walked abroad. They walked alternately on the Terraces; one of which was oppoſite to the Country, the other contiguous to the Parterre.—Where the Gales, impregnated with the *freſheſt* Exhalations of Nature, breathed the Smell of Meads, and Heaths, and Groves.—Or elſe, ſhaking the Cluſters of Roſes, and ſweeping the Beds of Fragrance, they flung *Balm* and *Odours* through the Air.

At

At a Distance, were heard the Bleatings of the Flock, mingled with the Lowings of the milky Mothers. While more melodious Music, warbled from the neighbouring Boughs, and spoke aloud the Joy of their feathered Inhabitants.—And not only spoke their Joy, but spread an *additional* Charm over all the Landschape. For, amidst such Strains of native Harmony, the breathing Perfumes smell more sweet; the streaming Rills shine more clear; and the universal Prospect looks more gay.

Then was experienced, what *Milton* so delicately describes;

If chance the radiant Sun with farewel Sweet
Extend his Evening Beam, the Fields revive,
The Birds their Notes renew, and bleating Herds
Attest their Joy, that Hill and Valley rings.

With Wonder and Delight our Friends observed, both the exquisite Beauty, and the immense Magnificence of Things.—They were struck with the most profound Veneration of that Almighty MAJESTY; who hung the Sun in Vaults of Azure, and clothed his Orb with Robes of Lustre. Whose *Right-hand spanneth the Heavens* *, *and stretcheth them out as a Tent*, for innumerable Creatures, Worlds, Systems *to dwell in* †.—Charmed they were, at the Consideration of the CREATOR's boundless Beneficence. Who lifts up the Light of his Countenance, and Joy is shed; who opens his munificent Hand, and Plenty is poured, throughout all the Regions of the Universe. Insomuch, that even inanimate Beings seem to smile under a Sense of the Blessings: and though they

* Isa. xlviii. 13. † Isa. xl. 22.

they find not a Tongue to praiſe, yet ſpeak their Acclamations by their *gladdened* Looks.

Ther. How very different, *Aſpaſio*, is this delightful Appearance of Things, from your ill-favoured Doctrine of original Guilt, and original Depravity! Your Doctrine is a Contradiction to the Language of Nature. Nature ſays, through all her Works, "That GOD is *good*, and Men are made to be "*happy*." Whereas, your Opinion would turn the whole World into a vaſt Hoſpital, and make every individual Perſon, a *Leper* or a *Lazarus*.

Aſp. I join with my *Theron*, and with univerſal Nature, in bearing witneſs to the Goodneſs of our GOD. And nothing, I am perſuaded, diſplays it more, nothing manifeſts ſo much, as the Doctrine of our *Fall* in *Adam*, connected with our *Recovery* in *CHRIST*.—Only in one Particular I am obliged to diſſent. It is not my Opinion that *would make*, but the Sin of our Forefather which *has made*, the whole World an Infirmary, and every individual Perſon a Leper.

Ther. At this Rate, You would croud into that *ſingle* Act of Diſobedience, Evils more numerous, and more fatal, than the Plagues which were lodged in *Pandora*'s Box, or the Troops which were ſtowed in the *Trojan* Horſe.

Aſp. Far more numerous, and infinitely more pernicious.—The Fable of *Pandora*'s Box ſeems to have been a Shred of the Doctrine, picked up by the Heathen Wits, and faſhioned according to their ſportive Fancy. This would, if there was any Occaſion for ſuch weak Aſſiſtance, bring in the *Pagan* Theology,

as a subsidiary Evidence to our Cause.—The *Trojan* Horse poured Ruin upon a single City; but the primitive Transgression entailed Misery upon all Generations.

Ther. You have advanced this heavy Charge pretty strenuously, I must confess. But without descending to Facts, or appealing to Experience. All the Invectives are *general* and *declamatory*, none pointing and particular.

Asp. It is easy, my dear Friend, too easy to draw up a particular Bill of Indictment; and not only to *specify* the Facts, but to *demonstrate* the Charge. Experience, sad Experience will furnish Us with a Cloud of Witnesses, and prove my Remonstrances to be more than Invectives.

Were we to dissect human Nature, as, in our last Conference, You treated the animal System, we should find the Leprosy of Corruption, spreading itself through our whole Frame. For which Reason, it is styled, by an inspired Writer, "The Old Man *." —*Old*; because, in its Commencement, it was early as the Fall; and, in its Communication to Individuals, is coeval with their Being.—*Man*; because it has tainted the Body, infected the Soul, and disordered the whole Person.

St. *Paul*, describing a profligate Conversation, speaks in this remarkable Manner; *fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh, and of the Mind* †. By the Desires of the Flesh, He means those irregular Inclinations, which correspond with the *animal* Part of our Constitution. By the Desires of the Mind, He denotes those evil Propensities, which are more immediately seated in the

* Rom. vi. 6. † Eph. ii. 3.

the *intellectual* Faculties. And by both, He very ſtrongly expreſſes the *total* Depravation of our Nature.

Ther. What You call evil Propenſities, I am apt to think, are not really ſinful, but appointed for the *Trial* of our Virtue.—Nay, ſince they are confeſſedly *natural*, they cannot be in themſelves evil. Becauſe, upon this Suppoſition, GOD, who is the Author of our Nature, would be the Author alſo of our Sin.

Aſp. Then You imagine, that Propenſities to Evil, are void of Guilt. This is the *Popiſh* Notion, but neither the *Moſaic* nor the *Apoſtolic* Doctrine.—In the Law of *Moſes* it is written, *Thou ſhalt not covet* *. The Divine LEGISLATOR prohibits, not only the iniquitous Practice, but the evil Deſire.—The Apoſtle gives it in charge to the *Coloſſians*, *Mortify your Members, which are upon the Earth*; *Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, and*, which is the Source of all, *evil Concupiſcence* †. Now, can *that* be free from Guilt, which We are commanded to mortify? Which, if not mortified, denominates Us Children of Diſobedience, and ſubjects Us to the Wrath ‡ of GOD?

Though theſe Propenſities are confeſſedly natural, they may be evil notwithſtanding. The ſacred Writers oppoſe what is natural, to what is ſpiritual. Inſtead of commending it, as innocent; they condemn it, as *fooliſh* ‖, *baſe* §, and *criminal* ¶.—Neither does this make the AUTHOR of our Nature, the Author of our Sin. But it proves, that our Nature has ſuſtained a deplorable Loſs: that it is quite different from

* Exod. xx. 17. † Col. iii. 5. ‡ Col. iii. 6.
‖ 1 Cor. ii. 14. § 2 Pet. ii. 12. ¶ Eph. ii. 3.

from its original State: that, what is ſpoken of the *Iſraelitiſh* People, is applicable to the *human* Race; *I planted Thee a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed: how then art Thou turned into the degenerate Plant of a ſtrange Vine* *?

However, let Us obſerve your Propoſal: dwell no longer on general Hints, but deſcend to a particular Examination. As our Examination will chiefly reſpect the Soul, let me inquire, What are her principal Faculties?

Ther. The *Underſtanding*, the *Will*, and the *Affections*. Theſe are the moſt diſtinguiſhing Powers, which that Queen of the human Oeconomy retains in her Service.—Theſe, like the ſeveral Diſtributions of ſome ample River, run through the whole Man; to quicken, fertilize, and enrich all his Converſation.—But You repreſent them bitter, as the Waters of *Marah*; unwholeſome, as the Streams of *Jericho*; noxious, as the Pottage prepared for the Sons of the Prophets.

Aſp. Nor is this a Miſrepreſentation. For, ſuch they really are; till divine Grace, like *Moſes*'s Wood †, like *Eliſha*'s Salt ‡, or the Meal ‖ caſt in by that holy Man of GOD, *ſweeten* them, *heal* them, and render their Operations *ſalutary*.

The Underſtanding claims our firſt Regard.—This, however qualified to ſerve the Purpoſes of civil Life, is unable to diſcover the Truths, in which *Wiſdom* conſiſts; or to form the Tempers, from which *Happineſs* flows.

Let Us take our Specimen, not from the uncultivated Savages of *Afric*, but from the politeſt Nation

* Jer. ii. 21. † Exod. xv. 25. ‡ 2 Kings ii. 21, 22. ‖ 2 Kings iv. 41.

tion in *Europe*.—The *Grecians* piqued themſelves on their intellectual Accompliſhments. They termed all the reſt of Mankind *Barbarians*. Yet, even theſe Sons of Science, *profeſſing themſelves wiſe, were*, in Fact, egregious *Fools* *.—Not to enumerate the ſhocking Immoralities, which the Poets aſcribed to their Deities. Not to inſiſt upon the groſs Idolatries, which the common People practiſed in their Worſhip. Even their *Philoſophers*, the moſt improved and penetrating Geniuſes, were unacquainted with the very *firſt Principle* † of true Religion. Even they could not pronounce, with an unfaultering Tongue ‡, "That GOD is ONE."

Ther.

* Rom. i. 22.

† *The firſt of all the Commandments is, Hear, O Iſrael, The* LORD *our* GOD *is* ONE LORD; *and Thou ſhalt love the* LORD, &c. *Mark* xii. 29. From which it appears, that the *Unity* of the GODHEAD, is the Foundation of all the divine Commandments, and of all human Worſhip.

‡ *Unfaultering*—For though, in *Plato*'s Book of Laws, We meet with ὁ Θεὸς—τῷ Θεῷ—τὸν Θεὸν again and again; yet He ſoon departs from this *ſound Speech*, and relapſes into the Language of Idolatry.

A learned and ingenious Friend, would fain have *Socrates* exempted from this Charge.—I wiſh, I could gratify his benevolent Temper, and ſpare that amiable Philoſopher. But, however juſtly He may expreſs Himſelf on ſome Occaſions, at other Times He wavers; He evidently revolts; and is moſt pitiably inconſiſtent with Himſelf.—Even in his excellent Conference with *Ariſtodemus*, where He argues admirably well for the *Exiſtence*, He cannot ſteadily adhere to the *Unity* of the GODHEAD.—Nay; in his laſt ſolemn Apology before his Judges, He publicly *renounces* the Truth; declares, that He worſhipped thoſe Gods, which were acknowledged by his Countrymen; worſhipped them, and no other; on the ſame Feſtivals, at the ſame Altars, and in the ſame

(idolatrous)

Ther. With regard to the Philosophers, the Prejudices of a wrong Education, might pervert their Judgment; or, in compliance with the prevailing Mode, they might adopt Customs, and assent to Notions, which they did not thoroughly approve.

Asp. A poor Compliment this to their Integrity! Had I been their Advocate, methinks, I would have given up the Sagacity of my Clients, rather than their Fidelity to the Cause of GOD and Truth.

With reference to the *supreme GOOD*, they were equally at a loss.—There's not one among all the inferior Creatures; not even the crawling Worm, or the buzzing Fly; but perceives what is *beneficial*, and pursues it; discerns what is *pernicious*, and avoids it. Yonder Caterpillar, whose Nourishment is from one particular Species of Vegetables, never makes a wrong Application to another: never is allured by the Fragrance of the Auricula, or dazzled by the Splendor of the Tulip; but constantly distinguishes, and as constantly

(*idolatrous*) Manner.—*No other:* these are his Words, Ουτε γαρ εγωγε αντι Διος, ϗ Ηρας, ϗ των συν τουτοις Θεων, ουτε θυων τισι καινοις Δαιμοσιν, ουτε ομνυς, ουτε ονομαζων αλλους Θεους αναπεφηνα. SOCRAT. Memor Lib. I. c. i. *Sect.* 11, 24.

Let none conclude, from this or any other Passage, That We would consign over all the Heathens to Damnation. This is as far from our Intention, as it is foreign to the Argument. We are only like Witnesses, summoned to give in our Evidence. From which it appears, that the very best among the *Gentiles*, were ignorant of the true GOD; or, if *they knew Him*, in any Degree, *they glorified Him not as GOD; but became vain in their Imagination*, and vile in their Worship.—*Whether* they shall obtain Mercy, or *which* of them shall be Objects of divine Clemency, is left *solely* to the Determination of their supreme, unerring, righteous JUDGE:

—— *Non nostrum est tantas componere Lites.*

conſtantly adheres to the Leaf, which affords her the proper Food. So *ſagacious* are the meaneſt Animals, with relation to their reſpective Happineſs! While the moſt celebrated of the Heathen Sages were, on a Subject of the very ſame Import, mere *Dotards*.—*Varro* reckons up no leſs than two hundred and eighty-eight different Opinions, concerning the true Good; and not one of them derives it from the true Source. I mean a Conformity to the ever-bleſſed GOD, and an Enjoyment of his infinite Perfections.

If, on theſe *leading* Points, they were ſo erroneous; no Wonder, that they were bewildered in their other Reſearches.

Ther. We are not inquiring into the Circumſtances of this or that particular Nation; but into the State of Mankind in general.

Aſp. Caſt your Eye, *Theron*, upon thoſe Swallows. They ſhoot themſelves, with ſurpriſing Rapidity, through the Air. I ſhould take them for ſo many living Arrows, were it not for their ſhifting, winding, wanton Motions.—Are not theſe what You call *Birds of Paſſage?*

Ther. Theſe, and ſome other of the feathered Race, are our conſtant Viſitants in Summer; but leave Us, at the Approach of Winter. As ſoon as the Weather becomes cold, they aſſemble themſelves in a Body; and concert Meaſures, for their Departure. *Who* convenes the Aſſembly—*What* Debates ariſe—Or *how* they communicate the Reſolution taken—I do not preſume to ſay. This is certain, that not one of them diſlodges, till the Affair is ſettled, and the Proclamation has been publiſhed. Not a ſingle Loiterer is to be ſeen, when the Troops are preparing

paring for their Decampment; nor a single Straggler to be found, when they have once begun their March. —Having finished their Journey through the Land, their Wings become a sort of Sails *; and they launch, not into, but over the Ocean. Without any *Compass*, to regulate their Course; or any *Chart*, to make Observations in their Voyage; they arrive safely at the desired Shore. And what is still more extraordinary, they always find the readiest Way, and the shortest Cut.

Asp. *The Stork in the Heavens knoweth her appointed Times: and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the Time of their Coming: but my People know not the Judgment of their* GOD †. The young Ones of those Birds perceive, how absolutely necessary it is, to forsake the Land of their Nativity, and travel in quest of milder Climes.—But our Offspring, even when their Minds begin to open, *are brutish in their Knowledge* ‡. Born they are, and too long continue, *like the wild Ass's Colt* ‖. Not only quite destitute of heavenly Wisdom, but stupid to apprehend it, and averse to receive it. *As soon as they are born, they go astray*, and—

* *Remigio Alarum.* VIRG.

† Jer. viii. 7. ‡ Jer. x. 14.

‖ *Job* xi. 12. How keenly is this Comparison pointed!—Like the *Ass*'s, an Animal remarkable for its Stupidity, even to a Proverb.—Like the *Ass*'s *Colt*, which must be still more egregiously stupid than the Dam.—Like the *wild Ass*'s *Colt*, which is not only blockish, but stubborn and refractory; neither possesses valuable Qualities by Nature, nor will easily receive them by Discipline.—The Image, in the Original, is yet more strongly touched. The comparative Particle *like* is not in the *Hebrew*; *born a wild Ass*'s *Colt*; or, as We should say in *English*, *a mere wild* &c.

Ther. *Go astray*—To what is this owing, but to the *bad Examples* they behold? They catch the wayward Habit, from the irregular Conversation of others.

Asp. Is not this a Confirmation of my Point? Why are they *yielding* Clay to each bad Impression? *Case-hardened* Steel to every edifying Application?—From imitating unworthy Examples, You can hardly with-hold them, by the tightest Rein. But, if You would affect them with a Sense of divine Things, or bring them acquainted with GOD their Maker, *Line must be upon Line, Line upon Line: Precept must be upon Precept, Precept upon Precept: Here a little, and there a little* *.—What farther corroborates my Sentiment, is, That all these tender Toils of Erudition, are generally unwelcome; are too often unsuccessful; nay, will always be ineffectual, without the Concurrence of Almighty Grace.

Besides, *Theron*, if this Propensity to Evil be observable in *all* Children, it seems more than probable, that the unhappy Bias is derived from their Parents, rather

* A great Critic has laid down the following Rule, to be observed in fine Writing;

'Tis not enough no Harshness gives Offence,
The Sound must be an Echo to the Sense.

POPE's *Essay on Criticism.*

Never was this delicate Maxim more nicely exemplified, than in the above-cited Passage of *Isaiah.* Chap. xxviii. 13.—Another Instance of the same kind occurs in the seventh Verse. Where the Language seems to mimic the *reeling, straggling, giddy* Motions of a Drunkard: while it iterates and reiterates the Idea; expresses the same Thing, in a different and still different Manner; with an apparent, and, in this Case, a significant *Circumrotation* of Words.

rather than catched from their Neighbours; and owing, not to the Influence of external Examples, but to a Principle of internal Corruption*.—Neglect the Education of Children, and You are sure to have their Manners evil, their Lives unprofitable. Nay, only remit your Endeavours, and they lose what has been gained: they start aside, like a broken Bow. And wherefore this? Why do they not, without the Rules of Discipline or Lessons of Instruction, *spontaneously* addict themselves to the Exercise of every Virtue? Just as the Cygnets, in yonder Canal, spontaneously take to the Element of Water, and the Act of Swimming.

That Bed, in the Garden before Us, will suggest the Reason. It has been digged and dressed this very Day. It now lies smooth and clean. Not a single Weed appears on its Surface. Yet, how certainly will it, in a very little Time, produce a plenteous Growth of those vegetable Nuisances?—Whence can this proceed? No Hand will sow them. No Wish will invite them. But the *Seeds*, though unperceived by any Eye, are *already* there. Disseminated by the Winds, they have mixed themselves with the Mold, and are sunk into the Soil.—So, just so, it is with our Children. The Seeds of Iniquity are *within* † them; and,

* St. *Paul* confesses, that He and his Fellow-saints were, in their unconverted State, depraved: and this, not διὰ τὴν ἕξιν, by *Custom* or *Habit*, but φύσει, by *Nature*. Eph. ii. 3.

† Whoever chooses to examine the Seeds, the poisonous Seeds, which are lodged in this *Nursery* of all Evil, may see a Sample of them in our LORD's Description, *Mark* vii. 20, 21, 22, 23. Where He characterizes the Heart, not barely of the hypocritical Pharisee, or the

and, unleſs proper Diligence be exerted by Us, unleſs gracious Aſſiſtance be vouchſafed from Above, they will aſſuredly ſpring up; over-run their Souls; and diſhonour their Lives.

Ther. Let Us leave the Children, and make *Men* the Subject of our Inquiry.

Aſp. In this Reſpect, *Theron*,

Men are but Children of a larger Growth.

We may leave the Veſt or Hanging-ſleeve Coat, but We ſhall ſtill find the Follies of the Child.—In *Youth*, what low Ambition, and Fondneſs for deſpicable Pleaſures.—In *Manhood*, what a keen Purſuit of tranſitory Wealth; yet what a cold Inattention to GOD and Holineſs!—Men, and Men too of the greateſt Abilities, whoſe Penetration on other Subjects, is piercing as the Eagle's Sight, are, on the moſt important Points, *blind* as the incaverned Mole.

Ther. What! is the Underſtanding like the moſt *dim-ſighted* Animal, when lodged in her darkeſt Retirement? That ſublime Faculty of the Soul; which lends her Eye to all the reſt; ſits at the Helm, and directs their Motions!

Aſp. You remember, I preſume, that beautiful Paſſage in *Milton* *; which Mr. *Addiſon* ſo highly admires, and ſo judiciouſly illuſtrates. The Paſſage I mean,

abandoned Publican, but of Mankind in general.—After ſuch an Authority, ſhall I mention the Teſtimony of *Seneca?* We are allowed to glean the Grapes, when the Vintage is gathered. In ſuch a View I would introduce the *Philoſopher* after the SAVIOUR. *Omnia in omnibus Vitia ſunt; ſed non omnia in Singulis extant.*

DE BENEF. Lib. IV.

* Book XI. 203, &c.

I mean, where the Archangel *Michael* comes down, to advertise *Adam* of future Events, and to execute the Sentence of divine Justice.

Ther. I remember it perfectly well.—In the East, the great Light of Day lies under an Eclipse. In the West, a bright Cloud descends; filled with an Host of Angels, and more luminous than the Sun itself. The whole Theatre of Nature is darkened, that this glorious Machine may appear in all its Magnificence and Beauty.—From this radiant Chariot, the *Potentate* of *Heaven* alights; and advances, with a majestic Statelineſs, to meet *Adam*.

Asp. Should You see such an august Personage, alighting from such a splendid Chariot, and walking amidst the thronged Streets of a City?—Should You behold every One intent upon his Business or Diversions; struck with no *Awe*; paying no *reverential* Regard to this celestial Visitant; what would You think?

Ther. I should certainly suspect, That some superior Power had drawn a *Veil* over their Sight, and hid this wonderful Spectacle from their View.

Asp. Such is really the Case with all Mankind by Nature, and with the Generality of People, during their whole Life.—GOD, the infinitely great GOD, is in every Place. Yet how Few *advert* to his Presence?—All Nature exhibits Him to their Senses; yet, perhaps, He is not in any of their Thoughts.

The Sun, clothed in transcendent Brightness, most illustriously displays his MAKER's Glory. The Moon, though drest in fainter Beams, has Lustre enough to shew Us the adorable DEITY, and his marvelous Perfections. The Stars, fixed as they

are at an unmeasurable Distance, and *lessened* almost to a Point, come in with their Evidence, and *magnify* their CREATOR to a gazing but unaffected World.

The Air *whispers* his Clemency in the gentle, the refreshing Gales of Spring. If We take no Notice of this soft persuasive Address, the Tone is elevated; the Majesty of JEHOVAH *sounds aloud*, in roaring Winds, and rending Storms. Yet *both* Expedients fail. Man is like the deaf Adder, that stoppeth her Ears. He refuseth to hear the Voice of the Charmers, charm they never so sweetly, never so forcibly.

Each Flower, arrayed in Beauty, and breathing Perfume, courts our Affections for its infinitely amiable AUTHOR.—Not a Bird that warbles, nor a Brook that murmurs, but invites our Praise, or chides our Ingratitude. —All the Classes of Fruits deposit their Attestation on our Palates, yet seldom reach our Hearts. They give Us a Proof of the divine Benignity; a Proof, as *undeniable* as it is pleasing, and too often as *ineffectual* also.

In short; the whole Creation is a kind of magnificent Embassy from its Almighty LORD; deputed to proclaim *his Excellencies*, and demand *our Homage*. Yet, who has not disregarded the former, and with-held the latter?—How Few walk, as seeing HIM that is invisible, or have Fellowship with the FATHER of Spirits? Though, to walk before Him, is our *highest* Dignity; and to have Fellowship with Him, is our *only* Felicity?

Ther. This is owing to *Inattention*, rather than to any Blindness or Defect in Man's Understanding. The many Works of Genius, which have been produced in various Ages, are an abundant Proof of his intel-

intellectual Capacity.—Have not the Seas been traverſed, and the Skies meaſured? Has not the Earth been diſemboweled of its choiceſt Treaſures; while its Surface is beautified with Towns, Cities, Palaces, innumerable?—What fine Arts are invented and exerciſed; and to what a Pitch of Perfection are they carried? Arts that ſeem, if not to exceed, at leaſt to *rival* Nature.—It was the Underſtanding, which formed all theſe great Deſigns. It was the Underſtanding, which contrived the Means, and conducted the Execution.—And are not theſe unqueſtionable Evidences of her very ſuperior Abilities?

Aſp. Then ſhe is like ſome great Empreſs, who conquers half the World, but is unable to rule *Herſelf*. Who extends her Regulations into foreign Climes, while her domeſtic Affairs are involved in Confuſion.—Do You doubt the Reality of this Remark? Set Yourſelf to meditate upon the moſt intereſting Truths. How *deſultory*, how *incoherent* are your Thoughts?—Charge them to be collected. They diſobey your Orders.—Rally the undiſciplined Vagrants. Again they deſert the Taſk.—Exert all your Power, and keep them cloſe to their Buſineſs. Still they elude your Endeavours.

The other Day, I could not forbear ſmiling at a little Adventure of your youngeſt Son's. Some *Quick-ſilver*, which happened to be ſpilt upon the Floor, parted into ſeveral Globules. The ſhining Balls looked ſo prettily, he longed to make them his own. But when he offered to take them up, they ſlipt from his Hand. As ſoon as he renewed the Attempt, ſo often He met with a Diſappointment. The cloſer

He strove to grasp them, the more speedily they escaped from his Fingers. He seemed, at first, to be amazed; then became quite angry, that the little *Fugitives* should so constantly *baffle* his repeated Efforts.—Thus unmanageable I very often find my own Thoughts. If yours are under no better Regimen, this may convince Us both, that all is not according to the original Creation.

We apply Ourselves to converse with the everlasting GOD in *Prayer*. Here, One would expect to have the Thoughts all Clearness, and all Composure. But here *We are not sufficient of Ourselves, to think any Thing as of Ourselves* *. All those holy Ideas, which create Reverence, or strengthen Faith, or quicken Love, come from the FATHER of Lights. Should HE withdraw His Influence, all will be dull, and dark, and dead.—It may be, We are somewhat inlivened in this sacred Exercise; before We are aware, perhaps in the very Midst of the solemn Office, our Attention is *dissipated*; and not dissipated only, but *scattered* to the Ends of the Earth. The GOD of all Glory is forsaken, and the Devotion paid to some senseless Foppery. A Malefactor, begging his Life at the Knees of his Sovereign; and discontinuing his Suit, in order to caress a *Lap-dog*, or pursue a *Butterfly*; is but a faint Image of the Vanity which attends our devotional Services.—Reason, which ought to correct these Irregularities, is treated like the incredulous Lord; who, instead of controuling the unruly Multitude, was overborne by their Impetuosity, and trodden under Foot †.

Since

* 2 Cor. iii. 5. † 2 Kings vii. 17.

Since then the Reins are ſtruck out of our Hands, and We have loſt the Rule over our own Faculties; ſurely, We are in a State different, very different from our primitive Conſtitution.

Ther. However inſenſible to *refined* Speculation, the Underſtanding, when *Intereſt* is in the Caſe, is apprehenſive enough.

Aſp. In temporal *, not in ſpiritual Affairs.—Your younger Brother, *Theron*, is a Merchant. We will ſuppoſe Him at the Sea-ſide; within a ſmall Diſtance of the Veſſel, on which a conſiderable Part of his Subſtance is embarked.—We will ſuppoſe the Veſſel in the utmoſt Diſtreſs; ready to founder with her Leaks, or to ſtrike upon the Rocks.—If he diſcovers no Sign of Concern; calls in no Aſſiſtance from the Country; makes no Effort to *ſave* the Crew, and *ſecure* the Cargo; would You not think him bereaved of his Underſtanding, or deprived of his Sight?—Could You conceive a more favourable Opinion of his Eyes or his Intellect? If, inſtead of trying every Method to prevent a Shipwreck, He ſhould amuſe Himſelf with picking *Shells* from the Ocean, or drawing *Figures* on the Sand.

We, and every One of our Fellow-creatures, have an Intereſt in Jeopardy, unſpeakably more precious, than all the rich Lading of a thouſand Fleets. Our Souls, our immortal Souls, are expoſed, every Day, every Hour, to the Peril of *everlaſting Deſtruction*. Every Temptation is threatening to their endleſs Welfare, as a Ridge of craggy Rocks to a Ship that drives before the ſtrongeſt Gale.—Yet, how unconcerned are Mankind? Where is their holy Fear?

* Called therefore by the Apoſtle, *Fleſhly Wiſdom*, and oppoſed to the Grace of GOD. 2 *Cor.* i. 12.

Fear? Where their godly Jealousy? Where their wakeful Circumspection? Rather, what a *gay Insensibility* is observable in their Behaviour? Or else, what a *lifeless Formality* prevails in their Supplications? Their Supplications to that Almighty BEING, who alone is able to save and to destroy.—Was not the human Understanding both darkened and benumbed, We should see our Neighbours, We should feel Ourselves awakened, into much the same earnest Solicitude, as the Disciples expressed; when, perceiving the Waves boistrous, and their Bark sinking, they cried; *LORD! Save Us! We perish!*

But alas! in Things of an unseen Nature, though of eternal Consequence, *Interest*, that habitual Darling of every Heart, loses its engaging Influence. Nay; when Eternity, all-important Eternity is at stake, even *Self-preservation* is scarce any longer a governing Principle.—What can be more deplorable? And, if We admit not the Doctrine of original Corruption, what so unaccountable?

Ther. This, I must confess, is true, with regard to the unthinking Rabble. To them may be accommodated the Remark of *Augustus*. Who, when he saw some foreign Females, carrying Apes in their Arms instead of Infants, said to one of his Courtiers; "Have the Women of those Countries *no Children*, "that they are so fond of such despicable Ani- "mals?"—The Vulgar are so immersed in secular Cares, that One might indeed be tempted to ask; "Have those People *no Souls?* that Buying and Sell- "ing, Eating and Drinking, ingross their whole "Concern?"—But Persons of Rank and Education, think in a more exalted Manner.

Asp. Do you then imagine, that an Elevation of Circumstances sets the Affections on Things above? Or, that it is the peculiar Infelicity of the *Vulgar*, to *grovel* in their Desires?—Gold, I believe, is more likely to increase, than to dissipate the Fog on the Mind. Abundance of Possessions, instead of disengaging the Heart, fasten it more inseparably to the Earth. Even superior Attainments in Learning, if not sanctified by Grace, serve only to render the Owner somewhat more refined in his Follies.—But Comparisons, between the various Classes of Mankind, are as useless as they are invidious. None, in either Condition, attend to the Things which make for their Peace, till they are *awakened* from their Lethargy, by the quickening SPIRIT of *CHRIST*. And even then We cannot but observe evident Indications of much *remaining* Blindness.

How apt are such Persons to mistake the Way of Salvation? To place their own Works for a Foundation of Hope, instead of *CHRIST* the Rock of Ages? Thinking, by their own Performances to *win*, not seeking from unmerited Grace to *receive*, the Inheritance of eternal Glory. Which is more absurdly vain, than to offer Toys as an Equivalent for Thrones; or to dream of purchasing Diadems with a Mite.—They are also prone to misapprehend the Nature of Holiness. Are zealous to regulate the *external* Conduct, without attending to the Renovation of the *Heart*: in outward Forms elaborate; with respect to inward Sanctity, less if at all exact. A Labour just as preposterous, as to skin over the Surface of a Wound, while it festers at the Bottom, and consumes the Bone.

Give

Give me Leave to ask, *Theron*; When our LORD declares, *Unless a Man be born again, He cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven* *; when he speaks of *eating his Flesh*, and *drinking his Blood* †; when You hear or read of Union with the blessed *JESUS*, or Communion with the most high GOD: is there not a Cloud, if not total Darkness, on your Mind ‡? —How erroneous was the *Psalmist* himself, in his Judgment concerning the divine Disposals? *So foolish was I and ignorant, even as it were a Beast*, or as the veriest Beast *before Thee* ‖.—The Voice of Experience therefore will attest, what the Word of Revelation has averred; That *the natural Man*, be his intellectual Abilities ever so pregnant, or even so improved, *cannot know the Things of the SPIRIT of GOD* §.

He

* John iii. 3. † John vi. 54.

‡ With regard to the Mysteries of *CHRIST*, the greatest Proficients are but *Obtuse acute*, Dull even in their Acuteness.—What says the wise *Agur*? An invaluable Fragment of whose Works is preserved in the Book of *Proverbs*. *Surely I am more brutish than any Man, and have not the Understanding of a Man*: even though the following Verses bespeak the very singular Elevation and Extent of his Knowledge. *Prov.* xxx. 2.—Conformably to the Experience of this excellent Man, I have always observed, that the more inlightened People are, the more they lament their Ignorance; the more they pant after a continual Progress in heavenly Knowledge; and pray for clearer, still clearer Manifestations of the incomprehensible GOD.

‖ I question, whether *Aspasio*'s Translation comes fully up to the Emphasis of the Original. The comparative Particle is omitted in the *Hebrew*. *As* softens and palliates the Matter. Therefore the *Psalmist*, to express the deepest Sense of his Ignorance, says, *I was a Beast*, yea, *the veriest Beast*, בהמות, Psal. lxxiii. 22.

§ 1 Cor. ii. 14.

He has no Sight to discern their Beauty; no Taste to relish their Sweetness. Nay, though they are the purest Light, and the most perfect Wisdom, to Him they appear, not only dark and obscure, but even *Foolishness* itself.

Would this be the Case, if the Understanding was not greatly depraved? Should it be difficult for your Ear, to distinguish the Diversity of Sounds; or for your Eye, to discern the Variety of Colours; would You not conclude, that the Organs were very much *impaired*?

Ther. I think, You have treated the Understanding, as *Zopyrus* served his own Body *; when he went over to the Enemy.—Do You intend to mangle the other Faculties, at the same unmerciful Rate?

Asp. That Nobleman *made* the Wounds, which disfigured his Flesh. I have only *probed* the Sores, which were found in the Understanding. If I have touched the Quick, and put the Patient to Pain, it is only to facilitate the Operation of Medicine, and make way for a Cure.—But permit me to ask, Wherein does the Excellency of the human *Will* consist?

Ther. In following the Guidance of Reason, and submitting to the Influence of proper Authority.

Asp. The Will, I fear, rejects the Government of Reason; and it is undeniably certain, that it rebels against the Authority of GOD.

Cast your Eye upon that *Team* of *Horses*, with which yonder Countryman is ploughing his fallow Ground. No less than five of those robust Animals are linked together, and yield their submissive Necks to

* *See* ROLLIN's *Antient Hist.* Vol. III. *p.* 46.

to the Draught. They have more Strength than twenty Men, yet are managed by a *ſingle Lad*. They not only ſtand in awe of the Laſh, but liſten to the Voice of their Driver. They turn to the Right-hand or to the Left; they quicken their Pace, or ſtop ſhort in the Furrow; at the bare Intimation of his Pleaſure.—Are *We* equally obedient to the Calls, to the Exhortations, the expreſs Injunctions of our heavenly LORD? The bleſſed *JESUS* ſpoke at the Beginning, and the World was made. He ſpeaks by his Providence, and the Univerſe is upheld. When He ſhall ſpeak at the laſt Day, the Heavens will paſs away, and the Earth be diſſolved. Yet He ſpeaks to Us in his divine Word, and We turn a deaf Ear to his Addreſs. He ſpeaks in tender Expoſtulations, and no Melting of Heart enſues. He ſpeaks in precious Promiſes, and no ardent Deſires are inkindled.—The Will, which, in theſe Caſes, ought to be turned as *Wax* to the *Seal*, is unimpreſſed and inflexible as an *iron Sinew*.

Ther. The human Will is conſtantly inclined to preſerve, accommodate, and make its Poſſeſſor happy. Is not this the right *Poſition*, in which it ſhould always ſtand? Or the moſt deſirable *Direction*, that can be given to its Motions?

Aſp. I ſhould be glad, if Fact bore witneſs to your Aſſertion. But Fact, I apprehend, is on the contrary Side.—I took notice, as we came along, of ſome *Ants* buſily employed on a little Hillock. Have You made any Obſervations, *Theron*, on this reptile Community?

Ther. It is a little *Republic**. They inhabit a Kind of oblong City, divided into various Streets. They

* See *Nat. Diſpl.* Vol. I.

They are governed by Laws, and regulated by Politics, of their own. Their Magazines are commodiously formed, and judiciously guarded against the Injuries of the Weather. Some are defended by an Arch made of Earth, and cemented with a peculiar Sort of Glue. Some are covered with Rafters of slender Wood, and thatched with Rushes or Grass. The Roof is always raised with a double Slope, to turn away the Current of the Waters, and shoot the Rain from their Store-houses. They all *bestir* themselves, with *incessant* Assiduity, while the Air is serene; while the Roads are good; and Abundance of loose Grain lies scattered over the Fields.—By these Precautions, they live secure, when Storms embroil the Sky; they want no Manner of Conveniency, even when Winter lays waste the Plains.

Asp. Do *We* improve, so diligently, our present Opportunities? This Life is the Seed-time of Eternity. Do We husband the precious Moments like Persons sensible of their unspeakable Importance? Sensible, that if We trifle and are indolent, *they* will be irrecoverably gone, and *We* irretrievably ruined.

Sickness, We know not how soon, may invade Us, Pain may torment Us, and both may issue in our final Dissolution. Are We duly aware of these awful Changes, and properly solicitous to put all in order for their Approach?—We walk (alarming Thought!) upon the very Brink of Death, Resurrection, and Judgment. Do We walk like *wise Virgins*, with our Loins girt; with our Lamps trimmed; in a State of continual Readiness, for the heavenly BRIDEGROOM's Advent?

Those Ants *have no Guide, Overseer, or Ruler. Yet they prepare their Meat in the Summer, and gather their*

their Food in the Harveſt *. We have all theſe, yet neglect the Time of our Viſitation. — We have GOD's unerring Word, to guide Us; GOD's ever-watchful Eye, to overſee Us; GOD's ſovereign Command, to rule and quicken Us. Notwithſtanding all theſe Motives, is not the Speech of the Sluggard, the very Language of our Conduct? *A little more Sleep, a little more Slumber, a little more Folding of the Hands to ſleep* †. The moſt ſupine Indifference, where all poſſible Diligence is but juſt ſufficient! — This, You muſt allow, is the true Character of Mankind in general. And does this demonſtrate the *Rectitude* of their Will.

Ther. The Underſtanding may be ſaid to carry the Torch, the Will to hold the Balance. Now, the Perfection of a Balance conſiſts, in being ſo nicely poiſed, as to incline at the *leaſt* Touch, and preponderate with the *ſlighteſt* Weight. This Property belongs, without all Diſpute, to the human Will.

Aſp. What? If one of your Scales ſhould deſcend to the Ground, though charged with Trifles, that are light as Air? If the other ſhould kick the Beam, though

* Prov. vi. 7.

† There is, if I miſtake not, a nice Gradation, in this Speech of the Sluggard; ſuch as very naturally *mimics* the Manner of that lazy Creature. — He pleads, firſt, for ſome conſiderable Degree of Indulgence, *A little Sleep*. — If that is too much to be granted, He craves ſome ſmaller Toleration of his Sloth; *A little Slumber*. — If the Taſk-maſter ſtill rings in his Ear, ſtill goads his Side; one almoſt ſees him, rubbing his heavy Eyes, and yawning out his laſt Requeſt; *A little Folding of the Hands* at leaſt *to lie down*, חבק ידים לשכב Prov. vi. 10. — When ſuch is our Conduct with regard to *eternal* Intereſts, how juſtly may We apply that ſpirited Expoſtulation of the Poet;

Tantamne Rem tam negligenter!

though its Contents be weighter, than Talents of Gold?—Is not this an exact Repreſentation of our Will, when the *fleeting* Pleaſures of Senſe, or the *puny* Intereſts of Time, excite our Wiſhes; even while the ſolid Delights of Religion, and the immenſely rich Treaſures of Immortality, can hardly obtain our Attention? — However, let Us quit the Metaphor, and examine Fact. Suppoſe, I make it appear, that, inſtead of chooſing the moſt eligible Objects, the Will is ſo deplorably vitiated, as to *lothe* what is ſalutary, and be *fond* of what is baneful.

Ther. If You prove this to be univerſally the Caſe, You will prove your favourite Point with a witneſs.

Aſp. When Providence is pleaſed to thwart our Meaſures, or defeat our Endeavours; to bring Us under the Cloud of Diſgrace, or lay upon Us the Rod of Affliction; what is our Behaviour? — Do We bow our Heads in *humble* Reſignation? Do We open our Mouths in *thankful* Acknowledgments?— Obſerve the Waters in that elegant octangular Baſon. They aſſimilate themſelves, with the utmoſt Readineſs, and with equal Exactneſs, to the Veſſel that contains them. *So* would the human Will, if it were not extremely froward and fooliſh, conform itſelf to the divine: which is unerringly wiſe, and, of all poſſible Contingencies, incomparably the beſt *.

* This ſeems to be the Meaning of the Prophet, ארח לצדיק מישרים Iſa. xxvi. 7. Not—*The Way of the Juſt is Uprightneſs*—This Senſe, in the preſent Connection, is hardly conſiſtent with Humility: is by no means proper, to introduce a devotional Addreſs to the great JEHOVAH. Rather—*GOD's Way to the Juſt is Uprightneſs*; or, ſtill more emphatically, *Uprightneſſes*. Is in *all* Reſpects irreprovable, excellent, admirable; ſuited, perfectly ſuited, to every ſacred Attribute of Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Truth.

—Yet, how apt are We to fret with Disquietude; and struggle under afflictive Dispensations, *as a wild Bull in a Net!*

Ther. This is a very imperfect Proof, *Aspasio*, and corresponds only with Part of your Accusation. We may dislike what is wholesome, especially if it be unpalatable, yet not be fond of our Bane.

Asp. Should You see a Person, who thirsts after the putrid Lake, but disrelishes the running Fountain; who longs for the *impoisoned* Berries of the Nightshade, but abhors the *delicious* Fruit of the Orchard, would You applaud the Regularity of his Appetite?—I don't wait for your Answer. But I more than suspect, this is a true Picture of all unregenerate People. How do they affect Dress and external Ornament; but are unwilling, rather than desirous, to be *clothed with Humility* *, and *to put on CHRSIT* †! Amusement will engage, Play animate, and Diversion fire them: but as to the Worship of the living GOD, O! *what a Weariness is it* ‡! This is attended, if attended at all, with Languor, and a listless Insensibility. Frothy Novels, and flatulent Wit, regale their Taste; while the Marrow and Fatness of the divine Word, are "as their sorrowful Meat ‖." What is all this, but to lothe the Salutary, and long § for the Baneful?

Let

* 1 Pet. v. 5. † Rom. xiii. 14. ‡ Mal. i. 13.

‖ Job vi. 7.

§ The Reader may see this unhappy Contrast drawn in the strongest Colours, by the royal Preacher, and by the mourning Prophet.—*Because I have called, and* Ye refused; *I have stretched out my Hand, and* no Man regarded: *But ye have* set at nought *all my Counsel, and* would none *of my Reproof.* What a Croud of Words! Emphatically

Let me, from the same Comparison, propose one Question more; which may be applicable both to the Will and to the Understanding.—Should You hear of another Person, the State of whose Stomach was so disposed, that it turned the most nourishing Food into Phlegm; and derived Matter of *Disease*, from the most sovereign Supports of *Health*; what would You think of his Constitution?

Ther. I should certainly think it very much distempered.

Asp. Without the Grace of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, our Souls turn *every* Occurrence into

phatically declaring the most incorrigible Perverseness; which is Proof against every Method of Reformation; against all the Arts even of divine Persuasion. *Prov.* i. 24, 25.—*The Host of Heaven, whom they have* loved, *and whom they have* served, *and after whom they have* walked, *and whom they have* sought, *and whom they have* worshipped. What a Heap of Expressions! Significantly describing that impetuous Ardor, which no Prohibitions can restrain; and that insatiable Avidity, which never knows when to say, "It is enough." *Jer.* viii. 2.

If I beg leave to add another Example of this kind, it is chiefly for the sake of clearing up an obscure Passage in the *Psalms*; which seems to have been mistaken by the Authors of *both* our Versions. —*David*, to set forth the barbarous Assiduity of his Persecutors, says; *They wander up and down.* They pry into every Corner; they search the City, and examine the Country; לאכל not *for Meat*; which, in this Connection, is a Sense quite foreign to the Subject, and very jejune indeed; but *to devour.* To devour me the destined Victim of their Rage. *And if they are not satisfied*, if they cannot compass their Design by Day, וילינו *they will grudge?* No; but *they will continue all Night*, in the Prosecution of their Purpose. Neither Cold nor Darkness can retard them; neither Hardships nor Dangers can divert them; but their Attempts are as *indefatigable*, as their Malice is *implacable.* Psal. lix. 15.

an Increase of their sinful Depravity. Our very Table is a Snare; and instead of exciting Us to Gratitude, is a Provocative to Gluttony.—How difficult is it, when We flow in Plenty, not to be elated; when We are pressed with Poverty, not to repine!—Have We Business in the World? It cumbers our Thoughts, or tempts Us to Avarice. Have We no Business to manage? We sink into Sloth, and settle on the Lees of Voluptuousness.—If our Schemes are prosperous, it is odds but they attach Us to the Interests of Time. If they prove unsuccessful, We too often are chagrined with the Disappointment, and sin against Meekness.—Even the holy Commandment, instead of restraining Sin, or producing Obedience, irritates the inbred Depravity; and renders it more restless, more impetuous, more ungovernable *.—Those very *Things, which should have been for our Welfare* (so malignant and raging is our Corruption!) *are* converted into *an Occasion of falling*.

Ther. The Will is under no *Necessity* of misemploying her Powers. She is *free* to act in this Manner or in that. And, if a Spendthrift, is not a Slave.

Asp. In Actions which relate to the *animal* Oeconomy, the Will is unquestionably free. She can contract the Forehead into a Frown, or expand it with a Smile.—In the *ordinary* Affairs of Life, She is under no Controul. We can undertake or decline a Journey, carry on or discontinue an Employ, just as We please.—In the *outward* Acts of Religion also, the Will is her own Mistress. We can read the Word of GOD, or go to the Place of divine Worship, without any extraordinary Aid from above.—But in Matters which are more intimately connected

* Rom. vii. 8.

ed with our Salvation, the Case is different. Here, as our Liturgy expresses it, "We are *tied* and *bound* "with the Chain of our Sins."

Would You have a Person delight Himself in the LORD; take pleasure in Devotion; set his Affections on Things above?—All this is both his Duty and his Happiness. But alas! *He is alienated from the Life of GOD.* His Inclinations gravitate quite the contrary Way. His Will is in the Condition of that distressed Woman, who was *bowed down with a Spirit of Infirmity, and could in no wise lift up Herself* *. Corruption, like a strong Bias influences, or rather like a heavy Mountain oppresses his Mind. Neither can He shake off the Propensity, or struggle away from the Load: until Grace, almighty Grace, interposes for his Release.—*Where the SPIRIT of the LORD is, there* and there alone *is Liberty* †; that sacred and glorious Liberty, which is not the common Privilege of all Men, but the high Prerogative of the Children of GOD.

Would You have a Person apply to the great REDEEMER; apply with a real Ardor of Desire; as *Bartimæus* of old, or the *Syrophœnician* Mother?—His Will is like the withered Arm; cannot stretch forth itself to the all-gracious SAVIOUR: cannot hunger and thirst after his everlasting Righteousness and infinite Merit: till the SAVIOUR Himself speaks Power into the *infeebled*, the *perverted* Faculty.—If You think otherwise; try the Experiment. Persuade Men to this necessary Practice. Urge the most weighty Arguments: devise the most pathetic Expostulations: let Zeal summon all her

 Force

* Luke xiii. 11. † 2 Cor. iii. 17.

Force, and Rhetoric employ all her Art. Without being a Prophet, I dare venture to foretel the Iſſue. Diſappointments, repeated Diſappointments, will convince You, that our Divine MASTER knew what He ſaid, when He ſolemnly declared; *No Man can come to Me, except the FATHER, which hath ſent me, draw Him* *.—Our Church, in Conformity to this and other Scriptures, has taught Us to pray; *Turn Thou Us, O good LORD*; for nothing but thy omnipotent Agency is capable of doing it; *and ſo ſhall We be turned.*

Ther. Are We Slaves then? Will *Chriſtianity* ſend Us to ſeek our Brethren, in the Mines or in the Gallies?

Aſp. Chriſtianity does not *ſend*, but *find* Us there. There, or in a worſe Slavery †.—It is doubtleſs a moſt

* *John* vi. 44. It is not ſaid, The FATHER *drives*, but *draws*: not by violent, irrational, compulſive Means; but by clear Conviction, ſweet Perſuaſion, and Inducements ſuited to a reaſonable Being. *Thoſe* are the Cords of a Beaſt, *theſe* of a Man. So that We are not acted upon as Clock-work, or influenced as mere Machines, but *made willing* in the Day of his Power, *Pſal.* cx. 3.

† St. *Paul* ſays of *Chriſtians*, and reckons Himſelf in the Number, that naturally they *ſerved* (not διακονουντες, but δουλευοντες, were abſolute Slaves to) *divers Luſts and Pleaſures*. Tit. iii. 3. The whole Verſe is very remarkable, and nothing can be more appoſite to *Aſpaſio*'s Purpoſe. It ſhews Us, What *They* were by Nature, who through Grace became living Images of the bleſſed GOD.

This mortifying Doctrine is often acknowledged by our Church. Thus begins one of her public Supplications; *Almighty GOD, who alone canſt order the unruly Wills and Affections of ſinful Man.* It ſeems, We cannot determine our own Wills, nor regulate our own Affections. What is this but Bondage?

most abject State, to wear the Yoke, and truckle in Chains. Yet such, I apprehend, is the State of our Minds by Nature. To prove this, We need not go down to the lowest Ranks of Life. *These*, You might say with the Prophet, *are poor*; *these are foolish*; *they have not known the Way of the* LORD, *nor the Judgment of their* GOD.—*I will get me* therefore *to the great Men* *, and examine their Disposition.

Have You not known Persons of the greatest Intrepidity, and firmest Resolution, hurried away by their Lusts, as "a rolling Thing before the Whirl-"wind †?" Perhaps, they were bold enough to face Danger, and defy the Sword, in the Field of Battle. Yet, were no more able to withstand the wanton Allurements of Beauty, or the soft Solicitations of Pleasure; than the *Moth* can forbear fluttering about the Flame, even though it singes her Wings, and is scorching her to death.—Others, possessed of a refined Imagination, disdain the gross Indulgencies of Sensuality; yet are Slaves to their own *domineering* Passions. They are blown into the most intemperate Rage, and pushed on to the most extravagant Actions, by every little ruffling Accident. They see the *Meanness*, which such an ungovernable Spirit argues: they feel the *Misery*, which such internal Tempests create: nay, they resolve to suppress the Impetuosity of their Temper: yet, are bore away by the Torrent; and, upon the very first Provocation, are as furiously resentful as ever.—Will You call *these* Persons free, because their Task-masters

* Jer. v. 4, 5. † Isa. xvii. 13.

and their Tyrants are lodged within *? Because the Fetters are forged, not for the meaner, but for the immortal Part of their Nature?

Ther. Let Us pass to the *Affections*. These are to the Soul, what Wings are to the Eagle, or Sails to the Ship. These always stand ready to receive the Gales of Interest, and to spring at the Signal of Reason.

Asp. O! that they did!—But, if the Wings are clogged with Mire; if the Sails are disproportioned to the Ballast; what Advantage will accrue, either to the Animal, or to the Vessel?—The One will, probably, be over-set in the Voyage; the Other will lie groveling on the Ground.

Ther. Desire seems to be the first, which "opens "the Mouth, or moves the Wing, or peeps †." Desire is active as a Flame, and ever in Pursuit of Happiness.

Asp. What if your Flame, instead of shooting upwards, should point its *inverted* Spires to the Earth? Would not this be strange, and a Sign of great Disorder?—GOD is the Center of Perfection, and the Source of Felicity. All that is amiable in itself, is comprehended in GOD. All that is beneficial to Us, proceeds from GOD. Do our Desires uniformly *tend* to this super-excellent Being? Do our Wishes *terminate* in the Enjoyment of his ever-glorious

* ——— ——— *Inordinate Desires*
And upstart Passions catch the Government
From Reason, and to Servitude reduce
Man, till then free.

MILT.

† Isa. x. 14.

rious Majesty? Alas! We are naturally estranged from Him: We covet no Communion with Him. We are wedded to Trifles, and dote upon Vanity: but *to GOD we say*—it is evidently the Language of our Conduct—*Depart from Us; We desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways* *.

If Desire is the First-born among the Affections, observe it in Children. There it appears in its Dawn, and has most of pure Nature.—See, how those *Flies*, exulting in the sunny Gleam, vibrate with all the Rapidity of Motion their little Wings †. So prompt and expedite are the Desires of Children to any corrupting Diversion.—See, how sluggishly that *Snail*, crawling forth amidst the refreshing Moisture, drags her slow Length along. So dull, if not reluctant, are the Dispositions of our Children, to any improving Exercise. Rewards will hardly win them to the latter; the Rod can hardly deter them from the former.—And None, None but GOD, "by his *spe-* "*cial* Grace preventing them, can put into their "Minds good Desires ‡."

Is our *Love* under better Regulation?—How easily are We captivated with a fair Complexion and graceful Form; especially, when set off with the Decorations of Dress. But how little affected with the Beauty of internal Character; with the Ornaments of Virtue, and the Graces of *Christianity*? Can it be supposed, that the Pulse of the Soul beats regularly;

* Job xxi. 14.

† The Wings of a Fly are supposed to have the *quickest* Motion, of any material Substance which lives. And if they make, as Naturalists imagine, some Hundreds of Vibrations in a Second of Time, I think, there can be no Competition in the Case.

‡ *Collect* for *Easter-Day*.

larly; when there is such a *passionate Fondness* for fading Embellishments, and such a *cold Indifference* for the most substantial Endowments?—How ready are We to be enamoured with well-proportioned Clay; often to our apparent Prejudice; sometimes to our utter Ruin! Yet how backward to love that infinitely loving and lovely REDEEMER, who would die Himself, rather than We should become a Prey to Death! Tinder We are, perfect Tinder to the Sparks of irrational and dissolute Affection. Harder than Adamant, colder than Ice, to this heavenly Flame.

Ther. If our Love is blind, our *Fear* has not lost her Eyes. Fear is quick of Apprehension: and, instead of being stupidly insensible, is ready to "rise "up at the Voice of a Bird *."

Asp. The Passion of Fear is sufficiently active, but deplorably *misapplied*.—We fear the Reproach of Men. But are We alarmed at the View of that *everlasting Shame*, which the LORD, the righteous Judge, shall pour upon the Ungodly? We shudder at the drawn Dagger, and stand appalled at the headlong Precipice. But how often have We defied the Sword of almighty Vengeance, and sported upon the Brink of irretrievable Perdition?

Sin is the most pernicious of all Evils. Sin violates the divine Command, and provokes the Divine MAJESTY. Sin offers Despite to the Blessed SPIRIT, and tramples upon the Blood of *JESUS*. For Sin, the Transgressor is banished from the blissful Presence of GOD, and doomed to dwell with inextinguishable Burnings. Do We dread this *grand Destroyer* of our Happiness? Dread it more than

* Eccles. xii. 4.

than any Calamities, more than all Plagues?—Take one of those fine May-dukes, which glow with so beautiful a Scarlet on yonder Espalier. Offer it to the *Blackbird*, that serenades us from the neighbouring Elm. The Creature, though fond of the Dainty, will fly from your Hand, as hastily as from a leveled Fowling-piece. He suspects a Design upon his Liberty; and therefore will endure any Extremity, will even starve to death, rather than taste the *most tempting* Delicacy in such hazardous Circumstances.—Are We equally fearful of an infinitely greater Danger? Do We fly, with equal Solicitude *, from the delusive but destructive Wiles of Sin? Alas! Do not We too often *swallow* the Bait, even when We plainly discover the fatal Hook? Do We not *snatch* the forbidden Fruit, though Conscience remonstrates; though GOD prohibits; though Death eternal threatens?

Ther. Conscience then, according to your own Account, has escaped the general Shipwreck. Conscience is GOD's Vicegerent in the Soul, and executes her Office faithfully. Even the Gentiles *shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another* †.

Asp.

* The *instigating* Admonition, transmitted to *Brentius* by an anonymous Letter, when the Papists had formed a Plot against his Life, should be the Rule of our Conduct on such an Occasion; *Fuge! Fuge! cito—citius—citissimè.*

† *Rom.* ii. 15. Methinks, I would not translate the Word μεταξυ *the mean while*, but *alternately* or *interchangeably* accusing or excusing; sometimes one, sometimes the other; in Conformity to the different Circumstances of their Temper and Behaviour.

Asp. If there be any Remains of the divine Image, perhaps, they are to be found in the Conscience. But even this is not exempt from the common Ruin.—Consider its *Light*. It is like a dim Taper, feebly glimmering; and serving only to make the Darkness visible. Or, if it discovers any Thing, it is an obscure Something, We know not what. Which, instead of informing, tantalizes Us; and instead of guiding, bewilders Us. As false and delusory Lights on the Shore, put a Cheat upon the Mariner, and lead Him on to Ruin *.—Consider its *Operations*. It is either dumb or dead, or both. *Dumb*; or else how vehemently would it upbraid Us, for our shocking Ingratitude to the Supreme Omnipotent BENEFACTOR? How loudly would it inveigh against our stupid Neglect of spiritual Interests, and eternal Ages? *Dead*; otherwise how keenly would it smart, when gashed with Wounds—*numerous*, as our repeated Violations of the divine Law—*deep*, as the horrid Aggravations of our various Iniquities.

Ther. Do You call this an Answer to my Objection, *Aspasio*? If it be an Answer, it resembles, in Point of satisfactory Evidence, the Light which You ascribe unto the Conscience.

Asp.

* This seems to have been the Case with the Bulk of the *Heathen* World.—Conscience arraigned, and found them guilty. This put them upon practising their *abominable*, sometimes their *inhuman* Idolatries.—Nay, this induced them to give the most scandalous and impious Misrepresentations of the DEITY. That they might *sheath* the Sting of Conscience, and find some *Salvo* for their own Iniquities, they made even the Objects of their Worship, the *Patrons* and the *Precedents* of their favourite Vices.

Asp. The *Gentiles*, You alledge, shew the *Work*, but not the *Love* of the Law, written on their Hearts. Some leading Notices of Right and Wrong they have: some speculative Strictures of Good and Evil. But without a *real Abhorrence* of the One, or a *cordial Delight* in the Other. Which, far from ennobling their Nature, far from vindicating their Practice, argues the exceeding Depravity of the former, and renders the latter absolutely without Excuse.

No; You say, Conscience *excuses* the Heathens. Rather, their Conscience *bears witness* to the Equity of the Law, while their Thoughts *make some* weak *Apology* * for the Tenour of their Conduct. This is far from acquitting, far from justifying them.—Besides, these weak Attempts to excuse, are always founded on *Ignorance*. Did they know themselves, their Duty, or their GOD, Conscience would, without the least Hesitation, bring in her Verdict, *Guilty*. —The Apostle assures Us, that, till Faith, which is a divine Principle, takes place in our Breasts, *both the Mind and Conscience are defiled* †. Here, and elsewhere, very plainly intimating; that the Conscience is evil, and ever will be evil, till it is *sprinkled with the Blood of CHRIST* §.

It *accuses* some, I acknowledge; and it ought to accuse, yea, to condemn All. But even Here it evidences itself to be corrupt. For, its Accusations are sometimes *erroneous* ‖, and no better than false Witness;

* The Word is απολογουμενων, not επιμαρτυρουντων, not δικαιωσαντων.

† Tit. i. 15. § Heb. x. 22.

‖ *Erroneous*—What else was that grand Article in the Accusations of Conscience, mentioned, with such particular Distinction, by *Virgil*;

Phle-

neſs; ſometimes *partial* *, and ſuborned by Appetite; and very, very often *ineffectual*.—Nay, when they do take Effect, they produce no Fruit that is truly good. They work not a genuine Humiliation, or an unfeigned Repentance; but either a ſlaviſh Dread of GOD, as a ſevere Judge; or Hatred of Him, as an inexorable Enemy.

Ther. Hatred of GOD—Aſtoniſhing Impiety! Is it poſſible for the human Heart to admit ſuch enormous, almoſt incredible Wickedneſs?

Aſp. You may well be aſtoniſhed, *Theron*; and GOD may juſtly demand; *What Iniquity have my People found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after Vanity* †? "I created You out "of Nothing, and endowed You with an immortal "Soul. As a Father, I have provided for You. As "a Nurſe, I have cheriſhed You.—I have conſigned "over to your Poſſeſſion the Earth, and the Fulneſs "thereof. All my Creatures do You Service, and "even

——Phlegyaſque miſerrimus omnes
Admonet, & magnâ teſtatur Voce per Umbras,
Diſcite Juſtitiam moniti, & non temnere Divos.

For Men to *deſpiſe* ſuch dunghil, worſe than dunghil Deities, had been their *Virtue* if done, and was their *Duty* to do.—What elſe was that Voice of Conſcience, mentioned by our LORD, *John* xvi. 2. or that, confeſſed by the Apoſtle, *Acts* xxvii. 9.

* *Partial*—Otherwiſe, how could the moſt celebrated among the antient Heroes applaud and practiſe, that execrable unnatural Crime, *Self-Murder*? How could their firſt-rate Hiſtorians extol and almoſt conſecrate, that diabolical Principle of Action, *Pride*? And how could their ableſt Teachers of Morality, not only tolerate, but eſtabliſh the Error, by neglecting to find ſo much as a Name for that amiable Virtue, *Humility*?

† Jer. ii. 5.

"even my Angels minister unto your Good.—Do "You desire greater Demonstrations of my Love? "I have given what was dearer to me than all An- "gels, than all Worlds. I have given my SON "from my Bosom, to die in your Stead.—Would "You have farther Evidences of my tender, my "distinguished Regard? Behold! I touch the Moun- "tains, and they smoke: I look upon the Earth, "and it trembles: I cast even the Princes of Hea- "ven, when they break my Law, into Chains of "Darkness. But to You, O Men, I condescend "to act as a Supplicant. Though highly injured, "and horribly affronted, I *beseech* You, again and "again I *beseech* You to be reconciled."

To hate * *such* a GOD, is indeed the most detestable Impiety. Yet Man, foolish Man, practises this Impiety, whenever, for the Sake of a vile Lust, an ignoble Pleasure, or an unruly Passion, He transgresses the Command of his CREATOR.

Shall I exemplify the Doctrine, in another of the Affections?

Ther. In Truth, *Aspasio*, I begin to be sick of the Subject. If human Nature is so ulcerated, the less You touch it the better.—However, let us not quite omit the *irascible* Appetite.

Asp. Of this We have already taken a Side-view; if You choose to see it in fuller Proportion, make your

* Hatred of GOD is so *shocking* an Expression, that one would almost wish, never to hear or read it. But it occurs in our unerring Book; is too often exemplified in common Life; and is engraven by corrupt Nature on every human Heart. See *Rom.* i. 30. *Exod.* xx. 5. *John* xv. 25. *Rom.* viii. 7.

your Observation on *Fervidus*.—*Fervidus* comes home in a Rage. His Cheeks are pale, and his Lips quiver, with Excess of Passion. Though He can hardly speak, He vows Revenge, and utters Imprecations.—What is the Cause of all this wondrous Ferment? A Neighbour, it seems, has dropt some reflecting Hint, or a Servant has blundered in some trifling Message. Such Usage, *Fervidus* says, is intolerable; and such Negligence unpardonable.—This same *Fervidus* has offered numberless Affronts to his MAKER; He has most scandalously neglected the Will of his Almighty LORD; yet feels no Indignation against *Himself*.—He is all Fury, when his own Credit is touched. But when the Interest of *CHRIST* is wounded, He can sit unconcerned, or pass it off with a Laugh.—Anger, I acknowledge, is sometimes becoming and useful. But is *this* its right Temperature? *This* its proper Application?

Ther. This is the Practice only of some few turbulent Spirits. To saddle *their* Qualities upon *every* Person, is a Procedure just as equitable, as the Madman's * Calculation was reasonable; who took an Account of every Ship, which entered the Harbour, and set it down for his own.

Asp. The latter Part of my Charge, I fear, is applicable to more than a few.—However, let Us consider the most *calm* and *sedate* Minds. How are they affected under Injuries? Do they never aggravate Failings into Crimes? Do they find it easy to abstain from every Emotion of Ill-will? Easy to love their Enemies, and do Good to Those who hate them? These godlike Tempers, if our Nature was not degenerated, would be the *spontaneous* Produce of

* *Thrasylus*, an *Athenian*.

of the Soul. But now, alas! they are not raiſed, without much Difficulty; ſeldom come to any conſiderable Degree of Eminence; never arrive at a State of true Perfection. An undoubted Proof, that they are *Exotics*, not *Natives* of the Soil.

Now We are ſpeaking of Plants, caſt your Eye upon the Kitchen-garden. Many of thoſe Herbs, will perfume the *hard* Hand, which cruſhes them; and embalm the *rude* Foot, which tramples on them. Such was the benign Conduct of our LORD. He always overcame Evil with Good. When his Diſciples diſregarded Him, in his bitter Agony, He made the *kindeſt* Excuſe for their ungrateful Stupidity *. When his Enemies, with unparalleled Barbarity, ſpilt his very Blood; He *pleaded* their Ignorance, as an Extenuation of their Guilt †.—Is the ſame Spirit in Us, which was alſo in our Divine MASTER? Then are our Paſſions rightly poiſed, and duly tempered. But if Reſentment kindles, and Animoſity rankles in our Hearts; this is an infallible Sign, that We ſwerve from our SAVIOUR's Pattern; conſequently, are fallen from our primitive Rectitude.

Ther. What ſay You of the *Fancy?* This ſure, if no other, retains the primitive Rectitude. What Pictures does ſhe form, and what Excurſions does ſhe make? She can dive to the Bottom of the Ocean; can ſoar to the Height of the Stars; and walk upon the Boundaries of Creation.

Aſp. That the Fancy is lively and excurſive, I readily grant. It can out-travel the Poſt, or out-fly the Eagle. But if it travel, only to pick *Shells*; or

* Matt. xxvi. 41. † Luke xxiii. 34.

fly abroad, to bring home *Mischief*; then, I apprehend, though You should admire the Faculty, You will hardly be in Raptures with its Agency.—This is the real Truth. Our Fancy, till divine Grace regulate and exalt its Operations, is generally employed in picking painted Shells, or culling venomous Herbs. *Weaving* (as the Prophet very elegantly, and no less exactly describes the Case) *the Spider's Web, or hatching Cockatrice Eggs* *. Busied in the most absurd Impertinencies; or acting in Speculation, the vilest Iniquities. That, which should be *a Garden inclosed, a Fountain sealed* †, for the PRINCE of Peace, is the Thoroughfair of Vanity.—And even when We are renewed from above, O! how necessary is it, to keep an incessant Watch, and exercise a strict Discipline, over this volatile, variable, treacherous *Vagrant!*

The *Memory*, as well as the Fancy, is impaired; or, if not impaired, is debauched. Why else does it so firmly *retain* the Impressions of an Injury, but so easily *let slip* the Remembrance of a Benefit? Any idle Fopperies, which sooth our Vanity, and increase our Corruption, cleave to the Thoughts, as the vexatious Burr to our Clothes. While the noble Truths of the Gospel, and the rich Mercies of a gracious GOD, slide away from the Mind, and leave no lasting Trace behind them. This double Perverseness is very emphatically, and too truly represented by *Jeremiah*; *Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, or a Bride her Attire? Yet my People have forgotten me, Days without number* ‡.—If We hear a loose Hint, or read an immodest Expression, they are almost sure to fasten them-

* Isa. lix. 5. † Cant. iv. 12. ‡ Jer. ii. 32.

themſelves on our Memory. If ſhaken off, they follow Us with a troubleſome Importunity. If excluded, as unwelcome Viſitants, they force themſelves, again and again, upon our Imagination. They dog Us to the Cloſet; they haunt our moſt retired Hours; and too often diſturb our very Devotions.—Tell me now, can that Faculty be upright and uncorrupted, which is a *perforated Sieve*, to tranſmit the Beneficial; but a *thirſty Sponge*, to imbibe the Pernicious *.

Ther. Well, my Friend, whatever Guilt I or others have contracted, *Flattery*, I dare be poſitive, is none of yours. Human Nature has received no heightening or adulatory Touches from your Pencil. You have pourtrayed Her *fooliſh*, and *beaſtly*, and every Thing bad but *deviliſh*.

Aſp. And this, even this Abomination I muſt not ſecrete, I dare not except.—*Envy* is a deviliſh Diſpoſition. It ſubſiſts no where, but in damned Spirits, and fallen Souls. Yet, infernal as it is, it has been found in Perſons of the moſt exalted Character. The magnanimous *Joſhua* felt its cancrous Tooth †. The Diſciples of the bleſſed *JESUS* were ſoured with its malignant Leaven ‡. An Apoſtle declares, that *the Spirit which dwelleth in Us luſteth to Envy* ‖; is impetuouſly prone to that deteſtable Temper.

* This, I think, ſuggeſts an unanſwerable Confutation of that ſpecious Argument, frequently uſed in Behalf of ſome *faſhionable* but *diſſolute* Diverſions. "They are interſperſed, ſay their Admirers, with Sentiments of Virtue, and Maxims of Morality."—Should We admit the Truth of this Plea; yet the depraved Diſpoſition of Mankind, is pretty ſure to drop the Morality, and carry away the Ribaldry.

† Numb. xi. 29. ‡ Matt. xx. 24. ‖ Jam. iv. 5.

Lying is confeſſedly a diabolical Practice. Yet, how unaccountably forward are our Children, to utter Falſhood? As ſoon as they are born, they go aſtray; and as ſoon as they ſpeak, they ſpeak Lies.—I ſaid *unaccountably*. But I recal the Expreſſion. The Cauſe is evident. They have loſt the Image of the GOD of Truth; and are become like that apoſtate Spirit, who *is a Lyar, and the Father of it* *.

What think You of *Malice*, of *Hate*, and *Revenge?* Are they not each a Species of Murder, and the Seed of the old Serpent? Unleſs, therefore, We are intirely free from all theſe helliſh Emotions, We muſt, *We muſt* acknowledge, that the Prince of this World † has his Party within Us. May the Almighty Hand of our GOD extirpate and ſubdue it, day by day!

You tell me, I am *no Flatterer*.—Should a Perſon who profeſſes Himſelf the Friend of his Fellow-creatures, ſoothe them into a *falſe* Peace? Should He bolſter them up in a *groundleſs* Conceit of their Excellency, when they really are no better than "an "unclean Thing?"—Shall the Surgeon aſſure his Patient, "All is well;" even when the Mortification has taken place, and the Gangrene is ſpreading? This were to refine the firſt out of all Benevolence, and to flatter the laſt into his Grave.

A Diſputant of leſs Complaiſance than my *Theron*, would probably aſk, what a contemptuous Sneer; "Have You then been drawing your own Picture?" —To Whom I would reply, with Confuſion and Sorrow, "I have." Alledging this only, to moderate *my Confuſion*; That I am daily ſeeking, by Prayer and Watchfulneſs, more and more *to put off this old, Man*,

* John viii. 44. † John xiv 30.

Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts *. And, to alleviate *my Sorrow*, I am endeavouring continually to remember; That, however unworthy I am, however vile I may have been, my adored REDEEMER's Righteousness is perfect; and in *this* Righteousness every Believer is to make his Boast.

Ther. So then Man is blind in his Understanding; perverse in his Will; disorderly in his Affections; influenced by Dispositions, which are partly brutal, and partly diabolical.—I have often heard You extol, in Terms of high Admiration, the Virtue of *Humility*. You have lavished all the Riches of Eloquence, when haranguing on Poverty of Spirit. If *such* be the Condition of Mankind, they have infinite Cause to be poor in Spirit. They must, therefore, have *one* Excellency left; and according to your own Account, a very distinguishing one.

Asp. Scarce any Thing displays, in a more glaring Light, the extreme Depravity of Man, than his strong Propensity to *Pride*; notwithstanding so much Vileness, and so many Deformities.—Should the noisome Leper admire the *Beauty* of his Complexion, or the impotent Paralytic glory in the *Strength* of his Sinews; would they not be mistaken, even to a Degree of Sottishness and Frenzy? Yet, for Man, fallen Man, who has lost his original Righteousness, which was the true Ornament of his Nature; who is become subject to base and sordid Lusts, or, as the Apostle speaks, *is earthly and sensual*—for *Him* to be proud, is still more absurdly wicked. And since this is the Case, I cannot acquit Him from the last and heaviest

* Eph. iv. 22.

Article of the sacred Writer's Charge; I have a fresh and more convincing Proof, that We do Him no Wrong, when we call his Nature, his Disposition, his *Wisdom—devilish* *.

Ther. Why do You reckon Pride an universally prevailing Corruption? I see no Ground for such a dishonourable Suspicion. I hope, I *myself* am an Instance to the contrary. To unguarded Sallies of Passion, to several other Faults, I confess myself subject. But cannot think, that I am proud.

Asp. Ah! *Theron*, if you was not proud, You would not be passionate. Unreasonable Anger always proceeds from an over-weening Opinion of our own Worth.—One who, besides his acquired Knowledge of human Nature, had the supernatural Gift of discerning Spirits, is observed to join *Humility* and *Meekness* †. Intimating, that they are amiable Twins; and where one exists, the other cannot be absent.—Always consistent with Himself, He links together the opposite Vices, *heady and high-minded* ‡: not obscurely hinting, that those who are easily provoked, are certainly proud.—Shall I add, without Offence? If We fansy our Minds to be clear from the Weeds of Vanity, and our Thoughts free from the Workings of Self-admiration: it is a most pregnant Symptom, that We are *over-run* with the former; *abandoned* to the latter; and *blinded* by both.

Pride was the first Sin, that found Entrance into our Nature; and it is, perhaps, the last that will be expelled.—What are all our Afflictions, but a Remedy provided for this inveterate Disease? Intended to *hide Pride* ‖ *from Man*. What is the Institution of

* Jam. iii. 15. † Eph. iv. 2. ‡ 2 Tim. iii. 4.
‖ Job xxxiii. 17.

of the Gospel, but a Battery erected against this Strong-hold of Satan? Ordained to *cast down every high Imagination* *.—Though that Remedy is often applied, though this Battery is continually playing; yet the peccant Humour is not intirely purged off, nor the Elatement of Spirit totally subdued, till *Mortality is swallowed up of Life*.

Pride is the Sin, which most easily besets Us. *Who can say, I have made my Heart clean* † from this Iniquity? It defiles our Duties, and intermingles itself with our very Virtues. It starts up, I know not how, in our most solemn Hours, and our most sacred Employs.—The good *Hezekiah*, whose Prayers were more powerful than all the Forces of *Sennacherib*, was not Proof against the Wiles of this subtle Sorceress ‡. Even the great Apostle, who had been caught up into the third Heavens, was in Danger of being *puffed up* with Pride. In such great Danger, that it was necessary to put a Lancet into the gathering Tumour; or, as He Himself expresses it, to fix a *Thorn in his Flesh* ‖, and permit the *Messenger of Satan to buffet Him*.

How pathetically is this Corruption lamented, and how truly described, by "a sweet Singer of our "*Israel!*"

But Pride, that busy Sin,
Spoils all that I perform.
Curs'd Pride! that creeps securely in,
And swells a haughty Worm.

* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. † Prov. xx. 9. ‡ 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. ‖ 2 Cor. xii. 7.

Thy Glories I abate,
Or praise Thee with Design;
Part of thy Favours I forget,
Or think the Merit mine.

The very Songs I frame,
Are faithless to thy Cause;
And steal the Honours of thy Name,
To build their own Applause *.

Ther. Now, I presume, You have given the last Touches to your distorted Pourtrait.

Asp. There are other disagreeable and shocking Features. But those I shall cast into Shades, or hide under a Veil. One Particular You must allow me to add; which, like a sullen Air in the Countenance, throws aggravated Horror over the Whole. I mean, An Inclination to be *fond of* our *Slavery*.

In other Instances, *the captive Exile hasteth to be loosed* †. But here We prefer Bondage to Freedom, and are loth to leave our Prison. Of this, our Backwardness to *Self-examination*, is both a Consequence and a Proof. Self-examination, under the Agency of the SPIRIT, would open a Window in our Dungeon; would shew Us our wretched Condition, and teach Us to sigh for Deliverance.—Why have We such a Dislike of *Reproof?* Because we hug our Chains, and choose Darkness rather than Light. Reproof is more grating than the harshest Discord; though it tends to dissolve the Inchantment, and rescue Us from the Tyranny of Sin. While *Flattery*, which

* WATTS's *Hor. Lyr.* † Isa. li. 14.

which abets the Deluſion, and ſtrengthens the Spell, is Muſic to our Ears.—Is not our *Reaſon*, which ſhould arraign and condemn every Irregularity, forward to invent Excuſes, and to ſpare the favourite Folly? Reaſon, which ſhould unſheath the *Dagger*, ſuperinduces the *Maſk*; and, inſtead of ſtriking at the Heart of our Vices, ſcreens them under the Cover of ſome plauſible Names. A wicked Habit is called a human Infirmity; inſnaring Diverſions paſs for innocent Amuſements; a revengeful Diſpoſition is termed Spirit, Gallantry, and Honour. Thus our Reaſon (if, when ſo egregiouſly perverted, it deſerves the Name) is ingenious to obſtruct our Recovery; and *rivets* on the Shackles, which our Paſſions have formed *.

This the eternal WISDOM foreſaw, and therefore uttered that tender Expoſtulation; *How long Ye ſimple Ones will Ye* love *Simplicity, and Scorners* delight *in their Scorning, and Fools* hate *Knowledge?* Even the ineſtimably precious Knowledge of an all-atoning and completely juſtifying SAVIOUR; who preaches, who has purchaſed, and who works Deliverance—preaches in his Word, has purchaſed by his Blood, and works by his SPIRIT, Deliverance for the Captives—the wretched Captives of Ignorance, Sin, and Death.

This I take to be the moſt *flagrant* and *deplorable* Effect of human Depravity — our Averſion to the Doctrine,

* Perhaps, this is what our LORD means, when, developing the human Heart, and diſcovering its latent Enormities, He cloſes the dark Account with αφροσυνη *Fooliſhneſs:* implying that *Stupidity*, which has no Senſe of its Miſery; that *Perverſeneſs*, which has no Inclination for a Recovery. Both which render all the other Evils far more inveterate. *Mark* vii. 22.

Doctrine, the Privileges, the Grace of the Gospel. Beware, dear *Theron*, lest You prove my Point by—shall I speak it? Would You suspect it?—your own Practice. Zealous as I am for my Tenets, I should be sorry, extremely sorry, to have *such* a Demonstration of their Truth.

Ther. You are highly obliging, *Aspasio*, to single *me* out for your Evidence. Yet why should the Honour be appropriated to myself? It belongs, upon the Foot of the preceding Calculation, not to your Friend only, but to the whole Species.—If You was aiming at None but the Licentious and Abandoned, You would have None to oppose You, but Persons of that Character. Your Arrows of Satire, would then be rightly leveled, and might be serviceable to Mankind. Whereas, to put *All* in the black List; to mark *All* with the Villain's Brand; this can never be *Christian* Charity; this is unsufferable Censoriousness.

Asp. Let me beseech You, *Theron*, not to misapprehend my Design. I speak not as a malevolent Satirist, but would imitate the faithful Physician. I am opening the Sore, that it may admit the healing Balm: and should I perform the Operation with an *invenomed* Instrument? My Soul abhors the Thought. —I must intreat You likewise to remember the Distinction, between a State of Nature, and a State of Grace. We are all naturally evil. Such We should for ever continue, did not a *supernatural* Power intervene; making some to differ, both from their original Selves, and from the Generality of their Neighbours.—Are they refined in their Temper, and reformed in their Life? I grant it. But then it is the Influence of the sanctifying SPIRIT, which purges

away

away their Dross; yet not without leaving *some Alloy*.

Ther. Here, *Aspasio*, You certainly strain the Bow, till it breaks. Since Scripture itself celebrates some Persons, as absolutely perfect.—What says *Moses*, the inspired Historian? *Noah was perfect in his Generation* *.—What says the GOD of *Moses*, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived? *Job was a perfect Man and an upright* †.—Consequently, *their* Nature must be intirely cleansed from this hereditary Defilement; and *their* Character confutes your derogatory Representations of Mankind.

Asp. Those eminent Saints were perfect. That is, they were *sanctified throughout*. Sanctified in all their Faculties. No one Grace of Religion was lacking. As in the new-born Infant, there is a human Creature complete: no constituent Part of the vital Frame is wanting: though each is tender; all are very feeble; and none arrived at the full Size.

They were *upright*. This Word seems to be explanatory of the preceding; and signifies an unfeigned Desire, joined with a hearty Endeavour, to obey the whole Will of GOD: excluding, not all Defect, but all *reigning* Hypocrisy, and *wilful* Remissness.—The Interpretation, thus limited, is of a Piece with their Conduct. If stretched to a higher Pitch, it is evidently inconsistent with the Narrative of their Lives.

Pray, what was your Motive, for decorating the silvan Retirement (which sheltered Us yesterday) with the Statue of *Elijah*?

Ther. Because I thought, his solitary Life, and gloomy Temper, suited that sequestered Bower. Because

* Gen. vi. 9. † Job i. 1.

cause the memorable Adventure, there represented, is, with me, a favourite Portion of sacred History.

Are We pleased with spirited and delicate *Rallery?* Nothing exceeds his pungent Sarcasm, on the stupid and despicable Dupes of Idolatry. Every Sentence is keen as a Razor, and pointed as a Dagger, yet wears the Appearance of the most courtly Complaisance. We may truly say, in the beautiful Language of the Psalmist, *His Words are smoother than Oil, and yet be they very Swords* *.

Are We delighted with Instances of *Magnanimity?* A single Prophet, unsupported by any human Aid, maintains the Cause of Truth, against the King, his Grandees, and hundreds of the apostate Priests. He ventures to stake all his Credit, to risk his very Life, and (what was dearer to Him than personal Credit, or bodily Life,) the Honour of the true GOD, and Interests of his holy Religion—to risk all on the *immediate* Interposition of a most surprising Miracle.

Do We admire the Triumphs of *Faith?* His Faith was, in a manner, omnipotent. He prays, and *Torrents* of *Fire* descend from the Sky, to devour his Adversaries †.—He prays again, and the Sluices of Heaven are *shut*; there is neither Dew nor Rain for several Years ‡.—A third Time He prays, and the Windows from on High are *opened*; Abundance of Showers water the Earth ‖.—On another Occasion he presents his Supplications, and GOD makes his

* 1 *Kings* xviii. 27. And it came to pass at Noon, that *Elijah* mocked them, and said; *Cry aloud; for He is a God. Either He is talking, or He is pursuing, or He is in a Journey, or peradventure He sleepeth, and must be awaked.*

† 2 Kings i. 10. ‡ 1 Kings xvii. 1. ‖ Jam. v. 17, 18.

his Feet like Harts Feet. Insomuch that an aged Prophet *outruns* the royal Chariot *.

Asp. I commend your Taste, *Theron:* and am particularly pleased with the Reasons of your Choice.—But do not you remember, that even the Wonder-working *Tishbite* failed in his Resignation, and failed in his Faith? Eminent as He was for Mortification, He gave way to *unreasonable* Discontent; and, though a Champion for the living GOD, He yielded to *unbelieving* Fear †.—*The Man Moses was very meek, above all the Men which were upon the Face of the Earth* ‡: Yet He, even He was provoked in his Spirit, and spake unadvisedly with his Lips ‖.—Was not *Peter* the Hero among our LORD's Followers? Yet He trembles, more than trembles, at the shaking of a Leaf; He denies his Divine MASTER, scared by the Voice of a Woman.

Look where-ever We will, We find Proofs of human Depravity; reigning *uncontrouled* in Some, making frequent *Insurrection* in All. It is written on our own Hearts, by the Pen of Experience; the Finger of Observation points it out, in the Practice of Others.—Even in the Practice of *Those*, who have been

* 1 Kings xviii. 46.

† *Elias*, or rather *Elijah*, *was a Man subject to like Passions as We are*. Jam. v. 17. Upon which Passage, an eminent Commentator makes the following Remark; "This probably is said, with respect to his *Fear* and *Dis-*" *content*, manifested 1 *Kings* xix. 3, 4."—Ομοιοπαθης must, I think, imply a State, liable to the *irregular* Workings of Passion; not free from the *sinful* Infirmities of Nature. Otherwise, it is an Instance foreign to the Purpose; does by no means answer the End designed; which is to encourage the Heart, and strengthen the Faith, even of *frail*, *corrupt*, *offending* Creatures. See *Ver.* 16.

‡ Numb. xii. 3. ‖ Psal. cvi. 33.

been Saints of the first Rank, and of the highest Endowments. Yet they were defective.—Defective too, in *that very* Quality, which was their distinguishing Gift; in which they particularly excelled.

Ther. While We are talking, the Day has insensibly stole itself away, and left Us surrounded with *Twilight*. Which is a Sort of Lustre intermingled with Darkness: no Part wholly lucid; no Part wholly obscure.—An Emblem, according to your Representation, of the renewed Soul, and its imperfect Holiness.

Asp. A very just one.—Even where the Gospel shines, still there is an *incurrent* Gloom of Corruption. Ignorance mixes itself with our Knowledge. Unbelief cleaves to our Faith. Nor is our Purity free from all Contamination.—The Prophet *Zechariah*, foretelling the Establishment of the Gospel Kingdom, and describing the State of its spiritual Subjects; says; *It shall come to pass in that Day, that the Light shall not be clear, nor dark* *. This, as to its *literal* Sense, We now see exemplified in the circumambient Atmosphere. With regard to its *spiritual* Meaning, every true Believer feels it accomplished in his own Breast.

Ther. While You are so vehement, in decrying all human Attainments; consider, *Aspasio*, whether You do not *check* and *dispirit* Us, in the Pursuit of exalted Virtue.

Asp. I suppose, You never expected to be such an Adept in Geometry as *Archimedes*, nor so profound

* *Zech.* xiv. 6. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9. *For We know in Part.* Perhaps this Declaration of the Apostle may be a Key to the Prophet's Meaning. However it is a sufficient Confirmation of *Aspasio*'s Sentiment.

found an Aſtronomer as *Newton*; yet this did not check your Application to the Study of Mathematics, or the Contemplation of the Heavens.—Your Brother the Merchant, I preſume, has no Proſpect of amaſſing the Wealth of a *Cræſus*, or the immenſe Treaſures of a *Kouli-Khan*; yet this does not diſpirit Him in proſecuting the Buſineſs, which brings Him both Opulence and Honour.

However, *Theron*, ſo long as you deny the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, I muſt acknowledge, You act a conſiſtent Part, in being zealous for the Perfection of perſonal Obedience. You ought either to *acquire* the One, or to *accept* the Other. Therefore, I ſhall produce no more Arguments for your Diſcouragement; but ſhall compriſe the whole of my Anſwer, in the Motto to an *Iriſh* Nobleman's Arms, TRY. Or, if this be too conciſe, I will ſubjoin, with a very little Alteration, the Words of a King; "When You have attained "what You purſue, *bring me Word again, that I may* "*go, and poſſeſs it alſo* *.

Ther. According to your Account, the moſt advanced and eſtabliſhed Chriſtians, are but like a Company of *Invalids*. Does not this extremely derogate from the Honour of our LORD, conſidered as the *Phyſician* of Souls? It ſeems to make a mere Nothing of Sanctification; and would ſwallow up *CHRIST* the King, in *CHRIST* the Prieſt.

Aſp. Invalids they are †: and ſuch will continue, till they are diſmiſſed from this great Infirmary, and admitted

* Matt. ii. 8.

† Do not the *beſt* of Men lament their Ignorance of the divine Perfections, their Slowneſs of Heart to believe the divine Promiſes, and the Languor of their Gratitude

admitted into that holy, happy, bleſſed World; Where *the Inhabitant ſhall no more ſay, I am* either in Soul or in Body *ſick* *.

If the Cure was *never* to be completed, this doubtleſs would be diſhonourable to our Almighty PHYSICIAN. But the ſpiritual Recovery, begun on Earth, and advancing through Time, will be perfected in Heaven, and prolonged to Eternity.—Does this make a mere Nothing of Sanctification? No, but it makes room for a continual *Progreſs*, and affords Cauſe for continual *Humiliation*. It reſerves a moſt exalted Prerogative, for the heavenly State and beatific Viſion; and perpetually reminds us of a moſt important Truth, That our preſent Bleſſedneſs conſiſts, not in being *free* from *all* Sin, but in having *no* Sin *imputed* to Us †.

This

titude for ineſtimable, for innumerable Gifts of the divine Goodneſs?—Do they not frequently feel Deadneſs in their Devotions, Diſorder in their Affections, and various other Relics of the original Leaven?—Do they not often complain, in the Language of the Apoſtle, *When I would do Good, Evil is preſent with me?* And ſay, with the earlieſt *Chriſtians, We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened.* Burdened, not ſo much with Affliction: thoſe Heroes in *Chriſtianity* had learnt, to *rejoice in Tribulation*. But burdened with a Senſe of their ſpiritual Infirmities, and with the Workings of their inbred Corruption. Which, to a tender and lively Believer, are the *heavieſt* of Croſſes, and the *moſt galling* of Loads.—Nay; do not the Heirs of Glory *waſh their very Robes*, even their faireſt Deeds, and their brighteſt Graces, *in the Blood of the LAMB?* Which, if they were free from Spot, and void of Impurity, need not be *made white* in this ſacred Fountain. See 2 *Cor.* v. 4. *Rev.* vii. 14.

* Iſa. xxxiii. 24. † Pſal. xxxii. 2.

This Imperfection of our Obedience, instead of confounding, maintains a proper *Distinction* between *CHRIST* the King, and *CHRIST* the Priest. Whereas, if We were perfect in Piety, the priestly Office, with regard to Us, would be superseded. What Need of an Intercessor, to recommend our Prayers? What Occasion for an High-Priest, to *bear the Iniquity of our holy Things* *? If some Taint of the original Leaven did not pollute our best Services?

Neither does this detract from the Wisdom, from the Goodness, or from the Power of *CHRIST*. It rather administers to the advantageous Display of all these divine Attributes.—Of his *Wisdom*; in conducting the Affairs of his Church with such exact Propriety, that the Righteousness of Faith may have its due Honour, and the Sanctification of the SPIRIT its proper Esteem.—Of his *Goodness*; in carrying on the Work of Grace, amidst so much Infirmity, and so many Curruptions; and in crowning, with consummate Happiness, such frail undeserving Creatures.—Of his *Power*; in extracting a Variety of Benefits even from—

Ther Benefits, Aspasio!—Can any thing beneficial proceed from an Evil, which, according to your own Representation, is so inccorrigibly malignant?

Asp. It will tend to make Us *lowly in our own Eyes*. When We remember, that by Nature We are altogether become abominable; that the Remains of natural Depravity still adhere to our Minds; how must such a View of Ourselves cover Us with Shame, and lay Us low in Abasement! *Less than the least of all thy*

* *Exod.* xxviii. 38. *Id est, expiare Peccata, quibus sanctissimæ cæteroquin Actiones nostræ inquinatæ sunt.*

WITS, De Oecon.

thy Mercies *, will be the Language of such a One's very Soul.

It will dispose Us to *compassionate Others*. How can We take a Brother by the Throat, and require faultless Perfection in his Behaviour, when We Ourselves in many Things offend, in all Things fall short? Every such Consideration rebukes, what I may call spiritual Unmercifulness; it pleads for Tenderness and Forbearance to our Fellow-creatures; is a Monitor within, and whispers that affecting Remonstrance, *Oughtest not Thou to have Compassion upon thy Fellow-servant, since thy Almighty LORD hath* such renewed, such unwearied, *Pity on Thee* †?

It will teach Us to admire the *Riches* of *Grace*. Shall fallen Creatures, that are taken from the very Dunghils of Sin, and rescued from a Hell of inward Iniquity—Shall *they*, notwithstanding their deplorable Depravity, and innumerable Deficiencies—Shall *they* be admitted into the Bosom of eternal Love? *They* be exalted to the Thrones of Glory, and numbered with the Princes of Heaven? This is Grace, transcendently rich, and divinely free indeed!

Will it not *reconcile* Us to the Approach of *Death*? This, methinks, like Wormwood on the Nipple, or Gall in the Cup, must tend to wean us from the World. How can we be enamoured with such a Land of Darkness, and such a Vale of Tears? Or why should We covet, when Providence gives the Signal for our Departure, to prolong our Abode in these Territories of *Disorder*?—Surely, this must incline us to leave them, every Day, more and more in our Affections; and at last, to leave them, without

* Gen. xxxii. 10. † Matt. xviii. 33

out any Reluctance, by final Dissolution. Leave them, for that better Country, where our personal Righteousness will no longer be defective, like the *waning* Moon; but shine forth with consummate Lustre, like the *meridian* Sun, in the Kingdom of our FATHER.

It will *endear* the Blessed *JESUS* in *every* Capacity; as the Stings of the fiery flying Serpents, and the Dearth of the waste howling Wilderness, endeared to the *Israelites* both their miraculous Antidote, and their Bread from Heaven.—They who believe this Truth, must see their inexpressible and incessant Need of *CHRIST*'s Spirit. The Protestation of *Moses*, on a particular Occasion, will be the daily, the hourly Breathing of their Souls; *Carry Us not up hence, unless thy Presence*, thy SPIRIT, *go with Us* *. For without this Aid, We can discharge no Duty aright, nor successfully resist any Temptation. —They will be exceedingly cautious, not to *grieve* † that sacred Guest, lest He depart from them, and abandon them to the Power of their lurking Corruptions. Knowing, that if *He* abandon them, when such Foes are within, and so many Snares without; their Case will be worse than *Samson*'s, when his Locks were shaven, and the *Philistines* all around Him.

How highly will such Persons value the *Blood* of the Covenant, and the *Intercession* of their great HIGH-PRIEST!—They will no more presume to enter into the Presence of the most High GOD, without a fiducial Reliance upon the atoning and interceding *SAVIOUR*; than the Sons

* Exod. xxxiii. 15. † Eph. iv. 30.

of *Jacob* would have ventured to appear before the Viceroy of *Egypt*, without the Company of their younger Brother *. In all, in all their Intercourse with Heaven, the great PROPITIATION will be their Plea, and the great ADVOCATE their Confidence.—The impotent Man waited at the Pool of *Bethesda*, and the *Syrian* General dipped seven Times in *Jordan*. These Persons will not only *wait*, but *live* by the Fountain opened for Sin and Uncleanness †. They will wash in the sacred sanctifying Stream, not *seven* Times only, but *seventy Times* seven.

And when such Sentiments possess the Mind, how dear! O how *dear* and *desirable* will our LORD's Obedience be!—I called, sometime ago, our own Works *Worm-eaten Things*; and must not these Corruptions, if they remain ever so little in the Heart, tarnish our Graces, and debase our Duties? Must they not be depreciatory to all our Accomplishments; and too much like *corroding Vermin*, in the Substance of our Timber, or at the Core of our Fruits?—Should We not then renounce, utterly renounce these tarnished, worm-eaten Things? And rely, wholly rely, for everlasting Acceptance, on our Divine HIGH-PRIEST? Who, in his mediatorial Works, as well as in his wonderful Person, is altogether *Light* and *Perfection* ‡; and neither in Him,

* Gen. xliii. 5. † Zech. xiii. 1.

‡ *Light and Perfection*—This is the Meaning of that mysterious Ornament, which, in the grand officiating Robes of the *Jewish* High-Priest, was annexed to the Breast-Plate, and styled *Urim* and *Thummim*. Only the *Hebrew* Words are in the plural Number, and denote *every Degree* of Illumination, and *all Kinds* of Perfection.—Does not this very significantly teach Sinners, Whence to

Him, nor in them, is there any Deficiency or any Darkneſs at all.

Excuſe me, *Theron*; I fear, I have been preaching. The Importance of the Text, muſt form my Apology. It is an *Introduction*, not to the Records of Hiſtory, or the Tranſactions of Philoſophy, but to the Riches of *CHRIST*.

Ther. If my *Aſpaſio* has been preaching, I can aſſure him for his Comfort, that his Audience has been very attentive; and though the Sermon was ſomewhat copious, the Hearer neither ſlept nor gaped. —However, I ſhould be glad to have the Whole reviewed, and ſummed up: that, if it has been large as the Pyramid, it may, like the Pyramid, terminate in a *Point*.

Aſp. This then is the State of our Nature—The Image of the CREATOR is loſt: Blindneſs is in the Underſtanding: Diſorder in all the Affections. —In the Will, Enmity againſt GOD, the ſovereign Good: Inability to all that is ſpiritual and heavenly: with a Propenſity to whatever is ſordid and earthly. —The whole Soul is deformed, diſtempered, rebellious.—And ſhall ſuch a Creature lay claim to thoſe amiable and ſacred Endowments, which may be a *proper Recommendation* to infinite Holineſs?—Is ſuch a Creature qualified to perform thoſe righteous Acts, which may approve themſelves to the *Demand* of

to ſeek their Wiſdom, and Where to look for their Perfection? There never was, in all Ages, more than one *Urim* and *Thummim*; and only one Perſon, in each Generation, was appointed to wear it. And Who is there, in all Worlds, that can give Us heavenly Knowledge, but the SPIRIT of *CHRIST?* What is there, in Ourſelves or all Creatures, that can preſent Us unblameable before GOD, but the Obedience of *CHRIST?*

GOD's Law, and to the *Inflexibility* of his Juſtice.

Should he conceive the vain Hope, or make the vainer Attempt, I would now addreſs Him, as *Jehoaſh* formerly anſwered *Amaziah*.—*Amaziah* King of *Judah*, elated with the little Victories he had obtained over the *Edomites*, began to fanſy Himſelf invincible. Prompted by this fooliſh Imagination, He challenges *Jehoaſh* King of *Iſrael*, to meet Him in a pitched Battle; and receives this ironical Apologue, by way of Reply.—Which, for Gallantry of Spirit and Delicacy of Wit, for Poignancy of Satire and Propriety of Application, has ſeldom been equaled, perhaps never exceeded—*The Thiſtle that was in Lebanon, ſent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, ſaying, Give thy Daughter to my Son to Wife: and there paſſed by a wild Beaſt that was in Lebanon, and trod down the Thiſtle* *. What are We—when We offer to eſtabliſh our own Righteouſneſs, or preſume to juſtify Ourſelves before the moſt High GOD—but *deſpicable Thiſtles*, that fanſy themſelves *ſtately Cedars*? And is not every Temptation, is not each Corruption, a wild Beaſt of the Deſart, which will trample on the impotent Boaſter, and tread his haughty Pretenſions in the Duſt?

* 2 Kings xiv. 9.

DIALOGUE XIV.

ASPASIO was employed in preparing for his Journey. *Theron*, free from Buſineſs, and diſengaged from Company, had the greateſt Part of the Day to Himſelf. Which he ſpent, in *reviewing* the Subſtance of their late Conferences; not without intermingled Aſpirations to GOD, for the Guidance of his Divine SPIRIT.

At Evening, He *went*, like the Patriarch of old, *into the Field to meditate* *: amidſt the Calm of Nature, to meditate on the Grace of the Goſpel.—The Sky was peculiarly beautiful, and perfectly clear; only where the fine *Indigo* received an agreeable Heightening, by a few thin and ſcattered Clouds; which imbibed the ſolar Rays, and looked like penſile Fleeces of pureſt *Wool*.—All Things appeared with ſo mild, ſo majeſtic, ſo charming an Aſpect, that, intent as He was upon a different Subject, He could not but indulge the following Soliloquy.

* Gen. xxiv. 63.

" How delightful are the Scenes of rural Nature!
" Especially, to the *philosophic* Eye, and *contemplative*
" Mind.—I cannot wonder, that Persons in high
" Life, are so fond of retiring from a conspicuous
" and exalted Station, to the Covert of a shady
" Grove, or the Margin of a cooling Stream. Are
" so desirous of quitting the smoky Town, and noisy
" Street; in order to breathe purer Air, and survey
" the Wonders of Creation, in the silent, the serene,
" the peaceful *Villa*.

" 'Tis true, in the Country, there are none of the
" modish, I had almost said, meretricious Orna-
" ments of that *false* Politeness, which refines People
" out of their Veracity. But an easy Simplicity of
" Manners, with an unaffected Sincerity of Mind.—
" Here, the solemn Farce of Ceremony is seldom
" brought into Play; and the pleasing Delusions of
" Compliment have no Place. But the Brow is the
" *real* Index of the Temper, and Speech the *genuine*
" Interpreter of the Heart.

" In the Country, I acknowledge, We are sel-
" dom invited to see the *mimic* Attempts of human
" Art. But We, every where, behold the grand
" and masterly Exertions of divine Power.—No
" *Theatre* erects its narrow Stage; surrounds it, with
" puny Rows of ascending Seats; or adorns it, with
" a shifting Series of gorgeous Scenery. But *Fields*
" extend their ample Area; at first, lightly clad with
" a Scarf of springing Green; then, deeply planted
" with an Arrangement of spindling Stalks; as a
" few more Weeks advance, covered with a Pro-
" fusion of bearded or husky Grain; at last, richly
" laden with a Harvest of yellow Plenty.

" *Meadows*

" *Meadows* discloſe their beautiful Boſom; yield
" a ſoft and fertile Lap for the luxuriant Herbage;
" and ſuckle Myriads of the faireſt, gayeſt Flowers.
" Which, without any vain Oſtentation, or expen-
" ſive Finery, outvie each other in all the Elegance
" of Dreſs.—*Groves* of various Leaf; arrayed in
" freſheſt Verdure, and liberal of their reviving
" Shade; riſe, in amiable, in noble Proſpect, all
" around.—*Droves* of ſturdy Oxen, ſtrong for La-
" bour, or fat for the Shambles; *Herds* of ſleeky
" Kine, with Milk in their Udders, and Violets in
" their Noſtrils; *Flocks* of well fleeced Sheep, with
" their ſnowy Lambkins, friſking at their Side; theſe
" compoſe the living Machinery.—Boundleſs Tracts
" of bending *Azure*, varniſhed with inimitable Deli-
" cacy, and hung with ſtarry Lamps, or irradiated
" with ſolar Luſtre, form the ſtately Cieling.—While
" the early Breezes, and the evening Gales; charged
" with no unwholſome Vapours, breeding no peſti-
" lential Taint; but fanning the humid Buds, and
" waving their odoriferous Wings, diſpenſe a thou-
" ſand *Sweets*, mingled with the moſt ſovereign Sup-
" ports of Health.—And is not this School of In-
" duſtry, this Magazine of Plenty, incomparably
" *more delightful*, as well as infinitely *leſs dangerous*,
" than thoſe gaudy Temples of Profuſeneſs and De-
" bauchery, where Sin and Ruin wear the Maſk of
" Pleaſure? Where *Belial* is daily or nightly wor-
" ſhiped with, what his Votaries call, modiſh Re-
" creation, and genteel Amuſement?

" Here indeed is no tuneful *Voice*, to melt in
" Strains of amorous Anguiſh, and transfuſe the
" ſickening Fondneſs to the Hearer's Breaſt. No
" ſkilful Artiſt, to inform the *Lute* with muſical In-
" chantment;

" chantment; to ſtrike infectious Melody from the " Viol; and ſooth away the Reſolution and Acti- " vity of Virtue, in wanton Deſires, or voluptuous " Indolence.—But the *Plains* bleat; the *Mountains* " low; and the hollow circling *Rocks* echo with the " univerſal Song. Every Valley remurmurs to the " Fall of ſilver Fountains, or the liquid Lapſe of " gurgling Rills.—*Birds*, Muſcians ever beauteous, " ever gay, perched on a thouſand Boughs, play a " thouſand ſprightly and harmonious Airs.

" Charmed therefore with the fineſt Views; lulled " with the ſofteſt Sounds; and treated with the rich- " eſt Odours; what can be wanting to complete the " Delight? Here is *every* Entertainment for the Eye; " the moſt *refined* Gratifications for the Ear; and a " *perpetual* Banquet for the Smell; without any in- " ſidious Decoy, for the Integrity of our Conduct, " or even for the Purity of our Fancy.

" O ye blooming Walks, and flowery Lawns, " ſurrounded with dewy Landſchapes! How often " have *Patriots* and *Heroes*, laid aſide the Burden of " Power, and ſtole away from the Glare of Gran- " deur, to enjoy themſelves * in your compoſed Re- " treats!—Ye moſſy Couches, and fragrant Bowers, " ſkirted with cooling Caſcades! How many *illuſtri-* " *ous* Perſonages, after all their glorious Toil for the " public Good, have ſought an honourable and wel- " come Repoſe in your downy Lap †?—Ye venerable " Oaks,

* ——————— *Mihi me reddentis Agelli*, ſays *Horace* of his little Country-ſeat.

† *Virgil* was ſo ſmitten with the Amiableneſs of theſe Scenes, that He aſſigns them as an Habitation for happy Spirits, in the Regions of *Elyſium*.

" Oaks, and ſolemn Groves; Woods, that whiſper
" to the quivering Gale; Clifts, that over-hang the
" darkened Flood; Who can number the *Sages* and
" *Saints*, that have devoted the Day to Study, or re-
" ſigned a vacant Hour to healthy Exerciſe, be-
" neath your ſilvan Porticos, and waving Arches?
" That, far from the dull Impertinence of Man,
" have liſtened to the inſtructive Voice of GOD;
" and contemplated the Works of his adorable Hand,
" amidſt your moſs-grown Cells, and rocky Shades.
" —How *inelegant*, or how *inſenſible* is the Mind,
" which has no awakened lively Reliſh for theſe
" ſweet Receſſes, and their exquiſite Beauties!"

But whither am I carried? Is not this *rural Enthuſiaſm?* I find myſelf talking to Trees; and forget the momentous Queſtion, which waits for our Deciſion. Here then let my Rhapſody ceaſe, and my Inquiry proceed.—Does it betray a Want of true Delicacy, to be inſenſible of Nature's Charms? My *Aſpaſio* thinks, it argues as wrong a Taſte in practical Divinity, not to acquieſce in the imputed Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*.—To this Doctrine I have been always extremely averſe. I ſet myſelf to oppoſe it with Objections, drawn from the *Reaſon* of Things, and from various Paſſages of *Scripture*. To all which my Friend replied. And though I was ſcarcely convinced, yet I was ſilenced by his Anſwers.

I pleaded for the Sufficiency of our *ſincere* Obedience. Eſpecially, when accompanied with *Repentance*,

——————— *Lucis habitamus opacis,*
Riparumque Toros, & Prata recentia Rivis
Incolimus.

ance, and recommended by the *Merits* of *CHRIST*. —Neither was this Attempt successful. His Arguments, somewhat like the flaming Sword, planted at the Entrance of Paradise, *turned every Way** ; and precluded all Access to Life, on the Foot of our own Duty.

At length, *Aspasio* quitted the defensive, and attacked me in his Turn. He explained the Precepts, and inforced the Threatenings, of the divine Law. So *exact* its Tenour! That it demands a perfect and persevering Conformity to every Injunction.—So *extensive* its Authority! That it reaches the inmost Thoughts; and requires Obedience, not barely in the Actions of the Life, but the very Intentions of the Heart.—So *inexorable* its Severity! That it condemns every the smallest Offence, and curses every the least Offender.

This Remonstrance, had some of the Terror, and almost all the Effect, of a masked Battery. It was quite unexpected, and alarmed me considerably.— To push his Advantage, He inlarged upon the *infinite Purity* of GOD. A GOD glorious in Holiness: *Who cannot look upon Evil*, with any Connivance, or without the utmost Abhorrence. Before whom the very Heavens are unclean, and who will in no wise clear the Guilty.

To complete his Victory, He played off the Doctrine of original *Guilt*, and original *Depravity*.— That, besides the Imputation of *Adam*'s Apostacy; besides the Commission of numberless Iniquities; We were born in Sin—Are, by Nature, Enmity against GOD—In all our Faculties corrupt—In every Imagination

* Gen. iii. 24.

gination evil—And, even when renewed * by Grace, are ſtill, ſtill tainted with ſome baſe *Remains* of the old Leproſy.

After all, He bid me conſider—What Fruits muſt ſpring from *ſuch a Nature?* — How they muſt appear, when compared with *ſuch a Law?* — What they muſt deſerve, when tried before *ſuch a GOD?* —Theſe, I muſt confeſs, are very weighty and ſtartling Queries. If theſe Repreſentations are true, the Face of human Affairs carries a moſt gloomy Aſpect. Or rather, a moſt dreadful Storm is hanging over the Children of Men.—*Aſpaſio* urges me to fly, without any Delay, to the Covert of *CHRIST*'s meritorious Obedience. This, He ſays, was wrought out, in my Name, and in my Stead: this will be admitted, both at the Throne of Grace, and the Bar of Judgment, as my juſtifying Righteouſneſs.

This, He adds, opens a Way, on GOD's Part, for the largeſt Emanations and moſt honourable Exerciſe of Mercy. On Man's Part, it founds a Title to

* *Even when renewed*—For a Diſplay of this important Truth, and a Remedy againſt this ſtubborn Evil, let me refer the Reader to a little Treatiſe publiſhed by Dr. *Owen*, and intitled *The Nature, Power, Deceit, and Prevalency of the Remainders of indwelling Sin in Believers.* —The Author's Pen is indeed a diſſecting Knife, goes deep into his Subject, and lays open this Plague of the Heart. Like a Work-man that need not be aſhamed, He demonſtrates his Point from the unerring Word of GOD, and the acknowledged Experience of Chriſtians. Like a compaſſionate as well as able Phyſician, He all along preſcribes the proper Antidote; nay, He ſhews how the Poiſon may be ſo over-ruled by divine Grace, and ſo managed by the watchful Patient, as to become medicinal, ſalutary, and conducive to the moſt beneficial Purpoſes.

to Pardon, to Life, and every spiritual Blessing.—This Doctrine, especially in such a Connection, begins to put on a *more recommending* Appearance. My Prejudices are really wearing away. I am almost a Convert.

Aspasio over-heard the Close of these Reflections. Unwilling to interrupt his Friend, in so serious an Inquiry; and desirous to observe the Issue of so interesting a Debate; He had hitherto concealed Himself. But thinking this a favourable Minute, He stepped forward, and said—

Asp. Almost! and why not *altogether* a Convert? What should hinder my dear *Theron*, from submitting to so *rational* a Scheme, with the most intire Acquiescence? What should hinder Him from embracing so *comfortable* a Doctrine, with the utmost Complacency? Why should he not subscribe, both with Hand and Heart, that divine Decree? *Their Righteousness is of me, saith the LORD* *.

Ther. If, by this Doctrine, the Claims of the Law are answered—If the Perfections of GOD are glorified—If the Interests of Morality are secured—I must acknowledge, it will be *more worthy* of Acceptance, than I could once have imagined.

Asp. And if all these Points are not gained; gained too in the most eminent Manner; I solemnly declare, that I will never plead for imputed Righteousness more.

But the *Claims* of the Law are all answered.—For, there is nothing in its sacred Injunctions, which *CHRIST* did not perform; and nothing in its awful Threatenings, which *CHRIST* did not sustain. He fulfilled all its Precepts, by an unspotted Purity

* Isa. liv. 17.

Purity of Heart, and the most perfect Integrity of Life. He exhausted its whole Curse, when he hung upon the Cross, abandoned by his FATHER, and a bleeding Victim for the Sins of his People.—This Obedience brings higher Honour to the divine Law, than it could have received, from the uninterrupted Duty of *Adam*, and all his Posterity, in all their Generations.

The *Perfections* of GOD, which were dishonoured by our Rebellion, are glorified.—He appears, by this Method of Justification, inconceivably rich in shewing Mercy; yet steady, inflexibly steady, in executing Vengeance. The *Sceptre* of Grace, and the *Sword* of Justice, have each its due Exercise, each its full Scope. The Holiness of the divine Nature, and the Dignity of the divine Government, are not only maintained, but most magnificently displayed. Indeed, it is the peculiar Excellence of this wonderful Expedient, that it renders *all* the divine Attributes supremely venerable, and supremely amiable.

Ther. But are the Interests of *Morality* secured? This is what I am strongly inclined to doubt. And to say the Truth, this is now my principal Objection to your Scheme.

Asp. I shall never blame my Friend, for being vigilant and jealous over the Interests of Morality. If our Doctrine had a malignant Aspect on true Morality, I would give my Voice against it, and use all my Endeavours to suppress it.—But it is formed with every Tendency, to awaken the *utmost Dread* of Sin, and affect Us with the *warmest Sense* of our CREATOR's Love. And is not *that* the strongest Barrier against the Incroachments of Vice? Is not *this* the sweetest Inducement to the Practice of Virtue?

I am

I am glad to find, that a Jealousy for the Interests of Morality, is the chief Obstacle in the Way of your Assent. Because, I am persuaded, it is much of the same Nature with those forbidding and mistaken Apprehensions, which our Ancestors entertained, concerning the *Ocean*. They looked upon it, as an unsurmountable Obstruction, to universal Society. Whereas it is in Fact, the very *Cement* of Society; the only Means of accomplishing a general Intercourse; and the great Highway to all the Nations of the Earth. What is here affirmed, may, on some future Occasion, be proved.—At present, let me desire you to imagine, rather, may the Blessed SPIRIT enable You to believe, That your Sins *are expiated*, through the Death of *JESUS CHRIST*: That a Righteousness *is given* You, by virtue of which, You may have free and welcome Access to GOD; the Merit of which you may plead, for obtaining all the Blessings of Time and Eternity.—Then let me ask; Will this *alienate* your Affections from your Almighty BENEFACTOR? Will this *irritate* evil Concupiscence, or send You to carnal Gratifications in quest of Happiness? Quite the Reverse. When this Faith is wrought in your Heart, nothing will be so powerful, to produce holy Love, and willing Obedience; to exalt your Desires, and enable You to overcome the World.

What says the Apostle? *I through the Law am dead to the Law* *. Being made to understand its Spirituality and Perfection, I have no longer any Hope of Justification from my own Conformity to its Precepts.—Did this prompt Him, did this embolden Him, to neglect or violate his Duty? Hear the sacred Writer's own

* Gal. ii. 29.

own Declaration. I am releaſed from the Rigour and Bondage of the Law; I am directed to *CHRIST* for Righteouſneſs and Salvation; *that I may live unto GOD.* That my whole Life may be devoted to HIS Honour, who has brought me into a State ſo delightful, into a Liberty ſo glorious.

Ther. This Liberty, I am afraid, will be of very little Service to the licentious and gay World.

Aſp. I ſhall be in no Pain even for the *gay World*, if once they cordially receive this Grace, and are vitally influenced by this Doctrine. Which, far from diſſolving the leaſt Obligation to Obedience, or weakening any one Principle of Piety, adds to every other Motive, the endearing Engagements of Gratitude, and the winning Perſuaſives of Love.

Nay; I verily believe, that Multitudes in the gay and licentious World, are held faſt in the *fatal* Snare, by their Ignorance of this ſweet, alluring, conſolatory Truth. They find themſelves deeply obnoxious to divine Juſtice, and feel themſelves ſtrongly bound with the Chains of Senſuality. They think, it is impoſſible to clear the enormous Score of their Guilt; impoſſible to deliver themſelves from the confirmed Dominion of Sin. Therefore, like *deſperate* Debtors, they ſtifle every ſerious Thought; leſt a Conſciouſneſs of their long Arrears, and a Proſpect of the dreadful Reckoning, ſhould *torment them before the Time**.

But if they were informed, that the infinitely merciful SON of GOD, has undertaken to redeem ſuch undone and helpleſs Sinners—That He has thoroughly expiated the moſt horrid Tranſgreſſions, and procured even for ungodly Wretches, all the

 need-

* Matt. viii. 29.

needful Supplies of ſtrengthening Grace—That, inſtead of being prohibited, they are *invited* to partake, *freely* to partake, of theſe unſpeakable Bleſſings—Were they acquainted with theſe glad Tidings of the Goſpel, ſurely they would burſt their Chains, and ſpring to Liberty. Theſe *Truths*, if once revealed in their Hearts, would, of all Conſiderations, be moſt effectual to *make them free* *.

What ſhall I ſay more, to obtain my *Theron*'s Approbation? Shall I point out and plead the moſt illuſtrious Precedents?—GOD the FATHER is well pleaſed with this Righteouſneſs of our REDEEMER. He expreſſes his Complacency by the moſt emphatical Words: *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth* †. In *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs, GOD is not only pleaſed, but *delighted*: his *very Soul*, every Perfection of the GODHEAD, with ineffable Satisfaction, reſts and acquieſces in them.—I ſaid *ineffable*; for He has declared this, in a Manner ſuperior to all the Energy of Language, by raiſing our crucified SURETY from the Dead; by exalting Him to the Heaven of Heavens; and placing Him at his own Right-hand in Glory.

Our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* is well pleaſed. He eſteems it his Honour to ſhine forth as the everlaſting Righteouſneſs of his People. It is the brighteſt Jewel of his mediatorial Crown. In this He *ſees of the Travail of his Soul, and is ſatisfied.* Accounting Himſelf fully recompenſed, for all the Labours of his Life, and all the Sorrows of his Death, when Sinners are waſhed from their Guilt in his Blood, and preſented faultleſs by his Obedience.

The

* John viii. 32. † Iſa. xlii. 1.

The HOLY SPIRIT is equally pleased with this great Transaction, and its noble Effects. It is his peculiar Office, and favourite Employ, to *convince* the World of their SAVIOUR's Righteousness. Not only that his Nature was spotlesly pure, and his Conversation perfectly holy; but that from both results a Righteousness, of infinite Dignity, and everlasting Efficacy: sufficient, throughout all Ages sufficient, for the Acceptance and Salvation of the most unworthy Creatures.

Since then, this Method of Acceptance and Salvation, is excellent and glorious, in the Eyes of the adorable TRINITY—Since it magnifies the Law, and yields the most exalted Honour to its Divine AUTHOR—Since it makes ample Provision for the Holiness of a *corrupt*, and the Happiness of a *ruined* World—Why should my Friend any longer dislike it; oppose it; or treat it with a cold Indifference? Surely, all these grand Recommendations, are enough to over-rule any little Objections, which may arise from the Suspicions of Timidity, or may be started by the Artifices of Sophistry.

Ther. I know not how it is, *Aspasio*; but I cannot reconcile myself to this Doctrine of imputed Righteousness: notwithstanding all the Pains You have taken, to make me a Convert.

Asp. The Disappointment is mine, but the Loss is yours, *Theron*.—However, let me intreat You, not to reject my Sentiments absolutely, nor to condemn them prematurely. Suppose it possible at least, that they *may* be true; and weigh them in an even Balance.—Learn Wisdom from your *Aspasio*'s Folly. I

was once exactly in your Situation; saw Things in your Light, and through your Medium.

Converſing, I well remember, with a devout but plain Perſon, our Diſcourſe happened to turn upon that ſolemn Admonition; *If any Man will come after ME, let Him deny Himſelf**. I was haranguing upon the Import and Extent of the Duty. Shewing, that merely to forbear the infamous Action, is little. We muſt deny Admittance, deny Entertainment at leaſt, to the evil *Imagination*; and quench even the inkindling Spark of irregular Deſire.—When I had ſhot a random Bolt, my honeſt Friend replied; "There is another Inſtance of Self-denial, to which "this Injunction extends, and which is of very great "Moment in the Chriſtian Religion. I mean, the "Inſtance of renouncing our own Strength, and our "own Righteouſneſs; not leaning on *that*, for Ho-"lineſs; nor relying on *this*, for Juſtification."—I thouaht the old Man, I muſt confeſs, little better than a ſuperſtitious Dotard; and wondered at (what I then fanſied) the motley Mixture of Piety and Oddity in his Notions. But now I diſcern Senſe, Solidity, and Truth in his Obſervation †. Now I perceive, that we ourſelves are often the Dreamers, when We imagine Others to be faſt aſleep.

Ther.

* Matt. xvi. 24.

† *Milton* thought the ſame, otherwiſe he would never have put thoſe Words into the Mouth of a *divine* Speaker.

——————*Thy Merit,*
Imputed ſhall abſolve them, who renounce
Their own, both righteous and unrighteous, Deeds:
And live in Thee tranſplanted, and from Thee
Receive new Life.

Book III. 290.

Ther. I shall not forget your Caution, and will endeavour to avoid the Rock, on which my *Aspasio* struck; but happily, it seems, escaped Shipwreck.—You may likewise assure Yourself, that, upon a Subject of exceeding great and eternal Consequence, I shall not fail to use the most attentive and impartial Consideration. An *indolent* Supineness, or a *bigoted* Obstinacy, in this great Crisis of Affairs, would be of all Errors the most inexcusable, and must prove of all Miscarriages the most fatal.

Asp. But still *You cannot reconcile Yourself*—And no Wonder. For this Way of Salvation runs directly counter to the Stream of corrupt Nature. It puzzles our Reason, and offends our Pride. What? shall We, not work, but *believe unto Righteousness* *? Shall We receive all *freely*, and reckon Ourselves no better than *unprofitable* Servants! This is a Method, to which We should never submit; this is a Proposal, which We should always spurn; were not our Sentiments rectified, and our Hearts new moulded, by sovereign Grace.

Let me remind You of a little Incident, which You must have read in the *Grecian* History. A certain Stranger came, one Day, to dine with some *Lacedæmonians*. They, You know, always sat down at a public Table, and were content with the plainest Food. The Gentleman, accustomed to higher Eating, could not forbear expressing his Disgust, at the *homely* Provision. —Sir, said the Cook, You don't make use of the *Sauce*.—What do You mean? replied the Guest.—You don't use hard Exercise; nor habituate Yourself to long Abstinence; nor bring a

* Rom. x. 10.

ſharpened Appetite of the Meal.—And You, my dear Friend, I am apprehenſive, have not the Sauce; have not the proper Preparative for this ſalutary Doctrine; which is indeed the Bread of Life, and the very Marrow of the Goſpel.

Ther. What Preparative?

Aſp. A Senſe of your great Depravity, your extreme Guilt, and your utterly undone Condition.—While *deſtitute* of theſe Convictions, our Souls will be like *the full Stomach*, that *lothes* even *the Honeycomb*.—So long as theſe Convictions are *ſlight*, and *hover* only in the Imagination; We ſhall be like *Gallio* * liſtleſs, indifferent, and *caring for None of theſe*

* *Acts* xviii. 17. A late Commentator, of diſtinguiſhed Eminence, has attempted to vindicate *Gallio*'s Conduct; and would repreſent it, as an amiable Inſtance of *Prudence* and *Moderation*.

According to my Apprehenſion, this *Roman* Governor acted a Part, both irreligious and unjuſt.—*Irreligious*, becauſe he refuſed to hear the Apoſtle's Defence; which was the moſt likely Means of his Converſion and Salvation. As one great End, why Providence permitted the Preachers of the Goſpel to be *brought before Rulers and Kings*, was, that ſuch an Incident might ſerve εις μαρτυριον αυτοις, Matt. x. 18. *for a Teſtimony* (not *againſt*, but) *to them*. That even the Potentates of the Earth, prejudiced and ſupercilious as they were, might hereby have an Opportunity, of hearing the *Chriſtian* Doctrine, and ſeeing its Efficacy on the Spirits of Men.—*Unjuſt*, becauſe He permitted *Soſthenes*, then an innocent Perſon, afterwards a Diſciple of *CHRIST*, (1 Cor. i. 1.) to be ſo illegally treated, and outrageouſly abuſed, without interpoſing for his Reſcue. Here was evidently a Breach of the Peace; a Violation of the Laws. Of *this* therefore the civil Magiſtrate ought to have taken Cognizance: however He might fancy Himſelf diſcharged from the Obligation, of attending to the Goſpel, or protecting its Preachers; however He might imagine Himſelf authorized, to treat divine

these Things.—But when they are *deep*, and *penetrate* the Heart; then the Righteousness of a REDEEMER will be sweet, tasteful, and inviting. As Myrrh and Frankincense to the Smell; as Milk and Honey to the Palate; as Gold and Treasures to the ruined Bankrupt.

Ther. What Method would You advise me to use, in order to get these Convictions impressed on my Heart?

Asp. Endeavour to understand GOD's holy Law. Consider, how pure, how extensive, how sublimely perfect it is.—Then, judge of your spiritual State, not from the *flattering* Suggestions of Self-love, nor from the *defective* Examples of your Fellow-creatures, but by this *unerring* Standard of the Sanctuary.—Above all, beseech the GOD and FATHER of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, to send his inlightening SPIRIT into your Soul. For indeed, without the inlightening Influences of the SPIRIT, We may have the divine Law in our Hand; We may comprehend its grammatical Meaning; yet be like blind *Bartimeus* under the meridian Sun. It is the blessed SPIRIT alone, who can rend the Veil of Ignorance from our Minds; and

divine Truths with Contempt; and call *the Striving for the Faith*, a Wrangling about *Words and Names*.

Besides; if the HOLY SPIRIT intended to fix a Mark of *Approbation*, rather than a Brand of *Infamy*, upon the *Proconsul*'s Behaviour; I cannot but think, it would have been expressed in a Manner, different from —κ ουδεν τουτων τω Γαλλιωνι εμελεν. Which, if it be the Language of Applause, requires some more than ordinary Skill in Criticism, to understand it aright. But, if it be the Voice of Censure, is obvious and intelligible to every Reader.

ſhew Us, either "the wonderful Things of GOD's "Law," or the glorious Myſteries of his Goſpel. In this Senſe, our polite Poet * ſpeaks a Truth, as ſingularly important, as it is elegantly expreſſed:

He from thick Films ſhall purge the viſual Ray,
And on the ſightleſs Eye-balls pour the Day.

Will You give me Leave to propoſe another Expedient? Which, I believe, may be conſiderably ſerviceable in this particular Caſe. Which, I am aſſured, will be greatly advantageous in many other Reſpects.

Ther. Backward as I am to adopt your Doctrine, I am no Enemy to my own Intereſt. Therefore, ſhall not only give You Leave to propoſe, but give You Thanks for communicating, ſo valuable an Advice.

Aſp. It is, in Reality, none of mine. It was long ago recommended by your old Acquaintance *Horace* †. It conſiſts in *Keeping a Diary.*

Compile a ſecret Hiſtory of your Heart and Conduct.—Take Notice of the Manner, in which your *Time* is ſpent; and of the Strain, which runs through your *Diſcourſe.* How often the former is loſt in Triſles, how often the latter evaporates in Vanity.—Attend to the *Principle* from which your Actions flow; whether from the ſteady habitual Love of GOD,

* Mr. *Pope*, in his charming Poem ſtyled *The Meſſiah.*

† *Ille velut fidis Arcana Sodalibus olim*
Credebat Libris: neque ſi male ceſſerat uſquam
Decurrens alio, neque ſi bene: quo fit, ut omnis
Votivâ pateat veluti deſcripta Tabellâ
Vita Senis.

HORAT. Sat.

GOD, or from some rambling Impulse, and a customary Propensity to please Yourself? — Minute down your Sins of *Omission*. How frequently You neglect to glorify your CREATOR; to edify your Fellow-creatures; and to improve Yourself in Knowledge and Holiness.—Observe the Frame of your Spirit in *religious* Duties. With what Reluctance they are undertaken, and with what Indevotion performed; with how many Wanderings of Thought, and how much Dulness of Desire.—How often, in the common Affairs of Life, You feel the inordinate Sallies of Passion, the Workings of evil Concupiscence, or the Intrusion of foolish Imaginations.

Register those *secret* Faults, to which None but your own Conscience is privy, and which None but the all-seeing Eye discerns.—Often review these interesting Memoirs. Frequently contemplate Yourself in this faithful Mirror.—An Artist, sometime ago, took a *Survey* of your Estate. Drew the Form, and measured the Dimensions, of each Inclosure. Pictured out every Hedge, and scarce omitted a single Tree, which grew upon the Premises. — Act thus with your Will, your Understanding, your Affections. These are your noble *internal Demesne*. Of which None but Yourself can be a competent Surveyor.

Ther. It is unreasonable and preposterous, I must acknowledge, to be minutely exact in meaner Matters, and use no Accuracy of Inspection in the most momentous Affairs. To have a correct Draught of our Lands, which are a *transient* Inheritance; and no Map of that *everlasting* Possession, the Soul.

Asp. Gratify me then, my dear *Theron*, in this Particular. As I purpose to set out very early in the Morning, I shall insist upon it; that You do not rise

before

before your usual Time, in order to compliment my Departure. But I now make it my *last* Wish, and my *parting* Request, that You will, for some Months at least, keep a Diary.

You have wondered at my Opinion, concerning the Corruption of our Nature, and the Insufficiency of our Righteousness. This may seem strange, this may appear shocking, to a Mind *unacquainted* with itself. But, when You have searched your Heart, by this Probe; when You have felt the Pulse of your Soul, by Self-examination: then, You will be better able to judge of my Sentiments, and enter into the Reasons of my Faith.

By this means, We shall also discover the Sins, that most easily beset Us; which most frequently elude our Vigilance, and baffle our Resolution. We shall learn, *how* to post our Guard; *when* to exercise the strictest Watch; and *where* to direct the Artillery of Prayer.—In a Word; We shall learn, better than from ten thousand Volumes, to KNOW OURSELVES. A Knowledge, which was supposed, by the antient Philosophers, to descend from Heaven *; and which, I believe, our *Christian* Divines will allow, has a happy Tendency to lead People thither. Because, of all other Preparatives, it best disposes them for that blessed REDEEMER, who is the Way, the only Way to those blissful Mansions.

Now I have mentioned a *Way*, let me suppose You traveling through an unknown Country. You come to a Place, where the Road divides itself into two equally inviting Parts. You are at a loss, which Track

* ——— *E Cœlo descendit, γνωθι σεαυτον.*

JUVEN.

Track to purſue. Whoſe Direction will you chooſe to follow? That Man's, who has paſſed through *neither* of them? That Man's, who has paſſed through *one* of them only? Or that Man's, who has paſſed and repaſſed them *both?*—To wait for an Anſwer, would be an Affront to your Judgment. Only let me obſerve, that the laſt is your *Aſpaſio*'s Caſe. He has traveled long, and proceeded far, even in *your* Path. All that Circumſpection and Aſſiduity, all that Prayer and Self-denial, all that Faſting and Alms, and every other Means of Grace could do, in order to eſtabliſh a Righteouſneſs of his own, has been done. But to no Purpoſe.—He has alſo trod every Step in the Way, which he recommends to his beloved Friend. He has made the Trial; can ſet his *Probatum eſt*, to whatever He adviſes; and may very truly ſay, with his Divine MASTER, *We ſpeak that We do know**, and teſtify that We have experienced.

Ther. I am ſorry to obſerve, that the Night is coming on, and our Converſation almoſt at an End. My Regret is increaſed, by the Conſideration of your intended Journey.—Though Buſineſs obliges You to *depart*; it will, I hope, afford You Leiſure to *write*. This will be ſome Compenſation for the Want of your Company.

Yonder Sun is ſinking below the Horizon, and juſt taking his leave of our Earth. To retard the departing Radiance, at leaſt to alleviate the approaching Loſs, thoſe weſtern Clouds catch the Rays; and reflect them to our View, in a moſt amuſing Diverſity of Colours. By this means, We enjoy the great Luminary in *his Beams*, even when *his Orb* is withdrawn

* John iii. 11.

drawn from our Sight. — An epistolary Correspondence has something of the same Nature. Letters may be called, the Talk of absent Friends. By this Expedient, they communicate their Thoughts, even though Countries, Kingdoms, or Seas intercept their Speech. You must, therefore, promise me this Satisfaction; and let me converse with my *Aspasio* by the *Pen*, when I can no longer have an Intercourse with him in *Person*.

Asp. You have anticipated me, *Theron*. Otherwise, what is now my Promise, would have been my Request.

I cannot but take notice of another Particularity, in that magnificent Assemblage of Clouds. How they varied their Appearance, as the Lamp of Day changed its Situation.—A little while ago, those Curtains of the Sky, were streaked with Orange, or tinged with Amber. Presently, they borrowed the Blush of the Rose, or the softened Red of the Pink. Ere long, they glow with Vermilion, or deepen into Crimson. Soon succeeds the purple-tinctured Robe of Majesty; and as soon (thus transient is all sublunary Grandeur!) gives place to the *sable Veil* of Evening, or the *gloomy Pall* of Night.— Such, I trust, will be the Issue of my *Theron*'s present Apprehensions. All his splendid Ideas of human Excellency and Self-righteousness, will become faint; will lose their imaginary Lustre; till, at length, they fade away, and darken into absolute *Self-abasement*.— Then, the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS will be amiable, will be desirable, as the Beauties of the Dawn, breaking upon the Shades of Night.

A

SERIES

OF

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

I AM now at the Seat of my worthy Friend *Camillus*; where Buſineſs and Inclination will fix me for ſome Weeks. —This Evening we had a moſt pleaſing Ramble. I have met with nothing ſo agreeable, ſince I left your Houſe, and loſt your Company.

The Time was juſt arrived, and the Scene was fully opened, which furniſhed our great Poet with his fine Deſcription;

Now

Now was the Sun in western Cadence low,
From Noon; and gentle Airs, due at their Hour,
To fan the Earth now wak'd, and usher in
The Evening cool.

At this Juncture, *Camillus* invited me to take the Air.—We walked, several Times, along a close shady Alley, arched with the Foliage of *Filberts*. Here, hid from every Eye, and the whole World withdrawn from our View, we seemed like *Monks* stroling in their Cloysters.—Turning short at the End, We enter a parallel Range of majestic and uniformly spreading *Wallnut Trees*. This Transition, was somewhat like advancing, through a low Porch, into the Isles of a magnificent *Cathedral*. The broad Leaf, and large Trunk of those lordly Trees—their very diffusive Spread, added to their prodigious Height—give them an Air of uncommon Dignity. It swells the Imagination with vast Ideas, and entertains Us with a romantic Kind of Delight, to expatiate amidst such huge Columns, and under such superb Elevations, of living Architecture.

Quitting our Cathedral, We turn once again, and pass into a grand Colonade of *Oaks*: so regular in their Situation, so similar in their Size, and so remarkably correspondent in every Circumstance, that they looked like the *Twins* of Nature; not only belonging to the same Family, but produced at the same Birth. Through these lay a Walk, strait, spacious, and gracefully long. Far exceeding the last in the Extent of its Area, though much inferior in the Statelines of its Cieling. It put me in mind of that divine Benignity, which has allowed Us *six* Days, for the Prosecution of our own comparatively

low Affairs; and ſet apart but *one*, for the more immediate Attendance on the ſublime Exerciſes of Devotion.

This Walk was covered with the neateſt *Gravel*; and not a Weed to be ſeen, nor one Spire of Graſs, through the whole extended Surface. It ſtole into a continual Aſcent; yet ſo very gradually, that the Riſe was ſcarce diſcernable, either by the ſearching Eye, the toiling Feet, or the panting Breath.—At the Extremity, a handſome *Summerhouſe* ſhewed a Flight of Steps, and half a *Venetian* Door. The reſt of the Building was hid by the cluſtering Branches.

As ſoon as We enter the Apartment, *Camillus* throws open the Left-hand Saſh; and, with it, a moſt inlarged and amuſive *Proſpect*.—The Structure appeared ſituate on the Brow of a conſiderable Eminence. Whoſe Sides were partly confuſed and wild with broken Rocks, partly ſhagged and perplexed with thorny Shrubs. The Spectator is agreeably ſurpriſed, to find Himſelf accommodated with ſo *elegant* a Manſion, on the Summit of ſo *rude* and *ruinous* a Spot.—But, how greatly is his Surpriſe and his Satisfaction augmented, when he caſts his Eye forward; and beholds the beautiful *Meads*, which, from the Foot of this ragged Hill, ſtretch themſelves into a Space almoſt unmeaſureable!

Through the midſt of this extenſive Vale, which was decked with the fineſt Verdure, and repleniſhed with the richeſt Herbage, a *River* rolled its copious Flood. Rolled in a thouſand ſerpentine *Meanders*, as though it had loſt its Way in the flowery Labyrinth, or made repeated Efforts of flowing back to its Source.—Till, at laſt, having wandered more than twice the Length of the Meadows; having held a

Mirror

Mirror to the aſpiring Poplars, and bending Willows; having paid a welcome Salute to ſeveral ornamented *Villas*, and paſſed through the Arches of two or three curiouſly pendent Bridges; it ſeemed to meet the Sky, and mingle with the Horizon.

Oppoſite to the Front Window, a *Caſcade* fell from the adjacent Stream. It flaſhed and foamed along the broad Slope, indented with ſmall Pits, and jagged with protuberant Stones. The Current, vexed and embarraſſed, ſeemed to *rave* at the intervening Obſtacles; and forcing its rapid, indignant, ſonorous Way, ſtruck the Ear with a Peal of liquid Thunder. Theſe fretful Waters—let our *angry* Paſſions obſerve the Admonition, and follow the Example—ſoon were pacified; ſoon forgot to chide. Collected into a little Rivulet, they ran off in calm and ſilent Lapſe, till they loſt themſelves amongſt Beds of Oſier, and Plantations of Alder.

The River, widening as it flowed, was parted here and there by ſeveral little Iſlands. Some tufted with *Reeds*, and the Reſort of Swans. Some, adorned with ſtately *Porticos*, and ſplendid *Alcoves*, the graceful Retreats of rural Pleaſure. Some, furniſhed with green imbowering Walks, fitted for ſtudious Retirement and ſedate Contemplation.—On either Side of the charming Valley, Towns and Villages lay thick and looked gay; adding Ornament and Variety to the Scene, and receiving innumerable Advantages from the paſſing Wave.

The Whole recalled to an attentive Obſerver's Mind, that amiable and auguſt Spectacle, which the *Syrian* * Soothſayer could not behold, without a Rapture of Delight;—*From the Top of the Rocks I ſee* the Tribes

* Numb. xxiii. 7.

Tribes of JEHOVAH, *and from the Hills I behold* the Habitations of his choſen People. *How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob! And thy Tabernacles, O Iſrael! As the Vallies, are they ſpread forth; as Gardens, by the River's Side: as Trees of exquiſite Fragrance*, which the LORD hath planted: as Cedars* of ſtateliеſt Growth, *flouriſhing beſide the Waters.*

We had but juſt looked about Us, when a Meſſenger came for *Camillus*. As He was called to ſettle ſome private Affairs, I choſe to ſtay in this inviting Retreat; and determined to make myſelf Amends for the Loſs of *Camillus*'s Company, by beginning a Correſpondence with my *Theron*.—We have Pen, Ink, and Paper, in all our rural Retirements; that, if any Thing is ſtarted in Diſcourſe, or occurs in Meditation, worthy to be remembered, it may immediately be committed to Writing.

I could not but obſerve to my Friend, that, fine as the Proſpect appeared, there was one Decoration wanting; if ſome *grand Deformity* may be called a Decoration. The Ridges of a bleak and barren Mountain, or the Skirts of a Sun-burnt tawny Heath, would give *additional Livelineſs*, to the ornamented Parts of the Landſchape, and make their Beauties ſtrike with double Vigour.—This alſo, by ſhewing Us, what wretched Abodes and inhoſpitable Quarters might have fallen to our Share, would awaken in our Hearts

* *Numb.* xxiv. 5, 6. It is well known that the Word אהלים is uſed in the ſacred Writings, to denote either a *delightful Perfume*, Prov. vii. 17. or that *aromatic Plant*, which produces it, *Cant.* iv. 14.—For which Reaſon, I think it very juſtifiable, to render the Expreſſion, *Trees of exquiſite Fragrance*; and am perſuaded, it will be far more intelligible to the Generality of Readers, than *Trees of Lign-Aloes*.

a more fervent Gratitude to the Supreme DISPOSER of Things; who has caſt *our* "Lot in "a fairer Ground, and given *us* a more goodly He-"ritage."

So, a proper Knowledge of the divine *Law*—of its ſublime Perfections, and rigorous Sanction—joined with a Conviction of our own extreme Deficiency, and manifold Tranſgreſſions—all this would endear the bleſſed *JESUS* to our Affections, and powerfully recommend his Righteouſneſs to our Deſires.—The Remainder of this Epiſtle, therefore, ſhall turn upon ſome Inſtances of Duty, injoined in that ſacred Syſtem. *By which* it may be highly uſeful to examine our Conduct, and ſift our Hearts: *in which*, I believe, we have all fallen ſhort, and are all become guilty: *from which*, We may learn the Imperfection of our beſt Services, and ſee the inexpreſſible Need of a better Righteouſneſs than our own.

The Knowledge of GOD is the Foundation of all vital Religion, and indeed is the Conſummation of human Happineſs. It is not only Matter of preſent Duty, but the very Eſſence of our future Bliſs; *This is Life eternal, to know Thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom Thou haſt ſent**.—Yet, important and obligatory as it is, are We not very defective in this divine Science? Have We duly acquainted Ourſelves with the marvelous Excellencies of the LORD JEHOVAH? His uncontroulable Power, and all-comprehending Wiſdom; his unbounded Goodneſs, and unwearied Patience; his immaculate Holineſs, and inflexible Juſtice; his never-failing Faithfulneſs, and inviolable Vera-

* John xvii. 3.

Veracity?—Have We, according to the Direction of our *inſpired* Tutor, purſued this ſacred Study on our Knees*; and ſought this moſt noble of all intellectual Endowments, not merely from Books, but principally at the Throne of Grace. Have We ſought it, like that antient *Jewiſh* Student, with an early Application, and with inceſſant Aſſiduity; even "from "the Flower, till the Grape was ripe†?"

Is that ſcanty Ray of Knowledge, which perhaps has forced itſelf through our original Darkneſs, *operative* on our Affections? Have We loved the LORD our GOD with all our Heart? This is the firſt and great Commandment‡.—Have We conſtantly entertained the moſt magnificent and honourable Thoughts of his ſublime Perfections? Is our Eſteem for this immenſely great and moſt bleſſed BEING, high, ſuperlative, matchleſs? Somewhat like *that*, expreſſed by the Pſalmiſt; *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? And there is None upon Earth, that I deſire in compariſon of Thee*‖.—Have we been affectionately concerned for his *Glory*, and zealous to advance his holy Religion? Troubled, very ſenſibly troubled, when our MAKER's Honour has been trampled in the Duſt, by licentious Tongues, or flagitious Deeds?

Have We made it our ruling Care, to approve the Whole of our Life, and the moſt ſecret Tranſactions of our Breaſt, to his all-ſeeing Eye? Reſolved, deliberately reſolved to ſacrifice, not only our darling Luſts, but even our moſt valuable Intereſts, whenever they ſtand in Competition with the good Pleaſure of his Will?—In a Word; as the Hart panteth after

* Jam. i. 5. † Eccluſ. li. 15. ‡ Matt. xxii. 38.
‖ Pſal. lxxiii. 25.

the Water-brooks, with such *vehement* and *inextinguishable* Ardour, have We thirsted after—a brighter Manifestation of his divine Attributes—some sweeter Assurances of his special Love—and an ever-increasing Conformity to his holy Image?

Such was the Temper of those excellent Men, who are characterized in the Scriptures of Truth, as Children of the HIGHEST, and Patterns for our Imitation. This is their Language; *The Desire of our Soul is unto thy Name, and to the Remembrance of Thee. With my Soul have I desired Thee in the Night; yea, with my Spirit within me will I seek Thee early* *.—Neither is such Warmth of Love, and Fervour of Desire, any needless or extravagant Pitch of Devotion; but a *reasonable* Service, indispensibly due, from all intelligent Creatures, to the great AUTHOR of their Being—in whom all possible Perfections, with the utmost Exaltation and Dignity, reside—from whom all Manner of Blessings, in the most copious and never failing Communications, flow.

When We receive, from an absent *Friend*, rich and repeated Presents; Casks of generous Wine, or Jarrs

* *Isa.* xxvi. 8, 9. We can hardly tell, which to admire most, the *Beauty* of the Description, or the *Piety* of the Persons. *I have desired*; and not with inactive Wishes, but such as prompt to vigorous Endeavours, *I will seek Thee.* And *early*, with the most vigilant Application and unwearied Assiduity. — The Emphasis is very much increased, by the Addition of those lively Words, *with my Soul, yea with my Spirit*; with the whole Bent and Sway of my Affections, and with the steady invariable Determination of my Judgment.—Thus *have I* desired Thee, even *in the Night*; when both the Pursuits and the Thoughts of other People, are sunk and lost in profound Repose. Thus *will I* seek Thee, with a Zeal—*early* as the rising—*constant* as the returning Sun.

Jarrs of delicious Fruit; We feel Ourselves inkindled into a grateful Affection. We honour, We love the Person, who allows Us such a distinguished Place in his Heart; and expresses his cordial Regard, by such a Series of active and tender Benevolence.—The Blessed GOD is a Friend to Us All, infinitely powerful, and equally munificent. We are the constant Objects of his *more than* friendly, of his parental Cares. Every passing Moment is a Messenger of his Patience, and charged with some Token of his Bounty. For *our* Sake, He has diffused Blessings over all the Face of the Earth; and commanded every Element to concur, in ministering to our Accommodation. He has not only adapted his Benefits to our several Wants; but has given them a *Diversification*, large as the Scope of our Wishes; and an *Enrichment*, far beyond all that our Fancy could conceive. —Profuse Liberality! Yet small and scanty, compared with his most adorable Benignity in *CHRIST JESUS*.

What? If GOD, willing to manifest the superabundant Riches of his Kindness, had made bare the Arm of his Omnipotence; and struck a most miraculous Road through the Surges of the Ocean, to afford Us a safe Passage!—If, to accommodate Us in our Travels, He had brought Waters out of the flinty Rock; and bid the Ravens bring Meat to our Hands, bid the Winds convey Manna to our Doors?—If, to furnish us with a commodious Settlement, He had dethroned mighty Kings, dispossessed populous Nations, and made the Walls of impregnable Cities fall to the Ground?—If, to further the Dispatch of our Business, or facilitate the Conquest of our Enemies, He had arrested the Sun in his meridian Career, and

laid an Embargo upon the Moon, ſetting out on her nightly Tour?—In ſhort, if to promote our Welfare, He had ſuſpended the Powers, and controuled the Laws of univerſal Nature; had wrought *all* the Miracles, exhibited in the Land of *Egypt*, or recorded in the Volumes of Inſpiration—Should We not think Ourſelves under the moſt inviolable Engagements, to love the LORD our GOD, *Who had done ſo great Things for Us*; to love Him unfeignedly and ardently; to love Him with a ſupreme Affection, far above every other amiable Object?—Yet, We have greater, incomparably greater Obligations to our Almighty BENEFACTOR. For (hear O Heavens! wonder O Earth! and let Eternity dwell upon the ſtupendous Truth!) *GOD ſpared not his SON—his own SON*—his tranſcendently glorious and divinely excellent SON—*but delivered him up* to the deepeſt Humiliation, and to the moſt accurſed Death, *for Us* Men and our Salvation.

O, *Theron!* Have We been impreſſed with *Wonder*, at the Contemplation of this Goodneſs? Have our Hearts glowed with *Gratitude*, under a Senſe of theſe Mercies? Surely, No Man need be convicted of any other Crime, at the great Tribunal, than Inſenſibility of ſuch Love, and Ingratitude for ſuch Favours. This, without the Acceſſion of horrid Impieties, is enough to leave him abſolutely inexcuſable. This is enough to prove Him one of the moſt *diſingenuous*, and *deteſtable* of Creatures.

Have We exerciſed Ourſelves in frequent *Thankſgiving?* Many are the Exhortations to this honourable Duty. *Praiſe thy GOD, O Sion* *: *Praiſe Him for*

* Pſal. cxlvii. 12.

for his mighty Acts * :—*Praise Him according to his excellent Greatness* †.—Innumerable are the Incitements to abound in this pleasant Service. Every Comfort has a Voice, and cries in the Ear of Reason; *O! that Men would therefore praise the* LORD *for his Goodness.* Every Deliverance inforces the Address, and furnishes fresh Materials for the heavenly Employ.—The Man after GOD's own Heart declares, as an inviting Example for our Practice; *I will bless the* LORD *at all Times: His Praise shall continually be in my Mouth* ‡: *Yea, as long as I have any Being, I will sing Praises unto my* GOD ‖.—Indeed, when We consider the inexhaustibly rich Bounty of GOD our CREATOR, and the inconceivably tender Mercy of GOD our REDEEMER, it is both strange and deplorable, that the Love of GOD is not always prevailing in our Hearts, and the Language of Praise ever flowing from our Lips.

I will not suppose our Character so irreligious, that We have neglected the daily Worship of GOD, either in our Closet, or in our Family.—But, have we prayed with that profound *reverential Awe*, which

* Psal. cl. 2.

† Among these Exhortations, We may rank that beautiful and devout Address to GOD, יושב תהלות ישראל Psal. xxii. 3. *Thou that inhabitest*—Light inaccessible, shall I say? The Regions of Immensity, or the Ages of Eternity? No; but what is a more exalted Character—*The Praises of Israel.* Finely signifying, that Praise is a most acceptable Sacrifice; to which the Divine MAJESTY attends with the greatest Delight.—Intimating also, that the Exercise of Praise should not be an occasional Thing, like a *transient Visit* to a Stranger's House; but a daily and almost unintermitted Service, like the *stated Residence* of a Person in his own Habitation.

‡ Psal. xxxiv. 1. ‖ Psal. cxlvi. 2.

is due to the HIGH and LOFTY ONE, *who inhabiteth Eternity?*—Have We made our Supplications with that *fervent Importunity*, which may in some measure correspond with the extreme Indigence of our State, and the invaluable Worth of the Blessings We crave?—Have our Petitions been attended with that *steady Affiance*, which may glorify the Goodness, the Power, the Veracity of the LORD? May evidently declare, That He *is rich in Mercy, to All that call upon Him* *: that He *is the LORD JEHOVAH, in whom is everlasting Strength* †: that He *is the GOD of Truth, and faithful for ever* ‡. We call Him FATHER: but have We trusted in Him, with that unsuspecting, chearful, filial Confidence, which a Child reposes on the Fidelity and Indulgence of such an earthly Relative? Have We not entertained, too often entertained, narrow, dishonourable, beggarly Apprehensions, concerning the Treasures of his Liberality, and the Bowels of his Pity? Rating them even lower than our Parent's, our Friend's, or our own.

Have We been careful to carry the Spirit of our Prayers into our *ordinary* Conversation; and waited at the Door, as well as approached to the Throne of Grace?—Amidst the Intervals of our solemn Devotions, have We cultivated an *ejaculatory* Intercourse with Heaven? How highly would the ambitious Courtier *prize*, and how frequently would He *use* a privy Key, which should give Him, at all Hours, free Admittance to his Sovereign. This Key of Admittance, only to an infinitely more exalted POTENTATE, We all possess in the Practice of mental

* Rom. x. 12. † Isa. xxvi. 4. ‡ Deut. xxxii. 4.

mental Aſpirations to GOD.—It is certainly the nobleſt Employ, and will be the richeſt Improvement of our Thoughts, to ſend them in ſuch ſhort Embaſſies to the KING of Kings; and to derive, by ſuch occaſional Sallies * of Faith, a renewed Supply from

* We have, in Scripture, very remarkable Inſtances of the Succeſs, which has attended *ejaculatory Prayer*.—Obſerve *Nehemiah*: He ſtands before *Ahaſuerus*, apprehenſive of the Monarch's Diſpleaſure, yet deſirous to ſolicit Him in Behalf of *Jeruſalem*. To be delivered from his Fears, and to obtain his Deſires, what Method does He uſe? The mean and ſervile Arts of Flattery? No; but the manly and devout Expedient of Prayer. *I prayed*, ſays the Patriot, *to the GOD of Heaven*.—We cannot ſuppoſe, that He fell on His Knees, or ſpoke with His Lips, while He continued in the royal Preſence. But he darted up his Soul in *ſilent* Supplication. Which Supplication "pierced the Clouds;" reached the eternal Throne; and returned not again till a Bleſſing was ſent. Such as totally averted the Wrath, He dreaded; and procured Favour and Aſſiſtance, much larger than He expected. *Nehem.* ii. 4.

When *David* heard, that *Ahitophel*, the ableſt Politician in his Kingdom, was revolted to *Abſalom*; ſenſible what a Loſs his Affairs had ſuſtained, and what an Advantage the rebellious Party had acquired, He betook himſelf to his GOD. He ſtaid not for an Opportunity of Retirement, but inſtantly and upon the Spot cried; *O LORD, I pray Thee, turn the Counſel of Ahitophel into Fooliſhneſs!* — A *ſhort* Addreſs, but very *efficacious*. HE, who diſappointeth the Devices of the Crafty, ſent a Spirit of Infatuation among the Rebels; and inclined them to reject the Advice of that judicious Stateſman. Which falſe Step brought upon their horrid Enterprize, the Ruin it deſerved; and chagrined the wretched Traitor, even to Rage, Frenzy, and Suicide. 2 *Sam.* xv. 31. xvii. 23.

Amyntor, at a memorable Period of his Life, was under great Diſtreſs of Conſcience, and haraſſed by violent Temptations. He made his Caſe known to an experienced Friend; who ſaid, *Amyntor, You do not pray*.—Surpriſed

from the Fountain of all Good. How great a *Loss* then muſt it be to our ſpiritual Intereſts, and how contemptuous a *Diſregard* of the ever preſent JEHOVAH, to omit intirely, or long to diſcontinue, this moſt beneficial Practice of habitual Adoration? — Can You, my dear *Theron*, acquit Yourſelf on this Article of Inquiry? Has not every Day of your Life been a Day of Negligence in this Reſpect? Been a perpetual Diſobedience to our SAVIOUR's Injunction; *Men ought*, in this Manner, *always to pray, and not to faint* *.

Have We ſanctified the *Sabbath?* Has the LORD's Day, with all its ſolemn and ſacred Offices, been our Delight?—Have We remembered that diſtinguiſhed Portion of our Time, as *Jacob* remembered the delightful Interview at *Peniel?* Have We expected it, as Merchants expect the Arrival of a richly laden Veſſel? Have We improved it, as Huſband-

priſed at this, He replied; "I pray, if ſuch a Thing be "poſſible, too much. I can hardly tell, how many Times "in the Day, I bow my Knee before GOD; almoſt "to the Omiſſion of my other Duties, and the Neglect "of my neceſſary Studies."—"You miſtake my Mean-"ing, dear *Amyntor*. I do not refer You to the Cere-"mony of the *Knee*, but to the Devotion of the *Heart*. "Which neglects not *any* Buſineſs, but intermingles "Prayer with *all*. Which, in every Place, looks unto "the LORD; and, on every Occaſion, lifts up an in-"digent longing Soul for the Supply of his Grace. This, "(added He, and ſpoke with a peculiar Vehemence) "*this* is the Prayer, which all the Devils in *Hell* cannot "withſtand."—This, I would farther obſerve, is the Prayer, which brings down ſomewhat of *Heaven* into the Heart; in which I would myſelf deſire to abound; and would earneſtly recommend, to all my Acquaintance, and all my Readers.

* Luke xviii. 1.

Husbandmen improve the shining Hours of the Harvest?—Have We wholly laid aside every earthly Engagement; *not speaking our own Words**, nor allowing Ourselves in any Gratifications, that may interrupt our Communion with the FATHER of Spirits?—Has *one Day in his Courts been preferable to a Thousand* †, spent either in the Works of our Calling, or in the Scenes of Recreation?—Have the Memorials of our REDEEMER's dying Merits, and the Seals of his unchangeable Loving-kindness, been relished as a Feast, and prized as a Portion?

Have We honoured GOD's holy *Word?*—What greater Mark of Disesteem, than to despise a Person's Discourse; and not to think his Speech worthy of our Notice? Especially, when He addresses Us with very great Seriousness, and with the utmost Affection. In our Bible, the GOD of Glory speaks to his Creatures; speaks with the most persuasive Energy, and with all the Yearnings of parental Tenderness. Have We listened to our CREATOR, with Reverence and Delight; and rejoiced with Trembling at—*Thus saith the LORD?*

Have We searched the Oracles of Truth, not merely as *Scholars*, but as *Sinners*; not from a Spirit of Curiosity, or with an Air of Formality, but with a Solicitude and Ardour, becoming Persons, who inquire after the SAVIOUR of their lost Souls? Have We submitted our inmost Thoughts to their impartial Scrutiny; to receive Conviction of Sin from their awful Remonstrances, and to hear the Sentence of Condemnation at their righteous Bar?—Have We been willing to suffer the Reproach of *conscious*

* Isa. lviii. 13. † Psal. lxxxiv. 10.

conscious Baseness, while they have ripped up the Disguises of Falshood; laid open our secret Iniquities; and brought all our evil Ways to Remembrance? Thus *Josiah* acted. *His Heart was tender, and He humbled Himself before the* LORD; *He rent his Clothes, and wept before the* LORD, *when He heard the Words of the Book of the Law* *.

Have We hid the glad Tidings of the Gospel within our Memories, within our Hearts? Have We been diligent to suck this *Honeycomb* † of Grace by concomitant Meditation, and subsequent Prayer?—Have We valued the precious Promises, as Gentlemen of Wealth value the Writings of their private Estates; or as infranchised Bodies esteem the Charter of their public Privileges?—Have We, like the princely Patriarch, longed for those Words of *Edification, Exhortation and Comfort*, more than for our necessary Food ‡? And, like the royal Prophet, prevented the Night-watches, that We may be occupied in those Statutes ‖ and Ordinances of Heaven?

We have hitherto confined the Examination, to a few Instances of the *affirmative* Kind; how dreadfully will the dark Account be swelled, if instead of Love and Obedience, there be Hatred and Opposition —*Hatred* of the Name, Glory, and Worship of GOD—*Opposition* to his Interest, Kingdom, and Service!

GOD is *infinite Perfection:* worthy of all Admiration: exalted above all Praise. Yet do not our Thoughts more frequently, or more naturally turn upon our own Accomplishments, than upon the adorable and shining Attributes of the ALMIGHTY?

This

* 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27. † Cant. v. 1. ‡ Job xxiii. 12. ‖ Psal. cxix. 148.

This is, in itself, the most shameful *Dotage*; and, in GOD's Sight, the most abominable *Idolatry*. Yet, let Us observe what passes within, and We shall probably find, that as Damps arise in the Mines, or Fogs in the fenny Grounds, so naturally, and so copiously do these over-weaning Reflections arise in our depraved Minds.

GOD is an *everlasting King*. Have we not too often resisted his Authority? Have We not, as far as in Us lay, deposed the omnipotent SOVEREIGN, and exalted *Self* into the Throne? Made Self-will our Law, and Self-pleasing our End? Thus adding Sacrilege to Rebellion?

GOD is transcendently *gracious* and *amiable*. Have We not turned our Backs upon Him, by forgetting his Mercies! Nay, have we not spurned Him from our Affections, by being *Lovers of Pleasure, more than Lovers of GOD* *?*—Awake, Conscience: bear thy impartial Testimony: and I am persuaded, the *Pharisee* in our Breasts, like the Man unfurnished with the Wedding-garment, must be struck dumb; must be covered with Confusion.

Is our Heart warm with *brotherly Love?*—Good-manners will put Expressions of Civility into our Mouths; but has a Power from on High implanted the royal Law of Charity in our Breasts? The Character of a Gentleman requires a Deportment accessible, obliging, and courteous: has the Spirit of *Christianity* taught Us to love, *not in Word* or plausible Appearance only, *but in Deed and in Truth* †*?*—Do We love our Neighbours, not merely on account of some Relation they bear Us, or some Services they have

* 2 Tim. iii. 4. † 1 John iii. 18.

have done Us? But, because they are Creatures of the blessed GOD; are the Objects of his providential Care; and capable at least of being conformed to his Image? Do We love them, because We hope, that the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* has bought them with his Blood; is willing to make them Partakers of his SPIRIT, and Members of his Mystical Body?

Are We sincerely concerned for their present Welfare, and their eternal Happiness? Do We embrace all Opportunities of promoting, both the one and the other? Embrace them with the *same* Alacrity, and improve them with the same Zeal, which actuate Us in seeking *our own* Felicity?—If they exceed Us in all that is amiable, and all that is prosperous, do We contemplate their superior Excellence with a real Complacency, and their more abundant Success with a real Satisfaction?

Do We dislike to hear, and abhor to spread, defamatory Tales; even when our Adversaries are the Men, whom they tend to blacken?—When rudely affronted, or causelessly abused, do we pity the Offenders, for the *Wrong* done to their own Souls; rather than kindle into Resentment, at the *Indignity* offered to Ourselves?—When greatly injured, are We slow to Anger, and not easily provoked? Are We much more willing to be reconciled, than to foment Displeasure, and prosecute Revenge? In a Word; do We *love our Enemies*; *bless them, that curse Us*; *do Good to them, that hate Us: and pray for them, which despitefully use Us, and persecute Us* *?—Without this loving

* *Matt.* v. 44. *What Manner of Love is this?* How disinterested! how extensive! how triumphant! Must not all the boasted *Benevolence* of the Philosopher and Moralist,

ing and lovely Disposition, *We abide*, says the Apostle, *in Death* *; are destitute of spiritual, and have no Title to eternal Life.

Let me add—Are all our Graces, and all our Works, *clothed with Humility?* This should be the Dress, in which they severally appear; as well as the Bond of Connection, which unites them all †.—Do We maintain a very low Opinion of our own Accomplishments, and *in Honour prefer Others to Ourselves* ‡? Habitually sensible, that We are less than the least of the divine Mercies, and the very chiefest of Sinners?

I might easily have branched out the preceding Subjects, into a much greater Variety of interrogatory Articles. But I intend only to present You with a Specimen. Your own Meditations will inlarge the Sketch, and supply what is defective. Only let me beg of You, my dear Friend, to try your State by this Touchstone; to prove your Conduct by this Standard. And may the FATHER of Lights give You an Understanding, to discern the exact Purity and sublime Perfection of his holy Law!

Have You lived in the *uninterrupted* Observance of all these Duties; avoiding whatever is forbidden, and obeying whatever is commanded? Your outward Behaviour, I know, has been free from notorious Violations; but has your inward Temper been preserved,

ralist, strike Sail to this evangelical Charity? Must not both Moralist and Philosopher acknowledge the Necessity of a *divine* Operation, thus to inlarge, exalt, and refine their social Affections?

* 1 John iii. 14.

† 1 *Pet.* v. 5. The unusual Word εγκομβωσασθε is supposed to have *both* these Significations.

‡ Rom. xii. 10.

ſerved, from all ungodly Motions, and from every irregular Deſire? Is there no Enmity in your Heart to any of the Precepts; nor any Backwardneſs, nor any Failure in performing each and every Injunction?

When You put theſe Queſtions to Yourſelf, remember, That if You fail in *one* Point, or in *any* Degree, You are guilty of all*. If your Conformity be not *perſevering* as well as *perfect*, You incur the Penalty, and are abandoned to the Curſe. You ſtand charged, before the JUDGE of the World, with all the Guilt of all your Sins, both original and actual: and there is not one Circumſtance, nor one Aggravation, of any of your Iniquities, overlooked or forgotten—UNLESS, renouncing all your *perſonal* Performances, You place your whole Affiance on a SAVIOUR's Atonement, and a SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs.—I think, You will not dare to put the Iſſue of your everlaſting State upon the former Footing. Which is not only hazardous, but muſt be inevitably ruinous. You will infinitely rather chooſe, to acknowledge Yourſelf a poor Inſolvent; and plead the unſearchable Riches of your REDEEMER's Obedience.

To thoſe who believe, the Law, though *ſtrict*, is not *terrible*. Becauſe, be its Precepts of Holineſs ever ſo extenſive, they have been moſt completely fulfilled by their glorious SURETY. Be its penal Sanctions ever ſo rigorous, they have been ſatisfied to the utmoſt, by their great MEDIATOR.—Believers, therefore, may make their Boaſt of their adorable SPONSOR. They may *ſit under his Shadow with great Delight* †. While the Thunderings of Mount *Sinai*, and all the Terrors of the legal

* Jam. xi. 10. Gal. iii. 10. † Cant. ii. 3.

gal Dispensation, tend only to increase and quicken the refreshing Sense of their Safety. Just as the Possessor of a plentiful Estate, in some peaceful and prosperous Country, reposes Himself under the Shade of his Vine, or the Shelter of his Fig-tree; and, hearing of the *Wars* which embroil, or the *Plagues* which depopulate other Nations, tastes, with augmented Relish, his own Felicity.

Let me close with the affectionate and emphatical Wish of an inspired epistolary Writer. That *the LORD of Peace may give* my dear Theron *Peace —always—by all Means* *! *Then* I shall think, my Wishes are accomplishing, and this Blessing is at the Door, when He sees the *Purity* of the divine Law —sees the *Depravity* of his own Nature—and the *Impossibility* of being justified, without an Interest in the great MEDIATOR's Righteousness. That Righteousness, which, as it is the only Hope, and the constant Joy, is therefore the darling Theme, of

Your ever faithful

ASPASIO.

P. S. Shall I *abridge* the preceding Letter, and contract the Whole into those two great Commandments, which made the first awakening Impressions on my own Mind? *Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with* ALL *thy Heart: Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as* THYSELF. —Amazing! said your *Aspasio*. Are *these* the Commands of GOD? As obligatory, as the

* 2 Thess. iii. 16.

Prohibition of Adultery, or the Observation of the Sabbath? Then has my whole Life been a *continual Act* of Disobedience. Not a Day, no, nor an Hour, in which I have performed my Duty.—This Conviction struck me, as the Hand-writing upon the Wall struck the presumptuous Monarch.—It pursued me, as *Saul* pursued the *Christians*, not only to my own House, but even to distant Cities.—Nor ever gave up the great Controversy, till, under the Influences of the SPIRIT, it brought me *weary* and *heavy laden to JESUS CHRIST.*

LETTER II.

THERON *to* ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

MORE than three Weeks are elapsed, since You favoured me with your improving Company. During which Interval, I have frequently recollected the most material Parts of our late Discourses. I have carefully considered, both the Doctrines You advanced, and the Answers You returned to my several Objections.—I have often reviewed your valuable Letter; have used it as a *Touch-stone*, to examine my State; and have, with great Punctuality, observed your parting Advice.—I have sat, every Evening, for a *Picture* of my *Mind*; and have endeavoured to take a true unflattering Draught of all its distinguishing Qualities. And,

if

if the Diary is a faithful Mirror, if it does not aggravate the Deformity of my Features, I shall be absolutely out of Conceit with myself: I shall ever entertain the *meaneſt* Opinion of my own, either moral or religious Qualifications.

Where is that intenſe and ſupreme *Love* of GOD, which his tranſcendent Perfections challenge, and his ineffable Goodneſs claims?—Where that firm and joyful *Reliance* on *CHRIST JESUS*, in any Degree proportioned to his infinite Merits and inviolable Promiſes?—Where that cordial and tender Affection for my *Fellow-chriſtians*, which is due to the Servants of a Divine REDEEMER; the People whom He ranſomed by his Agonies, and purchaſed with his very Blood?—Where is the Incenſe of holy Contemplation and refined Deſire? Where the Flame of fervent Devotion and ever active Zeal? Such as become the *living Temple* of GOD, in which his moſt immaculate and glorious SPIRIT vouchſafes to reſide.—Theſe fundamental Graces, like the grand Organs in the animal Syſtem, ſhould impart Health to the Soul, and ſpread the Beauty of Holineſs through all the Converſation. But theſe, alas! far from beating with a *vigorous* and *uniform* Pulſe, hardly heave with Life; only juſt ſtruggle, now and then, with ſome faint, intermitted, uneven Throws.

How ſeldom do my Actions ſpring from Gratitude to the everlaſting BENEFACTOR, or aim at the Glory of his ſuper-excellent MAJESTY?—In addreſſing the KING immortal, inviſible, how languid are my Affections, and how wandering is my Attention? How great my Unbelief, and how little my reverential Awe?—I receive innumerable Mercies; but where are my Returns of correſpondent

Thankfulneſs? I am viſited with many gracious Chaſtiſements; but without proper Reſignation, or due Improvement.—Alas for my heartleſs Devotions, my lifeleſs Virtues, and the Multitude of my *refined Iniquities!*—Hid behind the Maſk of outward Decency, and ſome cuſtomary Forms of Religion, I was altogether unacquainted with my ſpiritual State. I fanſied myſelf *rich, and increaſed with Goods, and to have Need of Nothing:* even while I was *wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked**.

If I look back, and review the Years of Youth and Manhood, what has been the Tenour, what is the Aſpect of my Life? More like a deſolate and horrid Wilderneſs; than a cultivated Garden, or a fruitful Vineyard.—In *Youth*, what ſordid Gratifications of Appetite! In *Manhood*, what baſe Compliances with a wicked World! In *both*, what Sholes of evil Inclinations have polluted my Heart! What Swarms of vain Imaginations have debaſed my Thoughts! What frothy and unprofitable Words have dropt from my Lips!—By all which, how have I diſobeyed, and how diſhonoured GOD! How have I denied, and how crucified the *LORD JESUS CHRIST!*—And yet ſuppoſed myſelf, all the while, to be *good enough!*

It is ſomething unaccountable, that a Perſon of my inquiſitive Diſpoſition, ſhould, through the Courſe of ſo many Years, be ſuch an utter *Stranger* to Himſelf. I wonder at my own *prepoſterous* Folly!—To travel into foreign Countries, and viſit the moſt renowned Cities of *Europe*; yet never ſtep over the Threſhold, nor look within the Apartments of my own Breaſt.—To carry on a Correſpondence with my

* Rev. iii. 17.

my Friends, even in the remoteſt Nations; and never enter upon a Conference, nor hold any Intelligence with my own Heart! —To inquire after News from the Fleet, News from the Army, News from the Court; yet exerciſe neither Curioſity nor Care, with regard to the Hope of Heaven, and the Concerns of Eternity!—What egregious Miſconduct is this! A moſt pernicious Error, in the Oeconomy of religious Life.

Sometimes, I have caſt a tranſient Glance on my *outward* Behaviour; but never extended my Search to the Delinquent, the Traitor, the Rebel *within*.—And even my outward Behaviour has been ſurveyed, with as much erroneous Partiality, as ſuperficial Levity. It has been compared, not with that *exact* and *ſublime* Standard, the Scriptures of Truth; but, as in the Caſe of the ſelf-deceiving *Phariſee*, with the unjuſt, extortionate, adulterous Practices of ſome other People. From whence I moſt unwarrantably concluded, That, being not quite ſo abandoned as the moſt profligate Creatures, my Character muſt be good, and my Condition ſafe.—But, Thanks to your laſt friendly Letter, and the ſearching Expedient it recommended, I am now in a different Way of thinking.

It is ſtrange to recollect, and indeed it is ſhameful to confeſs, the many *Artifices* which I have uſed, to put a *Cheat* upon myſelf.—Sometimes, I have fanſied, that the divine Law could never be ſo ſtrict, as to condemn Us inexorably, if We continue not in all its Precepts.—Sometimes, I have pleaded the Infirmity of our Nature, and endeavoured to make the Works of Darkneſs appear only as pitiable Failings.—Sometimes I have taken Refuge in the Excellency of our

Church, and plumed myself with the borrowed Feathers of a religious Profession.—At other Times, I have soothed my Conscience to Rest, by a Punctuality of Attendance on Places, or a zealous Attachment to Forms. And all this, to seduce, cajole, and betray myself—betray myself, first into a vain *Conceit* of my own Endowments; then into a contemptuous *Disregard* of *CHRIST*; and at last into eternal *Destruction*.—But now I see my Guilt; I apprehend my Danger; and feel my helpless Condition.

Indeed, my *Aspasio*, I am now convinced, that the darkest Colours cannot be too dark, for the Pourtrait of my spiritual State. I see myself overspread with an habitual Depravity, and cannot forbear crying out, with the abashed Leper; *Unclean! Unclean* !*—The sacred Oracles in no wise misrepresent fallen Man, when they describe Him as *altogether become abominable* †. They are far from under-rating human Works, when they denominate them *filthy Rags* ‡.

Rags

* Levit. xiii. 45. † Job xv. 16.

‡ *Isa.* lxiv. 6. Does not *Theron* misapply this Text? Can it be intended to discredit the Qualifications of the *Upright?* Is it not rather a Brand set upon the Works of the *Wicked*; whose very "Sacrifices are an Abomina-"tion to the LORD?" Or, a Rebuke given to the specious Performances of the *Hypocrite*; who is precise in the Form, but destitute of the Power of Godliness? Or, may it not refer to *ritual* Observances; in Contradistinction to moral Duties, and spiritual Accomplishments?

The disparaging Character must not, I think, be confined to ritual Observances; because it is expressly said, ALL *our Righteousnesses*, including every Kind of religious Duty.—Neither can it be appropriated to the *formal* Hypocrite, much less to the *notoriously* Wicked; because, those very Persons, who are the Subject of this Assertion,

declare

Rags they are, if We consider their great Imperfection; *filthy* Rags, if we advert to their manifold Defilements.—And since the Nature of GOD is so irreconcilably averse to all Contamination; since the Law of GOD requires such unspotted Perfection; O! *Who can stand before this holy LORD GOD* *, in any Accomplishments of their own?

U 4 When

declare in the Context; *LORD, We are thy People: Thou art our FATHER; We shall be saved.*—So that it seems intended to *stain the Pride of all* human *Glory*.

Besides the Prophet speaks of *himself*; WE *all are as an unclean Thing*. Which, however strange or unreasonable it may seem, is the very same Charge, to which He pleads guilty in another Place; *Wo is me! I am undone! For I am a Man of unclean Lips!* Not that He was defiled with any gross Pollutions; nay, He was a Saint of the most distinguished Lustre but *his Eyes had seen the KING, the LORD of Hosts*. He was under the clear Manifestations of a GOD, glorious in Holiness, inflexible in Justice, and infinite in all Perfections.—Amidst these Manifestations, the Impurity of his Heart and Nature, were not only apparent, but glaring; overwhelmed Him with Abashment, and, till *CHRIST* was applied in a Type, (*Isa.* vi. 7.) filled Him with Terror.

In *such* Circumstances, and under *such* Views, all our moral Virtues and evangelical Graces, all our Exercises of Devotion, and Acts of Charity, will appear both defective and polluted. By no means proportioned to the Demands of the Law, nor sufficient for our Recommendation to the Supreme LAWGIVER—no more than a few *tattered* Rags, can claim the Character, or perform the Services, of a complete Suit—no more than a few *filthy* Rags are fit, to dress the Bride for her Nuptials, or the Courtier for a Birth-night.

But there *is* a Righteousness—blessed be divine Grace!—spotlesly pure and consummately excellent: a Righteousness, which answers all that the CREATOR requires, and supplies all that the Creature needs: to prove this momentous Point, and to display this unspeakable Gift, is the Design of the following Sheets.

* 1 Sam. vi. 20.

When I farther reflect, that I have only a very obscure Glimpse of the divine Purity, and am a mere Novice in the Knowledge of my own Heart; how am I amazed at the lofty Apprehensions which I once formed, concerning the *Dignity* of my Nature, and the *Integrity* of my Conduct! All owing to Ignorance, the grossest Ignorance of myself and the Scriptures.—How do I shudder to think, that, in expecting Justification from the Law, I was resting the Welfare of my immortal Soul, not on the Foundation of a Rock, but on the Point of a Dagger.—I was going to the decisive Tribunal, flushed with the falsest Hopes, and charged with a Set of glittering Sins: going, like poor deluded *Uriah* *, not with any valid Credentials, but with *the Ministration of Death* † in my Hand.

Though I cannot but acknowledge the Arrogance of these Pretensions, yet loth, very loth is my Pride, to renounce the pleasing Absurdity. Self-love has searched, and searched again, for something excellent. It would fain make a better Appearance, and can hardly brook the Humiliation of imploring all *sub Formâ Pauperis* ‡. With what Reluctance is a Sinner brought to confess Himself, sinful in every Duty, sinful in every Capacity! Strange Perverseness!—But the Charge is undeniable. However unwilling, I must plead guilty. THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES, AND FOUND WANTING ‖, is evidently written on all I *am*, all I *have*, all I *do*.—And if I am thus defective, even in my own Estimation;

* 2 Sam. xi. 14, 15. † 2 Cor. iii. 9.

‡ That is, under the Character of a *poor Destitute*, or as a Beggar sues for his Alms.

‖ Dan. v. 27.

mation; if am utterly condemned, at the Bar of my own Conſcience; *What then ſhall I do, when GOD riſeth up? And when HE viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer Him* * ?

I now ſee the *Neceſſity* of an imputed Righteouſneſs. Without ſome ſuch Object for my Truſt, I am undone. I long therefore to hear your *Arguments* in its Behalf. And I muſt declare to You, if it can be ſatisfactorily proved from the Scriptures, it is the moſt comfortable Doctrine in the World, and worthy of all Acceptation.

A Letter upon this Subject, would be a ſingular Favour, and, I hope, an equal Bleſſing to

Your obliged, and affectionate,

THERON.

LETTER III.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

THough all your Letters give me Pleaſure, none was ever ſo highly pleaſing, as your laſt. I look upon it with the ſame ſecret Joy, as a compaſſionate Phyſician obſerves ſome *very favourable* Symptoms, in the Criſis of a beloved Patient's Diſtemper.

What

* Job xxxi. 14.

What You ask, I shall, without any farther Preface, attempt to to execute. If my Attempt proves satisfactory to your Judgment, I am sure, it will be the most likely Means, of *healing* your Conscience, and *calming* your Fears.—When we perceive the odious Depravity of our Nature; when We discern the horrible Iniquity of our Lives; and are sensible of that tremendous Wrath, and everlasting Vengeance, which are due to such guilty Creatures: *then* nothing can be found, that will speak effectual Peace, nothing that will administer solid Comfort, but only the vicarious Sufferings and the imputed Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*.

To this Purpose speaks one of the wisest and best of spiritual Guides; *Has Sin abounded?* As undoubtedly it has, in our Heart, and our Life: *Grace has much more abounded*, in the Obedience, and the Merits of our REDEEMER.—Nay, *has Sin reigned?* Exerted its malignant Power, in the most extensive and most destructive Manner; rendering us subject *unto Death*, both temporal and eternal? *Even so has Grace reigned*; exerted its benign Efficacy, and in a Manner yet more triumphant; not only rescuing Us from Guilt and Ruin, but restoring Us *to everlasting Life* and Glory. And all this *through* the *Righteousness*, the complete meritorious Righteousness, brought in *by JESUS CHRIST our LORD* *.

You inquire after the *Proofs* of this imputed Righteousness. From a Multitude I shall select a few. Sufficient, I hope, to make it appear—That this is the

* Rom. v. 21.

the declared Doctrine of our *Church*, and the avowed Belief of her *moſt eminent* Divines—That it is copiouſly revealed through the whole SCRIPTURES; revealed in many expreſs Paſſages, and deducible from a Variety of inſtructive Similitudes.

Hear the Language of our Common Prayer, in a very affecting and ſolemn Addreſs to the ALMIGHTY; "We do not preſume to come to "this thy Table, O merciful LORD, truſting in "our own Righteouſneſs."—If we may not, if we dare not, rely on our own Righteouſneſs, when we approach the *euchariſtic Table*; much leſs may we depend upon it, when we are ſummoned to the *deciſive Tribunal*.—Should you aſk, On what we are to depend? The Exhortation to the Communion furniſhes an Anſwer; "On the meritorious Death and Paſ-"ſion of *CHRIST*, whereby *alone* we obtain Re-"miſſion of Sins, and are made Partakers of the "Kingdom of Heaven."

The Collect, appointed for the Feſtival of *Circumciſion*, has this remarkable Introduction; "Almighty "GOD, whoſe bleſſed SON was *obedient to the* "*Law for Man*." In what Senſe, or with what Propriety, can this be affirmed? Unleſs *CHRIST*'s perfect Obedience be referable to Us, and accepted inſtead of ours? On any other Interpretation, I ſhould think, He was obedient, not for *Man*, but for *Himſelf*.

Should the artful Critic give ſome other Turn to theſe Paſſages, it will avail Him but little. Becauſe the Church, her own *beſt* Expoſitor, has explained the Meaning of ſuch Phraſes, and put the Matter beyond all Doubt. In her eleventh Article ſhe ſays; "We are accounted righteous before GOD only

"for

" for the Merits of our LORD and SAVIOUR " *JESUS CHRIST*."—The Doctrine relating to Pardon of Sin, had been ſtated in a preceding Article. This diſplays the Method, whereby Sinners may appear righteous in the Eye of GOD, and in the Court of Heaven; ſo as to recover the divine Favour, and obtain a Title to eternal Bliſs.—This is done, not by any *native* Righteouſneſs, not by any *acquired* Righteouſneſs, but by an *imputed* Righteouſneſs. Were We juſtified by either of the former Methods, it would not have been ſaid, We are *accounted*, but we *are* righteous. They are ſo far from conſtituting our reconciling and juſtifying Righteouſneſs, that they have no Share in it; contribute nothing towards it; are totally excluded from it. We are accounted righteous, and accepted as ſuch, ONLY (mark the Expreſſion) ONLY hrough the meritorious Obedience, and propitiating Blood of our great MEDIATOR.

The Homilies are, if it be poſſible, ſtill more explicit, and more cogent. In the Homily concerning the Salvation of Mankind, we read the following Words;— " The Apoſtle toucheth three Things, " which muſt go together in our Juſtification. On " GOD's Part, his great Mercy and Grace. On " *CHRIST*'s Part, the Satisfaction of GOD's " Juſtice, or the Price of our Redemption, by the " Offering of his Body, and Shedding of his Blood, " with Fulfilling of the Law perfectly. On our " Part, true and lively Faith in the Merits of *JESUS* " *CHRIST*, which yet is not ours, but by GOD's " working in Us."—You ſee, acording to the Judgment of our venerable Reformers, not only the Offering of *CHRIST*'s Body, and Shedding of *CHRIST*'s

CHRIST's Blood, but also his *perfect Fulfilling* of the Law, are the adequate Price of our Redemption. All these act conjointly, they sweetly harmonize, in the great and glorious Work. To suppose their Disunion, is a *doctrinal* Mistake, somewhat like that *practical* Error of the Papists, in severing the sacramental Wine from the sacramental Bread; administering to the Laiety the Symbols of the slaughtered Body, but with-holding the Symbols of the streaming Blood.

There are *other* Clauses in the same Homily, which set the Seal of the Church to our Sentiments. I shall content myself with transcribing one from the Conclusion.—" *CHRIST*, says that Form of sound " Words, is the Righteousness of all them, that do " truly believe. He for them paid their Ransom by " his Death. He for them fulfilled the Law in his " Life. So that now, in HIM, and by HIM, " every true *christian* Man may be called a Fulfiller " of the Law; forasmuch as that which their In- " firmity lacked, *CHRIST*'s Righteousness hath " supplied."—This Authority is as clear, as the Doctrine authorized is comfortable. May the former sway our Judgment! May the latter chear our Hearts!

The Homily on *CHRIST*'s Nativity informs the Reader, that the Design of our LORD's Incarnation was—" To give Light unto the World, " and call Sinners to Repentance; to *fulfil the Law* " *for Us*, and become the Propitiation for our Sins; " to cast out the Prince of this World, and destroy " the Works of the Devil.—We have all broke the Law, We are all unable to keep the Law; therefore, the Blessed *JESUS* fulfilled the Law—

fulfilled it, in *each* and *every* of its Demands—fulfilled it, in the *higheſt* Degree of Perfection—and, what is of all Conſiderations moſt delightful, fulfilled it *for Us*. His Obedience took the Place of what We were obliged to perform, under the Covenant of Works; and is not only the meritorious, but alſo the conſtituent Cauſe of our Juſtification.

So that — if there be any Worthineſs in our LORD's moſt holy Nature; any Merit in his Exerciſe of the ſublimeſt Virtues; completed by his Submiſſion to the moſt ignominious Sufferings, and tormenting Death—then, according to this Standard-Syſtem of orthodox Divinity, theſe are the *Ground*, theſe are the *Subſtance* of a Sinner's Juſtification.—And, according to the Dictates of the moſt unbiaſſed Reaſon, they are the *beſt*, the *ſureſt* Ground, that can either be wiſhed or imagined.

Does it not, from the preceding Quotations, appear; That the Doctrine of Juſtification through the imputed Righteouſneſs of our REDEEMER, is far from being diſclaimed by the *eſtabliſhed Church?* —I am ſorry, but conſtrained to own, that We rarely find any conſiderable Strictures of this great evangelical Peculiarity, in our *modern* theological Diſcourſes. Yet there have been Preachers of the higheſt Repute for Learning, for Judgment, and for Piety, who profeſſedly maintained this grand Truth of the Goſpel.

The devout Biſhop *Beveridge*, in his *Private Thoughts*, has left upon Record the following very remarkable Acknowledgment. Which, if it ſuited *his* State of eminent Holineſs, cannot be too humbling, my dear *Theron*, for your Lips and for mine.

"I

" I do not remember, neither do I believe, that I ever " prayed, in all my Life-time, with that Reverence, " or heard with that Attention, or received the Sa- " crament with that Faith, or did any Work with " that pure Heart, and single Eye, as I ought to " have done. Insomuch, that I look upon all my " Righteousness, but as filthy Rags; and it is in the " Robes only of the Righteousness of the SON of " GOD, that I dare appear before the MA- " JESTY of Heaven."

The fervent and affectionate Bishop *Hopkins* * speaks in perfect Consonance with his Brother of *St. Asaph.*—" The Law was given Us, not that We " should seek Justification by the Observance of it, " but finding it impossible to be justified by fulfilling " it, We should thereby be driven to *CHRIST*'s " Righteousness; who hath both fulfilled it in Him- " self, and satisfied for our transgressing of it; and " therefore saith the Apostle, *The Law was a School-* " *master, to bring Us unto CHRIST; that We might* " *be justified by Faith.* To this End it was pro- " mulged, that seeing the Strictness of its Precepts, " the Rigour of its Threatenings, and withal being " convinced of our Impotence to fulfil its Com- " mands, We might be urged by its Terrors to fly " to *CHRIST*, and find that Righteousness in " Him which may answer all the Demands of the " Law."

Bishop *Reynolds* †, styled by his Cotemporaries, and not without Reason, *A walking Library*, bears his Testimony

* See his Sermon on *John* vii. 19.

† See his Treatise intitled *The Life of CHRIST.*— Which, as well as all his other Works, abound with striking

Teſtimony in the following Words;—"*CHRIST* "as our Surety paid our Debt, underwent the Curſe "due to our Sins, and bare them all in his own "Body on the Tree: became ſubject to the Law "for Us, and repreſentatively in our Stead fulfilled "all the Righteouſneſs the Law required, active and "paſſive. For Sin being once committed, there "muſt be a double Act to Juſtification; the Suffer- "ing of the Curſe, and the Fulfilling of Righteouſ- "neſs anew. The one, a Satisfaction for the In- "jury We have done to GOD, as our JUDGE: "the other, the Performance of a Service which "We owe unto Him, as our MAKER."

To this illuſtrious Triumvirate, let me join Biſhop *Davenant*. Who, for his great Abilities, and unqueſtionable Integrity, was appointed one of our religious Plenipotentiaries, at the renowned Synod of *Dort*. In his very valuable Expoſition of the Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians*, He writes to this Effect: "*Ye* "*are complete in CHRIST*. Ye are furniſhed, in "that all-ſufficient REDEEMER, with what- "ever is requiſite to everlaſting Salvation. With "*Wiſdom*; ſince it is the Conſummation of this "noble Endowment, to know *CHRIST* and Him "crucified. With *Righteouſneſs*; becauſe He has "perfectly ſatisfied the Law *, and thoroughly ex- "piated

ing Sentiments; have much Elegance of Diction, a copious Variety of Learning, and a lively animating Spirit of evangelical Piety.

* In this Reſpect principally (ſays our Author, inlarging upon the Text) are Believers *complete*; becauſe though deſtitute of any Righteouſneſs, that may properly be called *their own*, *CHRIST* has graciouſly enriched them with *his*. *Vid.* DAVENANT, *in Epiſt. ad Coloſſ. Cap.* ii. *Com.* 10.

Let

" piated our Guilt. With *Sanctification*; becauſe " his SPIRIT dwelling in our Hearts, morti- " fies our corrupt Affections, and renews the Soul " after the Image of its CREATOR."

Let me bring up the *Rear* with a Teſtimony, which, for Clearneſs, Solidity, and a full Repreſentation of the evangelical Doctrine, might very juſtly have claimed a Place in the *Van*. It is taken from an Author, whom the general Conſent of our Nation has diſtinguiſhed with the Title of *Judicious*. The judicious *Hooker*, in a Treatiſe on Juſtification, ſays;—" It is a childiſh Cavil our Adverſaries ſo " greatly pleaſe themſelves with, exclaiming, that " We tread all *Chriſtian* Virtues under our Feet; " becauſe We teach, That Faith alone juſtifieth. " Whereas, by this Speech, We never meant to " exclude either Hope or Charity from being always " joined as inſeparable Mates with Faith, in the " Man that is juſtified; or Works from being add- " ed, as neceſſary Duties, required of every juſtified " Man: but to ſhew, that Faith is the only Hand, " which putteth on *CHRIST* to Juſtification; and " *CHRIST* the only Garment, which being ſo put " on, covereth the Shame of our defiled Natures, " hideth the Imperfection of our Works, and pre-

Let me beg leave to intimate, That this Expoſition of the Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians*—the Perſpicuity of Style, and Accuracy of Method—for Judgment in diſcerning, and Fidelity in repreſenting, the Apoſtle's Meaning—for Strength of Argument in refuting Errors, and Felicity of Invention in deducing practical Doctrines, tending both to the Eſtabliſhment of Faith, and the Cultivation of Holineſs—is, I think, inferior to no Writing of the Kind; and richly deſerves to be *read*, to be *ſtudied*, to be *imitated*, by our young Divines.

" ſerveth Us blameleſs in the Sight of GOD: be-
" fore whom, otherwiſe, the Weakneſs of our Faith
" were Cauſe ſufficient to make Us culpable, yea,
" to ſhut Us out of the Kingdom of Heaven, where
" nothing that is not abſolute can enter."

You will allow the ſagacious Biſhop *Sanderſon* * to ſum up the Evidence; or rather to make an important Remark on the Whole of the Controverſy. That great Light of the Church, both in caſuiſtical and practical Divinity, obſerves;—" The Tidings " of a REDEEMER muſt be bleſſed and welcome " News, to thoſe that are ſenſible of their own Po-" verty, and take it of Grace." Our eagle-eyed Divine penetrates into the *true* Cauſe of the prevailing Averſeneſs to this evangelical Doctrine. It is founded on the *State* of the *Heart*, more than upon any Force of Argument. People are but little, if at all, ſenſible of their ſpiritual and moral Indigence; of the Defects which depreciate, and the Defilements which ſully, whatever they have, and whatever they do. Nay, ſtrongly tinctured with Pride, they would be themſelves the *Alpha*, and ſuffer the Bleſſed *JESUS* to be no more than the *Omega*, in procuring their eternal Salvation. Therefore they can hardly be reconciled to the humbling Character of an *Eleemoſynary*; one who lives wholly upon the Alms of the Goſpel, and is dependent upon Grace for his All.

Whereas, was this grand Obſtacle once removed; were Men *convinced* of *Sin*, of exceeding Sinfulneſs in their worſt Eſtate, and of remaining Sinfulneſs in their beſt; they would ſoon be *convinced* of *Righteouſneſs*,

* See his Sermon upon *Iſa.* lii. 3.

ouſneſs *, of the abſolute Neceſſity and ineſtimable Worth of a REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs. They would no longer diſpute againſt it, but cordially receive it; intirely rely on it; and adore the Goodneſs, the tranſcendent and unutterable Goodneſs of GOD, in providing it.

I think, in one of our Conferences, I undertook to produce my Vouchers from the antient *Fathers*. Let me now ſubjoin two or three Atteſtations of this Kind.—From *one* of which You will perceive, that thoſe early Writers had a conſiderable Degree of Clearneſs upon the Point. From the *other* You will ſee, that, far from rejecting the Doctrine, they embrace it with Delight and Rapture. And if you will admit of the *laſt*, You cannot be ſtartled at any Thing, which I ſhall advance upon the Subject.—Let me only premiſe in general, that, if thoſe Authors are not ſo copious and explicit, with regard to the Imputation of *active* Righteouſneſs; they abound in Paſſages, which evince the *Subſtitution* of *CHRIST* in our Stead. Paſſages, which diſclaim all Dependence on any Duties of our own, and fix the Hopes of a Believer intirely upon the Merits of his SAVIOUR. When this is the Caſe, I am very little ſolicitous about any particular Forms of Expreſſion; and far from being angry, even though the Words, which I think moſt ſignificant, are not retained.

Clemens—an intimate Acquaintance of St. *Paul's*, and whoſe *Name was in the Book of Life* †—in his truly excellent Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, aſſures that

* John xvi. 8. † Phil. iv. 3.

People *: *We are not*, in any Reſpect or in any Degree, *juſtified by Ourſelves*, but wholly by *JESUS CHRIST: not by our own Wiſdom or Prudence*, which could never find out the Way; *not by the Piety of our Hearts, or Works of Righteouſneſs performed in our Lives*, which could never be ſufficient for the Purpoſe; *but by Faith*. The one invariable Method, *by which the Almighty SOVEREIGN has juſtified all* his People, *ever ſince the World began*.

Juſtin—who was firſt a *Gentile* Philoſopher, then an eminent *Chriſtian*, and at laſt a *Martyr* for the Truth—ſpeaks more fully to the Point †: *What elſe could cover our Sins, but the Righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST? By what poſſible Means could We, unrighteous and unholy Creatures, be juſtified, but only by the* Interpoſition of the *SON of GOD* in our Behalf?—Having, in this Clauſe, made a Profeſſion of his Faith; the good Man, on the Contemplation of ſuch a Privilege, breaks out into a kind of holy Tranſport.

* Ου δ' εαυτων δικαιωμεθα, ουδε δια της ημετερας σοφιας, η συνεσεως, η ευσεβειας, η εργων ων κατειργασαμεθα εν οσιοτητι καρδιας· αλλα δια της πιστεως, δι' ης παντας τους απ' αιωνος ο παντοκρατωρ Θεος εδικαιωσεν. 1 Epiſt. ad Corinth.—This Quotation is *explained*, as well as *tranſlated*. But that every Reader may diſtinguiſh the Text from the Paraphraſe, the firſt is printed in *Italic*, the laſt in *Roman* Characters.

† Τι αλλο τας αμαρτιας ημων ηδυνηθη καλυψαι, η εκεινου δικαιοσυνη; Εν τινι δικαιωθηναι δυνατον τους ανομους ημας κ' ασεβεις, η εν τω υιω τω Θεω; Ω ΤΗΣ ΓΛΥΚΕΙΑΣ ΚΑΤΑΛΛΑΓΗΣ, ω της ανεξιχνιαστου δημιουργιας, ω των απροσδοκητων δι' ενος πολλους ανομους δικαιωσης. Epiſt. ad Diogn.—Though *Du Pin* queſtions the Authority of this Epiſtle, He allows it to have been written by an antient Hand. Dr. *Cave*, as capable a Judge, thinks there is no Reaſon to doubt, but it is the genuine Work of *Juſtin*.

ſport. O SWEET AND DELIGHTFUL EXCHANGE! *A Diſpenſation unſearchably wiſe and gracious! Benefits, quite unexpected, and rich beyond all our Hopes! That the Sin of Many ſhould be hid by one righteous PERSON; and that the Righteouſneſs of ONE, ſhould juſtify many Tranſgreſſors.*

The following Words are remarkably ſtrong, and the Sentiments peculiarly bold. But they come from the Pen of the fineſt Writer in Eccleſiaſtical Antiquity. They have the great Name, and venerable Character of St. *Chryſoſtom*, for their recommendatory Preface*—*Fear not*, ſays He, *on Account of any of thy paſt Tranſgreſſions of the Law, when once Thou haſt fled by Faith to JESUS CHRIST. The moſt enormous and the moſt deſtructive Violation of the Law, is, To be with-held, by the Conſciouſneſs of any Guilt whatever, from believing on CHRIST. When Thou acteſt Faith on Him, Thou haſt fulfilled, I might ſay, more than fulfilled the Law. For Thou haſt received a better Righteouſneſs, than it could ever require: Thou art poſſeſſed of a better Obedience, than any Creature could poſſibly pay.*

Two or three Witneſſes of *diſtinguiſhed Ability*, and *undoubted Veracity*, are a ſufficient Confirmation of any Cauſe. For this Reaſon, and to avoid a tireſome Prolixity, I have ſet aſide a Multitude of Voices; which, from the Writings of our own and foreign Divines, are ready to pour their united Evidence.—And leſt the Buſineſs of Quotation, though ſparingly

* Μη τοινυν φοβηθης, ως τον νομον παραβαινων, επειδαν τη πιστει προσηλθες· τοδε γαρ αυτον παραβαινεις, οτε δι' αυτου των Χριστω μη πιστευσης· ως αν πιστευσης αυτω, κακεινον επληρωσας κ) πολλω πλειον η εκελευσε· πολλω γαρ μειζονα δικαιοσυνην εδωκε. Homil. XVII. in X. ad Rom.

managed, should seem dry and tedious; I will relieve your Weariness, and inliven the Collection, by an Extract from the Prince of *English* Poetry.—*Michael*, the prophetic Archangel, mentioning the destructive Consequences of the Fall; and asserting the GODHEAD of that glorious PERSON, who undertook to be the Repairer of this deadly Breach; adds,

Which HE, who comes thy SAVIOUR, shall secure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his Works,
In Thee and in Thy Seed. Nor can this be,
But by fulfilling (that which Thou didst want)
Obedience to the Law of GOD, *impos'd*
On Penalty of Death; and suffering Death,
The Penalty to thy Transgression due;
And due to theirs, which out of thine will grow.
SO ONLY *can high Justice rest appaid* *.

Here then is the express Determination of our *Homilies*—supported by the Authority of our *Articles*—established by the Concurrence of our *Liturgy*—still farther ratified by the unanimous Attestation of several celebrated *Divines*; whose Lives were the brightest Ornament to our Church, and whose Writings are the most unexceptionable Interpretation of her Meaning.—As a Capital, to crown and complete this grand Column, supervenes the Declaration of the antient *Fathers*; those who flourished, and with the highest Renown, in the first and purest Ages of Christianity.—So that, if great Authorities carry any Weight; if illustrious Names challenge any Regard; this Tenet comes attended and dignified with very considerable *Credentials*.

Yet

* MILTON, Book XII. 393.

Yet I will venture to affirm, that all these, considerable as they appear, are the *least* of those Testimonials, which recommend the Doctrine to my *Theron*'s Acceptance, and which have gained it Admittance into the Heart of

His most affectionate

ASPASIO.

LETTER IV.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

THE Family, in which I have the Satisfaction to reside, though remarkable for their genteel Figure and ample Fortune, are still more amiably distinguished by their *Benevolence*, *Hospitality*, and *Charity*.—As they live at a Distance from the Market-town, the Lady has converted one Apartment of her House into a little Dispensatory; and stocked it with some of the most common, the most needed, and most salutary Medicines. Which, in Cases of *ordinary* Indisposition, She distributes to her indigent Neighbours, with singular Compassion, and with no small Success.—This fine Morning, *Emilia* has ordered some skilful Hands into the Fields, to cull their healing Simples, and lay up a Magazine of Health for the afflicted Poor. *Camillus* is withdrawn

to receive his Rents, and settle Accounts with his Tenants.

Suppose, We act in Concert with these valuable Persons. Suppose, We range the delightful Fields of Scripture, and form a Collection, not of salutiferous Herbs, but of inestimable Texts; such as may be of sovereign Efficacy, to *assuage* the Anguish of a guilty Conscience, and impart *saving Health* to the distempered Soul.—Suppose, We open the Mines of divine Inspiration, and enrich Ourselves, not with the Gold of *Ophir*, but with the *unsearchable Treasures* of *CHRIST*; or with that perfect Righteousness of our REDEEMER, which is incomparably more precious, than the Revenues of a County, or the Produce of *Peru*.

In pleading for imputed Righteousness, We have already urged the Authority of our established Church, and the Suffrage of her most eminent Divines.—The Opinion of excellent Writers, which has been the Result of much Learning, great Attention, and earnest Prayer, is no contemptible Evidence. Yet We must always reserve the *casting* Voice, for those infallible Umpires, the Prophets and Apostles. *If we receive*, with a deferential Regard, *the Witness of Men; the Witness of GOD is greater* *, and challenges the most implicit Submission.—Which Remark naturally leads me to the intended Subject of this Epistle; or rather calls upon me to fulfil my late Engagement, and shew—That the above-mentioned Doctrine is copiously revealed, through the whole Process of the Scriptures.

Let me detach a very significant Portion from the Epistle to the *Romans*; which, though little inferior

to

* 1 John v. 9.

to a decisive Proof, is produced only as an Introduction to others. *Now the Righteousness of* GOD *without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even the Righteousness of* GOD, *which is by Faith of* JESUS CHRIST *unto all, and upon all them that believe* *. *The Righteousness of* GOD, signifies that Righteousness, which the incarnate GOD wrought out in his own all-glorious Person †. It is styled the Righteousness of GOD, by way of superlative Pre-eminence; in Opposition to any Righteousness of our own, and in Contradistinction to the Righteousness of all Creatures whatever.—This Righteousness is *without the Law*. Its Efficacy has no Dependence on, its Merit receives no Addition from, any Conformity of our Practice to the divine Law: being complete, absolutely complete in itself, and altogether sufficient to procure the Reconciliation and Acceptance of Sinners.—This Righteousness is *witnessed by the Law and the Prophets*; receives

* Rom. iii. 21, 22.

† This Explication, or something to the same Purpose, has occurred already. But it is hoped, the candid Reader will not condemn the Repetition, as a *disagreeable* and *jejune* Tautology.—Because, it is so consonant to the Practice of our great Apostle, who repeats the Term, re-inculcates the Doctrine, and hardly knows how to desist from the favourite Topic: like One, who was quite enamoured with the Subject; who found Music in the Words; and whose Happiness was bound up in the Blessing.—Because, it is conformable to another, and a greater Example. The LORD JEHOVAH Himself, within the Compass of *one* Chapter, once and again, yea, a third and a fourth Time, styles this wonderful Obedience, MY RIGHTEOUSNESS. As though the GOD of infinite Perfection *gloried* in it; thought Himself most *eminently* magnified by it; and was jealous to have all the Honour result ing from it. See *Isa.* li.

receives an uniform Atteſtation from the various Writings of the Old Teſtament. To inveſtigate which Atteſtation, to examine its Pertinency, and weigh its Sufficiency, is our preſent pleaſing Buſineſs.

We may begin with that gracious Declaration, made to the firſt Tranſgreſſors: *The Seed of the Woman ſhall bruiſe the Serpent's Head**; ſhall deſtroy the Works of the Devil, and retrieve whatever was loſt by his malicious Artifices †. How could this be effected, but by reſtoring that Righteouſneſs, which, for a while, our firſt Parents poſſeſſed; which they ought always to have held faſt; but from which they ſo ſoon and ſo unhappily ſwerved?—Take the Poſition in the right Senſe, and *Chriſtianity is*, if not intirely, yet very nearly *as old as the Creation*. It was comprehended in this bleſſed Promiſe, as the *Stamina* of the largeſt Plants are contained in the Subſtance of their reſpective Seeds. Every ſubſequent Revelation being no more, than a *gradual Evolution* of this grand evangelical Principle; acting like the vegetative Powers of Nature, which, in rearing an Oak with all its Spread of Branches, only expand the Tunicles, and fill up the Veſſels of the Acorn.

This Doctrine ſeems to have been typically taught, by the remarkable Manner of *clothing* our firſt Parents.—All they could do for their own Recovery, was like the patched and beggarly Mantle of *Fig-leaves*. This they relinquiſh, and GOD himſelf furniſhes them with

* Gen. iii. 15.

† In ſome ſuch Senſe, I think, our firſt Parents muſt underſtand the Promiſe. Otherwiſe it could yield them no *effectual* Relief, under the diſtreſſing Senſe of their own Miſery, and the diſmal Apprehenſion of their Poſterity's Ruin.

with Apparel *. Animals are slain, not for Food but *Sacrifice*; and the naked Criminals are arrayed with the Skins of those slaughtered Beasts. The Victims figured the *Expiation* of *CHRIST*'s Death; the Clothing typefied the *Imputation* of his Righteousness. —In perfect Conformity, perhaps with a Reference, to the Passage thus interpreted, the Apostle just now expressed Himself; *even the Righteousness of GOD, which is* not only made over † *to all* Believers, as a rich Portion; but put † *upon all,* as a beautiful Garment. Whereby alone their moral Deformity can be covered, and their everlasting Confusion prevented.— *Milton*, it is certain, speaking of this memorable Transaction, considers it in the same spiritual Sense:

Nor HE their outward only with the Skins
Of Beasts, but inward Nakedness *(much more*
Opprobrious!) with his Robe of Righteousness
Arraying, *covered from his FATHER'S Sight.*

In thy Seed, says the great JEHOVAH to his Servant *Abraham, shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed* ‡. That the Seed here mentioned is *CHRIST*, the Apostle ‖ places beyond all Doubt. Both Scripture and Reason declare, That *true Blessedness* must necessarily include—the Pardon of Sins, and the Favour of GOD—the Sanctification of our Souls, and the

* Gen. iii. 21.

†† *Rom.* iii. 22. ΕΙΣ παντας, ΕΠΙ παντας τους πιστευοντας.

‡ Gen. xxii. 18.

‖ See St. *Paul*'s Comment upon this invaluable Promise, *Gal.* iii. 8, &c. *This* Commentator, We all allow, was guided by the SPIRIT, and knew the Mind of GOD. According to his Exposition of the Text, it is pregnant with the Doctrine of Justification by Faith, and contains an Abridgment of the Gospel.

the Inheritance of Life eternal. None of which are to be acquired by any human Performances; but all are to be ſought, and all may be found, in the Root and Offſpring of *Abraham*, *JESUS CHRIST*. Who is therefore moſt pertinently ſtyled, THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS*: The *actual* Deſire of every inlightened Nation; and the *implicit* Deſire of all Nations whatever. Becauſe all, without any Exception, covet, what is to be derived only from *JESUS CHRIST* the Righteous, *real* Happineſs.

The patriarchal Age, and the legal Oeconomy, bore their Teſtimony to this Truth, by typical Perſons, emblematical Miracles, and figurative Uſages. Indeed, the whole ceremonial Service was a grand *Series* of Types, repreſenting *CHRIST* and his everlaſting Righteouſneſs. In all which, this was the *unanimous* though ſilent Language; *Behold the LAMB of GOD, that taketh away the Sin of the World.*— Theſe I ſhall not ſtay to diſcuſs, becauſe Proofs of a more explicit and poſitive Nature wait for our Conſideration. Only I would juſt make a tranſient Obſervation, relating to one very remarkable Conſtitution in the *Jewiſh* Ritual.

The High-prieſt had, on the Front of his Mitre, a Plate of pure Gold, engraven with that venerable Motto†, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. Which was always to be on his Forehead, when He performed the ſolemn Miniſtrations of the Sanctuary; and for this important Reaſon, that the People *might be accepted before the LORD*‡. Did not this moſt clearly

* Hag. ii. 7. † Exod. xxviii. 36, 37. ‡ Exod. xxviii. 38.

clearly foreſhew the immaculate Holineſs of our great HIGH-PRIEST? And with equal Clearneſs imply, that *his* Holineſs ſhould procure Acceptance for all his Followers?

In the Book of *Job*, We have ſeveral Hints of this Truth, and one Paſſage very expreſs to our Purpoſe. — *Elihu* deſcribes an unconverted Perſon, under the chaſtiſing Hand of Providence. *Whoſe Life*, through the Extremity of his Diſeaſe, *drew near to the Grave; and his Soul*, through the Multitude of his Iniquities, was ready to become a Prey *to the Deſtroyers*. In this deplorable Condition, *if there be* preſent *with Him, the MESSENGER** of the Covenant of Peace; *that* great *INTERPRETER* * of the divine Counſels, who, for his ſuper-excellent Wiſdom, is juſtly deemed *One among a thouſand*, or rather the chiefeſt among ten thouſand. If He, by his inlightening SPIRIT, vouchſafe *to ſhew unto* the afflicted *Man his* own perfect Righteouſneſs; that moſt meritorious *Uprightneſs*, on which alone a Sinner may depend, both for temporal and eternal Salvation. *Then* the poor diſtreſſed Creature, attentive to this Inſtruction, and applying this Righteouſneſs, is made Partaker

* See *Job* xxxiii. 22, *&c.*—*CHRIST* is called מלאך *The Angel of* the divine *Preſence*, Iſa. lxiii. 9. *The Meſſenger of the Covenant*, Mal. iii. 1.—He is alſo, in the moſt unlimited Senſe of the Phraſe, מליץ *The Interpreter* of the divine Counſels: He, to whom the FATHER hath given the Tongue of the Learned, and by whom He makes known the otherwiſe unſearchable Myſteries of the Goſpel.—Should any Doubt remain, concerning the Propriety of applying this Paſſage to our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, the Reader, I hope, will give himſelf the Pleaſure of peruſing the polite *Witſius*, *Oecon.* Lib. IV. Cap. iii. § xxxi. and Dr. *Grey*'s valuable Notes upon the Place, in his *Liber Jobi*.

taker of Pardon. *GOD*, the sovereign LORD of Life and Death, *is gracious unto Him*; *and saith*, in the Greatness of his Strength, as well as in the Multitude of his Mercies, *Deliver Him from going down into the Pit* of Corruption, as a Pledge of his Deliverance from the Pit of Perdition. For, *I have found a Ransom*, sufficient to satisfy my Justice. I have received an Atonement, in Behalf of this once obnoxious, now reconciled Transgressor.

But why do I select *one* particular Paragraph? It seems to be the main Design of the *whole* Book, to overthrow all Pretensions of any justifying Righteousness in Man. That the wretched Sinner, nay, that the greatest Saint, stript of every personal Plea, may rely only on the Merits of a REDEEMER. This is the final Issue of all those warm Debates, which pass between the afflicted Hero and his censorious Friends. This is the grand Result of *Elihu*'s calm Reasoning, and of GOD Almighty's awful Interrogatories. The apparent *Center* this *, in which all the Lines terminate; justly therefore to be considered, as the *principal* Scope of the whole Work.

I must not omit an excellent Observation, which I find in some *critical and explanatory Notes* †, on the last Words of *David*. The judicious Author proving, that this Song relates to *CHRIST*; that it displays the Dignity of our REDEEMER, under the Character of *The KING*, and *The JUST ONE*; adds, as an Explication of the last amiable and glorious Title — "Our *LORD JESUS* "*CHRIST* is so called, not so much for having "fulfilled all Righteousness, in his own Person, and "per-

* See *Job* xlii. 6.

† By Dr. *Grey*. See 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1, &c.

" performed an unsinning Obedience to the Will of " GOD, as because by his Righteousness imputed " to Us, We also upon the Terms * of the Gospel, " are justified, or accounted righteous before " GOD."

I think We may evidently discern the same Vein of evangelical Doctrine, running through many of the *Psalms*—*He shall convert* † *my Soul*; turn me, not only from Sin and Ignorance, but from every false Confidence, and every deceitful Refuge. *He shall bring me forth in Paths of Righteousness*, in those Paths of imputed Righteousness, which are always adorned with

* That is, *freely*; or, as the Prophet speaks, *without Money and without Price*. For nothing is requisite, in order to a Participation of *CHRIST* and his Benefits, but a Conviction of our extreme Need, and an unfeigned Desire to receive them; receive them as Gifts of pure Grace, vouchsafed to the *most undeserving* Creatures.—This Point, which is so intimately connected with our Comfort and Hope, the Reader may see more fully stated in *Dialogue* XV.

Psal. xxiii. 3. I am sensible, the Word ישובב may signify to *refresh* or *restore*; may answer to the *Greek* Phrase αναψυξις; and denote the Comforts of the HOLY GHOST.—This Verb may also bear the same Signification with the Participle επιστρεψας, in our LORD's Exhortation to *Peter*, *When Thou art converted*. Not describing the first grand Revolution in the Heart, by which a new Determination is given to the Judgment, and a new Bias to the Affections; but expressing those subsequent Operations of the Divine SPIRIT, by which We are recovered from our various Relapses, and healed of our daily Infirmities. And I question, whether there is any Instance, in which We more frequently need these restoring Aids, than in the Case of adhering to our REDEEMER's Righteousness. So prone are We to *forget our Resting-place!* So liable to fall from our Steadfastness in *CHRIST!*

with the Trees of Holineſs; are always watered with the Fountains of Conſolation; and always terminate in everlaſting Reſt.—Some, perhaps, may aſk, Why I give this Senſe to the Paſſage? Why may it not ſignify the Paths of Duty, and the Way of *our own* Obedience?—Becauſe, ſuch Effects are here mentioned, as never have reſulted, and never can reſult, from any Duties of our own. Theſe are not *green Paſtures*, but a parched and blaſted Heath. Theſe are not *ſtill Waters*, but a troubled and diſorderly * Stream. Neither can theſe ſpeak Peace, or adminiſter Comfort, when We paſs through the Valley and Shadow of Death. To yield theſe Bleſſings is the exalted Office of *CHRIST*, and the ſole Prerogative of *his* Obedience.

Admiting, that this Obedience is of ſovereign Advantage, during the Years of Life, and in the Hour of Death; it may ſtill occur to the ſerious and inquiſitive Mind, what will be our Safeguard, after the great Change? When the Soul departs, and our Place on Earth knows Us no more: when the Body revives, and We ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-Seat: what will *then* avail Us? — The ſame Righteouſneſs of our Divine LORD. This, if I miſtake not,

* *Blaſted, diſorderly*—Let not theſe Words grate on the Ear; or, if they grate on the Ear, let them humble the Heart. What were *Job*'s Duties? Zealous and exemplary; practiſed from his very Youth; and neither exceled nor equaled by any Perſon on Earth. Yet theſe, in Point of Juſtification, were not a whit better than *Aſpaſio* repreſents. Let Us hear the laſt Words of this matchleſs Saint, *I abhor myſelf, and repent in Duſt and Aſhes*. From this Confeſſion we learn, that, with all his Furniture of *perſonal* Obedience, He had juſt enough to be aſhamed, confounded, undone.

not, is displayed in the very next Psalm. Which begins with a solicitous Inquiry; subjoins a satisfactory Answer; and closes with a most pertinent but rapturous Apostrophe.—This is the Inquiry; *Who shall ascend into the Hill of the* LORD? *Or who shall rise up in his holy Place?*—This is the Answer; *Even He that hath clean Hands and a pure Heart*. He shall receive* † *the Blessing* of plenary Remission *from the* LORD, *and Righteousness also from the* GOD *of his Salvation:* even that perfect Righteousness, which is not acquired by Man, but bestowed by JEHOVAH: which is not performed by the Saint, but received by the Sinner: which is the only solid Basis, to support our Hopes of Happiness; the only valid Plea, for an Admission into the Mansions of Joy.—Then follows the Apostrophe. The Prophet foresees the Ascension of *CHRIST* and his Saints into the Kingdom of Heaven. He sees his LORD, marching at the Head of the redeemed World, and conducting them into Regions of Honour and Joy. Suitably to such a View, and in a most beautiful Strain of Poetry, He addresses Himself to the heavenly Portals; *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting Doors; and the King of Glory,* with all the Heirs of his Grace and Righteousness,

* *Psal.* xxiv. 4. *Who* hath clean Hands and a pure Heart; He only, whose *Heart is sprinkled from an evil Conscience,* by the precious Blood of *CHRIST*; and who *lives by Faith in the SON of GOD.* Heb. x. 22. Gal. ii. 20.

† The Words of the Apostle, ο λαμβανων την δωρεαν της δικαιοσυνης, are almost a literal Translation, are the very best Explanation, of the Psalmist's Language, נשא צדקה *Rom.* v. 17. *Psal.* xxiv. 5.

shall make their triumphant Entry; *shall enter in*, and go out no more.

Having shewn the powerful and extensive Influence of our REDEEMER's Righteousness; its Efficacy, in this World to justify, in the other World to glorify; well may the sweet Singer of *Israel* profess his supreme Value for it, and intire Dependence on it. *I will go forth in the Strength of the LORD GOD, and will make mention of thy Righteousness only* * As though He had said; I will have recourse to no other Righteousness, for the Consolation of my Soul. I will plead no other Righteousness, for the Recommendation of my Person. I will fly to no other Righteousness, for my final Acceptance, and endless Felicity.—This is that *Raiment of Needle work and Clothing of wrought Gold* †, in which the King's Daughter is introduced to HIM, "who sitteth in "the Heavens over all." This is that Garment *for Glory and for Beauty* ‡, which clothed our great HIGH-PRIEST; and descending to his very Feet ‖, clothes and adorns the lowest Members of his mystical Body.

Recollecting all the foregoing Particulars, justly and on the most rational Ground, does our royal Author

* *Psal.* lxxi. 16. There is, in the *Hebrew* Original, and in the new Translation, a very emphatical Repetition; which adds Weight to the Sentiment, and demands a peculiar Attention from the Reader: *Thy Righteousness, even thine only.*

† Psal. lxv. 13.

‡ *Exod.* xxviii. 31. *Notabat*, says WITSIUS upon the Place, *illud Pallium Justitiæ, quo indutus est, & suos induit CHRISTUS.*

‖ Rev. i. 13.

Author declare; *Bleſſed are the People, that know the joyful Sound: they ſhall walk, O LORD, in the Light of thy Countenance. In thy Name ſhall they rejoice all the Day: and in thy Righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted* *. —They are truly bleſſed, they alone are happy, who *know the joyful Sound* of the Goſpel; not only receive it with their Ears, but admit it into their very Hearts; ſo as to partake of the ſacred Peace, and ſpiritual Liberty, which it proclaims.—*They ſhall walk in the Light of thy Countenance*; they ſhall enjoy ſuch Communications of thy Grace, and ſuch Manifeſtations of thy Love, as will conſtitute the Serenity and Sunſhine of their Souls.—*In thy Name, O LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in thy glorious Perſon, and thy infinite Merits, *ſhall they rejoice*. And not occaſionally, but habitually; not barely at ſome diſtinguiſhed Intervals, but *all the Day*. Their Joy ſhall be as laſting, as it is ſubſtantial.—*And in thy Righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted*; ſet above the tantalizing Power of temporal Things; placed beyond the ſaviſh Fear of the laſt Enemy; and raiſed, when Time ſhall be no more, to a State of celeſtial Glory, and conſummate Bliſs.

How thoroughly *evangelical* is this ſeraphic Writer! He has Joy, He has Bleſſedneſs, and He looks for everlaſting Exaltation. Yet not from his Faith, his Repentance, and his own ſincere Obedience. According to this, which is the modern Scheme, Faith, inſtead of receiving, would *ſupplant* the *LORD JESUS*: Repentance, inſtead of being the Gift of *CHRIST*, would become his *Rival*: and ſincere Obedience, which is for the Praiſe and Glory

* Pſal. lxxxix. 15, 16.

of GOD, would *eclipse* and *impoverish* his Grace.—But *David* adopts no such Sentiments. *David* maintains no such Doctrine. This is the invariable Language of his Heart, *All my Springs* of Hope, of Trust, and Consolation, O thou adored EMMANUEL, *are in Thee* *.

This Sense is the less precarious, I had almost said the more certain, as it exactly corresponds with the Analogy of Faith, and coincides with the express Declarations of other Scriptures.—*Isaiah* is styled the *Evangelist* of the *Jewish* Church. Because, more frequently than any of the Prophets he celebrates, and more copiously explains, this and other Peculiarities of the Gospel.—In the very first Chapter, He preaches these glad Tidings; *Sion shall be redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteousness. Sion*, the Gospel-Church, composed of fallen Creatures, sometime disobedient to their GOD, and inslaved to Satan, shall be *redeemed*. Redeemed, not with corruptible Things, Silver and Gold, but by severe *Judgments* executed on their glorious HEAD, and gracious REPRESENTATIVE. And not by these only, but by *Righteousness* also; by the perfect and most meritorious Righteousness of the same divinely excellent PERSON †.

Our sacred Author bears his Testimony, with warmer Zeal and brighter Evidence, as he proceeds in his incomparable Discourses. *Surely, shall one say* (or, as it may be rendered, *only*) *in the LORD have I Righteousness and Strength* ‡. Please to observe,

Theron.

* Psal. lxxxvii. 7.

† *Hanc Redemptionem docet* SPIRITUS SANCTUS *habere Nos in Obedientiâ & Sanguine JESU CHRISTI.* Isa. i. 27. VITRING. in Loc.

‡ Isa. xlv. 24.

Theron. It is not said, in my own Works, in my own Repentance, no, nor in my own Faith, but *in the LORD JESUS* have I Righteousness.—Righteousness for Justification, and Strength for Sanctification. An imputed Righteousness, to procure my Acceptance; an imparted Strength, to produce my Holiness. The first, constituting my Title to the everlasting Inheritance; the last, forming my personal Preparation for its Enjoyment.—*Surely*, which expresses a firm Persuasion, and an unshaken Affiance. *Only*, which denotes an utter Renunciation of all other Confidence, and excludes every other Ground of Hope.—*Righteousnesses* *, the Original is in the plural Number. Which seems to be used, not without an important Design; to inlarge the Significancy of the Word, and make it correspond with the Richness of the Blessing. So that it may imply the Fulness and supereminent Excellency of this Gift of Grace; as comprehending whatever †, either of Suffering or of Obedience, is requisite to the Justification of Sinners.—Insomuch, that *in the LORD JESUS CHRIST*, and his all-perfect Righteousness, *the Seed of Israel shall* not only *be justified*, but rejoice; *and* not only confide, but *glory* ‡.

* צדקות parallel to which, both in Construction and Signification, is the Phrase used by St. *John*, Δικαιωμαῖα, Rev. xix. 8. *The fine Linen is the Righteousness* (properly the Righteousnesses) *of the Saints.*

† *Vult dicere Propheta, in JEHOVAH esse* ID PROPTER QUOD *Peccator respiciens & credens*, a Peccatis absolvi, & jure ad Benedictionem cœlestem *donari queat ac debeat: esse illud JEHOVÆ proprium; ab ipso quærendum; quod extra ipsum non invenitur.* VITRING.

‡ Isa. xlv. 25.

What he had just now asserted, he exemplifies in his own, and in the Person of every true Believer. *I will greatly rejoice in the* LORD, *my Soul shall be joyful in my* GOD; *for He hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation, He hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness* *.—True Believers are compared, in one of our sacred Eclogues, to *a Company of Horses in Pharaoh's Chariot* †: to *Horses*, than which no Animal is more stately and graceful: to *Egyptian* Horses, which were the best and completest, then in the World: to those in *Pharaoh*'s Chariot, which, doubtless, were a choice Set; selected from Thousands; and finest, where all were fine. Here, methinks, I see the Comparison realized. *Christians*, endued with such a Spirit, as breathes in this animated Text, are like a Collection of those gallant and majestic Steeds; not destined to low Drudgery, but appointed to run in the royal Chariot; all Life; full of Fire; champing the Bit, and eager for the Chase. Nothing can more beautifully describe a State of Exultation and Ardour, than the preceding Similitude, or the following Words—*I will rejoice*; *I will greatly rejoice*; *my* very *Soul*, and all that is within me, *shall be joyful in my* GOD. Wherefore? Because He *has clothed me*, undone Sinner as I am, *with the Garments of Salvation:* because *He hath covered me*, defective as all my Services are, *with the Robe of Righteousness*. A Robe, which hides every Sin, that in Thought, Word, or Deed, I have committed. A Robe, which screens from the Sword of Justice, the Curse of the Law, and all the Vengeance my Iniquities have deserved. A Robe, which adorns and

* Isa. lxi. 10. † Cant. i. 9.

and dignifies my Soul; renders it fairer than the Moon, clear as the Sun, and meet for the Inheritance of Saints in Light.

Having repreſented this Righteouſneſs, in a Variety of grand and charming Views—the Prophet farther characterizes it, as the *unalterable* and *never-failing* Origin of our Juſtification and Happineſs. This he diſplays by a Train of Images, bold and ſublime to the laſt Degree. *Lift up your Eyes to the Heavens, and look upon the Earth beneath: for the Heavens ſhall vaniſh away like Smoke, and the Earth ſhall wax old like a Garment; but my Salvation ſhall be for ever, and my Righteouſneſs ſhall not be aboliſhed**.—Obſerve the vaſt Dimenſions, and the firm Foundations, both of the upper and the lower World. How ſtrong, how ſtedfaſt, they all appear! Yet theſe, indiſſoluble as they may ſeem, ſhall periſh.—This majeſtic *Globe*, on which Mountains riſe and Oceans roll, ſhall loſe its beautiful Gloſs; and be laid aſide, like a decayed uſeleſs Garment. Even that more majeſtic *Concave*, in which Stars are fixed, and Planets revolve, ſhall be deprived of its very ſuperior Luſtre; and vaniſh away, like the diſſolving Smoke.—Whereas, *my Salvation*, with all the ſpiritual and heavenly Bleſſings included in it, ſhall ſubſiſt and flouriſh for ever. *And my Righteouſneſs*, which is the meritorious Cauſe of all, ſhall be an immoveable Foundation for Repoſe and Happineſs.—In ſhort; whether there be moral Virtues, they ſhall be found wanting; whether there be chriſtian Graces, they ſhall prove ineffectual; but my Conformity to the Law, and my Obedience unto Death, neither need Addition, nor admit of Change;

* Iſa. li. 6.

they are *all-sufficient* in their Merit, and in their Virtue *everlasting*.

When *Day* arises on our benighted Hemisphere, it breaks and spreads by a gradual Increase. Forming, first, the grey Twilight; next, the blushing Morn; then, the shining Light; till all is heightened into the Blaze and Glow of Noon.—When *Spring* revisits our wintry Clime, She also advances by gentle Degrees. First, swells the Bud, and protudes the Gem; then, expands the Leaf, and unfolds the Blossom: the Face of things is continually changing for the better; and Nature shews herself, almost every Hour, in some new and more engaging Dress.—This leisurely Process, renders the *strong* Effulgence of the celestial Orb, more supportable; and the *lovely* Expansions of the vegetable Creation, more observable.

So progressive and increasing are the Displays of *JESUS CHRIST*, exhibited in the Scriptures. Whose Appearance is unspeakably *more delightful* to the Soul, than the Emanations of orient Light are to the Eye, or the Entertainments of the vernal Season to our other Senses.—The Gloom of fallen *Adam* was alleviated by a Ray from this SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.—*Abraham* and the Patriarchs saw afar off the Blessed *JESUS*, *as the Morning spread upon the Mountains* *.—The *Psalmist* and the Prophets, beheld his nearer Approaches, like the Sun upon the point of Rising.—To the Apostles and Evangelists He arose, in perfect Lustre, and complete Beauty. The Grace and the Privileges, which *dawned* under other Dispensations of Religion, are *brought* even to meridian *Light* by the

* Joel ii. 2.

the Gospel.—This I mention, just to intimate, what You may expect from a following Letter.

In the mean Time, let Us attend to the Prophet *Daniel*. He records a Message from Heaven, which is more clearly descriptive of this great evangelical Blessing, than all the foregoing Texts.—He had been under much Distress, and in great Perplexity: afflicted for his own, and his Countrymens Sins; anxious for the Welfare of the chosen Nation, and the Prosperity of true Religion. When an Angel was dispatched to the holy Mourner, with this most chearing News; which, received by Faith, is the richest Balm to a wounded Conscience, and the only Remedy for a guilty World. *Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City; to finish the Transgression, and make an End of Sin; to make Reconciliation for Iniquity; and to bring in everlasting Righteousness* *. —This Prophecy relates to the MESSIAH. It foretels, that, in the Fulness of Time, He should *finish the Transgression* †; restrain and suppress the Power of Corruption, by purifying to Himself a peculiar People — Should *make an End of Sin* ‡; by sealing up or secreting its Guilt, and totally abolishing its condemning Power—Should *make Reconciliation for Iniquity*; by sustaining the Vengeance due to Sinners, and fully satisfying the divine Justice for all their Offences—Should not barely publish, but accomplish and *bring in a Righteousness* ‖; that it may be

* Dan. ix. 24. † כלא ‡ חתם

‖ להביא I think, must signify more than to *publish* or *preach*. Had this been all that the Angel was commissioned to declare, לבשר or להגיד would probably have been used.—The Word implies such *a bringing in* (the Original

be presented both to GOD and Man; to GOD, for the Reparation of his violated Law; to Man, for the Justification of his obnoxious Person—That this Righteousness should be *everlasting*; not such as may be compared to the Morning Cloud, which passeth away; or to the early Dew, which is soon dried up; but such as will out-last the Hills, on which the latter shines; and out-last the Skies, through which the former sails. A Righteousness, whose Merits extend to every Period and every Action of our Lives; and when once made ours by Imputation, remains and will remain our unalienable Property.—To this all the Saints, who, in antient Generations, pleased GOD, owe their Acceptance; on this, all the Children of Men, who, in future Ages, hope for his Mercy, must rely; by this the whole Assembly of the Blessed, will be invariably and eternally precious in his Sight.—Exalted Character! Can it be applicable to any Thing less, than the Righteousness of the incarnate GOD? Surely, None can imagine, that *Daniel* would speak in such a *magnificent* Strain of any *human* Righteousness; since, in this very Chapter, he professedly depreciates Himself, his Fellow-saints, and all human Performances whatever.

I forgot, in the proper Place, to consult the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Let Us now refer Ourselves to his Determination. Celebrating the SAVIOUR of *Judah* and *Israel*, He says; *This is his Name, whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* A Determination, so clear and sa-

Original is the same) as when *Abel* brought his Sacrifice to the Altar, for the divine Acceptance; and *Esau* brought his Venison into the Chamber, for his Father's Use. *Gen.* iv. 4. xxvii. 31.

satisfactory, as not to leave, One would almost conclude, any Room for Appeal.—Should the Sense of the Passage be questioned, I think, there cannot be a more authentic Explication, than the preceding Extracts from *Isaiah* and *Daniel*. And having the unanimous Attestation of two inspired Penmen, We may venture to abide by such Authority, even in Opposition to some respectable Names.—In the Verse immediately foregoing, the *essential* Holiness of the REDEEMER is displayed, under the Character of the RIGHTEOUS BRANCH.—The Sanctity, which He will *impart* to his Subjects, is intimated by his *executing Judgment and Justice in the Earth*.—In the Clause, We have quoted, his *imputed* Righteousness is foretold and promised.—Thus the several Sentences are distinct; the Description of the SAVIOUR is complete; and He appears perfectly suited to the Exigencies of a wretched World; in their worst Estate, inslaved to Satan, and in their best, falling short of the Glory of GOD.——This therefore I take to be the grand and extensive Meaning of the Prophet; not barely, The righteous LORD; not barely, the LORD who infuses Righteousness into sinful Souls; but the incarnate JEHOVAH*, whose *mediatorial* Righteousness is, by an Act of gracious Imputation, *ours*—

to

* *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. In these golden, infinitely better than golden Verses, are characterized the divine and the human Natures of *CHRIST*, together with his mediatorial Office. The *divine* Nature; in that He enjoys the Honours of the GODHEAD, and possesses the incommunicable Name JEHOVAH.—The *human* Nature; in that He was to be *raised up unto David*, and spring as a Branch from his Root.—The *mediatorial* Office; in that He is the *Righteousness* of his People, and the *Salvation* of Sinners.

to all the Intents of Justification and Salvation, ours —as much ours for these blessed Purposes, as if We had wrought it out, each in his own Person *.

Foreseeing and contemplating these Blessings, the inraptured *Zechariah* cries out; *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Sion; shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto Thee: He is just, and having Salvation, lowly and riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt the Foal of an Ass* †. — He addresses himself to *Sion* and *Jerusalem*, to the ecclesiastical and civil Community. Persons of all Ranks and of every Character, are exhorted to *rejoice*; to rejoice *greatly*; nay, to express the Joy of their Heart, by loud *Hallelujahs*, and triumphant *Exclamations*.—What is the Cause of this general Delight? What can fill both Church and State with such high Satisfaction? *Thy King cometh unto Thee*; even that glorious KING, who rules in Heaven, and rules in the Heart; whose Service is Freedom, and whose Laws are Love.—*He is just*; divinely righteous in his Nature, and He cometh to fulfil all Righteousness in thy Stead. *Having Salvation*; hereby procuring Salvation for his People; Deliverance from Sin, from Death, and Hell; from every Evil Thou deservest, and from every Misery Thou fearest. — That none may be discouraged, and none deterred, from applying to this PRINCE of Peace, He is, amidst all the Honours

* *Witsius*, speaking of the *mediatorial* Righteousness, has written in *Latin*, what *Aspasio* expresses in *English*; *Per illam Obedientiam tota Multitudo illorum, qui ad Ipsum pertinent*, justi constituuntur; *id est, censentur Jus habere ad æternam Vitam, non minus quam si quilibet eorum in propria Persona illam Obedientiam præstitisset*. Lib. II. Cap. v.

† Zech. ix. 9.

Honours of his Sovereignty, *lowly:* does not abhor the Baſeſt, will not deſpiſe the Meaneſt: to the Poor his Goſpel is preached, and for the Guilty his Benefits are intended.—As an Emblem, as a Proof, of this moſt amiable and condeſcending Goodneſs, *He will ride*; not like the Conquerors of old, in a triumphal Chariot, or on a richly capariſoned Steed; but upon the moſt mean and deſpicable of all Animals, *an Aſs:* nay, what is ſtill more deſpicable, on *a* rude undiſciplined *Colt*, *the* wayward *Foal of an Aſs**.

And

* Becauſe ſome profane Scoffers have preſumed to ridicule this very remarkable Incident of our LORD's Life, ſome Interpreters of Note have endeavoured to reſcue it from their *abuſive* Attempts, by obſerving—"That the "*Eaſtern* Aſſes are much larger and more graceful than "ours. That Patriarchs and Judges thought it no Diſ"grace to ride upon them."

This Obſervation has, I fear, more of *falſe Delicacy*, than of real Truth, or Chriſtian Simplicity. In the *Patriarchal* Ages, I acknowledge, Perſons of High Diſtinction thought it no Diſhonour, in their Journies and Proceſſions, to appear on this Animal. But I very much queſtion, whether the ſame Faſhion ſubſiſted, or the ſame Way of Thinking prevailed, in the Reign of *Tiberius Cæſar*. See *Jam.* iii. 3.—Nay, I am ſtrongly inclined to ſuſpect, that this plain primitive Cuſtom was ſuperſeded, even in the Days of *Zechariah*. For, long before this Time I find, that *Solomon had four thouſand Stalls of Horſes for his Chariots, and twelve thouſand Horſemen*; and that *Horſes were brought to Him out of Egypt, and divers other Countries*, 1 Kings iv. 26. x. 28, 29. From this Period, it is probable, none but the poor and inferior Sort of People rode upon Aſſes. —When *Iſaiah* propheſied, *The Land was full of Horſes*, Iſa. ii. 7. Under the *Perſian* Monarchy, when *Zechariah* flouriſhed, Horſes were in ſtill greater Repute. Well

there-

And now—since my *Theron* confesses Himself to be *miserable, and poor, and naked:* since the Eyes of his Understanding are inlightened, to see the Impurity of his Heart; the Imperfection of his Righteousness; and that He is, in Himself, a lost undone Sinner—what Advice, chearing and salutary, shall I suggest? O! let Him listen to an ADVISER, infinitely more able and compassionate. Listen to HIM, who is the ANTIENT OF DAYS, and the WISDOM OF GOD; *I counsel Thee*, says the Blessed *JESUS, to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that Thou mayest be rich; and white Raiment, that Thou mayest be clothed**.—*Gold!* What can this denote, but all those spiritual Treasures, which are hid in *CHRIST?* Which are, in Measure, unsearchable; in Value, inestimable; in Duration,

therefore might the Prophet say, with Wonder and Delight—*lowly and riding upon an Ass!*

Was it a *mean* Attitude? *Exceedingly* mean? Mean even to *Contempt?* I make no scruple to grant it: nay, I make my Boast of it! It is for the Honour of my LORD's Condescension: it is for the utter Confusion of all worldly Pomp and Grandeur: and it is for the unspeakable Comfort of my sinful Soul.—Most charming Humility! Most indearing Gentleness! HE, *who rideth upon the Heavens as it were upon an Horse, and maketh the Clouds his Chariot*, to atone for my Pride, and to encourage my Hope, disdained not, in the Days of his Flesh, to ride upon an Ass.

They, who would *dignify* this Action, any otherwise than from its ever-to-be-admired Abasement, seem to have forgotten the Stable and the Manger. They, who are *offended* at this Circumstance, and ashamed to own their LORD in his deep Humiliation, have but very imperfectly learned the Apostle's Lesson; *GOD forbid, that I should glory, save in the Cross of CHRIST JESUS my LORD.*

* Rev. iii. 18.

ration, eternal.—*White Raiment!* Surely this must signify the Righteousness of our REDEEMER; which is all Purity, and all Perfection. Which clothes the Soul, as a most suitable and commodious Garment; which covers every Deformity and every Sin; and presents the Believer, free from Shame, and free from Blemish, before the Throne of the MAJESTY in the Heavens.

This, to use the delicate Language, and amiable Images of *Isaiah*—*This* Doctrine, embraced by a realizing Faith, *is the* only Pillow of *Rest*, *wherewith Ye may cause the weary* and heavy-laden Soul *to find Repose*; *and this is the* sovereign Cordial, prepared by infinite Mercy, for the *Refreshment* of anxious and desponding Transgressors. O! Let Us not be in the Number of those proud *and* refractory Creatures, who, though *they* infinitely needed, yet *would not hear* * the gracious News, nor receive the unspeakable Benefit.—In this Respect, and in this most eminently, is that other Saying of the same sublime Teacher, true; *The LORD of Hosts shall be for a Crown of Glory, and for a Diadem of Beauty, to the Residue of his People* †. Shall we tear from our Temples, or reject with Disdain, this unfading and heavenly Ornament; in order to substitute a mean and tawdry Chaplet of our own?

Let me add a pertinent Passage from one of our celebrated dramatic Writers. Which, if proper in *his* Sense, will be incomparably more so, according to *our* Manner of Application.

——— *It*

* Isa. xxviii. 12. † Isa. xxviii. 5.

——— *It were contemning,*
With impious self-sufficient Arrogance,
This Bounty of our GOD, not to accept,
With every Mark of Honour, such a Gift.

I might proceed to urge this Expostulation of the Poet, as I might easily have multiplied my Quotations from holy Writ. But, studious of Brevity, I leave both, without farther Inlargement, to your own Meditation. Yet, more studious of my Friend's Happiness, I cannot conclude without wishing Him an Interest, a clear and established Interest, in this everlasting Righteousness of *CHRIST*. For so, and so only, can He have *everlasting Consolation and good Hope through Grace*.—I am, my dear *Theron*,

Inviolably Yours,

ASPASIO.

P. S. Opposite to the Room in which I write, is a most agreeable Prospect of the Gardens and the Fields. *These*, covered with Herbage, and loaded with Corn: *those* adorned with Flowers, and abounding with Esculents. All appearing with so florid and so beautiful an Aspect, that they really seem, in Conformity to the *Psalmist*'s Description, even to *laugh and sing*.—Let me just observe, That all these fine Scenes, all these rich Productions sprung—from what? From the *Dissolution* of the respective Seeds. The Seeds planted by the Gardener, and the Grain sowed by the Husbandman, first perished in

in the Ground, and then the copious Increaſe aroſe.

Much in the ſame Manner, a true Faith in *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs ariſes — from what? From the *Ruins* of Self-ſufficiency, and the *Death* of perſonal Excellency. Let me therefore intreat my *Theron*, ſtill to take the Diary for his Counſellor; ſtill to keep an Eye on the Depravity of his Nature, and the Miſcarriages of his Life. The more clearly We ſee, the more deeply We feel, our Guilt and our Miſery, the more highly ſhall We value the Obedience of our bleſſed SURETY.— In ſuch a Heart, Faith will flouriſh as a Roſe, and lift up its Head like a Cedar in *Lebanon*. To ſuch a Soul, the great REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs will be welcome, as Waters to the thirſty Soil, or as Rivers in the ſandy Deſart.

LETTER V.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

GIVE me Leave to relate an uncommon Accident; which happened a little While ago, in this Neighbourhood; and of which I myſelf was a Spectator.—The Day was the Sabbath; the Place

appropriated to divine Worſhip, was the Scene of this *remarkable* Affair.

A Boy came running into the Church, breathleſs and trembling. He told, but in a low Voice, thoſe who ſtood near, that a Preſs-gang * was advancing, to beſiege the Doors, and arreſt the Sailors. — *An Alarm* was immediately taken. The Seamen, with much Hurry, and no ſmall Anxiety, began to ſhift for themſelves. The reſt of the Congregation, perceiving an unuſual Stir, were ſtruck with Surpriſe.— A Whiſper of Inquiry ran from Seat to Seat; which increaſed, by Degrees, into a confuſed Murmur. No One could inform his Neighbour; therefore every One was left to ſolve the Appearance, from the Suggeſtions of a *timorous Imagination*. Some ſuſpected, the Town was on fire. Some were apprehenſive of an Invaſion from the *Spaniards*. Others looked up, and looked round, to ſee if the Walls were not giving way, and the Roof falling upon their Heads.— In a few Moments, the Conſternation became general. The Men ſtood like Statues, in ſilent Amazement, and unavailing Perplexity. The Women ſhrieked aloud; fell into Fits; ſunk to the Ground in a Swoon. Nothing was ſeen, but *wild Diſorder*; nothing heard, but *tumultuous Clamour*.—Drowned was the Preacher's Voice. Had He ſpoke in Thunder,

* The Reader, it is hoped, will excuſe whatever may appear *low*, or ſavour of the *Plebeian*, in any of theſe Circumſtances. If *Aſpaſio* had ſet Himſelf to *invent* the Deſcription of a Pannic, He would probably have formed it upon ſome more raiſed and dignified Incident. But as this was a real *Matter of Fact*, which lately happened in one of our Sea-Port Towns; Truth, even in a plain Dreſs, may poſſibly be no leſs acceptable than Fiction, tricked up with the moſt ſplendid Embelliſhments.

der, his Message would scarce have been regarded. To have gone on with his Work, amidst such a prodigious Ferment, had been like arguing with a Whirlwind, or talking to a Tempest.

This brought to my Mind that great *tremendous Day*, when the Heavens will pass away; when the Earth will be dissolved; and all its Inhabitants receive their final Doom.—If, at such Incidents of very inferior Dread, our Hearts are ready to fail; what unknown and inconceivable Astonishment must seize the guilty Conscience, when the Hand of the ALMIGHTY shall open those unparalleled Scenes of Wonder, Desolation, and Horror! — When the Trumpet shall sound — The Dead arise — The World be in Flames — The JUDGE on the Throne—and all Mankind at the Bar!

*The Trumpet shall sound**, says the prophetic Teacher. And how startling, how stupendous the Summons! Nothing equal to it, nothing like it, was ever heard through all the Regions of the Universe, or all the Revolutions of Time.—When conflicting Armies have discharged the bellowing Artillery of War, or when victorious Armies have shouted for Joy of the Conquest, the Seas and Shores have rung, the Mountains and Plains have echoed. But the Shout of the Archangel, and the Trump of GOD, will resound from Pole to Pole. Will pierce the Center, and shake the Pillars of Heaven. —Stronger, stranger still! It will penetrate even the deepest Recesses of the Tomb. It will pour its amazing Thunder into all those Abodes of Silence. The Dead, the very Dead, shall hear.

* 1 Cor. xv. 52.

When the Trumpet has sounded, *the Dead shall arise.*—In a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, the Graves open; the monumental Piles are cleft asunder; and the Nations under-ground start into Day. What an immense Harvest of Men and Women, springing up from the Caverns of the Earth, and the Depths of the Sea! Stand a-while my Soul, and consider the wonderful Spectacle.—*Adam* formed in Paradise, and the Babe born but Yesterday, the earliest Ages, and latest Generations, meet upon the same Level. *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, People of all Climes and Languages, unite in the promiscuous Throng. Here, those vast Armies, which, like Swarms of Locusts, covered Countries; which, with an irresistible Sweep, over-run Empires; here they all appear, and here they all are lost. Lost, like the small Drop of a Bucket, when plunged into the unfathomable and boundless Ocean.—O! the Multitudes! The Multitudes! which these Eyes shall survey, when GOD *calleth the Heavens from above, and the Earth that He may judge his People.* What Shame must flush the guilty Cheek! What Anguish wound the polluted Breast! To have all their filthy Practises, and infamous Tempers, exposed before this innumerable Croud of Witnesses!—Fly, my *Theron*; and fly, my Soul; instantly let Us fly, earnestly let Us fly, to the purifying Blood of *JESUS*. That all our Sins may be blotted out; that We may be found *unblameable* and *unreproveable*, in the Presence of the assembled World; and, what is infinitely more to be revered, in the Sight of the omnipotent GOD.

When the Swarm issues, the Hive will *burn*. There is no more Need of this habitable Globe.

The

The Elect have fought the good Fight, and finiſhed their Courſe. The Wicked have been tried, and found incorrigible. The important Drama is ended: every Actor has performed his Part: now therefore the Scenes are taken down, and the Stage is demoliſhed.—*Woe be to the Earth, and to the Works thereof!* Its Streams are turned into Pitch, its Duſt into Brimſtome; and the Breath of the ALMIGHTY, like a Torrent of Fire, inkindles the Whole. See! ſee! how the Conflagration rages—ſpreads—prevails over all! The Foreſts are in a Blaze, and the Mountains are wrapt in Flame. Cities, Kingdoms, Continents, ſink in the burning Deluge. *London*, *Britain*, *Europe* are no more. Through all the Receptacles of Water, through all the Tracts of Land, through the whole Extent of Air, nothing is diſcernable, but one vaſt, prodigious, fiery Ruin.—Where now are the *Treaſures* of the Covetous? Where the *Poſſeſſions* of the Mighty? Where the *Delights* of the Voluptuary?—How wiſe, how happy are they, whoſe Portion is lodged in heavenly Manſions! Their Inheritance is incorruptible and undefiled. Such as the laſt Fire cannot reach, nor the Diſſolution of Nature impair.

But ſee! The azure Vault cleaves. The Expanſe of Heaven is rolled back like a Scroll: and the JUDGE, the JUDGE appears! *He cometh*, cries a mighty Seraph, the Herald of his Approach, *He cometh to judge the World in Righteouſneſs, and miniſter true Judgment unto the People!*—He cometh, not as formerly, in the Habit of a Servant, but clad with uncreated Glory, and magnificently attended with the Armies of Heaven. Angels and Archangels ſtand before Him, and ten thouſand times ten thou-

ſand of thoſe celeſtial Spirits miniſter unto Him.—Behold Him, ye faithful Followers of the LAMB; and wonder and love. This is HE, who bore all *your* Iniquities on the ignominious Croſs. This is HE, who fulfilled all Righteouſneſs for the Juſtification of *your* Perſons.—Behold Him, ye Deſpiſers of his Grace; and wonder and periſh. This is HE, whoſe merciful Overtures you have contemned, and on whoſe precious Blood You have trampled.

The great *white Throne* *, beyond Deſcription auguſt and formidable, is erected. The KING of Heaven, the LORD of Glory, takes his Seat on the dreadful Tribunal. *Mercy*, on his Right-hand, diſplays the Olive-Branch of Peace, and holds forth the Crown of Righteouſneſs. *Juſtice*, on his Left, poiſes the impartial Scale, and unſheaths the Sword of Vengeance. While *Wiſdom* and *Holineſs*, brighter than ten thouſand Suns, beam in his divine Aſpect.—What are all the preceding Events, to this new Scene of Dignity and Awe? The Peals of Thunder, ſounding in the Archangel's Trumpet; the Blaze of a burning World, and the ſtrong Convulſions of expiring Nature; the unnumbered Myriads of human Creatures, ſtarting into inſtantaneous Exiſtence, and thronging the aſtoniſhed Skies; all theſe ſeem *familiar* Incidents, compared with the Appearance of the incarnate JEHOVAH.—Amazement, more than Amazement, is all around. Terror and Glory unite in their Extremes. From the Sight of his majeſtic Eye, from the inſupportable Splendors of his Face, the Earth itſelf and the very Heavens *flee away* †.—How then? Oh! how ſhall the Ungodly *ſtand?* Stand in his angry Preſence, and draw near to this conſuming Fire?

Yet

* Rev. xx. 11. † Rev. xx. 11.

Yet draw near they must, and take their Tryal—their decisive Tryal at his righteous Bar. Every Action comes under Examination. For each idle Word they must give Account. Not so much as a secret Thought escapes this exact Scrutiny.—How shall the Criminals, the impenitent Criminals, either conceal their Guilt, or elude the Sentence? They have to do with a Sagacity, too keen to be deceived; with a Power, too strong to be resisted; and (O! terrible, terrible Consideration!) with a Severity of most just Displeasure, that will *never* relent, *never* be intreated more.—What ghastly Despair lours on their pale Looks! What racking Agonies rend their distracted Hearts! The bloody Axe and the torturing Wheel, are Ease, are Down, compared with their prodigious Woe. And (O holy GOD! wonderful in thy Doings! fearful in thy Judgments!) even this prodigious Woe is the *gentlest* of Visitations, compared with that Indignation and Wrath, which are hanging over their guilty Heads—which are even now falling on all the Sons of Rebellion—which will plunge them deep in aggravated and endless Destruction.

And is there a last Day? and must there come
A sure, a fix'd, irrevocable Doom?

Surely then, to use the Words of a pious Prelate *, it should be "the main Care of our Lives and "Deaths, what shall give Us Peace and Acceptation before the dreadful Tribunal of GOD. What "but Righteousness? What Righteousness or whose? "Ours or *CHRIST*'s? Ours, in the inherent

* Bishop *Hall*.

" Graces wrought in Us, in the holy Works wrought " by Us? Or *CHRIST*'s, in his moſt perfect " Obedience and meritorious Satisfaction, wrought " for Us, and applied to Us? The *Popiſh* Faction " is for the former. We Proteſtants are for the " latter. GOD is as direct on our Side, as his " Word can make Him; every where blazoning the " Defects of our own Righteouſneſs, every where " extolling the perfect Obedience of our RE- " DEEMER's."

Behold! ſays the everlaſting KING, *I lay in Sion, for a Foundation, a Stone; a tried Stone; a precious Corner-ſtone; a ſure Foundation:* HE THAT BELIEVETH, SHALL NOT MAKE HASTE*. As this Text contains ſo noble a Diſplay of our SAVIOUR's conſummate Ability for his great Work; as it is admirably calculated, to preſerve the Mind from diſtreſſing Fears, and to ſettle it in a ſteady Tranquility; You will give me Leave to touch it curſorily with my Pen. Juſt as I ſhould deſcant upon it in Converſation, was I now ſitting in one of your agreeable Arbors, and enjoying your more agreeable Company.

How beautiful the Gradation! How lively the Deſcription! and how very important the practical Improvement! Or I might ſay, the Inſcription which is engraven on this wonderful Stone.—*Behold!* Intended to rouſe and fix our moſt attentive Regard. The GOD of Heaven ſpeaks. He ſpeaks, and every Syllable is Balm; every Sentence is rich with Conſolation. If ever therefore We have Ears to hear, let it be to this SPEAKER, and on this Occaſion.

A

* Iſa. xxviii. 16.

A Stone. Every Thing elſe is ſliding Sand; is yielding Air; is a breaking Bubble. Wealth will prove a vain Shadow; Honour an empty Breath; Pleaſure a deluſory Dream; our own Righteouſneſs a Spider's Web. If on theſe We rely, Diſappointment muſt enſue, and Shame be inevitable. Nothing but *CHRIST*, nothing but *CHRIST*, can ſtably ſupport our ſpiritual Intereſts, and realize our Expectations of true Happineſs. And, bleſſed be the divine Goodneſs! He is, for this Purpoſe, not a Stone only, but

A tried Stone. Tried, in the Days of his Humanity, by all the Vehemence of Temptations, and all the Weight of Afflictions: yet, like Gold from the Furnace, rendered more ſhining and illuſtrious by the fiery Scrutiny.—Tried, under the Capacity of a SAVIOUR, by Millions and Millions of depraved, wretched, ruined Creatures; who have always found Him *perfectly able*, and as *perfectly willing*, to expiate the moſt enormous Guilt—to deliver from the moſt inveterate Corruptions—and ſave, to the very uttermoſt, all that come unto GOD through Him.

A Corner-ſtone. Which not only ſuſtains, but unites the Edifice: incorporating both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, Believers of various Languages, and manifold Denominations—here, in one harmonious Bond of brotherly Love—hereafter in one common Participation of eternal Joy.

A precious Stone. More precious than Rubies; the Pearl of great Price; and the Deſire of all Nations. Precious, with regard to the divine Dignity of his Perſon, and the unequaled Excellency of his mediatorial Offices. In theſe, and in all reſpects, greater than *Jonah*—wiſer than *Solomon*—fairer than the Children of Men—chieſeſt among ten thouſand

—and, to the awakened Sinner, or inlightened Believer, *altogether lovely* *.

A ſure Foundation †. Such as no Preſſure can ſhake: equal, more than equal to every Weight; even to Sin, the heavieſt Load in the World.—*The Rock of Ages*; ſuch as never has failed, never will fail, thoſe humble Penitents, who caſt their Burden upon the LORD REDEEMER; who roll all ‡ their Guilt

* Cant. v. 16.

† *Fundamentum fundatiſſimum.*

‡ *Roll*—This is the exact Senſe of the ſacred Phraſe, גל אל יהוה Pſal. xxii. 8. xxxvii. 5. Prov. xvi. 3. I am not ignorant, that ſome People have preſumed to *cenſure*, and many have been *ſhy* of uſing, this bold and vigorous Metaphor. Which nevertheleſs appears to me, of all others the moſt juſt, the moſt ſignificant, and therefore the moſt truly beautiful.

A Burden, that is manageable and comparatively light, We *caſt*, we *throw*. But that which is extremely ponderous and quite unwieldy, we move only by rolling. Accordingly, Stones of an enormous Size, are called by the Oriental Writers, *Stones of Rolling*, Ezra v. 8.—Conſider the Expreſſion in this View, and nothing can repreſent, with greater or with equal Energy, that prodigious Load, which, heavier than the Sand of the Sea, oppreſſes the guilty Conſcience.—By ſubſtituting any other Word, We infeeble and dilute the Senſe: We loſe the capital and ſtriking Idea.

Vain Man would be wiſe. Let Him not then, for the Credit of his Ingenuity, adventure to correct the Language of Omniſcience. This, if any Thing in Nature, is

Periculoſæ plenum Opus Aleæ.

This will be ſure to diſcover, not his fine Taſte, but his *groveling* Apprehenſion, and his *rampant* Pride. To improve, with the Painter's Bruſh, the glowing Colours of the Rainbow; to heighten, by Fuller's Soap, the Luſtre of the new fallen Snows; would be a more modeſt Attempt, and a much eaſier Taſk, than to make an *Index expurgatorius*, or a Table of *Errata*, when the SPIRIT of Inſpiration dictates.

Guilt, and fix their whole Hopes, on this immoveable Basis.—Or, as the Words *may* be rendered, *A Foundation* *! *A Foundation!* There is a fine Spirit of Vehemency in the Sentence, thus understood. It speaks the Language of Exultation, and expresses an important Discovery. That which Mankind infinitely want; that which Multitudes seek, and find not; it is here! it is here! This, this is the Foundation for their Pardon, their Peace, their eternal Felicity.

Whosoever believeth, though pressed with Adversities, or surrounded by Dangers, *shall not make haste* †. But, free from tumultuous and perplexing Thoughts, preserved from rash and precipitate Steps, He shall possess his Soul in Patience. Knowing the Sufficiency of those Merits, and the Fidelity of that Grace, on

* מוסד מוסד

† *Shall not make haste*, לא יחוש This metaphorical Expression, though it might be very intelligible to an *Hebrew*, is to an *English* Reader, like some fine Picture placed in a *disadvantageous* Light. We may possibly illustrate the Prophet's Meaning, and exemplify his Assertion, if We compare the Conduct of *Moses*, with that of the *Israelites*, on viewing the fatal Catastrophe of *Dathan* and *Abiram*.—When the Earth trembled under their Feet; when the Ground opened its horrid Jaws; when the presumptuous Sinners went down alive into the Pit; when the tremendous Chasm closed upon the screaming Wretches; the Children of *Israel*, it is written, *fled at the Cry of them*. Fled, in wild and hasty Confusion; *for they said, Lest the Earth swallow up Us also*.—But *Moses*, who denounced the dreadful Doom; *Moses*, who was sure of the divine Protection; *Moses* made no such precipitate or disorderly *Haste*. He stood calm and composed: saw the whole alarming Transaction, without any uneasy Emotions of Fear, or any unnecessary Attempts to escape. So that *his Behaviour* seems to be a clear and apposite Comment on *Isaiah*'s *Phrase*. See *Numb.* xvi.

on which he has repoſed his Confidence, ſhall quietly and without Perturbation wait for an expected End. —And not only amidſt the perilous or diſaſtrous Changes of Life, but even in the Day of everlaſting Judgment, ſuch Perſons ſhall *ſtand with Boldneſs*.—They ſhall look up, to the grand ARBITRATOR—look round, on all the Solemnity of his Appearance—look forward, to the unalterable Sentence —and neither feel Anxiety, nor fear Damnation.

Such, in that Day of Terrors, ſhall be ſeen
To face the Thunders with a godlike Mein.
The Planets drop; their Thoughts are fix'd above:
The Center ſhakes; their Hearts diſdain to move.

This Portion of Scripture, which, I hope, will both delight and edify my Friend, recals our Attention to the Subject of my preſent Letter—to thoſe propitiatory Sufferings, and that juſtifying Righteouſneſs, which, imputed to Sinners, are the Ground of their Comfort, and the Bulwark of their Security.—And what ſay the Writers of the *New Teſtament* upon this Point? They, whoſe Underſtandings were opened by the "WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR," to diſcern the Meaning of the antient Oracles. Who muſt therefore be the moſt competent Judges of their true Import, and our ſureſt Guides in ſettling their Senſe.—Do *they* patronize our Interpretation of the Prophets? Do *they* ſet their Seal to the Authenticity of our Doctrine?

St. *Luke*, in his eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, has preſerved this weighty Declaration of the Apoſtles; *We believe, that, through the Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST,*

*CHRIST, We shall be saved, even as they**. Here the Thing is implied.—St. *Peter*, in the Introduction to one of his Theological Epistles, thus addresses his happy Correspondents: *To them that have obtained like precious Faith, in the Righteousness* † *of our GOD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.* Here the Point is expressly asserted.—With equal Clearness is the Doctrine delivered by *Matthew* the Evangelist; *Seek ye first the Kingdom of GOD and his Righteousness* ‡. What can the *Kingdom of GOD* mean? An Experience of the Power, and an Enjoyment of the Privileges of the Gospel. What are we to understand by *his Righteousness?* Surely, the Righteousness which is worthy of this grand Appellation, and peculiar to that blessed Institution.

Would We learn, What is the great and distinguishing Peculiarity of the Gospel? St. *Paul* informs Us; *Therein the Righteousness of GOD is revealed, from Faith to Faith.* As this Text leads Us into the Epistle to the *Romans*—as this Epistle is, for the Propriety of its Method, as well as for the Importance of its Doctrine, singularly excellent—it may not be amiss, to examine its Structure, and inquire into its Design.

The Apostle writes to a promiscuous People: who had been converted, partly from *Judaism*, partly from *Gentilism*. His Aim is, to strike at the very Root of their former Errors respectively—to turn them *wholly* to the superabundant Grace of GOD, and establish

* Acts xv. 11.

† 2 *Pet.* i. 1. The Phrase is πιστιν εν δικαιοσυνη. If We retain the common Translation, it proves another very momentous Truth: that *the Righteousness of our GOD, even of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST*, is the one *meritorious* procuring Cause of *all* spiritual Blessings; of Faith, as well as of Fruition; of Grace, as well as of Glory.

‡ Matt. vi. 33.

bliſh them *ſolely* on the all-ſufficient Merits of *CHRIST*.

The *Gentiles* were for the moſt part, groſly ignorant of GOD, and ſtupidly negligent of inviſible Intereſts. If any among them had a Senſe of Religion, their Virtues, they imagined, were meritorious of all that the DEITY could beſtow. If they fell into Sin; Sin, they ſuppoſed, might eaſily be obliterated by Repentance; or compenſated by a Train of Sacrifices *. A few of their judicious Sages taught, that the moſt probable Means of ſecuring the divine Favour, was a ſincere Reformation of Life.

The *Jews*, it is well known, placed a mighty Dependence on their Affinity to *Abraham*, and the Covenant

* See WITSII *Animadverſiones Irenicæ*. Cap. vii.— A choice little Piece of *polemical* Divinity, perhaps the very beſt that is extant. In which the moſt important Controverſies are fairly ſtated, accurately diſcuſſed, and judiciouſly determined; with a Perſpicuity of Senſe, and a Solidity of Reaſoning, exceeded by nothing, but the remarkable Conſciſeneſs, and the ſtill more remarkable Candour of the Sentiments.

The *Oeconomia Fœderum*, written by the ſame Hand, is a Body of Divinity; in its Method ſo well digeſted—in its Doctrines ſo truly evangelical—and (what is not very uſual with our ſyſtematic Writers) in its Language ſo refined and elegant—in its Manner ſo affectionate and animating—that I would venture to recommend it, to every young Student in Divinity: I would not ſcruple to riſk all my Reputation upon the Merits of this Performance: and I cannot but lament it, as one of my greateſt Loſſes, that I was *no ſooner* acquainted with this moſt excellent Author.—All whoſe Works, have ſuch a Delicacy of Compoſition, and ſuch a ſweet Savour of Holineſs, that I know not any Compariſon more proper to repreſent their true Character, than *the golden Pot which had Manna*; and was—outwardly, *bright* with burniſhed Gold—inwardly, *rich* with heavenly Food.

venant made with their Fathers; on their Adherence to the Letter of the moral Law, and their ſcrupulous Performance of ceremonial Inſtitutions. — *Gentiles* and *Jews* agreeing in this Miſtake, that they looked for the Pardon of Guilt, and the Attainment of Happineſs, from ſome Services done, or ſome Qualities acquired by *Themſelves*.

Againſt theſe Errors the zealous Apoſtle draws his Pen. He enters the Liſts like a true Champion of *CHRIST*, in the moſt ſpirited and heroic Manner imaginable. *I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of CHRIST:* for, however it may be deemed Fooliſhneſs by the polite *Greeks*, or prove a Stumbling-block to the carnal *Jews*, *it is the Power of GOD unto* * *Salvation:* it is the grand Inſtrument, which he has ordained for his bleſſed Purpoſe, and which he will certainly crown with the deſired Succeſs.—Whence has the Goſpel this very peculiar Power? Becauſe, therein a *Righteouſneſs is revealed*; a true and perfect Righteouſneſs, which obliterates all Guilt, and furniſhes a ſolid Title to eternal Life.—What Righteouſneſs is this! The Righteouſneſs not of Man but *of GOD*. Which was promiſed by GOD in the Scriptures; was introduced by GOD in the Perſon of his SON; and, on Account of its conſummate Excellency, is both acceptable and available in his Sight.

This Righteouſneſs is *from Faith to Faith* †: held forth, as it were, by a promiſing GOD, and apprehended by a believing Soul. Who, firſt, gives a firm *Aſſent* to the Goſpel; then, cordially *accepts* its Bleſſings. From a Conviction that the Doctrine is true, paſſes to a Perſuaſion that the Privileges are his own.—

* Rom. i. 16. † Rom. i. 17.

own. —When this is effected, a Foundation is laid for all Happineſs; a Principle is wrought, to produce all Holineſs.

But why was it requiſite, that ſuch a Righteouſneſs ſhould be provided by GOD, and revealed in the Goſpel?—Becauſe, both *Gentile* and *Jew*, neither poſſeſſed, nor could attain, any Righteouſneſs of their own: and this Righteouſneſs, though ſo abſolutely neceſſary for their fallen State, was infinitely remote from all human Apprehenſions. The latter Aſſertion is ſelf-evident. The former is particularly demonſtrated.—Firſt, with regard to the *Gentiles*; the Generality of whom, were abandoned to the moſt ſcandalous Exceſſes; and they who had eſcaped the groſſer Pollutions, fell ſhort in the Duties of natural Religion.—Next, with regard to the *Jews*; Many of whom lived in open Violation of the external Commandment; and not One of them acted up to the internal Purity, required by the *Moſaic* Precepts. —From which Premiſes, this Concluſion is deduced; that each of them had tranſgreſſed even *their own* Rule of Action; that all of them were, on this Account, utterly inexcuſable; therefore *by the Works of the Law*, whether dictated by Reaſon, or delivered by *Moſes*, *no Mortal can be juſtified* * in the Sight of GOD.

Leſt

* *Rom.* iii. 20. There ſeems to be a Kind of *humbling* or *degrading* Turn in the Apoſtle's Language πασα σαρξ, which may poſſibly be preſerved in the Tranſlation, *No Mortal*.—We may farther obſerve the very nice and exact Manner of the ſacred Argumentation. Leſt it ſhould be ſaid, and from the Authority of *St. James*, *A Man is juſtified by Works*; our unerring Writer tacitly allows, That *before Men* this is practicable, *before Men* this is proper; but not ενωπιον αυτου, not *before* GOD.

Leſt any ſhould imagine, that Righteouſneſs may be obtained, if not by a Conformity to the Law of Nature, or the Law of *Moſes*, yet by an Obſervation of *Evangelical* Ordinances, He farther declares; That Sinners are *juſtified freely*, without any Regard to their own Endowments; *through the Redemption*, the complete Redemption of *JESUS CHRIST**. After ſuch a Manner, as may lay them low in Humiliation, even while it exalts them to the Kingdom of Heaven. After ſuch a Manner, as may bring Life and Salvation to their Souls, while all the Glory reverts to GOD the FATHER and his SON *JESUS CHRIST*.

In the Proſecution of this very momentous Subject, our ſacred Diſputant removes an Objection, which is as common, as it is plauſible. *Do We make void the Law through Faith?* Do We render it a vain Inſtitution; ſuch as never has been, never will be fulfilled?—*GOD forbid!* This were a flagrant Diſhonour to the Divine LEGISLATOR and his holy Commandments. Such as We would abhor, rather than countenance.—On the contrary, *We eſtabliſh the Law* †; not only as We receive it for a *Rule* of Life, but as we expect no Salvation without a proper, without a *perfect* Conformity to its Injunctions.—How can this be effected? By qualifying its Senſe, and ſoftening it into an eaſier Syſtem? This were to *vacate* the Law; to deprive it of its Honours; and hinder it from attaining the due End, either of Obedience or Condemnation.—No; but We eſta-

* Rom. iii. 24.

† *Rom.* iii. 31. An inconteſtable Proof, that the Apoſtle treats of the *moral* Law.

bliſh the Law, by believing in that great MEDIATOR, who has obeyed its every Precept; ſuſtained its whole Penalty; and ſatisfied all its Requirements, in their utmoſt Extent.

Farther to corroborate his Scheme, He proves it from the renowned Examples of *Abraham* and *David*.—The Inſtance of *Abraham* is ſo clear, that it wants no Comment. Any Paraphraſe would rather obſcure, than illuſtrate it.—The other, derived from the Teſtimony of the *Pſalmiſt*, may admit the Commentator's Tool. Yet not to hammer it into a new Form, but only to clear away the Rubbiſh; to reſcue it from Miſrepreſentation; and place it in a true Light. *Even as David deſcribeth the Bleſſedneſs of the Man, to whom GOD imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works, ſaying; Bleſſed are They, whoſe Unrighteouſneſs is forgiven, and whoſe Sins are covered: Bleſſed is the Man, to whom the LORD will not impute Sin* *. —Here is *Imputation* aſſerted—The Imputation of *Righteouſneſs* — Of Righteouſneſs *without Works*; without any Reſpect to, or any Co-operation from, any Kind of human Works. It is a Bleſſing vouchſafed to the Ungodly; not founded on a Freedom from Sin, but procuring a Remiſſion of its Guilt.

Some, I know, have attempted to reſolve all the Force of this Paſſage, into an Argument for the *Sameneſs* of Pardon and Juſtification. Whereas, the Apoſtle undertakes to prove, not that Forgiveneſs and Juſtification are identically the ſame, but that both are *abſolutely free*. To maintain which Poſition, He argues—"This Doctrine is as true, as it "is comfortable. It agrees with the Experience, "and has received the Atteſtation of *David*. When "he

* Rom. iv. 6, 7.

" he speaks of the blessed and happy Man, He de-
" scribes Him, not as an innocent, but guilty Per-
" son: not as having any Claim to the divine Fa-
" vour, on account of deserving Performances, or
" recommending Properties. But as owing all his
" Acceptance to that sovereign Grace, which *for-*
" *gives Iniquities, and blots out Sin.* Such is the Case
" with regard to that evangelical Justification, which
" We preach. *Even as*; it is, in the *Manner* of its
" *Vouchsafement*, perfectly similar to the Blessedness
" celebrated by the *Psalmist.*"—The Apostle's Eye, is not so directly upon the Nature of the Privilege, as upon the *Freeness* with which it is granted. Nor can Any infer from the Tenour of his Reasoning, that to be forgiven, is the same as to be justified; only that both are Acts of infinitely rich Mercy; designed for Sinners; promised to Sinners; bestowed on Sinners. Who have nothing, nothing of their own, either to boast, or to plead.

In the fifth Chapter, from Verse the twelfth to the End, the sacred Penman points out the *Cause*, and explains the *Method* of Justification. Of which this is the Sum—That *CHRIST*, in pursuance of the Covenant of Grace, fulfilled all Righteousness in the Stead of his People—That this Righteousness, being performed for them, is imputed to them — That, by virtue of this gracious Imputation, they are absolved from Guilt, and intitled to Bliss; as thoroughly absolved, and as fully intitled, as if in their own Persons they had undergone the expiatory Sufferings, and yielded the meritorious Obedience. — Lest it should seem strange, in the Opinion of a *Jew* or a *Gentile*, to hear of being justified by the Righteousness of *Another*, the wary Apostle urges a parallel

Case; recorded in the *Jewish* Revelation, but ratified by *universal* * Experience; namely, Our being condemned for the Unrighteousness of Another.—In this Respect, He observes, *Adam* was a Type of our LORD; or, *a Figure of HIM that was to come* †. The Relations the same, but the Effects happily reversed. *Adam* the Head of his Posterity; *CHRIST* the Head of his People. *Adam*'s Sin was imputed to all his natural Descendents; *CHRIST*'s Righteousness is imputed to all his spiritual Offspring. *Adam*'s Transgression brought Death into the World, and all our Woe; *CHRIST*'s Obedience brings Life and all our Happiness ‡.—The Whole closes with this very obvious and no less weighty Inference; *Therefore, as by the Offence of One, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even so, by the Righteousness of One, the free Gift came upon all Men unto Justification of Life* ‖.

I do not recollect any other Similitude, which the Apostle so minutely sifts, and so copiously unfolds. He explains it; He applies it; He resumes it; He dwells upon it; and scarcely knows, how to desist from it.

* By the Pains and Death which *Infants*, in every Nation, endure. Which are unquestionably Punishments, and to which they are doomed by the righteous Judgment of GOD.

† Rom. v. 14.

‡ *Quemadmodum Peccatum Adami*, says *Bengelius*, *sine Peccatis quæ postea commisimus, Mortem attulit nobis; sic Justitia CHRISTI, sine bonis Operibus, quæ deinceps a nobis fiunt, Vitam nobis conciliat.* That is; As the Sin of *Adam*, without any Concurrence of the Sins, which We Ourselves respectively commit, occasioned our Ruin; so the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, abstracted from all Consideration of our personal Obedience, procures our Recovery.

‖ Rom. v. 18.

it. I am ſure, you will not blame me, if I imitate the ſacred Author; revert to the Subject; and quote another Paſſage from the ſame Paragraph.—*Much more ſhall They, who receive Abundance of Grace and of the Gift of Righteouſneſs, reign in Life by One, JESUS CHRIST* *.—Here, I am ready to think, the inſpired Writer puts a Difference between the two grand Bleſſings purchaſed by EMMANUEL, Remiſſion and Righteouſneſs †. For, who are the Perſons, which *receive Abundance of Grace?* They, I apprehend, that, having ſinned much, have much forgiven.—Who are the Perſons, which *receive Abundance of the Gift of Righteouſneſs?* They, that having in their own Conduct wrought out none, which will bear the Teſt of GOD's impartial Scrutiny, have one placed to their Account, which the all-ſeeing Eye of Heaven approves.—However, whether the Diſtinction I have ventured to propoſe, be fanſiful or ſubſtantial, of this I am perſuaded; that *the Gift* of Righteouſneſs ‡, muſt ſignify a Righteouſneſs, not originally

* Rom. v. 17.

† *Non tantum Peccata ſublata, ſed Juſtitia præſtita.*

‡ I cannot but wonder at the Aſſertion of a late Writer, who roundly declares, "That there is not one Word "in this whole Chapter, relating to the antecedent Obe- "dience of *CHRIST*'s Life, but expreſſing only his "paſſive Obedience."—Muſt then this Group of Expreſſions—δικαιοσυνη—δικαιωμα—υπακοη—be confined *barely* to the *Sufferings* of our LORD? To put ſuch a Senſe upon the Words of the Apoſtle, is, according to my Apprehenſion, not to *hear* his Voice, but to *gagg* his Mouth; not to acquieſce in the ſacred Oracles, but to make them ſpeak our own Meaning.—*Beza*, who perhaps is inferior to no Critic, with regard to a maſterly Skill in the *Greek* Language, thus explains δικαιωμα; *Juſtificationis eſt Materia, nempe CHRISTI Obedientia; cujus Imputatio nos juſtos facit.*—*Mintert*, in his accurate and copious Lexicon for

originally their own, but Another's; not what they themselves have acquired, but what was fulfilled by their SURETY; and is, by an Act of heavenly Indulgence, consigned over to them. Accordingly, it is represented, not as a *Work*, but as a *Gift*; and Those who are interested in it, are styled not *Workers*, but *Receivers*.

I should but faintly copy the apostolic Example, if I did not once again avail myself of this important Topic. Suffer me, therefore, to transcribe one more Verse from this admirable Chapter. *As by the Disobedience of One Man, many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of One, shall Many be made Righteous* *.—The *Disobedience of One*, is the Disobedience of *Adam*; his actual Trangression of the divine Law. Hereby, *Many were made Sinners*; Sinners, in such a Sense, as to become obnoxious unto Condemnation and Death.—All this, I think, is, from the Apostle's own Words, indisputable. And, if We would preserve the Propriety of his Antithesis, or the Force of his Reasoning, We must allow, that the *Obedience of One*, is the Obedience of *CHRIST*; his actual and complete Performance of the whole Law. Hereby, *Many are made Righteous*; righteous, in such a Sense,

the *Greek* Testament, gives this Interpretation of δικαιοσυνη; *Opera CHRISTO a Patre præscripta hoc Nomine veniunt; nimirum omnia quæ ab ipso præstanda erant, tam ad Legis divinæ Impletionem, quam ad Generis humani Redemptionem. Quæ nobis imputata, & per Fidem accepta, faciunt ut coram DEO justificemur.*—And as for υπακοη, surely that cannot, without the utmost Violence to its native Signification, be *so* applied to the passive, as to *exclude* the active Obedience. The *contrary* Notion, if an artful Disputant should espouse it, might appear somewhat plausible; but *this* has not the least Air of Probability.

* Rom. v. 19.

Sense, as to be released from Condemnation, and vested with a Title to Life eternal.—How clear and easy is this Meaning! How just and regular this Argumentation! What Subtilty of Evasion must be used, to give a different Turn to the instructive Text!

This is the most consistent Sense, in which I can understand *Rom.* viii. 5. *That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in Us, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the SPIRIT.* That the Righteousness required by the holy but broken Law, might be thoroughly accomplished. Accomplished by our public REPRESENTATIVE, and in our human Nature. So as to be deemed, in point of legal Estimation, fulfilled *for* Us and *by* Us *. This, I say, is most consistent with the Tenour of St. *Paul*'s Arguing, and with the exact Import of his Language.—*With the Tenour of his Arguing:* for, He undertakes to demonstrate the *Impossibility* of our Justification, by any personal Conformity to the Law. Whereas, if We could satisfy its Penalty, and obey its Precepts; or, in other Words, fulfil its Righteousness; this Impossibility would cease.—*With the exact Import of his Language:* for, the original Phrase denotes, not a *sincere*, but a *complete* Obedience; not what We are enabled to perform, but what the Law has a Right † to demand.

* It is remarked by a judicious Critic, and very valuable Expositor, that the Preposition εν sometimes signifies *by* or *for*; and is so translated, *Matt.* v. 34. *Heb.* i. 1. See Dr. *Guyse*'s Exposition of the *New Testament*.

† It may be worth our while to observe, that St. *Paul*, when treating on this Subject, uses three distinct Words, all derived from the same Original.—Δικαιωσις, which expresses *Justification*; the accounting or declaring a Person righteous.—Δικαιοσυνη, which never signifies Justification,

mand. Which, every One must acknowledge, is not fulfilled in any mere Man, since the Fall; but was fulfilled by *JESUS CHRIST*, for our Good, and in our Stead.—This Interpretation preserves the Sentences distinct, and makes a very natural Introduction for the following Clause; where the Persons interested in this Privilege, are described by their Fruits, *who walk not after the Flesh, but after the SPIRIT*. Implying, that Justification and Sanctification are, like the *ever-corresponding* Motion of our Eyes, inseparable Concomitants; and We vainly pretend to the former, if We continue destitute of the latter.

We have produced positive Proofs of our Doctrine.—We have heard an Apostle declaring the assured Happiness, and complete Justification of *true Believers*,—Let us now observe the same sagacious Judge of Men and Things, discovering the Danger of those *Self-justiciaries*, who reject the REDEEMER's Righteousness.

He is filled with the darkest Apprehensions, concerning his Brethren the *Jews*. He is impressed with melancholy Presages, relating to their eternal State*, —What was the Cause of this tender Solicitude? Had they cast off all Religion, and given themselves over to gross Immoralities? On the contrary, they were Worshipers of the true GOD; and had, in their Way, not only a *Regard*, but a *Zeal* for his Honour †.—Wherefore then does this compassionate Father

but *Righteousness*; either performed by Us, or imputed to Us.—Δικαιωμα, the Phrase which occurs in this Place, and denotes the *Right* or *Demand* of the Law; as that which is indispensibly necessary to the Justification of Man.

* Rom. ix. 2. † Rom. x. 2.

Father in *Israel* feel the same trembling Uneasiness, for his Kinsmen according to the Flesh, as *Eli* felt for the indangered Ark? Himself assigns the Reason. Because *they being ignorant of GOD's Righteousness, and going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of GOD**. Not knowing that immaculate Holiness, which the perfect Nature, and equally perfect Law of the most High GOD, require—being wilfully ignorant of that consummate Obedience, which an incarnate GOD vouchsafed to perform, for the Justification of his People—they sedulously, but foolishly endeavoured, to establish their own Righteousness; to make it scanty and decrepit as it was, the Basis of their Hopes.—Thus were they resting their everlasting ALL on a Bottom, not precarious only, but irreparably ruinous. A boundless *Eternity* the Fabric! Yet they built (wonder O Heavens!) on the *Foam* of the Waters! And (which added Stubbornness to their Folly) in avowed Contempt of that strong and sure Foundation, laid by GOD's own Hand in *Sion*.—For this, the good Apostle was afflicted, with "great "Heaviness and continual Sorrow." For this, He made the Prophet's pathetic Complaint his own; *Oh! that my Head were Waters, and my Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might bewail, Day and Night* †, the incorrigible Perverseness of my People! *For my People have committed two Evils:* in not thankfully submiting to the Righteousness of GOD, *they have forsaken the Fountain of living Waters:* in attempting to establish their own Righteousness, *they have hewed themselves out Cisterns, broken Cisterns, that can hold no Water* ‡.

Having

* Rom. x. 3. † Jer. ix. 1. ‡ Jer. ii. 13.

Having shewed *their* fatal Error, He strengthens his Representation, by displaying the happy Success of the *Gentiles*—*What shall we say then?* This, however improbable it may seem, We confidently affirm, *That the Gentiles, who followed not after Righteousness*, who had no Knowledge of it, and no Concern about it; even they *have attained to Righteousness* *.—Strange Assertion! How is this possible! Doubtless, the Righteousness which they attained, could not be any personal Righteousness. Of this they were totally destitute. Instead of practising moral Virtues, or religious Duties, they were immersed in Sensuality, and abandoned to Idolatry. It must therefore be the evangelical, the imputed Righteousness, *even that which* was wrought by *CHRIST*, and *is* received *by Faith* †.

Israel, in the mean time, the nominal *Israel*, *who*, with great Pretensions to Sanctity, and many costly Obla-

* Surely, this must signify more, than "attaining to "the *Profession* of a Religion, whereby they may be ju- "stified and saved." To this Multitudes attain, who continue, as the Prophet speaks, *stout-hearted, and far from Righteousness*. Who derive no real Benefit from their Profession; but are rendered utterly inexcusable, and liable to more aggravated Condemnation.

† Surely, *the Righteousness, which is by Faith*, cannot consist "in humbly *commiting* the Soul to *CHRIST*, "in the Way that he hath appointed." According to this Notion, the justifying Righteousness would spring from Ourselves; would be constituted by an Act of our own, and not by the perfect Obedience of our LORD.

I am sorry to see this, and the preceding Interpretation, in the Works of an *Expositor*, whose Learning I admire, whose Piety I reverence, and whose Memory I honour. Yet I must say, on this Occasion, with one of the antient Philosophers; *Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica Veritas.*

Oblations, *followed after the Law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness.* Attained! They have done nothing less. They are fallen vastly short of it; they are pronounced guilty by it; they stand condemned before it *.—*Wherefore* did they so grosly mistake, and so grievously miscarry? *Because* they forsook the good old Way, in which *Abraham*, *David*, and their pious Ancestors walked. They adopted a new Scheme; and would fain have substituted their own, instead of relying on a SAVIOUR's Righteousness. *They sought* for Justification, *not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law* †. A Method, which their Fathers knew not; which their GOD ordained not; and which proved, as it always will prove, not only abortive, but destructive.—At this Stone they stumbled; on this Rock they split. Let their Ruin be a *Way-mark*, and the Apostle's Observation a *Light-house* to my *Theron*.

Our zealous Writer tries every Expedient. He mingles Hope with Terror. Having pointed out the *Rock*, on which the *Israelites* suffered Shipwreck; He directs

* This, I apprehend, is the Purport of the Apostle's Speech, when He tells Us, that his Countrymen *had not attained unto the Law of Righteousness*. He uses the Figure μειωσις, and means more than He expresses. Somewhat like the dramatic Poet, who says of certain literary Pretenders,

Qui se primos esse rerum omnium existimant
Nec tamen sunt.

That is, *they are quite the reverse*.—Or like the Prophet in the Close of this Chapter, who assures the Believers in JESUS, *They shall not be ashamed*; that is, they shall be *encouraged, emboldened, established*.

† Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32.

directs Us to the *Haven*, in which Sinners may cast Anchor, and find Safety. He gives Us a fine descriptive View of the *Christian*'s complete Happiness. He opens (if I may continue the Metaphor) a free and ample Port for perishing Souls. Not formed by a Neck of Land, or a Ridge of Mountains, but by a magnificent Chain of spiritual Blessings. All proceeding from, and terminating in, that precious Corner-stone *JESUS CHRIST*. *Who of GOD* is *made unto Us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption* *. *Wisdom*, to inlighten our ignorant Minds. *Righteousness* †, to justify our guilty Persons. *Sanctification* †, to renew our depraved Natures. *Redemption*, to rescue Us from all Evil; and render Us, both in Body and Soul, perfectly and eternally happy.—Let it be remarked, how carefully our inspired Writer sets aside all *Sufficiency*, as well as all *Merit* in Man. He represents the whole of our Salvation, both in its Procurement and Application, as a Work of freest Grace. *CHRIST* is, and not We Ourselves, the Author of this glorious Restoration,

* 1 Cor. i. 30.

† † *Righteousness* and *Sanctification*; the former *imputed*, the latter *inherent*. This preserves a *Distinction* between the noble Articles, and assigns to each a grand Share in the Oeconomy of Salvation.—To say, that, if one of the Blessings is communicated by way of Imputation, the other should be communicated in the same Manner, seems to be *cavilling*, rather than *arguing*. Because, the Subjects are of a different Nature; and therefore must be enjoyed in a different Way. — The *Cocoa* Tree is, to the *American*, Food and Clothing, a Habitation and domestic Utensils. But must We suppose it, administering to *all* these Uses, in *one* and the *same* unvaried Method? Because, in one Respect it is eaten, in another it is wore, must it be thus applied in all? I believe, the illiterate Savage, who enjoys the several Gifts, need not be taught the Absurdity of such a Supposition.

tion, the Cause of this great Felicity. *He is made* all this unto Us—*How?* Not by our own Resolution and Strength; but *of GOD*, by the Agency of his mighty Power, and blessed SPIRIT. *He* shews Us the all-sufficient Fulness of *CHRIST*. *He* brings Us by ardent Longings to *CHRIST*. *He* implants Us into *CHRIST*, and makes Us Partakers of his Merits.

In the Process of the same Epistle, the sacred Penman enumerates the *constituent Parts* of that great Salvation, which the SON of GOD has procured for ruined Sinners. *But Ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the Name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD* *. Ye are *washed*; cleansed from the Filth, and discharged from the Guilt, of all your Iniquities. Ye are *sanctified*; delivered from the Death of Sin, and endued with a living Principle of Holiness. Ye are *justified*; restored to a State of Acceptance with GOD, and invested with a Title to eternal Glory. All which inestimable Prerogatives are conferred upon the true Believer, *in the Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST*; in consideration of his atoning Blood and meritorious Righteousness. *By the SPIRIT of our GOD*; through the Efficacy of his Operation, revealing *CHRIST*, and working Faith in the Heart.

Some Gentlemen have talked of a *new remedial* Law; whereas, the Apostle declares, that *CHRIST is the End of the* old, the unalterable, the *Mosaic Law, for Righteousness to every One that believeth* †.—Follow the Course of a River; it will constantly lead You

* 1 Cor. vi. 11. † Rom. x. 4.

You to the Ocean. Trace the Veins of the Body; they invariably unite in the Heart. Mark likewise the Tendency of the Law; it no less constantly and invariably conducts You to *CHRIST*, as the Center of its Views, and the Consummation of its Demands. —The *moral* Law aims, at discovering our Guilt, and demonstrating our inexpressible Need of a SAVIOUR. The *ceremonial* points Him out, as suffering in our Stead; making Reconciliation for Iniquity; and purging away every Defilement with his Blood.—They *both* direct the wretched Transgressor, to renounce Himself, and fly to the REDEEMER. Who alone has paid that perfect Obedience, and brought in that everlasting Righteousness, which the Sinner wants, and the Law exacts. Who is, therefore, the only proper *Accomplishment* of the one, and the only suitable *Supply* for the other.

What is the grand Design of the whole Scriptures? St. *Paul*, displaying their sublime Origin, and enumerating the gracious Purposes, they are intended to serve, writes thus: *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of GOD; and is profitable—for Doctrine*, to declare and establish religious Truth—*for Reproof*, to convince of Sin, and to refute Error—*for Correction* *, or Renovation of the Heart, and Reformation of the Life—*for Instruction in Righteousness*, in that Righteousness, which could never have been learned from any other Book, and in which alone sinful Men may appear with Comfort before their GOD.

We have seen the principal *Scope* of the *Law*, and the leading *Design* of the *Scriptures*: let Us add one Inquiry more. What is the chief *Office* of the SPIRIT?—If all these coincide, and uniformly terminate

* 2 Tim. iii. 16. Πρὸς ἐπανορθωσιν.

nate in the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*; We have a Confirmation of its *Reality* and *Excellence*, great as Man can desire, I had almost said, great as GOD can impart. — What says our LORD upon this Point? *When He, the SPIRIT of Truth is come, He shall convince* * *the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment. Of Sin, because they believe not in me: of Righteousness, because I go to my FATHER, and ye see me no more: of Judgment, because the Prince of this World is judged* †.—Is it possible for Words to be more *weighty* and *comprehensive?* Here is a Summary of Christian Faith, and of Christian Holiness. Not that *superficial* Holiness, which is patched up of devotional Forms, and goes no farther than external Performances: but that which is *vital*, and springs from the Heart; consists in Power, not in mere Profession; whose Praise, if not of Men, who are smitten with pompous Outsides, is sure to be of GOD, who distinguishes the Things which are excellent.

He shall convince the World of Sin; of original and actual Sin. The Sin of their Nature, as well as the Sin of their Life; the Sin of their best Deeds, no less than of their criminal Commissions, and blameable Omissions. Above all, of their sinning against the sovereign, the only Remedy, by Unbelief; *because they believe not on me.*—He shall convince *of Righteousness*;

* *He shall convince*, seems to be the most proper Translation of ελεγξει. As it implies the *sure Success*, which attends the Operation of the Divine SPIRIT.—Man may *reprove*, and no Conviction ensue. Whereas, that Almighty AGENT not only reproves, but reproves *with Power*; so as to determine the Judgment, and sway the Affections.

† John xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.

ness; of the Divine REDEEMER's Righteousness, which the foregoing Conviction must render peculiarly welcome. Convince them, that it was wrought out in behalf of disobedient and defective Mortals; that it is absolutely perfect, and sufficient to justify even the most Ungodly. Of all which an incontestable Proof is given, by his Resurrection from the Dead, his triumphant Ascension into Heaven, and Session at the Right-hand of his FATHER; *because I go to my FATHER, and ye see me no more* *.—He shall convince of *Judgment*. Those, who are humbled under a Sense of Guilt, and justified through an imputed Righteousness, shall be taught by happy Experience, that *the Prince of this World is condemned* and dethroned in their Hearts: That their Souls are rescued from the Tyranny of Satan; are made victorious over their Corruptions; and restored to the Liberty—the glorious Liberty of the Children of GOD.

You wonder, perhaps, that I have not strengthened my Cause, by any Quotation from the Epistle to the *Galatians*. What I design, my dear *Theron*, is not to accumulate, but to select Arguments. However, that I may not disappoint an Expectation so reasonable, I proceed to lay before You a very nervous Passage, from that masterly Piece of sacred Controversy.—Only let me just observe, that the Epistle was written to Persons, who had embraced Christianity, and professed an Affiance in *CHRIST*. But would fain have

* For, if the Work had been imperfect in any degree, our REDEEMER, instead of taking up his stated and final Residence in the Regions of Glory, must have descended again into this inferior World, to complete what was deficient.

have *joined* Circumcision, would fain have *superadded* their own religious Duties, to the Merits of their SAVIOUR; in order to constitute, at least, *some* Part of their justifying Righteousness. Against which Error, the vigilant and indefatigable Assertor of *the Truth as it is in JESUS*, remonstrates—*We who are Jews by Nature, and not Sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of JESUS CHRIST, even We have believed in JESUS CHRIST; that We might be justified by the Faith of CHRIST, and not by the Works of the Law; for, by the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified* *.

We, who are Jews by Nature, the Descendents of *Abraham*, and GOD's peculiar People; have the Tables of his Law, and the Ordinances of his Worship: We who, in Point of Privileges, are greatly superior to the *Gentile* Nations, and have all possible Advantages for establishing (if such a Thing were practicable) a Righteousness of our own; What have *We* done? — *We have believed on JESUS CHRIST:* We have renounced Ourselves; disclaimed whatever is our own; and depended wholly on the Righteousness of *CHRIST*. — For what End? That by this *Faith in CHRIST*, which re-

 ceives

* *Gal.* ii. 15, 16. Observable, very observable is the Zeal of our Apostle, in this determined Stand, against the *most specious*, and therefore the most dangerous, Incroachments of Error. To express his ardent Concern for the Truth and Purity of the Gospel, the *Works of the Law* are mentioned no less than three Times, and as often *excluded* from the Affair of Justification. *The Faith of CHRIST* likewise is thrice inculcated, and as often asserted to be the *only* Method of becoming righteous before GOD.

ceives his Righteousness; pleads his Righteousness; and presents nothing but his Righteousness before the Throne, *We might be justified.*—What Motive has induced Us to this Practice? A firm Persuasion, that by *the Works of the Law*, by sincere Obedience, or personal Holiness, *no Man living* has been, and no Man living *can be, justified before* GOD.

Are You tired, *Theron?* Have I fatigued your Attention, instead of convincing your Judgment?—I will not harbour such a Suspicion. It is pleasing to converse with Those, who have traveled into *foreign* Countries, and seen the *Wonders* of Creation. We hearken to their Narratives with Delight. Every new Adventure whets our Curiosity, rather than palls our Appetite. Must it not then afford a more sublime Satisfaction, to be entertained with the Discourses of a Person, who had, not indeed sailed round the World, but made a Journey to the *third Heavens?* Who had been admitted into the *Paradise* of GOD, and heard Things of infinite Importance, and unutterable Dignity?—This was the Privilege of that incomparable Man, whose Observations and Discoveries, I have been presenting to my Friend. And I promise myself, He will not complain of Weariness, if I enrich my Epistle with one or two more of those glorious Truths.

GOD hath made HIM to be Sin for Us who knew no Sin; that We might, not be put into a Capacity of acquiring a Righteousness of our own, but *be made the Righteousness of GOD in Him**. In this Text, the *double* Imputation of our Sin to *CHRIST*, and of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness to Us, is most emphatically

* 2 Cor. v. 21.

phatically taught, and moſt charmingly contraſted.—Moſt *emphatically taught*. For, We are ſaid, not barely to be righteous, but to be made Righteouſneſs itſelf; and not Righteouſneſs only, but (which is the utmoſt that Language can reach) the Righteouſneſs of GOD.—Moſt *charmingly contraſted*. For, One cannot but aſk, In what Manner, *CHRIST* was made Sin? In the very ſame Manner, We are made Righteouſneſs. *CHRIST* knew no *actual* Sin; yet, upon his mediatorial Interpoſition on our Behalf, He was treated by Divine Juſtice, as a ſinful Perſon. We likewiſe are deſtitute of all *legal* Righteouſneſs; Yet, upon our receiving *CHRIST*, and believing in his Name, We are regarded by the Divine MAJESTY, as righteous Creatures. This therefore cannot, in either Caſe, be *intrinſically*; but muſt be, in both Inſtances, *imputatively*.—Gracious, divinely gracious Exchange*! pregnant with amazing Goodneſs, and rich with ineſtimable Benefits. The inceſſant Triumph of the *ſtrong*, the ſovereign Conſolation of the *weak* Believer!

Ceaſe your Exultation, cries One, and come down from your Altitudes. The Term uſed in this Verſe denotes, not ſo properly *Sin*, as an *Offering for* Sin. — This is a mere Suppoſal, which I may as reaſonably deny, as Another affirm. Since the Word occurs, much *more frequently* in the former Significa-

 tion,

* *Ita ſcilicet* mirabili Permutatione *Mala noſtra in ſe recepit, ut Bona ſua nobis largiretur; recepit Miſeriam, ut largiretur Miſericordiam; recepit Maledictionem, ut Benedictionis ſuæ compotes nos faceret; recepit Mortem, ut Vitam conferret; recepit Peccatum, ut Juſtitiam impertiretur.* Thus writes the judicious *Turretin*. To which, in Concurrence with the accurate *Witſius*, I ſubſcribe both with Hand and Heart.

tion, than in the latter; and since, by giving it the latter Signification in the Passage before Us, We very much impair, if not totally destroy, the Apostle's beautiful *Antithesis*.

However; not to contend, but to allow the Remark. I borrow my Reply from a brave old *Champion* * for the Truths of the Gospel: "This Text, "says He, invincibly proveth, That We are not ju- "stified in GOD's Sight by Righteousness inherent "in Us, but by the Righteousness of *CHRIST* "imputed to Us through Faith." After which He adds, what I make my Answer to the Objection; "That *CHRIST* was made Sin for Us, because "He was a Sacrifice for Sin, We confess: but *there-* "*fore* was He a Sacrifice for Sin, because our Sin "was imputed to Him, and punished in Him."— The poor Delinquents under the *Mosaic* Dispensation, who brought their Sin-offering to the Altar of the LORD, were directed to lay their Hand on the devoted Beast; signifying, by this Usage, the transferring of Guilt from the Offerer to the Sacrifice. Conformably to the Import of this Ceremony, *CHRIST* assumed our Demerit; like a true *piacular* Victim, suffered the Punishment, which We had

* See Dr. *Fulk*'s Annotation on the Place, in that valuable Place of antient Controversy and Criticism, *The Examination of the Rhemish Testament*. Which, though not altogether so elegant and refined in the Language, nor so delicate and genteel in the Manner, as might be wished; is nevertheless full of *sound* Divinity, *weighty* Arguments, and *important* Observations.—Would the young Student be taught to discover the *very Sinews* of Popery, and be enabled to give an effectual Blow to that Complication of Errors, I scarce know a Treatise better calculated for the Purpose.

had deserved; and which, without such a Commutation, We must have undergone. So that our LORD's being made a Sin-offering for Us, does by no means invalidate, but very much confirm our Doctrine. It necessarily implies the Translation of our Iniquity to his Person; and on the Principles of Analogy, must infer the Imputation of *his Righteousness* to our Souls.

One Passage more permit me to transcribe into my Paper; and, at the same Time, to wish, that it may be written on both our Hearts. Written, not with Ink and Pen, no, nor with the Point of a Diamond, but with the Finger of the living GOD. *Yea, doubtless, and I count all Things but Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD; for whom I have suffered the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win CHRIST, and be found in Him; not having mine own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of CHRIST, the Righteousness which is of GOD through Faith* *.

Be pleased to observe, that in this Confession of Faith, and with Reference to the Case of Justification, the Apostle renounces all those Acts of supposed Righteousness, which were *antecedent* to his Conversion.—Nor does He repudiate them only, but all those more excellent Services, by which He was so eminently distinguished, even *after* his Attachment to *CHRIST*, and Engagement in the *Christian* Ministry. As though He should say—"The Privi-"lege of being a *Hebrew* by Birth; the Prerogative "of being a *Pharisee* by Profession; together with

* Phil. iii. 8, 9.

" a Behaviour exemplary, and a Reputation un-
" blameable; all these, which were once reckoned
" my highest Gain, as soon as I became acquainted
" with the glorious Perfections of *CHRIST*, *I*
" *counted* * *Loss for Him.*—And now, though I have
" been a *Disciple* many Years; have walked in all
" holy Conversation and Godliness; have endured,
" for my Divine MASTER's Name, Tribula-
" tions above measure; have laboured more abun-
" dantly, and more successfully than all the Apostles;
" yet, even *these* and *all other* Attainments, of what
" Kind or of what Date soever, I *count* † but Loss,
" for the transcendent Excellency of *CHRIST*
" *JESUS* my LORD.—*Yea doubtless* ‡; it is
" my deliberate and stedfast Resolution; what I
" have most seriously adopted, and do publicly
" avow; that, specious as all these Acquirements
" may seem, and valuable as they may be in other
" Respects, I reckon them *but Dung*, that I may
" win *CHRIST* ‖. They fade into nothing, they
" dwindle

* Ηγημαι, *I have counted.*

† Ηγεμαι, relates to the present Time, and comprehends present Attainments, *I do count.*—Not some, or the greatest Part, but *all Things.*—What? Is a Course of Sobriety, and the Exercise of Morality, to be reckoned as Dung? *All Things*, says the Apostle.—What? Is our most elevated Devotion, and inlarged Obedience, to be degraded at this monstrous Rate? *All Things*, says the Apostle. This is his invariable Reply. And We may venture to affirm, That *He had the Mind of CHRIST.*

‡ Perhaps, αλλα μενουνγε may be translated, *but truly.* As if He had said, " But why should I mention any more
" Particulars? *In truth*, I count *all* Things, &c."

‖ Δια Χριστον—δια το υπερεχον—ινα Χριστον κερδησω—plainly imply this *comparative* or *relative* Sense. Virtues, which are the Fruits of the SPIRIT, and Labours, which are a Blessing

" dwindle into *less than nothing*, if set in competition " with his matchless Obedience: and were they to " supersede my Application to his Merits, or weaken " my Reliance on his Mediation, they would be not " contemptible only, but injurious—irreparably in- " jurious—*Loss itself.*"

You will ask, If He rejects all his own Righteousness, on *what* are his Hopes fixed?—On a Foundation, *extensive* as the Obedience of the REDEEMER's Life and Death, *unshaken* as the Dignity of his eternal Power and GODHEAD. They are fixed on *the Righteousness which is of GOD*; the Righteousness which GOD the FATHER, in unsearchable Wisdom, provided; and which GOD the SON, in unutterable Goodness, wrought.—Do You inquire, *How* He came to be invested, with this Righteousness? The Answer is ready and satisfactory. It was by the Application of the Divine SPIRIT, and the Instrumentality of *Faith*.—Lest Any should imagine, That this Faith might be substituted, instead of his own Obedience to the Law; He puts an apparent Difference between the Righteousness which justifies, and the Faith by which it is received: not the Righteousness which *consists in*, but is THROUGH

a Blessing to Mankind, must not be reckoned *absolutely* or in *all* Respects despicable; but only in a limited and qualified Acceptation. Despicable, not in themselves, but as compared with the divinely perfect Righteousness of *CHRIST*, or as referred to the infinitely important Article of Justification.

That *Aspasio*, in this whole Paragraph, speaks the Sense of our Church, will appear from the following Extract: —" The Apostle St. *Paul* saith, He doth glory, in what? " In the Contempt of his own Righteousness; and that " He looketh for the Righteousness of GOD by Faith." *Homily of Salvation*, Part II.

the Faith of CHRIST.—To shew the great Importance of this Distinction; how earnestly He insisted upon it, as a Preacher; how much it tended to his Consolation, as a *Christian*; He repeats the Sentiment, He reinculcates the Doctrine, *The Righteousness which is of GOD* BY *Faith.*

Will *You* now, *Theron*, or shall *I*, poor unprofitable Creatures, presume to rely on any Performances or any Accomplishments of our own? When that distinguished Saint—a perfect Prodigy of Gifts, of Graces, and of Zeal—indefatigable in Labours, unconquerable by Afflictions, and of whose Usefulness there is neither Measure nor End—When *He* denies Himself in every View; depreciates all; disavows all; and makes mention of nothing, but the incomparable Righteousness of his *obedient*, *dying*, *interceding* SAVIOUR.

What shall I say more? Shall I attempt to play the Rhetorician, and borrow the insinuating Arts of Persuasion? This, after all the *cogent Testimonies* produced, and all the *great Authorities* urged, would be a needless Parade. When our Pen is a Sunbeam, there is but little Occasion to dip it in Oil.

Instead of such an Attempt, give me leave to make a frank and honest Confession. I would conceal nothing from my Friend. He should have a Sash to my Breast; throw it up at his Pleasure; and see all that passes within.—Though I never had any Temptation to that pernicious Set of Errors, which passes under the Character of *Socinianism*; yet I had many Searchings of Heart, and much solicitous Inquiry, How far We are indebted to *CHRIST's active* Righteousness. Thoroughly persuaded, that *Other*

Foun-

Foundation can no Man lay, ſave that which is laid, even JESUS CHRIST*; and that *there is no other Name given under Heaven, whereby Men can be ſaved*†; yet, whether We were not to to confine our believing Regards to a *dying* SAVIOUR, was Matter of conſiderable Doubt.—At firſt, I was inclined to acquieſce in the Affirmative. After long Conſideration and many Prayers, my Faith fixed upon the *Whole* of *CHRIST*'s mediatorial Undertaking. Which began in his ſpontaneous Submiſſion to the Law: was carried on through all his meritorious Life; and iſſued in his atoning Death.—This is now the Baſis of my Confidence, and the Bulwark of my Happineſs. Hither I fly; here I reſt; as the Dove, after her wearisome and fruitleſs Rovings, returned to *Noah*, and reſted in the Ark.

This Scheme firſt recommended itſelf to my *Affections*; as making the moſt ample Proviſion, for the Security and Repoſe of a guilty Conſcience. Which, when alarmed by the Accuſations of Sin, is very apprehenſive of its Condition; and will not be comforted, till every Scruple is ſatisfied, and all the Obſtructions to its Peace are removed. Thus I reaſoned with myſelf—"Though there is, undoubtedly, "ſomething to be ſaid for the other Side of the Que-"ſtion; yet, this is evidently the ſafeſt Method. "And, in an Affair of infinite Conſequence, who "would not prefer the ſafeſt Expedient?—Should "the Righteouſneſs of JESUS, CHRIST be "*indiſpenſibly* requiſite, as a Wedding-garment; "what will *they* do, when the great immortal "KING appears, who have refuſed to accept it? "Whereas, ſhould it not prove *ſo abſolutely* neceſ-"ſary,

* 1 Cor. iii 11. † Acts iv. 12.

" fary, yet such a Dependence can never obstruct " our Salvation. It can never be charged upon Us, " as an Article of Contumacy or Perverseness, that " We thought *too meanly* of our own, *too magnifi-* " *cently* of our LORD's Obedience. So that let " the Die turn either Way, We are exposed to no " Hazard.—This Scheme takes in all, that the " other Systems comprehend, and abundantly more. " In this I find no Defect, no Flaw, no Shadow of " Insufficiency. It is somewhat like the *perfect Cube*; " which, where-ever it may be thrown, or however " it may fall, is sure to settle upon its Base.—Sup- " posing, therefore, the important Beam should hang " in Equilibrio, with respect to Argument; these " Circumstances, cast into the Scale, may very justly " be allowed to turn the Balance."

Upon a more attentive Examination of the Subject, I perceived—That this is the Doctrine of our *national* Church; is inforced by the Attestation of our ablest Divines; and has been, in all Ages, the Consolation of the most eminent Saints:—That it is the genuine Sense of Scripture; and not some inferior or subordinate Point, incidentally touched upon by the inspired Writers, but the *Sum* and *Substance* * of their heavenly

* This Doctrine runs through St. *Paul*'s Writings, like a golden *Warp*. While Privileges, Blessings, and evangelical Duties are like a *Woof* (if I may allude to the Ornaments of the Sanctuary) of Blue, of Purple, of Scarlet, and indeed of every pleasant Colour. *The Righteousness of GOD*, Rom. i. 17.—*The Righteousness from GOD*, Phil. iii. 10.—*Righteousness by Faith*, Rom. iii. 22.—*Righteousness of Faith*, Rom. iv. 11.—*Righteousness without the Law*, Rom iii. 21.—*Righteousness without Works*, Rom. iv. 6.—*Righteousness in the Blood of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 9. —*Righ-*

heavenly Meſſage; that which conſtitutes the Vitals of their Syſtem, and is the very Soul of their Religion. On which Account the whole Goſpel is denominated from it, and ſtyled *The Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs*:—I was farther convinced, That this Way of Salvation magnifies, beyond Compare, the divine Law; is no leſs honourable to all the divine Attributes; and exhibits the ever Bleſſed MEDIATOR in the moſt illuſtrious and the moſt delightful View:—All theſe Conſiderations, under the Influence of the eternal SPIRIT, have determined my *Judgment*, and eſtabliſhed my *Faith*. So that I truſt, neither the Subtilties of Wit, nor the Sneers of Ridicule, nor any other Artifice, ſhall ever be able to ſeparate me from the Grace and Righteouſneſs which are in *JESUS CHRIST*.

Let me now, by way of Concluſion, review that awful Subject, which introduced the Letter. Let me ſuppoſe the JUDGE, who *is at the Door*, actually come: the great and terrible Day, which is haſting forward*, really commenced.—Hark! The Trum-

—*Righteouſneſs by the Obedience of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 19. —*Righteouſneſs not our own*, Phil. iii. 9.—*Righteouſneſs imputed by GOD*, Rom. iv. 6, 10, 22.

* The ſacred Writers, I obſerve, often remind their Readers of this grand Event; often diſplay this *delightful, dreadful* Scene.—Their Manner of Speaking ſhews, that they themſelves lived under the habitual and joyful Expectation of it: as Perſons, who were *looking for, and haſting to, the Coming of the Day of GOD*.—They repreſent it, not only as *ſure*, but *near*; yea, very near, and upon the Point to take place. *The LORD is at Hand. The JUDGE is at the Door. Yet a little while, and HE that ſhall come, will come and will not tarry*.—The laſt Paſſage is the moſt ſpirited and emphatical of them all; but has loſt

Trumpet ſounds the univerſal Summons. The Living are ſtruck with a death-like Aſtoniſhment; the Dead ſtart from their ſilent Abodes.—See! The whole Earth takes Fire; the Sun is turned into Darkneſs; and the Stars fall from their Spheres.—Behold! The *LORD JESUS* comes, with Myriads of his Angels. The Judgment is ſet, and the Books are opened.

Obſerve thoſe exemplary *Chriſtians*, whoſe Sentiments I have been collecting. *They* renounce themſelves, and rely on their Glorious SURETY. Methinks, I hear them ſay, Each as they quit their Beds of Duſt; *I will go forth* from the Grave *in thy Strength*, O Bleſſed *JESUS*; *and*, at the deciſive Tribunal, *will make mention of thy Righteouſneſs only.*—At the ſame time, will You, *Theron*, or ſhall I, ſtand forth and declare—before the innumerable Multitude of anxious Sinners, and adoring Seraphs—"Let thoſe "puſillanimous Creatures fly for Refuge to their "SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs. We will confide "in Works, in Accompliſhments of our own. We "are the Men, who have *perſonally* kept the divine "Law, and want no *ſuppoſititious* Obedience from An-"other. Let the Eye that glances through Immen-"ſity, and penetrates the Receſſes of the Heart; let "that holy and omniſcient Eye, examine our Tem-"per, and ſift our Conduct. We are bold to riſk "our

loſt much of its Emphaſis, by the *Engliſh* Verſion. It is in the Original μικρον οσον οσον. A beautiful *Pleonaſm*; by which the *Septuagint*, though too often inaccurate in tranſlating the *prophetic* Text, have very happily expreſſed *Iſaiah*'s מעט רגע Which may, I think, be rendered in our Language, *yet a very, very little while.* Heb. x. 37. Iſa. xxvi. 20.

" our Souls, and all their immortal Intereſts, on the " Iſſue of ſuch a Scrutiny."

Perhaps, Your Mind is impreſſed with this *ſolemn Scene*, and your Thoughts recoil at ſuch *daring Preſumption*. If ſo, it will be proper for me to withdraw, and leave You to your own Meditations. At ſuch Moments to obtrude on Your Company, would render me the troubleſome and officious, rather than

The reſpectful and affectionate,

ASPASIO.

The END of the SECOND VOLUME.

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THERON and *ASPASIO*:

OR, A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES

AND

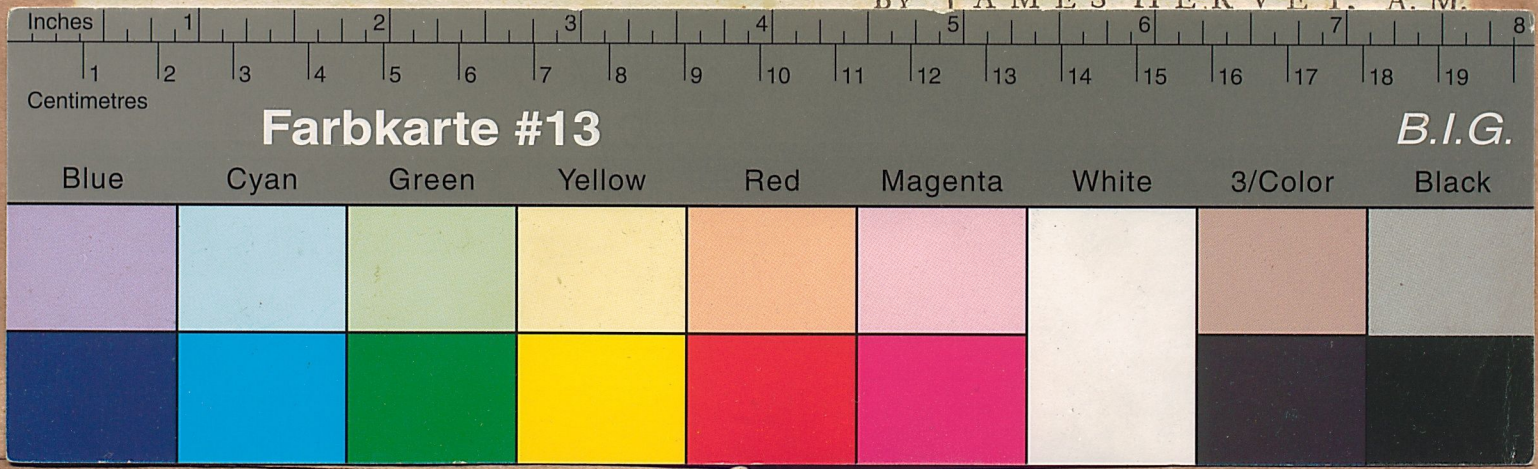
LETTERS,

UPON THE

Most *Important* and *Interesting* SUBJECTS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By JAMES HERVEY, A. M.



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