

*K. Groen (A. D. 1610)*  
THE

T R U T H

OF THE

Christian Religion.

IN SIX BOOKS.

By HUGO GROTIUS.

CORRECTED AND ILLUSTRATED WITH

NOTES BY MR. LE CLERC.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A SEVENTH BOOK, concerning this Question,

*What Christian Church we ought to join ourselves to?*

By the said Mr. LE CLERC.

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THE TENTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

Particularly one whole Book of MR. LE CLERC'S against  
*Indifference of what Religion a Man is of.*

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DONE INTO ENGLISH

By JOHN CLARKE, D. D. DEAN of SARUM.

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# B O O K IV.

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## S E C T. I.

*A particular Confutation of the Religions that differ from Christianity.*

**T**HE Fourth Book (beginning with that Pleasure Men for the most Part take at the Sight of other Men's Danger, when they themselves are placed out of the Reach of it;) shews, that the principal Aim of a Christian ought to be, not only a Satisfaction upon his having found out the Truth himself, but also an Endeavour to assist others, who wander in various crooked Paths of Error, and to make them Partakers of the same Happiness. And this we have in some Measure attempted to do in the foregoing Books, because the Demonstration of the Truth contains in it the Confutation of Error. But, however, since the particular Sorts of Religion, which are opposed to Christianity; as Paganism, Judaism, or Mahometanism, for Instance; besides that which is common to all, have some particular Errors, and some special Arguments, which they use to oppose us with; I think it may not be foreign to our present Purpose, to attempt a particular Examination of every one of them. In the mean Time, beseeching our Readers to free their Judgment from all Passion and Prejudice, which clog the Understanding; that they may the more impartially determine concerning what is to be said.

## S E C T. II.

*And first of Paganism. That there is but one God. That created Beings are either good or bad. That the good are not to be worshipped without the Command of the Supreme God.*

AND first against the Heathens, we say, if they suppose many Gods, eternal and equal, this is sufficiently confuted in the first Book; where we have shewn that there is but one God, the Cause of all Things. If by Gods, they mean created Beings superior to Man, these are either good or bad; if they say they are good, they ought in the first Place to be very well assured of this, (a) lest they fall into great Danger, by entertain-  
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(a) *Lest they fall into great Danger, &c.*] 2 Cor. xii. 14. Porphyry in his Second Book about abstaining from eating Animals, says, that "By those who are opposite (to the Gods,) all Witchcraft is performed; for both these and their Chief are worshipped by all such as work Evil upon Men's Fancies, by Enchantments; for they have a Power to deceive, by working strange Things: By them evil Spirits prepare Philtres and Love Potions: All Incontinence, and Love of Riches and Honour, and especially Deceit, proceed from them; for it is natural for them to lye: they are willing to be thought Gods; and the highest of them in Power, to be esteemed God." And afterwards concerning the Egyptian Priests: "These put it past all Dispute, that there are a kind of Beings, who give themselves up to deceive; of various Shapes and Sorts; Dissemblers, sometimes assuming the Form of Gods or Demons, or of Souls of dead Men; and by this Means they can effect any seeming Good or Evil; but as to Things really good in themselves, such as those belonging to the Soul; of producing these, they have no Power, neither have they any Knowledge of them; but they abuse their Leisure, mock others, and hinder those who walk in the Way of Virtue; they are filled with Pride, and delight in Perfumes and Sacrifice." And Arnobius, Book IV. against the Gentiles; "Thus the Magicians, Brethren to the Soothsayers in their Actions, mention certain Beings, opposite

ing Enemies instead of Friends; Deserters instead of Ambassadors. And Reason also requires, that there should be some manifest Difference in the Worship, betwixt the Supreme God, and these Beings: And further, we ought to know of what Rank these Beings are, what Benefit we may expect from any of them, and what Honour the Supreme King would have us pay to them. All which Things being wanting in their Religion, it sufficiently appears from thence, that there is nothing of Certainty in it; and it would be much safer for them to betake themselves to the Worship of the one Supreme God; (a) which even *Plato* owned to be the Duty of a wise Man; because as good Beings are the Ministers of the Supreme God, (b) they cannot but be assisting to such as are in Favour with him.

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### S E C T. III.

*A Proof that evil Spirits were worshipped by the Heathen, and the Unfitness of it shewn.*

BUT that the Spirits to which the Heathen paid their Worship, were evil, and not good, appears from many substantial Arguments. First,

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because

“ to God, who often impose upon Men for true Gods. And  
 “ these are certain Spirits of grosser Matter, who feign  
 “ themselves to be Gods.” Not to transcribe too much, we find something to the same Purpose in *Jamblichus*, concerning the *Egyptian* Mysteries, Book III. Chap. 33. and Book IV. Chap. 17.

(a) *Which even Plato owned, &c.*] “ *Jupiter* is worshipped by us, and other Gods by others.” The Words are quoted by *Origen*, in his Eighth Book against *Celsus*.

(b) *They cannot but be assisting, &c.*] This is very well prosecuted by *Arnobius*, Book III.

(a) because they did not direct their Worshippers to the Worship of the Supreme God; but did as much as they could to suppress such Worship, or at least, were willing in every Thing to be equalled with the Supreme God in Worship. Secondly, because they were the Cause of the greatest Mischiefs coming upon the Worshippers of the one Supreme God, provoking the Magistrates and the People, to inflict Punishments upon them: For though they allowed their Poets the Liberty to celebrate the Murders and Adulteries of their Gods; and the *Epicureans*, to banish the Divine Providence out of the World; nor was there any other Religion so disagreeable in its Rites, but they admitted it into their Society, as the *Egyptian, Phrygian, Greek, and Tuscan* Rites at Rome; (b) yet the *Jews* were every where ridiculed, as appears from their Satires and Epigrams, (c) and were sometimes banished, (d) and the Christians had moreover the most cruel Punishments inflicted upon them: For which there can be no other Reason assigned, but because these two Sects worshipped one God, whose Honour the Gods they established opposed, being more jealous of him than of one another. Thirdly, from the Manner of their Worship, such

(a) *Because they did not direct, &c.]* This is very well treated of by *Augustin*, Book X. Chap. 14, 16, 19, of his *City of God*.

(b) *Yet the Jews were every where ridiculed, &c.]* “As being cropt, circumcised, Sabbath-keepers, Worshippers of the Clouds and Heavens, merciful to Swine.”

(c) *And were sometimes banished, &c.]* *Josephus*, XVIII. 5. *Tacitus*, Annal. II. *Seneca*, Epist. XIX. *Acts*, xviii. 1. *Suetonius* in *Tiberius*, Chap. 26.

(d) *And the Christians had moreover, &c.]* *Tacitus* Annal. XV. to which that of *Juvena!* relates.

——— You like a Torch shall burn,  
As they who flaming stand, stifled with Smoke,  
And with their Body's Print have marked the Ground.



such as is unworthy of a good and virtuous Mind; (a) by human Blood, (b) by Men's running naked about their Temples, (c) by Games and Dancings, filled with Uncleaness; such are now to be seen amongst the People of *America* and *Africa*, who are overwhelmed in the Darkness of Heathenism. Nay, more than this; there were of old, and still are, People who worship evil Spirits, which they know and own to be such; (d) as the *Arimanes* of the *Persians*, the *Cacodæmons* of the *Greeks*, (e) and the *Vejoves* of the *Latins*; and some of the *Ethiopi-ans* and *Indians* now have others; than which, nothing can be imagined more impious. For what else is religious Worship, but a Testimony of the exceeding Goodness which you acknowledge to be in him whom you worship; which, if it be paid to an evil Spirit, is false and counterfeit, and comprehends in it the Sin of Rebellion; because the Honour due to the King, is not only taken from him, but transferred to a Deserter and his Enemy. And it is a foolish Opinion, to imagine that a good God will not revenge this, because that is not agreeable to his Goodness; (f) for

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Clemency,

(a) *By human Blood, &c.*] See what was said of this, Book II.

(b) *By Men's running naked about, &c.*] As in their Rites dedicated to *Pan*. see *Livy*, Book I. *Plutarch* in *Antoninus*, and others.

(c) *By Games and Dancings, &c.*] As in the Rites of *Flora*, See *Ovid's Fasti*, Book IV. and *Tatian*, and *Origen*, in his Eighth against *Celsus*.

(d) *As the Arimanes of the Persians, &c.*] See *Plutarch's Isis* and *Osiris*, and *Diogenes Laërtius* in his Preface. See also *Thomas Stanley*, of the Philosophy of the *Persians*: and our Observations upon the Word *Arimanes* in the Index. *Le Clerc*,

(e) *And the Vejoves of the Latins, &c.*] *Cicero*, Book III. of the *Nature of the Gods*.

(f) *For Clemency if it be reasonable, &c.*] "How can you love, unless you be afraid not to love?" *Tertullian* first against *Marcion*.

Clemency, if it be reasonable, hath its proper bounds; and where the Crimes are very great, Justice itself foresees Punishment, as it were, necessary. Nor are they less blameable, who say, that they are driven by Fear to pay Obedience to evil Spirits; for He who is infinitely good, is also in the highest Degree ready to communicate; and therefore all other Beings were produced by him. And if it be so, it will follow that he hath an absolute Right over all Creatures, as his own Workmanship; so that nothing can be done by any of them, if He desires to hinder it: Which being granted, we may easily collect that evil Spirits cannot hurt him who is in Favour with the Most High God, who is infinitely good; any further, than that God suffers it to be done for the Sake of some Good. Nor can any Thing be obtained of evil Spirits, but what ought to be refused; (*a*) because a bad Being, when he counterfeits one that is good, is then worst; and (*b*) the Gifts of Enemies are only Snares.

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#### S E C T. IV.

*Against the Heathen Worship paid to departed Men.*

THERE have been, and now are, Heathens, who say that they pay Worship to the Souls of Men departed this Life. But here in the first Place, this Worship is also to be distinguished by manifest Tokens, from the Worship of the Supreme God. Besides, our Prayers to them are to no Purpose, if those Souls cannot assist us in any Thing; and

(*a*) *Because a bad Being, &c.*] See the Verses of *Syrus* the Mimick.

(*b*) *The Gifts of Enemies are only Snares, &c.*] *Sophocles*,  
*Enemies Gifts are no Gifts. no Advantage.*

and their Worshipers are not assured of this, nor is there any more reason to affirm that they can, than that they cannot: And what is worst of all, is, that those Men who are thus had in Honour, are found to have been Men remarkable for very great Vices. A drunken *Bacchus*, an effeminate *Hercules*, a *Romulus*, unnatural to his Brother, and a *Jupiter*, as unnatural to his Father. So that their Honour is a Reproach to the true God, and that Goodness, which is well-pleasing to him; (a) because it adds a Commendation from Religion, to those Vices, which are sufficiently flattering of themselves.

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## S E C T. V.

*Against the Worship given to the Stars and Elements.*

(b) MORE ancient than this was the Worship of the Stars, and what we call the Elements, Fire, Water, Air, and Earth; which was indeed a very great Error. For Prayers are a principal Part of religious Worship, which, to put up to any but Beings that have Understanding is very foolish; and that what we call the Elements are not such,  
is,

(a) *Because it adds a Commendation, &c.*] See an Example hereof in *Terence's Eunuch*, Act III. Scene V. *Cyprian*. Epist. II. "They imitate those Gods they worship; the Religion of those wretched Creatures is made up of Sin." *Augustine*, Epist. CLII. Nothing renders Men so unsociable, by Perverseness of Life, as the Imitation of those whom they commend and describe in their Writings." *Chalcidius* in *Timæus*; "So it comes to pass, that instead of that Gratitude that is due to Divine Providence from Men, for their Original and Birth, they return Sacrilege." See the whole Place.

(b) *More ancient than this, &c.*] There are Reasons to persuade us that Idolatry began with the Worship of Angels and the Souls of Men, as you may see in the Index to the *Oriental Philosophy*, at the Word *Idolatria*. *Le Clerc*.



is evident in a good Measure from Experience. If any one affirms otherwise of the Stars, he has no Proof of it, because no such Thing can be gathered from their Operations, which are the only Signs to judge of Beings by. But the contrary may be sufficiently collected from the Motion of them, which is not various like that of Creatures endued with Freedom of Will, (a) but certain and determinate. We have elsewhere shewn, that the Course of the Stars is adapted to the Use of Man; whence Man ought to acknowledge, that he, in his better Part, bears a nearer resemblance to God, and is clearer to him; and therefore ought not to derogate so much from his own high birth, as to place himself below those things which God has given him; and he ought to give God Thanks for them, which is more than they can do for themselves, or at least more than we are assured of.

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## S E C T. VI.

*Against the Worship given to Brute Creatures.*

BUT that which is of all Things most abominable, is that some Men, particularly the *Egyptians*, (b) fell into the Worship even of Beasts. For, though in some of them there do appear, as it were, some Shadow of Understanding, yet it is nothing compared with Man; for they cannot express their inward Conceptions, either by distinct Words or Writings;

(a) *But certain and determinate, &c.]* By which Argument a certain King of *Peru* was persuaded to deny that the Sun could be a God. See the History of the *Incas*.

(b) *Fell into the Worship even of Beasts, &c.]* Concerning whom, *Philo*, in his Embassy, says, “They esteem Dogs, Wolves, Lions, Crocodiles, and many other wild Creatures in the Water and on the Land, and Birds, as Gods.” To which may be added, a long Discourse of this Matter, in the First Book of *Diodorus Siculus*.

Writings; nor do they perform Actions of different Kinds, nor those of the same Kind, in a different Manner; and much less can they attain to the Knowledge of Numbers, Magnitude, and of the Cœlestial Motions. But on the other Hand, (a) Man, by his Cunning and Subtilty, can catch the strongest Creatures, wild Beasts, Birds, or Fishes; and can in some Measure bring them under Rules, as Elephants, Lions, Horses, and Oxen; he can draw Advantage to himself, out of those that are most hurtful, as Physick from Vipers; and this Use may be made of them all, which themselves are

(a) *Man by his Cunning and Subtilty, &c.] Euripides in Æolus,  
Man has but little Strength,  
Yet can, by various Arts,  
Tame the wildest Creatures  
In Sea, or Earth, or Air.*

And Antiphon:

*They us in Strength, we them in Art, exceed.*

Which affords us no bad Explication of *Genesis* i. 26. and *Psalms* viii. 8. He, that desires a large Discourse of this Matter, may look into *Oppianus*, in the Beginning of his Fifth Book of Fishing, and *Basil's* Tenth Homily on the Six Days of Creation. *Origen*, in his Fourth Book against *Celsus*, has these Words: "And hence you may learn, for how great a Help  
" our Understanding was given us, and how far it exceeds all  
" the Weapons of wild Beasts; for our Bodies are much  
" weaker than those of other Creatures, and vastly less than  
" some of them; yet by our Understanding, we bring wild  
" Beasts under our Power, and hunt huge Elephants; and  
" those whose Nature is such, that they may be tamed, we  
" make subject to us; and those that are of a different Na-  
" ture, or the taming of which seems to be of no Use to us,  
" we manage these wild Beasts with such Safety, that as we  
" will, we keep them shut up, or, if we want their Flesh  
" for Meat, we kill them as we do other Creatures that are  
" not wild. Whence it appears that the Creator made all  
" living Creatures subject to him, who is endued with Rea-  
" son, and a Nature capable of understanding him." *Claudianus Neapolitanus*, in *Porphyry's* First Book against eating living Creatures, speaks thus concerning Man: "He is Lord over all Creatures void of Reason, as God is over Man."

are ignorant of, that by viewing the Structure and Situation of the Parts of their Bodies, and comparing together their several Species and Kinds, he learns his own Excellency, and how much more perfect and noble the Frame of the human Body is, than others; which, if rightly considered, is so far from inclining him to worship other Creatures, that he should rather think himself appointed their God in a Manner, under the Supreme God.

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S E C T. VII.

*Against the Worship given to those Things which have no real Existence.*

WE read, that the *Greeks* and *Latins*, and others likewise, worshipped Things which had no real Existence, but were only the Accidents of other Things. For, not to mention those outrageous Things. (a) Fever, Impudence, and such like; Health is nothing else but a just Temperature of the Parts of the Body; and good Fortune a Correspondence of Events with the Wishes of Men: And the Affections, such as Love, Fear, Anger, Hope, and the like, arising from the Consideration of the Goodness or Badness, the Easiness or Difficulty of a Thing, are certain Motions, in that Part of the Mind, which is most closely connected with the Body, by Means of the Blood; and they have no Power of their own, but are subject to the Command of the Will, which is Mistress of them, at least as far as respects their Continuance and Direction. So likewise the Virtues, which have different Names. Prudence, which consists in the Choice of what is advantageous: Fortitude, in undergoing Dangers; Justice, in abstaining from what

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(a) *Fever, Impudence, and such like, &c.*] See *Tully's* Third Book of the Laws.

is not our own; Temperance, in moderating Pleasure, and the like: There is also a certain Disposition or Inclination towards that which is right, which grows upon the Mind by long Exercise; which, as it may be increased, so it may be diminished by Neglect, nay, it may entirely be destroyed in a Man. (a) And Honour, to which we read of Temples being dedicated, is only the Judgment of one concerning another, as endued with Virtue; which often happens to the Bad, and not to the Good, through the natural Aptness of Mankind to mistake. (b) Since therefore these Things have no real Existence, and cannot be compared in Excellence with those that have a real Existence; nor have any Knowledge of our Prayers or Veneration of them; it is most disagreeable to  
right

(a) *And Honour, to which we read, &c.] Tully in the fore-mentioned Place; and Livy, Book XXVII.*

(b) *Since therefore these Things have no real Existence, &c.] Perhaps some may explain this Worship of the Heathens in this Manner; as to say, that it was not so much the Things, which were commonly signified by those Words, that they worshipped, as a certain Divine Power, from which they flowed, or certain Ideas in the Divine Understanding. Thus they may be said to worship a *Fever*, not the Disease itself, which is seated in the human Body; but that Power, which is in God, of sending or abating a Fever; to worship *Impudence*, not that Vice which is seated in the Minds of Men; but the Will of God, which sometimes allows Men's *Impudence* to go on, which he can restrain and punish: And the same may be said of the rest, as Love, Fear, Anger, Hope, which are *Passions* which God can either excite or restrain: or of *Virtues*, which are perfect in the Divine Nature, and of which we see only some faint Resemblances in Men, arising from the Ideas of those Virtues which are most complete in God. And of *Honour*, which does not consist so much in the Esteem of Men, as in the Will of God, who would have Virtue honourable amongst Men. But the Heathens themselves never interpreted this Matter thus; and it is absurd to worship the Attributes and Ideas of God, as real Persons, under obscure Names, such as may deceive the common People. It is much more sincere and honest to worship the Deity himself without any Perplexities. *Le Clerc.**



190      OF THE TRUTH OF THE      Book IV.  
right Reason to worship them as God ; and He is  
rather to be worshipped upon their Account, who  
can give us them, and preserve them for us.

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S E C T. VIII.

*An Answer to the Objection of the Heathens, taken  
from the Miracles done amongst them.*

THE Heathens used to recommend their Religion by Miracles ; but they were such as were liable to many Exceptions. For the wisest Men amongst the Heathens themselves, rejected many of them, (*a*) as not supported by the Testimony of sufficient Witnesses, (*b*) but plainly counterfeit : And those that seem to have been done, came to pass in some secret Place, in the Night, before one or two Persons, whose Eyes might easily be deceived with a false Appearance of Things, by the Cunning of the Priests. There were some, which only caused the People, who did not understand the Nature of Things, especially their occult Qualities, to wonder at them ; much in the same Manner, as if any one should draw Iron with a Loadstone, before People, who knew nothing of it ; and it is  
related

(*a*) *As not supported by the Testimony, &c.*] So *Livy*, in the Beginning ; “ I do not design either to affirm or deny those  
“ Things related before, or upon the Building of the City ;  
“ as fitter for Poetick Fables, than the sincere Memorials of  
“ Affairs that were transacted : Thus much must be allowed  
“ Antiquity, that by mixing human Things with divine, the  
“ Original of Cities was rendered the more venerable.”

(*b*) *But plainly counterfeit, &c.*] It were much better to acquiesce in this Answer, than to allow of their Miracles, or that such Things were done, as Men could not commonly distinguish from Miracles ; such as Oracles, Wonders, curing of Diseases, which if they were done, could scarce be distinguished from true Miracles, at least by the common People. See what I have said upon this Matter in the *Prolegomena to my Ecclesiastical History*. Sect. II. Chap. 1. *Le Clerc*.

related by many, (a) that these were the Arts in which *Simon* and *Apollonius Tyanæus* were so skilful. I do not deny, but that some greater than these were seen, which could not be the Effect of natural Causes, by human Power alone; but they were such as did not require a Power truly Divine, that is, Omnipotent; for these Spirits, who were inferior to God, and superior to Man, were sufficient for these Things; because by their Swiftneſs, Strength, and Cunning, they could eaſily remove diſtant Things, and ſo to compound different Sorts of Things, as to produce Effects which ſhould be very ſurprizing to Men. But the Spirits by whom this was effected, were not good, and conſequently neither was their Religion good; as is evident from what was ſaid before, and from this Conſideration alſo, becauſe they ſaid that they were compelled (b) by certain Inchant-

(a) *That theſe were the Arts, &c.] Tatian.* “ There are  
 “ certain Diſeaſes and Contrarieties of the Matter of which  
 “ we are compounded; when theſe happen, the *Dæmons*  
 “ aſcribe the Cauſes of them to themſelves.”

(b) *By certain Inchantments, &c.] Thus the Oracle of  
 Hecate in Porphyry.*

*I come, invol'd by well-consulted Prayer,  
 Such as the Gods have to Mankind reveal'd.*

And again,

*Why have you call'd the Goddess Hecate  
 From Heaven; and forc'd her by a Charm Divine;*

And that of *Apollo* in the ſame Writer,

*Hear me, for I am forc'd to ſpeak againſt my Will,*

Theſe are the Rites of their ſecret Arts, by which they address themſelves to I know not what Powers, as *Arnobius* expreſſes it, as if they compelled them by Charms to be their Servants; ſo *Clement* explains it. There is a Form of their Threats in *Jamblichus*, Book V. Chap. 5, 6, 7. of his *Egyptian Myſteries*. The ſame we meet with in *Lucan*, Book IX. in the Words of *Pompey* the Leſs, and in *Eusebius*, out of *Porphyry*, Book V. Chap. 10, of his *Gospel Preparat.* Other  
 Forms

192      OF THE TRUTH OF THE      Book IV.  
 Inchantments against their Will: And yet the wisest Heathens agree, that there could not possibly be any such Force in Words; but that they could only persuade, and this according to the Manner of their Interpretation. And a further Sign of their Wickedness is, that they would undertake many Times (*a*) to entice some to the Love of others, notwithstanding their own Endeavours against it, either by false Promises, or by doing them some hurt; (*b*) which Things were forbidden by human Laws, as Witchcraft. Neither ought any one to wonder that the Supreme God should suffer some Miracles to be done by evil Spirits; because they who were already fallen from the Worship of the true God, (*c*) deserved to be deluded by such Deceits. But this is an Argument of their Weakness, that their Works were not attended with any remarkable Good; for if any seemed to be called to life again, they did not continue long in it, nor exercise the Functions of living Persons. If at any Time, any Thing proceeding from a Divine Power, appeared in the Sight of the Heathen; yet it was not foretold that it would come to pass, in order to prove the Truth of their Religion; so that nothing

Forms of Threatenings you have in *Lucan*, where he speaks of *Erichthon*, and in *Papinius* about *Tiresias*.

(*a*) *To entice some to the Love of others, &c.*] See the *Pharmaceutria* of *Theocritus* and *Virgil*, and the Confession of *Porphyry* in *Eusebius*, Book V. Chap. 17. of his *Preparat*, and *Augustine*, Book X, Chap. 11. of his *City of God*. And the same *Porphyry* against eating living Creatures, Book II. and *Origen* against *Celsus*, Book VII.

(*b*) *Which Things were forbidden by human Laws, &c.*] *L. Ejusdem*, Sect. *Adjectio D. ad Legem Corneliam de Sicasus & Veneficis*, *L. si quis scēt. qui abortionis. D. de pœnis. Paulus Sententiarum*, Lib. V. Tit. XXIII.

(*c*) *Deserved to be deluded by such Deceits, &c.*] *Deut.* xiii. 3. *2 Thess.* ii. 9. 10. *Ephes.* ii. 2, 3.

thing hinders, but the Divine Power might propose to itself some other End, widely different from this. For Instance; suppose it true, that a blind Man was restored to his Sight by *Vespasian*; it might be done, (a) to render him more venerable upon this Account; and that he might thereby the more easily obtain the *Roman Empire*; and was therefore chosen by God, to be the Executioner of his Judgments upon the *Jews*; and other like Reasons there might be for other Wonders, (b) which had no Relation at all to Religion.

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## S E C T. IX.

*And from Oracles.*

AND almost all the same Things may be applied, to solve that which they alledge concerning Oracles; especially what was before said, that such Men deserved to be imposed upon, who despised that Knowledge, which Reason and antient Tradition suggested to every Man. Moreover, the

(a) *To render him more venerable, &c.*] *Tacitus*, Hist. IV. "Many Miracles were done, whereby the Favour of Heaven, and the good Disposition of the Gods towards *Vespasian*, appeared." He had said before in Hist. I. "We believe that after previous good Luck, the Empire was decreed to *Vespasian* and his Children, by the Secret Law of Fate, and by Wonders and Oracles." *Suetonius* ushers in his Relation of the same Miracles thus, Chap. 7, "There was a certain Authority and Majesty wanting, viz. in a new and unthought-of Prince; to which this was added." See the same *Suetonius* a little before, Chap. V. *Josephus* says of the same *Vespasian*, Book III. Chap. 27. of the *Wars of the Jews*, "That God raised him up to the Government, and foretold him of the Scepter by other Signs."

(b) *Which has no Relation, &c.*] But see the Examination of Miracles, feigned to be done in Favour of *Vespasian* and *Adrian*, in my *Ecclesiastical History*, Century II. 138th Year. *Le Clerc*,



194 OF THE TRUTH OF THE Book IV,  
 the Words of the Oracles (*a*) were for the most  
 Part ambiguous, and such as might be interpreted  
 of the Event, be it what it would. And if any Thing  
 was more particularly foretold by them, there is  
 no Necessity of its proceeding from an Omniscient  
 Being; because either they were such as might be  
 perceived beforehand, from natural Causes then  
 appearing, (*b*) as some Physicians foretell future  
 Diseases; or they might with Probability be con-  
 jectured, from what we usually see come to pass;  
 which we read was often done (*c*) by those who  
 were

(*a*) *Were for the most Part ambiguous, &c.*] See the Places  
 of *Oenomaus*, concerning this Subject, in *Eusebius*, Book IV.  
 Chap. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26. Hence *Apollo* was by the  
*Greeks* called *Ἀέξω*, *Ambiguous*. *Cicero*, in his Second Book of  
 Divination, says, the Oracles of *Apollo* were ambiguous and  
 obscure. “Whichsoever of them came to pass, (says he,) the  
 “Oracle was true.” (Perhaps many of the Oracles were coun-  
 terfeited after the Event: And there are many Reasons to sus-  
 pect, that Abundance of Frauds were used by Diviners; con-  
 cerning which, *D. de Fontenelle* has written an excellent Book in  
*French* which I refer you to, and what is said in Defence of  
 it, Vol. XIII. of the *Choice Library*; and what *Antony Van*  
*Dale* has written of this Matter above all others, in his Book of  
 Oracles.)

(*b*) *As some Physicians foretel future Diseases, &c.*] *Chalcidius*  
 on *Timæus*. “Men are forewarned, either by the flying of  
 “Birds, or by Entrails, or by Oracles, some propitious *Dæ-*  
 “mons foretelling, who knew all Things that will afterwards  
 “come to pass; just as a Physician, according to the Rules of  
 “Physick, declares either Death or Health, and as *Anaxi-*  
 “mander and *Pherciades* did an Earthquake.” *Pliny*, Book II.  
 Chap. 79.

(*c*) *By those who were skilful in civil Matters, &c.*] See the  
 Writers of the Life of *Atticus*. “A plain Evidence of this  
 “Thing, besides those Books wherein he (*Cicero*) mentions it  
 “expressly, (which are published among the common People,)  
 “are sixteen Volumes of Epistles sent to *Atticus*, from his Con-  
 “sulship to the End of his Days; which whoever reads, will  
 “not think that he wants a complete and regular History of  
 “those Times; there is such a full Description of the Inclina-  
 “tion of Princes, of the Vices of great Men, and the Alter-  
 “rations

were skilful in civil Matters. And if at any Time, God made Use of any of those Works, done by the Diviners among the Heathen, to foretel such Things as could have no other real Foundation but the Will of God; it did not tend to confirm the Heathen Religion, but rather to overthrow it; such as those Things we find (a) in *Virgil's* Fourth Eclogue, taken out of the *Sibilline* Verses; (b) in which, though unknown to himself, he describes

“ rations in the Republick, that there is nothing which is not  
 “ laid open; so that one would easily be led to think Prudence  
 “ to be a Kind of Divination. For *Cicero* did not only foretel  
 “ future Things, that would happen in his own Life-time, but  
 “ like a Diviner, declared those also that came to pass lately.”  
*Cicero* affirms truly of himself, in his Sixth Epistle of his Sixteenth Book: “ In that War, nothing happened ill, which I did  
 “ not foretell. Wherefore, since I who am a publick Augur,  
 “ like other Augurs and Astrologers, by my former Predictions,  
 “ have confirmed you in the Authority of Augury and Divi-  
 “ nation, you ought to believe what I foretell. I do not make  
 “ my Conjecture from the flying of Birds, nor from the  
 “ Manner of their chirping, as our Art teaches us, nor from  
 “ the rebounding of the Corn that falls from the Chickens  
 “ Mouths, nor from Dreams; but I have other Signs, which  
 “ I observe.” Thus *Solon* foretold that great Calamities would  
 come upon *Athens*, from *Munichia*. And *Thales*, that the Forum  
 of the *Milesi* would one Time be in a Place then despised.  
*Plutarch* in *Solon*.

(a) In *Virgil's* fourth Eclogue, &c.] See *Augustine's* City of God, Book X. Chap. 27.

(b) In which, though unknown, &c.] It is now sufficiently evident, that all the Prophecies of the *Sybils* are either doubtful or forged; wherefore I would not have *Virgil*; an Interpreter of the *Sibyl*, be thought to have declared a Kind of Prophecy, without any Design; like *Caiphas*, who was ignorant of what he prophesied: I know not what *Sibyl*, or rather Person, under the Disguise of such a one, predicted, that the Golden Age was a coming; from the Opinion of those who thought that there would be a Renovation of all Things, and that the same Things would come to pass again. See what *Grotius* has said of this Matter, Book II. Sect 10. and the Notes upon that Place. Wherefore in this, the *Sibyl* was not a Prophetess, nor did *Virgil* write thence any Prophecies

describes the Coming of Christ, and the Benefits we should receive from him: Thus in the same *Sibyls*, that (a) he was to be acknowledged as King, who was to be truly our King; (b) who was to rise out of the East, and be Lord of all Things. (c) The Oracle of *Apollo* is to be seen (d) in *Porphyry*; in which he says

of Christ: See *Servius* upon the Place, and *Isaac Vossius's* Interpretation of that Eclogue. *Le Clerc*.

(a) He was to be acknowledged as King, &c.] *Cicero* mentions him in his Second Book of *Divination*.

(b) Who was to rise out of the East, &c.] *Suetonius* of *Vespasian*, Chap. 4. *Tacitus*, Hist. 4.

(c) The Oracle of *Apollo*, &c.] See *Augustine* of the *City of God*, Book XX. Chap. 23. and *Eusebius's* *Preparat.* Book IV. Chap. 4. And the same *Porphyry*, in his Book of the *Oracles*, says, "The God (*Apollo*) testifies that the *Egyptians*, *Chaldeans*, *Phœnicians*, *Lydians*, and *Hebrews*, are they who "have found out the Truth." He that wrote the Exhortation to the *Greeks*, amongst the Works of *Justin*, quotes this Oracle:

*The Hebrews only and Chaldees are wise,  
Who truly worship God the eternal King.*

And this,

*Who the first Mortal form'd, and call'd him Adam.*

There are two Oracles of *Cato's* concerning *Jesus*, which *Eusebius*, in his *Gospel Demonstration* transcribed out of *Porphyry*:

*Souls of their Bodies stript, immortal are,  
This wise Men know; and that which is endued  
With greatest Piety, excels the rest:  
The Souls of pious Men to Heaven ascend,  
Though various Torments do their Bodies vex.*

The same are mentioned by *Augustine*, Book XXIX. Chap. 23. of his *City of God*, out of the same *Porphyry*; where he brings another Oracle, in which *Apollo* said, that the Father whom the pious *Hebrews* worshipped, was a Law to all the Gods.

(d) In *Porphyry*, &c.] This is justly enough said upon *Porphyry*, and those who are of the same Opinion with him, concerning

says, the other Gods were aërial Spirits, and that the one God of the *Hebrews* was to be worshipped: Which Words, if the Worshippers of *Apollo* obeyed, they ceased to be his Worshippers; if they did not obey him, they accused their God of a Lye. To which may be added, that if these Spirits would, in their Oracles, have consulted the Good of Mankind; they would, above all Things, have proposed to them a general Rule of Life, and assured them of a Reward, which they who so lived might expect; but they did neither of them. On the contrary, (a) they many Times in their Verses applauded Kings, though never so wicked; (b) decreed Divine Honours to Champions, (c) enticed Men to unlawful Embraces, (d) to pursue unjust Gain, (e) and to commit Murder; which may be evidenced by many Instances.

concerning those Oracles, and may be brought as an Argument *ad Hominem*, as Logicians call it; but since it does appear, that these Oracles were not feigned; nay, there are very good Reasons to think they were fictitious, they ought to be of no Weight amongst Christians. *Le Clerc.*

(a) *They many Times in their Verses, &c.]* See those alledged by *Oenomaus* in *Eusebius's Gospel Preparat.* Book V. Chap. 23. and 35.

(b) *Decreed Divine Honours to Champions, &c.]* See the same Author, Chap. 32. of *Cleomedes*; which we find also in *Origen's* Third Book against *Celsus*.

(c) *Enticed Men to unlawful Embraces, &c.]* This was shewn before.

(d) *To pursue unjust Gain, &c.]* See *Eusebius's Gospel Preparat.* Book V. Chap. 22.

(e) *And to commit Murder, &c.]* *Oenomaus* recites Oracles of this Kind, which you may find in the forementioned Book of *Eusebius*, Chap. 19. and 27.



## S E C T. X.

*The Heathen Religion rejected, because it failed of its own Accord, as soon as human Assistance was wanting.*

BESIDES those Things already alledged, the Heathen Religion affords us a very strong Argument against itself, in that wheresoever human Force was wanting, it immediately fell, as if its only Support were then taken away. For, if you turn your Eyes towards all the Christian or Mahometan Empires, you will find Heathenism no where mentioned but in Looks: Nay, History informs us, that in those Times; when the Emperors made use of Force and Punishment, as the first Emperors did; or of Learning and Cunning, as *Julian* did, to support the Heathen Religion; even then, it continually decreased; no Force being made use of against it, no Greatness of Family (for it was commonly believed that Jesus was the Son of a Carpenter;) no Flourish of Words, no Bribes (for they were poor;) no Flattery, for they on the contrary despised all Advantages, and said there was no Adversity but they ought to undergo, upon Account of their Law. And now, how weak must the Heathen Religion be, to be overthrown by such weak Helps? Nor did the vain Credulity of the Heathens only vanish at this Doctrine, (a) but Spirits themselves came out of Men, at the Name of Christ; were silenced; and being asked the Reason of their Silence, (b) were forced to own, that they could do nothing when Christ was invoked.

(a) *But Spirits themselves came out of Men, &c.] Acts v. 16. viii. 7. xvi. 13.*

(b) *Were forced to own, &c.] Tertullian in his Apology. See also Lucan against false Diviners. Apoll. in Daphne. "This Place, Daphne, is filled with dead Bodies, which hinder the Oracles." Babylon and other Christian Martyrs died there. See Chryssom against the Gentiles.*

S E C T.

## S E C T. XI.

*An Answer to this, that the Rise and Decay of Religion is owing to the Stars.*

THERE were some Philosophers, who ascribed the Rise and Decay of all Religion to the Stars. But this starry Science, which they profess to know and understand, is delivered in such different Rules, (a) that there is nothing certain to be found in it, but this one Thing, that there is no Certainty in it. I do not speak of those Effects, which naturally follow from necessary Causes; (b) but of such as proceed from the Will of Man, which is in its own Nature so far free, as that no external Necessity can be laid upon it: For if the Act of Willing flowed from such a necessary Impression, (c) that Power, which we experience in the Soul, of deliberating and chusing, would be given us to no Purpose; (d) and the Justice of all Laws, and of Rewards and Punishments, would be entirely taken away; because there is neither Blame nor Desert due to

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that

(a) *That there is nothing certain to be found in it, &c.]* See the excellent Dissertation of *Bardefanus the Syrian*, concerning this Matter; which you may find in the *Philocalia* collected from *Origen*, and in *Eusebius's Preparat.* Book VI. Chap. 10.

(b) *But of such as proceed from the Will of Man, &c.]* See *Alexander Aphrodisiens's* Book concerning this Matter.

(c) *That Power which we experience, &c.]* See *Eusebius's Gospel Preparat.* Book VI. Chap. 6.

(d) *And the Justice of all Laws, &c.]* See *Justin's Apology* II. “If Mankind be not endued with a Power of chusing freely; to avoid that which is bad, and to comply with that which is good; the Cause of either of them cannot be said to be from himself.” See also what follows. And thus *Tatian*: “The Freedom of the Will consists in this; that a wicked Man is justly punished, because his Wickedness is from himself; and a good Man is rewarded, because he has not voluntarily transgressed the Will of God.” To this may be added *Chalcidius's* Disputation concerning this Matter in *Timæus*.

that which is plainly unavoidable. Further, since some Actions of the Will are evil: If they are caused by a certain Necessity of the Heavens, and because God has given such a Power to the Heavens and the heavenly Bodies: it will follow, that God, who is perfectly good, (*a*) is the true Cause of moral Evil; and at the same Time that he professes his utter Abhorrence of Wickedness in his positive Law, he has planted the efficient and inevitable Cause of it, in the Nature of Things; therefore he wills two Things contrary to each other, *viz.* that the same Thing should be, and not be; and that *that* should be a Sin, which is done by a Divine Impulse. (*b*) It is said by others, with a greater Shew of Probability, that first the Air, and afterwards our Bodies, are affected by the Influence of the Stars, and so imbibe certain Qualities, which for the most Part excite in the Soul Desires answerable to them; and that by these the Will is enticed, and oftentimes yields to them. But, if this be granted, it makes nothing to the Question in Hand. For the Religion of Christ could not possibly have its Rise from the Affections of the Body, nor consequently from the Power of the Stars; which, as was said, act upon the Mind no otherwise than by such Affections; because this Religion, in the highest Degree, draws Men off from those Things that delight the Body. The wisest

(*a*) *Is the true Cause of moral Evil, &c.*] Plato speaks against this, in his second Republic. “The Cause is from him that chuses, God is not the Cause.” Thus *Chalcidius* translates it in *Timæus*, which *Justin*, in the forementioned Place, says, agrees with *Moses*.

(*b*) *It is said by others with a greater shew of Probability, &c.*] But they speak most truly, who deny any such Influence at all; and acknowledge nothing else in the Stars but Heat and Light; to which we may add, their Weight resulting from their Bigness; but these have, properly speaking, no Relation to the Mind. *Le Clerc*.

wisest Astrologers do (a) except truly knowing and good Men from the Law of the Stars; and such were they who first proposed the Christian Religion as their Lives plainly shew: And if we allow a Power in Learning and Knowledge, to hinder their Bodies from being thus infected; there always were amongst Christians some, who might be commended upon this Account. Further, the Effects of the Stars, as the most learned confess, respect only particular Parts of the World, and are temporary: But this Religion has continued already for above sixteen hundred Years, not only in one, but in very distant Parts of the World, and such as are under very different Positions of the Stars.

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S E C T. XII.

*The principal Things of the Christian Religion were approved of by the wisest Heathens: And if there be any Thing in it is hard to be believed, the like is to be found amongst the Heathen.*

THERE is the less Reason for the Heathens to oppose the Christian Religion; because all the Parts of it are so agreeable to the Rules of Virtue, that by their own Light they do in a Manner convince the Mind; insomuch that there have not been wanting some amongst the Heathen, who have said these Things singly, which, in our Religion, are all put together. For Instance (b) that Religion

(a) *Except truly knowing and good Men, &c.] Thus Zoroaster: "Do not increase your Fate." And Ptolemæus: "A wise Man may avoid many Influences of the Stars."*

(b) *That Religion does not consist in Ceremonies, &c.] Menander: With a clear Mind do Sacrifice to God,  
Not so much neat in Cloaths, as pure in Heart.*

Cicero



*Cicero* in his Second Book of the *Nature of the Gods*: “ The  
“ best Worship of the Gods, which is also the most innocent,  
“ the most holy, and the most full of Piety; is to reverence  
“ them always with a pure, sincere, uncorrupted Mind and  
“ Expression.” And again in his Second Book of Laws: “ The  
“ Law commands us to approach the Gods sincerely; that is,  
“ with our Minds, which is all in all.” *Persius*, Sat. II.

*This let us offer to the Gods (which blar'd  
Messala's Offspring can't, with all their Cost)  
Justice and Right in all our secret Thoughts,  
An undissembled Virtue from the Breast.  
Bring these, and what you please, then sacrifice.*

These Verses seem to have Respect to the *Pythian Oracle*, which we find in *Porphyry's* Second Book against eating living Creatures; where any Thing offered by a pious Man, is preferred to Heecombs of another. In the same Book *Porphyry* has these Words to the like Purpose: “ Now they esteem him  
“ not fit to offer Sacrifice worthily, whose Body is not clothed  
“ with a white and clean Garment; but they do not think  
“ it any great Matter, if some go to Sacrifice, having their  
“ Bodies clean, and also their Garments, though their Minds  
“ be not void of Evil: As if God were not most delighted  
“ with the Purity of that which in us is most divine, and bears  
“ the nearest Resemblance to him. For it is written in the  
“ Temple of *Epidaurus*,

*Let all who come to offer at this Shrine  
Be pure; so we command.*

“ Now Purity consists in holy Thoughts.” And a little after:  
“ No mortal Thing ought to be offered or dedicated to God,  
“ who, as the Wise Man said, is above all: for every Thing  
“ material is impure to him who is immaterial; wherefore  
“ Words are not proper to express ourselves by to him,  
“ not even internal ones, if polluted by the Passions of  
“ the Mind. And again: “ For it is not reasonable that  
“ in those Temples which are dedicated to the Gods by  
“ Men, they should wear clean Shoes without any Spots;  
“ and in the Temple of the Father, that is, in this World,  
“ not keep their outer Clothes (which is the Body) neat,  
“ and converse with Purity in the Temple of their Father.”  
Neither can I omit what follows out of the same Book:  
“ Whoever is persuaded that the Gods have no Need  
“ of these (*Sacrifices*) but look only to the Manners of  
“ those

the Minds; (*a*) that he who has it in his Heart to commit Adultery, is an Adulterer; (*b*) that we ought

“ those who approach them, esteeming right Notions of them  
 “ and of Things, the best Sacrifices; how can such an one be  
 “ otherwise than Sober, Godly, and Righteous?” Where we  
 find these three known Words of *Paul*, *Tit.* ii. 2. *Soberly,*  
*Righteously, and Godly.* *Charondas*, in his Preface to the Laws:  
 “ Let your Mind be void of all Evil; for the Gods delight  
 “ not in the Sacrifices and Expences, of wicked Men, but in  
 “ the just and virtuous Actions of good Men. *Seneca*,  
 quoted by *Lactantius* in his Institutions, Book XI. Chap. 24.  
 “ Would you conceive God to be Great, Propitious, and to  
 “ be reverenced, as meek in Majesty, as a Friend, and always  
 “ at hand? You must not worship him with Sacrifices, and  
 “ Abundance of Blood, but with a pure Min<sup>d</sup>, and an upright  
 “ Intention.” To the same Sense is that of *Dion Prusæensis*,  
*Orat.* 3. *Thucydides*, Book I. “ There is no other Festival,  
 “ but a Man’s doing his Duty.” *Diogenes*: “ Does not a good  
 “ Man think every Day a Festival?”

(*a*) *That he who has it in his Heart, &c.*] Thus *Ovid*:

*He who forbears, only because forbid,*  
*Does sin; his Body’s free, his Mind is stain’d,*  
*Were he alone, he’d be an Adulterer.*

*Seneca* the Father: “ There is such a Thing as Incest, without  
 “ the Act of Whoredom; *viz.* The Desire of it.” And in  
 another Place: “ She is reckoned amongst Sinners, and not  
 “ without Reason, who is modest out of Fear, and not for  
 “ Virtue’s Sake.”

(*b*) *That we ought not to return an Injury, &c.*] See *Plato’s*  
*Criton*, and *Maximus Tyrius’s* Second Dissertation. *Menander*:

*O Gorgias, he’s the very best of Men,*  
*Who can forgive the greatest Injuries.*

*Ariston Spartianus*: “ To a certain Person who said that it  
 “ was a princely Thing to do Good to Friends, and Evil to  
 “ Enemies: “ Rather, answered he, to do Good to Friends,  
 “ and to make Enemies Friends.” And the same *Dion*, the  
 Deliverer of *Sicily*, in *Plutarch* says: that a true Demonstra-  
 tion of a philosophical Disposition consists not in any one’s  
 being kind to his Friend; but when he is injured, in being  
 easily intreated, and merciful towards those who have offended  
 him.

ought not to return an Injury; (*a*) that a Husband ought to have but one Wife; (*b*) that the Bands of Matrimony ought not to be dissolved; (*c*) that it is every Man's Duty to do Good to another, (*d*) especially to him that is in Want; (*e*) that, as much as possible, Men ought to abstain from Swearing;

(*a*) *That a Husband ought to have but one Wife, &c.*] See what is before quoted out of Sallust and others, about this Matter. Euripides in his *Andromache*:

————— *It is by no Means fit*  
*One Man should o'er two Women have the Rule;*  
*One nuptial Bed will a wise Man suffice,*  
*Who would have all Things regulated well.*

And more to the same Purpose, and in the Chorus of the same Tragedy.

(*b*) *That the Bands of Matrimony ought not to be dissolved, &c.*] So it was amongst the Romans till the five hundred and twentieth Year of the City, as Valerius Maximus informs us, Book III. Chap. 1. Anaxandrides to the same Purpose.

*'Tis shameful thus for Men to ebb and flow.*

(*c*) *That it is every Man's Duty to do Good to another, &c.*] Terence's *Self-Tormenter*.

*I am a Man, and think every Thing humane belongs to me.*

“We are by Nature related to each other,” says Florentinus the Lawyer, *L. ut vim. D. de justitia*. And this is the Meaning of the Proverb. “One Man is a Kind of a God to another.” Cicero, in his First Book of Offices, says, there is a mutual Society betwixt Men, all of them being related to one another.

(*d*) *Especially to him that is in Want, &c.*] Horace, Book II.

*Watch, why should any want, when you are rich?*

In *Mimus*:

*Mercy procures strong Security.*

(*e*) *That as much as possible, Men ought to abstain from Swearing, &c.*] Pythagoras: “We ought not to swear by the Gods, but endeavour to make ourselves believed without an Oath?” Which is largely explained by Hierocles, on his Golden Verses. Marcus Antoninus, Book III, in his Description

Swearing; (a) that in Meat and Clothes, they ought to be content with what is necessary to supply Nature. And if there be any Thing in the Christian Religion difficult to be believed, the like is to be found amongst the wisest of the Heathens, as we have before made appear, with respect to the Immortality of the Soul, and Bodies being restored to Life again. Thus *Plato*, taught by the *Chaldeans*, (b) distinguished the Divine Nature

scription of a good Man, says, "such an one needs no Oath."  
*Sophocles* in his *Oedipus Colonus* :

*I would not have you swear, because 'tis bad.*

*Clinius* the *Pythagorean* would sooner loose three Talents in a Cause, than affirm the Truth with an Oath. The Story is related by *Basilius* concerning reading *Greek* Authors.

(a) *That in Meat and Cloaths, &c.*] *Euripides* :

*There are but two Things which Mankind do want,  
A Crust of Bread, and Draught of Spring Water;  
Both of which are war, and justice for Life,*

And *Lucan* :

*There is enough of Bread and Drink for all.*

And *Aristides* :

*We want nothing but Cloaths, Houses, and Food.*

(b) *Distinguished the Divine Nature, &c.*] See *Plato's* Epistle to *Dionysius*. *Plato* calls the first Principle the Father, the second Principle, the Cause or Governor of all Things, in his Epistle to *Hermias*, *Erasmus*, and *Coriscus*. The same is called the *Mind* by *Plotinus*, in his Book of the three Principal Substances. *Numerius* calls it the Workman, and also the Son; And *Amelius* the *Word*, as you may see in *Eusebius*, Book XI, Chap. 17, 18, 19. See also *Cyril's*, Third, Fourth, and Eighth Books against *Julian*, *Chalcidius* on *Tiræus*, calls the first the Supreme God; the second, the Mind, or Providence; the third, the Soul of the World, or the Second Mind. In another Place he distinguishes these three thus: The Contriver, the Commander, and the Effector. He speaks thus of the second: "The Reason of God, is God consulting the Affairs of Men; which is the Cause of Men's living well and happily, if they do not neglect that  
" Gift



Nature into the Father; the Father's Mind, which he also calls a Branch of the Deity, the Maker of the World; and the Soul, which comprehends and contains all Things. That the Divine Nature could be joined with the Human, (a) *Julian*, that great Enemy to the Christians, believed, and gave an Example to *Æsculapius*, who he thought came from Heaven to deliver to Men the Art of Physick. Many are offended at the Cross of Christ; but what Stories are there, which the Heathen Authors do not tell of their Gods? Some were Servants to Kings, others were struck with Thunder-bolts, ripped up, wounded. And the wisest of them affirmed, that the more Virtue cost, the more delightful it was. (b) *Plato*,  
in

“ Gift which the Supreme God has bestowed on them. The  
 “ *Pythagoreans* assign to the Supreme God the Number Three,  
 “ as perfect,” says *Servius*, on the Seventh Eclogue. Not  
 much differing from which, is that of *Aristotle*, concerning the  
 same *Pythagoreans*, in the Beginning of his First Book of the  
 Heavens. (This is more largely handled by the very learned  
*R. Cudworth*, in his *English Work of the Intellectual System of  
 the World*, Book I. Chap. 4. which you will not repent con-  
 sulting.)

(a) *Julian, that great Enemy to the Christians, &c.]* Book  
 VI. “ Amongst those Things which have Understanding,  
 “ *Jupiter* produced *Æsculapius* from himself, and caused him  
 “ to appear upon Earth, by Means of the fruitful Life of the  
 “ Sun; he, taking his Journey from Heaven to Earth, ap-  
 “ peared in one Form in *Epidaurus*.” Thus *Porphyrus*, as *Cyril*  
 relates his Words in his forementioned Eighth Book: “ There  
 “ is a certain kind of Gods, which in proper Season are trans-  
 “ formed into Men.” What the *Egyptians*' Opinion of this  
 Matter was, see *Plutarch*, *Sympos.* VIII. *Quæst.* I. to which  
 may be added that Place of *Acts* xiv. 10.

(b) *Plato, in his Second Republic, &c.]* The Words are  
 these, translated from the *Greek*: “ He will be scourged,  
 “ tormented, bound, his Eyes burnt out, and die by Cruci-  
 “ fixation, after he has endured all those Evils.” Whence he  
 had that, which he relates in his Third Book of Republick:  
 “ That a good Man will be tormented, furiously treated,  
 “ have

in his second Republick, says, in a Manner propheticallly, that for a Man to appear truly good, it is necessary that his Virtue be deprived of all its Ornaments, so that he may be looked upon by others as a wicked Man, may be derided, and at last hanged: And certainly to be an Example of eminent Patience is no otherwise to be obtained.

“ have his Hands cut off, his Eyes plucked out, will be  
 “ bound, condemned, and burnt.” *Lactantius* in his *Institutions*, Book VI. Chap. 17. has preserved this Place of *Seneca*:  
 “ This is that virtuous Man, who though his Body suffer  
 “ Torments in every Part; though the Flame enter into his  
 “ Mouth, though his Hands be extended on a Cross; does  
 “ not regard *what* he suffers, but *how well*.” Such an one *Euripides* represents to us in these Verses:

*Burn, scald this tender Fish; drink your full Glut  
 Of purple Blend. Sooner may Heaven and Earth  
 Approach each other, and be join'd in one,  
 Than I on you express a flattering Word.*

To which that of *Æschylus*, mentioned by *Plato*, in the fore-cited Place, exactly agrees:

*He strives to be, not to be thought, the best;  
 Deep-rooted in his Mind he bears a Stock,  
 Whence all the wiser Counsels are derived.*