

QUERIES

Recommended to the

AUTHORS

OF THE

Late DISCOURSE

OF

Free Thinking.

By a CHRISTIAN.

Hoadey B. of Bangor

L O N D O N,

Printed for James Knapton, at
the Crown in St. Paul's Church-
Yard. MDCCLXIII.

Price Four Pence.

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Abigail W. of Banzer

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Qu. I. **W** Hether *that* can
be justly called
Free-Thinking,
which is mani-
festly *Thinking*

with the utmost Slavery, and the strongest
Prejudices against every Branch, and the
very Foundation, of all Religion.

II. Whether, if all the Absurdities of
Physicians, from the time of the first Pro-
fessor of that *Art*, were collected into one
Body, it could justly be esteemed a good
Argument for the total Abolition of all
Physick.

III. Whether the false Money that is
put upon Men sometimes, hinders them
from believing that there is any good
Coin; or from accepting it, when it is
offered them.

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IV. Whe-

IV. Whether, therefore, the feign'd Miracles, and false Pretenses of many to Inspiration, and divine Commission, be an Argument against the Truth of any such thing.

V. Whether all that is quoted by these *Authors* out of *Bishop Taylor*, and several others, doth not furnish an excellent Argument for all *Believers* in *Jesus Christ*, to bear with one another's Differences: And whether it be not very unjust to extend *that* to the prejudice of the Foundations of all *Religion*, which good Men have spoken with an hearty concern against the ill Temper, and the Violences, of *Bigots*; and which was designed, and tends directly, to the Preservation and Security of those Foundations.

VI. Whether this, as well as the ranking some of these Men themselves with *Atheists* and *Infidels*, be not a very ungrateful and base return to their noble Endeavours, and hearty Zeal, against the *Abuses* of *Religion*; and all *Superstition*, *Inhumanity*, and *Church-Tyranny*.

VII. Whether the Follies, and Inconsistencies, and ridiculous Opinions, of many *Christians*, or *Divines*, pick'd up in the Course of above 1600 Years, can in Justice be produced, as Arguments against
all

all Religion, any more than the differences amongst Philosophers, can be an Argument against *Reason* it self, and every thing in Philosophy; or than the differences amongst *Atheists*, and particularly the Absurdities in *Epicurus's System*, will be allowed by these *Authors* to conclude against *Atheism* it self.

VIII. Whether such Representations of Christianity, and such positive Assertions, as run through this Treatise, to the Prejudice and Condemnation of all Religion, and particularly of the Belief of a future State, do not too evidently shew, that the design of it was, - not to incite Men to an impartial Examination, but, to influence Men to the utter Condemnation, of all Religion.

IX. Whether it be a sign of greater Knowledge, or Honesty, to represent *Solomon* as an *Infidel*, because he introduceth an *Infidel* speaking; to represent *Him* as denying a future State, who talks so plainly in the same Book of a Judgment; to represent *Him* as an Enemy to the fear of God, (which is in this Treatise, without distinction, called *Superstition*.) whose repeated Maxim it is, *That the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom*; and whose Conclusion in that *Free-Thinking Treatise*

Treatise of Ecclesiastes, is, That to fear God and to keep his Commandments, is the whole of Man.

X. Whether it be a sign of that Integrity which Infidelity produceth, to represent that Fear of God, which hath nothing servile nor terrifying in it ; which is nothing but such a Reverence as directs, and secures Men's Obedience to his Laws, upon the same Foot with that Fear of the Gods amongst the Heathen, which was indeed *Superstition*, and which taught Men to have no other Notion of their superiour Beings, but that of Tyrannical, Cruel, Barbarous Lords, delighted with the Blood, Misery, and Torments, of their Votaries.

XI. Whether this, and this only, be not that *fear of the Gods*, which *Plutarch*, and the best Heathen Writers expose ; and whether the Love of God, as the Sovereign Good, ought not to have been mention'd as the Principle of *Plutarch*, as well as his *Zeal* against the Fear of God falsely represented.

XII. Whether any thing can justify such a procedure against the *Christian Religion*, as is seen from one end of this *Treatise* to the other ; but particularly in that impartial and honest Note about
Solomon,

Solomon, introduced with an Air of solemn Banter, and made as remarkable as possible: And whether these Authors can give any greater Instance of Prevarication, or hiding Truth, in the worst of those whom they oppose, than is to be seen in this Passage: In which the *Gospel* is represented, I will venture to say, against their own Judgments, in the worst Dress of its worst Interpreters; and that Doctrine of *Eternal Damnation* of Mankind for the Sin of *Adam*, made the Fundamental of the *Gospel*, which these Authors themselves do not believe to have any Foundation in the *Gospel*; and such a particular Explication of the *Trinity*, and Satisfaction, expressly laid upon the *Gospel* it self, as they themselves know, and believe, never to have been delivered by our Lord, or his Apostles. Now, can any thing be more disingenuous? Or is there need of any greater proof, that the Design of these *Authors*, was not to invite to Examination; but to charge upon Christianity it self those Absurdities, which are to be found only in some *modern Systems* of *Divinity*?

XIII. Whether it be not of a piece with this, to speak of an universal Alteration of the Gospels, under the Emperor *Anastasius*; upon the Authority of an obscure Passage, which cannot be proved to imply any thing more than that some polite Scholars *had a mind* to publish the *Gospel-History* in a better and more beautiful Style; or something like this. Whether these Authors be not Scholars enough to know that *Idiotis Evangelistis* could not then signify *Idiot Evangelistis* in the Sense in which we now use the word for *Natural Fools*; but only Men without polite Learning. If they be not whether they should pretend to translate and make Quotations. If they be; whether any thing can excuse such barbarous Usage.

XIV. Whether these Authors themselves can say, that the *Gospels* now in our Hands are any thing like a Book mended, and beautified, by a polite Scholar; nay, whether it be not apparent that they are the same which were quoted and appealed to, before *Anastasius's* time and whether the *simplicity*, and freedom from *Art*, and Cunning, and Tricks which so often accompany *Polite Humane Learning*, be not an advantage

the side of *Writers*, who profess to relate only Matters of Fact ; and ought not to be esteemed a good Argument in their Favour.

XV. Whether it be not a very great mark of the impartial Regard of these Authors to *Truth*, that they produce the *various Readings* of the several remaining Manuscripts of the *New Testament* ; with a manifest design of bringing a Disreputation upon the *Gospel* it self ; quoting for this purpose, and *seemingly*, (though there is reason to think, not *really*,) approving the opinion of one *Divine*, founded upon no good Reasons. For, let the *various Readings* be never so many, the Questions are, whether they disturb the sense of the place to which they belong ; whether they do not often help to fix it ; whether any one point, made necessary by our Lord or his Apostles, be in the least affected by them ; and whether, in the whole, they do not afford to all impartial Enquirers, a very strong and convincing Argument in favour of the *Gospel* ; being Proofs of a vast number of Copies, Translations, and Citations, of these Books, more than of any
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other,

other, with varieties so little material, with respect to the principal Points, and the main Matters, recommended to the World in these Books.

XVI. Again, whether it becomes true Enquirers, or Examiners, to allege, as of prejudice to Christianity, the Disputes about the Time, when the Books of the *New Testament* were formally all put into one Body; and universally received. What is this to true *Christianity*, which doth not depend upon modern Notions, either of *Inspiration*, or *Canonicalness*? Is it not true, and ought it not to have been acknowledged, that if we have faithful credible Accounts of what *Jesus* taught, and what he requires, this is sufficient for the Being, and Security, of *Christianity*: whensoever the particular Books of the *New Testament*, were collected. How unfairly then are Matters represented, as if *Christianity* depended upon the time when such a number of Books were gathered together into one *Authentic Volume*, by persons who know very well that it depends only upon this whether the *Gospels* are not a credible account of *Jesus Christ*; and whether we ought

ought not, upon that account, to receive him as sent by *God*? And, under this Head, ought it not to have been acknowledged by such great *Pretenders* to the *Love of Truth*, that, whatever Disputes there were about other Books, not only the *Gospels*, but the *Acts*, and *St. Paul's Epistles*, which give us a *noble View of Christianity*, were always uncontested *Books*?

XVII. Whether *Epicurus's Atheism*, and *Infidelity*, (which are acknowledged to have been founded upon Nonsense, and Absurdity,) can with any Justice be produced as a noble Instance of *Free-Thinking*, by those who themselves think the Grounds he went upon not to be worthy of any Man who can *Think* at all: And whether this be not a sign that *Atheism*, as *Atheism*, though without Foundation, is esteemed by some Men an excellent Recommendation.

XVIII. Whether it be not ridiculous, as well as absurd, to pass by the noble Beneficence, and universal Love and Friendship, recommended and required by the Christian Religion, and practis'd
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by the first *Christians*; and to extol *Epicurus* as carrying Morality to an higher pitch in the case of *Friendship*, under pretence that the word *Friendship*, in a particular restrained Sense, is not in the *New Testament*: in order to magnify this absurd *Philosopher*, to pass by the Life and Death of *Jesus Christ*, the greatest Instance of Friendship (were he considered only as a *Philosopher*) and not to say a word here, in favour of his Doctrine, though it was chiefly designed to introduce an universal Friendship, and Beneficence; and in general, every thing of good repute, or every thing justly esteemed amongst Men.

XIX. Whether it doth not shew great impartiality, to put *Tully* into the same List with *Epicurus*, whom he constantly pursued as an Enemy to Humane Society, and to Truth. Whether it be Ignorance, or resolute Wilfulness, to represent *Him* sily as an *Atheist*, and expressly as an Enemy to the Immortality of the Soul, (which he constantly maintains :) and that upon such weak Grounds as these,

1. Because

1. Because he gives this as an Instance of a probable Opinion, *That they who study Philosophy don't believe there are any Gods* : Whereas *probabile* in Cicero, or any other good Latin Author, never signifies *probable* in our modern Sense ; but only an Opinion that will bear a disputation, or that may be debated. Besides, that this is acknowledged by these same Authors to respect only such Gods as the common People then worshipp'd.

2. Because, in his *Tusculan Questions*, after having mentioned the various Notions of Philosophers about the Nature of the Soul, He concludes from them, that there can be nothing after Death : than which there cannot be imagined a more ignorant, or a more insincere, Representation. For he only reckons up the Opinions of some of the Philosophers. Nor doth He conclude this, as his own opinion ; but only observes, that, according to the opinion of those he had then named, there could be nothing after Death. According to these opinions, saith he, there is nothing after Death. *His sententiis omnibus, &c.* And yet he is here represented as drawing his own Picture ; when he is only

only drawing that of some others. Just as if any one who should set down the opinions of *Hobbs* and *Spinoza*, with what follows from them, should be charged with making that *Conclusion* in *his own Name*, and not in *theirs*.

3. Because in a disputation, in his *Tusculan Questions*, He denies, and was understood by his *Auditor* to deny, the Immortality of the Soul. Whereas it is plain to any one who understands *Latin*, and *Sense*, that *He* only, for the present, drops *Plato's Arguments* for the *Soul's Immortality*, and endeavours to convince his Opponent of an Error, even supposing, for the present, the Soul not to be Immortal. For his Words there, *prætermittamus*, and *relinquamus*, are such as can signify nothing but *dropping the Argument for the present*: and this, because he thought he could carry his point without it. Nor are they proper Words for one to use, who designed absolutely to deny the thing. The answer of his *Opponent*, or *Auditor*, is only an Embellishment to the Dialogue. He could not bear the thoughts of losing so pleasing a view, as that of the Immortality of the Soul, even for the present :

present : And therefore He useth a very beautiful Expostulation ; and lets Him know that, even supposing it an Error, he could not part with it. Nay, his answer implies that *Cicero* himself had been the Instrument of his believing and expecting such an Immortality. It cannot surely be collected from hence by any, but such as are resolved to have it so, that *Cicero* could mean absolutely to deny, what he had taught his *Auditor* to expect ; or any thing more than to lay aside, for the present, those Arguments, as his own Words imply ; and this, for the farther Prosecution and Embellishment of his Dialogue. But because these *Authors* speak with so much respect of this *Great Man* ; and have taken upon them to teach us all, how to understand him, by a *Key* which seems peculiar to themselves : I would farther ask, whether they ever read his Treatise, called *Cato Major* ; whether in *that* He doth not profess to speak his own Thoughts under the Person of *Cato* ; whether He speaks in *that* like a Man who absolutely rejected *Plato's* Arguments, or like one highly pleased, and satisfied, with them ; whether that noble *Sentence* which begins,

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O præclarum illum diem, &c; could be said by any Man, but *One*, not only possess'd, but ravish'd, with the glorious Hope, and Expectation, of Immortality; and whether this *Treatise* of *Cicero's* be not alone enough to convince us that the *Free-Thinking* of those, who can thus represent His Sense, is either *No Thinking* at all; or, *Thinking* with the utmost *Slavery* and *Prejudice*. For otherwise, how could *This*, and all that he saith in many other places, be over-looked; and *He* be set forth, not only as a Man of sense enough, to examine popular Errors, but as a down-right *Infidel* and *Atheist*? Whoever considers what is here said, of the usage this excellent *Writer* hath met with from these *Authors*; together with their translating Latin Words merely by their Sound, as *Probabile*, *Probable*; *Religio*, *Religion*, in our modern Sense; and the like; will also easily determine whether they understand *Tully* themselves; or are fit to direct others with what Biass to read him; or whether any of them are qualified to give us a *New Edition* of that *Noble Author*.

XX. Whether any thing can be imagined more unjust, or more absurd, than the Usage given to *Socrates* by the same *Authors*. In *one Page* they give a noble Account of his Death, out of *Erasmus*; from which it is plain, that He had such a Belief of a God, and such an Expectation of a Reward in a *Future State*, as supported Him under all the Injuries of his *Adversaries*, and under the Terrors of Death it self. But, for fear that this should go for a Proof of his being, a *Religious Man*, and a *Believer*; (which it must do amongst all who can think;) in the very next Page, in order to take off that Impression, He is represented as discouraging all Enquiries into *Heavenly Things*: An expression used, we know, amongst Christians, and in the *New Testament* it self, for the good things of a *Future State*. That is, *Socrates* in *one Page* is represented as professing Himself to have lived with a constant desire of pleasing God; and to die, with *good Hopes* of being happy in a *Future State*: And in the *next Page* is introduced as calling all *Fools*, who troubled themselves with Enquiries into *Heavenly Things*; which to be sure

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these

these *Authors* would have to be understood in the common Acceptation of that Phrase ; and which they allege as a Proof, that *Socrates* did not make *Notions* a part of his Religion. That He made the *Notions* of a *God*, and of a *Future State*, i. e. of *Heavenly Things*, in our common Style, a part of his Religion, is plain from the account these *Authors* give us of what He said when He was dying : And that this *Sentence* here quoted to the contrary, hath no manner of relation to the contrary, will appear to any, who have a little Sense, and so much *Free-Thinking* left, as will permit them to look into the *place* of *Xenophon* here quoted ; which is indeed as unaccountably, and as miserably, misrepresented as any thing can be. *Xenophon* is there vindicating *Socrates* from all appearance of Impiety. For He never, faith He, as many others did, troubled himself to discover how that which the *Sophists* called the *World*, came into being ; and by what necessary Causes, (*τιῶν ἀνάγκαις*) every one of the heavenly Things was made. Nay, He endeavoured to prove those, who troubled themselves about such Things, to be Fools. Let these *Authors* consider

consider, that the Persons whom He thus stigmatized, were *Disputers* about the *Necessary Causes* of the *Universe*, and of the *Heavenly Bodies*; that *these* were the *Heavenly Things* which He thought it absurd in Men (who have not Capacities for such Enquiries) to concern themselves about; and that the *Humane Things* which He recommended at the same time, were all things which are of real Use and Importance to Mankind, Not *Humane Things*, in opposition to *Heavenly Things*, in the Religious Sense of the Phrase: But *Humane Things*, in opposition to Enquiries about the *Necessary Causes* of the *Universe*, and the *Heavenly Bodies*, and other things: which were accounted by *Socrates*, not *Humane*, as being of no Importance to the Happiness of Man, and wholly out of the reach of a Creature so little acquainted with the *Nature* of things as Man is; and which are, in the *next Sentence*, called *ὑπερβία*, i. e. not *Divine Things*, in the common Sense of the Words amongst us, but *Things belonging to God*, who alone fully knows, and comprehends, the *Causes* of all things. These things of *Humane Concernment*, *Xenophon* reckons up in a *Paragraph* very near

to this here quoted ; *viz.* Enquiries about the moral and political Virtues : to which He adds, *And about other things, which those who knew, were esteemed by Socrates excellent, and good Men ; and those who did not know, to deserve no better Name than that of the lowest Slaves.* And lest we should exclude out of this Number, the *Notion* of a *God*, we may learn, in the next Paragraph but *One*, how strict an observer of an Oath *Socrates* was ; and in that which follows, the Reason of this : *Viz.* because *Socrates* had this *Notion* of the *Gods*, *That they knew all things, either spoken, or done, or so much as deliberated upon in Silence :* which perhaps may prove, even to these *Authors*, that *Socrates* made some sort of *Notions*, and *Speculations*, a part of his Religion.

But to return, whence my concern for this excellent Man hath carried me, What can be plainer, than that *Socrates* expressly condemns Enquiries about *Necessity*, and such like things, which He thought of no importance to Man ? And whom doth this touch, so much as those who produce Him to another purpose ? What can be plainer, than that his
Moral

Moral Excellencies were founded upon, and improved by; his believing *that God is, and that He is a Rewarder of those who seek him?* What can be plainer, than that He is the greatest Advocate in the Heathen World, for the Necessity, and Advantage, of minding *Heavenly Things*, in a Religious Sense? And lastly, what can be plainer, than that *He*, as well as others, hath been grossly misrepresented, after such a manner as cannot be excused, unless it be by this, that some Men are persuaded that all Methods are lawful for propagating so good a Cause, as that of *Infidelity*, and *Atheism*; or, that there is a *Blind Zeal*, and *Implicit Bigottry*, in *this*, as well as in *Popery*.

XXI. Whether it be not very unjust to apply the general Sayings of that great Man, my *Lord Bacon*, about that Suspicion of some Relations in History, which a true natural Historian ought to have; to the Prejudice of all Religion: And to lead the Reader to judge that he had the same Suspicion of all Miracles, which he expresseth of the *Prodigies* recorded by *Livy*.

XXII. Whe-

XXII. Whether Mr *Hobbs's* several false Opinions, and High-Church Politicks, here laid to his charge by these Authors, be not, in their own opinion, as great a mark of his *Slavish-Thinking*, as his *Atheism* is, of his *Free-Thinking*: And whether the producing *Him* in this Catalogue, with that censure, be not an Argument that *Atheism* and *Infidelity* are the things truly meant, however now and then colour'd over.

XXIII. Whether these Authors can ever make Reparation for the Injury done to the Memory of that great and good Man Arch-Bishop *Tillotson*, by putting him into the same List with *Epicurus*, and Mr *Hobbs*, against both whom he hath expressed himself with so particular a Severity in some parts of his Works; and by thus doing the work of his worst and bitterest Enemies. Whether his Example had not better have been imitated, than his Memory thus blackened; and the Abuses of Religion charged only upon the Abusers and not upon Religion it self. Whether his Zeal against *Atheism*, and *Infidelity* might not have been mentioned; as we

as his Zeal against *Spiritual Tyranny*, and *Unchristian Cruelty*. Whether the Injury done by these *Authors* to his great Name, be not already apparent, when a *Conscientious* Author hath already taken an handle from them, to misrepresent him in the grossest manner: contrary to the whole *Tenour* of that *Sermon* in which he speaks of the Mischiefs of *Popish Zeal*; and contrary to his express Declarations concerning the *Christian Religion*, which *He* in the same *Sermon* vindicates from the least shadow of Guilt upon that account. But, as it was to these *Authors* purpose, to rank this *good dead Man* in such Company: so is it to the purpose of his *Popish*, and other furious Enemies, that *He*, who could not enter into their *blind and unchristian Measures*, should pass for an *Atheist*, and an *Infidel*. So mutually do *Atheism* and *Poper*y assist one another!

XXIV. Whether, upon the whole, considering the unfair Treatment Religion hath met with from these *Authors*; the false Representations made use of to its Disadvantage; the little idle Stories pick'd up and vented; the great Scandal
such

such Treatises must give to all serious Persons; the great Handle they afford to all the Enemies of true Liberty of Conscience, for their unchristian Treatment of those, who differ from them: considering (I say) all this, whether there may not be some ground for Suspicion, that there are, amongst these *Authors*, some of the Enemies to true Liberty, and impartial Examination; than whom no Persons are more rejoiced at such Performances as this.

XXV. Whether the Thanks of all Friends to true Religion, and true *Freedom* of thought, will not be due to these prudent and worthy *Authors*; if occasion should be taken, from this *Licentious Treatise*, to destroy all *Liberty* in Religion; and to lay the Foundation of *Popery* amongst us.

XXVI. Supposing *Atheism* to be better, in it self, than that *Superstition* which tortures a Man's own Breast, and sets the World about him in Flames; whether, nevertheless, a thorough Belief of an over-ruling Providence, and a State to come, and of the Truth of Christianity,

nity, and a Conquest of our Passions founded upon this Belief, and a practice of all the lovely Virtues of the Gospel, be not vastly preferable to both; full of the Supports which *Atheism* explodes, and void of the Torments which *Superstition* feels.

XXVII. Last of all, whether there can be any thing in *Atheism*; (as there certainly is in true Religion,) to hinder any Man from acting the part of the most Superstitious and fiery Zealot upon Earth. Are not all the Cruelties and Barbarities, so justly complained of, in *Popery*, supported by the *Atheism* of those who profess it, and of many of those who exercise those very Cruelties? Do not these Authors think that many of the Inquisitors themselves have been *Atheists*, as well as *Jews*? Will they not be ready to own, that many of the *Popes*, *Cardinals*, and *Bishops*, have been *Atheists*? And is it not their *Atheism* and *Infidelity*, which hath led them to maintain and support that usurpation over Men's *Consciences*, which is so much for their own worldly Interest? Is there any thing to hinder

an *Atheist* from professing *Popery*, in order to obtain a *Crown*, or a *Mitre*: and then, from using his Power for the promoting of the same *Popery*? Can it be determined, at this Hour, certainly, whether the whole *Scheme* of the *Power*, and *Tyranny*, and *Persecution*, of a neighbouring Monarch, hath not been owing to *Atheism*, more than to *Bigotry*? What should hinder an *Atheist* from professing and acting the *Bigot*? What should hinder an *Atheist*, born with a little more Fire than ordinary in his Constitution, when it is for his present Interest, from ruining Nations and Kingdoms: and all under pretense of God's Glory, and Zeal for the Church? How then shall *Atheism*, or *Infidelity*, put a stop to the madness of Zeal; when the *Atheist* and *Infidel* are themselves the Zealots? How shall *Atheism* give up the vast Revenues of Religious Houses which are here complained of, when *Atheists* themselves turn *Abbots*, and *Abbesses*? How shall *Atheism* put a stop to *Persecution*; when the chief *Persecutors* are too probably *Atheists* themselves? And what hope can we have of any Alteration in the World, for

the better: unless we can persuade Men to be *Free-Thinkers* without *Atheism*, as well as *Believers* without *Superstition*; that is, *Christians* indeed, upon the Foundation laid by *Jesus Christ*, and not upon the Authority of any *Church*, or *Man*, upon Earth? Can it be said that this would make, either particular Persons, or humane Society, unhappy? Or can we possibly hope for the like relief from *Atheism*, and *Infidelity*? And to what purpose then are *Atheism*, and *Superstition* so often compared; when it is so plain that, in these last Ages, it is the *Atheist* chiefly who hath acted the *Superstitious*; the *Zealot*; the *Inquisitor*; and the *Tyrant*?

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P O S T S C R I P T.

THE Author of these Queries confesseth that some of the Particulars mentioned in them, as designed plainly against the Belief of Christianity, are produced in the Treatise of Free-Thinking, under the specious Pretense of their being good Reasons, and Occasions, for a free and impartial Examination; and not expressly declared to be intended against the Gospel, in the same Passages, in which the Authors of that Treatise produce them. But, as these Authors themselves, He verily believes, would inwardly laugh at any who should suppose them to have had any other view in this performance: So, lest any of their less heedful Readers should be led to think them too hardly dealt with, in being taxed expressly with such a Design, they are desired to consider the following Particulars; which, though, in great Part, already mentioned in the Queries themselves, yet, deserve now to be placed altogether, in order to be seen at one view, for the better Determination of this Point.

1. When

1. *When Difficulties, and Objections, relating to any thing in the Bible, or Religion, are produced out of Excellent Authors; no mention is made of the Design of those Authors, or of the Answer they themselves make to any Abuse which may be made of such Difficulties. The Story of mending the Gospels, is produced out of Dr. Mills: but not a word said of his Vindication of the Gospels now in our Hands, from that Imputation; and the like perpetually.*

2. *No favourable Word, concerning the Gospel it self, is spoken, which doth not look more like Banter, than the Sense of the Writers. As, our most Holy Faith, and the like, when there is least Reason to think them serious.*

3. *Many sly Insinuations, at the same time, are drop'd against it: even where the Difficulties cannot possibly touch the Foundation upon which that stands.*

4. *The Evangelists are called Idiots by these Authors. I say, By Them: Because the Word which they have so translated signifies no such thing.*

5. *The Note about Solomon, is a standing Proof, that their real Design was to ridicule the Gospel: laying those things upon the Gospel, which they do not believe to be*
in

in it ; and proposing a wonderful Scheme, as they call it, as the great End of the Gospel-Revelation.

6. Lest we should be at a Loss what is intended under the Cover of impartial Examination, (which no Man of Sense can oppose,) styl'd, in the Case of these Authors, Free-Thinking ; we are presented with a Catalogue of Free-Thinkers, which hath several Things in it worthy of Observation. As,

1. Socrates represented as an Enemy to all Enquiries into Heavenly Things ; though the greatest Instance of Faith, in the Heathen World.

2. Epicurus produced as a distinguish'd Free-Thinker : who banished Providence, that is, God, out of the World, by the most absurd System that ever enter'd into the Brain of Man ; and who can have no other pretense to this Title, but his Atheism.

3. Cicero applauded under this Name ; and, to prove him a Free-Thinker, (that we may not be at a loss what is mean't,) great Zeal is shewn, to distort many Passages in his Writings, in order to prove Him to have had no Belief of the Immortality of the Soul ; and this, I say, expressly against those who cite Him as an Enemy to Free-Thinking, pag. 138. where Free-Thinking certainly signifies, Infidelity. 4. So-

4. Solomon represented as a Free-Thinker, no otherwise than by being represented as no Believer of the Creation of the World; or of the Immortality of the Soul; or of a Future State. Here again Free-Thinking doth not signify Examination; but Infidelity.

5. Synesius a Free-Thinker, merely as an Infidel about the Resurrection.

6. Mr. Hobbs a great Instance of Free-Thinking, pag. 170. notwithstanding his several false Opinions, particularly in Politics. On no other Account, possibly, can He be produced, under this Title, but for his known Atheism: And particularly, He is a great Instance of Free-Thinking, with these Authors, because He hath furnished them with Arguments to prove, that there can be no such thing as Free Thinking in the World; but that all Thoughts, and Actions, are the necessary Effect of Matter and Motion. Excellent Freedom of Thought!

After this, let any one doubt, if He can, what sort of Free-Thinking, all that is produced in the first Part of this Treatise, is designed to promote; or suppose it possible, that the chief View of these Authors could be any other, than the Promoting that Free-Thinking, which they themselves confess to be Atheism, and Infidelity.

F I N I S.

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