

THE

Sup. Act. Rev. Period
BRITISH CRITIC,

A NEW REVIEW,

FOR

JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL,
MAY, AND JUNE,

M DCC XCVIII.

Causa jubet melior Superos sperare fecundos. LUCAN.



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1798.

highly advantageous. We hope, that on considering these arguments, no opposition will be made, by the members of the corporation, to the introduction of a bill, similar to that which has been lost, at some future time; that the company may be placed in that state of security and dignity which they so justly merit.

ART. 30. *Observations upon the Venereal Disease; with some Remarks on Barrenness, Impotence, and certain Disorders incident to either Sex. By Martin Bree, Surgeon.* 8vo. 2s.

An elaborate advertisement, to invite persons afflicted with the disorders mentioned; but not containing a single observation from which the learned or unlearned reader may collect any useful information.

DIVINITY.

ART. 31. *A Layman's Protest against the prophane Blasphemy, false Charges, and illiberal Invektive, of Thomas Paine, Author of a Book, entitled "The Age of Reason, Part I and II; being an Investigation of true and fabulous Theology." By J. Padman, Jun.* 8vo. 241 pp. 3s. Symonds. 1797.

We have been so often called upon to peruse the answerers of Paine, that it was not without some reluctance that we opened "The Layman's Protest." We were, however, agreeably disappointed in finding, that the layman had made but very little use of the arguments employed by his predecessors in the same cause; and that he discovered a knowledge of his subject, and talents for defending it, which merit the most respectful notice. As the most material objections advanced by Paine, have been ably and repeatedly refuted, we shall present our readers with a specimen of Mr. Padman's mode of confutation, from the miscellaneous part of his reply.

"Every animal in the creation (says Mr. Paine, in a tone of grumbling dissatisfaction) every animal in the creation, excels us in something." True, great naturalist! your assertion is incontrovertible.—But what does it tend to? You seem to be upon the look-out for a better body, and a more convenient form; but you have mistaken your road; the question to such a seeker is not, Whether every animal in the creation excels us in something, but whether any one animal in the creation excels us in every thing. If Mr. Paine can but bring substantial proof, that any one animal has an advantage or superiority over mankind, upon a general comparison, he will of course be justifiable in his longings after a "better body, and more convenient form;" but till he has done this, we are justifiable in considering his envying the "winged insect, the fish, the snail, and the spider," as one of the most mean, grovelling, and contemptible passions, that ever found a place in the human bosom. These animals are doubtless most admirably provided with every thing necessary, or even expedient, for that state of existence in which they are placed: and can our author say less for his own species? How happens it that he, who, a little while ago, brought a charge against the Christian, of "reproach and ingratitude,"

titude," should now be detected quarrelling with his Maker, for neglecting to give him the qualifications of a snail and a spider? How happens it, that he who but just now charged the christian with undervaluing the blessings of life, and despising the gift of reason, should now lay himself open to both of these charges, by decrying that wonderful microcosm—the anatomical construction of an human being; and with presuming effrontery, daring (within the omnipresence of his Creator) to breathe a half-stifled wish, that, instead of a human form, he had bestowed upon him that of a reptile? Mr. Paine may perhaps pretend, that his words have no reference to the gift of reason; and that, therefore, he is not chargeable with despising it: but we cannot admit of the distinction. It is evident, that the gift of perfect reason is only bestowed upon creatures bearing the human form; we have, therefore, no right to separate these two ideas in our mind, nor to require of the Creator to annex reason to any deviation from the human figure. He, therefore, who (with Mr. Paine) despises the human form, cannot avoid the charge of despising that gift of reason which it has pleased the Creator to annex to it." P. 174.

From this quotation it will appear, that the Layman's Protest is a work of ability. The writer pretends only to animadvert on those assertions of his opponent, which the Bishop of Llandaff has left unnoticed. He has executed, in our opinion, with complete success, the commission of that "under-officer, who (to use his own words, in his Introduction) when his commander has routed the army of an enemy, pursues, and makes prisoners of the straggling fugitives."

ART. 32. *Sermons, preached in the Parish Church of Jobn, Manchester, on the following Subjects: Fast-Day, Lent, Easter-Day, Ascension-Day, the Lord Jesus Christ the great Householder, putting away Evil the great Essential of Religion, Christian Perfection, or the Duty of doing what he can. By the Rev. J. Clowes, M. A. Rector of the said Church, and late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Vol. II. Svo. 257 pp. Rivingtons. 1796.*

This small volume of sermons affords a very creditable specimen of the talents and piety of their author. The parable of the Householder is discussed very much at large. Seventeen sermons are employed in tracing and applying its religious moral, to the condition of mankind under the Christian dispensation. Notwithstanding a tendency to mysticism which occasionally discovers itself, the subject is managed, in many respects, with great ingenuity; and gives rise to observations of the highest practical importance. We shall present our readers with a specimen of the author's style and manner, from his sermon upon the *duties of the Spiritual Husbandman*.

"A most poisonous and destructive persuasion is, at this day, prevalent in the Christian church, which would lead men to believe, that things are going well with them in the way of salvation, although they never in any way exert the powers which God giveth them to promote their salvation. How many, for instance, do we see easy and unconcerned about their spiritual state, who yet are living in the daily neglect of the abilities they possess to improve that state! With facul-