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A N A P P E A L

To the GENUINE

Records and Testimonies O F Heathen and Jewish WRITERS; I N *Defence of CHRISTIANITY.*

By THOMAS DAWSON, D. D. Vicar of *New Windsor*;
some Time Member of *Convocation*.

PART I.

1. An *Appeal* to the Works of *Phlegon*, *Thallus*, and other Heathen Writers; as Evidence for the *miraculous Eclipse* at Christ's Passion.
2. An *Appeal* to the *Chinese Records*; proving *that Eclipse* to be *Universal*, as well as *Supernatural*.
3. An *Appeal* to the Confession made by the Emperor *Titus*, of the *miraculous Proceedings* of Heaven in the *final Destruction* of *Jerusalem*; attested by *Tacitus* and *Josephus*; which was fulfilling the *Prophecy* made by Christ, (*Luke xxi. 24.*) with which *Prophecy PHLEGON* was acquainted.
4. An *Appeal* to the *present Desolation* of *Jerusalem*; as concerning another *Prophecy* of Christ, (*Luke xxi. 24.*) which is *YET* accomplishing, *viz.* That *Jerusalem* should not be rebuilt, "till the Times of the Nations be fulfilled."
5. An *Appeal* to the Emperor *Julian's* Attempts to rebuild the *Temple* at *Jerusalem*, that he might elude that *Prophecy*; as also to the *Miracles* that attended the Attempt; as related by *Amm. Marcellinus*, and other unquestionable Authors.

PART II.

1. A *Defence* of the several Testimonies of *Phlegon*, *Thallus*, *Jul. Africanus*, &c. concerning the *miraculous Eclipse* at Christ's Passion, against the late Objections made by Dr. *SYKES*.
2. The *different Supputation* of Years about Christ's *Death* plainly adjusted; and thereby Dr. S's greatest Objection to *Phlegon's* Testimony entirely remov'd.
3. The *Expressions* of several ancient Writers, concerning the *miraculous Darkness* at Christ's Passion, compar'd one with the other; and thence shewn, that such *Darkness* at Christ's Passion was *Universal*.
4. A farther *Appeal* to the *Chinese Records*, for proving the *Universality* of such *Darkness*; taken from the Testimonies of *P. Bouvet*, and his Adversary *P. Gaublin*; as also from other Authentick Accounts lately transmitted to the *Royal Society*.
5. Two *Test Passages*, taken from *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*, propos'd to the Consideration of Dr. S. and speedy Justice required to be done to those injur'd *Ante-Nicene Fathers*.

L O N D O N :

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43

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209

A N
A P P E A L

To the GENUINE

Records and Testimonies

O F

Heathen and Jewish WRITERS;

B E I N G

Full E V I D E N C E

F O R T H E

TRUTH of the *Christian Religion*, and its
Primitive Doctrines.

In Several CONFERENCES.

P A R T I.

The Truth at the Bottom is plainly this: All the great Things that modern Deists affect to say of Right Reason, as to its Sufficiency in discovering the Obligations and Motives of Morality, is only a Pretence to be made use of, when they are opposing Christianity.

Dr. Clarke in his Boyle's Lectures.

*Refrain not to speak, when there is Occasion to do good:
Strive for the Truth unto Death, and the Lord shall
fight for thee.* [Ecclus. iv. 23, 28.]

L O N D O N :

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6

209



To Her G R A C E

T H E

Dutcheſs-Dowager of St. *Albans*

(An Eminent Example of true Piety)

The following

T R E A T I S E,

With all poſſible Reſpect,

Is Dedicated by

Her Very Humble Servant,

T. D. .

T H E
P R E F A C E.

I*T would be very absurd, to make the least Apology for publishing the following Sheets; which are intended for the Service of true Primitive Christianity. 'Tis certain, the Spirit of Infidelity is gone forth, and seems to rage with uncommon Violence amongst us: But, alas! where's the controuling Power,* that has best served, in several Ages of the Christian Church, to rebuke it? I say no more; but the Power is no longer felt, nor heard of in our Sion. 'Tis true, an eminent Prelate has done Wonders that Way: God prosper his Labours! But in the Opinion of most, 'tis too sore an Evil, we labour under, to be cur'd by a single Hand; how skilful and masterly soever it may be: However, since this is the Method our Superiors judge best for us to take, I have ventured to inlist myself under his Lordship's Protection; and to contribute my Mite, in a glorious Cause, which all good People must have at Heart: And let our Adversaries but follow the Rule, which they prescribe to others, in using those Faculties which God has given*
us

* A National Synod.

The P R E F A C E.

us to judge with, after the best Manner we can, the End will be truly answered ; *and Victory soon appear to be on our Side : The Facts appeal'd to in the present Tract, (supported by unquestionable Authority) are an undeniable Proof that the Gospel-Revelation came from God ; and consequently, that our Reason alone is not a sufficient Guide to eternal Happiness : For if the Premises are true, then the Inference which the same eminent Prelate has made, must be true also, viz. " When by the Help of our Reason Revelation becomes so establish'd ; no Suggestion either against the Need of such a Revelation, or against our Obligation to receive it, ought to make any Impression upon us : For indeed to suppose that God makes a Revelation that is needless, is a direct Impeachment of his Wisdom ; and to affirm that we are not bound to attend to, and receive it, when made, is no less an Impeachment of his Authority."* Our Deists and other Reason-Mongers do indeed make a great Noise at present about Morality ; not considering, how much they are beholden, as well as many old Philosophers were, to the Holy Scriptures themselves, for the best Things they say about it. 'Tis certain, the Apostate Julian understood much better what Morality is, than the infamous Set of our bungling Free-thinkers : He was for ingrafting into his subtle, pernicious System, even the Order and external Discipline of the Christian Church, as well

The PREFACE.

well as those Graces and Virtues that distinguish'd its Members from the rest of the World: But those among our selves, who wou'd be thought to refine upon Julian's Schemes, are really confounding the very Notions that Mankind has ever had of the Being and Attributes of God: For whilst they are very copious (shall I say lavish?) in extolling his Goodness, the better to secure (as they imagine) a full Swing in Prophaneness and Debauchery, they are divesting him of his Justice and Holiness; nay, so very short and defective are they in their New-fangled Scheme, that the very Name of Repentance is not allow'd to have any Share in it; and no other Rule is left us to walk by, but our own corrupted Reason. God, in his due Time, deliver us from such destructive Schemes! destructive, whether in regard to Church or State; for they naturally resolve themselves into Libertinism and downright Atheism; and there is no one Maxim better establish'd than this, That where there is no true Fear of God, there can be no true Allegiance paid to Man.

In another Tract (which, God willing, will soon follow this) the Reader will find that remarkable Verse in St. John, There are three that bear Witness in Heaven, &c. [1 Ep. v. 7.] fully vindicated from the many Cavils and Objections rais'd against it; and the Genuineness of the Text prov'd indisputably; I shou'd think, beyond all Contradiction. Providence, it seems, has been
pleas'd

The PREFACE.

pleas'd to bring to Light a Manuscript about twelve hundred Years old, found in the Library at Verona, a few Years ago, [1720.] taken Notice of, as lost, by Dr. Cave, written by that able Senator Aurelius Cassiodorus, intitled, Complexiones in Epistolas, &c. publish'd by Maffei, (well known to the learned World,) with his own excellent Annotations; and the whole is supported with all the Authority that an obstinate Heretick can require: For it appears from several Places in this Work, that Cassiodorus did use another Version than that of St. Jerom, where the Verse has been suppos'd to have been foisted in: And 'tis as evident, that this Verse was not only read in the Copies belonging to the African Church, but in those also the most ancient and most correct in the Roman or Western Churches. To this will be added another Sort of Proof for establishing the same Text, given us by the late learned Dr. Cave, Canon of Windsor, being Part of his Historia Literaria, but is yet in Manuscript. The Passage was occasion'd by the Doctor's Observations upon Lucian's Philopatris; and as he seems to have manag'd it in a Manner different from other Writers, so perhaps more for the Advantage of the Text he defended.

I have nothing more to add, than to remind every good Christian, how much it behoves them, in these perillous Days, to be frequent at the Throne of Grace, in behalf of that excellent Religion they profess; that
God

The PREFACE.

God wou'd bless the Labours of such who do or shall go forth in its Defence; in keeping People's Minds from being tofs'd to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine, and in getting their Hearts establish'd in the Saving Truths of the Gospel. This is promoting true Religion : And 'tis thus our Church has taught us to pray (God hear our Petitions !) that we may hold the Unity of our Faith in the Bond of Peace, and in Righteousness of Life. *Amen.*

T. D.

CON-

CONFERENCE I.

A. **S**IR, well met: You are welcome in-
to the Country; I hope you are now
come to make some Stay amongst us.

B. Sir, I am glad to see you well: As to my
Stay here, 'twill be (as usual) during the long
Vacation; and then Business calls me to Town
again.

A. I am sorry, you can't give us more of your
Company; for our *Monthly* Meetings in these
Parts have suffer'd pretty much by your Ab-
sence. The *Society* are much indebted to you
for your good Instructions, and are very sensible
of your Abilities to serve them in the common
Cause of Christianity: However, they are satis-
fy'd, as I am, that you make the best Amends
for the Loss of your Company, by your constant
Attendance on the greater Society above, for
promoting those Ends which they and we have
so much at heart.

B. I suppose you *mean* the *Society* for propa-
gating *Christian Knowledge*, &c. Some thing or
other has diverted my Thoughts another Way:
I have not been amongst 'em a great while.

A. What say you? Do you only *suppose* I mean — I could not have thought, there had been any need of *explaining* my self; and I am very sorry to hear you now mention that *Society*, with so much Coolness and Indifferency.

B. To deal frankly with you; I am now become a Member of *another Society*; and they are Men of a quite different *Stamp*. Let me tell you; 'tis a Society that is justly distinguish'd by their Politeness, Learning, and good Reasoning; 'tis *there* that I have associated my self, and I am resolv'd to continue a Member, unless it can be shewn, that I am in an Error, by being of this *new Opinion*.

A. If this be your Case, I'll venture to say thus much to you at present, that it very nearly behoves you to make a speedy, serious, and impartial Enquiry, whether this *new Opinion* of yours be well grounded, or no; for if it be not, the *Error*, you'll easily agree with me, is not of an *indifferent* Nature, as in other Speculations it may be; but an *Error* the most fatal in its Consequence: For (if I guess right) your new *Fraternity* are so far from distinguishing themselves in the *Manner* you represent them, that they are every Day abusing that *Reason*, which God has given them; and that also to serve the worst Purposes, in rejecting the *Gospel-Revelation*, the Means of Grace, and the Hopes of Glory. But lest I should mistake you, and charge further than you and your polite *Fraternity*

nity are guilty, please to explain your self, in what this *new Opinion* of yours does consist.

B. The *Opinion* I am now of, has been lately very fully stated by our *Society*, in a Book, call'd, *Christianity as old as the Creation*, &c. I don't find, but the Book's well receiv'd; and Encouragement enough given for another Volume to follow (as promis'd) in due Time. Some of us had lately the Curiosity to *herd* our selves (as we call it) amongst the *Country Clergy* at a certain *Bishop's Visitation*, where the Book was indeed plentifully rail'd at, and a general Indignation shewn at its being publish'd in such a *pompous Manner*; they complain'd very much of the *Decline* of *Orthodoxy*, and inveigh'd pretty heartily against some of their *own Order*, as if they were much of the same *Opinion* with our selves; which (I must confess) gave a secret Pleasure; and it was much fear'd, they said, that in a little Time these *Opinions* might be defended from the *Pulpit*. Thanks to our Superiors (thought I) for such a generous Indulgence as is now shewn to *Free-Thinkers*. Our late Brother *Toland* did some Years ago congratulate *only* the *City of London*, * (but the Happiness is now almost *universal*) That there was scarce a *Way* of honouring the DEITY known any where, but was either already allow'd, or might be safely exercis'd among THEM; and 'tis from this Freedom, that *Truth* makes its *Way* in the World.

B 2

A. You

* See his Dedication prefix'd to Mr. Harrington's Works.

A. You are so very full of these mistaken Notions of *Liberty*, that you forget the Question I put to you. I desire once more, you will either in your own Words, or in those of your *Fraternity*, as deliver'd in that pompous Book you just mention'd, let me know in what this *new Opinion* of yours does consist. You rightly observe, there is *Liberty* enough to speak, write, and publish what you please; and for my own Part, I desire no Quarter at your Hands: Defend your *new Opinion* as well as you can: But first let me know rightly what it is.

B. To speak then without any Reserve; I cannot admit of any such Thing as you call *Revelation*, otherwise than as 'tis consistent with *Natural Religion*: Where *they* are so consistent, I readily embrace any Part of it; but if you talk of *Revelation* differing from *Natural Religion*, such *Revelation* I reject; for to make such a *Difference*, supposes, that the same infinite Being has given *two* independent *Rules* for the Government of human Actions. This must be the Case, when *Revelation* is thus magnified, and *positive* Duties enjoin'd, which Reason knows nothing of: So that my Opinion is, that if we use *those Faculties*, which God has given us to judge with, *after the best Manner we can*, the *End* is answer'd for which God gave them, and our Conduct fully justify'd.

A. I have carefully read your pompous Book in *Quarto*; and, I confess, 'tis admirably well calculated for the *Propagation of Infidelity* amongst

us : There's a great deal of Address, Dexterity, and *Politeness*, (as you say of your new Fraternity,) in adapting the Doctrines contain'd in it, to the Lusts and Passions of Men, to a deprav'd *Understanding*, and a corrupted *Will* ; and if you are resolv'd to enlist yourself under such *Leaders*, I think you are much in the Right of it, to quit your old *Society*, and not concern yourself any farther about the *Propagation of Christianity*. I observe you speak in the very Words that are used by your Fraternity ; and you seem to be pretty well versed in this *new Book*, that has given such a Turn to your Thoughts about *Religion*. But, pray, explain yourself what you mean by that Part of *Revelation*, that may be admitted by you ?

B. I think it needs little farther explaining : My Meaning is, that *natural* and *true-reveal'd* Religion do only differ in the *Manner* of their being convey'd to us : When any other *Difference* is made, and Reason assures us there is such *Difference*, such Part of Religion is not to be received as *Revelation*, but to be rejected as *Superstition* : So that all the Distinction that our Fraternity think needs be made between *natural* and *reveal'd* Religion, is that of *internal* and *external* Revelation : In both of them we must use those Faculties, as I said before, which God has given us to judge with, *after the best Manner we can* ; and consequently *Reason* must be a sufficient Guide in Matters of Religion, without
having

having Recourse to any other sort of *Revelation*, such as our *Reason* is a Stranger to.

A. Your Distinction of *internal* and *external* Revelation, puts me in Mind of Mr. *Lock*'s *Distinction* in this Matter; and since you Gentlemen pay so great a Deference to his Opinion, methinks, it ought to have its due Weight with you.——“ *Reason*, says he, is *natural Revelation*, whereby the eternal Father of Light, and
“ Fountain of all Knowledge, communicates to
“ Mankind that Portion of Truth, which He has
“ laid within the *Reach* of their natural Facul-
“ ties: *Revelation* is natural Reason *enlarg'd* by
“ a new Set of Discoveries communicated by
“ God *immediately*, which Reason vouches the
“ Truth of by the Testimony and Proof it gives,
“ that they come from God.” And, let me tell you, my old Friend, these few Lines of Mr. *Lock* destroy entirely all your great Volume in *Quarto*. I readily agree with you in one Thing you said before, and which you just now repeated, *that we must use those Faculties which God has given us to judge with, after the best Manner we can*: nay, to *examine* Things, and then act upon the Evidence that arises from such Examination, is, I take it, our *Duty*; and if Mr. T——l, and the rest of your Fraternity had *used those Faculties which God has given 'em to judge with, after the best Manner they can*, (I use their own Words, as you have done,) they could never have persuaded themselves to write as they do, when the most important Concerns of Religion were
were

were the Subject, in such a vain, loose, and trifling Manner ; knowingly and wilfully abusing and perverting the *primitive* Writers, as well as the most eminent *Divines* of our own Nation, in a very scandalous Manner. I will venture therefore to affirm, that if we use our Faculties *after the best Manner we can*, they will necessarily lead us to acknowledge the Truth of the *Gospel Revelation* : So that your Book, in the main, is proving what *none deny*, if by *Reasoning* you mean, that Men must one Way or other *examine* Things ; for without such Use of our Faculties, we never can truly come at the Knowledge of the *Gospel-Revelation*, nor without *examining* can we judge of the Consequences that naturally follow upon such *Revelation* made to us. But will you therefore say, that our Reason or Faculties direct us to *judge*, or draw such a Consequence as you do, that there are no *Truths* in *Nature* and *Religion* to be admitted by us, but such as our *deprav'd* Understandings can comprehend ? Does our *Reason* tell us, that infinite Wisdom and Power ought thus to be limited in his Dealings with his Creatures ? So far from it, that if we look out into the *natural* World, we every Day see our *Assent* is requir'd to many Things in *Fact* true, which yet our Faculties will never enable us to give any tolerable Account of. * *I gratefully receive (says Mr. Lock) and rejoice in the Light of Revelation, which sets me at Rest in many Things, the Manner whereof my poor Reason can by no Means*
make

make out to me. Here's Humility ! an excellent Virtue, that your present Fraternity would do well to copy after ; you see it was the necessary Result of *Free-thinking* in him, and will always be so, when 'tis *rightly* stated. *We must consult our Reason*, says he, *and by it examine, whether it be a Revelation from God, or no.* And if Reason finds it to be revealed from God, Reason then declares for it, as much as for any other Truth, and makes it one of her Dictates. If you can't join then with Mr. Lock, produce your Arguments ; and let the Christian Religion stand or fall by its own Merits : But then let your Arguments be produc'd with an *honest* Mind, free from that notorious *Insincerity*, that runs through most of the *Quotations* in your *new* Book ; and forbear withal bantering, or being ridiculous in an Affair of the last Consequence. In Truth, I much fear *Insincerity* and *Jesting* will not be so easily parted with, by you *Free-thinkers* ; for such Methods are the main Strength of your Cause, and your Leaders know very well, it serves to make the deepest Impression on the *Unthinking* and *Ludicrous*, that is, the greatest Part of Mankind.

B. I own, I did suspect *Insincerity* in some *Quotations*, when I first read the Book ; and I ever dislik'd *Jesting*, or being *knowingly* impertinent in the Business of Religion. 'Tis true what Mr. Lock says, (and I shall by no Means oppose it,) *when Reason once finds it to be a Revelation from God*, 'tis our Business to submit. But then,
 Sir,

Sir, *how* shall our Reason find it out to be so; this with me is the great Difficulty. If you can produce that *Chain of Evidences*, as some talk of, which shall be so plain and forcible, as that they shall not fail to convince every *unprejudic'd Mind*, (as, I do assure you, *mine* is at present,) that the *Gospel Revelation* (all that we now have under that Name) was *from God*, I will not only acquiesce, but farther acknowledge to you, that the Inference, which an eminent *Prelate** has lately made, is very just and cogent, *viz.* “ That when
 “ by the Help of our Reason, Revelation be-
 “ comes so established ; no Suggestion, either a-
 “ gainst the *Need* of such a Revelation, or against
 “ our *Obligation* to receive it, ought to make any
 “ Impression upon us : For indeed to suppose,
 “ that God makes a Revelation that is *needless*,
 “ is a direct Impeachment of his *Wisdom* ; and
 “ to affirm, that we are not bound to attend to
 “ and receive it, when made, is no less an Im-
 “ peachment of his *Authority*.” But still, as I said before, the *Difficulty* with me is this, *how* we can, by the Help of our Reason, or a right Use of those Faculties which God has given us to judge with, attain to a *certain Knowledge* of the *Truth* of those *Facts*, which you call Proofs of the *Gospel Revelation* ? Or, to say all in a few Words, where are those *credible Witnesses*, that our Reason will tell us, we may and ought to rely on for the *Truth* of these Things ?

C

A. Should

* Bishop of London's Second Pastoral Letter.

A. Should it be supposed, that we had not *credible Witnesses* to rely on; yet taking it for granted, that there were such Persons as the *Apostles*, (a *Fact* as clear, as that there were such Persons as *Augustus* and *Tiberius Cæsar*,) I appeal to your own Reason, or to *those Faculties* which God has given you to judge with, after the best Manner you can, whether such Persons as the Apostles of Christ, and in their Circumstances, could possibly be guilty of *Forgery* or *Imposture*? Whether whole Societies of disinterested, persecuted Christians, could be deceived or mistaken in the *Authors* of those *Histories*, and those *Epistles* they had so lately receiv'd, and on which they set such an inestimable Value? Whether those Books, so highly esteemed, so universally handled, so publickly read, so often transcrib'd, quoted, and expounded, so *jealously guarded* by contending Parties, could ever be *materially* altered, or possibly be corrupted, as Mr. *Whiston* has groundlessly asserted 'em to be in the Days of *Barchocab*, (about the End of the first, or Beginning of the second Century,) the better to serve his Purpose, relating to the Apostolical Constitutions? Notwithstanding the Efforts of such Men, this is the truly *Primitive* Religion that is now established amongst ourselves; and it highly behoves our Governors to consider, whether such a Religion, as recommends *Justice* and *Unity*, *Peace* and *Civil Obedience*, *Temperance*, *Industry* and *Fidelity*, should, in Point of Honour and Interest, be prophan'd, vilify'd, and set at

Nought,

Nought, either by such Hereticks, or such a Set of *Free-thinkers*, as you love to call yourselves; and yet, after all your boasted Reasoning, you don't offer to introduce any better Religion instead of the *Christian* : The Truth is, *Free-thinking*, you fancy, will justify *Free-living*. There's a Fear and Dread of religious Truths ; or, as Dr. *Clarke** has very well observed : “ In “ the *Manners* of most of you it is too plain “ and apparent, that absolute *Libertinism* is the “ Thing you really aim at ; and however their “ *Creed* (says he) may pretend to be the Creed “ of *Deists*, yet almost always their *Practice* is “ the Practice of very *Atheists*.

B. You seem to grow warm ; but Warmth, you know, is of no Service to any Cause. I think you said just now, that it could not well admit of a *Doubt*, (for the Reasons you have assign'd,) whether the *Epistles* and *Gospels* could be *materially* alter'd or corrupted. Now, this *Doubt*, I own, I have, and it sticks with me, notwithstanding the Reasons you have given ; and therefore this is the main Point that I shall insist on. I don't suspect the *Apostles* guilty of *Forgery* or *Imposture*, nor do I deny that their *Works* were highly valuable for many Years : But since there have been many *pious Frauds* amongst the *contending* Parties, (you mention'd) in After-Ages, how can we be certain, that these *Epistles* and *Gospels* have not been *materially* alter'd or corrupted ? Or, as I said before, where

* In his *Boyle's Lectures*.

are those *credible Witnesses* to be met with, which our *Reason* will tell us, we may safely rely on for the Certainty of the *Gospel Revelation*, as 'tis now received in this Kingdom?

A. I hope, Sir, you will readily allow, that there were no *pious Frauds* among *Heathens* or *Jews*, in regard to the *Christian Religion* and its *Doctrines*: What think you then of those Persons, that were the avow'd *Enemies* of the *Christian Religion* in general: Such as *Cornelius Tacitus*, *Celsus*, *Prophyrie*, and a long List besides of such learned and observing *Heathens*, whose Works are *genuine*, and their Evidence not liable to any Objection? What say you, if I *appeal* to these Men, and some *Jews* also, as *credible Witnesses* of the Truth of these Things? I desire therefore, that their *Testimonies* may be heard touching any such *Doctrines*, or Points of *Faith*, or any *Facts*, as they now stand recorded in the *Epistles* and *Gospels*, such as you shall please to question the Truth of: And, as I don't doubt but their *Testimony* will corroborate the *Authority* of the ancient *Fathers* of the Church in these Matters, (where you seem to object your *pious Frauds*,) so I am perswaded, they will prove to be *full Evidence*, that the *Epistles* and *Gospels* have not been *materially* altered or corrupted.

B. You surprize me very much; and if you can make out your Point, the Surprize will be highly agreeable: There certainly can be no Objection to the *Credibility* of such *Witnesses*; but

but on the contrary, (as 'tis observed and allow'd of in our Courts of Justice,) the *Evidence* is always much stronger, and more regarded, that comes from the Mouth of an *Adversary*.

A. It was for this Reason, that the *Fathers* in the early Times of Christianity, took an especial Care to corroborate the Doctrines of their Religion, by the *Evidence* which they alledged out of the most eminent *Heathen* Writers. By this Means they often furnished themselves with Weapons out of their Enemies own Quarters, to defend the Truth of the Christian Religion. *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and *Origin* his Scholar, were remarkably happy and successful that Way; and *Lactantius*,* the Christian *Cicero*, was so sensible of the Advantage that *Christianity* might receive by such a Method, that he forms a Plan whereupon to proceed, and advises the making *Extracts* out of *Heathen* Writers, touching such Things as they had said conformable to the Holy Scriptures, and then reducing them into one Body or System for the common Good of Christianity.

B. I perceive then, the Method you propose is not altogether *new*: However 'tis what I approve of, and therefore desire you would proceed. I am sorry, I am not so well vers'd in the *Classick* Authors, as I ought to be at this Time; but I think, I know enough, not to be easily *impos'd on* in these Matters; and besides,
I have

* Instit. Lib. vii. Cap. 7.

I have that good Opinion of you, that there will be no Attempt to reconvert me *that Way*.

A. Let my old Friend rest satisfy'd, that I will deal with him in this Affair with the greatest *Sincerity*, though your Fraternity in *this* are so notoriously deficient, and in an Affair of the utmost Concern to us all. I will alledge nothing from any *Heathen* Writer to the Purpose in hand, but such as is allow'd to be *genuine* by *all*, or if not *by all*, I shall endeavour to prove it so, before I apply it; I will take the best Care, I can, not to mistake the Sense of my Author; and if I do at any Time, I know your Abilities to be such, that you can soon set me right. But this is a sort of Work, that can't be done, either to your Satisfaction, or mine, without having the *Authors* themselves before us, that I am to *appeal* to. Please then, if you have rested your self sufficiently, after the pleasant Walk we have had in the Park, to step into my Study, and there we'll summon those *Authors* to make their Appearance, and give *Evidence*, as often as we have Occasion for 'em.

B. I must confess, this Room gives me a singular Pleasure; and if you can make good your Point by the Help of these old *Gentile* Philosophers and Historians, (which I see are ready at hand whenever we call 'em,) I shall think they deserve a more honourable *Class*, than some of those old *primitive Gentlemen* I see at a Distance.

A. I easily guess who you mean, the *Fathers* of the Christian Church; your Prejudices, I find, are very strong against 'em; but I do assure you, without Foundation, unless human Frailties are to be charg'd as Crimes; otherwise I could easily vindicate 'em from those vile Reproaches and unjust Reflections, that are cast on 'em in your new *Free-thinking* Book: But I can only promise you now, that this shall be done some other Time, if you desire it; tho' it will appear in our present Debates, that *Heathen* Writers and the *Fathers* support one another in this Matter. Matters of *Fact*, we are now chiefly to enquire into, and the *Method* propos'd and approv'd of by you, is, that the *Heathen* and *Jewish* Writers *only* shou'd be appeal'd to, to see how far they confirm the several Branches of the *Christian* Religion, in that Manner as 'tis now profess'd by us in our *Bible*:

“ And if *they* shall fully and clearly bear witness, not only in general to some one Truth contain'd in the Holy Scriptures, but also to the *Divinity* of Jesus Christ; to the *Reality* of his Miracles; to the literal Accomplishment of the Divine *Prophecies* relating to Him; to the principal Doctrines contain'd in the New Testament; to the *Holiness* and *Purity* of Christianity, and the remarkable *Sanc-tity* of its Professors; I hope you will then agree with me, that the Religion, as we now profess it, is truly *primitive*, and did really come down from God.

B. I join issue with you entirely in the Manner as is already propos'd and agreed to: Begin, as soon as you please.

A. Before I begin, please to cast an Eye on a Manuscript lying on the Table; 'tis a Collection of the *Authorities* that I am to make use of from the *Heathen* and *Jewish* Writers, in order to prove what I have propos'd. This Collection has been made for some Years, pursuant to the Advice given by *Lactantius*, as I mention'd to you, just before we finish'd our Walk: The *Authorities* are already made *English*, with proper References; which will much shorten the Time. All I now desire, is, that you would let me know, in what Manner I shall proceed, or what Topick you would have first discuss'd; and when I produce my *Testimonies*, be as particular as you will, in putting Questions about the several *Authors*, whether as to their Time of living; or the Occasion and Nature of such *Testimonies*; or what Character such *Authors* bore in the World: Canvas these Matters as rigidly as you please; for I am satisfied, the more you do it, the brighter and stronger the *Testimony* will appear.

B. You may begin in what Manner you think fit, and take your own Way in the proving what you have undertaken: And as to putting of Questions, you need not have made that a Request; for I may happen to put 'em faster than you can answer em; at least, I do assure you, if that will make your *Testimonies* brighter and stronger

stronger, my Assistance shan't be wanting. I observe in the first Page of your *Collection*, there's a *Testimony* taken from *Phlegon*. If you please, let him be the *first* that gives his *Evidence*, and then we'll examine what *it* amounts to; I think he was an ancient Writer, and therefore may very well have the Preference given him.

A. *Phlegon* liv'd about the Beginning of the second Century, firnam'd *Trallianus*, from the Place of his Nativity in *Asia*; but he liv'd the best Part of his Time under the Emperor *Adrian*, who was fond of having him and other learned Men about his Person. *Phlegon* might not improperly be call'd one of your *Belles-Lettres* Men; those Pieces of his that are yet extant, make us justly regret the Loss of his other Works; we see however from his Remains, that he was one, who had a fine Taste; had a great Fund of good Learning, and yet a Politeness withal, that made him and his Learning agreeable to the greatest Court then known in the World.

B. What *Pieces* are there now remaining of *Phlegon's*, and from which of them do you intend to fetch your *Testimony*?

A. There are *three* very considerable ones yet extant, which *Meursius* has taken care to put together, and to illustrate with his own *Notes*. The most remarkable of those *three* Pieces, is his famous *History* of the *Olympiads* (from whence I intend presently to produce my *Testimonies*) dedicated to *Alcibiades* Captain of the Emperor *Adrian's* Guards. *Scaliger* in his *Animad-*

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versions

versions on *Eusebius's Chron.* p. 185. suggests, that the Emperor *Adrian* himself compos'd this Work, and that *Phlegon*, by his Permission, publish'd it : Be that as it will, our Cause is not affected in the least. This Work was pen'd in the Way of *Annals*, or a sort of *Chronicle* that Way manag'd, divided into *sixteen* Books, giving an Account of the most remarkable Things that had happen'd in the whole World, for the Space of more than 900 Years; I mean, from the Establishment (or rather Renewal) of the *Olympiads* under *Iphitus*, to the 138th Year of *Jesus Christ*, which was in the 229th *Olympiad*. To apprehend the Excellency of this Work, you need only cast your Eyes on the 177th *Olympiad*, which *Photius* has preserv'd for us in his *Bibliothèque* ; and you will easily form a Judgment, from the extraordinary Occurrences *there* taken notice of by *Phlegon*, of what a mighty Advantage such an entire *Chronicle* would have been, for clearing up *many Passages* in *profane* and *Ecclesiastical* History too : However, according to the good Pleasure of the Almighty, there are still extant in *this History of the Olympiads*, two or three noble, irrefragable *Testimonies*, such as are not to be shaken by all the Wit and Malice of your *Fraternity* ; which *Phlegon* (neither wittingly nor willingly) gives to the *Divinity* of *Jesus Christ*, and to the Truth of the *Christian Religion* in general. The *Testimonies* are these —

B. Sir,

B. Sir, as impatient as I am to hear what those *Testimonies* are, I am willing to have one Minute's Patience more, whilst you just name to me the *Titles* of those *two* other Pieces of *Pblegon*: Pray oblige me so far, and in as few Words as you please.

A. One of them, which is the *second* Piece, is call'd, *A History of such Things as have been observ'd to be Extraordinary, Marvellous, or out of the common Course of Nature*. This History consisted of thirty-five Chapters; but the Beginning, and the better Part of it, is wanting. His *third* Piece is a Treatise on the *Longevity* of Men, giving a particular List of such Persons, as have exceeded one hundred Years. I will only add, that the Fragments of these *three* curious Pieces are happily to be met with in the *eighth* and *ninth* Volumes of *Gronovius's Greek Antiquities*; by which Means that learned Man has taken care, that Posterity shall not be depriv'd of those valuable Remains. I will now proceed, and observe to you the *Testimonies* that *Pblegon* gives in this History of the *Olympiads*; and for this Purpose we must also have Recourse to *Lactantius* in his *Institutions*, Lib. IV. c. 21. and to *Origen* in his second Book against *Celsus*: Now, *Pblegon* first of all avers in the most solemn Manner, "That *Jesus Christ* had been a true
 " *Prophet*; that he knew the *Times* that were
 " to come; that such were foretold by Him;
 " and that there has been an exact Accomplish-
 " ment of all his Predictions.

B. Pray, what might induce *Phlegon* to speak so positively in this Matter; or what *Authority* had he to support such a *Declaration*?

A. He had much the same *Authority*, as you would have, if you search'd the *Records* in the Tower of *London*, and got any Matter of *Fact* regularly attested from thence. You can't but know, and every reasonable Body must think, that they had at *Rome* (the great Metropolis) their *Archives*, publick *Registers*, or *Records*; you must allow, that *Phlegon* had free Access to these *Records*, when and as often as he pleas'd; and you find nothing more common amongst the primitive *Apologists*, when pleading before *Emperors* or others in Defence of the *Christian Religion*, than *appealing* to these publick *Acts*, or *Records*.

B. I suppose then, this Declaration of *Phlegon's*, touching the *Divinity* of Jesus Christ, was what he grounded upon some Matters of *Fact*, recorded in that publick Manner you speak of. But are there any such Matters of *Fact* in *Phlegon's* History of the *Olympiads*, as will sufficiently prove such Declaration of *Phlegon's* concerning Christ's *Divinity* to be well grounded?

A. There is one *Fact* in *Phlegon's* History, which does it effectually; and that is, his recording the wonderful *Darkness* that overspread the Face of the Earth at the Time of our Saviour's *Crucifixion*; this he had unquestionably confirm'd to him from those publick *Records* just mention'd; the *Post* he was in at Court, as

I have hinted already, must naturally lead him to search these *Records*, and the Nature of the *Work* which he was composing [his History] did indeed absolutely require it; in this Search then among the *publick Acts* occur'd to *Phlegon* among others, the extraordinary *Event* I have now taken notice of, and which he copy'd in the plain, simple Manner he found it recorded. These *Records* were indeed well enough known to Friends as well as Enemies of *Christianity*, or else there had not been such a frequent *Appealing* to 'em, as we find there was; and as to the particular *Fact* now before us, that renown'd Martyr *Lucian*, *Tertullian*, and others, have directly *appeal'd* to these *Roman Annals*, for the Truth of it, and as often confounded their Adversaries with that sort of Argument. The Martyr *Lucian*, so famous for his Learning, Piety, and Constancy, when his Judge had interrogated him publickly about his Religion, and he had given an Account of his Faith, he afterwards rais'd his Voice to a higher Pitch, and spake as follows, “ If you will not have any Regard to
 “ the *Testimony* I have given you for the *Divi-*
 “ *nity* of *Jesus Christ*, you have nothing left
 “ but to consult your own *Annals*; there you
 “ will find, that during *Pilate's* Government,
 “ and at the Time, when the Saviour of the
 “ World was crucify'd, the Sun disappear'd,
 “ and the Universe was buried, as it were, in
 “ Darkness.

B. I don't know how well at present to object to this *Testimony* of *Lucian's*, because you say he suffered *Death* for the Cause which he espoused. That's a *Time*, I must own, when *pious Frauds* can hardly be supposed to be practis'd ; and putting a Cheat upon themselves or others, can turn to little Account : But before I fully assent to this *Testimony*, let me hear a little more of this *Lucian*, and who it is that relates this of him.

A. I easily imagin'd, you was not so well acquainted with this *Lucian*, as with another of the same Name, whose *Dialogues* (I know) now and then serve to exhilarate and keep up the Spirits of your Fraternity. Your *Lucian* had certainly a great deal of Wit ; but he did not turn it to such good Purpose, as the *Martyr* did. And yet *unawares*, your *Lucian* too has given a *Testimony* to one of the greatest Mysteries of our Religion, as I shall have Occasion to shew and defend before we have done ; so that his Wit proved a Snare to others, and has weakened the very Cause of *Infidelity* he was maintaining. As to our Martyr, if you dare believe the Character that St. *Chrysostome** and *Athanasius*† give of him, He was a Man of rare Accomplishments, and uncommon Learning ; a profound Philosopher, and a compleat Orator ; had a thorough Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and was so accurately skill'd in the *Greek* and *Hebrew* Learning, that he became a Corrector of the *Septuagint* ; was
the

* Tom. i. Hom. 46.

† In Synopsi.

the Author of that famous vulgar Translation of the Bible, that generally obtained in the *East*, both in the *fourth* and *fifth* Centuries, and was commonly call'd *Lucian's* Version. 'Tis natural to believe, such an able Defender of his Religion, would not be wanting in laying hold of the *Weapons*, that his Enemies had furnished him with for that Purpose; I mean their own *Records*: And that he did thus defend himself, as I have said already, you may learn from *Ruffinus*,* a Cotemporary of St. *Jerome*, and once a great Friend of his, at the latter End of the *fourth* Century: And, for your farther Satisfaction in this Matter, you shall have the *Testimony* of *Tertullian* likewise, when you please, who *appeal'd* to the *Roman Archives*, for the Truth of the same Matter of *Fact*, concerning the *miraculous Darkness* at the Time of our Saviour's Crucifixion.

B. I might except to *Tertullian's Evidence*, because, contrary to the Method propos'd, he is neither *Jew* nor *Heathen*; but since 'tis so, that his *Evidence* relates only to a Matter of *Fact*, with which he press'd his Enemies; and they were certainly concern'd to answer him, if they could; and since you are proving, that *Heathens* likewise have taken Notice of the same Matter of *Fact*, and from the same *Records*, I think *Tertullian* ought to be heard in a proper Place: But I desire, before he makes his *Appearance*, that *Phlegon* may be called once more;
for

* Hist. Eccl. Lib. ix. Cap. 6.

for it was only said in *general* a while ago, if I remember right, that in *Phlegon's* History of the *Olympiads*, Mention was made of this *Fact*, the wonderful *Darkness*, attending our *Saviour's Crucifixion* ; I desire now to know, how that Passage stands in *Phlegon*, and in what Language he wrote it ?

A. I will give you the *Passage* at Length, which was written in *Greek*, and translated into *Latin* both by *Eusebius** and *St. Jerome*. The *Original* you may read at your Leisure;† I will now only give it you in *English* : The Historian, when he comes to the *two hundred and second Olympiad*, says expressly, *That in the fourth (or last) Year of that Olympiad*, (which answers to the *Eighteenth* of *Tiberius*, and to the Year of our Lord's Crucifixion,) *there was a greater Eclipse of the Sun than was ever known before : There was Night at the Sixth Hour* of the Day ; in as much as the Stars were seen in the Heavens : There was also a mighty Earthquake, which caused a great Overthrow at Nice in Bithynia.* The *Fathers* in their *Apologeticks* laid a great Stress (as well they might) upon these Words of *Phlegon* ; and they have demonstrated in those and other of their Works, that this *Eclipse* of *Phlegon's*, (or to speak more properly,) that sudden Defection, or Cessation of Light at Noon-Day, neither was, nor could be, other than a *Supernatural*

* *Hieron. & Euseb. in Chronico.*

† *Phleg. Olymp. 202.*

* 'Tis well known, that at *Rome* the *Sixth Hour* was our Twelve o'Clock.

tural Eclipse, hap'ning at the Death of our Saviour, since by the unanimous Agreement of all *Astronomers*, whether *Greek* or *Roman*, or any where else through the Universe, there neither was, nor could be, a *natural* Eclipse, during that *Eighteenth* Year of *Tiberius's* Reign; and consequently *that Darkness*, we are now talking of, must necessarily have been *miraculous* or *supernatural*, it happening at the Time of *full Moon*, and was such an *Eclipse*, as put the whole System of the Universe quite out of Order. Give me Leave then to tell you, Sir, this is such a Sort of Proof for the Truth of our Religion, that whenever it has been urg'd, it has carried so much Strength and Weight along with it; has appeared so very powerful and cogent, that neither *Porphyry*, nor *Julian*, nor any of our other Enemies have been able to make any *tolerable* Reply to it.

B. You seem to be very *elate* upon this first *Evidence* given by *Phlegon*; and if the Case stands really and truly, as you have put it, I think He well deserves the Precedency that's given him. But there are some *Scruples*, I must tell you, that still rest with me touching this *Testimony* of *Phlegon*: If he has finished his *Evidence*, my *Scruples* or *Exceptions* are ready to be offered to you.

A. It was you, if you remember, that call'd for *Phlegon* to make his *second* Appearance; and now he is here, I don't care yet to part with him: I find you are framing *Objections*, (though

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I be-

I believe nothing more than what I have often heard from your *Libertines*,) and therefore I'll make the most of *Pblegon* that I can : Now, this *Heathen* Writer in his History of the *Olympiads*, gives this farther *Testimony* in Behalf of the *Christian* Religion, and which equally deserves our Notice with the former, *viz.* “ That
 “ the Predictions, which St. *Peter* had made
 “ to the *Jews*, touching their approaching
 “ Ruin, and that of their City *Jerusalem* in
 “ particular, had been all exactly fulfill'd in
 “ what had happen'd ; and that such an *Event*
 “ ought to be look'd on as the Effect of some
 “ superior Power, and as the Will and Pleasure
 “ of Heaven, that Things should so fall out.”
 And here 'tis proper to observe to you from *Origen*,* that he did not fail taking Advantage from this *Authority* of *Pblegon*, for refuting the Calumnies of *Celsus*, and for proving the *Divinity* of Jesus Christ, against the Profaneness of that *Epicurean* : And here also it may be farther remark'd, with your Leave, that at the Time when *Origen* writ, this Chronicle of *Pblegon* was all *entire*, and in every body's Hands. There's another *Fact* that was recorded by *Pblegon*, in his *Olympiads*, that serves very well our present Purpose, which *Eusebius* reports after *Pblegon*. I will just mention it, (for I am impatient to hear your *Scruples*,) and I may have an Occasion to speak of it more fully another Time : 'Tis *Pblegon* then, who has first observed, *That* Pi-
late,

* *Contra Celsum*. Lib. ii.

late, sinking under the Disgraces he met with, became his own Executioner; killing himself through Despair, after he had languished for some Time in his Exile, being banished by the Emperor Caligula. And now, I am ready to hear what those *Scruples* are, touching *Phlegon's Testimony*, as I have given it, concerning the *miraculous Darkness* at our Saviour's Death.

B. One *Scruple* that I have is this: There's an Author, who has been of good Credit many Years ago for *some Works* that he publish'd, and He is much valued by our *Society*, who says expressly, that this extraordinary *Eclipse* that *Phlegon* speaks of, is plac'd by him, not in the *fourth Year* of the *two hundred and second Olympiad*, as you have now given it from the *Collection of Testimonies* lying before us, but in the *fourth Year* of the *two hundred and tenth Olympiad*; and says farther, that in this Account of *Phlegon's*, the Sun is said to have been then in *Pisces*, one of the *twelve* celestial Signs. I don't remember to have seen this particular Tract of the Author's, otherwise than in *Manuscript*; but in that Manner 'tis common and very current amongst us: And, if what he says be true, your Argument is of no Force, and the *Testimony* of *Phlegon* only serves to prove, that there was an extraordinary Eclipse about *thirty two Years* after the Time that you have fixed for the Death of Christ.

A. *Eusebius*, who makes so much Use of *Phlegon's* Olympiads, when he comes to the fourth Year of the *two hundred and tenth Olympiad*, has

these remarkable Occurrences, viz. *This Year* Lucan the Poet, being catch'd in a Plot, held out his Arm for the Surgeon to cut his Veins : Nero set Rome on Fire, that he might have the better Idea of Troy when in Flames ; and three Cities in Asia were overturned by an Earthquake, Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse. But not a Word of such an extraordinary Eclipse as we are talking of : and I'll venture to say, before I name your Author, (which I can easily do, and am no Stranger to the *Manuscript*,) that he is the only Person that ever charged *Phlegon* in this Manner ; and I have often wonder'd what Frenzy could carry a Man so far, as to attempt to change the Text of *Phlegon*, in order to rob *Christians* of so singular a Testimony given by a *Heathen* from the publick Records for the Divinity of Jesus Christ. I am sensible, however, I am now lying under the Suspicion of *Insincerity*, as to this Quotation from *Phlegon* ; and therefore have no better Way to clear myself of such Imputation than by summoning *Meursius** in his Notes upon *Phlegon* : Here he is ; read, and then give me your Opinion.

B. I

* J. Meursius in notis ad Phlegontis Tralliani Fragmentum de Olympiis. Vid. J. Gronovii Thesaur. Antiq. Græc. Vol. ix. pag. 1292.

Eusebius in Chron. nominat xiii. librum Chronicorum Phlegontis ; Γράφει δε καὶ λέγει ὁ τὰς Ὀλυμπιάδας γράφων Φλέγων, περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ τρισκαιδεκάτῳ, ῥήμασιν αὐτοῖς τὰδε. Τῷ δε ἔτει τῆς ΣΒ. Ὀλυμπιάδῃ ἐγένετο ἔκλειψις, τῷ τετάρτῳ ἔτει διακοσιῶς δευτέρως Ὀλυμπιάδῃ ἐγένετο ἔκλειψις ἡλίου μεγίστη, τῶν ἐγνωρισμένων προτέρων. καὶ νύξ ὥρα ἔκλει τῆς ἡμέρας ἐγένετο ὥστε καὶ ἀσέρας ἐν ἡρατῷ φανῆναι. σεισμός τε μέγας κατὰ Βιθυνίαν γενόμενός τὰ πολλὰ Νικαίας κατέσβεψατο. Ubi habes, ecce, Fragmentum item Operis.

Ex

B. I don't find one Word here of *Pisces*, or of the *two hundred and tenth Olympiad* : If there be no more *Phlegons*, my Author has certainly play'd the Knave : The Passage is as you have represented it to be, as to *Time* ; and I own your Translation of the whole to be just, as you gave it me from your *Collection* : I fear my Author had some *ill Ends* to serve by this *changing* of *Phlegon's* Text.

A. Your Author is *Bodin*, the same Man that writ six Books *de Republicâ*, and other Pieces that

Ex Eusebio autem transtulit *Paulus Diaconus*, *Hist. Misc. Lib. vii.*
 " Scribens autem inter cæteros & Phlegon, qui Olympiadas super ipsis
 " enumerat, in tertio decimo sermone eisdem verbis adserit. Por-
 " ro quarto anno CCII Olympiadis, facta est defectio Solis maxi-
 " ma, & nox horâ sextâ diei facta est : ita ut etiam stellæ in cœ-
 " lo apparerent. Terræmotus etiam magnus in Bithynia factus,
 " plurimam Nicææ partem urbis subvertit. Et *Maximus* in Scho-
 " liis ad Dionysii Arcop. Ep. vii. Μέμνηται μὲν καὶ Φλέγων, ὁ Ἑλλη-
 " νικὸς χρονογράφος, ἐν τρισκαιδεκάτῳ χρονογραφίῳ ἐν τῇ ΣΒ. "Ολυμ-
 " πιάδι, τῆς ἐκλείψεως ταύτης. Ante omnes verò Origenes contra
 " Celsum, Lib. ii. qui de numero tamen libri ambigit. Φλέγων μέν-
 " τοι ἐν τρισκαιδεκάτῳ, ἢ τεσσαρεσκαιδεκάτῳ, οἶμαι, τῶν χρονικῶν, καὶ
 " τὴν περὶ τινῶν μελλούτων πρόγνωσιν ἔδωκε τῷ Χριστῷ. Et mox :
 " Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἐπὶ Τιβερίῳ Καίσαρος ἐκλείψεως, ἢ Βασιλέυοντι καὶ ὁ
 " Ἰησοῦς ὅμοιος ἐσαυρώσθαι, καὶ περὶ τῶν μεγάλων τότε γενομένων σεισμῶν
 " τῆς γῆς, ἀνέγραψε καὶ Φλέγων ἐν τῷ τρισκαιδεκάτῳ, οἶμαι, τῶν Χρο-
 " νικῶν. Ego rectum numerum censeo xiv. Nam, ut calculum sub-
 " ducamus, justâ operis dividendi proportionem, in singulis libris fue-
 " rint Olympiades quindecim ; ac postremus imperfectus quatuor
 " tantum in se habuerit, plures habiturus, si *Phlegonti* vita diutur-
 " nior fuisset : Ergo Olympias CCII. pertractata, Lib. xiv. fuerit.

Euseb. in Chron. Lib. poster. ad Olymp. CCII. ita habet : Je-
 sus Christus secundum Prophetias, quæ de eo fuerant prolocutæ,
 ad passionem venit anno Tiberii decimo octavo, quo tempore etiam
 in aliis Ethnicorum Commentariis, hæc ad verbum scripta repe-
 perimus : *Solis facta defectio : Bithynia terræmotu concussa : &*
in urbe Nicæâ ades plurimæ corruerunt. Quæ omnia his congruunt
 quæ in passione Salvatoris acciderant. Scribit verò super his &
Phlego, qui Olympiadarum egregius Supputator est, in xiii. libro
 ita dicens ; *Quarto autem anno CCII. Olympiadis, magna & ex-*
cellens inter omnes, quæ ante eam acciderant, Defectio Solis facta,
 &c.

that are deservedly esteemed for a great deal of good Learning that is in them: But the *Manuscript*, out of which you and 'Thousands suck their Poison, (written *Dialogue wise* and in *Latin*,) is intitled, *De abditis rerum sublimium Arcanis*. 'Tis in these pestilent *Dialogues* that he has ventur'd in such a gross malicious Manner to impose upon the World in relation to this *Testimony* of *Phlegon*; and as to your *Fears* of *Bodin's* having some *ill Ends* to serve, it appears plain enough from those *Dialogues*, in other Instances besides this.

B. I own, *Bodin* was the Author I meant; but pray, what are those other Instances, that shew his *ill Designs*?

A. I say no more at present, than that in those *Dialogues*, he questions the *Virgin Mary* as *such*, after our Saviour's Incarnation, or God manifested in the Flesh; and treats the *two* first Chapters of *St. Luke's Gospel* as *Apocryphal*, because the *Divinity* of *Jesus Christ* there displays it self in so full a Light; upon the whole, 'tis too plain, that *Bodin*, under the Mask of a *Christian*, was either *Jew* or *Infidel* at the Bottom; and I hope in a little Time, God will give you Grace to leave such Company, and to use those Means that he has appointed to make you happy. I hope your *Scruple* however is now at an End; if not, *Reason* it self will do it for you: And you know by the *Laws* of your *Society*, as has been already observ'd, you are bound to use those *Faculties that God has*

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given you after the best Manner you can. For consider the *Fact* or *Facts* now before us; *Phelegon* tells us from the *Roman Records* that there was such a *surprising Darkness*, and that it was attended with a *violent Earthquake*; and the *primitive Writers* in their *Apologies* for the *Truth* of the *Christian Religion*, appeal to those very *Records*, whether those *two Facts* were not there fully attested in the like Manner as they were related by the *Evangelists*: But would it not have been very absurd, impertinent, and doing no manner of Service to the Cause of Christianity, if, in those *Records* which they were appealing to, they had not known there was a perfect Agreement in *Point of Time*, as to such *Darkness* and *Earthquake*, and our *Saviour's Crucifixion*? And how easy had it been for those they *appeal'd* to, to have shewn 'em their *Error*, and which certainly they wou'd have done, if they cou'd? But the *publick Records* were too well known; the *Apologists* therefore triumph'd in this Particular, as well they might; nor was there ever a *Porphyry*, a *Lucian*, a *Celsus*, or a *Julian*, that offer'd to controvert the *Point of Time*, as to this *Eclipse*. *Astronomers*, as I said before, have all agreed that there could be no *Natural Eclipse* during the eighteenth Year of *Tiberius's* Reign, which was the Year of our *Saviour's Crucifixion*; and yet the *Roman Records* say there was an *Eclipse* that very Year; the *Apologists* very well knew the *Romans* had recorded such wonderful *Eclipse*, and therefore with great
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Confidence make their Appeal: *Phlegon* relates the same Thing from those *Records*; his *fourth* Year of the two hundred and second *Olympiad* is well known to correspond with the eighteenth of *Tiberius*; and the Passage given by *Phlegon* being the *same*, and taken from the *same* Place, where the *Apologists* appeal'd to, it must be, that the *fourth* Year of the two hundred and second *Olympiad* was the *Time* when this extraordinary Eclipse happen'd. But, Sir, were it possible that *Phlegon's* *Testimony* cou'd be any ways shaken (as I am sure it cannot) *non deficit alter*; he is not the *only* *Heathen* Writer, that can bear Witness to this wonderful *Darkness*, and being *wonderful*, serv'd to illustrate the Death of our Saviour: I have one in *petto*, whenever you please to call for him; and I can tell you farther, he is older than *Phlegon* too; for he liv'd even in the *first* Century: But my Business now is to hear your *Scruples*, if you have any *more* about *Phlegon's* *Testimony*, and then to give you the best Satisfaction I can.

B. You are very obliging: I have another *Scruple* or *Objection*, 'tis true, relating to *Phlegon's* *Testimony*; and I think a pretty strong one too; answer it, if you can; and till you have done that, I would not have you be so positive, as you are, that *Phlegon* will certainly *stand his ground*. The *Objection* is this; I observe, *Phlegon* in his *Testimony* does not take any Notice, that it was *full Moon* when this Eclipse happen'd, and therefore it might be a *natural* Eclipse, and yet many surprizing Circumstances

stances attending it; but 'tis your Business, you know, to make it out to be *supernatural*, or else *Phlegon's Testimony* will not serve your present Purpose; Astronomers have acquainted the World with many amazing *Eclipses*; yet all in a *natural* Way. There was a prodigious *Eclipse* ushering in the Death of *Charles the Great*, as *Eginhardus* in his Life relates. There was another *Eclipse* twenty-eight Years after that, as taken notice of by *Alstedius* and others; so great, that the *Stars* were seen, as in the Night-time. And you know, 'tis not many Years ago, that we were Witnesses our selves of such an *Eclipse* here in *England*; so very dreadful, that the Birds fell down to the Ground; but these *Eclipses* all happen'd by a regular Motion of the heavenly Bodies; and *such* I am to suppose *Phlegon's Eclipse* to be, till you prove it otherwise.

A. I grant, Sir, if this *Eclipse* can't be prov'd to be *supernatural*, your Argument is just; but surely, the frequent *Appeals* made in that respect, pretty strongly imply it, were there no other Proof. It looks very odd, and reflects highly on the Understanding of the *Apologists*, (who, I hope, may be heard by-and-by in this Matter of *Fact*,) that they shou'd make such a Stir and Buffle in the World about an *Eclipse* of the Sun in a *natural* Way, however dreadful. I think, they might as well have told their Emperors, when they were pleading before them, that the *Peloponnesian* War was *just* or *unjust*, because the very Year it began, there was a terrible

ble *Eclipse* ('tis well known,) inſomuch that the *Stars* were ſeen at Noon-day : But their *Apologeticks* ſufficiently ſhew 'em to be Men of excellent Senſe and great Learning ; and you can no more doubt of the Genuineſs of thoſe *Works*, than you can of the *Annals* of *Cornelius Tacitus*, or the *Commentaries* of *Julius Cæſar*. 'Tis certain then, the *Eclipse* taken notice of by *Phlegon*, and appeal'd to by theſe *primitive* Writers, muſt be defended in the Manner you inſiſt it ſhould be, that is, in proving it to be *ſupernatural*. But ſtill, the Argument, in the main, does not turn upon *Phlegon's* omitting to ſpeak of the *Eclipse* being when it was *full Moon*. It has been obſerv'd already, that by the unanimous Conſent of all *Aſtronomers*, there cou'd not have been any *natural Eclipse*, during the eighteenth Year of *Tiberius* ; and if there had, your own Reaſon and frequent Obſervation tells you, that in a *natural Eclipse*, there cou'd not be *Darkneſs* for *three Hours* ; as there really was in the preſent Caſe. The *Evangelists* ſay in expreſs Terms, that our Saviour began his *Ministry* the fifteenth Year of *Tiberius* ; it appears likewise, that he continu'd in the *ſame*, for *three Years* ; that he kept *four Paſſovers* with his Diſciples, and about that Time ſuffer'd Death for us ; after which there was *Darkneſs* over all the Earth from the ſixth to the ninth Hour. As to *Phlegon's* not mentioning the *full Moon* therefore, it ought to be conſider'd, that he was writing as an *Annaliſt*, and not as an *Aſtronomer* ; or rather,

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ther, in my Opinion, he *copy'd* purely and simply as he found this extraordinary *Event* enter'd in the *publick Records*, and did not trouble himself with *Astronomical* Calculations, or at least might not then have his *Tables* at hand. But, Sir, if what I have said in this Matter does not give you full Satisfaction, I must tell you once for all, that an *Eclipse*, if at the Time of the *Passover*, (which was the Time unquestionably when our Saviour suffer'd) must be when the *Moon was at full* ; for so the Almighty in the *Jewish Law* commanded it. Here's at hand a curious and judicious Enquirer into the Nature of the *Jewish Laws*, * who speaks thus to the Matter in hand. “ The divers keeping of the
 “ *Passover* seemeth to have taken the Beginning
 “ from the divers keeping of the Month ; for
 “ when they reckon'd their Month from the *Ap-*
 “ *parition*, which was doubtful and uncertain,
 “ hence it came to pass, that the Beginning of
 “ the Month was not always at the self-same
 “ Period ; for the last Day of *Adar* might fall
 “ out so, that it should be the Beginning of
 “ *Nisan* ; and therefore the *Sanhedrin* appoint-
 “ ed, that the *Full Moon* should be the *thir-*
 “ *teenth* Day, which according to the Verity
 “ was the *fourteenth* ; this Diversity arose of
 “ this, because of the divers *Apparitions* of the
 “ *Moon*, so they kept the Preparation to the
 “ *Pascha* diversly.” In the *fourteenth Day* of
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* *Weemse's Explanation of the Ceremonial Laws of Moses , &c.*
 p. 90.

the first Month is the Lord's Passover, says the Text, (*Levit. xxiii. 5.*) you can no more dispute the Truth of the *Jewish* Laws, than you can of *those* made in the *Greek* and *Roman* Commonwealths; and 'tis as plain, that Christ *comply'd*, in keeping these *Passovers* at the same Time as the *Jews* did. *Then drew nigh the Feast of unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover; and the Chief Priests and Scribes sought how they might kill him,* (*Luke xxii. 1.*) *And it came to pass, when Jesus had finish'd all these Sayings, he said unto his Disciples; Ye know, that after two Days is the Feast of the Passover, and the Son of Man is to be deliver'd to be crucify'd,* (*Mat. xxvi. 1.*) I hope, you don't require more to be said for establishing this Point, that our Saviour *suffer'd* when it was *Full Moon*; and this may amply supply the *Deficiency* in *Phlegon's Testimony*, which you object to; tho' I think what has been said for him just now, was a sufficient Excuse in that Respect: However the *Testimony* of *Phlegon*, as the Case now stands, is entire, and of full Force again.

B. You say, that Christ kept the *Passover* at the same Time the *Jews* did, and therefore it must be *Full Moon* when he *suffer'd*: But does it appear from the *Texts* you have quoted, or any otherways, that the *Jews* and *Christ* did eat the *Passover* upon the *same* Day?

A. I grant, 'tis a Question, that may, and has been put before now; but, I think, it will do you little Service at this Time, which way soever it be resolv'd: However, I'll give you the *Resolution*

tion of the same learned Person* I quoted just now, upon it, and if you think fit to reply, I am ready to hear you. “ Christ, says he, observed the *true Day*; in the End of the *fourteenth Day*, and the Beginning of the *fifteenth*, he eat it betwixt *two Evenings*: But the Jews transferred the Day; and eat it in the End of the *fifteenth Day*, and Beginning of the *sixteenth*; and therefore when Christ eat the *Passover*, it was the Day of the *Preparation* to the *Jewish Passover*, altho’ indeed it was the *true Passover*.” And is not this Resolution agreeable to the *Jewish Law*, and the *Fact* itself in regard to the *Time* of our *Saviour’s* Suffering? Does not the *Jewish Law* say, *In the first Month, the fourteenth Day of that Month, between the two Evenings is the Lord’s Passover*, (Lev. xxiii. 5.) alluding to the Charge given by God to the People of *Israel*, when he was leading them out of the Land of *Egypt*, that they shou’d have their Lamb in Readiness against the fourteenth Day of the first Month, when they were to kill it *between the two Evenings*, Exod. xii. 6.

B. I don’t see much Room left for making any *Reply*; and am now convinc’d it wou’d turn to little Account, if I did; if you please, we’ll dismiss *Phlegon*; we have had him a long While before us, and I think you have made the most of him; much more, I must own, than I at first imagin’d. I think, you said some Time ago, that you had another *Heathen Writer* in *petto*, that
liv’d

* *Weemse*, Ib. p. 89.

liv'd even in the *first* Century, and was able to give *Evidence* as to this *Darkness* at Christ's *Crucifixion*: I am ready to hear him, when you will; and pray what is his Name?

A. He is often spoken of by the *Fathers* under the Name of *Thallus*; and they generally join his *Testimony* with that of *Phlegon's*, the one to support the other. 'Tis so done by *Minutius Felix* in his *Octavius*; by *Tertullian* in his *Apologetique*; by *Justin* in his *Exhortation to the Gentiles*; by *Lactantius*, and some others. *Thallus* was a *Grecian*, living, as I said before, in the *first* Century, and writ, it seems, the *Syriac Histories* with great *Exactness*, in *Conjunction* with one *Castor*, who, *Vossius* believes, and with a good deal of *Reason*, was the Son of that *Castor* whom *Cicero* has made famous by his *Invectives* against him. Now, this *Thallus* in his *third* Book of the *Syriac Histories*, takes Notice "in a particular Manner of this *miraculous Darkness* at Noon-day, and of its so hap'ning in the *eighteenth* Year of *Tiberius's* Reign.

B. I find, this *Thallus* comes handed down to us by the *Fathers*, whilst they were pleading their own Cause; I have often told you, I don't like it; let the *Testimony* come directly from some *Heathen* Writer, and I shall be much better satisfied.

A. Please to consider a little, Sir: The *Testimony* of *Thallus*, or any other *Heathen* Writer, that comes to us in this *Manner*, comes with greater Force, and carries greater Authority with it,

than by any other sort of Conveyance. For, in the Case of an *Appeal* from *Christians* to *Heathens*, if the *Heathen* Author that is quoted; if his *Works*; and if moreover any particular *Passage* in such *Works*, are all allow'd of, and not the least Objection made; this certainly must be *recognizing* such Author, such his *Works*, and such particular *Passage* in his *Works*, in the strongest Manner possible. You do not question, nor indeed can you, whether such *Apologies* were really made for the Christian Religion; and you may as well question *Cicero*, (whom I just now nam'd) when he tells us, * there was such a Man as *Protagoras*, and that he vended such and such impious Discourses, as dispute here about *Thallus* and the *Passage* already mention'd to be in his *Works*.

B. 'Tis true; I have already in some measure allow'd of such sort of Proof from the *Fathers*, as being *reasonable*; and therefore shall press it no farther: But have you any ancient Writer, and of good Credit, who writes professedly as an *Historian* or *Chronologer*, and not as an *Apolo-
gist*, and who takes any Notice of this *miraculous Darknesh* at such Time? If so, I desire to hear him.

A. I think, I am able to oblige you with such an Author too, that will answer in every Respect what you desire: 'Tis the celebrated *Julius Africanus*, who flourish'd not above three or fourscore Years after *Phlegon*, and was once sent
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* De Nat. Deorum. L. 1.

by his Countrymen of *Nicopolis*, as Ambassador to the Emperor *Antoninus Heliogabalus*, to obtain some Priviledges ; in which Embassy he was successful : This noble *African* compil'd an excellent Work, much valued by all the Learned, written in a *Chronological* Way ; and containing, in *five* Books, a compendious but accurate History of all remarkable Occurrences in the World, from the Creation to the Reign of *Heliogabalus*. *Julius Africanus* was a *Christian*, and may be reckon'd the first and most ancient Historian that the Christians had : Now, this Man in his *Chronology* remarks in the same Manner, as *Phlegon* and *Thallus* had done, (the one in his *Olympiads*, the other in his *third* Book of the *Syriac History*,) that there was an *Universal Darknes*s, putting the World under the greatest *Consternation* at the very Time when our Saviour *suffered*.

B. I find by this Testimony of *Julius Africanus*, that the *Darknes*s was *universal* ; and I observe in general from the *Testimonies* you have alledged to corroborate (as you think) the *Scripture* Account of this *Darknes*s, that you would have it thought to be *universal*, or over *all the Earth* ; whereas by the *Scripture* Account, the *Darknes*s seems to have extended itself no farther than the Land of *Palestine* : *Beza* * accordingly renders it, *super universam regionem* ; and I can't but be of the same Opinion with that learned Commentator, *viz.* That the Miracle still appears greater, if at the Time of the *Passover*, when it was *Full Moon*,
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* Mat. xxvii. 45. Mark xv. 33.

and when at Midday, the Sun should suddenly withdraw its Light from that little Corner of the Earth *only*, where this great Scene of Christ's Suffering was acted, and yet the *whole* World besides should enjoy its Light at the same Time.

A. 'Tis true, Sir, there is Room for such a Conjecture ; but you must own, it can do your Cause no Service, were it to be supported, as I am satisfy'd it cannot : Indeed our *own Version* in Part, seems to favour this Conjecture ; for we render the *Original*, in St. *Matthew*,* *over all the Land* ; in St. *Mark*, *over the whole Land* : But in St. *Luke* 'tis render'd, *over all the EARTH*,† which best answers the Import and general Acceptation of the *Greek Word*. The *Septuagint* uses the very same *Word*, when the *Earth*, in general must be understood, and not any one Part of it : *The Earth was without Form, and void* :‡ As to *Beza's Version*, 'tis to be observed, that the *Syriac*, as 'tis render'd by *Tremellius*, (and which best agrees with the *Original Greek*,) runs throughout the three Evangelists, *over all the Earth*, or *over the whole Earth* : || And had *Beza* and our Translators been living, when the *Syriac Translation* was made, I'm satisfy'd there would have been no such Caution us'd by 'em, in rendering this Passage. But you say with *Beza*, that the *Miracle* appears greater, in not suppo-

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* Mat. xxvii. 45. ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν.

† Luke xxiii. 44. ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν γῆν.

‡ Gen. i. 2.

|| Super universam Terram. — Super totam Terram.

sing the Darknefs to be *universal*, but rather confining it to that Place or Country, where the Scene of Wickednefs was more particularly acted in *crucifying the Lord of Glory*. I will freely fpeak my own Senfe of this Matter, whatever Weight it may have with you. Our Saviour's Crucifixion, it muft be allow'd, had a Relation to the Sins of the *whole* World, and not of *thofe* only who liv'd in the Land of *Paleftine* : This *miraculous Darknefs*, therefore, was properly the *Sanction*, or the Method taken by infinite Wifdom, to manifefit his Wrath and vindictive Juftice, in the Death of our Redeemer : And if fo, then fuch *Sanction* of divine *Wrath* may be reafonably fupposed to be made known at that Time to *all Mankind*. In Adam we all died; and when the Time was come, that in *Chrift* we fhould all be made alive, I muft think, that this *miraculous Darknefs*, out of which *Light* was to arife to the *Gentiles*, was notify'd by our heavenly Father to *all* his Creatures, I mean to the fallen Race of Mankind in general, as well as to the People of the *Jews*.

B. I do not make any Objection to this fort of *Reasoning* of yours ; but are there any publick *Records* to fupport the Truth of the *Fact* ; I mean, the Darknefs being *universal*. I own, you have proved this *Darknefs* to be *miraculous*, whether we fuppose it to have been *universal*, or *particular* : 'Tis therefore for my own private Information, that I now ask you, whether this Matter can any Ways be cleared up; or whether there be any *Authentick Testimonies* extant at this Time of Day upon
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the Face of the whole Earth, to evince such *Darkness* to have been *universal* ?

A. You are pleas'd to allow of my *Reasoning* upon this Point ; but your Question now, let me tell you, is *unreasonable* : However, if you'll venture to believe that great and learned Prelate Monsieur *Huet*,* Bishop of *Avranche* in *France*, lately deceased ; and if in Conjunction with him, you will give Credit to the History of *China*, written by *Hadr. Gresson* ; and to *three* other Writers, *Couplet*, *Intorceta*, and *Rougemont*, who say the same Thing in their Account of *Confucius* ; I say, according to these Authors, there are at this Day surprizing *Monuments* extant, for the Honour of the Christian Religion, in the Empire of *China*, to support this *Fact* of an *universal Darkness* at our Saviour's Crucifixion : The *Chinese*, all the World well knows, have been long distinguish'd for their Skill in *Astronomy*, as well as for their Exactness in recording and fixing their *Epocha*, or proper Period in all great Events : Now, according to this Authority here given you, the *Chinese* have been particularly careful by remarking in their *Calendars*, or *Annals*, " That under the Reign of their sage Prince
 " QUAM-VU-TI, there was a *total* Eclipse of the
 " Sun in the Month of *April* ; with which the
 " King was exceedingly surpriz'd ; for (say those
 " *Annals*) it happen'd contrary to the regular
 " Course of Nature, [*i. e.* when it was *Full Moon*,]
 " putting their Astronomers into the utmost Con-
 " fusion ;

* In his *Demonstratio Evangelica*.

“ fusion ; and their *Epocha*, or Year assign’d,
 “ when this *extraordinary* Eclipse happen’d, an-
 “ swers (our Authors say) precisely to the
 “ *fourth* Year of the *two hundred and second Olym-*
 “ *piad*, which was the *eighteenth* Year of the
 “ Reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*.” Now admit or re-
 ject this Relation, as you please ; I will not
 knowingly insist upon any *Authority*, where it
 can with any Colour be disputed ; though I can-
 not see any Exception to be made to this Rela-
 tion, unless it be that the Relators were *Roman*
Catholicks ; which, in my Opinion, ought to be
 of no Force or Weight at all in this Case: For
 though they (confessedly) may have such Ends
 in View, as, by introducing the *Christian* Re-
 ligion amongst the *Chinese*, to introduce and in-
 culcate such *Doctrines* withal, which we think are
 not to be found in, or justify’d by that *Gospel*
 which they publish ; yet their *Appealing* to the
Chinese Annals, in respect of this *wonderful Dark-*
ness, and shewing the exact Conformity of such
Annals, in Point of *Time*, with what is said in
 the Gospel, may still be admitted as a good Proof
 of our Saviour’s *Divinity*, and of the Truth of
 his Doctrine in general: And *that*, you must grant,
 is sufficient for my present Purpose.

B. I do grant it; nor am I for using such Me-
 thods to invalidate your Evidence for this
particular Fact ; for, upon such *Facts*, the *Ro-*
manists cannot ground any of those *Errors*, which
 we condemn as *such*, though they may find other
 Means to introduce ’em amongst the *Chinese*. I
 grant,

grant, the *particular Fact* in question now is only, Whether there was such a Person as *Jesus Christ*, whose Divinity was *recogniz'd* by this *miraculous Darkness* at his Death; and whether such an *extraordinary Eclipse* of the Sun was not taken notice of at the *same Time* by the *Chinese*, inhabiting the extreme Parts of the Earth, and was so recorded by them? In such a Case, I agree, the *Credibility* of the Authors you cite ought to be consider'd in another Manner, than in barely saying they are *Roman Catholics*: And since the Subject is of that Importance, and, as you say, so much for the Honour of the Christian Religion, if this *Fact* can be fully made out from the *Chinese Annals*; I think, instead of rejecting or condemning the *Evidence* given by such Authors, their Evidence may still stand good, 'till (as there ought to be) a stricter Enquiry shall be made into it; and in this Manner, if you please, we'll drop it at present.

A. Agreed; I think 'tis now high Time to claim the Promise you made me some Time ago, that *Tertullian* should be heard in a proper Place, touching this *miraculous Darkness* at our Saviour's Passion. He *appeals* then to the same *Roman Records*, or *Archives*, that *Phlegon* and others had recourse to, in that famous *Apology*, which he made with so much Argument and Eloquence in behalf of the Christians, during the Reign of *Severus*. He speaks of this *Eclipse*, as one of the greatest, the most authentick, and most extraordinary Events, that had ever happen'd

pen'd in the Universe : He sets it forth boldly and openly, as a *Prodigy* that was well known over all the Earth : He represents it as a *Fact* publick, prov'd, and avow'd ; and to which their own *Annals* had all along bore Witness. Now, can it be imagin'd, that *Tertullian* could ever have been induc'd to speak of this *miraculous* Eclipse in such a Manner ; with such a confident *Air* ; and to ground all he said upon the very *Records* they were in Possession of, before whom he was pleading, if he had not been very sure of his Point ? when nothing more was to have been done to give him the Lye, and entirely ruin all *Christians* and their Cause at once, than to have produced those very *Annals*, or *Records* he was *appealing* to ? About *fifty* Years after *Tertullian*, *Origen* entered the Lists with *Celsus* the *Epicurean*, in publishing (towards the latter End of his Days) that admirable Work, which we still have preserved, and is generally esteemed, as the most compleat Performance amongst all his Works extant. He there proves irrefragably the *Divinity* of our Saviour from this *wonderful Darkness*, as also from the *Earthquake* that was felt at his Death under the Reign of *Tiberius*. He makes *Phlegon* also his Voucher for these Things ; for he well knew, he was such an Author they could make no Objection to ; he being of the same Religion with themselves ; and besides, *Phlegon's* Chronicle was at that Time read by all the World. I hope, Sir, by this Time I have left you no Room for question-
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ing the Truth of that *Fact*, which has been the Subject of our present Conference; I mean the *miraculous Eclipse* and *Earthquake* that happen'd at our Saviour's Crucifixion: You see how well, how fully the *Testimonies* of *Heathen Writers* bear Witness to *those* of the primitive *Fathers*; and how *both* of them confirm the Account given of this *Darkness* in the Holy Scriptures. The *Evidence* therefore given by *Heathen Writers* has sufficiently prov'd the grand Point of all, *viz.* the *Divinity* of our blessed Saviour; and that there was just Reason for the *Exclamation* made by the *Areopagite*, upon this *miraculous Eclipse*, which he himself was witness to, *viz.* *Either the Divine Nature suffers, or else now sympathizes with him that does so.*

B. If you please to remember, before we left the *Park*, and came into your Study here, I frankly own'd to you, that I was sincerely dispos'd to hear all you cou'd offer in Defence of the *Christian Revelation*; and I must now farther own to you, that the *Evidence* which you have produc'd from *Heathen Writers*, as to this particular *Fact* of the *Eclipse* and *Earthquake*, in Defence of it, has given me no small Satisfaction; and as often as I read the History of our Saviour's *Passion* for the future, the concurrent *Testimonies* you have brought, will have their true Weight, and must create an inward Pleasure withal. But before I take my Leave of you, I wou'd willingly know the Reason, why you just now touch'd so lightly upon the *Testimony* of the *Areopagite*,
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which is a *Testimony* so well known, and which I expected you wou'd have produc'd, when you first set out upon this Sort of Proof.

A. I desire it may not be forgot, what I told you at the Beginning of this *Conference*, that I wou'd deal with you in this Affair (as being an Affair of the last Consequence) with the utmost *Sincerity*; though (as I beg Leave to remind you once more) your *Fraternity* in this Respect are notoriously deficient themselves, and therefore ought to be suspected. Now, the Reason of my not insisting on this *Testimony* of *Dionysius* the *Areopagite*, is, because some Criticks do not appear fully satisfied, as to the *Authority* on which the Writers of the Life of *Dionysius* ground this *Exclamation* of his; Dr. *Cave* makes a *Scruple*, when he says, *If Credit may be given to the Writers of his Life*; * and yet that great Man assigns no Reason for such *Scruple* neither. There are many learned Men, who do not in the least question the Truth of this *Fact*; I mean of *Dionysius's* being at *Heliopolis* in *Egypt*, when our Saviour suffer'd, and when the *surprizing Darkeness* extorted such *Exclamation*; and they assign several Reasons to support the *Fact*; as being deliver'd down in a traditionary Way, for above *eleven* Centuries; and as having the Judgment also of some eminent Writers, such as *Cyrill*, *Ephrem*, *Maximus*, *Sophronius*, and *Juvenal* Patriarch of *Jerusalem*, in favour of this *Fact*:
However,

* Si vitæ ejus Scriptoribus fides sit adhibenda. *Cave*, Hist. Liter.

However, it being a *Fact* that has not been universally admitted, I chuse rather to leave *it* with you, under the Disadvantage of such a *Scruple*, than to join or place *it* with other *Facts* that are *incontestable*. As to those remarkable *Testimonies* that have taken up the greatest Part of our Time, and were produc'd from the *Records* of the *Roman* Empire; the *Syriac Histories* of *Thal-lus*; and the *Olympiads*, or *Phlegon's Chronicle*; I make it my Request now, at parting, that you will in particular reflect on them at your Leisure; and I am glad to hear you say, that the *Evidence* I have already produc'd in *this Manner*, has given you no small Satisfaction. I can assure you, I am as much pleas'd to see, that you dare be *honest* in your Enquiries after eternal Happiness, which is an Attempt your *Fraternity* are loth to make, though the strongest Principle (which is *Self-Interest*) shou'd lead 'em to the doing of it. When you next please to favour me with your Company in this Place, you shall have farther Proof given you from other *Facts*; and in the same *Manner* as we have now proceeded; I mean, in sticking close to such *Evidence* as *Heathen* or *Jewish* Writers may afford us for the Truth of the *Christian Religion*; give me Leave only to remind you of the *Rule* that your *Fraternity* has laid down in their *New Book*, (though they by no Means observe *it* themselves,) *viz.* that in these Inquiries, *You still continue to use those Faculties which God has given you to judge with, after the best Manner you can.*

Let this *Sincerity* appear in our next Conference, and I make no Question but you will be still farther convinc'd, that the *Gospel Revelation* is from *God*; and consequently with Mr. *Lock*, (as I quoted him before) you will likewise *rejoice in the Light of Revelation, which sets us at Rest in many Things; the Manner whereof our poor Reason* (says he) *can by no Means make out to us.*

B. Adieu! my good Friend. My Soul is full of Thought upon this important Subject; which I believe will *soon* occasion you the Trouble of a second Visit.

CONFERENCE II.

A. **G**OOD Morrow, Sir. This early Visit makes me hope for more of your Company than I had the last Time.

B. — Sir, I am come to give you more Trouble. This *Room* gives me a fresh Pleasure; and I can venture to tell you, that I begin to have a better Opinion of those old *Fathers* there, than I had when I was here before.

A. I presume the Reason of that is, because you found their *Testimonies* (alledg'd in our last Conference) sufficiently supported by the *Evidence* that I produc'd from *Heathen* Writers; or rather that they supported one another.

B. 'Tis true; and I want to hear more of such *Evidence* touching some other *Points*, wherein the Truth of the Christian Religion, I shou'd think, is very nearly concern'd. I shou'd be glad, if *Heathen* or *Jewish* Writers can enable you to clear up some such *Points* to my Satisfaction.

A. You know, I am under the strongest Obligations already, to give you all the Satisfaction possible in *that Way*. Please then to let me know what the *Point* is, that you wou'd have first discuss'd; and then, upon examining the Collection of *Testimonies* here lying before us,

it will soon appear what *Evidence* you may expect from *Heathen* or *Jewish* Writers.

B. The Point is this: After I had read over carefully the History of our Saviour's *Passion*, (which I assure you, I did before I clos'd my Eyes that Evening, when I parted with you in this Place,) and had spent some Time in reflecting upon the *miraculous* Eclipse attending it, and the undoubted *Evidence* you had brought from *Heathen* Writers to confirm that Part of the History; I found, by looking back, that Christ had *prophefied* in a very remarkable Manner, but *two* or *three* Days before he suffer'd, concerning the *Destruction* of *Jerusalem*, the *Temple*, and the whole *Nation* in general. Now, this is a Part of Scripture that becomes you to clear up, and to set in the fullest Light possible, if you are able to do it. For I must own, I take it to be a *Prophecy*, that may be stil'd a *Fundamental* one; a *Prophecy* that seems to be the best *circumstantiated* of any other: The *Facts* are pointed out in a most distinguishing Manner, not only by the *three* Evangelists, but by several *Prophets* long before; I desire therefore, this *Prophecy* may be the present Subject; and let me hear what *Heathen* or *Jewish Evidence* you have relating to its Accomplishment; or such as may prove and explain this remarkable Piece of sacred *History*.

A. Sir, I have *Roman* and *Jewish Evidence*; both of them ready at hand, to give you full Satisfaction in what you desire: But before I
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summon those Writers, I can't but observe, that when our Saviour's *Predictions* in this Affair of *Jerusalem* and the *Jewish* Nation, are well weigh'd, with the several Circumstances taken notice of by him, they look rather like an *Historical* Abridgment of what is past, than a *Prophecy* of what was to happen near *forty* Years after; and the whole (take it altogether) must be an undoubted Argument of the Truth of the Christian Religion, and its Doctrines.

B. Upon second Thoughts, before you produce your *Evidence* or *Authority*, for confirming this *Prophecy*, please to give a summary Account of it, as it stands recorded by the *three* Evangelists; since you say it looks so like a History, rather than a Prophecy.

A. It appears from them, * that our Saviour at the latter End of his Ministry was frequently inculcating this grand Affair on the Minds of the *Jews*; letting 'em know that their *Desolation* and final *Overtthrow* was near at hand; that so when it should come to pass, they might remember it was the just Punishment of Heaven for their *Infidelity*. He declares to them, in the plainest Terms, a dreadful *War*; points out the last *Siege*, wherein their City *Jerusalem* shou'd be entirely subverted; the horrible *Famine* they were to suffer; the false Prophets that should deceive; their Dispersion over the Face of the whole

* Matt. xxiv. Mark xiii. Luke xxi.

whole Earth; the *Abomination of Desolation* in the *Holy Place*, that is, the Profanation of the *Temple*, as well by placing *there* the Images of the *Roman* Emperors, as by the numberless Murders that shou'd be there committed; the frightful *Circumvallation* or casting up of the Trenches round about 'em, that none might escape the divine Vengeance: He explains to them how, by a long Course of Wickedness, the Wrath of Heaven was drawn down; gives 'em certain Signs, whereby they might know the exact Time, when God would inflict these severe Punishments upon them; and it was but *three* Days before his Passion, as you observ'd, when our Saviour (for the last Time) going out of the *Temple*, took an Occasion of prophesying in so remarkable a Manner concerning the Destruction of it.* One of his Disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of Stones, and what Buildings are here; and Jesus answering, said unto him, Seest thou these great Buildings? there shall not be left one Stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

B. If I might be excus'd for interrupting you a few Minutes, I should be glad to know, what might induce this Disciple, or any other, to admire so much *this Structure*, when I think 'tis agreed on all Hands, that the *first* Temple was vastly superior to the *second* in every respect?

A. Your

* Mark xiii.

A. Your Observation is just in the main: But in one *Respect* the *second* Temple was unquestionably more *glorious* than the *first*, being that wherein the Redeemer of *Mankind* appear'd; agreeable with what *Haggai* * had long before prophesy'd; *The Desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this House with Glory, saith the Lord of Hosts; the Glory of this later House shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this Place will I give Peace, saith the Lord of Hosts.* With this Restriction, I say, your Observation's just: For otherwise the *second* Temple, which *Zerubbabel* rebuilt, did by no Means equal the Splendor and Grandure of the *first*: *Solomon*, in one Article only, had allotted a hundred thousand Talents of Gold, and ten hundred thousand Talents of Silver, which his Father *David* had left him for that Purpose, with other immense Dispositions of the like Nature: And yet this *second* Temple, tho' in these Respects inferior to the *first*, was look'd on by the *Gentiles*, as one of the *Wonders* of the World. And indeed there was Reason why they and others shou'd esteem it as such; when 'tis consider'd what vast Additions were made to this *second* Temple by King *Herod*, surnam'd the *Great*; the Number of *Portico's*, *Piazza's*, and other Buildings, besides the magnificent Decorations with which he had enrich'd it *within*; and these *Imbellishments* might probably be the Occasion of an Error, that some have run
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* Chap. ii. 7, 9.

into in this Matter, as thinking that *Herod* had been the Founder of a *third* Temple; tho' the Prophet *Haggai* assures us of the contrary; and the same has been substantially prov'd and confirm'd by others. * There was Room enough then, you see, for the Disciples, or any other curious Observer, to wonder at the Structure of this *second* Temple, when taken altogether. By the Descriptions that are given us, the Stones were very remarkable for their *Whiteness*, as well as *Firmness*, but chiefly so, for their prodigious *Size*; of which we can hardly form an Idea: For according to *Josephus*, † every one of those *Stones* was five and twenty Cubits long, twelve Cubits broad, and eight Cubits high; and all these vast *Stones* were so link'd together, and conjoin'd with Lead and Iron, that this Temple seem'd likely enough to last as long as the World it self.

B. This Digression has much oblig'd me. Please to proceed in finishing the *Scripture* Account of this *Prophecy*; and then I am ready to hear your other Account of it from *Heathen* and *Jewish* Writers.

A. I have little more to observe, than that our Saviour inform'd his *Disciples* as well as the *Jews*, that the *Time* of this Destruction of the Temple, when *there shou'd not be left one Stone upon another*, and when all these *Evils* shou'd befall their Nation, was very near at hand; so near,

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that

* Vide *Saliani Annales* ad A. M. 4035.

† *Antiq. Jud.*

that the present Race, the Families then in Being, shou'd see and feel it all. *This Generation shall not pass away, till all these Things be fulfilled.* So remarkable a *Prediction* made a very strong Impression on the Minds of the *first* Christians. *Thirty-two* Years after our Saviour had *prophecy'd* in this Manner, when *Cestius*, Governor of *Syria* came with a great Force before *Jerusalem*, (which was about *six* Years before the last and famous *Siege* under *Titus*) the *Christians* soon call'd to Mind what our Saviour had said, as also the express Command he had given them, that they shou'd quit the *Plain* of *Judea*, and retire to the *Hill-Country*: *Then let them which be in Judea flee unto the Mountains.** Accordingly they retir'd to *Pella* in good Time, which is a City in the mountainous Country, upon the Confines of *Judea* and *Arabia*; and though there were many Thousands of Christians, 'tis well known, in *Jerusalem* and the adjacent Parts before the *Siege* began, yet there was not *one* to be found, when the City came to be taken.

B. I must now remind you of what you said some Time ago, that you had both *Roman* and *Jewish* Evidence ready, to make good the *literal* Accomplishment of this *Prophecy*: It seems to be a proper Time now to produce it, which shall be carefully attended to.

I

A. It

* Mat. xxiv. 16.

A. It has pleas'd infinite Wisdom, that this *grand Event* shou'd be transmitted to Posterity by the united Testimonies of *Jew* and *Gentile*; and particularly so, by two of the most eminent Historians that the *Jews* and *Romans* cou'd boast of; I mean *Josephus* and *Tacitus*: The former had a considerable Command in the *fatal* War himself; the latter was a *Pretor*, as well as *Consul*, and might have been an Eye Witness of all the *Facts* in question, that are related in his History. I would farther observe, that the same overruling Providence so order'd it, that about two Centuries afterwards, the Emperor *Tacitus* was very solicitous in preserving this important History; several *Copies* being placed by his Appointment, in the most eminent Libraries; and this done yearly at the publick Expence.

B. I think *Tacitus* the Historian, was a professed Enemy to the Christian Religion, and Contemporary with *Pliny*, that gives *Trajan* an Account of the *Christians* Conduct, in one of his Epistles.

A. You are right, Sir; and, let me add, that there was an entire Friendship* between *Tacitus* and *Pliny*; and yet in regard to the *Christians*, their Thoughts and Dispositions were widely different. The latter appears, by his own Letters, to be of a sweet, affable Temper, humane and equitable; and when he gives a Character of the *Christians*, 'tis plain, he does it in the most favourable and genteel Manner; whereas the former,

* Plin. Lib. vii. Ep. 20.

mer, we may observe from his Works, was naturally of a malign and spiteful Temper, more inclin'd to give a wrong, than a kind *Turn* in his Way of Thinking; and as to *Christians* and our Religion, he formed the most hideous Ideas possible, and has painted them both in the most frightful Colours. You see this in his *Annals*, * where he is remarking, with a great deal of satirical Wit, upon the Luxury, Debauchery, and Cruelty of *Nero*; that Emperor regaled himself for six Days together at the Sight of his own City, which he had set on Fire; and finding it necessary to put a Stop, and to appease the People, who were justly incensed at him, as the Author of that general Calamity, bethought himself of this Expedient, in charging the *Christians* with all that had been done; upon which the Historian gives the following Character of the *Christians* and their Religion, though; as vile and false as the Emperor's Charge itself was; he speaks of them, as a People *odious to Mankind*, and calls their Religion a *dangerous Superstition*. I think much the same Way of talking is in your *new Book*, call'd, *Christianity as old as the Creation*, &c.

B. Let that Reflection pass at present, if you please: I desire to know, if you can give any Account how *Tacitus*, and other Heathens came to entertain such odd Notions of the *Christian Religion*, and whence such an Inveterency against its Professors?

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A. The

* Lib. xv.

A. The Account, as I take it, is this : There was a popular *Error* that had been long current, against which *Tacitus* was by no means Proof ; and I make no question, it was what did very much prejudice him against the *Christians*, and put him into an ill Humour as to their Religion. The Error was this, in *confounding* the *Christians* with the *Jews* so much, as to make no Difference between one and the other : The *Gentiles* proceeded upon this Principle ; that the Origine of both People was one and the same ; that they had the same sacred Books ; and that they worshipp'd the same God : Now, 'tis well known what Antipathy, what Contempt *Tacitus* had for the whole *Jewish* Nation, for their Ceremonies, their Behaviour, and their Religion in general : We need only turn to the *fifth* Book of his History, where we see the many Falshoods and Calumnies rais'd against that unhappy People, the *Jews*. He speaks of them, as a cursed, detestable sort of People, both in Respect of their abominable Crimes, and their infamous Superstitions. And 'tis on Account of these Calumnies, that *Tertullian* in his *Apologetick*, calls *Tacitus* a great *Lyer*. For *Tacitus*, first of all, advances it as a Truth, in the most serious Manner, that the *Jews* came from the Island of *Crete*, and that their *Name* was deriv'd from Mount *Ida* ; that in Process of Time, these *Jews* being driven out of *Egypt*, where they had taken Refuge, had like to have all perish'd by *Drought* in the Desarts of *Arabia* (where they wander'd for a long Time under

under the Conduct of their *Chief Moses*, had not a Company of *wild Affes* that were kicking and frisking about upon the Rock, shew'd them the Way to a Fountain, for quenching their Thirst ; and this stupid People, says he, by Way of Acknowledgment for the Favour, in being reliev'd in such Extremity, did ever after worship the *Head* of a wild *Afs*, as their God and great Deliverer.

B. This is a very odd Story, I must confess ; and I should be glad to know where *Tacitus* had it.

A. This and other silly *Stories* of the like Nature, that you meet with in *Tacitus*, 'tis easy to see, were all fetch'd from the Works of that celebrated Grammarian of *Alexandria*, one *Apion*, an avow'd Enemy of the *Jews* : This *Apion* the Emperor *Tiberius*, by way of Derision, used to call *Cymbalum Mundi*, a noisy Fellow, or a great *Braggadockio* : His Boastings were so intolerable, that nothing less than *Immortality* was to be the Portion of such, to whom he dedicated any of his Books. *Pliny jun.* speaks every whit as contemptibly of *Apion*, in his *Preface* to his Uncle's *Natural History*, where you may find an Account of this Matter. 'Tis very certain, that this *Apion* was the Man, that first invented this ridiculous Fable of the *Jews* worshipping the Head of an *Afs* ; and in those bloody *Invectives* which he publish'd against that People, he gives it out with the same Assurance, that this *Head*, which was of massy Gold, was found under the Foundation of the
Sanc-

Sanctuary, when the fam'd *Antiochus*, during the Time of the *Macchabees*, pillag'd the City and Temple of *Jerusalem*. Now these idle Tales first fram'd by *Apion*, and then adopted by *Tacitus*, gain'd such Footing in the World, that they generally pass'd for establish'd Truths, and (what was generally the Case with the *Christians*) they soon suffer'd under the like Imputation with the *Jews*. The *Christians* were charg'd with worshipping the Head of an *Ass* in their private Assemblies; and this absurd Report obtain'd such a general Belief, that, in the Emperor *Severus's* Reign, they insulted the *Christians* on that Account, by publickly exposing a Picture, wherein was to be seen a ridiculous Figure of this pretended *Deity*; a sort of a petty Monster, with the long Ears of an *Ass*; a Horn or Hoof instead of a Right Hand, in which was placed a great Book open; the Figure it self muffled up with a *Doctor's* long Robe; and at the Bottom of the Picture was this Legend, *Christianorum Deus Ononychites*. The Particulars you may read at your Leisure, if you please, in *Minutius Felix* and *Tertullian*, their Apologeticks.

B. You have said enough of *Tacitus*, to convince me, how much he was prejudiced against Christianity; and therefore, I think, I may in Justice own to you, that his *Evidence* ought to have the greater Weight, whenever you please to produce it; and I hope you'll excuse the Trouble I have given you in making these *Digressions*.

A. Since

A. Since what I have said of *Tacitus* adds Weight, in your Opinion, to the *Evidence* I am going to produce, it shou'd not, methinks, be call'd a *Digression*; and therefore I had rather you wou'd think, I have not been *out of the Way* at all, whilst I have been talking of *Tacitus*. To proceed then; notwithstanding the Spite and groundless Malice you have observ'd in this *Historian* against the *Christian Religion*, he has produced irrefragable Arguments in its Defence. This, as I observ'd of old *Phlegon*, was not done *wittingly* or *willingly*, but by the Appointment of him who governs all Things; and yet, whenever we read the *fifth* Book of his History, one wou'd think he writ it on purpose to bear his Testimony to *one* of the brightest Truths contain'd in the Gospel.

B. I make no Objections, as to an over-ruling Providence in this Affair: But I think, if you are minded, that the Evidence you are going upon, shou'd have its full Force, and effectually serve the Interest of the Cause you are defending, 'tis necessary your *Historian* appear to have done these *two* Things; the one is, that there be an exact and particular Account given of such *Facts* in his History, as are particularly mention'd in *Christ's* Prophecy: The other is, that though your *Historian* be allow'd to have no Religion himself, there ought to be the Marks, however, of *Fidelity* in what he relates; and moreover, his Relation ought to raise in the Minds of his Readers a thorough Sense and Conviction

Conviction that there was something *divine* and extraordinary in those *Facts* relating to the Punishment of the *Jewish* Nation.

A. What you require is but reasonable ; and I will now let you see that *Tacitus's* Account of this Matter fully answers in both Respects ; and no *Facts* cou'd have been recorded in a Manner more advantageous to the *Christian* Cause, than they are done by this *Heathen* Writer, and also by *Josephus* the Jew. They were both profess'd Enemies of our Religion, and I shall produce the Testimonies of both ; each supporting one another. The several Instances of divine Vengeance *foretold* to the Jews in the Gospel, and in the Prophets, may be reduc'd to *five* or *six* general Heads, which will easily comprehend all the rest. 1. The Siege of *Jerusalem*. 2. The Divisions and Civil Wars amongst the *Jews* themselves. 3. The Delusions of false Prophets amongst them. 4. A terrible Famine. 5. The taking and entire Subversion of that wretched City, as well as the Temple. 6. The Dispersion of, and Hardness of Heart in that unhappy People. Now these two *Chiefs* in History, (the *Roman* and the *Jew*) have inform'd us, that, about *thirty-eight* Years after our Saviour's Passion, whilst great Numbers were yet alive in *Jerusalem*, who had either a Share in his Death, or were Witnesses thereof, and recollected what he had prophesied to them ; this unfortunate City was for the *last* Time besieg'd in Form by *Titus* ; the Command of which his

Father

Father *Vespasian* had given him, being oblig'd himself to return into *Italy* to take Possession of the Empire. This young Prince, with vast Labour and Expence, encompass'd the City with a mighty Wall, fortify'd with Towers and Redoubts, as strong as the City it self had. But the War without the City was nothing in Comparison to *that* within it; where there were *three* Factions, all in Arms, falling foul on one another; cantoning themselves in *three* different Parts of the City; and filling the Whole with Blood and Carnage. Such was the Infatuation, that they were running continually about the Streets like Madmen; and those who were but suspected to desire Peace, and to have an End put to their general Calamity, were inhumanly put to Death for the same. A sore Famine, amidst this Blood, Rapine, and Violence, soon rag'd amongst them: They cou'd have no Succour from *without*, and yet there were *two* or *three* Millions of Souls to be maintain'd *within*; and still to increase their Misery, those *three* Factions conspiring to ruin one another, burnt those little Provisions that were left in their Magazines. And hence you may easily judge what the Miseries were that must befall 'em during the whole Time of the Siege.

B. I desire to know, if either of your Historians have observ'd the *Time* when that terrible *Famine* began, and how long the *Siege* lasted.

K

A. They

A. They inform us, that the Siege lasted near *five Months*; that it began in the Month of *April*, and that the *Famine* happen'd in the Month following. A *Measure* of Wheat or Barley was sold for a Talent, or about *one hundred and fifty Pounds* of our Money; and some sold their Houses and Estates to purchase that Way. The Famine increasing carried off whole Families at once; and nothing more common, than to see Men like Shadows in the Streets, trailing about full of Pain, and on a sudden tumbling down and giving up the Ghost in a fainting Fit. The poorer Sort were *presently* interr'd at the publick Expence, to prevent (if possible) the Infection spreading: But this Precaution was not long of any Service; when they began to throw their Dead over the Walls of the City: And one of their Deserters assur'd *Titus*, that from the fourteenth of *April* to the first of *July* following, *one hundred fifteen thousand eight hundred and eighty* Corpses had been carry'd out at that one Gate alone, where he had been a Centinel, without reckoning such as their Parents had buried at their own Charge; the Stench of the *Jewish* Carcasses became a very great Nuisance to the *Roman* Camp; and as other Deserters inform'd 'em, the Besieged growing weary in thus carrying out their Dead, they laid 'em at last in Heaps in their greatest Houses, and when full, they shut 'em close up. Tears were now no more to be seen, nor Groans any longer heard in *Jerusalem*; an implacable Ne-

cessity

ceffity had dried up the very Fountain of Grief; chill'd the Blood; and destroy'd all natural Affection; *the Love of many*, fays our Saviour, *fhall wax cold*; a fullen Silence prevail'd every where; no one complain'd for his Dead, nor yet lamented his own Condition; and feveral crept into their Father's *Tombs*, where they waited for Death, that they might not want a Grave. our Historian farther informs us, that whilst Affairs were in this melancholy Pofture, and Things reduc'd to the laft Extremity, there were not wanting factious discontented Perfons, who broke open Peoples Houfes, rifling the Poor of a few Weeds and wild Plants which they had gather'd without the Walls of the City, and ran the Rifque of their Lives in doing it. They maf-facred Women, as well as old Men, that offer'd to difpute parting with the little Bread that was left 'em; and the very Children, whose Fingers were too tenacious of a Morfel, had their Brains dash'd out for it. And yet, notwithstanding fuch Barbarity, the Historian obferves, that thefe Ruffians in a certain Houfe once retir'd with the utmoft Horror and Confufion, having surpriz'd a certain Gentlewoman, diftinguifh'd by her Birth and Fortune (*Mary* the Daughter of *Eleazar*) eating her own Son, that ſhe had fuckled; Famine and Defpair urging her to that inhuman Action. *Woe to them that give fuck in thofe Days*, fays our Saviour.

B. I would not willingly interrupt you in an Account you are giving, which is so very surprising in all its Parts ; and surely your *Authors* must have been very sensible themselves that the Hand of God was in these Proceedings. But I think you said some Time ago, that the Famine began the very next Month after the Siege ; and that the Siege lasted near five Months: You have likewise taken notice of great Numbers destroy'd by their own Swords and unheard-of Barbarities, as well as by Famine : Now, whence was it, or what Reason can be assign'd, that in spite of such a long Train of Misfortunes, and such dreadful Extremities to which I perceive they were reduc'd, they should still hold out so long, and continue themselves wretched with so much Obstinacy ?

A. There was a general *Infatuation*, occasion'd chiefly by a great Number of *false Prophets*, that were risen up amongst them ; who were every Day deluding 'em by vain Promises of an infallible, miraculous and speedy Deliverance, dinning in their Ears, as coming from the Lord, such Expressions as these, *I will break the Roman Bonds asunder ; and the Day of Salvation is at hand* ; when yet they were just upon the Brink of Destruction, and no Way left to escape the powerful Hand of *Titus*. Thus they were amusing themselves with imaginary Victories ; and their Extravagancy was carried to such a Height, that no less than the Empire of the Universe

was

was in a little Time to be their Lot.* I don't therefore wonder to see you surpriz'd at this Account; and I frankly own to you, 'tis such an *Infatuation* (take it with all its Circumstances) that would not easily gain Credit, were it not attested in the Manner it is. Besides *Josephus*, *Tacitus* † himself tells us, “ That the *Jews* were
 “ firmly persuaded from some old Prophecies in
 “ their sacred Books, that the Eastern World was
 “ at that Time to resume its Strength, and that
 “ such, as shou'd prescribe Laws to the Universe,
 “ were to come out of the Land of *Judæa*.
 There were three remarkable *Factions*, I observ'd to you some Time ago, in *Jerusalem*; *Eleazar*, who was at the Head of one of them, was after some Time defeated, and his Force dissipated; the other two Chiefs, nam'd *John* and *Simon*, thereupon acted like two Tyrants; who apply'd to themselves those Prophecies that had already been accomplish'd in the Person of Christ, and could only be understood as relating to his *spiritual* Kingdom; and moreover they cou'd not doubt, after so noble a Defence made by the *Jews*, but they should be recogniz'd as *two* Kings, as was formerly done in the Case of the *Machabees*; and having driven away the *Romans*, they would have nothing left to do, but to share the Government of the World between 'em.

B. Gross

* Dion, L. 60, † Hist. L. 5.

B. Gross Stupidity ! and a severe Punishment it was indeed : But what might the Behaviour of *Titus* be, when he saw such Obstinacy in this miserable People ?

A. *Titus*, tho' he was full of Wrath at these Proceedings of the *Jews*, was however unwilling to destroy *Jerusalem* ; and therefore, as *Dion* has remark'd, he shew'd double Diligence for saving it, offering 'em a General *Amnesty*, if they would think better of it, and return to their Duty : But all the generous Offers made by that Prince were insolently rejected. *Titus* at length began to think of another Method, that he judg'd more likely to work upon 'em, and to bring 'em over to their Obedience ; and that was the *Mediation* of our Historian *Josephus* ; for first of all, he was a *Jew* and a Fellow-Citizen ; he was one of their Priests, and an able Man for managing such an Affair ; his Birth moreover, as well as his Profession, being a *Pharisee*, had distinguish'd him amongst them ; he had but three Years before commanded forty thousand Men in *Galilee*, and sustain'd a long Siege against *Vespasian*, who after taking the Place, and *Josephus* too Prisoner, soon gave him his Liberty to go where he pleas'd ; for *Josephus* had ingratiated himself, by foretelling that both *Vespasian* and his Son shou'd be Emperors ; which, tho' *then* unlikely, seem'd *now* to be near accomplish'd in good earnest.

C

B. This

B. This Project of *Titus* seems to have been well form'd for answering the Ends he had in view : But what was the Success ?

A. *Titus* having sent for *Josephus* from *Alexandria*, whither he was retir'd, dispatch'd him several Times with Terms to the *Jews* in *Jerusalem*. Our Historian relates himself in his *seventh* Book, how in regard to the Orders he had receiv'd from that Prince, and the natural Affection he had for his Country, he often appear'd before the Bulwarks of the City, and there raising his Voice, proclaim'd aloud to those that were on Duty, that they wou'd not perish thro' their Obstinacy, but speedily prevent their entire Ruin and Destruction, which was inevitable, without imploring the Mercy of the Conqueror ;
 “ Save the Holy City, says he, save the Temple,
 “ the Wonder of the World, which even *Titus*
 “ is *unwilling* to destroy ; save the whole Nation
 “ and your selves.” *Josephus* was not disheartened, though at the same Time his good Advice met with no other Return from his Fellow Citizens than Reproaches, Invectives, and grievous Affronts. “ I wou'd still merit more at
 “ your Hands, replies *Josephus*, in this obstinate
 “ Way of mine, if it might be of Service in
 “ saving an ungrateful People, who seem, by too
 “ evident Marks of a divine Vengeance, to be
 “ doom'd to a total Destruction.” But *Josephus* at length was forc'd to retire, after a dangerous Wound receiv'd in his Head by a Stone thrown down from the Ramparts ; and it was not without great Difficulty and fresh Hazard, that they brought

brought *him off* into the *Roman Camp*. At length the Fortrefs *Antonia* being taken by *Storm* about the Beginning of *August*, the *Temple*, that stood near it, soon had the like Fate, notwithstanding the *desperate* Fury that was shewn in its Defence : For as to the *Temple* in particular, the *Jews* thought their Happiness wrapp'd up in the Preservation of that Place ; and, as another eminent Heathen * Writer remarks, they flatter'd themselves that Victory and Felicity wou'd be their Lot, if they fell with their Temple. About three Weeks after this, the upper Part of the City, where was Mount *Sion*, being taken, with its three Citadels, *Jerusalem*, according to our Saviour's Prediction, was entirely overthrown and brought to its fatal End by the Conquerors ; who, out of so many magnificent Buildings, left only three Towers standing, as a Monument of their Victory, as well as of the ancient Grandure of the City.

B. I thank you for this melancholy and surprizing Account of *Jerusalem*. The *Scripture* Account you gave before, does indeed (as you observed) look more like an *Historical* Abridgement of what was past, than a *Prophecy* of what it seems, happen'd so many Years after. But, methinks, the *Heathen* Historians ought to have made Apologies to their Readers for delivering such Things as Matters of *Fact*, and yet so very *unaccountable*.

A. You

* *Dion.*

A. You requir'd *Fidelity*, and very justly, some Time ago, in our *Historians* ; and, I think, they have given sufficient Proof of it in this Case ; and you see, we cannot hear or read the Account given by them of these *Facts* relating to the Punishment of the *Jewish* Nation, but it necessarily works a Conviction in our Minds, that there must have been something *divine* and extraordinary in those *Facts* : And, I think, what you allow'd of your self, is but reasonable, *viz.* That they could not well write in that Manner, and not be sensible that the Hand of God was in such Proceedings ; but then, they knew not the Reason of so severe a Visitation, which was *putting to Death the Lord of Glory ; a crucify'd Saviour was a stumbling Block* to the one, as *it was Foolishness* to the other. But, after all, I must grant, there are some *Facts*, that seem almost incredible ; and particularly, I think, the very *Numbers* said by these *Historians* to have perish'd in *Jerusalem* is a *Fact*, that may be thought to need an Apology, as much as any other : But no Apology can or ought to be thought necessary, where *Facts* are so unquestionably attested, as they are here : No History has better Vouchers, than that of this fatal Siege of *Jerusalem* : It has the Authority of Authors of the first Rank or Figure in the World ; Authors, who were either Eye-Witnesses or Contemporaries, or else such as liv'd soon after those Times : And as to Ecclesiastical Writers, they are all unanimous and punctual in the Relation of this memorable

L Event,

Event, to evidence an entire *Accomplishment* of our *Scripture* Prophecies in this Respect: Add to this, what the *Jews* themselves still relate to this Day, and the miserable *Spectacles* they themselves are to the whole World, occasion'd by that general *Dispersion*: Put all these Things together, and I leave you to judge, whether any reasonable Person can desire stronger Evidence for the Truth of any Fact?

B. Since you mention'd that Particular, of the great *Numbers* that perish'd in *Jerusalem*, what might the Whole amount to?

A. The *Numbers*, consider'd these several Ways;
 1. Of such as died by Famine and Sickneſs;
 2. Of such as perish'd by their own Civil Fury;
 and, 3. Of such as fell by the Hand of the Enemy; amounted in all, to *eleven hundred thousand Persons*, in the Space of four or five Months Time. This is what *Josephus* expreſſly affirms; and 'tis what he wrote, not only in regard to Poſterity, (which might be impos'd on,) but for to be read by many illuſtrious *Romans*, who had ſerved in that memorable Siege: To be read in particular, by the Emperor *Veſpaſian*, and by *Titus* himſelf; to whom he had the Honour of preſenting this Hiſtory; and who was pleas'd with his own *Hand* to atteſt the Truth of the Whole; and alſo to order, that thoſe *Memoirs*, and no other, ſhould ſerve for writing that Part of the Hiſtory of his Reign: In ſhort, *Titus* order'd this Work of *Josephus* * to be plac'd in
 the

* *Joseph. in vitâ ſuâ.*

the publick Library, with a proper *Encomium*; the Author's Statue was cast, and set up in *Rome*; and King *Agrippa*, who accompanied *Titus* in this Expedition, did our Historian the Honour of writing to him *three* or *four score* Letters, which contain an ample Testimonial of *Josephus's* Sincerity.

B. Sir, I cannot question the Sincerity of your Author, after this Account that you have given of him and his Work; and upon recollecting one Particular, which just now comes into my Mind, I begin to think, that there is not so much need (as I thought before) for your Authors making *Apologies*, in relating so many *Facts* seemingly incredible: For as to this frightful Number in Particular of *eleven hundred thousand* Persons, you just mentioned, it does not appear so very strange, when 'tis consider'd, what Authors, *Heathen, Christian, and Hebrew*, do all unanimously affirm to be true, that no People in the World did so increase and multiply as the *Jews*.

A. Your Observation is very just; and the single Family of *Jacob* is a remarkable Instance, who during their Sojourning in *Egypt* *two hundred and fifteen* Years, multiply'd to the Number of *six hundred thousand Men*, without reckoning Women and Children. Those Authors, from whom you made your Observation, will likewise tell you, that *Jerusalem* was one of the most populous Cities in the East; and they observe moreover, that *Titus* having begun the Siege the first

L 2
Day

Day of the Feast of *unleavened Bread*, there was consequently a general *Rendezvous* of the *Jews* there, from all Parts of the World, to keep their Passover ; by which Means infinite Numbers were shut up, without any Means left 'em of getting out again.

B. Did *Divine Vengeance* stop here, or how did it fare with the *Jews* after the City was taken ?

A. The grievous Famine, that had raged amongst 'em, forc'd a great many to pilfer and plunder after the *Romans* had enter'd ; and, as our Historian informs us, the Number of those pilfering *Jews* was so very great, that the *Romans*, to terrify others from the like Practices, commonly crucify'd about *five hundred* a Day of them ; insomuch that at last, says he, there was neither Wood to be got to make Crosses, nor room to set 'em up in ; and whilst these Punishments were inflicting, the *Arab* and *Egyptian* Soldiers cut the Throats of about *two thousand* *Jews* besides, ripping up their Bellies to find the Gold, which, 'twas bruited in the *Roman* Camp, the *Jews* had swallow'd ; and *Titus* with all his Power, found it pretty difficult to put a Stop to such inhumane Practices. As to other Places where the *Jews* were, the like Tokens of divine Wrath appear'd ; *eight thousand* *Jews* were massacred in *Joppa* ; *ten thousand* in *Damascus* ; *thirteen thousand* in *Scythopolis* ; *fifteen thousand* in *Gadara*, or the Parts beyond *Jordan* ; *twenty thousand* in *Cæsarea* ; *fifty thousand* in the City of

Alexandria, which Place seem'd to be floating with the Blood ; and the dead Bodies lying in Heaps in the Streets and publick Places : One in particular, says the Historian, named *Simon*, the Son of *Saul*, being fill'd with Horror and Despair, catch'd hold of the hoary Hairs of his aged Father, and slew him ; then cut the Throats of his Mother, Wife, and Children, and afterwards dispatched himself with his own Sword ; in short, (not to dwell any longer on this melancholy Subject,) the Number of *Jews* destroy'd, on several Occasions, in this War, amounted to *thirteen hundred thirty seven thousand, four hundred and ninety Persons*, besides others that could not easily be brought into the Account. I have now given you a full View of the terrible Vengeance of an offended God, executed on a miserable People, for *two* of the greatest Crimes that Mortals were capable of committing ; I mean, their putting to Death the *Lord of Life and Glory*, and then obstinately adhering to what they had done, without the least Signs of Repentance. This terrible Vengeance was foretold by the *Prophets* many Ages before ; but it was *Jesus Christ* himself, who was to denounce it to the *present* Generation, that was to feel the dismal Effects of it ; and this Vengeance was denounc'd in Terms so exprefs ; the bloody Scene drawn with such strong Lines ; represented with such distinguishing Marks and Circumstances attending the fatal Blow, that (as both of us have already observed in our Turns) it looks more like a short *History*,

tory, than a plain-simple Prophecy. *Verily I say unto you, all these Things shall come upon this Generation : O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto Thee : How often wou'd I have gather'd thy Children together, as a Hen doth gather her Brood under her Wings ; and ye would not ? Behold, your House is left unto you desolate.** What a heavenly Pathos is there in these Words ! He was the *express Image of his Father*, and, as such, he expostulates with his disobedient Children : Observe the Antithesis — *How often would I — But ye would not.* — He had called upon them long before, under the *Jewish Dispensation*, by *Angels*, by *Prophets*, by *just Men* ; and now he did it in his own Person for *three Years* together, by *Miracles*, by *Exhortations*, by *Threatnings* ; all done to retrieve 'em from a State of Misery, *dead in Trespasses and Sins* ; that by embracing the *New Covenant*, they might become *one Fold under one Shepherd* ; that by their Faith and Repentance they might have engag'd him to *defend 'em under his Wings*, and to *make 'em safe under his Feathers*,† (a proverbial Speech common amongst the Jews :) *His Faithfulness and Truth* would have been their *Shield and Buckler* ; and the impending Storm of divine Vengeance would happily have been removed far from them : But, alas ! *He beheld the City, and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even Thou, at least in this thy Day, the Things which*

* Mat. xxiii.

† Psal. xci.

which belong unto thy Peace ! But now they are hid from thine Eyes.||

B. I have observ'd already, you may remember, that your *two* Authors cou'd hardly give such a surprizing Account of these Things, but that they must have been sensible themselves that the *Hand of God* was *in it* : But does this appear from any exprefs Acknowledgment of their own ?

A. The Acknowledgments of both of them are very exprefs to that Purpose; that there were in those Proceedings something truly *miraculous* and *divine*. *Tacitus*, though in his Conduct he appears to have been notoriously loose and prophane, yet in this Case of the *Jewish* Desolation and their final Destruction, he says, That it was declar'd both from *Heaven*, and on *Earth*, by such unusual and frightful Prodigies, that neither Prayers nor Sacrifices cou'd avert it.* And when he comes to Particulars, he says, That whole Battalions were seen engaging in the Air, and that their Arms clash'd and glitter'd in the Rencounter.† The other Historian, *Josephus*, is more particular, who says, this happen'd towards Sun-set upon the *twenty-second* Day of *May* ; that these airy Legions were seen in all the Country, and seem'd to spread and extend their fiery Chariots, as if they were forming a Siege.

B. This

‡ Luke xix.

* Evenerant prodigia quæ neque Hostiis neque votis piare fas habet Gens Superstitioni obnoxia, Religionibus adversa. L. V.

† Visæ per Cœlum concurrere Acies, rutilantia Arma.

B. This Account puts me in Mind of what happen'd between two and three hundred Years before, when *Antiochus*, firnam'd *Epiphanes*, took *Jerusalem*. There were the like Prodigies, tho' rather greater, ushering in that remarkable Profanation of the Temple, and Cruelties exercis'd on the *Jewish* Nation. This Account we have from the *Macchabean* History, you know, and I suppose you do not question the Authority.

A. The Authority in that *Respect* is very good, and I thank you for recollecting in so proper a Time : If you please, we'll read the Passage—*And then it happen'd, that through all the City of Jerusalem, for the Space almost of forty Days, there were seen Horsemen running in the Air, in Cloth of Gold, and armed with Lances, like a Band of Soldiers ; and Troops of Horsemen in Aray, encountring and running one against another, with shaking of Shields and Multitude of Pikes or Staves, and drawing of Swords, and casting of Darts, and glittering of golden Ornaments, and Harness of all Sorts : Wherefore every Man prayed that that Apparition might turn to Good, 2 Mac. 5.*

B. Has *Tacitus* recorded any other Prodigies or extraordinary Occurrences among the *Jews*, that preceded their Destruction?

A. Yes; two or three more, and those very remarkable ; which, he says, happen'd in the very Temple, and the very same Year with the former. The Temple first of all, as he informs us, was illuminated on a sudden, in a dark Night,

as if it had been Noonday; * and *Josephus* more particularly remarks, that this happen'd about the *third* Hour after Midnight, and the *eighth* Day of *April*; which, as it fell out, was the Day of the *Passover* that Year, and was look'd upon by the most judicious, as a Sign of the *Temple's* being to be destroy'd by Fire, as it was accordingly *five* Years after. Whilst the same *Passover* was kept, the *East* Door of the *Temple*, which was made of *Brass*, and so heavy, that it requir'd *twenty* Men to shut it at Night, (secur'd by Iron Bars and otherways in the strongest Manner) open'd nevertheless of its own Accord all of a sudden, about Midnight †. *Josephus's* Remark is, that God hereby signify'd he wou'd soon open and deliver up the *Temple* to the *Gentiles*. The same Year, upon the Day of *Pentecost*, when the Priests went into the *Temple* at Night, according to Custom, to do their Duty, they soon heard a hideous Noise, and perceiv'd something to move about in the *Sanctuary*; after which, upon its moving out of that sacred Place, they heard a Voice distinctly pronouncing and repeating the following Words, *Let us go hence, Let us go hence*. St. *Chrysostom* || says they were *Angels*, the Guardians of the *Temple*, who having long waited (but in vain) the *Jews* Amendment, declar'd at last boldly, that they were quitting the Place, which God now disallow'd

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* Subito Nubium igne collucere Templum, L. V.

† Expansæ repente Delubri Fores. Tac. L. V.

Hom. 64. in Joseph.

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thou'd be no longer in the Power of Conqueror or Conquered to save the *Temple* from utter Ruin. A *Roman* Soldier, by a divine Impulse (says *Josephus*) taking a Parcel of Firebrands and by the Help of his Fellow-Soldiers mounting up to one of the Windows, hurl'd the Fire in such a Manner, that the Flame soon became general, and in a little Time seiz'd the inner Part of that noble Building.

B. Since there was such a strong Inclination in *Titus* to save it, how did he behave on this Occasion?

A. His Behaviour was still answerable to his former Conduct; and he was very sensible, that he was the Instrument of divine Vengeance, and

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* Audita major humanâ Vox : Excedere Deos : Simul ingens motus excedentium. L.V.

shou'd be no longer in the Power of Conqueror or Conquered to save the *Temple* from utter Ruin. A *Roman* Soldier, by a divine Impulse (says *Josephus*) taking a Parcel of Firebrands and by the Help of his Fellow-Soldiers mounting up to one of the Windows, hurl'd the Fire in such a Manner, that the Flame soon became general, and in a little Time seiz'd the inner Part of that noble Building.

B. Since there was such a strong Inclination in *Titus* to save it, how did he behave on this Occasion?

A. His Behaviour was still answerable to his former Conduct; and he was very sensible, that he was the Instrument of divine Vengeance, and not the Conqueror himself only. *Titus* was just gone to repose himself, after a great Fatigue the Day before, when he and his principal Officers gave the best Orders they could for extinguishing the Fire; but the Uproar and Disorder was now so great, that his Commands, instead of being executed, were scarce minded, or any Notice at all taken of them by the Soldiers; for when they had once discover'd, that the very *outside* of the *Holy Place* was plated with Gold, and consequently concluded what immense Riches they shou'd find within-side, they began to be more outrageous, valuing neither the Intreaties nor the Threats of *Titus*, but obstinately persisting to kindle the Fire in one Place, as fast as their Prince was quenching it in another. And thus the Temple was laid in Ashes; and

(as it has been observ'd) this was done in the same Month, and upon the same Day, when the former Temple was destroy'd by *Nabuchadonosor*, a little more than *six hundred* Years before.*

B. You said just now, if I remember right, that *Titus* was sensible himself, that he was the *Instrument* of God in these Victories he had obtain'd over the *Jews*. A glorious Reflection for an old *Roman* to make! And where's the *Christian* General that does the like? But pray, Sir, what Authority have you for saying this of *Titus*?

A. His own Words, and his Behaviour after his Victories, are both Witnesses to the Truth of what I said. *Titus* being deeply affected and astonish'd at the mighty Things he had seen done, constantly refus'd all Addresses and Congratulations from the Cities and neighbouring Provinces; their Panegyricks always met with this Answer; *That it was not he that had vanquish'd; that what he had done, was lending his Hand for executing the Wrath of Heaven; and that he sincerely acknowledg'd, he was no more than a weak Instrument in the doing of it.* This remarkable Saying of *Titus* we have preserv'd to us in as remarkable a Manner, by *Philostratus* in the Life of the famous Impostor *Appollonius Thyaneus*; * Providence so ordering it, that what was wanting in one *Heathen* Writer, shou'd be supply'd in another. After this, 'tis less to be wonder'd at, what other Historians tells us of

Titus,

* 2 Kings xxiv.

† Lib. 6. c. 14.

Titus, that when he had taken a View of the outward Fortifications of the *Temple*, and saw with Amazement that all his batt'ring Rams had done no Damage, he said several Times by the way of an Exclamation, *That if Heaven had not fought for him, meer human Force had never been able to effect what was done.* We are not now to wonder, if he refus'd Crowns of Gold that were offer'd him for doing Honour to his Victories ; and that both *He* and his Father *Vespasian* wou'd by no Means accept of the Title of *Conqueror of Judæa*, tho' the *Roman* Senate wou'd fain have given it. * In short, those two Princes had too great an Insight into Things, not to know and perceive, what their Modesty likewise made 'em acknowledge, that the *Jewish* Nation could never have suffer'd such an Overthrow, if divine Vengeance had not visibly effected it : But still they were at a Loss to account for such *Vengeance*, or what that detestable *Crime* might be that brought such swift and general Destruction ; which really was, *crucifying the Lord of Life and Glory.*

B. I own, you have sufficiently prov'd what I ask'd of you concerning *Titus* : Both Father and Son seem to have had rare Accomplishments ; and such Accomplishments 'tis plain, did serve better to display the Works of Providence in this wonderful Scene of Affairs in *Judæa*. But, if I am not mistaken, notwithstanding all their Modesty, those Princes had some *Monuments* to

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* Neuter Judaicus cognominatus. *Dio. in Vita Vesp.*

perpetuate their Names on this Account: Pray, inform me.

A. You say right; and such Monuments are yet remaining to this Day. But 'twas done by Order of the *Senate*, or, to speak more properly, by the particular Appointment of Heaven. One of the Monuments are *Medals* of *Titus* and *Vespasian*, struck in Brass, Silver, and Gold, (to be seen in the Collections of the Curious,) having on the Reverse *a Captive sitting and lamenting at the Foot of a Palm-Tree* with this Legend, *JUDÆA CAPTA*. The other Monument, which is the most considerable, is that stately triumphal *Arch* erected at *Rome* against the Day that *Titus* enter'd the City, where in *Basso-Relievo* of Marble is seen at this Day the Figure of that Prince, together with the *Golden Table*, the *Golden Candlestick*, with the *seven Branches* supported by eight Persons; and other remarkable Spoils, brought from *Judæa* and the Temple.

B. I suppose you are now pretty well tired; I'll take my Leave, and go Home, and make the best Reflections I can upon this Accomplishment of such a *Fundamental Prophecy*, as I find it both in the Old and New Testament. I thank you for the Pains you have taken, and hope soon to pay my Respects to you in this Place.

A. One Thing occurs, which I desire, you would take along with you: 'Tis a very remarkable *Prophecy* of the two Apostles *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, relating to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, made by *them* when they were deliver'd up to
Nero

Nero by the *Jews*, about the Year of our Lord 66. 'Tis a very curious Fragment, and being so well attested, it were much to be wish'd it had been plac'd with the other *Acts* of the Apostles, and *made Canonical*. It was collected and committed to writing by the primitive Christians : 'Tis recorded by *Lactantius*,* in his *Institutions* ; and *Phlegon*, whose Honesty and Integrity we took Notice of in our last Conference, whose Testimony is unquestionable, and who writ but about *forty* or *fifty* Years after this Prophecy of the Apostles, says expressly in his *Olympiads*,† that *St. Peter's Predictions to the Jews concerning their Destruction, had been all exactly fulfill'd*. And for farther Satisfaction in this Matter, we need only read *Origen's* second Book writ against *Celsus*. Now the *Apostles* declar'd to the Jews as follows, “ That the Time
 “ pointed out by *Jesus Christ* for their final De-
 “ struction, was nigh at Hand ; that *Jerusalem*
 “ shou'd be besieg'd, and laid entirely waste ;
 “ that they should suffer Famine so very grie-
 “ vous that they should eat one another ; that
 “ they should see their Wives and Children ex-
 “ piring, and a general Ranack with Fire and
 “ Sword ; that they should be banished their
 “ Country for ever, and become Fugitives or
 “ Slaves to the End of the World ; and that
 “ all

*Sed & futura aperuit [Christus] illis omnia ; quæ *Petrus* & *Paulus* Romæ prædicaverunt ; & ea prædicatio in memoriam scripta permansit ; in qua cum multa alia mira, tum etiam hoc futurum esse, dixerunt ; ut post breve tempus immitteret Deus Regem, qui expugnaret Judæos, & Civitates eorum solo adæquaret, ipsos autem fame, sitique confectos obsideret, &c. *Lact.* l. iv. c. 21.

† *Olymp.* L. xiii. xiv.

“ all these Evils should befall ’em on Account
 “ of their Outrage and Offence committed against
 “ the Son of God, who had been plainly decla-
 “ red as *such* by the many Miracles wrought
 “ amongst them.” And now, my Friend, put
 all these Things together, that have passed be-
 tween us to Day concerning the Destruction of
Jerusalem; the surprizing Accomplishment of an-
 cient *Prophecies* relating thereto; the visible
 Marks of divine Vengeance, in the whole Pro-
 cedure; and acknowledg’d as *such*, but not
 rightly understood, by the *Jewish* and *Heathen*
 Writers, and even by *Titus* himself: After this,
 tell me what you think of *Revelation*? Whether
 our *Reason* is not sufficiently inform’d from the
Testimonies of Heathens, that these Things are
 so? That these *Facts* are true; and consequently
 that the *Scriptures*, where these Things are fore-
 told, are truly the *Word* of God, and as such to
 be regarded by us? I remember, in our former
 Conference, you said, the *Difficulty* you labour’d
 under, was, how we could by the Help of our *Rea-*
son attain to a certain Knowledge of the *Truth* of
 those *Facts*, which we call the *Gospel Revelation*: I
 have undertaken to remove that *Difficulty* in a way
 that you justly own is unexceptionable, by *appeal-*
ing to the Enemies of our Religion, who have
 (neither wittingly nor willingly) bore their Testi-
 mony to the Truth of it. The *miraculous* Eclipse,
 which was clear’d up and fully establish’d from
 such sort of *Testimony* at our last Meeting, does
 of it self (were there no other Evidence) suffi-
 ciently

ciently establish that grand *fundamental* Point, the *Divinity* of our blessed Saviour ; and, I make no question, if you will but favour me with your Company two or three Times more, you will be convinc'd, that the Truth of the *Christian Religion* appears from *Heathen Testimonies*, not only in regard to *Facts*, but to the principal *Doctrines* likewise. Your Dispute about *positive Duties* will soon have an End, if without Prejudice you will use those Faculties that God has given you to judge with in these Matters. And remember what you have already agreed to at our first setting out, *That when by the Help of our Reason Revelation becomes establish'd, no Suggestion either against the Need of such a Revelation, or against our Obligation to receive it, ought to make any Impression upon us.*

B. I am still of the same Opinion : And as to my *Reason*, the new Book,* which our Society has lately publish'd, will bear me out, when I use it after the best Manner I can ; The End is then answer'd, says that Book, for which God gave us our Faculties, and our Conduct is fully justify'd.

A. I like the Rule exceedingly ; but till your Society practises accordingly, the End is not answer'd, nor their Conduct justify'd. *Adieu.* I wish you well home, and a quick Return to this Place.

* Christianity as Old as the Creation.

CONFERENCE III.

B. **G**OOD Morrow, Sir. You see I am very quick in making you this Visit ; much sooner, indeed, than I intended at our parting : But when I came Home, and had carefully read over the *Prophecy*, and recollected, as well as I could, the Particulars of its *Accomplishment*, which were the *Subjects* of our last Conversation, I began to think, this Point had not been so fully *discussed* as it ought to be ; or at least, as I could wish, for my own Satisfaction. My Meaning is, that this *Prophecy* of our Saviour has not been consider'd by us in its full View and Extent, as the express Words seem to require it shou'd be ; for we learn from that *Prophecy*, not only the *Destruction* of *Jerusalem*, and the *Jewish* Nation, as also their *Dispersion*, which are Things already accomplish'd, and have been fully discoursed of ; but we learn moreover something else very *material*, which is yet accomplishing ; and which, according to your Commentators, will not have its final Completion, till *Jew* and *Gentile* at the End of the World shall join with the *Christian* in embracing the Gospel. You easily guess at the Passage ; where the Marks of divine Vengeance are stamp'd upon the very *Ground*
where

where the Holy City stood ; and 'tis pronounced, that such Marks shall be as *lasting*, as the fugitive Condition of the People ; so that all human Endeavours should prove in vain for *re-building* on that Ground where the *Temple* was founded. This *Part* of the Prophecy is very plain and exprefs, when our Saviour tells his Disciples*, *They [the Jews] shall fall by the Edge of the Sword, and shall be led captive into all Nations ; and Jerusalem shall be trodden under Foot of the Gentiles, until the Times of the Nations be fulfilled.* And this *Part* I desire may now have its due Consideration ; and, if you can, pray inform me, whether such *Part* of the Prophecy has been *fulfilling* by any *signal* Marks of Divine Vengeance, in relation to that Place, in the succeeding Ages of the *Church*. For if such *Marks* shall appear, supported by good Authority, I readily grant, you will then have produced another very cogent Argument in Defence of *Christianity*.

A. I much rejoice at this good Disposition in my Friend ; that he has read over the *Prophecy* with such Attention ; that he has made such a judicious Remark on a *Deficiency* in our former discoursing of it ; and that he has now given me an Opportunity of supplying that Defect ; and as I hope in every Respect to his Satisfaction. As to the remarkable *Text* you just now quoted, the *Comment* you have made is easy and natural, and what the best Expositors are agreed

* Luke xxi. 24.

in.* And to strengthen this Exposition, you will see presently that the Emperor *Julian* (the Apostate) did so understand this Text, as well as the Passage in *Daniel*, to which it alludes; the Prophet assuring us, *That the Desolation shall continue to the End.* *Julian* therefore thought, if he cou'd compass the building a *Temple* on the Ground where the former stood at *Jerusalem*, he shou'd elude the Force of this *Prophecy*, and render the Truth of the Holy Scriptures precarious. I shall now, therefore, according to your Request, farther inform you, that this very Emperor *Julian* did actually attempt, with all the Power, Cunning, and Expence possible, to build a *Temple* for the *Jews* where the *Temple* stood at *Jerusalem*; and that he was baffled in this Attempt with the greatest Marks of *divine* Displeasure, that you can imagine; attended with such fearful *Proaigies*, that they equal, if not exceed, those I took Notice of from *Tacitus* and *Josephus*, to have happen'd in the *Temple* some Time before its Destruction.

B. If *Julian* made this Attempt with such a Design as you say he did, it was indeed *daring* Heaven to assert its Honour, and the Truth of the *Prophecies*, by some extraordinary Punishment. But what *Authority* have you for these *Facts*, before you give any farther Account of them?

A. The

* *Calcabitur à Gentilibus*, i. e. Inhababitur Jerusalem tanquam vile Oppidum ab exteris Gentibus, pressa jugo Servitutis.—*Donec impleantur*; — quasi dicat, usque ad finem mundi erit destructa, vel punietur per Gentiles Tempore scilicet & modo quo Deus statuit. *Vid. Menoch. Collect. Comment. ad Luc. xxi. 24.*

A. The *Authority* is in every Respect unexceptionable. The *Facts* I am going to relate, are attested by great Numbers of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as well as *Christians*; but the *Authority* I shall chiefly insist on, is *Ammianus Marcellinus*; because he was not only an *eminent* Historian, but liv'd at the same Time; was in great Esteem with, and a zealous Defender of his Master *Julian*.

B. Please to give me some *farther* Account of this Author, that I may better judge how far I may rely upon what he says in this Matter.

A. Methinks, much more need not be said than what has been already. He had the Misfortune indeed of being bred a *Heathen*, and he liv'd and dy'd as such; but was remarkable for doing Justice to the *Christians* notwithstanding. Tho' he was strongly attach'd to *Julian*, yet he does not conceal his Vices; and tho' he was a *Soldier*, yet his Abilities were such, that he knew how to make a Difference in the Characters of the *Orthodox* or *Catholick*, and the *Arians*, at that Time of Day. Considering he was a *Greek* by Birth, and the *Time* wherein he wrote, the Purity of the *Latin* Language is not to be expected; but in every other Respect he is allow'd to be an accomplish'd *Historian*.

B. You say he was of the *Military* Profession: Did that allow him Time to write a History with such Exactness?

A. He was in some Respects like a *Cæsar*, or a *Xenophon*: He was either Witness to all
the

the great Events in his Time, or had a good Share in them himself: But as to the compiling his History, he did it, after he had quitted his *military* Employments, retiring to *Rome*, that he might have the better Relish of Life the Remainder of his Days; having serv'd not only under *Julian*, but *Jovian*, *Valentinian*, and *Gratian*. 'Tis our Misfortune, that we have but *eighteen* Books left of the *one* and *thirty* which he compos'd; and the many fine Editions of *Ammianus Marcellinus*, with the Notes of several learned Men, are a sufficient Proof what Credit and Esteem this History has obtain'd in the World.

B. You need not say any more of your Author; and your having said this, will make me hear your Account from him with more Pleasure and Satisfaction. Please then, to let me know what *Julian's* Efforts were for rebuilding the *Temple* at *Jerusalem*; what hinder'd his Project; and whether in such *Obstacles* as he met with, there was any Thing *extraordinary* or *miraculous*, or such as evidently and undeniably prov'd the immediate Interposition of the *Almighty* in that Affair.

A. I am to observe to you first of all, that *Julian*, when he saw himself sole Master of the *Empire*, upon the Death of his Cousin *Constance*, thought the Time was come, when he need be no longer upon his Guard in Matters of Religion: Accordingly he try'd all Ways to restore *Idol-Worship*, and to establish *Pagan* Superstitions

perstitutions in general, which were then at their lowest Ebb, and well nigh expiring. By this Means the *Christian* Religion, if possible, was to be abolish'd; and he was so bold as to imagine, that in a little Time he shou'd abolish the very *Name* it self. The better to succeed in this Project, he form'd a *persecuting* Scheme, entirely *new*, none of his cruel Predecessors having acted like him. He was not contented in spiring up the *Christians*, and furnishing them with Arms to destroy one another, whilst the *Arians* were openly protected by him; But he shamefully demean'd himself, in making his Application to the very *Jews*, who were become the Scum and Derision of the Universe, the better to accomplish the pernicious Ends he had in View. He writes to 'em accordingly, a very cunning, inveigling Letter, yet extant among his Epistles; where, "after having earnestly
 " begg'd their Prayers, he lets 'em know, that
 " he did not require 'em to pay any more Taxes,
 " as they us'd to do; and that he had caus'd
 " to be burnt all publick Entries that might any
 " ways affect 'em; *and then informs them*, that
 " the happy Time was now come, for retrieving
 " the ancient Glory of their Nation, for
 " re-establishing their Ceremonies, their Laws,
 " their Synagogues, their *Temple*; assuring them
 " withal, that as soon as he had ended the
 " *Persian* War, he wou'd rebuild *Jerusalem*
 " with greater Splendor than ever it was before,
 " and that he wou'd come and reside there him-
 " self,

“ self, and join with them in worshipping the
“ supreme Being.”

B. I must confess, this Letter seems to be work'd up with a great deal of Policy, and Art; and no doubt, it answer'd his End with the *Jews*:

A. *Julian* did not stop here: He call'd together the *Chiefs* of the *Jewish* Nation from all Quarters, and summon'd 'em to appear in his Palace; where he reproach'd 'em severely, for having liv'd so long, without *sacrificing* to their God; when it was a Matter, he said, that was so expressly enjoin'd 'em by their Law.

B. This was putting it home indeed; and to be sure, *Julian* easily guess'd their *Answer* would serve his Purpose: But how was it?

A. The *Jews* answer'd, That by their Law they were not to sacrifice any where, but at *Jerusalem*; whence they were banish'd; and not only at *Jerusalem*, but it was to be done in the *Temple* there; which yet had been demolish'd for about *three hundred* Years. 'Tis for that very Reason, replies the Emperor, that I am minded out of hand to rebuild your *Temple* at my own Expence; that you may be able to do your Duty, which has been interrupted so long a Time; and the more to encourage 'em, he made 'em believe, that he had recover'd one of their sacred Volumes (buried under Ground) which declar'd expressly, that in *his* *Reign* their long Exile shou'd have an End, and their Synagogue shine out in its former Lustre.

B. By

B. By this Time I make no question, but enough was said to engage the *Jews*; and I take it for granted, *Julian* and his Assembly broke up well satisfy'd on both Sides.

A. 'Tis true, as you observe: And *Julian*, to make good his Promise, orders the ablest Workmen throughout the Empire to attend. He makes one *Alypius* Surveyor-General of the Work, who was his Countryman, and trusty Friend, and who had for some Time been a Deputy-Governor here in *England*. He issues out Orders to his Treasury for very large Sums, to defray the Expences necessary for building this stately Edifice; and after this, he writes to the Governor of the Province to countenance the Undertaking; to forward the Execution; and to give him a regular Account how the Affair went on, which he had more at heart than any other. Our *Historian*, as a Heathen, wou'd have us understand that all this was done by *Julian* with an Intention of eternizing his Name only, by erecting such a Building: But *Julian*, who had been in *Holy Orders* himself, had consider'd the *Scriptures* we must allow, and he knew there were *Prophecies* (as I have observ'd to you already) expressly against his, or any other's succeeding in this Enterprize. His Proceedings in religious Matters, as I did before mention 'em to you, farther shew what his Intentions were; and Heaven in a most astonishing Manner (as you will hear presently) confirm'd the

Prophecies, and put a Stop to the daring Impiety of the *Apostate* Emperor.

B. Before I behold this terrible Scene of divine Vengeance, which I apprehend you are now ent'ring upon, please to let me know, how the *Jews* behav'd, after *Julian* had given Orders for rebuilding their Temple? as also how the *Christians* were affected at such a Proceeding?

A. There was an Excess of Joy among the *Jews*, as I believe you easily imagine: They flock'd together from all Parts of the World, to assist in raising their intended *Temple*. No Cost was spar'd for laying the Foundation with the greatest Pomp and Solemnity imaginable, and for hast'ning the Work.* By some Accounts, their very *Pick-Axes*, *Shovels* and *Baskets* for digging and carrying Earth were of *Silver*; and Women of the first Rank amongst them, were ambitious who shou'd give a helping Hand, by carrying it in the Lappets of their richest Garments. As for the *Christians*, the more considerate amongst them were not in the least affected, but slighted and despis'd these Efforts of *Julian*. *Cyril* Bishop of *Jerusalem* is a remarkable Instance: He was just return'd from Banishment, when these wild Projects were on Foot: But he did not appear any ways concern'd at the fresh Storms that were arising against the Church of Christ. He was Witness to the Insolence, to the Insults and Threats of the

* Theod. Lib. 3. c. 27.

the *Jews*; who were so puff'd up with their imaginary State of Happiness, that they talk'd of nothing less, than cutting off that good *Man*, or rather the whole Body of *Christians*, and treating 'em in like Manner, as they themselves had been treated by the *Romans*. But the venerable *Patriarch* was as little mov'd with their Threats as their vain Preparations: He made it his Business to comfort the *Faithful*, who were any ways terrify'd at such Proceedings; frequently reminding 'em, that the Word of God was *sure*, and that they ought to have a firm Reliance on those *Prophecies*,* the Truth of which they wou'd soon see confirm'd; that the Efforts of their Enemies deserv'd nothing but their Scorn and Contempt, because the Words of *Jesus Christ* were express; † he having positively assur'd them, that the *Temple should never be rebuilt*; maugre all the Attempts of the *Jews*, or even *Julian* their zealous Protector; and in fine, he told 'em boldly, that all the present Noise and Bustle wou'd end in nothing but in an entire Destruction of those few Stones yet left under-ground in the *Foundation* of the old *Temple*; the better still to verify literally the Saying of our Saviour, that there *shou'd not be left one Stone upon another*.

B. If you please, Sir, it may now be a proper Time to ask, what was the *Event* of this Enterprise, concerted I see with all the Artifice

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ima-

* Ruffin. Lib. 10. c. 38.

† Theod. Lib. 3.

imaginable, and carried on with a very high Hand, and a great deal of Bustle and Clamour?

A. The Fact, as recorded by *Marcellinus*, * stands thus; “Whilst *Alypius* was busy in carrying on the Work, and the Governor of the Province as careful in giving him his Assistance, fearful *Balls of Fire* came out of the Earth near the Foundations; such Eruptions with repeated Shocks soon render’d the Place inaccessible, the Workmen themselves being sometimes burnt; and the fiery Element continuing its Opposition in this Manner, the Work was entirely laid aside.” I desire, it may be observ’d, that an Account so distinct and remarkable, as this is, has been given us by an Historian, who was, at the very Time when these Things happen’d, one of the greatest Officers in the *Roman* Empire; that he was a great Admirer of *Julian*; and that he was as well able to inform himself of this *wonderful Event*, as any Man whatever; not only by common Fame, but from the Relation of thousands who had seen it with their own Eyes. “Thus, says *St. Chrysostome*, * the Word of *Jesus Christ* was not to be shaken; and the Sentence which he had pronounc’d was verify’d in its utmost Extent. *Titus*, as I observ’d to you in our last Conference, made a vain Attempt to save the *Temple*; and *Julian* here strove, to as little purpose, to rebuild it. What God is pleas’d to pull down, is not to be rais’d up again by meer human Power;

* Lib. 18.

† Orat. 2. in *Judæos*.

Power; and what he thinks fit to uphold, is not to be thrown down by his Creatures.

B. Pray, how do the *Fathers* of the Church agree with *Marcellinus* in this Matter?

A. I don't much wonder at your asking that Question *now*, because you have been already convinc'd more than once, that the *Heathen* and *Christian* Writers support one another in many *Facts*; and consequently such sort of *Testimony* ought to have the greater Weight. The *Church* Historians, as well as *Fathers*, are generally more particular in relating this *Fact*, than *Marcellinus*; but they all confirm the Account which he has given; and *three* of the *Fathers*, which bear their *Testimony* in this Affair, *Gregory Nazianzen*, *St. Ambrose*, and *St. Chrysostome*, were living at the same Time when this *Prodigy* happen'd; the remarkable *Testimony* of *Cyril* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, has been already taken Notice of.

B. I desire to hear first of all the Account given by the *Church Historians*; and then, *that* given by the *Fathers* just mention'd, whose *Testimony*, as they were *Contemporaries* with *Julian*, I do agree, ought to be the more regarded.

A. The *Church Historians** inform us, “ That
 “ whilst the Foundation of the *Temple* was a lay-
 “ ing, a violent *Hurricane* carry'd away in a
 “ Moment, the *Lime*, *Sand*, or *Gravel*, with o-
 “ ther Materials, that had been heap'd in pro-
 “ digious Quantities: This was follow'd by an
 Earth-

* Theod. lib. iii. c. 27. Sozom. lib. v. c. 22. Ruffin. lib. x. c. 38, 39.

“ *Earthquake*, which suddenly hurl’d to a great
 “ Distance, on all Sides, vast great *Stones*, that
 “ had been brought together for the intended
 “ Building ; threw down the Houses all round
 “ about ; and turned topsy-turvy the *Galleries*,
 “ where Workmen in great Numbers were crush-
 “ ed to Death. The *Fire* at the same Time con-
 “ sumed the *Hammers, Saws, Chissels*, and other
 “ Tools, which were lodg’d in a Place under-
 “ ground : Streams of *Fire* rushing out of the
 “ Earth, and running here and there, burnt and
 “ destroy’d every Thing that came in its Way ;
 “ And yet the obstinate *Jews*, prompted by their
 “ own Inclination, and in Obedience to their
 “ Emperor, would still attempt to carry on the
 “ Work, till they were either forc’d back or
 “ consum’d by this *miraculous Fire*.” These His-
 torians farther add, that for a Night and a
 Day there appeared in the Air, from *Calvary* to
 Mount *Olivet*, the Figure of a *Cross*, within a
 Circle ; the whole gloriously illuminated ; which
 Appearance was like a Trophy set up in Token
 of a Victory obtain’d by *Jesus Christ* over his
 Enemies. They all agree likewise in telling us,
 that the *Cloaths*, as well of *Christians* as *Jews*,
 were at the same Time impress’d with the Fi-
 gure of the *Cross* ; which was so beautiful that
 no *Imbroidery* cou’d equal it ; and the *Jews*
 with all the Pains they took, could not raze it
 out. And, let me tell you, these *Historians* were
 chiefly no Friends to the *Orthodox* Party neither ;
Theo-

Theodoret was once a *Nestorian*,* but repented : *Socrates* and *Sozomen* were both of them *Novatians*;† And *Ruffinus* shew'd himself at one Time of his Life, like an envious surly *Presbyter*, in regard to the great *St. Jerome*. These Historians however, all liv'd at or near the Time, when this wonderful Event happen'd; and their Testimony in a Matter of Fact, is therefore not to be question'd.

B. 'Tis certain this Account makes the *Interposition* of Heaven still more remarkable : But do these *Fathers* of the Church, who liv'd at that Time, descend to such Particulars ?

A. *Cyril*, Bishop of *Jerusalem*, had a *Foreknowledge* given him by Heaven of the Fact in general, as you may observe from his *Testimony* I've given you already. *St. Chrysostom*,** who spoke of this *Prodigy* between *twenty* and *thirty* Years after it happen'd, told his Auditors publicly, that many of them might have been *Eye-witnesses* of these Things; and he assur'd 'em, that the *Foundations* were yet to be seen all lying open, as well as the *Remains* of that abandon'd Enterprize. And *Gregory Nazianzen* † declar'd as openly, that at the Time of his writing and discoursing, those indelible *Crosses* were still to be seen on the Cloaths of *Jew* and *Christian*. And *St. Ambrose*, in a Letter that he

* Deny'd that the *Virgin Mary* was the Mother of God, and asserted two *Persons* in Christ.

† Among the *καίθαραι*, or *Puritans*.

** Orat. 2. in *Judæos*.

† Orat. 4.

he writ some Years after to *Theodosius*, firman'd, *The Great*, reminds him of this *wonderful Event*, as a Thing known throughout the Universe. In short, the *Fact* in general has been at all Times so well attested, that we may venture to say, since the Days of the *Apostles*, we meet with nothing either in its self more *astonishing*, or more *authentick*, than this. And what was the Effect of this dreadful *Repulse* that *Julian* met with? Nothing less than the Conversion of great Numbers, both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*; who had been Spectators of it, and forthwith desir'd to be *baptiz'd*. And certainly 'twas a noble Subject that St. *Chrysoptom* * had on this Occasion to preach upon, when he told his Congregation, “ that God was pleas'd to shew
 “ the *greatest* Miracles for establishing the *Di-*
 “ *vinity* of his Son, at a Time when *Hell* it
 “ self made the *greatest* Efforts to subvert it. And surely it becomes us likewise to remember the Words of our blessed *Saviour*, † (let the Times be what they will) *Upon this Rock* [upon such *Foundations* whereby the *Christian* Religion shou'd soon be establish'd] *will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*

B. Sir, before we take our Leave of *Jerusalem*, please to inform me, if you have any good Authority, what State or Condition that *Piece of Ground* is in (at this Time of Day) where the *Temple* stood?

A. We

* Hom. 4. in *Mat.*

† *Mat.* xvi. 18.

A. We have as good *Authority* as we can wish for in that Particular: We have it from a worthy Countryman of our own, who *view'd* the Piece of Ground (you enquire after) about *thirty* Years ago: But both *Jew* and *Christian* (it seems) are so far from having any Thing to do *there*, that they are not allow'd so much as to *tread* upon it. For more Satisfaction, I'll give you the Passage it self, which runs thus;*

“ *Thursday, April 8.* we went to see the Palace
 “ of *Pilate*, I mean the Place where they say it
 “ stood: For now an ordinary *Turkish* House
 “ possesses its Room. It is not far from the
 “ Gate of *St. Stephen*, and borders upon the
 “ *Area* of the *Temple* on the *North* Side. From
 “ the *Terrace* of this House, you have a fair
 “ Prospect of all the *Place* where the *Temple*
 “ stood; indeed, the only good Prospect that is
 “ allow'd you of it: For there is *no going with-*
 “ *in the Borders of it*; without forfeiting your
 “ Life, or, which is worse, your Religion. A
 “ fitter Place for an *august Building*, cou'd not
 “ be found in the whole World, than this *Area*.
 “ It lies upon the Top of Mount *Moriab*, over-
 “ against Mount *Olivet*, the Valley of *Jehosa-*
 “ *phat* lying between both Mountains. This
 “ *Area*, as far as I cou'd compute by walking
 “ round it *without*, is *five hundred and seventy*
 “ of my Paces in *Length*, and *three hundred and*
 “ *seventy* in *Breadth*; and one may still discern

P

“ Marks

* See Mr. *Maundrell's* Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jerusalem* at *Easter*, 1697. p. 106. Fourth Edit.

“ Marks of the great Labour that it cost, to cut
 “ away the *hard Rock*, and to level such a spa-
 “ cious *Area* upon so strong a Mountain. In
 “ the Middle of the *Area* stands at present a
 “ *Mosque* of an *octogonal* Figure, suppos’d to be
 “ built upon the same Ground, where anciently
 “ stood the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, the *Holy of Ho-*
 “ *lies*. And thus *the Desolation shall continue*
to the End.

B. I blame my self very much, in not having read that curious and entertaining Book: I find he measur’d the *Place* where the *Temple* stood, but cou’d not do it with that Exactness to be sure, when he was not allow’d to go upon it. Pray, if you’ll excuse this Digression, let me ask one Question more: Did this ingenious Countryman of ours measure the *Circuit* of the City? For that, as I take it, was in his Power.

A. It was so; and Mr. *Maundrel* did accordingly pace the Walls round; and then reducing his *Paces* to *Yards*, informs us, that his *four thousand six hundred and thirty Paces*, amounted to *four thousand one hundred and sixty-seven Yards*, which make just *two Miles and a Half*.*

B. I thank you: There’s one Thing occurs concerning your Historian *Ammianus Marcellinus*, which I desire may be further look’d into: You gave it me, I remember, as Part of his Character, that his Abilities enabled him to make a *Difference*

* Ibid. p. 116:

rence (though a Heathen) in the Characters of the Orthodox, or *Catholicks*, and the *Arians* at that Time of Day. If he was so strongly attached to his Master *Julian*, who notoriously protected the *Arians*, there's Reason to suspect his Judgment was biased in *their* Favour. But how was it, or is there any Light in his History, as to this Point?

A. There's Light enough in this Matter to shew that he follow'd his own Judgment, and not *that* of his Master; whose Errors, as well as Vices, he sometimes animadverted upon. He had no Relish at all for the *Christian* Religion in general, in what Manner soever profess'd: He uses sometimes very opprobrious Language, and makes it applicable to all Parties amongst them, representing them as a Company of *wild Beasts* in their Disputes with one another; and, like *Gallio*, He car'd for none of those Things: But still his Judgment appears; there's a very remarkable Character given by him, as well of the *Orthodox*, or *Catholick Christians*, as of the Emperor *Constantius*, who was a grievous Persecutor of them. I heartily thank you therefore for reminding me of this Particular; and certainly I should be wanting very much in defending the Cause of *Primitive Christianity*, if I omitted a *Passage*, which so much Sincerity, Honesty, and Plain-Dealing, as is seen in *Marcellinus*, has furnish'd us with in its Favour. Our Historian* then, taking Notice of the Confusion and Irregularities

* Lib. xxi.

committed by *Constantius* in religious Matters ; in protecting the *Arians* ; in often convening 'em ; and by such repeated and irregular Meetings designedly oppressing the *Catholick* Bishops ; has these memorable Words ; which, as they come from the Mouth of a *Heathen*, not bias'd by *Julian*, but following his own private Judgment, cannot be liable to the least Objection. “ *Constantius*, says he, made a strange jumble in religious Matters, by mixing silly superstitious Fancies with the *Christian* Religion ; which is a Religion in itself simple, and all of a-piece, without any such Mixture : His Enquiries into the Nature of that Religion, were rather to perplex Debates, than to compose Matters ; which frequently occasion'd Divisions and Dissensions amongst them : These Divisions he fomented by *verbal* Altercations, or Disputes about *Words*. Thus he was continually harassing the *Bishops*, who in great Numbers journey'd backwards and forwards, on Account of what they call their *Synods* ; where he endeavour'd that his own Will should be a Law : And by this constant Hurry and Fatigue of Beasts, [as well as Men,] the *publick Stages* at last could not hold out any longer.*

B. I

*Christianam Religionem absolutam & simplicem anili superstitione confundens [Constantius] in qua scrutanda perplexius quam componenda gravius excitavit dissidia plurima, quæ progressa fufius aluit concertatione verborum, ut *Catervis* Antistitum jumentis publicis ultro citroque discurrentibus per Synodos, quas appellant, dum ritum omnem ad suum trahere conatur arbitrium, rei vehiculariæ succideret nervos. *Lib. 21.*

B. I desire to know, what your Historian means by those *verbal* Altercations or Disputes about *Words*, which he charges *Constantius* with, as one Method taken by him to foment *Divisions*?

A. The Meaning is plain enough to such as are vers'd in *Ecclesiastical* History; *Marcellinus*, 'tis easy to apprehend, had an Eye to those two noted Terms of *Homoonfios*, i. e. of the *same Substance or Essence*, and *Homoiousios*, i. e. of the *like Substance or Essence*. This Variation of *one Letter* only was made a Handle for distinguishing the *Catholick* from the *Arian*, and was the Occasion of great Distraction and Misery in the *Christian Church*: And here it very well deserves your Observation, where the *Fault* lay, in making such a fatal Distinction amongst Christians; for, a great many well-meaning People (to my certain Knowledge) have unwarily been made to believe, that the Fault lay at the Door of the *Orthodox* Party, in coining *new Words*, not to be met with in the *Scriptures*, and multiplying *Creeds*, not serving to any other Purpose than to perpetuate Strife and Discord in the Church. Now, please to observe; *Marcellinus*, as he was a *Greek*, must be allow'd to have understood the *Scriptures* of the *New Testament* in their original Language; and I think, 'tis as little to be doubted, but that his fine Parts, and liberal Education induc'd him to read *them*; if only out of Curiosity, as well as his Master *Julian*; nay, considering the Honesty, Plainness, and Simplicity, that appear'd in *Marcellinus*, I
am

am apt to think, he might have surmounted the Difficulties of an unhappy Education, and made a glorious Figure in the *Christian* Church, as other *Heathens* had done before him, had not the violent Dissentions and barbarous Practices which he observ'd amongst the Professors of an excellent Religion, given just Offence, and prov'd the great Stumbling-Block in his Way. We may easily imagine, this was the Case with Thousands as well as *Marcellinus*; and the *Arians* must answer for it, as well as they can: But this by the Way——*Marcellinus* knew, what the *Christian Religion* in it self was, or else he cou'd not have call'd it, as he does here, *Religionem simplicem & absolutam*, which I render a *Religion simple, pure, and unmix'd, and all of a piece*; (and let our *Arians* give a better Translation if they think fit.) *Marcellinus* as plainly distinguishes the *Notions* that *Constantius* had in Religion (which he blended with the *Christian*) as idle silly *Opinions*: So he expressly charges; *confundens christianam religionem anili superstitione*. *Marcellinus* knew that the Word *Ousia*, or *Essence*, was not a Word coin'd by the *Catholicks*; because he found it in the sacred Writings; he knew the *Catholicks* maintain'd (or rather shall we say, he was Judge himself from those Writings?) that the *Father* and the *Son* were there declar'd to be of the *same Essence*; but then he observ'd, that the *Arians* evaded this, in saying, that the *Son* was not of the *same* but of a *like Essence* with the *Father*:

How-

However in the Judgment of *Marcellinus*, we are to reckon *this* was one of *Constantius's* silly idle Opinions ; and indeed, how can it be esteem'd otherwise by any considerate and unprejudic'd Person ? For tho' *Sameness* and *Likeness* are Terms really different, and as *such* are applied to *Things* in general ; yet to say, that there is a *Likeness* and not a *Sameness* in the ESSENCE of Things, is, in my Apprehension, little better than meer *Jargon*. For what is *Essence* in the Corporeal World ? Does it not arise from the various Contexture of the Parts of a Body ? (which Contexture however we are as little able to *explain*, as we are the *Essence* of Incorporeal Beings.) But will it be said, that one Body may be of the *like Essence* with another Body, and yet not of the *same Essence* with that Body ? Is not this telling us, that two Bodies may have the very *same* Contexture of Parts, (which constitute their *Essence*,) and yet that they may be only *like* and not really the *same* with one another in such Contexture ? Can any Thing be more gross or absurd ? And therefore, as we must judge it very improper, to say there may be a *Likeness*, and not a *Sameness* in the ESSENCE of Bodies ; so was it highly improper for the *Arians* to use the compound Word *Homoiousios* in their Disputes with the *Catholicks* ; for if they would not allow of the *Sameness* of *Essence* in the *Father* and the *Son* ; they were told, no doubt, (or at least they ought to have been so,) that *Likeness* of *Essence* is unintelligible Stuff ;

nor

nor shou'd any Person presume to question a *Mystery*, who can admit and defend such *Inconsistencies*. 'Tis plain, *Marcellinus's* good Sense quickly discover'd the weak, evasive Arguments in the *Arian* Party; or else he wou'd not have animadverted with that Freedom, as he does, upon the Conduct of *Constantius*, who propagated *these meer VERBAL Disputes*; which he himself must know had nothing of Weight in them, but serv'd his Purpose very well; and that was to oppress the *Catholick* Party: *Excitavit dissidia plurima, quæ progressa fusius aluit concertatione verborum*. Now, what is to be done in this Case, think ye, when the wily Heretick by *deceitful Words* is sapping the very Foundation, or subverting the fundamental Truths of the Gospel, ensnaring many an honest but unguarded Soul by such Devices? Must not the *Church* of Christ assemble, as it did in the Apostle's Days? And when assembled, are they not brought under a Necessity of *explaining*, and using such *Words*, as shall be judg'd most proper to shew the *Fallacy* of the *Deceiver*, and thereby to settle People's Minds in the Faith and Doctrine as contain'd in the Holy Scripture? When this is done, private Judgment ought no longer to disturb the Peace of the Church. But if Pride, Arrogance, Discontent, or an Affectation of Singularity (which were always the general Characteristicks of *Herefy*) have at any Time made such Disturbance; the *Church* has been ever justify'd in convening its Members, and explain-
ing

ing their Faith and Doctrines in such a *Manner*, as their Adversaries made it *necessary* for 'em to do. You see then where the *Fault* lay, whilst *Herefy* and *Schism* made such Havock in the *Christian Church*; and whenever the Objection is made to the *Orthodox*, in respect of *Councils*, *Creeds*, and *hard Words* (as they call 'em) it ought to be remember'd by way of Answer, that such *Councils*, *Creeds* and *hard Words* had never been, if *Self-Conceit*, *Pride*, and *Disappointment* had not first of all made the Disturbance, and oblig'd the Governors of the *Christian Church* to do what they did. I thank you for your Patience in hearing me out; and I hope, considering the *natural Application* made of *Marcellinus's Declaration* in favour of the *Orthodox*, no Part of what I have said will be thought a *Digression*.

B. Sir, I am first to thank you, which I do very heartily, for having now fully consider'd our Saviour's *Prophecy* relating to *Jerusalem*; which you readily agree was not done, when we met last; and the *surprising Interposition* of Heaven in blasting the Designs of *Julian*, and being a Truth so well supported on all Sides, gives me very great Satisfaction. Happy, thrice happy were those Thousands you took notice of, *Jew* and *Gentile*, who were immediately *baptiz'd* upon this *wonderful Event*, and thereby had a *new Birth* given 'em, whilst Thousands on the other hand had been just before seeking their own *Death*, and found it in the most ghastly

Q. Manner.

Manner. The Close of your Discourse has surpriz'd me very much ; for I little thought that *Marcellinus* wou'd have gone so far in your Favour, as to the Distinction he makes between the *Orthodox* and the *Arians* ; tho' I think your *Historians* are pretty well agreed, that *none* in *Fact* have been greater Persecutors than the *Arians* when in Power ; and as to their *Principles*, besides the Inconsistency of such a *Spirit* with *that* of the Gospel, their Notions of *Faith* and *Doctrine* must be very odd, and ill-grounded, when (as *Marcellinus* has remark'd, and you justly enforc'd) they take Refuge in such an idle *verbal* Distinction to support 'em. *Adieu !*

A. Sir, I think we part too soon : Let me observe to you some other Things relating to *Julian*, which are as well attested as the former, and are as much to the Purpose in hand. *Julian* had many *Devices* for extirpating the *Christian* Religion ; but they all serv'd to make *more manifest* the Care of Heaven in preserving that *Revelation* which had been made to Mankind by *Jesus Christ*.

B. A few Words engage me to stay longer in this Place, and in such Company : Please then, before you tell me of *Julian's Tricks*, to give me a fair and just Character of him, as to his good or bad Qualities.

A. I think some of the *Fathers* of the *Christian Church*, in this Particular, are to be blam'd ; for they drew him in the most frightful Colours ; and because they had his Memory in the utmost
Detestation,

Detestation, they forgot or rather refus'd to do him common Justice. He was certainly a Man that lov'd and encourag'd Learning and learned Men: 'Tis plain, 'twas his Delight from his Youth to the Day of his Death. He was regular in his Behaviour, sober, chaste, industrious, liberal and just; his Eloquence and Skill in the *Platonic* Philosophy (which prevail'd at that Time) particularly distinguish'd him, and perhaps it may be truly said, in that Respect he equall'd, if not exceeded his *Master*; or, as he us'd to call him, his dear Brother *Libanius*. He had a brisk lively Genius, free and easy, fertile and copious; the Learning he had acquir'd was polite and curious, his Style smooth and pleasant. This appears from his Writings yet extant; and nowhere more, than in his Satire upon the *Cæsars*, and his *Misopogon*; which are generally look'd upon as his *Master-Pieces*. Besides all this, it may be justly said of *Julian*, that he was a Man intrepid; he had Courage, and was well vers'd too in the Art of War; of which he gave signal Proof in several Victories that he gain'd. But on the other hand it must be said, and very truly, that perhaps there was not then in the World a more restless, vain, superstitious Person than this same *Julian*; such was the odd Medley in the Composition of this *great wicked* Man! His Fondness or rather Madness for all sorts of *Magick*; for *Augury* or *Soothsaying*; for casting *Nativities*; for *Dreams*, and all sorts of *Divinations*, was incredible; accordingly vast

Numbers of useless Persons (in *Julian's* Opinion) with which *Constantius* had fill'd his *Palace*, were totally discarded, and in their room were plac'd *Philosophers*, *Diviners*, and *Quacks* of all Sorts: There were *two* Persons that had a perfect Ascendant over him, and seem'd to be his absolute Governours, even in the Affairs of the Empire; which were *Maximus* and *Chrysanthus*. There was nothing scarce to be seen or heard any where, but *Altars*, *Sacrifices*, and pronouncing *this* or *that* to be a good or a bad Omen; *Julian* himself was not asham'd sometimes to carry the very *Wood* us'd in such Sacrifices, and to help the old Women light and blow up the sacred Fire; as *Gregory Nazianzen* justly reproaches him; add to this, that he would greedily pry into the *Entrails* of Beasts, thinking to discover how Things wou'd fall out by so doing; and sometimes his detestable Curiosity carried him so far, as *privately* to sacrifice and pry into the *Bowels* of Men themselves. His extravagant Fancies went still farther; he was firmly perswaded within himself, that the Soul of *Alexander the Great* animated his Body; induc'd thereunto by an Opinion (call'd *Metempsychosis*) which with him was as certain and indubitable as any other in the World; and 'tis well known, this was what chiefly inclin'd him to enter into the *Persian* War after the Example of *Alexander the Great*. I think it needless to say any more, touching the Character of this grand *Apostate*, who, as I observ'd to you some Time ago,

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took on him the sacred *Orders*, and for some Time officiated in the Church. But the strange Passion he had for *Idolatry*, and for the most ridiculous *Superstitions*, inspir'd him at length with such a Hatred of the *Christian Religion*, that he *vow'd* its Destruction; and if you please to remember, I told you at the Beginning of this Conference, that when *Julian* came to be *sole* Master of the Empire, he threw off the *Mask*, as thinking the *Time* was come, when he need be no longer upon his Guard in Matters of Religion. But in truth, my good Friend, the *Time* was rather come, when thro' his Opposition the *Christian Religion* was to shine out in greater Lustre; and as the *Miracles*, on which the Christian Religion is built, receiv'd a mighty Confirmation from the *Opposition* made by *Julian*, in attempting to *rebuild* the Temple; which has been fully discours'd of already; so the *Doctrine*, *Purity*, and *Holiness* of the Christian Religion, (if you are pleas'd to allow me Time,) shall appear to have receiv'd as strong a Confirmation from the *Methods* and *Devices* us'd by *Julian* to establish *another Religion* in room of the *Christian*.

B. I shall think my Time very well spent, if you proceed and make appear, as you have propos'd.

A. I observe then, that *Julian* for the first *twenty Years* of his Life, made an open Profession of the *Christian Religion*; and, as I have said already, he was actually a *Clergyman*; so
was

was his Brother *Gallus* too ; and both of them read Prayers publickly for some Time, in the Church, as we learn from *Gregory Nazianzen* and *Sozomene* : Nay, *Julian* went so far as the *Tonsure*, and seem'd to be (in Appearance at least) for leading a *Monastick* Life ; thereby removing some Umbrage that his Cousin German *Constantius* had taken at his Conduct, and was judg'd to be the best Method for preserving his Life, then thought to be in Danger.

B. Pray what need was there of so much Caution in *Julian*, considering what *Constantius* really was himself?

A. 'Tis true, *Constantius* was an *Arian* ; but as great an *Arian* as he was, the *Empire* well knew, that he had dreadful Apprehensions of *Idolatry* ; and that he had had a Mistrust of *Julian* for some Time : He watch'd him narrowly for that Reason ; and if News had been brought him that *Julian* had turn'd *Apostate*, he wou'd have cut him off infallibly : His Brother *Gallus* had met with the like Fate already, though not upon the Account of Religion.

B. There was an odd *Medley*, as you said just now, in the Composition of this *Julian* ; and one wou'd think it not easy to reconcile such different Sentiments in one and the same Person. — But please to proceed, Sir.

A. 'Tis true, at first Sight 'tis not easy to reconcile such different Sentiments in one Person : But mind the Sequel, and you'll find this Matter unriddled plain enough. There were *two*
grand

grand *Designs* which *Julian* had form'd to himself, as soon as he became sole Master of the Empire; the Execution of which seem'd to have taken up his Thoughts the Remainder of his Days: The one was, to humble the *Persian*, whose growing Power had for some Time been troublesome to the *Romans*; the other was, to extirpate *Christianity* Root and Branch, throughout the whole *Empire*. The better to succeed in this last *Design*, which he had most at heart, he concluded with himself, that quite another Method was to be taken for carrying on such a *Persecution*, than what had been taken by his Predecessors *Dioclesian*, *Decius*, *Maximinus*, *Nero*, and others.

B. These Men did not want Cunning, nor Abilities, you know, for doing Mischief that Way; what then made *Julian* take other Methods?

A. I dare say, you don't question Cunning or Abilities in *Julian*; and a little Reflection will let you see the *Reasons* upon which he concerted *new* Methods of Persecution. He had gain'd a perfect Knowledge of the Principles and Practices of *Christians*; had convers'd a long Time with 'em; more particularly with St. *Basil*, and *Gregory Nazianzen*; and he had thoroughly consider'd, and well weigh'd the Establishment and Progress of *Christianity* in the World, notwithstanding former *Persecutions*. These Things put together, he not only found his *Predecessors* had judg'd wrong in Point of Policy,

Policy, by taking such *Methods* as they did; but he found himself better qualify'd than *they*, by taking *new* Methods for accomplishing the same *Ends*, as they had in View. *Julian's* Philosophy therefore instructed him, that he ought not to proceed with the *Christians* by way of *Pains* and *Penalties*, and *wholsome Severities*, but rather with a Semblance of *Equity*, *Reason*, and *Moderation*? 'Twas upon these *Principles*, the fertile Genius of *Julian* form'd his *new* Scheme of Persecution; which chiefly turn'd upon *two* *Stratagems*, the *blackest* and most *hellish* in their Nature that cou'd be; and of which the World was not then appriz'd. The *first* was, by secret Practices and underhand Dealings, to bring the *Name* of *Christians* into *Contempt*, as much as possibly he cou'd; sometimes *they* were to be represented as a weak, silly Sort of People; and a Question to be put, Whether they cou'd be cur'd, and yet retain the *Name*; sometimes they were forbid reading *ancient* Authors; whilst *Julian* told 'em, that it shou'd be deem'd sufficient to read *Luke* and *Matthew* in their Churches; *who* also for the Time to come shou'd be call'd *Gallileans*; and as to their Loss of *Places* and worldly Goods, *Julian* alledg'd in his own Defence, that he was putting 'em upon practising *literally* the Gospel, and making the *Way* much easier for 'em to Heaven. The other *Stratagem*, as notable, and as big with Mischief as the former, was, (the better to support *Paganism*, which was declining a-pace) to introduce,

duce, without Loss of Time, into that *Religion*, whatever was remarkably good and commendable in the *Christian*; such Parts of it, as he cou'd not help being affected with himself; and tho' *Gregory Nazianzen* in his Treatise against *Julian*, exposes this Attempt of *Aping* the *Christian*, as absurd and impossible, yet the Matter appear'd otherwise to our *Apostate*; and he seems to have laid the greatest Strefs upon this *Stratagem*, as the most likely to work his Ends; and therefore it ran very much in his Head, how he might graft upon *Heathenism* such Branches of *Christianity* as he shou'd think proper.

B. I am much of *Gregory Nazianzen's* Opinion, that *Idol-Worship* and the *Christian* cou'd not stand long together: It must be meer *Infatuation*, indeed, to think of abolishing that *Religion*, which was at the same Time to be made use of to support *another*; and I can't deny, but such a Procedure was giving fresh *Evidence* for the *Truth* of that *Religion* he was opposing. But pray let me hear how he went on with this wild Project.

A. There's a noted Saying, you know, that when Heaven is determin'd to punish, the Prelude often is *Infatuation*. *Julian* was minded to establish amongst the *Pagans* not only the Order and outward *Discipline* of the *Christian* Church, but its *Morals*, *Maxims*, and *Virtues*, that *more* peculiarly adorn'd it. Among all the practical Parts, he labour'd most, that the *Heathens* shou'd copy after, or imitate the *Christians*.

in *Hospitality*; in the Care they took of burying their Dead; in *Charity*; in *Purity* of Manners, and in *Modesty*; which were *Graces* that distinguished the *Christian* from the rest of Mankind. *Julian's* Letter to *Arsacius*, Sovereign Pontiff of *Galatia*, directing how he and his Priests shou'd behave in these Matters, is well worthy our reading: I should perhaps, be thought tedious, should I repeat the whole; which is here in my *Collection of Testimonies*: You may see it at your Leisure amongst *Julian's* Works yet extant: You will likewise find *Part* of a second Letter to some other *Pontiff* (not nam'd) which equally deserves your Notice.

B. Did not *Julian*, the latter End of his Days, write a Book professedly against the *Divinity of Jesus Christ*? I think he did. I have heard some say, that the *Book* was never answer'd; and that the *Orthodox* Party industriously suppress'd as much as they could of it. Pray deal ingenuously with me, how stands that *Affair*? I fear, your *Cause* won't be much the *better*, in answering this Question?

A. A great deal *better*, I do assure you, before I have done with it: Nor should I have fail'd taking Notice of what you now propose, before we had parted. 'Tis very true, *Julian* (some say *Maximus* the Philosopher) did write such a Book, as you mention, full of Spite and Malice against the Person of *Christ*; and our present *Set* of *Deists* and *Libertines* are often out of Humour, because all the *Venom* of that Book has not been

been transmitted to them ; and they are apt to fancy sometimes, that their *Cause* suffers very much for want of it : Now as to their charging this *Loss* upon the *Orthodox* or *Catholick* Party, they may as well charge them with the *Loss* of that great Number of Books which *Photius* has given an Account of in his *Bibliothèque* : We have there *Extracts* only, and are forc'd to sit down contented with the *Loss* of the Books themselves ; But there is less Reason to complain in regard to *Julian's* Book ; for as the Book was fully answer'd by St. *Cyrill*, and is still extant, so we see *Julian's* Arguments all the Way quoted ; and 'tis unreasonable after that, to suggest, that *Cyri*l has not done Justice to *Julian* in such Quotations, or that he has not consider'd all the main Objections brought by him against the *Person* of *Christ*, The End and Design then of *Julian's* Book, as it appears, was to prove that our Saviour was a *meer* Man, like other Folks, inferiour in all Respects to the *Demi-Gods* and *Pagan Heroes* ; and that *honest John* (as the *Apostate* had learnt to talk) was the first, that took it into his Head to give him the Name of *God*, &c. And yet this very *Book* (so it happens) furnishes us, in a few Words, with very substantial *Evidence* for the Truth of our Religion : For *Julian*, at the same Time that he inveighs bitterly against the *Divinity* of *Christ*, dares not *deny* the Miracles of *Christ*, but, without any Examination, admits them to be true and real *Facts* ; what he only labours at, is to lessen the Idea conceived of

them, and to obviate, as to their Consequences, by roundly asserting in a magisterial Manner, that such *Faëts* were far exceeded by those of their *Heroes* and *Pagan Gods* : And indeed, how could *Julian* undertake to prove the *Falsity* of such *Miracles* of our Saviour, without giving the *Lye* at the same Time to *two Persons*, whose Works he highly valued, and often copy'd after 'em? I mean *Celsus* and *Porphry* ; who, both of them, in the warmest and bitterest Discourses which they writ against *Jesus Christ*, in the *second* and *third* Centuries, always acknowledg'd such a *superior Power* to have been in Him, as would sometimes *put the very Laws of Nature out of Order*, says *Celsus* ;* and at other Times make even *the Gods themselves give way to him*, says *Porphry*. And there was Reason enough for *their* making such Acknowledgments : For every Thing concurr'd for raising and fixing such an *Idea* of *Christ* in People's Minds. His *wonderful Works* were fresh in a *traditionary* Way ; There were publick Monuments ; there was the *Letter* of *Tiberius* ; and there were the *Archives*, or publick *Records* at *Rome*, which, as *Tertullian* assures us, attested these Things in the *second* Century : Add to this the wonderful Rapidity, with which the *Christian* Religion spread itself over the Earth ; and the *Fame* of our Saviour's Disciples working such *Miracles*, as seem'd to exceed *those* of their *Master*, agreeable to what is said in the *Gospel* : *Greater Things than these shall they do*. And thus,

you

* Orig. Lib. 7. Contra Celsum.

you see, how much *Good* out of the *Evil* (intended by *Julian*) accru'd to the *Church* of *Christ*. *Julian*, in short, *run-riot*, as we say, in these *Designs* for subverting *Christianity*; and one *Historian** (amongst others) whose *Time* of *living* enabled him to be *Witness* of the very *Fact*, assures us, that *Julian's* *Rage* carried him so far as to deface and pull down a fine *Statue* of our blessed *Saviour*, that had stood above *three hundred Years*; and afterwards set up his *own* in the *Room* of it.

B. Such a remarkable *Fact* naturally leads me to ask you, how it stands recorded by that *Historian*?

A. This memorable *Statue* was erected at *Cæsarea Philippi* by the *Woman* that had received such signal *Mercies* from the *Son* of *God*, when she was cur'd of her *Bloody-Flux*. This *Statue* she plac'd before the *Gate* of her own *House*, and was minded in such a *Manner* to transmit to *Posterity* her *Gratitude* and her *Faith*: The *Statue* was of *Metal*; the *Portraiture*, it seems, natural and lively; a long *Mantle* thrown about him; and his *Hand* stretch'd forth to the *Woman* prostrate and imploring his *Assistance*; and beneath, on the *Pedestal*, was a *Phenician* *Inscription*, setting forth in a few *Words* the *miraculous Cure*; which *Inscription* the *Christians* had taken *Care* to brighten and clear up, when by the *Length* of *Time* it had been disfigured.

B. Sir, my *Affairs* make the *Time* of parting
now

* *Euseb.* *Eccl. Hist.* *Lib.* *vii.* *c.* *18.* Citatur hic *Eusebii* *Locus* in *vii* *Synodo*. Vide quæ narrat *Philostorgius*, *Lib.* *vii.* *c.* *3.* & ex illo *Nicephorus*. *Vales* in *Annot.*

now necessary : I must leave the Country to-morrow ; but shall return in a few Days, and will then soon pay my Respects to you again : But before I go, I must remind you of one Thing, that you just hinted in our *first Conference*,* and which I desire may not be forgot, when we meet again : 'Tis concerning that merry Fellow *Lucian*, whose *Dialogues*, you said, sometimes served to exhilarate and keep up the Spirits of our *Fraternity* : Perhaps in that you judge right ; and I begin to think such *Cordials* are deceitful : But what I mean, is this, that *Lucian*, you said, *had unawares given a Testimony to one of the greatest Mysteries of our Religion*. Let this be the *Topick*, if you please, to be first considered, when I next give myself the Pleasure in waiting on you.

A. It is well remember'd ; and I'll immediately mark it down in the *Collection* for that Purpose. Give me Leave, before we shake Hands, to offer a few Words, by way of Advice. You say, you are going out of the Country ; it may be very improper, perhaps, for me to ask what *Company* may probably engage you ; but if it be any of your *new Fraternity*, let me exhort you to be very cautious how you converse with them, otherwise than your Affairs in Life may make it necessary so to do. I think, you have already seen, for the little Time we have spent together this last Month, just Reason to believe the *Gospel of Christ* ; for you have had *solid Evidence* given you, and more you may still expect from me,
for

* P. 22.

for the *Truth* of *Christianity*; and the Arguments that have been us'd, seem to have made a happy Impression on you: But remember, that it behoves every *Christian*, though ever so well establish'd upon just Grounds, in the *Faith* of the *Gospel*, not rashly to expose themselves to *Temptation*; as you certainly do, if you mingle your self at every Turn in a free Conversation with such, whose *Principles* you know are directly opposite to your own. I make no Question but that there are many in the World, who fancy themselves settled in the *Principles* of their Religion; and yet, by frequently conversing with those, whose Wit and Learning are for giving every Thing a Turn in favour of *Infidelity*, have sometimes found their *Faith* shaken. You can't promise your self, that a prophane Jest, some subtil Objection, some witty Burlesque on any Part of the *Bible*, shall not weaken your Belief, and make an unlucky Impression on your Spirits, when perhaps you have not an *Answer* ready at hand to ward off the Force of these Things. But whenever the Providence of God plainly calls you into such sort of *Company*, as it may be often your Case; take care that no little *Cavils*, that may be rais'd against particular Passages in the *Bible*, intangle your Thoughts, or shake your Faith; rather recollect, and keep your Mind intent upon the plain Force of Argument drawn from *Miracles* and *Prophecies*, in the Manner it has been hitherto discours'd of between us; think often, how much safer you are in the

Profession

Profession and Practice of *Christianity*, than if you shou'd relinquish the *Gospel*, and change it for mere *Natural Religion*, which you seem'd some Time ago to be so fond of. You see that the *Doctrine* of *Christ* contains every Thing in it which *Natural Religion* pretends to discover: But your *Deists* deny those very Parts of *Christianity* which are necessary to supply the Defects of the *Light of Nature*. The Condition, indeed, of such Men, is dismal: The Charge is heavy, but very just, as a pious and learned Writer has lately drawn it up against 'em.* “ They deny the
 “ *Atonement* of *Christ*, and the *Pardon* of *Sin*
 “ through the Virtue of such *Atonement*; they
 “ deny *Jesus* to be the great *Prophet*, and the *Sa-*
 “ *viour* of Mankind: Whereas he himself has told
 “ us by Commission from the *Father*, *If ye believe*
 “ *not that I am he, ye shall die in your Sins.*”
 What a Blessing, think ye, must such Subjects be in a *Christian Country*? And so, my good Friend, I take my Leave of you.

B. I heartily thank you for this good Advice and serious Application; and I hope, by the *divine Assistance*, to make a right Use of both.
Adieu.

* See Dr. *Watts's* *Caveat* against Infidelity.



F I N I S.



P R E F A C E.



HAVING publish'd, some Time ago, a small Treatise in *three Conferences*, being the *First Part* of an *Appeal to the Genuine Records of Heathen and Jewish Writers in Defence of the Christian Religion*; I have since found it necessary to vindicate a very remarkable *Testimony* of the Heathen *Phlegon*, (there insisted on, relating to the miraculous *Eclipse* at our Saviour's Passion) from the groundless Misrepresentations of it, in a late *Dissertation* written by one Dr. *Artbur-Ashley Sykes*; and likewise defended by him, with a surprizing Obstinacy,

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P R E F A C E.

cy, in his Dispute with Mr. *Whiston* on the same Subject. That Gentleman has thought fit to oppose a *Testimony*, that has been *apply'd* in all Ages, for about *Sixteen* hundred Years together, in behalf of our *common Faith*: So that *Ancients* and *Moderns*, in this Respect, now both stand corrected of *Weakness* or *Knavery*; and the World is told at the same Time, That such *Correction* is the proper Duty of a *Minister* of the *Gospel*.

It is a melancholy Reflection, (and I speak it with the deepest Concern,) that *Infidelity* is now known to *Appeal*, in its own Defence, to the *Sacred Order* itself; seen to rejoice in finding a Champion, who has committed such an *Insult* upon the whole Christian World, and yet calling himself a *Friend* to *Christianity*; labouring (though his *Labour* be in vain) to deprive Christians of one of the most
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P R E F A C E.

glorious *Testimonies* that the *Heathen* World at *this Day* can probably afford us. Will not the *Deist* and the *Libertine* be apt to say, That this *Divine* has herein outdone a *Celsus*, or a *Julian*? The *latter*, (who was first a *Clergyman*, and then an *Emperor*,) never durst make *such* an Opposition to *Phlegon*; because *Phlegon* in those Days (near *Fourteen* hundred Years ago) pass'd every where for a good *Witness*; no Body questioning the *Evidence* that he gave for a *Præternatural Eclipse*: And though the *former* was so far reduced, in point of Argument, that he could find no other *Name* in accounting for the many Wonders at *Christ's Death*, than *that* of *Magick*; yet he was not so hardy as to *controvert* this Testimony of *Phlegon*, when it was urg'd by *Origen*. It was *then* a sure Weapon, which *Origen* knew his *Free-Thinker* could not fence against:
For

P R E F A C E.

For it was well known, that *Phlegon's Evidence* deriv'd itself from the *Roman Archives*; which our English Adversary, this *Friend to Christianity*, had rather should be call'd *Secret Accounts*. [See his *Dissert.* p. 36. See the 4th *Conf.* below, p. 98, &c.] The first Christian Writers often *appeal'd* to these *publiok Records* in this Matter; and sometimes they judg'd it sufficient to *appeal* to *Phlegon* only; he having had free Access to *them*, by the Favour of his Royal Master *Adrian*, when he began to compose his *Olympiadique History*. But the World is now told, without the least Hesitation, that those Primitive Writers, such as *Justin Martyr*, *Tertulian*, *Lucian* the Martyr, and others, whilst they were *thus* proving the Truth of Christianity, or *appealing* to *Pilate's Acts*, (which were lodg'd in those very *Archives*,) did either shew themselves
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P R E F A C E.

to be *weak*, mistaken, doating, old Men; or else (which this Gentleman would rather have believ'd) that they were *Insincere*, in quoting some Things that were not *genuine*, [See Dr. *Grabe's* Pref. to Bishop *Bull's Defensio*, &c. in relation to some idle Stories about *Justin Martyr*,] to serve THEIR CAUSE, (as he calls it,) which was defending our *Common Christianity*; as also, that some of them were too much addicted to PUT upon others, as his *Phrase* is; nay, farther, (as he modestly expresses himself,) that those ancient Christian Writers of the Second and Third Centuries, *had got a scurvy Trick*, (he says,) *of Lying for GOD's sake*. [See his *Dissert.* p. 39, 40. his *Def.* p. 21.]

I am very sensible, the following *Plea* for *Phlegon*, as also for those other *ancient Writers*, will be thought by some to have too much *Warmth* in it:
I will

P R E F A C E.

I will only say, such Readers may probably, and in *reality* be more angry at the *Argument*, than the *Zeal* in supporting this *Cause*; which our *Divine* owns, is a Cause of no *small Importance*: And surely he himself ought to remember the Apostle's Direction, *viz.* That *Rebuke*, as well as *Zeal*, may sometimes become *necessary*. But if neither he nor his Friends will allow of it in this Case; they will then be oblig'd to censure the Judgment and Conduct of the late Dr. *Samuel Clarke*, in a Case of the like Nature; who has discover'd an uncommon *Warmth*, has used severe Language, if not bitter *Invective*, whilst arguing with our *Deists* and *Libertines* in his *Boyle's Lectures*; — Those very *Lectures*, that gave this *Friend to Christianity* so much Pain, till he had got *Pilegon's* and *Origen's* Testimonies both
struck

P R E F A C E:

struck out of *them*; as appears now to be *Fact*, in the late Edition of those Lectures. If this shall not be thought *Apology* sufficient for any *warm* Expressions upon this Occasion, the Reader may find more said upon the same Subject, in the *Fifth Conference*, [Conf. V. Page 13, 14, 15, 23, 24, 25.] to which he is now *re-ferr'd*.

However, be the Construction put upon the following Papers what it will, 'tis a frightful Scene, to see a *Divine* of the Church of *England* *pluming*, upon an imaginary Victory over the *disinterested Phlegon*, who has transmitted to Posterity such glorious Things concerning the *Son* of *GOD*, besides this Account given of the *Eclipse* at his *Passion*; To see this *Divine*, in his Writings, on the one hand, telling each *Libertine* and *Deist*,

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P R E F A C E.

That he has detected the ancient Christian Writers of much *Weakness* or a great deal of *Knavery*; and on the other hand, bidding every sincere, honest-hearted Christian believe, that in doing this, he has been *doing real Service to the Cause of Christ*; “removing (as he calls it,) an *Occasion of Triumph* out of the Way of our Adversaries.” Let him not flatter himself; for a little Observation may convince him, that those Gentlemen, whom he miserably mis-calls by the Name of *HIS Adversaries*, would not only have him proceed in controverting such Testimonies for *Reveal'd Religion*, but are pleas'd to find, that such a Method, such a sort of Opposition as this, is at last judg'd a proper Expedient for putting a Stop to their avow'd *Infidelity*.

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P R E F A C E.

The Reader is desir'd to indulge a *Second*. Hearing to the injur'd *Phlegon* ; and 'tis hoped, his *Evidence*, as now given in by *Ancients* and *Moderns*, will, by this *Contraste*, appear in a stronger Light ; and that those Renown'd *Fathers* of the Christian Church will also, in the following *Défence*, approve themselves to be (what they really are) Men of the strictest Piety, most extensive Knowledge, sound Judgment, and unquestionable Integrity ; by which Means the Reader will be better able, not only to guess at the ill Designs of this *Anti-Phlegonist*, from his having aspers'd *them* in so vile a Manner ; but to see this great Truth of *Phlegon*, concerning a *miraculous* Darkness, more effectually recommending itself to the World ; and the highest Proof given, that no *false Arts* have

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P R E F A C E.

been made use of in the Vindication of it.

The *Fourth* Conference, in the following Treatise, which contains the *First* Part of the *Defence* of *Phlegon's* Testimony, was drawn up some Time last *Summer*; and then, upon second Thoughts, it was laid aside; imagining that *Dr. Sykes* would have been satisfy'd with what *Mr. Whiston*, just at that Time, had publish'd, for shewing him his *Error*. But the Doctor having lately, by his *Defence*, let the World see, that his *First Error* was to be obstinately maintain'd by the Commission of many *more*; it being likewise observ'd, that *Mr Whiston* had neglected to wipe off those foul Aspersions which the *other* had cast upon *Justin Martyr, Tertullian, &c.* as also that *Mr. Whiston* (at the Time of writing his Vindication of *Phlegon's* Testimony)

P R E F A C E.

mony,) appears to have known nothing of the *two Epochas* in *Tiberius's* Reign; which is the very *Key* for solving those *Difficulties* which his Antagonist had rais'd about the *Time* of the Death of Christ, and concerning the *Application* of *Phlegon's* Eclipse: Upon these Considerations, I have taken the Liberty to *postpone*, for a little Time, what I had promis'd in a Preface to the *three* first *Conferences*, viz. a Confirmation of the *Genuineness* of the noted Text, (*1 John v. 7.*) *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven, &c.* from two valuable MSS. The one contains the judicious *Remarks* of the late learned Dr. *Cave* (Canon of *Windsor*) upon the *Testimony* of *Lucian*, or some other *Heathen* Writer, who appears to have been acquainted with *that* Text, at the Beginning of the *Second* Century. The other is the *Verona* MS.

P R E F A C E.

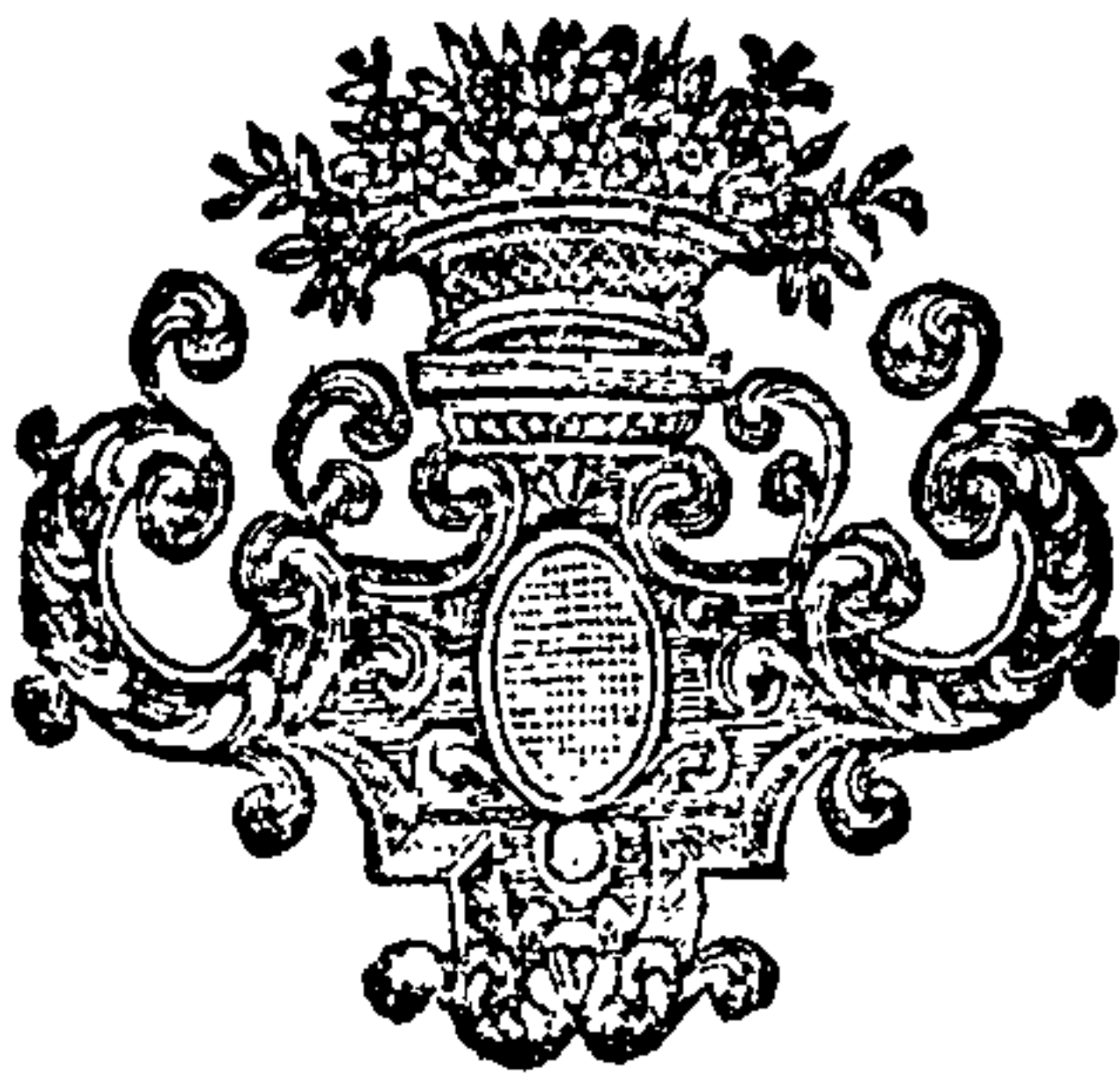
MS. of *Aur. Cassiodore*, (who was for some Time *Prime Minister* to *Theodorick the Great*,) lately publish'd with great Exactness, by the Honourable *Scipio Maffei*, a Person well known to the learned World. In this MS. we have not only the express Words of *St. John*, (1 *Ep.* v. 7.) recited by *Cassiodore* in the *Complexiones*, (above *Twelve hundred Years* ago,) but we are assured by the same learned Author, in another Part of his Works, that the best and most *ancient* Greek Copies of the New Testament, (even in those *early Days*,) as well as the most ancient Versions, were carefully consulted, and compar'd with each other; which makes *Cassiodore's* Testimony still stronger: For those *ancient Authorities* appeal'd to by *Cassiodore* as SUCH, may fairly be suppos'd to rise as high as the Time of the Heathen *Lucian* himself: So that these two MSS. seem
luckily

P R E F A C E.

luckily to conspire in establishing the *Genuineness* of this Text. [*Id Monachis suis præcepit Cassiodorus, ut præstantissimis, & Græci etiam Textûs collatione repurgatis Codicibus uterentur; utque, in ambiguis Locis, duorum vel trium PRIS-CORUM, emendatorumq; Codicum Aucto-ritas inquireretur. Ipsum Cassiodorum in primis idem præstitisse, quis ambi-gat, inquit Maffei?] I find one Mr. Samuel Chandler (a Non-Conforming Teacher, as I am inform'd) endeavouring to invalidate *Cassiodore's* Testimony in this Matter; but there will be no great Difficulty in *removing his* Objec-tions; for he is only, like another *Anti-Phlegonist*, doing an *imaginary* Piece of Service for our *Free-Thinkers*. After such Removal, there will be a thorough Enquiry made into, and full Proof gi-ven of the great *Insincerity* of some mo-
dern*

P R E F A C E.

dern Writers, in their Way of treating on this controverted Text. The *Third* Part will be seen in two *Conferences*, now ready for the Press. There will be subjoin'd a *Letter* sent to the said *Scipio Maffei* at *Verona*, upon the Subject of this MS. and his *Answer*, containing further Information about it, if timely receiv'd.



C O N.

T H E
C O N T E N T S
O F
The First P A R T.

C O N F E R E N C E I.

THE Author of *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, does not act consistently with the fundamental Rule, he prescribes to others, viz. *That we are to use those Faculties, which God has given us to judge with, after the best Manner we can.*

Page 4 to 12

Mr. Lock, by the Help of those *Faculties*, acknowledges a *Revelation*, and rejoices in the Light of it. 7, 8

When by *Reason*, or the Use of our *Faculties*, the Truth of *Revelation* appears; then the Bishop of *London's* Inference, in his *Pastoral Letter*, becomes incontestable. 9

Facts well attested by *Heathen, Jewish, and the first Christian Writers* prove undeniably the Truth

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<i>Truth</i> of Christianity; and <i>Facts</i> so attested, demand our <i>judging</i> of them according to <i>those Faculties</i> which God has given us to judge with.	Page 12 to 17
The Testimony of <i>Pblegon</i> , a heathen Writer; a remarkable <i>Fact</i> , well attested, to prove the miraculous <i>Eclipse</i> at Christ's Passion.	17 to 37
Three Fragments of <i>Pblegon</i> yet remaining; published with <i>Notes</i> , by <i>Meursius</i> , in <i>Gronovius's</i> <i>Greek Antiquities</i> .	17 to 20
<i>Lucian</i> the Martyr, <i>Tertullian</i> , and others, did appeal to the <i>Roman Records</i> , in regard to to this Testimony of <i>Pblegon</i> .	21, 22, 23
The Passage in <i>Pblegon</i> laid down, as it is in <i>Eusebius</i> , and in <i>Meursius</i> , at large.	24, 28, 29
<i>Pblegon</i> also takes Notice of <i>Predictions</i> , relating to the Destruction of <i>Jerusalem</i> .	26
<i>Bodin</i> , the Free-Thinkers Objection to <i>Pblegon's</i> Testimony, in point of <i>Time</i> .	27 to 32
An Objection to <i>Pblegon's</i> Testimony; that he does not say (in <i>Eusebius</i>) it was <i>Full-Moon</i> , when his <i>Eclipse</i> happened; and therefore might not be a <i>Supernatural</i> one.	32, 33, 34
An Eclipse at the <i>Passover</i> could not be, but when the <i>Moon</i> was at the <i>Full</i> . The judicious Mr. <i>Weemse's</i> Observation.	35, 36
The Testimony of <i>Thallus</i> , another Heathen Writer, for proving the <i>miraculous Darknes</i> at Christ's Passion.	38
	The

- The Testimony of *Julius Africanus*, an eminent Historian and Chronologer, who lived not long after *Phlegon*. Page 39, 40
- An Enquiry, whether the Darknefs was *universal* at Christ's Passion: Some *Chinese* Historians appeal'd to. 41, to 45
- Tertullian* and *Origen's* Testimony in relation to this wonderful Darknefs at Christ's Passion; the one appealing to the *Roman Records*, the other expressly mentioning *Phlegon*. 45 to 47
- The Testimony of *Dionysius the Areopagite* in this Matter, not *now* insisted on. 48
- Advice to follow the *Rule* laid down by the Author of *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, viz. "To continue using those Faculties which God has given us to judge with after the best Manner we can." 49
-

CONFERENCE II.

- THE *Prophecy* concerning the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, a very strong Proof of the Truth of the Christian Religion. 52 to 54
- Why the Disciples so much admired the Structure of the *second Temple*. 54 to 56
- The *literal* Accomplishment of this *Prophecy* transmitted to Posterity, by two of the most eminent
- b 2 eminent

- eminent Historians that the *Jews* and *Romans* had, viz. *Josephus* and *Tacitus* Page 58
- Some Account of *Tacitus*; and how he and other Heathens came to think so hardly of the Christian Religion. 58 to 63
- Three Factions* in *Jerusalem*, all in Arms, destroying one another, when *Titus* first began the *Siege*. 65.
- The *Siege* lasted near *five Months*. An Account of the Misery, Famine, and Infatuation of the Besieged. 66 to 69
- Titus* uses *Josephus* the Historian as a *Mediator* between himself and the obstinate *Jews*. The Issue of the *Mediation*. 70, 71
- The *Numbers* that perished; and how the *Divine Vengeance* pursued the *Jews* after the *Siege* was over. 74 to 78
- Both *Tacitus* and *Josephus* acknowledge, that there was in these Proceedings something truly *miraculous* and *divine*. 79
- Remarkable *Prodigies* and *Cruelties* in the Profanation of the Temple, between *two* and *three* hundred Years before this final Destruction 80
- Several *Prodigies* recorded by *Tacitus* and others, that also *preceded* this Destruction of the *Jews*. 81 to 83
- Titus's* Behaviour at the taking of the City; and afterwards acknowledging himself to have

have been the *Instrument* of God; and refusing *Addresses*, &c. *TITUS and his Father's Monuments.* Page 83 to 86

St. *Peter* and St. *Paul's* Prophecy of this Destruction of the *Jews*, as recorded by *Lactantius*, when they were delivered up to *Nero.* 87

CONFERENCE III.

THE Prophecies relating to the *Jews* farther *discussed*; such as are yet accomplishing. 90, 91

Julian's Intentions to elude the Force of such Prophecies. 92

Ammianus Marcellinus, an eminent *Heathen* Historian, the chief *Authority* made use of in this Matter. 93

Julian's Efforts and Artifice for rebuilding the Temple. 95 to 99

The Event of this Enterprize of *Julian*, as related by *Marcellinus*; with the concurrent Testimony of *three Fathers* contemporary with *Julian.* 100 to 104

An Account of the Piece of Ground where the Temple stood, as given us by Mr. *Maundrell*, A. D. 1697. 105, 106

Ammianus

Ammianus Marcellinus's Abilities enabled him
to distinguish between the *Orthodox* and the
Arians. Page 107

The Judgment passed by *Marcellinus* in this Mat-
ter; and what he means by the Christians dis-
puting about *Words* 107, 108

A proper Remark upon this Passage in *Marcel-
linus* 109 to 113

A just Character of *Julian*, and his many *De-
vices* for extirpating the *Christian Religion*.
114 to 122

Julian writ a Book professedly against the *Di-
vinity of Jesus Christ*. The *Free-Thinkers*
complain of the Loss of that Book. 122 to
124

Julian defaced a fine *Statue* of our blessed
Saviour, and set up his *own* in the Room of
it. 125

Some Short Advice, as to *Conversation*. 127

T H E
C O N T E N T S
O F
The Second P A R T.

C O N F E R E N C E IV.

THE *Free-Thinkers* Way of arguing concerning the *Use of those Faculties which God has given us to judge with*, farther considered and exposed. Page 3 to 7

Dr. *Prideaux's* two Reflections, useful in arguing with the *Deists*. 10 to 12

The *Opposition* made to *Phlegon's* Testimony by Dr. *Sykes*, spoke to in general, and *Lucian's* Testimony postponed. 12 to 17

Dr. *Sykes* has represented the *Primitive Fathers*, as well as *modern Writers*, as doing *Disservice to Christianity*, in applying *Phlegon's Passage*. 18

Had *Tballus* (a Heathen Writer) his *Works* been extant, which are quoted by *Africanus*, there had been no Room for Dr. *Sykes's* Quirks and Quibbles about *Phlegon's* Testimony. 19

Tballus's

<i>Thallus's</i> Authority from <i>Africanus</i> considered ; as also <i>Africanus's</i> citing <i>Phlegon</i> about the Words (<i>Full-Moon.</i>)	Page 19 to 22
A summary Account of what passed in the <i>first</i> Conference concerning <i>Phlegon's</i> Testimony.	23 to 28
<i>Grotius's</i> Application of this Testimony of <i>Phlegon</i> to the <i>miraculous</i> Darknefs at <i>Christs</i> Passion.	28 to 32
<i>Huetius's</i> Application of <i>Phlegon</i> ; and his Rea- soning concerning this <i>miraculous</i> Darknefs.	33 to 41
Remarks upon <i>Bodin</i> , <i>Scaliger</i> , <i>Vossius</i> , <i>Kepler</i> , and <i>Origen</i> in this Matter ; with an Application to Dr. <i>Sykes</i> .	42 to 49
The Passage in Mr. <i>Whiston's</i> <i>Historical Me- moirs</i> relating to this Matter, considered and applied.	49 to 56
The Characters or Description of <i>Phlegon's</i> and <i>Kepler's</i> Eclipse, as compared by Mr. <i>Whiston</i> .	57 to 59
In Mr. <i>Whiston's</i> Opinion, Dr. <i>Clarke</i> was work'd upon <i>some other Way</i> , than by the <i>printed Ar- ments</i> of Dr. <i>Sykes</i> .	59 to 62
Dr. <i>Sykes's</i> Objection from the <i>Difference</i> amongst the <i>Fathers</i> about the <i>Time</i> of <i>Christs</i> suffering, considered.	63 to 68
The learned <i>P. Pagi</i> , his Character, Reason- ing, and sound Judgment upon such <i>Diffe- rence</i> amongst the <i>Fathers</i> .	69 to 71
<i>Jrenæus</i> vindicated from the <i>Aspersions</i> of Dr. <i>Sykes</i> .	72 to 74
	The

The rough Treatment given by Dr. Sykes to <i>four</i> very eminent <i>Writers</i> ; all in one Para- graph.	Page 75 to 78
<i>Philoponus</i> , his Character; when he lived; his <i>Evidence</i> very strong for <i>Phlegon's</i> <i>Superna-</i> <i>tural Eclipse</i> .	78 to 86
Mr. <i>Whiston's</i> Omission of the Word <i>Lord</i> in <i>Philoponus's</i> Testimony.	81
A farther Defence of <i>Justin Martyr</i> and <i>Ter-</i> <i>tullian</i> .	87 to 90
Bp. <i>Pearson's</i> Argument for this Purpose, to prove the <i>Genuineness</i> of the <i>early Acts</i> of <i>Pilate</i> .	90 to 97
The reason why Dr. Sykes would have the <i>Roman</i> <i>Archives</i> to be called <i>Secret Accounts</i> .	98, 99
The Passage in <i>Tertullian</i> not fairly recited by Dr. Sykes.	100 to 105
Dr. Sykes's Objection to <i>Justin Martyr</i> answered.	105 to 108
Mr. <i>Whiston's</i> Remarks very just upon <i>Origen's</i> <i>Latin Commentary</i> , that Dr. Sykes relies upon so much.	108 to 110
The <i>Extent</i> of the <i>Darkness</i> at our Saviour's Passion farther considered, by <i>comparing</i> what the earliest <i>Greek</i> and <i>Latin Writers</i> have said upon that Subject,	111 to 114
Remarks on what those ancient Writers have so said.	114 to 117
The Reason why <i>Dionysius</i> the <i>Arcopagite's</i> Epistle to <i>Polycarp</i> is here quoted; and Dr. Sykes's <i>Insincerity</i> shewn.	118 to 132

No Marks of *Spuriousness* in that Epistle; a large Extract from the Epistle itself. 132 to
Page 140

The *Chinese* Affair farther enquired into: A Proof from *their Language*, (as transmitted to the *Royal-Society*,) that *they* had a Knowledge of a *crucified* Saviour. 141 to 153

A Proof from two *Dissertations* lately written by two learned *Chinese* Fathers, P. Bouvet and P. Gaubil, that the *Chinese Annals* have bore Witnesses to the *præternatural* Darkness at Christ's Passion. 153 to 171

The wonderful *Eclipse* taken Notice of by *Herodotus*; with *Calvisius's* Judgment upon it. 172 to 175

Dr. *Samuel Clarke's* Understanding was incapable of receiving any sort of *Conviction* by such weak Arguments as Dr. *Sykes* has offered to the World; whence it is reasonably concluded, that his *Will* must have been *tampered* with. 176, 177

Dr. *Sykes* ought to *explain* himself, as to some Expressions relating to *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*; in which *Tan. Faber*, and *Dan. Zuicker* may probably help him out. 177 to 180

Justin Martyr and *Tertullian's* Way of proving the *Divinity* of our blessed Saviour; they are both vindicated from some Reflections. 181 to 186

Some Account of *Tertullian's Montanism*; which Failure can by no Means justify Dr. *Sykes* in his *Reflections*. 187 to 190

Daillé

Daillé, an Author much valued by the *Free Thinkers*; and yet, in Matters *most material*, they dare not admit what he says. Page 191

The *Priesthood* traduced in a late impious Pamphlet; wherein a *Clergyman* is personated, in vending the most horrid *Blasphemy* and *Profaneness*. 195, &c.

CONFERENCE V.

DR. *Syke's* Defence of his Dissertation concerning *Phlegon's* Eclipse animadverted on in general. Pag. 2, to 6

Four Sorts of *Deists* confuted from those *Lectures* of Dr. *Clarke*, that have been lately *castrated*, upon the Persuasion of Dr. *Sykes* 6, to 21

Our *Free-Thinkers*, as often as they see Dr. *Clarke's* *Eusto* in the Royal *Hermitage*, should reflect upon these unanswerable Arguments against *Deism*. 22

Dr. *Sykes's* *Abusing* the Primitive *Fathers*, made use of by the *Deists*, as a Handle for their not giving so much Credit to Dr. *Clarke's* Arguments in Defence of Divine Revelation in general. 22, 23

Dr. *Clarke's* Animadversions on the Conduct of the *Deists*, now-a-days call'd *Railing*, &c. 23, 25

A Remark on Mr. <i>Locke's Humility</i> , compar'd with <i>that</i> of Dr. <i>Clarke</i> , as to the <i>Mysterious Truths</i> in Christianity.	Page 25, 26
A <i>Passage</i> alledg'd (seemingly in favour of Dr. <i>Clarke</i>) from his <i>Boyle's Lectures</i> ; with Remarks upon <i>it</i> .	26 to 28
The <i>Passage</i> concerning <i>Phlegon's</i> Testimony, recited at length from the <i>Seventh</i> Edition of Dr. <i>Clarke's Boyle's Lectures</i> ; and the <i>Case</i> thereupon stated, as being struck out in the 8th Edition, by the Means of Dr. <i>Sykes</i>	28 to 33
The greatest <i>Difficulty</i> with which Dr. <i>Sykes</i> amuses his Reader concerning <i>Phlegon's</i> Eclipse, arises from <i>different Epochs</i> in <i>Tiberius's</i> Reign.	34 to 37
This <i>Chronological</i> Difficulty more strictly enquir'd into; adjusted from the Observations of <i>P. Pagi</i> ; and Dr. <i>Sykes</i> is fully confuted; the Matter being first stated <i>in his own Words</i> .	38 to 44
<i>P. Pagi's</i> Judgment upon <i>Astronomical Calculations</i> , in relation to the <i>Time</i> of Christ's Passion.	44 to 47
The <i>Issue</i> of the Debate about the <i>Year</i> of <i>Phlegon's</i> Eclipse, as stated in Dr. <i>Sykes's</i> own Words.	48
<i>Africanus's</i> Opinion about the <i>Time</i> of Christ's Death, farther consider'd.	49 to 52
Dr. <i>Sykes's</i> Notion about <i>Original Testimonies</i> examin'd.	53 to 56
More was said in <i>Phlegon's</i> Olympiads, concerning this <i>miraculous</i> Eclipse, than what is recorded by <i>Eusebius</i> .	56 to 58
	Parti-

Particular <i>Extracts</i> from some <i>ancient</i> Writers, to prove <i>this</i> .	Page 58 to 65
An Argument form'd upon such <i>Extracts</i> ; and the <i>Genuineness</i> of them asserted.	65 to 67
<i>Africanus's</i> <i>Testimony</i> establish'd, against Mr. <i>Whiston</i> , upon the Authority of the <i>Royal MS.</i> of <i>Syncellus</i> ; with a Vindication of <i>Syncellus</i> .	67 to 72
Dr. <i>Sykes</i> allows this <i>Testimony</i> of <i>Africanus</i> to be <i>genuine</i> ; and blames Mr. <i>Whiston</i> for his <i>Doubts</i> about it; only modestly affirms, That <i>Africanus</i> was one of those that cou'd <i>lye</i> for God's sake.	72 to 74
The Mischief done to Religion by such base <i>Reflections</i> .	75
<i>Scaliger's</i> Variation from the <i>Royal MS.</i> of <i>Syn-</i> <i>cellus</i> consider'd, in relation to <i>Phlegon's</i> <i>Testimony</i> .	75 to 78
Mr. <i>Whiston</i> and Dr. <i>Sykes</i> their <i>Doubts</i> about rendering the Words <i>κατὰ τὸν χρόνον</i> and <i>κατὰ τὸ</i> <i>δυνατὸν</i> , remark'd upon.	78
Dr. <i>Sykes</i> his Argument from <i>Origen's</i> Latin Commentaries, very weak in several Respects.	79, 80
The Testimonies from <i>Tertullian</i> and <i>Dionysius's</i> Epistle to <i>Polycarp</i> farther defended.	80 to 83
Remark on the <i>Extract</i> from the <i>Chronicon Alex.</i>	83, 84
Remarks on the false <i>Conclusions</i> drawn by Dr. <i>Sykes</i> from the several <i>Calculations</i> that were sent him.	86 to 88
A false Charge upon Mr. <i>Whiston</i> concerning <i>Phle-</i>	

- Phlegon's Eclipse*, as well as upon the ancient Christian Writers. Page 89 to 91
- Dr. Sykes's *Aversion* to those ancient Writers; and why? 91, 92
- The *same* appears from Dr. Clarke's Works; Dr. Sykes call'd upon to do Justice to *him*, as well as to the injur'd *Fathers* of the Christian Church. 92 to 94
- Two *Test-Passages* propos'd to the Consideration of Dr. Sykes, from *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*. 94, to 101
- Dr. Clark's Arguments for the *Testimony* of *Phlegon*, and Dr. Sykes's Reasons against it, summarily propos'd to the Reader. 102 to 104
- Lucian's Philo-Patris*, together with the two MSS. of *Verona* and *Windsor*, shortly to be consider'd, and apply'd, in the next Conference. 105, 106
- Mr. Martin of *Utrecht*, had he liv'd to see the *Verona* MSS. would have made the like good Use of it, as he has done of the *Greek* MSS. at *Dublin*. 107, 108
- Mr. Emlyn's Address to both Houses of Convocation, to have this *Text*, (1 *John* v. 7.) struck out of the *Bible*; and upon Non-Compliance of the Convocation, there has been a late Edition of the *New Testament*, wherein that *Text* is left out; as *Phlegon's Testimony* is in the *Boyle's Lectures* of Dr. Clarke. 109, 110
- A hearty *Wish* that the Convocation might soon remedy the growing *Evils* of *Deism* and *Profaneness*. 112

A N
A P P E A L
T O T H E
Genuine Records.

PART II. CONFERENCE IV.

A. **G**OOD morrow, Sir : This early Hour makes the Visit more agreeable. You are welcome into the Country again. Please to walk up to the Room you have been so long a Stranger to.

B. 'Tis true, I have been *that* Stranger ; but very unwillingly. Family Affairs must be minded : And *that* made it necessary. The Loss, certainly, is on my Side ; and I often regretted it during my Absence. What a secret Pleasure does the very Sight of this Room give me ! for I am now recollecting the *three* Days Conversation we had in it about a Year and a half ago. What you said the last Day, made

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a very strong Impression : I very well remember, you observ'd to me as much, at parting. I have Reason to think, it will be some Satisfaction to you, when I say, that Time hath not worn it off ; and, I hope, never will. I began to reflect, in the best Manner I could, upon what had passed between us ; and in a little Time I ventured to engage (though perhaps *that* was not so prudently done) with the younger Sort of our *Free-Thinking* Gentry ; I mean, that Society, which I was so lately a Member of. What made me think myself a Match for these Gentlemen, was *that* known *Indolence* I had been so long acquainted with myself, and a superficial Sort of Learning, which they usually content themselves with. They are, in the general, a very complying sort of Folks, if you don't trouble them with Arguments that interrupt a licentious Course of Life. They very often look no farther than what prevails *most* amongst those they converse with. It was my own Case lately : And I am now every Day convinced, more and more, that 'tis this giddy Humour, which carries such Numbers away into *Infidelity*.

A. I very well remember, when we last shook Hands, I thought it seasonable to caution you against such Adventures as these : But since you seem to have come off successfully, and talk with so much Courage upon the Matter ; (which, you may assure yourself, gives me the highest Satisfaction ;) let me ask you, in what
Manner

Manner your *quondam* Fraternity treated you, when you let them see, by good Arguments, that you had just Reason to desert them.

B. They took up their well-thumbed *Quarto* *, and immediately told me out of it, that I did not *use those Faculties that God has given us to judge with, after the best Manner I was able* †; nor would they hearken to those Concessions of Mr. Lock ||, viz. that *He gratefully received and rejoiced in the Light of REVELATION, which set him at rest in many Things, the Manner whereof his poor Reason could by no Means make out.* They had the Assurance to insinuate, if not say directly, that in such a Way of Thinking as mine, I was neglecting my own Interest; that I was entirely out of the Fashion; and that it would much better become me, and turn more to my Advantage, in putting myself into a Dress that was modish and genteel to appear in, than to hearken to such credulous Folks, as they perceived I had been lately conversing with.

A. I'm glad you turned Mr. Lock's Weapon upon your young Gentry. They would have been much better pleased, if you had entertained them with some juvenile Excursions, and other Foibles of that great Man. The Bishop of London has often quoted him in his *Pastoral Letters*; and, that you may be better arm'd for the future, pray observe carefully

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how

* Christianity as old as the Creation,

† p. 3.

|| Vol. I. p. 334, 573.

how his Lordship has *applied* the several Passages he has quoted. For my part, I think this *one golden Sentence*, that you urged, justly demands his *Busto* in any *Royal Library*. But what sad *Reasoners* are this *quondam* Fraternity of yours? They *argue* from Numbers, from Fashion, and from worldly Interest, without any regard to future Rewards and Punishments; and they would have you believe, that they are the People, who *use those Faculties that God has given them to judge with, after the best Manner they are able*. As to *Credulity*, which their *Instructors* have taught them to object to you; I desire, when you see them again, that you would bid them ask their *Masters* for the several *Creeds* of *Hobbs*, *Spinoza*, and *Mr. Toland*, (no doubt they can furnish them; such *Creeds* having been collected by several Writers;) and then to tell you, who are the most *credulous* sort of People, according to the genuine and natural Import of the Word *Credulity*, or even, as they themselves understand it, that is, when we *rashly believe Things, without Reason for so doing*. It will be found (as a learned and judicious Writer * has lately told his Clergy) that such *Creeds* contain more frightful Articles, than the *Trent Creed* itself, or even the *Mahometan*. There's scarce an *Article* amongst them, says he, but what is big with many and shocking Absurdities. You may tell such Gentlemen

* Dr. Waterland's second Charge to the Clergy of Middlesex, p. 22.

men then, (Tutors and Pupils both,) if you please, that they don't want *Faith*, where they have *Inclination* : Nay, nothing, says Mr. Archdeacon, is too *absurd* for their Belief, when they have a Mind to it. And yet these are the People, that told you (it seems) the other Day, that you don't *use those Faculties that God has given you to judge with, after the best Manner you are able*. There lies a Book on the Table, just before you, (which you may peruse at your Leisure,) written by one, who is allow'd to be a close Reasoner*, who, for several Pages together, lets us see the many intolerable *Absurdities* that our present set of *Infidels* must admit of; observing withal, that “ their so-
 “ much-boasted Aversion to all kind of *Rigo-*
 “ *try* and *Credulity*, is mere Jest and Scene;
 “ and that they are either some of the most
 “ fondly *credulous* Persons in the World, or
 “ worse; *credulous to a Prodigy*, and might as
 “ well go on to the Fictions of a *Popish Legend*,
 “ or a *Turkish Alcoran*. ” These *credulous* Persons, I have observed of late, shew a *Dislike*, when they are called *Free-Thinkers*; and yet it is a *Name* of their own coining. 'Tis not many Years ago, that they published a long *List* themselves, to shew how numerous they were. Archbishop Tillotson is *modestly* put into their *List*; he is distinguished by them, in that Pamphlet, under the Name of a *Free-Thinker*; and in the Title Page they make their boast of
 a growing

* Ditton on the Resurrection of Christ, p. 364. &c.

a growing *Sect*, which they there call *Free-Thinkers*. I am very sure, they are *Free-Speakers*. I have heard them myself, whilst quarrelling with the Name of *Free-Thinker*, out of the *Abundance of their Heart*, liken the *inspired Writings* to *Persian Tales*. The Land must mourn where such Monsters are suffer'd: And they are now every Day multiplying as the Spawn of *Woolston* and *T——l*. History tells us, that the Dregs of *Arianism*, and the vilest *Free-Thinking*, were the Things that destroy'd the Churches of *Asia*; and introduced, in the Room of Christianity (by the just Judgment of God) the Religion of that wretched Imposter *Mahomet* *. I easily imagine, as you do, that the younger Sort of these *Free-Thinkers* know nothing of these monstrous *Creeds* and *Absurdities* arising from their own Doctrines; whilst the old inveterate *Deists*, who know such to be the necessary Consequences of their own Positions, do as artfully avoid entring upon the Discussion of any such Topicks.

B. I confess, I knew nothing myself of these *Creeds* and *Absurdities* you talk of, when I fell into this Company; otherwise I should have charged it home upon them; and I promise you, I'll take care to do it for the future. My Way of *answering* the Treatment I then met with, was reasoning upon, and making Deductions from those *Facts* and *Prophecies* that you
had

* See Dr. *Prideaux's* Life of *Mahomet*, and his Letter (subjoined) to a *Deist*.

had talked of so convincingly to me, in Defence of *Divine Revelation*. These were the *Weapons* I made use of; and I am not without Hopes, that in a little Time they may prove successful in the Conversion of those unhappy Gentlemen.

A. You may be furnished with more *Weapons* of that sort, whenever you please; and I remember, it was your *particular* Request, when we last parted, that I would proceed (when we met again) in proving *Christianity* from that merry *Heathen* Writer *Lucian*; who, as I told you, *had unawares given a Testimony to one of the greatest Mysteries of our Religion* *. The *Mystery* is that of the *Blessed Trinity*, contained in the Words of St. *John*, 1 *Epist.* v. 7. *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven, &c.* *Lucian*, who lived at the Beginning of the *second* Century, was not only acquainted (we shall see) with this first *Epistle*, but he remarked upon this particular *Vers*e, that has given so much Disturbance to our *Anti-Trinitarians*. I will first give you then the *Testimony* from one of *Lucian's* Dialogues, (or whether *Lucian's*, or a *Con-temporary* *Heathen* Writers, is not, in our Case, material,) and then observe the Analogy, by comparing *it* with the Text. In the next Place, I will produce *new Proof* for the *Genuineness* of this Text; as well from the judicious Remarks now in *MS.* of Dr. *Cave* (late Canon of *Windsor*) upon this Passage in *Lucian*, as from
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* *Part I. p. 22, 126.*

an old *MS.* lately brought to light, and publish'd with all the Marks of Fidelity and Exactness, written above *twelve hundred* Years ago; wherein this remarkable Text is read. This very *MS.* of that able Senator *Aur. Cassiodore*, Dr. *Cave* takes notice of as *lost*, in his *Hist. Liter.* The noble Editor at *Verona*, *Scipio Maffey*, has added his own excellent Annotations: So that the *Whole* is supported, you will find, with all the Authority that an obstinate Heretick in this Matter can require. And when this is done, I will let you see the *notorious Insincerity* of some Writers, (those of the greatest Note and Figure,) in the bold Attacks they have made upon this Text, which our Heathen *Lucian* bore Testimony to in those early Days. And considering this *Text* is Part of an *Epistle*, that was never called in question, in any Age, or by any Person whatever, I do the less wonder that our Enemies have taken so much Pains to prove this *Text* *spurious*, rather than those of the like Nature in other *Parts* of the Bible: For here they know their Attacks are in vain; and therefore I hope you will excuse me, if I dwell longer than ordinary upon this Subject, it being a Matter, as you will perceive, of no small Consequence: And the whole Discourse (you see) naturally arises from the *Testimony* given by this Heathen Writer *Lucian*. When we have done with *him*, and applied the whole, in fully vindicating this *Text*, referred to by *Lucian*, from the many

Cavils

Cavils and Objections that have been raised against it, I am ready to produce more *Facts*, well attested by other *Heathen* Writers, for proving *Divine Revelation*. And I desire you would always remember (upon this, or any other *Proof* that I shall offer, or have offered of this kind) what the same eminent *Prelate*, just mention'd, says in one of his *Pastoral Letters*; “ When
 “ by the *Help* of our *Reason* Revelation becomes
 “ so established; no Suggestion, either against
 “ the *Need* of such *Revelation*, or against our
 “ *Obligation* to receive it, ought to make any
 “ Impression upon us: For to suppose that God
 “ makes a *Revelation* that is *needless*, is a di-
 “ rect Impeachment of his Wisdom; and to
 “ affirm that we are not bound to attend to,
 “ and receive it, when made, is no less an Im-
 “ peachment of his Authority.” You see the plain Connection been the *Facts* I *appeal* to, and what the Bishop has observed. The *Facts*, if you please, you may call the *Premises*; and the Bishop's Words are a natural *Inference* from them. The *Facts* that I have already *appealed* to, in our former Conversation, are what you will find to be true, upon the strictest Examination; nor will I, knowingly, appeal to any for the future, but what are supported by unquestionable Authority. There are *two Points* that I would have you often think on; they will be of great service, in conducting you safely through many a troublesome Dispute that you may happen to be engaged in. They are but
 C short:

short: However, I will venture to assure you, when by your own good Sense, and acquired Learning, you shall have improved upon *them*, they will prove like a *Sheet-Anchor* to you, when you find yourself *pressed* by any of your old *Fraternity*. They will save you the Pains of reading over many an excellent Treatise: And let Mr. T--n--l, and his Party go on, adding *Quarto* to *Quarto*, and write as long as they please; do but keep these *two* Points in view, and you will soon perceive that these Gentlemen only discover warm Inclinations, but *prove* nothing of what they boast of; and you will find what Dr. *Waterland* observes * to be very true; *Take but away their Rhetorications, and equivocal Expressions, their Misrepresentations and Misreports, their Ostentation and their Scurrilities, and their Cause will be left in a Manner destitute.* The *two* Points are these, and I cannot give you *them* in stronger Words than the late learned and judicious Dr. *Prideaux* has done at the Close of his excellent Letter to the *Deists*; “ Thus have I given you an Account, says he, how all the *false Religions* in the *Heathen World* had their Original; and herein I have been the longer, for the sake of *two Reflections* :”

First, That the *Notion* of a *Mediator* between God and Man, was *that* which did run through all the *Religions* that ever were in the World, to the *Coming* of *Jesus Christ*; and was the *fundamental*

* Second Charge.

amental Principle, which prevailed in every one of *them*, as to all the *Worship*, which was practised in them; which could no otherwise become so universal among Mankind, but by a *Tradition* as universally delivered unto them. And what can better account both for this *Tradition*, and also the *Universality* of it, than what is delivered unto us in *Scripture*, of our being descended from one common *Parent*; who, on his *Fall* from the Favour of God, having had this *Promise* of a *Mediator* made unto him, (through whom we might be again reconciled unto him,) *transmitted* it to all his *Posterity*.

Secondly, That the *Mistakes* and *Errors* about the *Worship* of God, and the *Service* we owe unto him, which Men are apt to run into, when left to the *Conduct* of their *own Light* only, are monstrous and endless, and therefore evidently demonstrate the *Necessity* of *Divine Revelations*. For if God does expect from us an *Account* of our *Actions*, (*which is a Doctrine our Deists and Free-Thinkers do not care to hearken to,*) it is necessary he should give us a *Law* for the *Rule* of them; and if the *Law* of our *Reason* alone be *insufficient* for this, we thence see the *Necessity* likewise of *another* to supply its *Defect*. That there is such a *Defect*, appears undeniably from the continual *Errors* and endless *Absurdities* which Mankind, when *left to themselves*, have ever hitherto run into. So that in this depraved Condition, we must have a

Revealed Religion, as well as a *Natural*, or else we can have no certain Knowledge of the Will of God, or any of those *Duties* of Worship and Service, which we are to perform towards him. But this is a sort of *Digression*, occasion'd by the Treatment, you say, you met with from your old Acquaintance. You are come to Day to talk about *Facts*, as it was formerly agreed on between us; and this is the Method we did then agree, and are now entering upon, for proving the Truth of the *Christian Religion*. *Facts* are stubborn Things; and *these* being so well supported, I am persuaded that *Christianity* (whatever some Persons may think on it) *will still gain Ground*, as it did formerly, *by such sort of Evidence*.

B. There is one *Fact* I must take the Liberty of reminding you of, (which was brought upon the *Tapis*, and took up most of our Time the first Day,) that has lately met with *Opposition*; and the Gentleman that makes it, *thinks*, or *pretends to think*, (as he says [p. 4.] of some other People,) that it is not to be supported with such *unquestionable Authority*, or in the Manner you have stated it: It is the *Eclipse* mentioned by the Heathen Writer *Pblegon*; which, indeed, I think; you fully proved, from the *Antients*, was the *same* with that preternatural *Darkness* at our Saviour's Passion. I find your Opponent is a *Clergyman* too, and (what is very amazing) he tells the World, that he is *doing a real Service to the Cause of Christ*, whilst he

is

is setting aside a *Testimony* (a glorious *Testimony* it is) which, according to your Account, has been all along firmly established by the most authentick Writers. His talking of *doing Service to the Cause of Christ*, in this Affair, was very shocking, I own: And I want very much to be informed, how you and he are serving *that Cause* in such a *different* Manner. His Pamphlet, though it raised some Scruples, and, I verily believe, he has misapplied the *Fathers* in several Things, (in which Point I hope you will satisfy me,) yet gave me very little Pain, after having read it carefully over; for his main Objection, I perceive, is grounded upon an old, whimsical, exploded Hypothesis of *Kepler's*, who, not liking the *Fact*, was willing to get rid of it; as some People have been since, by *supposing*, that the *Eclipse* mentioned by *Phlegon* was natural; that *Eusebius*, *Jerom*, and others, were mistaken; that *Kepler* was in the right, and consequently that it could have no Relation to *Christ's* Passion. Mr. *Whiston*, I think, has lately sufficiently confuted this wild Notion of *Kepler's*; and thereby has let the *Divine* see, not only his own Weakness, but the high *Improbability*, that such a judicious Person as Dr. *Clarke*, should be so easily persuaded to give up *Phlegon's* Testimony, upon the producing of *Kepler's* Hypothesis; *supposing it was produced to him*. 'Tis certain, this *Divine* ordered Matters so, that the *Doctor* was not to be *alive*; when yet it was highly proper he should speak for himself. I cannot help thinking

thinking, but that some better Reasons may be assign'd for Dr. *Clarke's* striking out this *Testimony*; and that he and his Friend were both well agreed in *serving the Cause of Christ*, after one and the same Manner. I do not question but you will give me your Thoughts upon the whole Affair; nay, you see, you are obliged to do it for your own sake, as well as mine. But, in the first Place, I beg you would recapitulate, and give a summary Account of this *Fact* of *Phlegon*, as you gave it, and stated it to me in our *first* Day's Conversation.

A. I find, *Lucian* then must stand by a while, and give his Evidence another Time. You seem to have cut out work enough for an Hour, at least: However, I agree, your Request is reasonable, and, perhaps, my Compliance may be necessary too, for your fuller Satisfaction about a *Fact* of such Importance as *this is*; and therefore, I hope, we shall neither of us find our Time mispent, though we put the Business of the Day a little out of Order. As to the Person you point out, as denying that the *Eclipse* mentioned by *Phlegon* has any Relation to the *Darkness* that happened at our Saviour's Passion; I desire you will, for the future, drop that Distinction of a *Divine*. I am persuaded you wish well to the *Order* in general: But I remember, at the very Beginning of our *first* Day's Conversation, you talked very oddly of some of the *Clergy*, or rather, you heard it talked of at a Bishop's *Visitation*; and you said,
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it gave you a *secret Pleasure*. Pray, Sir, when you see any of the Order acting in that odd Manner, spare the *distinguishing* Character, (for it is sacred,) lest it be thought, you design it as a Reproach to the Order in general. Such a Character, and such a *Conduct* in some of us, do raise, I fear, very shocking Ideas in People's Minds. And let this Gentleman think what he pleases, I believe he will be found, upon further Examination, to have been *weakening Christianity*, by endeavouring to set aside this *Testimony*; and therefore, if you please, let him pass under the Name of *Anti-Pblegonist*, as often as you shall have Occasion to name him. As to his *Intentions* or Design in contradicting such a known glorious and avowed Testimony of *Pblegon*, I shall not now so much as guess at them: But after I have recapitulated in the Manner you desire, and when the *Facts* shall have been thoroughly discussed again by us, I shall give you my Thoughts very freely, and make the best Conjectures I am able, how it came about that Dr. *Clarke's* Eyes were so luckily opened by this Writer, when he was revising his *Boyle's* Lectures; and that both of them should so well agree in *doing Service to the Cause of Christ* this Way. The *Free-Thinker, Celsus*, had the Front to suppose the *Earthquake* and the *Darkness* at our Saviour's Crucifixion, to be *fictional Wonders*, or the Effect of Conjuratation. And *Julian*, though he did not question a *new Star* rising at our Saviour's Birth, yet he was
for

for resolving it into *natural* Causes. *Infidelity* had taken such deep Root in those Persons, that they would not *have been persuaded, though one had rose from the Dead to convince them.* But what's this, you will say, to our *Anti-Pblegonist*? He does not question *that Darknefs, as Celsus did, nor yet the Star as Julian, 'tis true.* But have not several of those Writers, that convey'd down to us this *Scripture Darknefs*, for so many Ages past, convey'd likewise the same *Darknefs*, as expressly recorded in the *Roman Annals*? or have they not applied the *Darknefs so recorded,* to our Saviour's Passion? Have not the same primitive Writers convey'd to us these *two Facts*, with equal Plainness and Integrity? And when some of them were so publick and confident in the *Appeal*, did the *Roman World* offer to confront them in that Particular, as this Gentleman has taken a Fancy to do? Did their Enemies talk to *them* about *natural Eclipses*? or were they told, that they were under a *Mistake*, in making such an *Application*? and that there was no such *wonderful Darknefs* recorded in their *Annals*? I would fain know then, when the *Fathers* of the Christian Church, who have convey'd to us the *sacred Writings*, have also *appealed* to the *Roman Archives* for the Truth of this *Fact*, and boldly *applied* what is since called *Pblegon's Eclipse*, as *relating* to our Saviour's Passion; and such *Fact* or Testimony shall now be called in question; I would fain know (I say) what great Difference there is, in

in reckoning one *Fact fictitious*, as *Celsus* does ; or in resolving the *other* into *natural* Causes, as *Julian* does ; and in *denying this Fact*, in the Manner it is applied by those primitive Fathers ? I desire you will call *Tertullian*, and hear what he says, as to this Matter. He lived in those early Days ; so early, that the very *original Letters* of the Apostles * were then read in their Churches. He was a great Master of History, and was particularly versed in the *Roman Laws*, as appears from this *Apology* I am turning to, as well as from the Character that is given him by *Eusebius*. In this Manner then *Tertullian* pleads. “ In the same Moment that he (*Jesus* “ *Christ*) dismissed Life, the Light departed “ from the Sun, and the *World* was benighted “ at Noon-Day ; and those Men who acknow- “ ledged this *Eclipse*, but were unacquainted “ with the *Prophecies* that foretold it upon “ Christ’s Death, and finding it impossible to “ be solved by the *Laws* of *Nature*, at last “ roundly denied the *Fact* ; and yet *this Won- “ der of the World* you have related, and the Re- “ lation preserved in your Archives to this Day.”

A late worthy and learned *Divine*, whose Translation you see I make use of, remarks at the Bottom of the Page thus ; “ An Eclipse of “ the Sun at a *Full-Moon* (as this was) is by the “ known Laws of Nature demonstratively im- “ possible ; and *this* it was made it so much “ taken Notice of by the *antient Astronomers* ;

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“ by

* *Tertul.*, Præscript. c. 36.

“ by *Dionysius* the Arcopagite, *Apollophanes*
 “ the Sophist, by *Phelegon* in his *Olympiads*, &c.
 “ *Vid.* Paraphrase of *Zephyrus*, and the Notes
 “ of *Pamelius*, and especially the Annotations
 “ of *Grotius* upon *Mat.* xxvii. 45.

B. According to our *Anti-Phelegonist's* Way of Arguing, these *Primitive Fathers*, and *Grotius*, *Huetius*, and twenty more of the modern Writers, have been doing *Disservice to the Cause of Christ*, whilst they so appeared in behalf of this Testimony of *Phelegon*. This is a Piece of Priestcraft, it seems, that our *Free-Thinkers* have not been yet able to dive into: And who so proper, say they, to make the Discovery, as a *Priest* himself? He roundly assures them*, that *this is one of those impertinent Testimonies, that does but weaken the Evidence that is offered for the Truth of Christianity.* But what if the Case appears to be quite otherwise than he has stated it, (as I make no great doubt it will so appear before you and I part,) what an odd, frightful Figure must a *Divine* of the Church of *England* (pardon me) make in the World, after having laboured to destroy one of the most glorious Testimonies (as far as I can yet learn) that *profane History* affords us for the Truth of the Christian Religion? I now often think of the Words you used, when we were formerly upon this Subject, “ That *Phelegon's* Testimony was “ such a sort of *Proof*, for the Truth of our “ Religion, that whenever it has been urged,
 “ it

“ it has carried so much Strength and Weight
 “ along with it, and has appeared so very power-
 “ ful and cogent, that neither *Porphyry*, nor *Ju-*
 “ *lian*, nor any other of our Enemies, have been
 “ able to make any tolerable Reply to it.”

A. Had not the Works of *Thallus*, another *Hea-*
then Writer, been lost, and of some other *Hea-*
then Commentators that *Eusebius* takes notice of,
 there would have been no room for those little
 Quirks and Quibbles that this *Anti-Phlegonist*
 uses, by way of Objection, about understanding
 the *Passage* in these Olympiads. What, if there
 be no mention made of the *Full Moon* in the *Pas-*
sage, as 'tis cited by *Eusebius*; yet 'tis confes-
 sedly so mention'd as cited by *Julius Africanus*,
 who is allow'd to have been a most accurate Hi-
 storian; who flourish'd not above three or *four score*
 Years after *Phlegon*, and yet above a *hundred*
 Years before *Eusebius*: And what is farther ob-
 servable, *Africanus* was the Man, that had read
Thallus's Works too. Now, what says *Africa-*
nus, as he is quoted by this *Writer* from *Syncel-*
lus? “ *Phlegon* tells us, says he, that in *Tiberius*
 “ *Cæsar's* Reign, at the Time of the *Full Moon*
 “ there was a total Eclipse of the Sun, from the
 “ sixth Hour to the ninth.” I cannot imagine
 why this *Authority* from *Africanus* should not
 have the Preference to that of *Eusebius*, or any
 other now extant, in stating the true Reading of
 this *Passage* in *Phlegon*. I know very well what
 Mr. *W.* surmises to the contrary in this Matter,
 about *Africanus's* Fragment having been inter-

polated, and that the Words [*Full Moon* and the *ninth Hour*,] he fancies crept out of the Margin into the Text. I must confess, after having consulted the various Lections in *Syncellus*, (whence I believe Mr. *W*'s Fancy took its Rise,) I cannot by any Means see Ground enough to think *those Words* interpolated, but rather *restor'd* to their proper Place, in those Copies where they may have been wanting; nor is *Eusebius*'s omitting *those Words* any Argument at all, as we shall see hereafter. I am very sure, the great and learned *Huetius* (one that Mr. *W*. has paid a great Deference to in this very Vindication) had none of these *Suspensions* about him, when he said*, *Africanus interpreted Phlegon's Words in a very different Manner, (viz. from Origin, in his Commentary,) for Phlegon (says Africanus) relates, that in the Reign of Tiberius an Eclipse of the Sun happened when it was Full Moon. Africanus is talking of a Full Moon himself at the Time of our Saviour's Passion: He then says, it is plain, that Phlegon speaks of that very Eclipse at Christ's Passion†: But how would it have been so plain, if the Circumstance of a Full Moon had not been mention'd by Phlegon? But what says Africanus from the Works of Thallus, which he had seen, but now are lost? " There was a " most dreadful Darkness, says Africanus, all " over the World; the Rocks were rent by an " Earthquake, and many Places in Judæa, and " in*

* *Huet. Dem. Ev. Prop. III.*

† *Δήλον ὡς ταύτην.*

“ in *other Parts* of the Earth, were thrown
 “ down. This Darknes *Tballus*, in the *third*
 “ Book of his History, calls an *Eclipse* of the
 “ Sun : Without Reason, as I think ; for the
 “ *Hebrews* celebrate the Passover on the XIV
 “ Day of the Moon, &c.” The Difference then
 between *Africanus* and *Tballus* was, by what
Name they should call this wonderful Darknes;
 but ’tis easy to see by *Africanus*’s commenting
 on the Matter, that *Tballus* read and understood
 in general as he did : For if *Tballus* had talk’d
 of a *natural Eclipse*, ’tis plain *Africanus* did
 not argue fairly. “ How can it be thought to be
 “ an *Eclipse*, says he, when the Moon was almost
 “ diametrically opposite to the Sun ?” And yet
 we see *Africanus*, being at a Loss to find out a
 better *Word* for this *Darknes*, soon corrects him-
 self, and leaves off censuring *Tballus*. *But be it*
so, says he ; *let what has happen’d sink deep into*
the Hearts of the People ; and let this universal
Prodigy be suppos’d an Eclipse of the Sun, since
in respect of our Sight ’twas all one.—————
 From this short Remark, you may farther dis-
 cern a very trifling Argument that’s made use of
 by this *Ani-Phlegonist* *, who gravely puts the
 following Question, after having cited this Pas-
 sage of *Africanus* ; “ How comes it to pass, that
 “ *Tballus* is censured for an *Absurdity*, and yet
 “ *Phlegon*, who was guilty of a much greater
 “ *Absurdity*, escapes uncensured ?” Surely, ’tis
 obvious to every Reader *how it comes to pass ;*
for

* Page 14.

for would it not have been very absurd in *Africanus* to have *censured Phlegon* for using a *Word*, when he had been just before (upon second Thoughts) reconciled to *it* himself? *But be it so*, says he---&c. and then proceeds to talk of *Phlegon*. But what's this greater *Absurdity*? *Thallus*, no doubt, talk'd of a *Full Moon*; *Phlegon* talks of a *Full Moon*; and so does *Africanus*; and yet this Gentleman wonders, why *Africanus* don't *censure Phlegon* for such *absurd Discourse*. I'll just take notice, that this Writer stops a little too soon upon this Quotation from *Africanus*: Mr. *W.* will *lengthen it* for him by-and-by; and then it will appear from *Africanus*'s Supputation of *Daniel's LXX Weeks*, that he did not fix the Death of Christ in that Manner, which this Gentleman * says he did: But this is the Way our *Anti-Phlegonist* takes of *eluding* the Force of what *Africanus* says; tho' he so positively *applies Phlegon's Eclipse* to our Saviour's Passion.

B. Your Discourse pleases me very well; yet suffer me to tell you, that in my Opinion you are *anticipating* Matters, and not proceeding according to the Method you just now proposed. Please to give me a summary Account first, of what formerly passed between us concerning this *Testimony* of *Phlegon*; and then enter into as close a Discussion, as you please, of what this Writer has said in Opposition to *it*.

A. You may remember, I took Notice, that *Phlegon* was a great Favourite of the Emperor

* Pag. 17, 18, 96.

Adrian;

Adrian; and consequently we might reasonably conclude, that, in Writing his *Olympiads*, he had free Access to the *Roman Records*; and that there was no Transaction transmitted from the several Provinces of that Empire, he was any ways a Stranger to; which shews the inestimable Loss that the Christian World sustains, in being deprived of that History, and now forced to content ourselves with two or three broken Fragments only. *Ger. Vossius* expresses a hearty Concern for the Loss of it: “ I wish, “ says he, the *whole* Chronicle or Olympiad of “ *Phlegon* was extant; for *that*, no doubt, “ would have given us great Light into the Affairs of the Primitive Church*.” You may remember, when I cited *Thallus*, another Hea-then Writer, to give Evidence (as far as others had quoted him) concerning the *wonderful Darknes* at our Saviour’s Crucifixion; I took notice that he liv’d even in the *first* Century; which makes the *Loss* of his Works still more to be *lamented*: But I don’t find the least *Concern* in this *Anti-Phlegonist* about that Matter; and the *little* that remains of *Thallus*, he would have to pass for nothing. I observ’d farther from *Thallus*, by comparing the several Authors that had quoted him, that this *miraculous Darknes*, according to him, was in the *eighteenth* Year of *Tiberius*: And is it any ways probable, that the celebrated

* Utinam totum chronicon exstaret: multum enim lucis absq; dubio, priscae inde Ecclesiae temporibus accederet. *Ger. Voss. de Hist. Gr. p. 219.*

celebrated *Africanus*, so early a Writer, and allowed to be an exact Chronographer in other Things, should be so grossly mistaken, as to fix our Saviour's Passion in a *real* different Year of *Tiberius*, as this Writer has * charg'd it; and who modestly charges *Eusebius* and *Jerom* both with an *Absurdity* likewise on this Account? " 'Tis
 " *absurd*, he says, for them to quote *Phlegon's*
 " Testimony for the Death of Christ, when the
 " Difference betwixt *them* and *Africanus* was
 " plainly *three* or four Years." But this Matter shall be further examined in a proper Place; for this Writer seems to *amuse* his Reader with some *Quotations*; and yet it will be found, upon farther Enquiry, (in what I have to offer to you,) that there was no such *real* Difference (in point of *Time*) between *Africanus* and *Eusebius*, as this Gentleman would have his *English* Reader to believe. To proceed, I did not only give you *Phlegon's* Fragment in the *Manner* 'tis recorded by *Eusebius*; (which you observe is not so *full* as *that* given by *Africanus*,) but, if you please to recollect, I also laid before you *Meursius's* Observations upon that Fragment: I referr'd you, for a fuller Information in that Matter, to the IX Vol. of *Gronovius's* *Greek* Antiquities; and I dare say, you have found nothing in those *Observations* of *Meursius*, that do in the least *favour* the odd Notions now maintain'd by our *Anti-Phlegonist*. I well remember, I gave you another Fragment of *Phlegon's*; and, in my Opinion,

nion, a very material one; for which I referr'd you to *Lactantius* and to *Origen*; from whom we learn, " that *Phlegon* ascrib'd to Christ a " *Foreknowledge* of the *Times* to come; and af- " firm'd, that there had been an exact Accom- " plishment of all his *Predictions*." Whence had *Phlegon* the Account of such an *exact Accom- plishment*, but from the *Roman Archives*? which was a Treasure that no Person was better ac- quainted with, we may well presume, than him- self. Our *Anti-Phlegonist* shews a good Will for explaining away *Pilate's* Accounts lodg'd in these *Roman Archives*, if he could. " 'Tis pos- " sible, says he *, that *Pilate* might give an Ac- " count to *Tiberius* of the Death of Christ: But " that he wrote the Things which *Tertullian* " says he wrote; or that the Things, for which " *Justin Martyr* appeals to the *Acts* of *Pilate*, " were ever sent to *Tiberius*, has no Foundation " of Probability." These two *Fathers*, if I mistake not, gall our *Anti-Phlegonist* in more Respects than one, and therefore I don't wonder to see the *πλαίσμιος* breaking out in this manner. He has been pretty remarkable already in explaining *Prophecies*: But that I have nothing to say to at present. As to his Notion about *Pilate's* Accounts sent to *Rome*, and his intolerable Treatment both of *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*, I promise you, that, as they are Matters of Importance, they shall be fully taken notice of before we part with him. You'll ex-
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cuse

cuse these short Digressions.---I now farther remind you, of what I said concerning *Lucian* the *Martyr*'s appealing to the *Roman Annals* just before he suffer'd; " If you will not have any
 " Regard (says he) to the *Testimony* I have given
 " you for the *Divinity* of *Jesus Christ*, you have
 " nothing left but to consult your own *Annals* ;
 " there you will find, that during *Pilate's* Government, and *at the Time* when the Saviour
 " of the World was crucify'd, the *Sun* disappear'd, and the *Universe* was buried, as it were,
 " in Darkneſs." I observ'd to you the frantick Humour of *Bodin*, who was a down-right *Anti-Phlegonist*, and ventur'd to impose upon the World in the most gross malicious Manner, fixing this Eclipse of *Phlegon's* about *two and thirty* Years after the Time fix'd for the Death of Christ. But then I took notice withal, if you remember, that this Man had very *ill Ends* to serve, not only in changing the Text of *Phlegon*, but in questioning the *two* first Chapters of *St. Luke's* Gospel, because the *Divinity* of *Jesus Christ* there displays itself in so full a Light. I farther observ'd to you, that this *miraculous Darkneſs*, attending our Saviour's Passion, appears to have been *recorded* by the *Chinese* as a *supernatural* Eclipse of the Sun: For this I quoted the Learned Bishop *Huetius*; and not being Master of *Hadr. Greſton's* History of *China* myself, nor then knowing where to procure it, I contented myself with the Account given of that Matter by the learned Librarian at *Lyons*, (yet living,

living, as I'm inform'd,) *Dominique de Colonia*, who I hope will excuse the Freedom I have sometimes taken, in making the best Use I could of his excellent Work. You easily recollect, that I insisted pretty much upon *Tertullian's* Appeal to the *Roman Records* concerning this wonderful *Darkness*, which must be the same with what *Phlegon* speaks of. Can we think *Tertullian* was a Stranger to *Phlegon's* *Olympiads*? tho' he appeals to the *Archives* themselves; for it was proper for him so to do: But what signify'd his *appealing* any where about an Eclipse that was only *natural*? Nay, his very *appealing* to an Eclipse in the XVIIIth Year of *Tiberius's* Reign, (as we shall find *that* to be the Case,) necessarily implies, that what was recorded in the *Roman Annals* of that Nature, *must be recorded as* SUPERNATURAL; because by the unanimous Agreement of all *Astronomers*, whether *Greek* or *Roman*, there neither was, nor could be a *natural* Eclipse in *that Year* of *Tiberius*; which Year corresponds with the Year wherein Christ died: So that tho' *Tertullian* and others do not name *Phlegon*, yet they meant *him* and *Thallus* too, (says *Scaliger* *,) and they name the *Records* whence *Phlegon* took the Passage; and therefore the *Fathers* did, in effect, lay a Stress upon the Words of *Phlegon* himself. I am now to suppose, you have thought me long enough in the Recapitulation you desir'd. In

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* *Scal.* Animadv. in *Euseb. Chron.* p. 171.

making this Collection of *Authorities*, I should have told you before, that I was chiefly beholden to *Huetius*, *Grotius*, *Spencer* in his Notes upon *Origen*, and *Dom. de Colonia* already nam'd. These *Authorities* are since put in order, with the Addition of many more (which I did not then think necessary) in Mr. *Whiston's* Vindication against our *Anti-Phlegonist*; so that every *English* Reader may form a pretty good Judgment of the Matter now before us.

B. Our *Anti-Phlegonist* having named *Grotius* in the first Page of his Pamphlet, (I think he should have named *Huetius* too,) as a Person, whose *Reasons* in this Matter were not so weighty as his *own*; in the Judgment of Dr. *Clarke*; I should be glad to know, before you take that Pamphlet in Pieces, what it is that *Grotius* says upon the Affair. This will be doing Justice, I think, to the *Anti-Phlegonist* himself; for we shall then see at one View how far *his Reasons* præponderate to those of *Grotius*, and whether the Scale turn'd low enough to influence a Man of Dr. *Clarke's* Sagacity and Learning.

A. I object to nothing that has any Tendency to the setting this Affair in its true Light. *Grotius* then, upon these Words of St. *Matthew*, (*ch. xxvii. 45.*) has the following Remarks;
 “ The Sun was darkned, says he, (as St. *Luke*
 “ informs us,) not by the Interposition of the
 “ Moon: for it was then *Full Moon*, but in some
 “ manner *unknown* to us; and whereas St. *Mat-*
 “ *thew* here says, *there was Darkness over all*
 “ the

“ *the Land*; or (as *St. Luke*,) *over the whole*
 “ *Earth*; this, as it cannot be understood of the
 “ whole *Globe*, (for in many *Parts* of it there
 “ was no *Day*,) so neither would I have it un-
 “ derstood of *Judæa only*, since the old *Astro-*
 “ *logers* and *Chronographers*, who take notice of
 “ it, make no *Restriction*, as to the *Place*; and
 “ therefore there’s *Room* to understand it as
 “ *extensively* as may be. *Phlegon* says, in the
 “ *XIIIth Book* of his *Olympiads*, That in *the*
 “ *fourth Year* of the *CCIIId Olympiad*, there was
 “ *an Eclipse*, or *Failure of Light in the Sun*,
 “ *greater than ever was known before*; and there
 “ *was Night at the sixth Hour of the Day*, inso-
 “ *much that the Stars appear’d in the Firma-*
 “ *ment*; there was also a great *Earthquake in*
 “ *BYTHYNIA*, that overthrew great *Part of the*
 “ *City Nice*. *Phlegon* assigns a *Place* for the
 “ *Earthquake*; but none for the *Darkness*: And
 “ since he takes notice of the *Darkness* being
 “ *greater* than any that had been seen before, ’tis
 “ a sufficient *Proof*, that it was not seen only in
 “ *Judæa*. *Eusebius* quotes another *Greek Wri-*
 “ *ter*, (but does not name him,) writing thus
 “ concerning this very *Affair*; *The Sun fail’d in*
 “ *its Light*; the *Land of Bythynia was shaken*;
 “ *great Part of Nice fell down*. This *Writer*,
 “ not nam’d by *Eusebius*, without doubt, is
 “ *Thallus*, who is quoted by *Africanus* in the
 “ following manner; *Thallus calls this Dark-*
 “ *ness an Eclipse*, in the *third Book of his History*;
 “ in my *Opinion*, improperly so called: For the
 “ *Hebrews*

“ Hebrews keep their Passover when the Moon
 “ is fourteen Days old; but the Things concern-
 “ ing our Saviour happen’d before the first Day
 “ of the Passover, &c. In which Passage *Afri-*
 “ *canus* takes *Thallus*’s Expression of an Eclipse
 “ in a *strict* limited Sense, as if *Thallus* meant,
 “ that this Failing of Light in the Sun was in
 “ the *natural* Way, or from a *natural* Cause;
 “ whereas the Sun may be said to *fail*, (*ἐκλείπειν*)
 “ tho’ it does so any *other* Way whatever:
 “ This was the Reason likewise that *Origen*
 “ complains of the Text in *St. Luke*, as having
 “ been *corrupted*, because of the Word *ἐκλείπον-*
 “ *τος* occurring in it; (*the same Word that*
 “ *Thallus and Phlegon had used for an Eclipse.*)
 “ For *Origen* thought as *Africanus* did, that it
 “ was not a proper Word to express the Sense of
 “ the Evangelist.” Moreover, *Tertullian* in his
Apologetick thus; “ At length, being fasten’d to
 “ the Cross, and having cry’d out and commend-
 “ ed his Spirit into the Hands of his Father, he
 “ gave up the Ghost of his own Accord, and so
 “ prevented the Executioner’s breaking his Bones,
 “ by dying in his own Time, and fulfilled a Pro-
 “ phesy by so doing. Moreover, in the same Mo-
 “ ment that He (*Christ*) dismissed Life, the Light
 “ departed from the Sun, and the World was be-
 “ lighted at Noon-Day; and those Men who ac-
 “ knowledg’d this Eclipse, but were unacquainted
 “ with the Prophecies that foretold it upon *Christ*’s
 “ Death, and finding it impossible to be solv’d by
 “ the Laws of Nature, at last roundly deny’d the
 “ Fact:

“ *Fact: And yet this Wonder of the World you*
 “ *have related, and the Relation preserved in*
 “ *your ARCHIVES to this Day. In which Pas-*
 “ *sage, I don’t apprehend, what else can be meant*
 “ *by Archives, than the Place where the pub-*
 “ *lick Transactions of the Roman Empire were*
 “ *recorded. ’Tis to these Archives, if I mistake*
 “ *not, that Lucian the Martyr (in Eusebius) ap-*
 “ *peals to likewise; and whereas Tertullian stiles*
 “ *this Darknes the Wonder of the World,*
 “ *he sufficiently guards against the Opinion of*
 “ *those, who ascribe such Darknes to Judæa*
 “ *only. I think therefore, that these Expres-*
 “ *sions of St. Matthew and St. Luke, over all the*
 “ *Land, and over the whole Earth or World*,*
 “ *are to be understood in relation to the Ro-*
 “ *man Empire, or certainly to the greatest Part*
 “ *of it. What the Almighty was minded to*
 “ *have understood by this Darknes, has been*
 “ *differently argu’d by many. For my own*
 “ *Part, I’m of an Opinion, that other Nations*
 “ *were concern’d in this Prodigy, as well as the*
 “ *Jews, whose calamitous State the Prophets*
 “ *describe by the Darknes of the Sun. For*
 “ *’twas this, among other things, that put the*
 “ *Centurion into so great a Consternation: And*
 “ *therefore the Meaning and Intent of this Dark-*
 “ *nes, is to be taken in as large and compre-*
 “ *hensive a Sense as possible. It was usual with*
 “ *the Heathen Part of the World, (as by several*
 “ *Instances,) to observe such Prodigies as cer-*
 “ *tain*

* πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν, πᾶσαν τὴν διασπέρην.

“tain Indications, that Heaven was offended at
 “some heinous Sin or other that had been com-
 “mitted amongst ’em. And, as to the *Jews*,
 “this *Prodigy* might in a particular manner
 “bring to their Mind those Words of the Pro-
 “phet *Amos*, (viii. 9, 10.) *And it shall come to*
 “*pass in that Day, saith the Lord God, that I*
 “*will cause the Sun to go down at Noon, and I*
 “*will darken the Earth in the clear Day, &c.*
 “For what was before of old fulfill’d in a meta-
 “phorical or *figurative* Sense, was now made
 “good in a literal and *proper* Sense, as I have of-
 “ten taken notice.” Thus far from *Grotius* ;
 and I hope you have not thought me tedious.

B. Sir, I thank you. This Comment of *Gro-*
tius, I am apt to think, will not be so soon out
 of fashion, as some People would have it. I
 have got our *Anti-Phlegonist’s* Pamphlet here in
 my Pocket. I cannot but wonder at the
magisterial Manner, in which he sets out, when
 he tells the World, that *this Passage of Phle-*
gon OUGHT NOT to be cited, as relating to the
Darkness at our Saviour’s Passion; and yet two
 or three Pages farther, he seems to think him-
 self in an *Error* too: “However, says he, whe-
 “ther I am mistaken in my Sentiments, or in
 “any Remarks I have made upon *this Pas-*
 “*sage*, or not, I have here collected, &c.” Sir, af-
 ter hearing this Account from so great a Man
 as *Grotius*, I even blush for this Writer; when,
 in the very *first Page* he assures his Reader,
 “That the *Reasons* which he gave to Dr.
 “*Clarke,*

“ *Clarke*, were such, as made him strike out
 “ *this Passage* in his *Boyle’s Lectures*. ” I
 think, some little Time ago, you mentioned *Huetius*,
 as a Person you was partly indebted to,
 for your *Collection of Authorities* in this Case.
 If it might not be too much Trouble, I should
 be glad to hear, how he *reasons* too upon the
 Matter. This would be still doing Justice to
 the Cause ; and also our *Anti-Phlegonist* can
 have no Occasion to complain ; because he has
 discarded *Moderns* as well as *Antients*, in this
 Affair, except *two or three*, that I hope you
 will give me a satisfactory Account of by-and-
 by.

A. Sir, The Gentleman you now call upon, stands
 very near you. Since you please to hear him *,
 let me tell you, he treats of this Subject *pro-*
fessedly, and not as a Commentator ; which makes
 me think, after you have heard him, that there
 may be some *Choler* in you, mix’d with the *Blushes*
 you just now mentioned. *Huetius* then was a
 Bishop in *France*, and one of the most polite,
 learned, and judicious Persons, which that Na-
 tion perhaps can boast of for these hundred
 Years past. He writ a *Commentary*, like *Julius*
Cæsar, de Rebus suis, in *Latin* : He was a *Valetu-*
dinarian, you may easily imagine from the labori-
 ous Works, with which he has obliged the learn-
 ed World ; often troubled with the Cholick ; and
 at last found a Cure ; and should you ever be
 troubled with a *Bilious Cholick*, let me direct you

F

to

* Vid. *Huet. Dem. Ev. Prop. 3.*

to the reading that Book, where you will see your own Distemper described, a Remedy happily applied, and an excellent *Poem*, by way of Gratitude, in Praise of the *Tea-Kettle*. Excuse the Digression. *Huetius* expresses himself thus, upon the present Subject : “ *Phlegon*, a Freed-
 “ Man of the Emperor *Hadrian*, has declared
 “ in his Chronicle or Olympiads, that *Jesus*
 “ was a Prophet, and that Things *future* were
 “ known and foretold by him. The *wonder-*
 “ *ful Things* done by him are confessed by the
 “ *Jewish Chiefs*, as well as the *Talmudists* ; nor
 “ have the bitterest Enemies of Christianity de-
 “ nied them, such as *Celsus* and *Julian*. The
 “ former, when he was not able to deny the
 “ *Facts*, assigned a *fiction* Cause, Enchant-
 “ ments and Witchcraft ; the latter likewise
 “ does not question the *Facts*, but endeavours,
 “ by declaiming, to lessen the Esteem of them
 “ in People’s Minds. *Porphyrie* also com-
 “ plains, that *Jesus* had restrained the Power
 “ of the *Dæmons* ; nor was it to be wonder’d at,
 “ he said, that whole Cities were laid waste
 “ by the *Plague*, where *Æsculapius* and other
 “ Gods did no longer reside ; and that the
 “ *Gods* were generally become of little Ser-
 “ vice to Mankind, since *Jesus* was made the
 “ Object of their Worship. As to the *won-*
 “ *derful Eclipse*, and great *Earthquake* that hap-
 “ pened at *Christ*’s Death, they are both taken
 ‘ notice of by *Phlegon*, just now quoted, in
 ‘ in the thirteenth Book of his *Olympiads* ; St.
 “ *Jerom*

“ *Jerom* thus translates the Passage; *In the*
 “ *fourth Year of the 202d Olympiad* (which an-
 “ swers to the 18th of *Tiberius*, when *Christ*
 “ died) *there was a great Eclipse of the Sun, ex-*
 “ *ceeding all Eclipses that had ever happened*
 “ *before it: The Day at the sixth Hour was*
 “ *turned into so dark a Night, that the Stars*
 “ *were seen in the Firmament; and the Earth-*
 “ *quake in Bithynia threw down many Houses*
 “ *in the City of Nice.* The same Account, *Eu-*
 “ *sebius* lets us know in his *Chronicle*, was given
 “ by other *Heathen Writers* in their *Commen-*
 “ *taries.* Among such *Writers*, the *Authority*
 “ of *Thallus* is chiefly remarkable, who, as
 “ *Africanus* (an eminent *Chronographer*) has
 “ quoted him, relates the very same *Eclipse*
 “ in the third Book of his *History.* That it
 “ is the *same Eclipse* or *Darkness*, that is men-
 “ tioned by the *Evangelists*, with what is here
 “ taken notice of by *Phlegon*, in his *History*,
 “ appears chiefly on these *three Accounts*;
 “ 1. The *Eclipse* fell out, as by both *Histo-*
 “ *ries*, in the *same Year*, namely, in the 18th
 “ of *Tiberius.* 2. It happened at the *same*
 “ *Time*, namely, at the *sixth Hour.* 3. It had
 “ the *same Circumstance* attending it, a
 “ remarkable *Earthquake*, which made the
 “ Wonder still greater in both. *Tertullian*
 “ therefore, when he was pleading with *Hea-*
 “ *thens*, in behalf of the *Christians*, had just
 “ *Reason* for appealing to their *publick Records*,
 “ to make good the Truth of this *miraculous*
 “ Event.

“ Event. Before this, *Lucian*, the Martyr at
 “ *Antioch*, appealed to the same *Archives* or
 “ *Roman Records* at *Nicomedia*, before the
 “ Governor, bespeaking him thus : *Consult your*
 “ *Annals* ; *you will find in the Days of Pilate,*
 “ *when Christ suffered, that at Noon-Day the*
 “ *Sun vanished, and the natural Course of Light*
 “ *was interrupted.* The *publick Acts* of the
 “ Empire are often taken notice of by the
 “ Writers of the *Augustan History*, under this
 “ Name of the *Roman Annals*. But nothing
 “ more deserves a nice and accurate Observa-
 “ tion, as to this Affair, than what is related
 “ in the *Chinese History*, lately written by
 “ *Hadrian Greslon*, viz. It there stands record-
 “ ed among the *Chinese*, at that very Time, that
 “ corresponds with the XXXII Year of the
 “ Christian *Æra*, about the Month of *April*,
 “ that there happened a *solar Eclipse* contrary
 “ to the Laws of Nature, and the regular
 “ Motions of the Planets ; at which *strange*
 “ Occurrence their Emperor QUAM-VUTI was
 “ very much disturbed. *Kepler* therefore, other-
 “ wise a candid Man, and an excellent Astro-
 “ nomer, acted imprudently, and a Part that
 “ did not become a Christian, when, in his Cal-
 “ culations, he threw back this *Solar Eclipse*
 “ mentioned by *Phlegon*, to the second Year of
 “ the 202d Olympiad, fixing it likewise to
 “ the 24th Day of November. Not less ex-
 “ cusable is *Vossius*, who was likewise a good
 “ and a learned Man, in assigning such a Rea-
 “ son

“ *son* as he does, why *Phlegon's* Eclipse is not
 “ the *same* with that mentioned in the Gospel :
 “ For *Phlegon*, says he, took *this Eclipse* for a
 “ natural one. And that is all he says ; with-
 “ out telling us, *why* he thought so himself.
 “ But it is very likely he, as well as other
 “ learned Men, had run into one and the same
 “ Mistake on Account of the Word *Eclipse*,
 “ as thinking nothing but a *regular Defect* of
 “ Light in the Sun (by the Moon's Interposi-
 “ tion) could be implied under that Denomi-
 “ nation of an Eclipse. But how inconsistent
 “ *that is* with sound Reasoning, will be made
 “ appear presently. *Origen*, indeed, wrote in
 “ his Commentaries *, that *Phlegon* took no
 “ notice that this *Darkness* happened when it
 “ was *Full-Moon* ; nor did he take notice of its
 “ happening when it was *New-Moon* ; and there-
 “ fore drops it, without determining any Thing
 “ in the Matter. But *Africanus* † interpreted
 “ *Phlegon's* Words in a very different Manner.
 “ *Phlegon*, says he, relates, that in the Reign
 “ of *Tiberius*, an Eclipse of the Sun happened,
 “ when it was *Full-Moon*. This is to be seen
 “ in *Syncellus's* Chronography. *Philoponus* like-
 “ wise, in his second Book of the Creation of
 “ the World, represents *Phlegon's* Testimony
 “ in

* It will appear in the Sequel of this Conference, that some other Person, and not *Origen*, did write in this Manner. *Rufinus* was one of the Interpolators of *Origen's* Commentaries: See Dr. *Mills's* Note on *Luke* xxiii. 44.

† It has been observed already, that *Africanus* flourished but three or fourscore Years after *Phlegon*.

“ in very different * Words from those of *Eusebius* : *Phlegon*, says he, *has also remembered*
 “ *this Darkness, or rather this Night* : For he
 “ *says, that in the second Year* (it should be
 “ *fourth Year, as Philoponus reads it himself*
 “ *in the following Page) of the 202d Olympiad,*
 “ *there happened an Eclipse of the Sun, of that*
 “ *Nature, that nothing like it was known be-*
 “ *fore.* And *Philoponus*, to take off any Ob-
 “ *jection* that might be made, as if he had
 “ *been Faulty, or had not truly quoted and*
 “ *applied Phlegon’s Words,* adds ; *Now, that*
 “ *Phlegon recognized this Eclipse, and no other,*
 “ *as relating to our Lord Christ’s hanging on*
 “ *the Cross, is chiefly evident from his saying,*
 “ THAT SUCH † AN ECLIPSE WAS NOT KNOWN
 “ IN FORMER TIMES. If this then be the
 “ genuine Reading in *Phlegon*, it is to be
 “ observed, though he calls such Failure of
 “ Light in the Sun by the Name of an *Eclipse*,
 “ yet says withal, that no Eclipse ever hap-
 “ pened like *this*. There was no *Absurdity* in
 “ *Phlegon’s calling it an Eclipse* ; for in what-
 “ ever Manner the Light of the Sun may
 “ *fail* us, it may be said ἐκλείπειν, *deficere* ; and
 “ such *Failure*, whether ordinary or extraor-
 “ dinary, is an ἐκλειψις, an *Eclipse*. *Herodotus* will
 “ confirm

* This, in my Opinion, is one very good Argument for proving, that *Eusebius* has not given the whole Passage of *Phlegon* ; and that therefore *Africanus*, being so much a more early Writer than *Eusebius*, ought the rather to be credited in this Affair.

† ἐκ τοῦ λέγειν, μὴ ἐγνωσθαι τὴν τοιαύτην ἐκλειψιν τοῖς πρότερον χρόνοις.

“ confirm what we say ; who says, when || *Xer-*
 “ *xes's Army* was about transporting themselves
 “ over into *Greece*, that the Sun did ἐκλειπέναι,
 “ *i. e.* its Light failed ; when yet *there were no*
 “ *Clouds ; and it became Night instead of Day.*
 “ This was not an ordinary *Eclipse* ; the *Dark-*
 “ *ness* was a *Prodigy*, as has been demonstrated
 “ by *Petavius* *. So the famous *Hesychius*
 “ talks concerning *Carneades* when he died :
 “ *The Moon*, says he, *failed in her Light, and*
 “ *the Sun was darkened* † ; which Words are
 “ taken notice of by *Suidas* likewise. You
 “ observe then, Sun and Moon both failed to-
 “ gether ; how it happened is uncertain : Such
 “ *Failures* were, no doubt, but *seldom* ; and
 “ yet the *Moon* is ἐκλειπέναι, to *fail*. Where-
 “ fore both *Scaliger* and *Vossius* were in a very
 “ great Error, when they imagined, because
 “ *Phlegon* used the Word ἐκλειψις, *Eclipse*, that
 “ therefore *Phlegon* must necessarily be under-
 “ stood speaking of a *natural Eclipse*. Under
 “ the same Mistake was *Origen*, in thinking, be-
 “ cause he found the Words ἐκλείποντος ἡλίου, *the*
 “ *Sun failing or eclipsed* in some Copies of *Luke's*
 “ *Gospel*, that therefore some *Hereticks* had
 “ corrupted the *Text*, to render the *Gospel* lia-
 “ ble to Exceptions on that Score : For which
 “ ever

|| *Herod.* lib. 7. Our *Anti-Phlegonist's* Criticism on this
Passage will be considered in a proper Place ; and at the same
 Time will be produced *Calvisius's* singular Observations upon
 this very remarkable *Eclipse*.

* *Petav. de Doctr. Temp.* lib. 10. 'c. 24. *A stupendous Pro-*
digy, says Archbishop *Usher* ; *ad A. M.* 3524.

† ἡ σελήνη ἐξέλιπε, καὶ ὁ ἥλιος ἄμυδρος ἐγένετο.

“ ever way St. *Luke* did write *that* Text, the
 “ Sense and Meaning of it will be the *same*,
 “ and safe enough from any *Cavils* that may
 “ be started on that Account. *Africanus* him-
 “ self, likewise, was (at first) mistaken, when he
 “ reprehended † *Thallus*, for calling this *Failure*
 “ by the Name of an *Eclipse*. As to *Bodin’s*
 “ quoting of *Phlegon* in that pestilent *Dia-*
 “ *logue*, (where he spits out all his *Jewish*
 “ *Venom*,) he does it in a base, dishonest Man-
 “ ner: For he frames a *singular* Notion to him-
 “ self, in supposing that when *Phlegon* had fixed
 “ this *Eclipse* to the fourth Year of the *two*
 “ *hundred and tenth* Olympiad, the Sun
 “ was then passing through the Constellation
 “ *Pisces*; whereas *Phlegon* had settled it in the
 “ *fourth* Year of the *two hundred and second*
 “ Olympiad, without saying *one* Word as to
 “ the Sun’s Situation at that Time. Lastly,
 “ *Tertullian* seems to be mistaken, when he says,
 “ *That those, who did not know this to have been*
 “ *foretold of Christ, though or supposed it to*
 “ *have been an ECLIPSE*: For it *truly* was an
 “ *Eclipse*; but an *unusual one*, and *contrary* to
 “ the *Laws* of *Nature*. Return we to *Vossius*.
 “ *Phlegon*, says he, tells us, that there was an
 “ *Earthquake* in *Bithynia*; but takes no notice of
 “ *its being in Palestine*. True; *Phlegon* did
 “ not make it his Business to give a *Detail*
 “ of

† But, I think, from this *Reprehension* used by *Africanus*, it
 may be fairly concluded, that there were not in his Time the
 Words ἡλίου ἐκλείποντος in any of St. *Luke’s* Gospels, at least, in
 any that he had seen.

“ of the several Countries that had felt the
 “ Shock of that Earthquake ; but thought it
 “ was enough for his Purpose, to point out
 “ *that* Country, which he knew had felt *it* in
 “ a severer Manner than many others. But, says
 “ he again, *If such a miraculous Eclipse was seen*
 “ *in* DIFFERENT *Parts of the Earth*, Phlegon
 “ *would not have been the ONLY Person to have*
 “ *taken Notice of it.* True ; accordingly *Thal-*
 “ *lus* took Notice of it, and so did the People
 “ in *China* : But had no other but *Phlegon* done
 “ it, it would not be an Argument of any Force.
 “ The same Way of Reasoning was used before
 “ *Origen*, when he was minded to prove,
 “ that *Judæa* only was sensible of this *Dark-*
 “ *ness* ; the Weakness of which Argument has
 “ been shewn. We might, after this, make good
 “ what we have asserted, from the *Testimony*
 “ given by *Dionysius the Areopagite*, who, in
 “ his Epistle to *Polycarp*, gives an Account of
 “ the *Observations* that he and *Apollophanes*,
 “ a Sophist, made upon this *wonderful Eclipse*,
 “ when they were together at *Heliopolis* in
 “ *Egypt*. But since I see these *Epistles* of *Dyo-*
 “ *nysius*, and other Writings ascrib'd to him,
 “ are now called in Question, and, in my Judg-
 “ ment, deservedly so ; we pass by this *Testi-*
 “ *mony*, and make no use of it for the present
 “ Purpose.” And thus I have acquitted myself
 in what you desired to hear from *Huetius*.

B. Sir, I'm oblig'd to you ; and I can truly
 affirm, that the *Length* of the Passage has not

any ways *lessen'd* the Satisfaction I propos'd, and have receiv'd from *it*: But I can't help telling you without some sort of *Warmth*, how very *insincerely* (in my Opinion) our *Anti-Phlegonist* has here dealt with his *English* Reader. He has *Quotations* sometimes long enough: And I must think he has *conceal'd* this *Passage*, lest his own Weakness, or bad Designs, as well as Dr. *Clarke's* Judgment, should be *farther* call'd in question. However, this *Passage* (I own) has taught me, that our *Anti-Phlegonist* has some People (and of Note too) to keep him in Countenance. There's *Bodin*, *Scaliger*, and *Vossius*, besides *Kepler*, that we took notice of before; and as to the *Chinese History*, that's mention'd by *Huetius*, I find Mr. *Whiston* and our *Anti-Phlegonist* are both against you. Nay, the former seems to insult upon it; for he says, "A great Noise has
 " been made of late about it by some very weak
 " People:" So that you, and your learned Librarian *Dominique de Colonia*, as well as *Huetius* and others, are pretty freely censur'd on that Account. I hope you have something to offer by-and-by in your own Defence. At present, I desire to know if you have any Thing to remark in your own Favour, upon *Bodin*, *Scaliger*, and *Vossius*?

A. As to *Bodin*, there need be no more said than has been already; his *Affertion* on this Affair of the *Eclipse* is so very extravagant; without having the least Colour of Argument to support it; and his Character so very bad, as to the Christian
 " Religion,

Religion, which appears to have fate very loose upon him, that our *Anti-Phlegonist* thought it more adviseable to say nothing of him. As to *Scaliger* and *Vossius*, you hear what *Huetius* has said just now about it: And every unprejudic'd Reader will think, that he has said enough to discover the *Error* of those two great Men, who were led into it, as *Africanus* was at first so many hundred Years before, by restraining the Word *ἐκλειψις* to a *natural* Eclipse only. That our *Anti-Phlegonist* then may have no manner of Shelter under the Names of those *learned Men*, I will make two or three Observations from the Writings of *both*; which will fully satisfy you, that they were *Men* of a quite different Stamp from our *Anti-Phlegonist*. As to *Scaliger*, he says * directly, *that* Tertullian (in his Apologetick) *had this very Testimony of Phlegon in his Thoughts*, when he was appealing to the *Roman Archives*. *Scaliger* likewise, upon that noted Passage of *Tertullian*, reads the Text not *Arcanis*, but *Archivis vestris*; and so *Rigaltius* likewise explains *Arcanis vestris*. But our *Anti-Phlegonist* thought it more for his Purpose to translate it *secret Accounts*: “How came *Tertullian*, says he †, to know what was contain'd “in these *secret Accounts*?” This you will have more fully consider'd, when we come to talk about these *publick Records*, and *Pilate's Acts*, which our *Anti-Phlegonist* discards ALL at once,

* *Scal. Animadv. in Eusebii Chron. p. 171.*

† Page 40.

as *forged* (in his Opinion) without making any *Difference* at all. As to *Vossius*, it appears that he lived to see his *Error*, in thinking that the *Eclipse* mentioned by *Phlegon* was a *natural* one. He talked in this mistaken Manner, when he wrote his *Harmonia Evangelica* * ; but the last Piece he wrote, (which was revising and augmenting his Book *de Historicis Græcis*) happily shews us, that he had *changed* his Opinion, was reconciled to the Word *Eclipse*, and acknowledges that *Phlegon's Eclipse* † was to be understood as relating to our Saviour's Passion. There is the Passage, which I desire you to read; and if you turn to the *Preface*, the Editor there informs us, that this was the last Performance || of that great and learned Man *Gerh. John Vossius*.

B. I do read it so, as you say, much to my Satisfaction; and the lucky Observation of the *Editor*, puts it out of all Doubt, that these were his *last* Thoughts upon this Affair. I should now be glad to hear what you have to say to *Kepler's* Hypothesis, that our *Anti-Phlegonist* makes such a Stir about. I took Notice just now, that your good old *Bishop* blames *Kepler* for

* Lib. 2. c. 10. p. 321, 322.

† Sed non penitus probare possum, quod idem [*Photius*] reprehendit anxiam illam curam in Olympiadibus [*Phlegontis*] recensendis, atque iis annotandis, quæ singularum Tempore contigerunt. Imo verò, utinam totum Chronicon exstaret. Multum enim Lucis absque dubio *prisca* inde *Ecclesia* temporibus accederet. Atque hoc eo justius putamus, quia inter alia industriæ Testimonia etiam *Eclipsos* ILLIUS meminert, qua *Dominica Passionis* tempore contigit. *Voss. de Hist. Græcis*, p. 219.

|| Pervenerat jam ad finem hic Liber [De Hist. Gr.] cum mortalitatis Leges impleret magni nominis Autor; cumque nihil aliud quam Præfatio vel Dedicatio desideraretur.

for it, and that it *did not become a Christian*: But our *Anti-Phlegonist* is quite of a different Opinion from that great *Prelate*; for he tells the World, *That setting * aside this impertinent Testimony of Phlegon, he cannot, for his Part, help thinking, is doing a real Service to the Cause of Christ*. He seems to lay a great Stress upon this *natural Eclipse*, which happened about *three Years* before our Saviour's Passion. This he is pretty sure is all that *Phlegon* means; and he would have us believe, that, by *the Help of the Fathers*, (which I hope you will consider presently, as you have promised,) he is able to reconcile all Difference in Point of Time. *Kepler*, it is plain, was wavering in this Matter, making his Conjectures sometimes this Way, sometimes *that*: But this Gentleman has so *re-fined* upon *Kepler*, and called the *Primitive Writers* to his Assistance in such a Manner, that *Lucian*, *Tertullian*, and others, that *appealed* to the *Roman Archives*, and (as you took Notice from *Scaliger* just now) *appealed* really to this very Testimony of *Phlegon*, must lose their Credit for the future; and if they *lose* it in *one* particular, it is natural to think, that my *old Fraternity* will thank our *Anti-Phlegonist*, and soon put the short Question, Why the *Voracity* of such *Fathers* may not be suspected in other Particulars, as well as *that*. It is very plain, this *Anti-Phlegonist* has done what he can to *lessen* People's Esteem for *Justin Martyr*,
and

* Pag. 4, 5.

and *Tertullian*, as well as some other primitive Writers. But this is not the Point now before us. Give me leave, before I hear you, as to *Kepler*, to read a Passage or two from our *Anti-Pblegonist*, wherein he endeavours to corroborate *Kepler's* Hypothesis, and expresses himself very *sanguinely* upon the whole. “ The *only* Thing
 “ that is objected against *Kepler's* Account of
 “ this Matter, (says he) is, * that it is not
 “ consistent with the Custom of the *Greek Lan-*
 “ guage, to say, *In the Year* of the 202d Olym-
 “ piad: That therefore some *Numeral* ought
 “ necessarily to be put, to express the *first* Year,
 “ as well as the subsequent ones. But how *easy*
 “ is the Solution of this? If *Pblegon* designed
 “ the Eclipse in the *first* Year of the 202d
 “ Olympiad, the *Greek* Text of *Eusebius* is to
 “ be *corrected* by the smallest Alteration possible
 “ in the *Greck Numbers*, by putting an A in-
 “ stead of a Δ ; and then the Language, and the
 “ Nature of Things, and, which is *very re-*
 “ markable, *all those* who first applied the Testi-
 “ mony of *Pblegon* to the Year of the Death
 “ of *Christ*, will *all agree*.” When he comes to
 recapitulate, at the Close of all, he thus ex-
 presses himself; “ Since as good Evidence, and
 “ as many Vouchers, are to be brought for
 “ *Pblegon's* Eclipse happening either the *fourth*
 “ Year of the 201st, or the *first* Year of the 202d
 “ Olimpiad, as for its happening the *fourth* Year
 “ of the 202d Olimpiad: (such are *Africanus*
 and *Origen* against *Eusebius* and *Jerom*:) And

“ since in *Fact* there was such an Eclipse, as
 “ *Phlegon* describes in the *first* Year; and the
 “ *Alteration* of the Numerals in *Greek*, from
 “ an A to a Δ , *i. e.* from the *first* to the *fourth*,
 “ is so *very small*, that the Mistake is very easy;
 “ I think, that it is most propable, if not cer-
 “ tain, that *Phlegon* mentioned this Eclipse in
 “ the *first* Year of the 202d Olympiad, and
 “ that *Eusebius* mistook in citing it under the
 “ *fourth*.”

A. I perceive these Passages make you *smile*;
 and well they may. This small *Alteration* in
 the *Greek* Numbers; this *easy Mistake* in *Eusebius*,
 and the happy *Agreement* of all Parties
 upon this wonderful Discovery made by our
Anti-Phlegonist, are, I own, very wonderful
 Things; and I suppose, you read these *two*
 Passages, to make your self and me merry. Were
 this fancied *Alteration* to be admitted, instead
 of that *remarkable Agreement* he talks of, we
 should find every Thing *out of Order*. Can
 you read the Passage of *Africanus*, (as cited by
 our *Anti-Phlegonist* himself*,) and then recon-
 cile *his Words* to a *natural Eclipse*; as must
 be the Case, if our *Anti-Phlegonist* is to make
all Parties agree? What if we suppose (which
 as it will be proved by-and-by, neither can nor
 ought to be supposed) that *Africanus* and *Eusebius*
 did *really* and *materially* differ *three* or
four Years, as to the *Time* of our Saviour's suf-
 fering; and should we admit, that in these
 seemingly;

seemingly different *Supputations*, *Africanus* is in the right, yet his Words, I say, contradict *that natural Eclipse* which our *Anti-Pblegonist* would establish. *Origen*, you have heard more than once, expressly *applies* this Testimony of *Pblegon* to the *Darkness* at our Saviour's Passion, in his Book against *Celsus*; and therefore, neither can he, any Thing more than *Africanus*, be brought as a *Voucher* for the wild Scheme of our *Anti-Pblegonist*. And as to his imperfect and interpolated Commentary on St. *Matthew*, you will hear it spoke to hereafter. As to *Eusebius*, I can venture to say, he could not any ways be guilty of the *Mistake* which he is charged with; and which *Mistake*, he says, *arose from an Hypothesis*. For what *Hypothesis*, do you think, was this? *Eusebius* says, that Christ suffered the 18th of *Tiberius*; and he was so honest, as well as *Jerome*, and others, to rely on the SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT for the Truth of this Matter. “ The Gospel of St. “ *John*, says St. *Jerom*, gives us *Proof sufficient*, that our Saviour *died that Year*; for it “ is said therein, that the Lord *preached three* “ *Years* after the 15th of *Tiberius*.” But you see the SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT is quite out of the Case with our *Anti-Pblegonist*; and indeed it was but necessary that he should set it aside, when he was setting aside the Testimony of *Pblegon*; for he knew it was agreed on all Hands, that there could be no *natural Eclipse* to serve his Purpose in or about the 18th of *Tiberius*.

Tiberius. As to the *Olympiads*, I believe it will not be questioned, but that *Eusebius*, *Jerom*, *Scaliger*, and others, knew something better than our *Anti-Phlegonist*, how to adjust them with the *Years* of *Tiberius*; and you will have it made abundantly evident by-and-by from a very accurate Chronologer, how by various *Supputations* it came to pass, that the *Fathers* seemingly differed so much about the *Time* of our *Saviour's* *Passion*. The *Scripture Account* was still acknowledged on both Sides by the *Fathers*; which is a certain Argument that their different Calculations were only in *Appearance* so. But hold! *Kepler's* Hypothesis, which our *Anti-Phlegonist* espouses, is the particular Matter now before us. Please to turn to Pages 4 and 6, of his Pamphlet; and after reading those two short Passages, you will see the Obligation a certain *Mathematician* was under to answer our *Anti-Phlegonist*: In this Matter he is allowed to have done *this Part* thoroughly: I wish he did every Thing else as well. Please to read then.

B. I think myself the more obliged to *this*, because Mr. *Whiston*, in his *Historical Memoirs* of Dr. *Clarke*, has in so remarkable a Manner mentioned this Affair. [*Phlegon's Eclipse*] “ *A*
 “ *Book!* wherein that Man of Warmth, and Zeal,
 “ and Indiscertion, has taken a matchless Liberty
 “ to misrepresent and abuse myself, as well as
 “ others; to pass hard Censures upon some Facts,
 “ which he knew not the true Grounds of; and

“ to relate some direct Falshoods, without con-
 “ sulting or regarding the only Persons that
 “ could have set him right.” The other Passage
 runs thus : “ Mr. *Whiston*, has already received
 “ great Advantages from my *Mistake*, (about
 “ this *Eclipse* of *Phlegon*’s,) if it be a Mistake ;
 “ because it has been one Occasion of some of
 “ the noblest and most important Discoveries that
 “ he ever made in *Astronomy* and *Chronology*.”
 The first Passage is plain enough ; and, I believe,
 that Mr. *W.* thought it too much so : But this
other wants a little explaining ; and therefore,
 as I have not seen those *Historical Memoirs*,
 here referred to, please to oblige me in that
 Particular.

A. What you desire will be no *Digression*, and
 ’tis a *Paragraph* well worth your hearing. The
 first Passage you just now read, is plain enough,
 indeed, as you observe, in respect of Mr. *W.*
 but in regard to the *Facts*, it must be an ob-
 scure one, without being acquainted with the
Memoirs. This would open a large Field for
 you and I to range in another Hour or two, and
 occasion (I do assure you) some very odd *Spe-*
culations : But this would now be a real *Di-*
gression ; and therefore I am satisfied, you are
 willing it should be postponed. There is one
 Thing I readily agree with our *Anti-Phlegonist*
 in, viz. that Mr. *W.* has shewn himself a Man
 of great *Indiscretion* in those *Memoirs* ; for there
 are many Things that your old *Fraternity* wishes
 had lain concealed for sometime longer. But
 then

then, our *Anti-Phlegonist* must leave off charging Mr. *W.* as a Man of *Warmth* ; for you observe, under all the *hard Language, and rough Treatment* that our *Anti-Phlegonist* gives him, he appears, in his Vindication, as *tame, as tranquil* as possible ; and perhaps a tolerable good Account might be given of *this Conduct*, were it necessary. But I forget myself, in what you desire. The *Paragraph* in Mr. *W's* *Memoirs* is this ; * “ Some Time before Dr. *Clarke* died, “ Dr. *Sykes* persuaded him to leave out of the “ future Editions † of his *Boyle's Lectures*, that “ famous Passage in *Phlegon*, of an Eclipse of “ the Sun, and an Earthquake, which was “ cited by him, and has been generally cited “ by others of the Learned, as an Attestation “ to the super-natural Eclipse of the Sun, and “ the Earthquake at our Saviour's Passion, mentioned by the Evangelists. When I came to “ enquire of Dr. *Sykes*, his Reasons for such his “ Persuasion of Dr. *Clarke*, I found it was only “ a Supposal, that some natural Solar Eclipse “ or other might be fitted to some Earthquake in “ Bithynia ; at which Place alone, *Phlegon* “ spoke of the Effects of his Earthquake. Upon “ this, being greatly displeased with him for “ going upon a Supposal, in a Thing that was “ capable of Certainty, I took the Pains to calculate, by my *Copernicus*, all the natural “ Eclipses of the Sun, that could happen in

H 2

“ any

* *Whiston's* *Histor. Memoirs* of Dr. *Clarke*, p. 148, 149, 150.

† Page 273. Edit. 5.

“ any Year that *Pblegon* could mean. And I
 “ found, *that no natural Eclipse of the Sun*
 “ *could possibly happen, so as to suit his Descrip-*
 “ *tion, but only that super-natural one at the Pas-*
 “ *sion, which exactly agreed to it.* This was
 “ fit to be mentioned here, not only to prevent
 “ any such Alteration in *Dr. Clarke’s* Sermons,
 “ (which Alteration, how he came to be per-
 “ suaded to make upon such a *groundless Suggesti-*
 “ *on*, I cannot imagine,) but also on Account of
 “ the Consequence of those, and the like Cal-
 “ culations of Eclipses to myself. For it was
 “ this *pretended Correction* that was one Occa-
 “ sion of some of the noblest and most impor-
 “ tant Discoveries that I ever made in Astro-
 “ nomy and Chronology; I only here hint at
 “ their principal Contents, *viz.* that none of
 “ the Astronomical Characters of Chronology,
 “ now preserved, reach earlier than about 500,
 “ Years after the Flood, in the sacred Chrono-
 “ logy: That this sacred Chronology is, how-
 “ ever, to be taken from the *Samaritan Pen-*
 “ *tateuch*, *Septuagint* Version, and *Josephus*,
 “ and not from our *Masorete Copy*; which last
 “ Chronology, several of those ancient astrono-
 “ mical Characters do plainly contradict; that
 “ the *Chinese* Annals, when determined by the
 “ *Julian* Year of $365\frac{1}{4}$ Days since the *Olym-*
 “ *piads* began, and by the old Year of 360
 “ Days before that Time; and when at their
 “ Beginning they are reduced 500 Years later
 “ than they now stand; perfectly agree with the
 “ Astronomical

“ Astronomical Characters, and the before-men-
 “ tioned sacred Chronology, but not otherwise :
 “ That the Prophet *Amos* was the first that
 “ ever foretold Eclipses of the Sun, and an
 “ Earthquake ; and the Prophet *Isaiab* the
 “ second ; and that he not only foretold an
 “ Eclipse of the Sun, an Eclipse of the Moon,
 “ and an Earthquake, but an *Occultation* of the
 “ Stars by the Moon ; and that *Jeremiah* fore-
 “ told the *Eclipse of the Sun at our Saviour’s Pas-*
 “ *sion* ; all which exactly came to pass according-
 “ ly. That *Thales* foretold his famous Eclipse,
 “ not by Astronomy, which could not be done
 “ till above 400 Years after his Time, but ra-
 “ ther by learning it from the *Jews* in *Egypt*,
 “ who had it from the Prophet *Isaiab*. That
 “ the grand *intermediate Breaches* in every one
 “ of the four Monarchies were immediately
 “ preceded by great Eclipses of the Sun, and
 “ their *Endings* by great Eclipses of the Moon ;
 “ all visible in the same Monarchies. And that
 “ accordingly, 1736, (the grand Period of the
 “ ten Kingdoms, or of the last State of the *Ró-*
 “ *man* Monarchy,) will be peculiarly remark-
 “ able for such great Eclipses of the Moon.
 “ All which Discoveries are of the utmost Im-
 “ portance, and by me *demonstrated* all along
 “ from astronomical Calculations.”

B. I must confess these astronomical Calcula-
 tions please me much ; and I cannot help com-
 mending Mr. *W.* in honestly *rebuking* our *Anti-*
Phlegonist for going upon a *Supposal*, in a Thing
 that

that was capable of *Certainty*; and a *Thing* of that Importance, may I add, where the Honour and Interest of the Christian Religion is so much concerned, in Opposition to my *old Fraternity*. But, methinks, when our *Anti-Phlegonist*, after this Conversation, came to read these *Historical Memoirs*, and found that Mr. *W.* had actually taken the Pains to calculate, and upon pawning the Faith and Credit of his *Copernicus*, had assured him, that *no natural Eclipse of the Sun could possibly happen, so as to suit Phlegon's Description*, but *only that supernatural one at the Passion, which exactly agreed to it*; I say, after all this, methinks our *Anti-Phlegonist* should have repented, and suffered the Christian Religion to have stood upon its old Bottom. But *Kepler's Hypothesis* was got into his Head; and it is very plain he must have some very *odd Ends* in view, instead of *doing real Service to the Cause of Christ*, when he was resolved to set aside such a glorious *Testimony*, given by a Heathen, in behalf of his Saviour, though he had his Friend *Whiston's MATHEMATICAL CERTAINTY*, that such *Testimony* was *true*.

A. I know not well what to say to these Things. *Free-Thinking* (as you have observed, no doubt, amongst your *quondam Fraternity*) knows no Bounds, nor will admit of any. You see, they talk as freely of *Jesus Christ*, and his *Miracles*, as they do of *Mahomet the Impostor*; and all *Facts which are appealed to* (though
never

never so well proved) as *Evidence* for the Christian Religion, are to be rendered *disputable*, “ some way or other ; as in the present Case. “ The Addition of *very disputable*, if not totally “ *impertinent Testimonies*, (says our *Anti-Pble-* “ *gonist* *) docs but weaken the Evidence ; “ it never can possibly add any Force to what “ is urged for the Truth of Christianity.” But let our *Anti-Pblegonist* recollect, that *Julian’s* disputing about *Facts*, made the *Truths* of Christianity shine out with a greater Lustre. Besides, it may be farther observed, in regard to to such *latitudinarian* Attempts, what the same judicious and learned Person, I have named already, † has observed. “ I know not how far, “ says he, an *Affectation* of *Singularity*, or an “ Ambition to be thought *wiser* than the rest “ of the World, may have carried some Per- “ sons : — To reject any Thing *vulgar*, “ though ever so *true* and *right*, as if it were any “ Commendation to be *singularly Injudicious* ; “ or as if, because it is honourable to *exceed* the “ common Standard, it were honourable like- “ wise, only to *differ* from it, or *not to come up* “ *to it* ; which is manifestly the Case of our mo- “ dern *Deists*, however highly they may please “ to think of themselves : And the same may “ be said of *Free-Thinking* in general.” But our *Anti-Pblegonist*, I must remind you, has al-
 ledged something in his own Defence against
 this

* Page 5.

† Dr. Waterland’s second Charge, p. 8, 9.

this *Calculation* of Mr. *W.* He lets us know that Mr. *Whiston* and *he* had a *second* Meeting, after reading of the *Histor. Memoirs* ; and that Mr. *W.* was satisfied about *Kepler's* Hypothesis. I will read you his own Words † ; and then, if you have any *Remarks* to make, let me have them. “ I believe it to be true in Fact (says “ our *Anti-Pblegonist*) that Mr. *Whiston* had “ calculated every Year, *but the one only true* “ *one*, when he published his Book, [the *Me-* “ *moirs.*] But when it was told him afterwards “ by myself, that *Kepler* meant an Eclipse that “ was total in the *first* Year of the CCIId Olym- “ piad, and I had shewn him *Kepler's* Book ; “ he went to his *Computations* again, and found “ it to be as *Kepler* said.” What have you to say to this ?

B. This does not prove that Mr. *W.* was in the least of an Opinion that *Kepler's* Eclipse and *Pblegon's* were *one* and the *same* ; which was the grand Point in debate between them. I am very sure, that Mr. *W.* has lately told our *Anti-Pblegonist*, in a *publick* * Manner, that he *thinks* quite otherwise. Mr. *W.* has remarked no less than *five* Characters given by *Pblegon* of his Eclipse, all different from those of *Kepler's* Eclipse.

A. I am much pleased, that Mr. *Whiston* has been called upon to answer in this Affair ; and, I believe

† Page 75.

* Mr. *Whiston's* Vindication of *Pblegon's* Testimony, &c. p. 46, 47, &c.

I believe, we shall hear no more from our *Anti-Phlegonist* about *Kepler's* Hypothesis. I am persuaded, there needs no *other* Pen to give any impartial Person Satisfaction in *that Particular*.

B. I have contracted what that *Mathematician* has said upon it, in as narrow a Compass as I could, that I may the better defend myself, when any *Anti-Phlegonist* shall attack me upon *Kepler's* Hypothesis. I dare say, you will not think me troublesome, if I let you see in what Manner I have contrived this Piece of Armour: Please to cast an Eye on it; or if you will, I will read it to you; thus,

The <i>supernatural</i>	The <i>natural</i> Eclipse
Darkness at the Passion of the Sun, mentioned of <i>Christ</i> , 3d <i>April</i> , <i>A. D.</i> by <i>Kepler</i> , 24th <i>Nov</i> , XXXIII.	<i>A. D.</i> XXIX.

Phlegon's Eclipse, by *Kepler's* Eclipse was all the Evidence we on the *first* Year of the have, was on the *fourth* CCIIId Olympiad, Year of the CCIIId Olympiad. In the same Year was the *Darkness* at the Passion of *Christ*.

<i>Phlegon's</i> Eclipse was the <i>greatest that ever</i> was known before. The Greatness of solar E-	The <i>Duration</i> of total Darkeness, in all natural solar Eclipses, is very rarely so much as
clipses,	I five

eclipses, that are total, *five* Minutes. *Kepler's* is chiefly seen in the Eclipse, if it were at *Length* of their Dura- all total, along the cen- tion. The *supernatu- tral* Shadow, (which is *ral* Darknefs continued not certain,) it could be *three* Hours. *so* but a very small Part of *one* Minute.

In *Phlegon's* Eclipse, *As to Kepler's* Eclipse, *the Day became Night*, when, by Calculation, *and the Stars appear'd*; *Jupiter* was below the which well agrees to Horizon, 'tis a great the *supernatural*, and Question, whether *any* long Darknefs at our *one* Star, excepting Saviour's Passion. There *Venus*, which is fre- must have been more quently seen in the Stars seen in *Phlegon's* Day-Time also, could Eclipse, than in our or- be at all visible; I mean dinary *great* Eclipses; this in the Path of the because *Phlegon* informs central Shadow, along us, this was a *greater* the *Mediterranean*, a- Eclipse than any of bout 400 Miles from them. *Nice*. But as for *Nice* itself, the Digits eclips'd were no more than nine or ten.

Phlegon's Eclipse be- *Kepler's* Eclipse be- gan at the *Sixth* Hour gan about the *second* or of the Day, or at Noon; *third* Hour, or about as did the *Darknefs* at *eight* or *nine* of the our Saviour's Passion. Clock in the Morning, *Phlegon's* that

that is, a little after Sun-rising, which three or four Hours, at *that Time* of the Year, is a very great *Difference*.

Phlegon's great and extraordinary Eclipse in *Kepler's* Eclipse, there was accompanied with a like great and extraordinary *Earthquake*, reaching as far as *Bithynia*; as was the Case of the *Darkness* and Eclipse at our Saviour's Passion. Of such *Coincidence* is not the least Evidence in the World.

A. I very much approve of the Method you have taken: It is short and easy, and you know how to improve upon it. But let me tell you, you must not *stop here*: Mr. *W.* has shewn our *Anti-Phlegonist* in a very proper Light, as well in regard to his *refining* (as I told you some Time ago) upon this wild Hypothesis of *Kepler*, as also to his Pretensions of persuading Dr. *Clarke* upon it; at which Mr. *W.* wonders extremely, (who knew Dr. *Clarke* much better than our *Anti-Phlegonist*,) and he plainly lets the World know, that Dr. *Clark*, in his Opinion, was worked upon *some other Way*, in striking out this *Testimony* of *Phlegon*. The *Paragraph* is rather too long, considering the *Time* already spent; but it is necessary we should have

it, for the Reasons I have given you ; and therefore pray read it. Turn to Page 49. and let me advise you afterwards to make no Abridgment of it ; for I think it is so *pithy*, that nothing can well be spared.

B. Mr. *W.* at *that* Page expresses himself thus ; “ This being the true and certain State
 “ of the *Facts* and *Testimonies*, as to the Eclipse
 “ mentioned by *Phlegon*, in the first six Cen-
 “ turies : And the *Pretences* against its Appli-
 “ cation to the Darknes at Christ’s Passion,
 “ being so *entirely groundless*, tho’ lately said
 “ to be *almost certain* ; it remains to me a very
 “ *difficult Problem*, how that great and judici-
 “ ous Person, Dr. *Clark*, should so *easily be per-*
 “ *suaded* to give up *Phlegon’s* Testimony, upon
 “ the producing of *Kepler’s* Hypothesis ; *suppo-*
 “ *sing it was produced to him.* *Kepler* himself
 “ was indeed so vehemently desirous to *remove*
 “ *Phlegon’s* Eclipse, as fixed to the *fourth*
 “ Year of the CCIId Olympiad, or *A. D.*
 “ XXXIII. out of the Way of his own Hypo-
 “ thesis, (which was, that *Christ* died the second
 “ Year * of that Olympiad, or *A. D.* XXXI.)
 “ that without Pretence to *MSS.* or any real
 “ Evidence, he first changed the Δ , † or *fourth*,
 “ into Γ , or *third* ; and when that would not
 “ do, he changed the Δ , || or *fourth*, into \mathbb{B} , or
 “ *second*. And when that darling Year ap-
 “ peared to have no Eclipse to his Purpose, he
 “ ventured

* Tab. Rudolph. p. 43.

† *Ibid.*

|| Eclog. Chron. p. 87.

“ tured a Step farther, and took away the Δ ,
 “ or *fourth*, or rather chang’d it for a Sort of
 “ an Expletive $\Delta\epsilon^*$; by which Means the
 “ *Passage* only determined us to the CCIIId
 “ Olympiad in general, without denoting any
 “ *particular* Year of that Olympiad: Which
 “ yet *Kepler* would have to denote its *first* Year
 “ only: For *he did not venture to substitute an*
 “ *A instead of a Δ for the first Year of that Olym-*
 “ *piad, as it has been since thought proper to*
 “ *do.* On which Year *Kepler* found such an
 “ Eclipse of the Sun, (not as he desired, which
 “ was one total for four or five Minutes,
 “ with many Stars visible, and that at *Nice* also;
 “ and beginning at Noon, and accompanied with
 “ a great Earthquake, but) as the Heavens
 “ would afford him; which was one that *might*
 “ be total within 400 Miles of *Nice*, for four
 “ or five Seconds, with *One* Star visible, and
 “ beginning in the *Morning*, and *without* any
 “ Earthquake. Nay, *Kepler* once ventured to
 “ hint at another still wilder Hypothesis, *viz.*
 “ that *this* † *Darkness* in *Judæa* might be
 “ owing, not to any Eclipse of the Sun at all,
 “ but to a *Cloud of Smoak and Ashes* driven
 “ into *Palestine* from *Ætna* or *Vesuvius*. In
 “ this Vehemence of *Kepler’s Inclinations*, I do
 “ not so much wonder at his Determinations:
 “ We see every Day what mighty Things *strong*
 “ *Inclinations* can do. But knowing *Dr. Clarke*
 “ *had*

* Eclog. Chron. p. 126.

† Epit. Astron. p. 896. Astron. optic. ap. Ricciol. Almag.
 Vol. I. p. 359

“ *had no violent Passions at all; and not be-*
 “ *lieving he had any particular Inclination to*
 “ *set aside Phlegon’s Testimony, especially, not*
 “ *to leave it out of his Book in the eighth, after*
 “ *it had stood there seven Editions: I cannot*
 “ *solve this Problem; How Kepler’s Eclipse, so*
 “ *imperfectly stated by him, and of so little Con-*
 “ *sequence when stated to the best Advantage,*
 “ *could prevail upon Dr. Clarke to discard it.*
 “ *Kepler puts his Eclipse once upon Nov. 25.*
 “ *and then on the 24th. In one Place it is al-*
 “ *most total; in another it is total: And in one*
 “ *Part of a Sentence he supposes it to belong*
 “ *to twelve o’-Clock, while, in another Part, it*
 “ *belongs to ten. In another Place to ten, or*
 “ *eleven, or twelve. And this is not much*
 “ *less strange, if we suppose that the additional*
 “ *Evidence, now taken out of Origin’s Latin*
 “ *Works, (in Opposition to his Greek,) was*
 “ *also produced to Dr. Clarke: Since he, with*
 “ *all the learned World, well knew those Latin*
 “ *Works, in such a Case, to be in a Manner of*
 “ *no Authority at all. So that I must entirely*
 “ *leave this Problem to such as can better ac-*
 “ *count for it; it being still, I confess, to me ut-*
 “ *terly insoluble.*”

A. Since Mr. *W.* is utterly at a Loss in *ac-*
counting for this *Persuasion* of Dr. Clarke; I will
 take it in my Turn by-and-by, (as I promised
 you about an Hour ago,) and make the best Con-
 jecture I can about it. In the mean Time I am
 to answer an *Objection*, as you have desired,
 touching

touching the *Difference*, that our *Anti-Phlegonist* represents to be amongst the *Fathers* about the *Time* of our Saviour's Suffering. The *Difference*, he tells us, is not less than *three* Years ; and you observe, he lays a Stress on *it*, as thinking by that Means to make *Kepler's* Eclipse coincide with *that* of *Phlegon's*, and consequently that *Phlegon's* Eclipse was no other than a *natural* one. “ That there was a *real Eclipse* “ (says * he) in the *first* Year of the CCIId “ Olympiad, that is, in the *Year* which *Africanus* “ supposed Christ to die in, appears by *Calculation* : *Phlegon's* Words are express and clear, “ asserting an *Eclipse of the Sun* ; and they express such an Effect, as a *natural* Eclipse in “ a serene Day would produce ; but they are “ not *applicable* to any other Kind of extraordinary Darkeness.” Here are several *Mistakes* huddled together in a very few Words. The Word [*Eclipse*] you see, he will by no Means allow of as *applicable* to a supernatural Darkeness ; and yet, methinks, *Africanus's* second Thoughts upon the Matter, and *Huetius's* sound Reasoning upon it, might have given him all reasonable Satisfaction in that Point. He will not allow, that *Phlegon's* Words, such as *the Day became Night, and the Stars appeared ; began at the sixth Hour of the Day ; the greatest* (i. e. in Duration) *that ever was known before ; accompanied with an Earthquake reaching as far as Bithynia ;* will not allow, I say, that these

Words

Words can be any ways *applied* to the *supernatural* Darknefs at our Saviour's Passion ; and yet every one fees the *Application* is easy, without any forced Construction put upon the Words of *Pblegon* ; and I hope, by this Time, Mr. *W.* has *convinced* him, that *Pblegon's Words* likewise directly *disagree* with the *Characters* given of *Kepler's Eclipse*, which he seems to be so passionately fond of.

B. Sir, I am not without Hopes, that our *Anti-Pblegonist* will see and acknowledge his *Error* too in this Matter, if he be *sincere* in what he professes. His Introduction closes, you know, with Words pretty remarkable ;
 “ When the *Reasons* (says he) upon which I
 “ made my Judgment appear, I shall be glad
 “ to see him, (Mr. *W.*) or any one else, make
 “ greater Advantages still from *them*. And I
 “ shall not be *sorry* to find myself *confuted*, be-
 “ cause I shall then have this additional *Testi-*
 “ *mony* unquestionable, which *at present* I
 “ do not conceive to have *any Relation* to
 “ the Passion of our Saviour.” I beg pardon for interrupting you. You was going to answer the *Objection*, as to the great Difference in Point of *Time* among the *Fathers*, in regard to our Saviour's Passion. It sounds very odd, I must confess, that *Africanus* should affirm, that our Saviour died in the 15th of *Tiberius*, when he knew the *Scripture Account* was otherwise ; that our Saviour did *then* begin his *Ministry* ; and that there were *three Passovers* com-
 pleat

pleat from that Time to his Crucifixion. But please to proceed in explaining this Affair.

A. I heartily wish, our *Anti-Phlegonist* may own his *Error* in these Things; but there is too much Reason to question his *Sincerity*, as to the very particular we are now entering upon: For can it well be supposed, that he was ignorant, how that the *Fathers* have *different* Ways and Rules in making their *Supputations*, and yet are so to be adjusted, as to have no *real* Difference at all? It was better, indeed, for our *Anti-Phlegonist's* Purpose, to pass by the *Scripture Account*, and to adhere to that of *Africanus*, which was *seemingly* so very different. And yet it will be found, that *Africanus* no ways contradicted the *Evangelists* neither. But *this* was to be *concealed*; otherwise our *Anti-Phlegonist* could not argue in the Manner he does: “ If therefore *Phlegon's* Eclipse,
“ says he, was at the *same* * *Time of the Year*
“ that *Africanus* conceived the *Death of Christ*
“ to be, it is evident he must suppose *it* to
“ have been in the 15th Year of *Tiberius*, *i. e.* it
“ must have been, not in the 4th Year of the
“ CCIId Olympiad, but in the 4th Year of
“ the CCIst. It is *absurd* therefore for *Euse-*
“ *bius* and *Jerom*, (who fixed the *Death of*
“ *Christ* to the 3d or 4th Year of the CCIId
“ Olimpiad,) to quote *Phlegon's* Testimony
“ for *it*, when the Difference betwixt *them* and
“ *Africanus* was plainly *three* or four Years.

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* Pag. 17, 18.

You observe, how free our *Anti-Pblegonist* is, in charging *Absurdities* upon these *two* great Men, who were far from being Strangers to the Works of *Africanus*; nor did they apprehend any *Absurdity*, (nor *Scaliger* after them,) in quoting *Pblegon's* Testimony, as they have done. Though we have not *Africanus's* five Books of Chronology under his own Name; yet *Eusebius*, we find, has inserted almost all of *it* into his own Chronicle, either in altering, adding, or correcting, as he thought proper. But let our *Anti-Pblegonist* shew where *Eusebius* complains of any such *real* Difference in Chronology between him and *Africanus*; and till he does that, the *Absurdity* lies at his own Door. I took Notice sometime ago. that our *Anti-Pblegonist* had not quoted *Africanus* so far as he ought to have done, for doing him Justice. He concludes the Passage from *Africanus* * thus: “ But this Darkness was from
 “ God, because the Lord then suffered.” Mr. *Whiston* adds from *Africanus*; (but I think he should have gone farther too;) “ And Reason
 “ shews us that the LXX Weeks in *Daniel*
 “ were fulfilled at *this Time*.” *Africanus's* Calculation then follows, which ended on the second or third Year of the CCIId Olympiad. “ *Africanus's* Reasoning (says Mr. *W.*†)
 “ rather brings it to the third Year of the
 “ CCIId Olympiad; that being just 475 solar
 “ Years, or 490 Lunar Years from the 4th
 “ Year

* Pag. 13, 14.

† Pag. 32.

“ Year of the LXXXIII Olympiad, which,
 “ both *Africanus* and *Ptolemy’s* Canon agree,
 “ was the 20th of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, the
 “ Date of *Daniel’s* LXX Weeks in *Africa-*
 “ *nus’s* Hypothesis. *Jerom’s* present Copies,
 “ indeed, say twice, without all *Pretence to*
 “ *Truth*, || that *Africanus* believed the *Death* of
 “ Christ to have been on the 15th Year of *Ti-*
 “ *berius*, or the 4th of the CCIst Olympiad;
 “ which is the very Year, when *all Christians*
 “ *knew*, from *St. Luke*, that *John the Baptist*,
 “ his Forerunner, did but *begin* his Ministry.”

You may see more to this Purpose in Mr. *W’s* Vin-
 dication. [p. 33.] But, I think, this does not yet
 come up to the Point, in setting *it* in so full
 and just a Light, as it ought to be. The learned
 Primate, then of *Ireland*, * observes, upon those
 Words of *St. Luke* [Chap. iii. i.] *In the*
 FIFTEENTH Year of the Reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*,
 a different Supputation, in regard to the Pro-
 consular and Imperial Government of *Tiberius*:
 It was the *fifteenth* Year in respect of the one;
 but reckoning from the *Death* of *Augustus*, it was
 the *thirteenth* †. And this Distinction you

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will

|| It is plain from this Passage, that Mr. *Whiston* is ignorant of
 the two *Epoche* in *Tiberius’s* Reign: So that *Jerom’s* Copies are
 true. See the learned *Benedict’s* Editors of *Jerom’s* Works.

* Anno decimo quinto Principatus Tiberii Cæsaris.] Qui Mo-
 narchiæ ipsius, ab excessu *Augusti* captæ, erat decimus tertius,
Usserii Annales Ed. Par. p. 619.

† Passus Christus juxta Sanctum *Maximum* & *Georgium Syncel-*
lum, Anno Dionysiano XXXI. Litera Dominicali G insignito, quo
 ideo Dies 23 Martii cum feria sexta concurrebat, Anno nempe
 19 *Tiberii*, ut *Maximus*, p. 356. & *Syncellus*, p. 319 scribunt. Ubi
 Annos

will find, will often help you out, when your *Anti-Pblegonist*, from several Authors, is amusing you with *different* Supputations. *Augustus* reign'd, if we take it from the Death of *Julius Cæsar*, *fifty seven* Years, and died the *nineteenth* of *August*, when *Tiberius* succeeded him. The *last* Year therefore of *Augustus*'s Reign was not a *compleat* Year, but rather one *Half* of it; and consequently *so* was the *first* Year of *Tiberius*, *i. e.* about *five* Months, from *August* to *January*, whence the *Romans* began their Year. A learned *Franciscan*, who has professedly treated of the Matter now before us, and *that* in a very accurate and judicious Manner, will give you all the Satisfaction, if I mistake not, that you can possibly desire about *it*. He's near at hand, and if you are not *tired*, I'll read to you what I shall judge most proper at this Time.

B. I hope, you will not entertain so hard a Thought of me, as to imagine, I had the least Inclination to leave off, in discussing a *Subject* that I have so much at heart: I rather wish another agreeable Hour may pass, before we make an End of it. But please to let me know in the first Place, who and what this learned *Franciscan* is, or when he flourish'd.

A. His

Annos *Tiberii* ab ejus *Imperio Proconsulari* (ut communiter Antiqui, quando de Baptismo aut *Morte Christi* loquuntur) uterque deducit. ab Anno nempe *Dionysiano* 13; cum tamen Anno 11 aut 12 *Tiberii*, *Imperii* Collega factus fuerit. Verum hic Error excusatione dignus; cum prior *Epocha Tiberiani Imperii* valde sit obscura; sed uterque inexcusabilis esset, si, ut vult *Petavius*, Baptismum *Christi* in Annum ejusdem *Æræ* XLII contulisset; cum *Tiberius* jam ab Anno XXXVII. fato functus esset. vid. *Ant. Pagi* Dissert. de Periodo Græc. Rom p. 13.

A. His Name is *Ant. Pagi*, one of the greatest *Chronologers* of the last Age: He held a Correspondence with the late famous Mr. *Dodwell*, and several other learned Men of this Nation; refused being a *Jesuit*, though educated amongst them, and became a *Franciscan* at *Arles* 1641, chiefly by the Persuasion of an Uncle, who was at the Head of that Order in France. His illustrating a curious Piece of Roman Antiquity, namely, an *Inscription* on the Pillar of *Aurelian* the Emperor, and from thence making many singular Observations relating to the *Cæsarian Consuls*, gained him Applause all over the learned Word: But the great Work of all, is his *Critical, Historical, and Chronological Remarks* on *Baronius's Annals*: There you have a vast Treasure of *Profane* and *Ecclesiastical History* both; and it is from this Work I am now going to give you the Satisfaction I proposed, about these *different* Supputations, in Relation to the *Death* of Christ.

The ancient *Fathers*, * says he, *St. Austin*, *St. Jerom*, and others, place the *Passion* of Christ our Lord, when the two *Gemini* were *Consuls*, in the XXIX Year of the *Christian Æra*. *Eusebius* was one of the first that altered this Supputation, being afterwards followed by *Epiphanius* † and others. The Way being thus paved, some fixed the Time of our Saviour's

Passion

* R. P. Ant. Pagi Critica. Histor. Chronol. in *Annales Baronii*, &c. Vol. I. Par. 1689. p. 23, &c.

† Hær. 51.

Passion to XXXIst, some to the XXXIIId Year
 of the Christian *Æra*. The Opinion of *Euse-*
bius and *Epiphanius* in this Matter, which is,
 that *Christ* was crucified in the XXXIst Year,
 has been maintained by *Petavius* at large*.
 In the 12th Chapter, having first taken Notice
 that the *Ancient* Fathers thought that *Christ*
 died the 15th of *Tiberius*, aged 30. he says thus,
Others since, following Eusebius and Epiphanius,
have placed his Death about the 18th of Tibe-
rius: But then many, I observe, don't attend to
the Meaning of this later Opinion; imagining
that the Years of that Emperor are to be computed,
after the Roman Manner, from the Day that he
began his Reign; which is not right: For those
Fathers began their Supputation from the Autumn
preceding the Summer, in which Augustus died.
Eusebius's Opinion in his *Chronicle* appears to
 have been, that *Christ* suffered in the 18th of
Tiberius, and XXXIst of the Christian *Æra*;
 and yet, in Reality, it was only the 17th of
Tiberius, as *Eusebius* himself afterwards ac-
 knowledged in his *History*: For there he makes
Augustus reigning fifty seven Years, and supposes
 his Death to have been in the 14th of the *Diony-*
sian Æra. *Eusebius* then in his *Chronicle* speaks
 differently concerning *Christ's* Death, from what
 he does in his *History*; and therefore his first
 Opinion, which was, that *Augustus* died in the
 13th Year of the Christian *Æra*, he rejected
 as false. Some Persons erring with *Eusebius*
 in

* De Doctr. Temp. Lib. 12.

in his *Chronicle*, have accordingly fixed *Christ's* Passion to the XXXIst Year of *our Æra*, whilst others following the right Chronology, have join'd the 18th of *Tiberius* with the XXXIId Year of the Christian *Æra*, and in *that* Year have placed the Death of *Christ*. This is *Eusebius's* Opinion both in his *History**, and in his *Demonstration*, &c. declaring in those Places, that the *Time* of our Lord's Preaching was *three Years and a half*. Wherefore, since *Eusebius* writes, that *Christ* was baptized in the 15th of *Tiberius*, namely, in the XXIXth Year of the Vulgar *Æra*; it is plain, that, according to this *second* Opinion, he ascribes to *Christ* *four Passovers*, though, according to the former, *three* only. So that *Eusebius* has been wavering in this Point, about settling the Time of *Christ's* Death.

B. I now begin to have a much better Notion of this *intricate* Affair. I do not wonder that our *Anti-Pblegonist* has so industriously kept his Reader in the Dark about it; for should he have adjusted these *seeming* Differences in Chronology, he knew his whole Scheme must have been destroy'd. But is this pardonable in an Author, that reminds † his Reader, of *having writ an Essay on the Truth of the Christian Religion*, and of having prescribed *a proper Method of proceeding in the Argument against serious Infidels*? Surely this could be no more
a proper

* Hist. Lib. 1. Cap. 10 De Demonstr. Lib. 10.

† Page 5.

a proper Method of convincing Dr. Clarke, than the *Kepler Hypothesis* was: And, I dare say, every *Infidel* in the Kingdom will thank him for *such a Method of proceeding against them*. He throws out a very odd *Innuendo* * concerning *Irenæus*, as willing to expose him in Point of *Chrenology* about the *Time* of our Saviour's Death. The Opinion (as charged on *Irenæus*) is monstrous, if true; and yet our *Anti-Phlegonist* has not said one Word in Vindication of that venerable *Father*. I could be glad to have this Matter cleared up.

A. The same Writer, that we are now engaged with, will clear it up, I doubt not, to your entire Satisfaction. The Opinion charged upon *Irenæus* is, that *Christ preached the Gospel from the fortieth to the fiftieth Year*. Now *Pagi*, in stating this Matter, first lays before his Reader the plain Words of *Irenæus*, and thence fixing the *Time* of Christ's Baptism: Our Lord, says *Irenæus* †, was born about the FORTY FIRST Year of the Reign of Augustus; which if he computed from the Death of *Caius Julius*, (as it ought not to be questioned but he did,) it is manifest, that he settled the Birth of Christ in the XLth of the *Julian Year*. And since he declares in another ||, that *Christ came to his Baptism, when he began to be about thirty Years of Age, i. e. entering upon his thirtieth Year*; (as

* Page 97.

† Lib. 3. Cap. 25.

|| Lib. 2. 39. tanquam triginta annorum.

(as is plain from his own Words;) and adds, moreover, that *Christ* kept *three* Passovers; it necessarily follows, that *Irenæus* understood the 15th of *Tiberius*, mentioned by *St. Luke*, as of the 15th Year from the Time of *Tiberius's* *Proconsular* Government; otherwise he would contradict himself, as well as the Gospel. The Opinion then of this pious Doctor of the Christian Church was, that, in the XXVth Year of the Christian *Æra*, the Word of the Lord came unto John the Baptist, the 15th Year of the *Proconsular* Government of *Tiberius* being near at an End; that *John* continued his Ministry to the Beginning of the XXVIIth of the Christian *Æra*, or thereabouts, *Christ* being baptized by him, when he began to be *thirty* Years of Age; and that *Christ's* *three* Passovers were held in the Years XXVII, XXVIII, and XXIX, of the Christian *Æra*; in the last of which Years, and on the 25th Day of *March*, *Irenæus* believed that *Christ* was crucified. For it is not to be imagined, that he either differ'd from the rest of the Writers of that Time, as to the Year and Day of our Saviour's Passion, or that he was ignorant, how that the Years of *Tiberius* had been computed from the Time of his *Proconsular* Government. For at the Time that *Marcus Aurelius*, who had been his Copartner, was in the Administration of the Roman Affairs, *Irenæus* was sent into the Country of *Liens* in *France*, to preach the Gospel.

Now, from what has appeared above to be the settled Opinion of *Irenæus*, it is fairly to be

concluded, that the following Words, which we read in his Works, * *viz. That Christ preached the Gospel from the fortieth to the fiftieth Year, are corrupted* or foisted in; not only because they are contrary to the Points before settled by *Irenæus*, touching the Birth and Baptism of Christ, and the three Passovers, but also because it would thence follow, that Christ suffer'd, in *Irenæus's* Opinion, after that *Tiberius* was dead himself, and after that *Pontius Pilate* had quitted *Judæa*; which are Things I can by no Means believe, could ever enter into the Head of *Irenæus*. The Design of *Irenæus's* Reasoning in the Manner, as has been above taken notice of, was to shew the Error of those who said, † that Christ preached only one Year after his Baptism, and that he suffered when *thirty Years* of Age.

B. You have given me the Satisfaction I wished for: And I think our *Anti-Pblegonist's* Conduct, in this Affair, should make him blush. His *Way* of ushering in this *Aspersiō* upon *Irenæus*, is likewise as remarkable as the Thing itself: For he would have his Reader to believe, that it was a wild Imagination in *Eusebius*, *Jerom*, and *Philoponus*, as it was in *Irenæus*, to talk and write as they did about the *Time* of our Saviour's Death. I see, by what you have already observed from *Pagi*, how it came about, that *Eusebius* and others

* Cap. 29, & 30.

left

† See my Note (from Dr. Grabe) upon this Passage of *Irenæus*, in a Book lately translated from the *Latin* of Dr. Whitaker (Regius Professor in Cambridge) called a *seasonable Preservative against Popish Delusions*. p. 123, 124.

left the antient Way of computing in this Matter ; that both Ways stand on a sure Foundation ; and that the *different* Calculations, on Account of *Proconsular* and *Monarchical* Administration, are easily reconciled ; no ways contrary to St. *Luke's* Chronology : And I believe, that Way of computing of the *Antients* before *Eusebius's* Time, may serve to direct us, in settling the *true* Reading of this Passage of *Pblegon*. I am pleased to see this Justice done to *Irenæus* ; and your learned *Franciscan* now lets the *English* Reader plainly see, that *Eusebius* and *Jerom* had a *Rule* to go by, and were not guided by *Fancy*, in fixing the *Year* for the Death of *Christ*. I do not doubt, but *Philoponus* acted accordingly.

A. Sir, *Philoponus* will appear presently a very strong Evidence against our *Anti-Pblegonist*. You observe, that no less than *four* very eminent Writers meet with very rough Treatment, all in a *Breath*, as we say. 'Tis an extraordinary Paragraph, indeed ; and since it is upon the *Tapis*, please to read it, and then, perhaps, I may make some Observations upon it, that may give you further Satisfaction.

B. Our *Anti-Pblegonist's* Paragraph runs thus ; * “ If it be asked, How *Eusebius*, or “ *Jerom*, or *Philoponus*, came to cite it so “ many Years later, if it stood in *Pblegon*, “ where I conceive it stood ? I answer, That “ these Men, from the Authority of *Africanus*, “ took for granted, that *Pblegon* had spoke con-

“ cerning the *Darkness* at the Death of Christ;
 “ and then, whatever Year they fixed for the
 “ Death of *Christ*, whether the second, or third,
 “ or fourth Year of that Olympiad, *they quoted*
 “ Phlegon’s *Testimony still as to their Purpose*;
 “ and so they might have done, had they supposed
 “ our Saviour to have lived as long as *Irenæus*
 “ supposed him to live. But this I submit, as
 “ a mere *Conjecture*, to the Judgment of the *un-*
 “ *biassed Reader.*”

A. I hope, our *former Enquiries* were such,
 as sufficiently discharge us of *Partiality* in this
 Affair of *Phlegon*: But what Room can there
 be for *Conjecture* in this Matter, as our *Anti-*
Phlegonist puts it? Why must *Eusebius*, *Jerom*,
 and *Philoponus*, be supposed to take a Thing
 for granted, when they had *Phlegon’s* Works
 extant amongst them, whence they might have
 the same Satisfaction as *Africanus* had? *Afri-*
canus, you see, glosses upon the *supernatural*
Darkness; and therefore we are not to wonder,
 that we learn something more from him con-
 cerning this *Testimony* of *Phlegon*, than
 from others, who have chose to be *concise* in
 their Relations. But why (I say) must *Eusebius*,
 and *Jerom* be thought Strangers to *Phlegon’s*
 Works, when they had them to consult as well
 as *Africanus*, and need not take Things for
 granted upon his Authority? They knew by
 their own Calculations, that *Phlegon’s* Eclipse
 must relate to the *Darkness* at Christ’s Death;
 and yet they knew withal, though they reformed,
 in

in settling the *Christian Æra* in another Manner than *Africanus* and other Writers before them had done, that these *Calculations* of theirs did in *Reality* agree with the former, though there is *seemingly* a very great *Difference*. As to *Philoponus*, though he lived long after *Eusebius* and *Jerom*, yet undoubtedly he saw *Pblegon's* Works; and his *Evidence* is very strong; which I will produce presently, and give you my Thoughts upon it. I will only first observe, that our learned *Franciscan* was once of an Opinion, that this *Evidence* was not *such*; that *Philoponus*, in what he has said about *Pblegon's* Eclipse, had it not from *Pblegon* himself, but from some other Writers; for that he believed *Pblegon's* Works were not then *extant*: And that besides, there appeared an *Inconsistency* in what *Philoponus* says about the Matter; as first quoting *Pblegon* saying in the *second Year*, and afterwards the *fourth Year* of the *CCIIId Olympiad*. But as to *Pblegon's* Works being then perished, as he thought, *Pagi* lived to see his *Error*, and has honestly corrected it in his *Addenda* * thus: “ The Collection of
 “ *Olympiads*, or the *Chronicle* published by
 “ *Pblegon Trallianus*, was still *extant* in the
 “ *ninth* Century; when *Photius*, in his *Bib-*
 “ *liothèque Cod. 97*, affirms, that he had read
 “ five of his Books; and *Photius* has made
 “ some *Extracts* from that Collection: There-
 “ fore *Philoponus*, who lived long before *Pho-*
 “ *tius*

* Vol. I, inter Add. p. 302. Ed. Par. 1689.

“ *tius*, may be allowed to have seen that
“ Collection of *Phlegon's*. ”

B. I observe, *Pagi* says that *Philoponus* lived long before *Photius*. Pray ~~when~~ was it that he lived? and who was this *Philoponus*?

A. You may guess from his *Name*, that *Business* was his *Delight*; and therefore was entitled to the *Motto* that a learned *Peer* now so justly takes to himself. *Philoponus* flourished at the latter End of the *sixth* Century; was a *Grammarian* of *Alexandria*; He writ several *philosophical* Pieces, besides his Defence of *Moses's* Account of the Creation; also a Treatise upon the *Passover*: Among the Pieces that are lost, I am particularly concerned for *that* which he wrote against *Proclus*: I may, perhaps, give you my Reasons for it some other Time. He indulged himself so much in the Philosophy of *Plato* and *Aristotle*, that the *Divine* was often lost in some *heretical* Opinion, or other, that he maintained; which *Tertullian* (says *Dr. Cave*) rightly observed, long before, had been the Fate of some Philosophers. And now I will read to you what *Philoponus* says upon the Matter in hand; and afterwards make the best use of it I can for the present Purpose. You see *Pere Pagi* has cleared up *one* Difficulty; and I hope to do the same by the *other*. You are now to hear *Philoponus* speaking to you, after having conversed (we may reasonably conclude) with *Phlegon* himself: I will read to you from *Mr. Whiston's* Collection; for he has been
very

very careful in making *it*: And as to this Passage out of *Philoponus*, you may depend on the *Translation*, in the Main, as *just*. There is one Mistake, which is the Printer's Fault; though I do not find it amongst the *Errata* neither. It is reading CXVIII. instead of the CXCVIIIth Olympiad, as it ought to be. *Philoponus* then thus * speaks to the Matter in hand.

“ *Phlegon* also, in his Olympiads, makes mention of this Darkness, or rather of this Night:
 “ For he says, that in the *second Year* of the
 “ CCIId Olympiad, there was the greatest Eclipse of the Sun, which had been known
 “ before: And Night came on at the sixth
 “ Hour of the Day; insomuch that the Stars
 “ appeared in the Sky. Now, that *Phlegon*
 “ also makes mention of *that Eclipse* of the Sun,
 “ which happened at the *Crucifixion* of Christ
 “ (*our Lord*,) and not of *any other*, is manifest:
 “ First, because he says, *no such Eclipse* † had
 “ been known in former || Times; for there is
 “ but one *natural Way* of every Eclipse of
 “ the Sun. For the usual Eclipses of the Sun
 “ happen only at the Conjunction of the two
 “ Luminaries; but *that* at the Death ** of
 “ Christ

* *Philoponus de Creatione* II. 21. p. 88, 89.

† Μη ἔγνωσθαι πῇν ταύτην ἔκλειψιν, is *Philoponus's* Gloss upon *Phlegon's* ἔκλειψις μεγάλη.

|| The Eclipse of the Sun, that *Xerxes* saw, (as mentioned by *Herodotus*,) was certainly not a *natural* one; notwithstanding *Phlegon* points out his Eclipse, as having had nothing like it, no *such Eclipse* before.

** Ἐπὶ τῷ Δεσπότῃ ἡμετέρῳ. Supplendum quod supra, ἐν τῷ ταύτῳ.

“ Christ (*our Lord*) happened at the *Full-Moon* ;
 “ which, in a natural Way, is impossible. And
 “ in other Eclipses of the Sun, although the
 “ whole Sun be eclipsed, it continues without
 “ Light but a very small Portion of Time; and
 “ at the same Time begins presently to clear
 “ itself again: But at the Death * of (*our Lord*)
 “ Christ, the Air continued entirely without
 “ Light, from the sixth Hour to the ninth.
 “ The same Thing is proved also from the Histo-
 “ ry of (*Tiberius*) *Cæsar*: For *Pblegon* says, he
 “ began to reign on the second Year of the 198th
 “ Olympiad ; but that the Eclipse happened
 “ in the *fourth* Year of the CCIId Olympiad.
 “ So that if we compute from the Beginning
 “ of the Reign of *Tiberius*, unto the fourth
 “ Year of the CCIId Olimpiad, there are pretty
 “ † near 19 Years, *i. e. three* of the CXCVIIIth
 “ Olympiad, and *sixteen* of the other *four*.
 “ This is the Account given us by St. Luke in
 “ the Gospel ; for he says, in the 15th Year of
 “ Tiberius Cæsar’s Government, John the Bap-
 “ tist began to preach, when our Saviour’s Mi-
 “ nistry commenced ; but that did not last full
 “ four Years, as Eusebius has shewn in his first
 “ Book of Ecclesiastical History, deducing it from
 “ Josephus’s Antiquities. For the Time Beginning
 “ under Annas the High-Priest, (which was an
 “ annual Office,) and three other High-Priests
 “ having succeeded him, it expired at the
 “ BEGIN-

* Τῆ Δεσπότης Χριστοῦ. Supplendum ut antea ἐν τῷ-σαυροῦ.

† Ἐγγύς τε ἔτη δεκά τε ἑννέα.

“ BEGINNING of Cajaphas’s *succeeding them in*
 “ *that Office, Christ being crucified: But that*
 “ *Year was the 19th of Tiberius Cæsar’s*
 “ *Government.*” Why Mr. *W.* left out this
 latter Part of *Philoponus*, I know not: But so
 I find it, *Ed. Vien. 1630.* And now please to
 take my Observations upon this remarkable
 Passage of *Philoponus*.

B. Before you make your Observations, excuse me, if I ask you, why Mr. *Whiston* leaves out the Word *Lord* (as applied to Christ in the Original) no less than *three* Times in this Translation of his?

A. You are sensible the *Argument*, we are upon, does not suffer at all by such an *Omission*; and therefore Mr. *W.* might think, there was no Necessity for taking notice of it. But I must not dissemble with you: I rather think, the original Word *Δεσποτης* was passed over, as being disagreeable to that Gentleman’s Way of Thinking about the *Divinity* of our blessed Saviour. It is a very significant *Word*; is often applied by the Antients *emphatically* to Christ; and some other Time, if you please, you shall hear what *Conclusions* I have to draw from the primitive Use of that *Word*. But now, to proceed in making some *Remarks* upon this Passage of *Philoponus*.--- You may observe, in the first Place, that he assigns *two Reasons* why *Phlegon* cannot be understood speaking of *any other Eclipse* than *that* which happened at our Saviour’s Crucifixion. The *first Reason* is

M

founded

founded upon the Description of a *supernatural* Eclipse, which he understands to be *plainly* implied in *Phlegon's* Words, as others do; notwithstanding the *Opiniâtreté* of our *Anti-Phlegonist*. Though there had been several *total* Eclipses, which *Philoponus* was able to give an Account of; and, some not in a *natural* Way, that he could give no Account of; yet here, according to *Phlegon*, says he, *no such ECLIPSE was ever known in former * Times*. And indeed, as Mr. *W.* has justly observed already, † what else can well be the Meaning of *Phlegon's* Words *ἡ κλειψὶς μέγιστη*, the *greatest Eclipse*, if you do not understand *them* as relating to its *Duration*? “The *Greatness*, says he, in solar Eclipses “that are total, is chiefly seen in the *Length* of “*their Duration*.” Had it then been a *natural* Eclipse that *Phlegon* speaks of, or such a one, where the *total Darkness* very rarely lasts longer than *five Minutes*; can we think *Philoponus* would have put such a Construction upon *Phlegon's* Words, and applied them in the Manner as he has done? His *second Reason* assigned (you take Notice) is founded upon a Supputation of Years, which *Phlegon*, it seems, had made himself. *Phlegon* says (*ἔσται ὁ φλέγων*) that (Tiberius) Cæsar began to reign on the second Year of the CXCVIIIth Olympiad; but that the Eclipse happened in the fourth Year of the CCIIId Olympiad. Here we meet with a

new

* *Μὴ εἰδῶσθαι τὴν τ' αἰά' ἢ ἡμεῖς.*

† Page 47.

new Quotation, and a very material one from *Pblegon*; and our *Anti-Pblegonist* will be hard put to it, to shew whence *Philoponus* had this Passage, if not from *Pblegon* himself. The *Premises* then are *Pblegon's*: *Philoponus* also makes his Computation from these Premises, and finds that the 19th Year of *Tiberius*, or thereabouts, (in which our Saviour suffered) corresponds with *Pblegon's* second Year of the CXCVIIIth Olympiad, when *Tiberius* (*Pblegon* says) began to reign. Such concluding from *Pblegon*, and such a particular Calculation made by *Philoponus*, is to me an undoubted Argument (as in the Case of *Irenæus* above) that *the second Year of the CCIIId Olimpiad*, as appears in our printed Copies of *Philoponus*, in the former Part of this Quotation, must be a *Mistake*; and not hard to be accounted for neither: For what is more easy or natural to be supposed, than that one *Part* of the Numeral [V] might, by Length of Time, be effaced and gone, and the hasty Transcriber, instead of IV, write II? I have another Reason for thinking this was the Case; because *Corderius* the *Jesuit* (who published it from the *Cæsarian* Library) tells his Reader, that he did transcribe it from a *very ancient MS.* and possibly did not do it with that Care and Attention, as it ought to have been done: For he lets his Reader know likewise, that it was done at his *leasure Hours* *

M 2

However,

* Hujus ergo pulcherrimi Tractatus Antiquissimum Exemplar Græcum MS. ex Sac. Cæsar. Majestatis Bibliotheca, Nactus, &c. Horis, uti soleo, subcisivis, αὐτοχρησὶν descripsi, &c.

However, this is still submitted only as a *Conjecture* ; and there is no need of troubling our Heads in accounting for it : For a *Consistency* ought to be allowed, when *Philoponus's Narrative* and *argumentative Part* are compared together ; unless we can suppose *Philoponus* to have been so very *weak*, as to make *Deductions*, when he had just before destroyed the very *Foundation* for making them. I would now observe farther upon this Quotation of *Philoponus* from *Phlegon*, that *Phlegon*, as a *Grecian*, did not fix the Time of this Eclipse after the *Roman Manner* of computing ; or as *Tertullian* and others generally did compute, till the Days of *Eusebius*, already taken notice of : But it is plain *Phlegon* computed as *Eusebius* after him did. And though our *Anti-Phlegonist* would have it thought, * that *Eusebius*, *Jerom*, and *Philoponus*, fixed the Death of Christ at *random*, or according to Fancy ; yet surely it is highly reasonable to believe, that *Eusebius* and *Jerom* had their Computation in this Matter from *Phlegon's Works*, as well as *Philoponus* had ; though they do not quote *the Passage* that he does. I would observe farther, that the different Supputations, on Account of *proconsular* and *monarchical Government*, being so well understood at *Rome*, it was not material after which Manner *Tertullian* and others addressed themselves to their Enemies, in relation to the
Eclipse

* Page 97.

Eclipse at our Saviour's Passion. Had *Eusebius* been contemporary with *Tertullian*, their different Supputations would not have occasioned any such Surprize then, as it does now. There were different *Æra's*, but then, all Things considered, there was still a Correspondence of particular Years. *Origen* would never have quoted *Phlegon's* Eclipse, as relating to our Saviour's Passion, if he thought *Celsus* had had it in his Power to disprove him in Point of Chronology; and *Tertullian* must have been a Mad-Man in *appealing* to the *Archives* about this Matter, if he had not been thoroughly satisfied, that there was an Agreement, or Adjustment in Chronology; and yet their Chronological Tables might be made use of in a different Manner. So that “ when *Tertullian*,
 “ *Origen*, *Julius Africanus*, *Austin*, and *Jerom*,
 “ (says *Pagi* *) do inculcate the Eclipse at our
 “ Saviour's Passion, upon the Authority of
 “ *Phlegon*; it is very evident, though they had
 “ different Supputations, that they all fixed
 “ upon the *same Year* of our Saviour's suffering,
 “ as *Phlegon* had fixed his Eclipse. For,
 “ says he, if *they* had settled the *Time* of Christ's
 “ Passion, otherwise than *Phlegon* had settled
 “ the Eclipse, they would have been so far
 “ from effecting what they intended, which
 “ was to persuade the *Gentiles* concerning the
 “ *miraculous* Death of *Christ*, that they would
 “ have been made a Jest of, and had in the
 “ utmost

* Crit. Hist. p. 27. Ed. Par.

“ utmost Contempt by those they were talking
 “ to upon this Matter.” There is one Thing,
 however, (as *Pagi* observes *) that made these
Supputations, in general, difficult and abstruse,
 amongst the *Ancients* themselves; and *that* was,
 a *different* Way of computing, even in the
Olympiadique Way. *Pagi* in clearing up the
 Difficulty, in relation to *Phlegon’s* Olympiad,
 observes, that *Africanus* sometimes says, that
 the Eclipse happened the *second Year*, at other
 Times in the *fourth Year* of the CCIId Olym-
 piad; then takes notice how *Eusebius* varied after
 this Manner; and how unsuccessful *Kepler* and
Petavius have been in accounting for these
 Difficulties; for they supposed, that the *Year*
 in *Eusebius’s* Chronicle was *corrupted*. But the
 Fault, says *Pagi*, or Mistake, is not couched
 under the *Year*, but under the *Olympiad*: And,
 to illustrate this Matter, he instances in *Afri-*
canus, and shews both from the Fragment, and
 from *Syncellus* too, that *Africanus* must be under-
 stood of a *different* Computation, even as to the
Olympiads. “ *Africanus*, says he, it being a
 “ weighty Affair, and of great Consequence
 “ (*viz.* *Phlegon’s* Testimony) that all Persons
 “ might understand him, made use of *both*
 “ *Ways* of reckoning the *Olympiads*; and,
 “ whereas in the *common Way* then, the Com-
 “ putation was the fourth Year of the CCIst
 “ Olympiad, *Africanus* made use of that like-
 “ wise; writing the *fourth Year* of the *two hun-*
 “ *dred*

* Pag. 27, 28. Crit. Hist.

“ *dred and first*, and not of the *two hundred and*
 “ *second Olympiad.* * ”

B. Sir, I am extremely thankful for the Light you have given me into this intricate Affair. If you think it now a proper Time, *Tertullian* also having of late been often named, I should be glad you would enter into a farther Defence of *him* and *Justin Martyr* too, against the *rough Treatment* they have met with from our *Anti-Phlegonist*. You have now done them and the rest of the *Fathers* sufficient Justice, (I dare say, in the Opinion of every unbiassed Person,) as to their *seeming Differences* in Chronology about the Death of Christ, and in regard to *Phlegon's* Testimony. But this Writer seems more particularly bent to *depreciate* these two great Lights of the Christian Church, because they talk of *Acts* of *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman Archives*, and many *Testimonies* that are produced from them.

A. I think the *Time* very proper for doing what you desire. If I mistake not, it is our *Anti-Phlegonist's* main Design to have the *Credit* of those *two Antenicene Fathers* brought as low as possible; and that for some other Reasons perhaps, besides those you have now given. Some Enquiry may probably be made into that Affair by-and-by. As to *any Acts* of *Pontius Pilate*, our *Anti-Phlegonist* cannot bear the Thoughts
 of

* *Africanus*, ut in *Re gravissima* ab omnibus intelligeretur, *utramque* Olympiades supputandi rationem usurpavit; cumque Annus tunc quartus ducentessimæ primæ Olympiadis *communis* curreret, eam etiam numerationem amplexus est, scripsitque, &c.

of them. “ The Truth is, says * he, these
 “ *early Acts of Pilate* seem plainly to be
 “ *forged*. Who were the Authors of them I
 “ know not (says he). He allows, it is *possible* that
 “ *Pilate* might give an Account to *Tiberius* of
 “ the *Death* of Christ.” If so, What Name
 are we to give to *this Account* sent to *Tiberius*?
 Are not the Things contained in that Account
 to be reckoned amongst the *Acts of Pilate*?
 And why then are all the Acts of *Pilate*
 to be supposed *forged*? That the Heathens did
forge some, and that the later Christians did
forge others, shall not be disputed with him:
 But what then? Must these *early Acts* there-
 fore *seem to be plainly forged*? No; but *Justin*
Martyr and *Tertullian* (our *Anti-Phelegonist* says)
 have related so many incredible Things from
 these *Acts of Pilate*, that *therefore* these *early*
Acts of Pilate seem plainly to be forged: The
 plain *English* of which is, that *Justin Martyr*,
 and *Tertullian* were the Persons that transmitted,
 if not guilty of *Forgery* themselves, in this
 respect, by imposing upon the World Things
 that never were amongst the *Acts of Pilate*;
 and if they were *Impostors* in relating these
 Things, why (say the World) may *they* not be
 suspected of having been *Impostors* in the Re-
 lation of other Matters too? “ That *Pilate*
 “ wrote † the Things (says he) which *Tertul-*
 “ *lian* says he wrote; or that the Things, for
 “ which *Justin Martyr* Appeals to the *Acts of*
 “ *Pilate*, were ever sent to *Tiberius*, has no Founda-
 “ tion

* Pag. 37, 40.

† Page 37.

“ *tion* of Probability. Could *Pilate* (says he)
 “ possibly say some of the Things* which *Tertullian*
 “ puts upon him? Or would *Pilate*
 “ mention such a Circumstance, as the Soldiers
 “ casting Lots for the Garments of our Lord, for
 “ which *Justin* appeals to these Acts?” How-
 ever, after this, our *Anti-Pblegonist* resolves the
 Whole into the Folly and Weakness of these two
 learned, judicious, and pious *Fathers* of the Chri-
 stian Church. He now supposes *Justin Martyr*
 and *Tertullian* not putting Things upon *Pilate*,
 or designedly imposing them upon others: But
 he would have it understood and believed, that
 their Zeal wanted Knowledge; and that these
 early Acts of *Pilate*, out of which they preach-
 ed to Emperors, Senate, and People, were al-
 ready forged to their Hands. “ It seems there-
 fore (says he) † much the most natural to
 “ suppose, that these Acts of *Pilate* came out
 “ of the same Mint, which some other early
 “ Forgeries did; and were mistaken by these
 “ good Men, (*Justin Martyr and Tertullian*), and
 “ quoted as genuine, just as they did some other
 “ Things, which seem’d to make so strongly
 “ for their Cause.”

B. This Way of Talking in our *Anti-Pblegonist*, is to me very shocking; and looks, as if
 he had a deeper Design laid, than weak’ning this
 Testimony of *Pblegon* only. What those some other
 Things are, which he says those *Fathers* quoted

* Page 39.

† Ibid.

as *genuine*, and were *not* so, we are yet in the Dark about it; for he has not explain'd himself: But till he does, he must excuse me, if, upon so vile a Suggestion, I think that he is striking at some of the *Fundamentals* of Christianity; at least, that an *English* Reader has a Handle given him for thinking so. What was the CAUSE, that these two *great Men* pleaded for? Was it not our *common Christianity*? And does our *Anti-Phlegonist* call it *THEIR Cause*, as if he had no Share or Concern in it himself? Was it true, that *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian* wanted either *Veracity* or good *Sense*, (which this Writer would fain rob 'em of,) yet the Christian Religion did not want such *Supporters*, as should have Recourse to *spurious* Quotations. I own, Sir, I think your Defence of these *Fathers* to be absolutely necessary, as to these *Acts* of *Pilate*: But pray, in the first place, let me have some Account of these *Acts* themselves; for I want to be better inform'd in that Particular.

A. Bishop Pearson, I think, has given a succinct and faithful Account of this Matter, and produces all the Authority that any *reasonable* Man can desire, to support the *Genuineness* of these *early Acts* of *Pilate*; and yet I cannot promise you, should we allow our *Anti-Phlegonist* to be a *reasonable* Man, that this Account of *Bishop Pearson's* will have any Weight with him. However, the *Account* stands thus*: “ To the Be-
“ ginning

* *Pearsonii* Lectiones in *Acta Apostolorum*. Lect. III. IV.

“ ginning of this Year, (*A.D.* 34.) seems chiefly
 “ to be referred what we find related of *Pontius*
 “ *Pilate*; not in the *Scriptures*, but by the an-
 “ cient Writers of the Christian Church. For
 “ as *Acts* and *Journals* of Things that happen’d
 “ were sent to, and kept at *Rome*, so the same
 “ Thing was done by the Governors of the seve-
 “ ral *Roman* Provinces; who were continually
 “ writing to their Masters the Emperors, if any
 “ Thing of *Moment* offer’d itself: Which makes
 “ *Eusebius* observe, that it * *was an old Custom*
 “ *among the Heathen Governors to signify to the*
 “ *Emperor, whatever was new or extraordinary.*
 “ *Pontius Pilate* therefore is accordingly repre-
 “ sented, as having made it his Business to enter
 “ and keep such *Acts* and *Journals*, and parti-
 “ cularly to have sent a Letter to *Tiberius* con-
 “ cerning Christ. *Justin Martyr* is clear and
 “ distinct in his speaking of *these Acts*, in the
 “ Apology that he wrote to the *Roman Em-*
 “ peror; for he *appeals to them*, when he says,
 “ *And that these Things were done, ye may learn*
 “ *from the Acts under Pontius Pilate.* So *Ter-*
 “ tullian, in his Apology †, *All these Things*
 “ *concerning Christ, Pilate, in his Heart a Chri-*
 “ *stian, then acquainted Tiberius with.* So a-
 “ gain, *Justin Martyr*, in the same Apology,
 “ *That he (Christ) did these Things, ye may learn*

N 2

“ from

* Παλαιὴ κεκράνιστος ἔθος, &c. *Euseb.* Hist. L. 2. c. 2.

† Cap. 21. Ea omnia super Christo, &c.

“ from the Acts * under Pontius Pilate. *Isaac*
 “ *Casaubon* has rightly remark’d upon this Pas-
 “ sage, that the Greek Word ἀντὶ † should be
 “ read ἀκτῶν. *Eusebius* likewise says, *The Things*
 “ *concerning the Resurrection of our Saviour Je-*
 “ *sus Christ from the Dead, having already been*
 “ *noised about throughout all the Land of Pa-*
 “ *lestine, are communicated by Pilate to the Em-*
 “ *peror Tiberius.* *Hegeſippus*, that seems to have
 “ been a Writer in the 4th or 5th Century,
 “ lays before his Reader the very Letter that
 “ *Pilate* sent: But ’tis unquestionably a *fiſtitious*
 “ one; and some lewd, idle-headed Christians,
 “ or rather Hereticks, have counterfeited these
 “ *Acts*; such as the *Quarta-decimans*, or *Four-*
 “ *teen-Day Paſſover-Men*, made their Brags of;
 “ or such as *Epiphanius* describes in his 50th
 “ Heresy; or what is taken notice of in the 8th
 “ Homily on *Easter*, ascribed to *St. Chryſoſtom*.
 “ But as to the Books, or Collection of *Acts*;
 “ *Epiphanius* observes them to have *varied* in
 “ his Time. But besides *these*, there were other
 “ counterfeit

* ἐκτὸς ἐπὶ Πόντιῳ Πιλάτῳ γενομένων ἀντὶ μαθεῖν δυνάσθαι.

† Our *Anti-Phlegonist's* Reasoning upon this Matter is admir-
 able; because *Justin Martyr* appeals to *Acts* UNDER *Pontius Pilate*,
 therefore it does not appear, that *these* were the *Acts* OF *Pontius*
Pilate, or that he had any Thing to do in sending an Account of
 such Matters to *Tiberius*. “ Some very good Criticks, (p. 35.)
 “ says he, have here changed ἀντὶ into ἀκτῶν; i.e. you may learn
 “ from the *Acts* done under *Pontius Pilate*: But read it either Way,
 “ it makes no great Matter; for *Justin Martyr* does not say, that
 “ *Pilate* wrote or sent any Account of *these* Matters to *Tiberius*;
 “ and consequently the *Testimony* of *Pilate* cannot from hence be
 “ urged.” Sad Stuff indeed! Who but *Pontius Pilate*, could send
 Accounts from *Judaea*, according to the stated Rules of the Em-
 pire above-mentioned? *Pilatus nunciavit Tiberio*, I hope, is plain
 enough in *Tertullian* however.

“ counterfeit Acts of *Pilate*, fram’d by the Ene-
 “ mies of Christianity amongst the *Romans*
 “ themselves; full of Blasphemy against Christ;
 “ which, at the Command of the Tyrant *Maxi-*
 “ *mine*, were publish’d both in Town and
 “ Country, and put into the Hands of their
 “ *School-Masters*, for to instruct their Children
 “ out of *them*; which is the Account given *
 “ us by *Eusebius*. *Eusebius* discovered the Cheat
 “ from the Consulship † of *Tiberius*; but not
 “ by any Strength of *Argument* that he has
 “ shewn himself. However, these *Acts* the *Ro-*
 “ *mans* made use of, under *Dioclesian* and *Maxi-*
 “ *mine*, to make Christians refrain from *Mar-*
 “ *tyrdom*; as appears from the Saying of *Maxi-*
 “ *mine* himself, when those blessed People *Ta-*
 “ *rachus*, *Probus*, and *Andronicus*, were going to
 “ suffer; *Thou Varlet, thou silly Creature*, (says
 “ he, turning to one of them,) *thou dost not*
 “ *know who it is thou callest upon; Christ, a*
 “ *meer Man, made a Prisoner by Pontius Pi-*
 “ *late, whose Acts are recorded*. It cannot
 “ therefore be doubted, but that there
 “ were some Acts of *Pilate* done by his own
 “ *Authority*, and transmitted to *Tiberius*, which
 “ Hereticks, as well as Heathens, *interpolated*
 “ as they pleased, when once the true Acts
 “ were not forth coming to confute them. *Pi-*
 “ *late* having related to *Tiberius*, what the
 “ Christian

* Lib. 9, cap. 5.

† Lib. 1. cap. 9.

“ Christian * Profession was ; *Tiberius* moved
 “ the Senate to have *it* ingrafted into their
 “ own Religion, says *Eusebius* in his *Chronicle*.
 “ *Syncretus*, says † *St. Chrysostom*, had the ho-
 “ nourable Office, amongst the Romans, of con-
 “ stituting such as should be deemed Gods :
 “ Wherefore, when there had been a Declaration
 “ made of all Things relating to Christ, the
 “ Heathen Magistrates sent to know, if it was
 “ their Pleasure to make him a God. The same
 “ Thing has since been told by *Orosius*, *Cedrenus*,
 “ *Turon*, and *Nicephorus*. The Enquiry then to
 “ be made, is, whence this Tradition first came,
 “ which is what *Eusebius* carefully Remarks ;
 “ and *Tertullian* appears to have first related
 “ these Things ; a Man exceedingly well versed
 “ in the Roman Affairs. He then, in his Apo-
 “ logy, || says thus ; *Tiberius* therefore, in
 “ whose Time the Christian Name was first
 “ known in the World, having learned from Pa-
 “ lestine such Things as discovered there the
 “ Truth of Christ’s Divinity, he made a Re-
 “ port of THEM to the Senate, using the Prero-
 “ gative of giving his own Opinion in the Mat-
 “ ter. The Senate, because he had not approved
 “ of a DIVINITY in regard to himself, rejected it.
 “ This is what the World, in general, has
 “ received, upon the Testimony of *Tertullian*.
 “ But *Tanaquil Faber*, in one of his Epistles **,
 “ is

* *Pilato de Christianorum Dogmate ad Tiberium referente.*

† *Hom. 27, in 2 Cor,*

|| *Cap. 5,*

** *Ep. 12. Lib. 2.*

“ is pleased not to allow of *it*, making some fri-
 “ volous Objections, to lessen the Credit of so
 “ great a Man as *Tertullian*. He first puts the
 “ *Question*, How *Tertullian* came by the Know-
 “ ledge of these Things? And then *answers*
 “ his own Question, in saying, That *Tertullian*
 “ had his Account from those *Acts* of *Pilate*,
 “ which have been so often mentioned by the
 “ Antients. But this is an Answer highly *ab-*
 “ *surd*. The *Acts* of *Pilate* had nothing in
 “ them but the *Palestine* Affairs: Whereas
 “ *Tertullian* is telling us what was done by
 “ *Tiberius*, by the *Senate*, and at *Rome*; so
 “ that *Tertullian* could not have *these Things*
 “ from *Pilate's* *Acts*, being written in *Judæa*.
 “ But then, the *Senate* had their daily Entries,
 “ or their *Journals*, (*as an English Parlia-*
 “ *ment has*;) from whence *Tertullian* might ex-
 “ tract *these Things*; at least, it is what no
 “ Body can disprove. *Tan. Faber*, in the next
 “ Place, objects, that he does not think *Tibe-*
 “ *rius* (a Person who did not mind Religion)
 “ would so far concern himself about *Christ*, as
 “ to say any Thing of him to the *Senate*. But
 “ this is too loose a Way of talking, since
 “ *Suetonius* informs us, That there was nothing
 “ relating to public Business, of what Kind so-
 “ ever, ordinary, or extraordinary, but what
 “ he communicated to the *Senate*. *Tan. Faber*
 “ goes on: — *Heyday!* (says he,) *What, did*
 “ *the Senate* refuse, when it was *Tiberius's*
 “ *Will and Pleasure*? He that rejects *Tertul-*
 “ *lian's*

“ *lian's* Testimony for *such a Reason* as this;
 “ shews that he is little acquainted with the
 “ History of *Tiberius*, or of the *Senate*. or with
 “ *Tertullian* himself. It was the Temper and
 “ Way of *Tiberius*, when he laid any Thing
 “ before the Senate, to behave so, that, though
 “ he gave his Vote, they should not be able to
 “ know what his real Meaning was. *He did*
 “ *not so much as complain* (says *Suetonius*) *when*
 “ *some Things were decreed contrary to his Opi-*
 “ *nion. The Senate* (says *Tertullian*) * *rejected*
 “ *what was proposed, because he* (*Tiberius*) *had*
 “ *not approved of it, in his own Case.* Where
 “ the best Account is given of this Matter.
 “ The *Divinity* had been offered before by the
 “ Senate to *Tiberius*, which he refused. He
 “ forbid the Honours of the *Temple*, and the
 “ *Flamins* to be paid him; and would not
 “ allow the setting up of Statues and Images
 “ without his Leave; and when *that* was ob-
 “ tained, it was conditionally, that *they* should
 “ not be placcd amongst the Images of the
 “ Gods, but as Ornaments in their Houses:
 “ So *Suetonius* has it. Now, because *Tiberius*
 “ did not approve of the *Divinity* himself, but
 “ refused *it* when offered, the *Senate* concluded
 “ it to be the best and safest Way, not to ad-
 “ mit any other *Person* into the Number of
 “ their Gods, least, by such Admission, they
 “ should seem to make *him* greater than *Tibe-*
 “ *rius.* *Tan. Faber* carries his Objection still
 “ farther,

* *Senatus, quia in se non probaverat, respuit.*

“ farther, in denying that *such* a Report, as
 “ *Tertullian* makes concerning Christ, could
 “ have been brought to Court so early, whilst
 “ *Tiberius* was living; for it was after *that*;
 “ when the Name of *Christian* took its Rise
 “ at *Antioch*. But *Tertullian*’s Discourse here,
 “ is not about the *Name* that the Disciples of
 “ Christ were to be called by; but it is con-
 “ cerning *Christ himself*, whose *Works*, whose
 “ *Death*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*, were
 “ Things that *Pilate* might both know and
 “ believe; and by his Ministry *Tiberius* might
 “ know them too. Nay, *Pilate* could not be
 “ so negligent in the Discharge of his Duty, as
 “ to omit giving the Emperor an Account of
 “ a *Transaction* so very remarkable in his *own*
 “ *Province*. *Tan. Faber*, at last, when he is
 “ not able to make the Matter itself appear
 “ as *incredible*, endeavours to lessen the Au-
 “ thority of *Tertullian* himself; and says,
 “ that he was not always *careful* in the Choice
 “ of *Authors* that he made use of; whilst he
 “ himself [*Faber*] betrays the greatest *Negligence*
 “ in the Perusal of *Tertullian*. There is no Part
 “ therefore, in this History of *Tertullian*, that
 “ can be confuted. And since he was a Man
 “ of that *Weight*; is so ancient an Author, and
 “ so eminently vers’d in the *Roman* Affairs; it
 “ is much safer, and more adviseable to hold
 “ with *Tertullian*, That *Tiberius* did make such
 “ Report to the *Senate* concerning the *Divi-*
 “ *nity* of Christ.” Thus far our excellent
 O . . . Bishop.

Bishop. And now, if you please, let us throw our *Anti-Phlegonist's Bagatelles* about *Tertullian* into *one* Scale, and what this learned Prelate has said himself, and from others, into the *other*; and, I believe, you'll want little more Information, to let you see the empty *Free-thinking* Part of the Pamphlet, in regard to this Particular.

B. Surely, any impartial Reader may see enough already, to make him ashamed of such a Writer. I observe, he does not think it proper to quote his *Master, Tan. Faber*, in this Matter; and 'twas wisely done; for then he must have *confuted* what our judicious Prelate has observ'd; which, I am persuaded, is a *Task* much too great for our *Anti-Phlegonist* to undertake. I don't wonder now, that he labours so much to set aside *Tertullian's* Testimony concerning these *Acts of Pilate*, because I perceive *Eusebius* himself, and many other Writers, were beholden to *him* for some Particulars relating to those *Acts*. But please to pursue your intended Method, Sir, in making your Observations upon what the Bishop and the Authors, quoted by him, have said in this Matter; and then take the *Scales*, and let us see the *Difference*, as you propose; only first tell me, why our *Anti-Phlegonist* calls those Acts *Secret Accounts*?

A. This is the Thing I hinted at before; and I will now say something more about it.
 "How came *Tertullian* (says * he) to know
 "what was contain'd in these *Secret Accounts*?

By the *Secret Accounts* he means the Roman *Archives* or *Records*, as I took notice some time ago, (p. 43); so *Rigaltius* and others have explain'd it: But our *Anti-Phlegonist* thought it more for his Purpose, to have his *English* Reader believe, that these were *Places* where few or none might have *Access* to; and, consequently, that the *Acts* or *Accounts* lodg'd in 'em were *Secret Accounts*; for so he is pleased to translate *Arcanis vestris*. I remember, *Amm. Marcellinus* uses the Word *Arcani*, to denote those Persons that were placed on the top of *Towers*, to discover the Enemy: And therefore, as *Arx* is the known *Latin* Word for a *Tower*, so 'twas as easy and natural for *Tertullian* to use the Word *Arcana*, as signifying those *Things* that related to, or were contain'd in a *Tower*, as 'twas for *Marcellinus* to use the Word *Arcani*, as signifying the *Persons* that were placed on the *Tower*. However this be, I am very sure, from the *publick Appeals* frequently made to *these Places*, that our *Anti-Phlegonist's* translating (*Secret Accounts*) will make no very strong Impression on any intelligent Reader. But, says our *Anti-Phlegonist*, 'Tis evident, *Eusebius* knew nothing of *these Acts*, but what he learnt from *Tertullian*. Very strange, indeed! 'Tis well known, that *Eusebius* had the Privilege granted him of searching all *Archives* or *Records* whatever throughout the *Roman Empire*; and he was a Writer but a little more than a hundred Years after *Tertullian* writ his *Apology*. But this only

by-the-by ; that you mayn't think *Eusebius* knew nothing of these *Acts*, or the Contents, but what he had from *Tertullian*. The chief Matter now under Consideration, are those *Exceptions* taken by our *Anti-Phlegonist* to *Pilate's* Relation, as represented by *Tertullian*. This Caviller first modestly affirms in general thus * : “ That *Pilate* “ wrote the *Things*, which *Tertullian* says he “ wrote, has no *Foundation of Probability* ;” then makes a Recital, but a very unfair one, of *Tertullian's* Words ; and afterwards puts his Questions, intending thereby to draw as odd an Inference : “ Is this like *Pilate's* Conduct in the “ Gospels ? Cou'd *Pilate* possibly say some of “ the *Things* which *Tertullian* puts upon him ? “ Cou'd he tell *Tiberius* the Reason here given, “ why *Jesus* did not appear to all the Jews after his Resurrection ? Or cou'd he say, that “ He was much more, *truly taken into Heaven* “ *than ever Romulus was*, and yet *continue* an “ Infidel ? ” These are *Things*, it seems, that, in our *Anti-Phlegonist's* Opinion, have no *Foundation of Probability* : But a few *Remarks* upon what the Bishop, and the Authors cited by him, have said, will fully justify *Tertullian*.

B. You'll excuse me, if I interrupt you for a few Minutes in what you are going about. If our *Anti-Phlegonist* has not made a fair *Recital* of *Tertullian's* Words, I don't well see how I can have a full and clear Understanding of this Matter

* P. 37, 38, 39.

Matter : I ought to know first what *Tertullian* has really and truly said upon it.

A. I suppose Mr. Reeves's Translation will not be question'd : He tells us, in his * Preliminary Discourse to this Apology of *Tertullian*,
 “ That when he went about to *translate* it, he
 “ try'd *Tertullian* in all Dresses ; that he fol-
 “ low'd him as close as he could, among his
 “ Briars and Thorns ; and, that he has been
 “ religiously careful in Matters of moment ”.
 Now, if you please, take up *Tertullian*, and read the Passage ; and you'll soon find a Difference ; and had the Passage been much longer than 'tis, it should not have been contracted by our *Anti-Phelegonist* in the Manner you see it, for Reasons that will appear presently.

B. *Tertullian's* Account of the Matter, I find, stands † thus : “ In the same Moment that He
 “ [Christ] *dismiss'd* Life, the *Light departed*
 “ *from the Sun*, and the World was benighted
 “ at Noon-Day ; and those Men, who acknow-
 “ ledg'd this Eclipse, but were unacquainted
 “ with the Prophecies that foretold it upon
 “ Christ's Death, and finding it impossible to
 “ be solv'd by the Laws of Nature, at last
 “ roundly deny'd the *Fact* ; and yet this Won-
 “ der of the World you have related, and the
 “ *Relation preserv'd in your Archives to this Day*.
 “ Christ then being taken down from the Cross,
 “ and lay'd in a Sepulchre, the Jews beset it
 “ round with a strong Guard of Soldiers, fore-
 “ arming

* Page 151, 152.

† Page 261, 262, 263.

“ arming them with the strictest Caution, that
 “ his Disciples should not come and steal away
 “ the Body unawares; because he had foretold
 “ that he would rise again from the Dead on
 “ the third Day. But, lo! on the third Day,
 “ a sudden Earthquake arose, and the huge Stone
 “ was rolled from the Mouth of the Sepulchre,
 “ and the Guard struck with Fear and Confu-
 “ sion; not one Disciple at the Action, and no-
 “ thing found in the Sepulchre, but the Spoils
 “ of Death, the Linnen Cloaths he was buried
 “ in. Nevertheless, the Chief Priests (whose
 “ Interest it was to set such a wicked Lie on
 “ foot, in order to reclaim the People from a
 “ Faith, which must end in the utter Ruin of
 “ their Incomes and Authority among ’em) gave
 “ out, That his Disciples came privily, and stole
 “ him away. For, after the Resurrection, Christ
 “ thought not fit to make a publick Entry
 “ among the People, because he would not vio-
 “ lently redeem such obstinate Wretches from
 “ Error; and that a Faith, which proposes in-
 “ finite Rewards, should labour under some Dif-
 “ ficulties; that Believing might be a Virtue,
 “ and not a Necessity. But with some of his
 “ Disciples he did eat and drink *forty* Days
 “ in *Galilee*, a Province in *Judea*, instructing
 “ them in all they should teach; and then ha-
 “ ving ordain’d ’em to the Office of Preaching
 “ those Instructions all over the World, he was
 “ parted from them by a Cloud, and so receiv’d
 “ up before ’em into Heaven, much more truly
 “ than

“ than what your *Proclus's* report of *Romulus*,
 “ and some others of your *deified* Kings. *Pi-*
 “ *late*, who in his Conscience was a Christian,
 “ sent *Tiberius Cæsar* an Account of *ALL these*
 “ *PROCEEDINGS* relating to Christ”. Thus
 far *Tertullian*. The Passage is not *long*: Nor
 can I think the *English* Reader would have
 thought our *Anti-Pblegonist* tedious, had he
 thought fit to have given *it* entire, as it now is:
 But I easily perceive, it would not have serv'd
 his Purpose; and therefore 'twas rightly judg'd,
 that the best Way was to *abridge* it.

A. Will any one now, think you, (besides
 our *Anti-Pblegonist*,) offer to maintain, after
 reading this Passage, that 'tis *Pilate* that says
ALL this to *Tiberius*? Does not *Tertullian* plain-
 ly distinguish, when he says, *all these Proceed-*
ings? Must *Tertullian's* Remarks on those *Pro-*
ceedings be necessarily charg'd as *Pilate's*? Has
 not our *Anti-Pblegonist* therefore *designedly* left
 out *Proceedings*, that his Reader should have no
 Room for making the *Distinction*? *ALL these*
Things, (says he, in *Capitals*) *i. e.* *ALL* that he
 had given his Reader above †, or *ALL* that was
 contain'd really in this Paragraph of *Tertullian*,
 was to be suppos'd *Plate's* Discourse, and *his*
only: Whereas nothing is plainer, than that the
Matters of Fact, upon which *Tertullian* com-
 ments, are the *Things* properly to be ascrib'd to
Pilate. And yet I readily grant, that Gover-
 nors, and other Officers in the *Roman* Empire,
 both

both might and did *sometimes* acquaint their Principals, not only with bare *Matters of Fact*, but also with their *own Observations* upon them. It was the Practice, you know, of *Pliny*, and several more, in their *Accounts* given of the Christians. But how wide is the *Difference*, in the Case now before us, and how easily understood? Is it credible, when *Tertullian* had quoted the *Resurrection* of *Christ* from the *Archives*, that he wou'd have it *understood* by those he wrote to, that *Pilate* in those very *Acts* had assign'd the following *Reason* for *Christ's* not making his *Publick Entry* afterwards; or rather, that the *Reason* was his own, *viz. because Christ wou'd not violently redeem such obstinate Wretches from Error; and that a Faith, which proposes infinite Rewards, shou'd labour under some Difficulties; that believing might be a Virtue, and not a Necessity?* Can we imagine that *Pilate* wou'd go about to inform *Tiberius*, that *Galilee* was a *Province of Judea*, (which are words omitted by our *Anti-Phlegonist*,) or that *Tertullian* wou'd make *Pilate* to be so free with his great Master, as to say *Christ* was receiv'd up into Heaven, *much more truly than what Your Proclus's report of Romulus, and some others of Your deify'd Kings?* Yet still (as *Tertullian* says) *Pilate* sent an Account of all these *Proceedings (Matters of Fact)* relating to *Christ*: So that *Tertullian* does not put these Things upon *Pilate*; as this Writer has shamefully charg'd, and wou'd have his Reader believe. There is a *Narrative* and a *Reasoning*

part

Part, both in this Paragraph of *Tertullian*; and none but our *Anti-Pblegonist* would have ascribed *both* (without Exception) to *Pilate*. But, what if *Pilate* had talked like a *Christian*, as well as reported *Facts* to *Tiberius*? It is but agreeable with the Character given of him here by *Tertullian*; *He was in his Conscience a Christian*; and our *Anti-Pblegonist* does not offer to dispute it. It is certain, by the *Scripture Account*, he acted sadly *against his Conscience*; which makes *Tertullian* say, in another Place, that the *Jews extorted* Sentence against our Saviour to be crucified, from *Pontius Pilate*.

B. Sir, I am so thoroughly satisfied about your *Anti-Pblegonist's Bagatelles* (as you justly call them) in this Matter, that I will not ask you to hold the *Ballance*, or to compare them with what Bishop *Pearson*, and his *primitive Writers* have said about it. I only desire, you will answer the *Objection* that this Writer makes to *Justin Martyr*: For he *says; “ Would *Pilate* “ mention such a Circumstance, as the *Soldiers* “ casting Lots for the Garments of our Lord, “ for which *Justin* appeals to these Acts? “ That indeed is a material Circumstance to a “ Christian, but to an Infidel it is nothing.”

A. Hard Fate! that any Part of this Apology of *Justin Martyr* should now need a Vindication: An Apology, which, considering the various and important Doctrines it treats of, and the Antiquity of its Author, may be justly looked on as one of the most considerable *Records*. of

Christianity now extant amongst us. The Character that *Photius* * gives of him is, *That he was a Man little behind even the Apostles themselves, either in Point of Time, or Virtue : Scarce fifty Years between St. John's Revelation, and this Apology of Justin.* He was, indeed, a great Enemy to the modern Way of *Free-Thinking*; for he “ complains † (as Mr. Reeves has observed) of the lamentable Reasonings, and “ wretched Inconsistence of human Brain; and “ that nothing is to be depended on, but the “ divinely inspired Writings; and affirms, in “ this Apology, that *Plato* had all his Divinity “ from *Moses* and the Prophets.” Yet this is the glorious Martyr, whose Veracity, Judgment, and good Sense, is now called in question, touching these *Acts of Pilate.* *That the Things for which Justin Martyr appeals to the Acts of Pilate, were ever sent to Tiberius, has no Foundation of Probability, says our || Anti-Phlegonist.* And what are these Things? Would *Pilate* mention such a Circumstance, “ says he, as the *Soldiers casting Lots, &c. ?* ” Yes, surely, he would; and his Duty obliged him so to do. For, as *Suetonius* relates of *Pilate's* Master, *Tiberius*, that there was *nothing* seemingly so *trivial*, in publick Affairs, but he thought proper to acquaint the *Senate* with it; so it may reasonably be concluded, that he expected the Governors, in the several Provinces of his Empire,

* Cod. 234.

† *Paræn. ad Græc.*

|| Page 37.

Empire, should be as careful, as exact, and minute in their Accounts transmitted to him. Nor is it enough to say, (as our *Anti-Phlegonist* does) that the *Soldiers casting Lots*, &c. was not a *Circumstance* at all material for an *Infidel* to be acquainted with; unless he could account for the Springs of Government, or was able to reason upon the Foot of *Roman Policy*. *Prophecies* were Things, that the *Romans* minded very much, whatever Quarter they came from: And therefore, if the *Soldiers*, tho' acting in the usual Manner of dividing the Cloaths of a Person executed, had fulfilled a *Prophecy*; was it any Ways *improbable*, nay, was it not a Thing to be expected, that *Pilate* should acquaint *Tiberius* it? The *Roman Archives* abounded with *Prophecies*; and, as I have more than once observed to you, * from *Phlegon*, (who, by the Favour of the Emperor, had such free Access to them in composing his *Annals*.) He was thence acquainted with several *Prophecies* of Christ himself; and, as we learn from *Lactantius* and *Origen*, *Phlegon ascribed to Christ a Foreknowledge of the Times to come, and affirmed, that there had been an exact Accomplishment of his Predictions*. And why are we not to believe, that *Phlegon* might be acquainted with this ancient Prophecy likewise, of the *Soldiers casting Lots*, and *dividing Christ's Garments amongst themselves*? Had *Justin Martyr* appealed to

P 2

the

* See above at Page and in the first Part, p. 19.

the *Acts* of *Pilate* for all the *Indignities* that the *Soldiers* offered to our blessed Saviour ; I can hardly think any unprejudiced Person would say, as our *Anti-Phlegonist* does, that *Pilate's* sending such an Account, could have no *Foundation* of *Probability*. But so it is ; neither *Justin Martyr*, nor *Tertullian*, are to have any Weight with an *English* Reader, if our *Anti-Phlegonist* can bring it about : And I am very well satisfied, * *Origen's* Books against *Celsus* would have been cavilled at too, if *Origen* had not *seemingly* sided with our *Anti-Phlegonist* another Way.

B. I suppose you mean *Origen's* 35th Discourse upon St. *Matthew* ; which, I observe, this Writer makes a mighty Stir about ; but, in my Opinion, this is treating *Origen* very ill, in making him *contradict* himself in so notorious a Manner ; and at the same Time it must be owned, that our *Anti-Phlegonist* has shewn a great deal of *Weakness* in so doing. I will not trouble you, to explain this Matter for me farther than Mr. *W.* has done ; for I think, he has said enough, both for *vindicating* the one, and *exposing* the other.

A. Sir, as the *Passage* is not long, it may be proper to refresh our Memories with it, at so seasonable a Time ; and therefore, pray let it be read, before we take our leave of *Origen*.

B. Mr. *W.* at Page 13. observes, that the *Answer*, which it is supposed *Origen* makes to the

* *Origen's* Appeal to *Phlegon*, in those Books, is struck out in Dr. *Clarke's* Boyle's Lectures.

the *Objection* formed in this Discourse upon St. *Matthew*, seems to be *lost*; and that *Origen's* Books against *Celsus*, were writ several Years after this Commentary or Discourse of his on St. *Matthew*. Mr. *W.* afterwards, at Page 30. expresses himself thus: To say nothing of the Difference, the *visible Difference* here in general, (*i. e.* *Origen's* Latin Commentary on St. *Matthew*,) from the Stile and Genius of the *true Origen*: The genuine *Origen* says, the *Darkness* at our Saviour's Passion, was caused by an *Eclipse of the Sun*. The *other* denies it, and ascribes it to *thick Clouds* only. Thus the genuine *Origen* quotes the Text of St. *Luke*, as it stood in the Copies of his Age, that *there was a Darkness in the Day-time, by an Eclipse of the Sun*. The *other* looks on that reading as an Interpolation; indeed, as a dangerous Interpolation made by the Enemies of Christianity; nay, and afterwards directly *denies* that the Evangelists do so much as *name* the *Sun* upon the Occasion; not only contrary to *Origen's* own Words, and Citation of St. *Luke's* Gospel, but contrary to all the Citations and Manuscripts of St. *Luke* now known in the World. Thus the genuine *Origen*, both in his *Greek*, and the *former* Part of this *Latin* Version, *cites* *Phlegon* as a *real and valuable Heathen Witness* to the Truth of the extraordinary *Darkness* or *Eclipse of the Sun*, related in the Gospels. But the *other* is rather busy in *setting aside all such Heathen Testimonies*, and supporting his
own

own novel Opinion, that this Darkneſs came only from *thick Clouds*, peculiar to *Judæa*. Thus the genuine *Origen* never confines either the *great Darkneſs*, or the *great Earthquake* to *Judæa*, as does the *other*. But his *Appealing* to *Phlegon's* Testimony, which we know extended the Earthquake as far as *Bitbunia*, (eight hundred Miles diſtant from *Judæa*,) implies his *own* Opinion to have been, that *they* extended ſo far; which was alſo the unanimous Opinion of the earlieſt Centuries of Chriſtianity. Thus the genuine and great *Origen* could not poſſibly be guilty of ſo groſs an *Absurdity*, as once to ſuppoſe, that by *all the Earth*, or *all the Land* might be meant the *ſingle City Jeruſalem*, as this trifling Author more than once intimates, with the greateſt Degree of *Absurdity*: While there is no certain Inſtance yet produced, that thoſe Phraſes are ever uſed in the *New Teſtament*, in ſo narrow a Senſe as the *Land* of *Judæa* only. The Judgment of the very learned *Huetius* upon this *Latin Commentary* of *Origen*, is this; “ What is remain-
 “ ing, ſays he, in the *Latin Commentaries* *
 “ on *Matthæw*, are miſerably deformed. The
 “ Barbarity of this old Interpreter was con-
 “ ſummate; the Skill he had in the *Greek*
 “ Tongue ſmall; he was deſtitute of all Man-
 “ ner of Sagacity in clearing the moſt difficult
 “ Paſſages; of which he was ſo conſcious, that
 “ he paſſes over the moſt difficult Places, and
 “ that

* Huetii Origenian. p. 243, 252;

“ that, as it were, on Purpose. He has, to be
 “ sure, allowed himself so extravagant a De-
 “ gree of Licentiousness, in giving us this
 “ *Translation*, as is very surprizing; sometimes
 “ omitting intire Pages, and sometimes adding
 “ others. Nor has he any where truly under-
 “ stood the Meaning of the Copy that lay
 “ before him.”

A. You have read enough : I think it is very much to the Purpose, in a few Words; and it is what our *Anti-Phlegonist*, I believe, will not digest in haste. You may remember I did formerly (when we had our *first Conference*) give you my Thoughts upon the *Extent* of this wonderful *Darkness* at our Saviour's Passion; and I am still of the * same Opinion that it was *universal*, and not to be restrained either to *Judæa*, as some, or to the Limits of the *Roman Empire*, as others. What chiefly confirms me in this Opinion, is a stricter Examination of the *Way* and *Manner* of the ancient *Greek* and *Latin Writers* expressing themselves upon this Subject : For I think, upon a due Comparison made of one Expression with another, this Matter is pretty plain, without *reasoning* upon it, as I did before.

B. Sir, as you have raised my Expectation, I hope I shall have the Satisfaction of hearing you argue, upon this Point, from the *ancient Writers*. Mr. *Whiston's* Collection lies before you : Please to *compare* the Expressions of those
 Writers,

Writers, as to this Particular, one with the other; and then let me know what *Conclusion* you draw from them in Proof of such *universal Darknefs*.

A. I do by no Means say, that what I am going to offer, will amount to a *certain Proof*; nor, perhaps, give you the same Satisfaction as it has given me. My Extracts are here in my Hand; and I will read them to you in order, both from the Evangelists, and from the several *Authors*, as Mr. *Whiston* has ranged them in his Collection.

Mr. *Whiston*'s Collection.*

Testamentum Le- vi; ap. Grabe Spic. p. 160.	The Lord will execute Judgment upon the <i>Sons</i> of <i>Men</i> , when the Rocks shall be rent, and the Sun be put out, --- at the Pas- sion of the most High. [1700 Years before <i>Christ</i> .]	Ἐπὶ τὰς ἡμέ- ρας τῶν ἀνθρώπων.
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Mat. xxvii. 45.	There was Darknefs over all the Earth. [A. D. 60.]	Ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν.
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Luke xxiii. 44.	There was Darknefs over the whole Earth. [A. D. 61.]	Ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν γῆν.
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Mark xv. 33.	There was Darknefs over the whole Earth. [A. D. 62.]	Ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν γῆν.
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Recognitions

* Some of these Authorities are cited *only* on Account of their *Antiquity*; which is sufficient for the present Purpose.

- Recognitions of
Clement I. 41. When the true Pro-
 phet suffered, *the whole*
World suffered with him.
 --- *The whole World* was
 in Commotion. [*A. D.*
 120.] Omnis ei com-
 passus est Mun-
 dus. --- Cum om-
 nis Mundus com-
 motus sit.
- Africanus* ap.
Syncell. p. 322, A most terrible Dark-
 nels came suddenly over
etc. all the World. [*A. D.* 220.]
 A Mundane Prodigy. Καθ' ὅλην τὴν κόσμον.
 Τὸ κοσμικὸν τέρας.
- Arnobius* Lib. I. When Christ put off
 P. 32. his Body, --- all the Ele-
 ments of the World were
 terrified, &c. [*A. D.* 203.] Exterrita univer-
 sa Mundi sunt Ele-
 menta.
- Dionysius* Arcop. We were both of us
 Vol. II. p. 91. vid. then present at *Heliopolis*
 p. 214, & *Pach.* in Egypt, and saw the E-
 Paraph. p. 103. clipse, when our Saviour
 was on the Cross. [*A. D.*
 360. *] Ἀμφότεροι γὰρ
 ἡμεῖς, ----- καὶ
 τὴν τῆς Αἰγυπτῆς
 Ἡλιόπολιν.
- Chrysostom* in This Darknells was
Mat. xxvii. 45. over all the habitable
 Earth. ----- It came at
 Noon, that all the Inha-
 bitants of the Earth might
 learn by it; for it was
 Day-Time every where in
 the habitable Earth. [*A. D.*
 398.] Ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν
 οἰκωμένην.
 ἵνα πάντες οἱ
 τὴν γῆν οἰκῶντες.
 Ὅτι πανταχῶς
 τῆς οἰκωμένης ἡμέ-
 ρα ἦν.
- Occumenius* in This Darknells was a
Mat. xxvii. 45. mundane Prodigy: But not
 one that concerned a Part
 of the World only, as did
 the Darknells in Egypt. Κοσμικὸν Τέρας

Q

Orosius

* Mais il est certain (dit Du Pin) que ces Livres attribuez à Saint Denis l'Arcopagite sont écrits depuis le quatrième Siècle, &c. avant que le sixième fût avancé.

Orosius Histor. vii. 4. A terrible Night was drawn *over the Earth* on Tetranox subito obducta Terris est. a sudden; and, as the Impiaque æter- Saying is, the *wicked World* nam timuerunt feared an eternal Night. *secula noctem.*
[A. D. 416.]

Chronicon Alex. ad An. Tiberii 18. The Sun was darkned *over all the World.* [A. D. 400 or 500.] 'Εἰς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον.

Malala ad A. D. 33. P. 310. The Sun was darkened, and there was Darkness *upon the World.* [A. D. 600. or 850.] 'Εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

Thus you see at one View, and in a very narrow Compass, how both the *Evangelists*, and other ancient Writers, for *six hundred Years* after them, have *express'd* themselves, as to the *Extent* of this wonderful *Darkness* at our Saviour's Passion. For my own part, I cannot think of *it* otherwise than as *Universal*; can by no means assent to those Writers, who would restrain those Words of the Evangelists (*over all the Earth, and over the whole Earth*) to the *Roman Empire* only; and that for these two Reasons: The one is, that St. *Luke* has very plainly *distinguish'd* in this Matter: For whereas he here says, (xxiii. 44.) ἐπ' ὅλην τὴν γῆν, *over the whole Earth*; yet in another place (ii. 1.) where he informs us of a *Tax*, or Inrollment rather, throughout the *Roman Empire*, he does not say, ὅλην τὴν γῆν, but πᾶσαν τὴν ἐκείνην, which we translate *all the World*; i. e. *all that*

that *Part* of it which was under the Jurisdiction of *Augustus Cæsar* : For the *Goths*, *Armenians*, and several other Provinces, were then a *Free People*, and no ways subject to *Augustus*; which made *St. Ambrose* remark upon these Words of *St. Luke*, that *Christ's Empire was of a larger Extent than that of Augustus*. [*Gothis non imperabat Augustus, non imperabat Armeniis, Imperat Christus.*] The same Word (ὀικουμένη) in another place [*Acts xi. 28.*] is to be taken still in a more limited sense, including, as I take it, the Land of *Judea* only. You will say, perhaps, that *St. Chrysostom*, as we have just taken notice, uses the Word ὀικουμένην for the *habitable Earth*; and that is true likewise. This is the proper Signification of the Word; and so *St. Chrysostom* explains it, (notwithstanding that Illustration of his from the *Darkness* formerly in *Egypt*;) for he says, *All the Inhabitants of the Earth*; and *Day-time every where in the habitable World*, when the Eclipse began : Yet 'tis as true, that we cannot understand this Word ὀικουμένην, as used by *St. Luke*, in the same Sense as *St. Chrysostom* uses it, because the *Habitable Earth*, or *all the Inhabitants of the Earth*, were not liable to be *tax'd* by that Emperor. And yet, tho' the Word admits of both these Senses, and is * often so used; you see, the Evangelist uses it in a *limited* Sense : But when he comes to speak of the *Extent* of this wonderful *Darkness*, he uses a Word the most *extensive* in its Signifi-

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cation

* Vid. *Cunrad. Dieter.* in voce ὀικουμένη.

cation, and such as the LXX Greek Interpreters made use of to express the *Terr-aqueous* Globe by. My other Reason is, That the *ancient* Writers, above mention'd, seem to have understood the *Evangelists* in the same Manner as I do: For those Words, *the Sons of Men; all the Elements of the World; all the Inhabitants of the Earth; a Mundane Prodigy, &c.* (as you heard me read 'em just now,) are to me very odd Expressions, if they serve to point no farther than the *Roman Empire*. You may please to remember what *Grotius* has observ'd, "That
 " tho' *Phlegon* assigns a Place for the Earth-
 " quake, yet he assigns none for the Darknes;
 " I would not, says he, have this *Darkness* un-
 " derstood of *Judæa* only, since the old *Astro-*
 " *logers* and *Chronographers*, who take notice of
 " it, make no Restriction as to the Place". And a little after, his Remark is excellently good, I think, upon *Tertullian's* calling this Darknes the *Wonder of the World*; for "here the Father,
 " says he, sufficiently guarded against the Opi-
 " nion of those who ascribe † such Darknes to
 " *Judæa* only. My Opinion is, that other Na-
 " tions were concern'd in this *Prodigy*, as well as
 " the *Jews*; — and therefore the Meaning
 " (says he) and Intent of *this Darknes*, is to be
 " taken in as large and comprehensive a Sense
 " as

† *Grotius* does not distinguish (as above) between *γῆν* and *οὐρανὸν*: But he is certainly mistaken, if he understands *οὐρανὸν* to be used by the *Evangelist* in regard to the *Darkness* at *Christ's* Passion.

“ as possible ”. And this reminds me of the *Reasoning Part* we had upon it, if you remember, the *first Day* || we met : I shall not think it improper, if we subjoin it. I will freely speak my own Sense of this Matter, (I told you,) whatever Weight it may have with you. Our Saviour’s Crucifixion, it must be allow’d, had a relation to the Sins of the *whole* World, and not of *those only* who liv’d in the Land of *Palestine* : Therefore this *miraculous Darkness* being the Method taken by God to *manifest* his Wrath and vindictive Justice against Sin, (for in *Adam* all had sinned, and all were sensible of a natural Corruption,) such a *Sanction* of Divine Wrath, ’tis reasonable to suppose, would be made known to *all Mankind* at the Death of our Redeemer. In *Adam* we all *died* ; and therefore, when the Fulness of Time was come, that *in Christ* we *should be all made alive* ; what is more naturally to be concluded, than that this *miraculous Darkness*, out of which *Light* was to arise to the *Gentiles*, should be noted by our Heavenly Father to the *Fallen Race of Mankind* in general, as well as to the People of the *Jews* ? The Answer you made me then, was, That you did not make any Objection to this sort of *Reasoning* : But you question’d whether I had any publick *Records* extant to support the Truth of such a *Fact*, as an *Universal Darkness*. Upon which I referr’d you to the *Chinese Annals*.

B, ’Tis

B. 'Tis very true, Sir : I did not *object* to your Way of Reasoning on this Topick of an *Universal Darknefs* ; and, I think, there is less Reason for any one to do it now ; because, by *comparing* what the *Ancients* have said upon it, in the Manner you have done, there are other *Records*, I see, to be produced for supporting the Truth of the *Fact*, besides *those* amongst the *Chinese*. As to the latter, you observe, that your *Anti-Phlegonist* and Mr. *W.* both seem to make a *Jest* of it : I hope, before we part, you'll take some notice of their Behaviour towards *Huetius* and those learned *Jesuites* that have reported from the *Chinese Annals* ; and not give up the Point, as, I perceive, they would have it done : However, such sort of *Evidence* does not *now* seem to be wanting neither. But I could wish, before you enter upon that Affair, you would explain your self in one Particular, *viz.* Why in your List of *ancient Writers* (just given in) you quote *Dionysius*, and yet make no Use of him in your Application ? I suppose, you don't agree with your *Anti-Phlegonist* in all that he says about *Dionysius*.

A. By no means ; as you will quickly see. The Reason of my placing *Dionysius* in the List was, that you might observe, that the *Darknefs* was not confined to the Land of *Judæa*. As to the *Fact*, it has been related (according to Bishop *Pearson* and Dr. *Cave*) about *Fourteen hundred Years* ago ; and *Michael Syncellus* * (a-
bove

* P. 203; 213.

bove *Nine hundred Years* ago) takes notice, "That
 " there was come down a *Tradition* from the
 " former Times, deliver'd from Father to Son,
 " that this great Man *Dionysius*, at our Sa-
 " viour's Passion, when the Sun was hidden in
 " *the Midst of the Day*, was greatly surpriz'd."
 The Opinion, which has been look'd on as most
 probable, is, that *Apollinarius*, Bishop of *Lao-*
dicea, compiled these Works, and assum'd the
 credible Name of *Dionysius the Areopagite*; (a
 Practice very common amongst the Ancients.)
 And possibly this Bishop, amongst his *own*
 Works, might first of all insert *those* that were
really the *Areopagite's*; or at least the *Traditio-*
nal part, that *Syncellus* speaks of. However it
 be, as to Matters of *Fact*, I think, great Regard
 ought to be had to so ancient a Writer, and
 one that has been so *distinguish'd* in the World
 for many Ages. The *Chronicon Alexandrinum*
 * quotes him above *Twelve* or *Thirteen* hundred
 Years ago, as writing an Epistle to *Polycarp*
 upon this Extraordinary Eclipse; and *Philo-*
ponus †, (that we talk'd of some Time ago,) not
 long after, quoted this *Dionysius*, as explaining
 how the same Eclipse was caused. *Photius* tells
 us at the Beginning of his *Bibliothèque*, That one
Theodore wrote a Book, to answer the Objections
 made to the Works of *Dionysius*. You observe,
 I am not pleading for the *Genuineness* of these
 Works, as if they had the *Areopagite* for their
 Author;

* Ad An. *Tiberii* XVIII

† De *Creatione* III. p. 116.

Author ; but only desiring you to take notice, for *how long a Time*, and *by whom* the Author of them has been quoted ; and surely, upon the Authority of such *Antiquity*, and such *Distinction* of the Author, the Argument must be stronger against our *Anti-Pblegonist*, in respect of that *Fact* now before us.

B. I think your Method's right : For why must *that* be reckon'd an *absurd Romance*, (as our *Anti-Pblegonist* is pleas'd to call it,) when it has stood the *Test* of the wisest and most learned Men, for so many *Ages* ? “ But (says he *) it signifies but *little* to enquire *when* he “ (this *Dionysius*) liv'd, or to enter into a Con- “ troversy which exercis'd the greatest and learn- “ edst Criticks and Chronologers of the last “ Century.

A. I care as little as our *Anti-Pblegonist* ; nor is it my Design to enter into any sort of Controversy about the *Antiquity* of this Writer ; for that Matter is plain enough already : But it must ever be acknowledg'd, that the *longer* a *Fact* has been discuss'd, and keeps its Ground, the *stronger* it grows, and less liable to Exception. There are many learned Men (as I told you in † our first Conference) who do not in the least question the Truth of this *Fact* ; I mean, of the *real Dionysius's* being at *Heliopolis* in *Egypt*, when our Saviour suffer'd, and when the surprizing Darkness extorted that *Exclamation*.

* Page 57.

† Part I. p. 48.

tion. *Suidas* says expressly, “ that the *Areopagite* went into *Egypt* in the Reign of *Tiberius*, “ that he might converse with the Wisemen “ there; that he had, for a Companion, *Apollophanes* the Sophist; that they were both at “ *Heliopolis* in *Egypt* together, at the Time that “ our Saviour suffer’d; when (says *Suidas*) there “ was a *preternatural* Eclipse, &c. [τῆς ἡλιακῆς ἐκλείψεως ἡ κατὰ τούτων γεγενημένης.”] The Learned also assign several Reasons to support the *Fact*, as being deliver’d down in a *Traditionary* Way for above eleven Centuries; and as having the *Judgment* also of many eminent Writers besides, such as *Cyrill*, *Ephrem*, *Maximus*, *Sophronius*, and *Juvenal* Patriarch of *Jerusalem*, in favour of this *Fact*. If then the *Fact* be so well supported, why must the *Way* and Manner of relating it be so much ridiculed by our *Anti-Phlegonist*? Why is this ancient Writer, whoever he was, now to be expos’d as a Writer of an *absurd* Romance, that has never been thought so, for these *fourteen hundred* Years past? Could our *Anti-Phlegonist* make no Grains of Allowance for any *Mistake* that might possibly happen in rendering this *Relation* obscure, if not seemingly inconsistent? Must the *Judgment* of so many Persons, ancient and modern, submit to the sudden *Caprice* of this Gentleman? Or, has it been reserv’d for the L——r of S. J——s to undeceive the World in this Matter; and in *that* (as he says) to do a real Service to the Cause of Christ?

B. I suppose his representing *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian* in the Manner we have seen him, was much the same sort of *real Service* : But I cannot think, he has by any Means done this *Writer Justice*, in his *Translation* : He saddles him with *Absurdities* ; and yet, I fancy, makes *them* himself. Pray does *Suidas*, which is the *Author* he quotes, so read it in the *Greek*, viz. that the *Eclipse* began at the *ninth Hour* ? He says, this is one Thing very *remarkable* in the *Romance*. “ How absurd soever this *Romance* is, “ says he, yet one Thing is remarkable, that the “ *Eclipse* is *made to begin at the ninth Hour*, “ *or at nine o-Clock in the Morning* ”. Pray, why does our *Anti-Phlegonist* quote *Suidas*, and not rather the *Epistle* itself of *Dionysius*, that relates the *Fact* ?

A. You'll find the Case quite otherwise, by-and-by, than our *Anti-Phlegonist* has represented it : And tho' Mr. *W.* (p. 35) is pleas'd to impute it to want of *Judgment*, I believe it will appear to be rather for want of *Sincerity*. I told you a long time * ago, that you are not to expect *Sincerity* from your *Free-thinking* Gentry : I shall make it notoriously *evident* to you, (the next Time I have the Happiness of seeing you here) in relation to the late Dr. *Samuel Clarke* also. I tax'd *him* with it many Years before he died : But tho' the Matter was then, and ever will be, undeniably plain, (and more of that Nature will soon appear in the World, God willing,) yet I
could

* Part I. p. 14.

could not prevail, (as our *Anti-Phlegonist* has done,) to have any Alteration made in his Book, call'd *The Doctrine of the Trinity* ; or to have any the least Defence made by him, or his Friends, in the Point of *Insincerity*, so directly charg'd upon him ; and *that* in a Matter of very great Importance. Now, our *Anti-Phlegonist's Insincerity* is as evident in the Case now before us : Had he quoted *Dionysius's* Epistle, it would not have serv'd his Purpose, as you will perceive presently. *Dionysius* says, “ That he and “ *Apollonius* saw the Moon, when it was not “ the Time for a *Conjunction*, coincide with the “ Sun ; and again, (ἀϋθις,) from the *ninth Hour* “ to the Evening, standing in direct *Opposition* “ to the Sun.” But *Suidas* giving *two* Accounts (from different Hands) of *Dionysius*, and mentioning the *sixth Hour* in one, and the *ninth Hour* in the other, our *Anti-Phlegonist* catch'd at it. I'll first read you the Passage in *Suidas* (relating to the *sixth Hour*) truly translated ; and you here have the Original, for your farther Satisfaction. *Suidas* then relates the Affair thus : “ These two * (*Dionysius* the *Areopagite*, and *Apollophanes*) were both together “ at *Heliopolis* in *Egypt*, when our Saviour suf-
R 2 “ fer'd

* Κατὰ γὰρ τὸν καιρὸν τῆ σωτηρίας πάθος ἄμφω ἦσαν ἐν Ἡλίῳ πόλει τῇ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ. Καὶ δὴ τῆς Ἑλιακῆς Ἐκλείψεως ἔκατὰ φύσιν γεγενημένης. ἔγὰρ ἦν Συνόδου καιρὸς. [ἀλλὰ παραδόξως τῷ ἡλίῳ τῆς σελήνης συμπίπτειν, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἑκτῆς ἡμέρας ἄχρι τῆς ἑσπέρας εἶς το τῆ ἡλίου διάμετρον ὑπερφυῶς ἀντικαταστάσης.]

“ fer’d ; there being also at that Time a *pre-*
 “ *ternatural* Eclipse of the Sun : For it was
 “ not the Time for a *Conjunction* ; [the *Moon*
 “ in a very surprizing Manner *coinciding* with
 “ the Sun, and standing (*or returning again*)
 “ Diametrically opposite, from the *Sixth Hour*
 “ to the Evening, contrary to the Course of
 “ Nature.”] Thus far *Suidas*. The *Sixth Hour*,
 you see, is very plain ; but then all within the
Brackets our *Anti-Phlegonist* has thought proper
 to *leave out* in his Quotation : And yet had it been
ἐνάντιος instead of *ἐκπύου*, as *Michael Syncellus* reads
 it, and from whence *Suidas* took it, it can do
 our *Anti-Phlegonist* no manner of Service, be-
 cause he won’t allow the *Ninth Hour* here to
 mean our *Three o’ Clock* in the Afternoon ;
 whereas nothing is plainer. However, let us
 hear how he argues, (*Page 62.*) after he has
 quoted *Suidas* for his *Ninth Hour*. “ Had the
 “ *Arcopagite*, says he, observ’d the *Athenian* Rules
 “ of computing their Time, he must have rec-
 “ kon’d his *Hours* from *Sun-set* : For the
 “ *Athenians* began their Day at the Setting of
 “ the Sun, and reckon’d from *Sun-set* to *Sun-*
 “ *set.*” And does not *Suidas* here inform us,
 that the *Arcopagite* did observe the *Athenian*
 Rules of computing their Time ? And when
 this Passage in *Suidas* lay so plain before our
Anti-Phlegonist’s Eyes, was he not oblig’d to
 acquit himself like an *Honest Man*, in acquaint-
 ing his *Reader* with it ; especially when, at
 his setting out, he makes so solemn a Declara-
 tion

tion, *That he is doing real Service to the Cause of Christ* ? Observe him likewise, in the other Remark that follows, upon his *Ninth Hour*, from *Suidas* : “ The *Areopagite*, says he, reckoning his Days as the *Egyptians*, (where the *Scene* is laid,) and the *Romans* did their Civil Day, and we do ours, from Midnight to Midnight ; ’tis very remarkable, that he says, He saw the Moon diametrically under the Sun at *Nine o’-Clock*. ” This looks plausible enough to an ordinary *English Reader* ; and, I don’t doubt, passes current amongst our young *Free-thinking Sparks* : But I’ll venture to affirm, that our *Anti Phlegonist* has here likewise impos’d upon his Reader in a very gross Manner : For when the *Areopagite*, after his Conversion by St. *Paul*, (see *Acts xvii. 34.*) wrote this *Apologetique Letter* to *Polycarp* the venerable Bishop of *Smyrna*, he was then Bishop of *Athens* himself ; and therefore the *Scene* is to be laid *there*, where he writes it, and not in *Egypt*, where he studied, when a Heathen, and before his Conversion. And were it granted, that some other Person, and not *Dionysius* himself, wrote this Letter, yet it would have been highly improper for the Author to have suppos’d *Dionysius* living at *Athens*, and not to have observ’d the *Athenian Rules* of computing their *Time*. And indeed, how could the Bishop, he wrote to, possibly understand it otherwise, especially when the *Ninth Hour* (he knew) was so *contradictory* to the Account given by the *Evangelists* ? So that

that, you see, the *Sixth Hour* mention'd by *Suidas*, and the *Athenian Rule* of computing *Time*, mention'd by our *Anti-Pblegonist*, agree both very well together, though he design'd it quite otherwise. As to his talking of the *Roman* or *Civil Day*, notwithstanding his Quotation from *Censorinus*, (in which I shall not now spend *Time* to undeceive him,) let him consult *Grotius* on *Mat. xxvii. 45.* and he will find that the *Lawyers* began their Pleadings at *Rome* much about the same *Time* as ours do in *Westminster-Hall*; and yet they call'd it the *Third Hour*, as we call it the *Ninth*. *Exercet Raucos Tertia Causidicos.* So *Ignatius (ad Smyrnenfes)* *Christ* receiv'd his Sentence from *Pilate* about the *Third Hour*.

B. Sir, you surprize me very much: Give me Leave to imagine, that *Suidas* has, somewhere or other, mention'd the *Ninth Hour*, though not in the Passage that you have cited: If so, our *Anti-Pblegonist* has then, in some measure saved his Credit; and since he would not; 'tis your Business now, I hope, to make *Suidas* consistent with himself.

A. I will do all the *Justice* in this Matter that our *Anti-Pblegonist*, or his ablest Friends, can require of me. *Suidas* names the *Ninth Hour* in the very second Page after he has mention'd the *Sixth*; so that, you'll say, he's seemingly, at least, inconsistent with himself. But what then? *Suidas's* Annotator corrects the Text, as to the *Ninth Hour*; and so makes him

him *consistent*; first, in translating it the *Sixth Hour*, and then giving his *Reason* for * it, at the bottom of the Margin. But does our *honest Anti-Phlegonist* tell his Reader one Tittle of this? or does he offer to shew, our Annotator is mistaken? I grant, it was by no means proper for him so to do. But when he saw *Suidas's* Annotator had made a Correction, and gave such a Reason for it, (no less than *Scripture Authority*,) one would have thought, it might have prevail'd with our *Anti-Phlegonist* to have been more modest in *imposing* upon his Reader, without any Reason assign'd: But, if he is not convinc'd, he may yet satisfy himself, that it is *so*, by casting an Eye upon the Greek *Scholia* of *Maximus*, and upon *Pachymere's* Paraphrase on this Passage of *Dionysius*: For it appears undeniably plain from both these Writers, that they knew nothing of any such *Reading* in *Dionysius*, as the Eclipse BEGINNING at the NINTH Hour. Both the *Scholiast* and the *Commentator* talk of this Passage in such a Manner, that there is no room left to doubt, but that the Copies lying before 'em did read agreeably to the Account given by the *Evangelists*. Nevertheless, I must think (and I believe the World will think so too)

* Sic etiam legitur (ἐν ἡμέρῃς ἑξα) apud ipsum *Dionysium*, Tom. II. Oper. ejus, p. 91. sed minus recte. Scribendum enim potius est ἀπὸ τῆς ἑκτῆς ὥρας; propter auctoritatem Evangelistarum, qui, tempore passionis Dominicæ, ab Hora Sexta usque ad nonam Orbi Tenebras offusas fuisse referunt [At, inquit Anti-Phlegonista, haud moror Auctoritatem Evangelistarum; scribendum potius ἐν ἡμέρῃς; aliàs enim claudicat Argumentum.]

too) that he must have cast an *Eye* upon these *two Writers*; and this makes our *Anti-Phlegonist's* Crime the greater.

B. *Who so blind, as those that won't see?* is an old Saying. I think, Sir, and very applicable in the present Case. I perceive, the more we enquire into this Matter, the more *flagrant* is the *INSINCERITY* of this unhappy Gentleman. But since *this*, that you mention *last* concerning *Maximus* and *Pachymere*, is what we call a *Clincher*, I desire you will make this Matter as plain as possible, by giving me the Original Words from each Author, and your own Translation besides. Mr. *W.* mentions *Maximus* in his List, 'tis true; but his Quotation from him (p. 19.) does not give me any Satisfaction in the particular Point now before us. *Pachymere*, in the List, is express.

A. Maximus was born, says Dr. *Cave*, A. D. 580: His *Copy* therefore carries the greater weight with it, for its *Antiquity*. He had likewise the Opportunity of perusing the best *Copies*, because he was honour'd by the Emperor *Heraclius* with very considerable Employments at Court; was afterwards a great Stickler against the *Monothelites*. Now *Maximus*, upon the Account given by *Dionysius* of this wonderful Eclipse, says thus: "Hence, (*i. e.* from this Account of the Matter given by *Dionysius*) mind how the *Doubt* is solv'd that occurs in St. *Luke* * the Evangelist. *Dionysius* is the only

* Could *Maximus* say this, and see the *Ninth Hour* in the Copy of *Dionysius's* Epistle?

“ only Man that has given us the Explication
 “ of this Prodigy : For, whereas St. *Luke* says,
 “ From the *Sixth* Hour there was Darknefs at
 “ the Passion of our Lord, the Sun being *eclip-*
 “ *sed* ; it was controverted * by all, how he
 “ could call this an *Eclipse*, the Moon being
 “ *Fourteen Days* old, when there is no Con-
 “ junction of Sun and Moon. And almost all
 “ Expositors, who liv’d long since those Times
 “ (*when the Eclipse happen’d*) were of Opinion,
 “ that the Sun contracted or refus’d its Rays,
 “ for *three † Hours*, until the *Ninth* ||. But
 “ *here* indeed we are told, after what a *strange*
 S “ man-

* There was no Controversy about St. *Luke*’s Hour, or when the Eclipse began, but about the *Manner* of it. ’Tis *that* our *Anti-Phlegonist* should have cavill’d at, since he was minded to invalidate the Testimony.

† None of the *Ancient* Commentators, it seems, (that *Maximus* here refers to) knew any Thing of this *Ninth Hour*, (that our *Anti-Phlegonist* makes such Sport with,) whether *Romans*, *Athenians*, or *Egyptians*.

|| I would here observe, that *Maximus*, as well as the Epistle of *Dionysius*, reads it εν ἑνῇ, (with a single ν). ’Tis certain both *Hesiod* and *Homer* read it so likewise : And then how easy was it for Transcribers to mistake in their Copies, there being such a likeness between an ν and a κ, especially when the additional Stroke in the κ should happen to be lost or obscur’d in the Copy ? But there is no need of such a Conjecture here ; for the Text stands right without it in *Dionysius*’s Epistle ; αὐθις τε ἀπὸ τῆς ἐνῆς ὥρας ἄχρι τῆς ἑσπέρας εἰς τὸ τῷ ἡλίῳ διαμείρον ὑπερφυῶς ἀνικαλάσασαν. When one Christian Bishop was writing to another, it was needless to mention the *Sixth Hour*, (being well enough known from the Evangelists) when the Eclipse began : Nor is the *Sixth Hour* accordingly mention’d in all the Epistle ; but ’tis plainly enough understood. I must also frankly own, that, in my Opinion, *Æmilius Portus*, and after him *Lud. Kuster*, were both mistaken in translating this Passage *ab Hora sexta usq; ad Vesperam* ; and that the *Note* of the latter

is

“ manner the Sun was eclips’d : For he says,
 “ that the Moon, at the *fourteenth* Day, (when
 “ it was no Time for the Conjunction,) came up
 “ (from the East) with the Sun at the *Sixth*
 “ Hour, and coinciding, ran under it, &c.”

[Σημείωσαι ἐντεῦθεν τὴν λύσιν τῆ παρὰ τῷ Ευαγγελιστῇ
 λεκτῇ ἀπωρήματος. Οὐδεὶς ὅ τὸ ζένον τῆ τρόπε καὶ τῆ
 θαύματος διηγῆσαι, εἰ μὴ μόνον ἔσται. τῆ γὰρ θείῃ Λεκτῇ
 ἐπὶ πόντῳ, ἀπὸ 5. ὥρας σκέτῃ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ τῆ κυρίῃ γε-
 νέσθαι, τῆ ἡλίου ἐκλείποντῳ, παρὰ πᾶσιν ἀμφεβάλλετο πῶς
 ἐκλείψιν ἐκαλεσε ταύτην, τῆς σελήνης τεσσαρεσκαίδεκα και-
 ῆς, ἐ μὴν συνόδῃ ἐσθῆς ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης. Οἱ γὰρ ἐξηγηταὶ
 σχεδὸν πάντες μεγαγενέστεροι πολλῶ τῶν χρόνων τέτων
 ὄντες, ὑπέλαβον ὅ ἡλίον αὐτὸν ἀποβαλεῖν τὰς ἀκτῖνας τὰς
 τρεῖς ὥρας, ἕως τῆς ἐνάτης. Ἐνταῦθα μέντοι καὶ ὁ ζένον τρέ-
 πῃ εἰρησαι τῆς ἐκλείψεως. φησὶν ἔν, ὅτι ἀπ’ ἀνατολῶν
 τεσσαρεσκαίδεκα καιῆς ἔσα (ἐ γὰρ ἦν συνόδῃ καιρὸς) ἐφθά-
 σεν ὥραν 5. τὸν ἡλίον, καὶ ἐμπισῆσα εἰς αὐτὸν ὑπέδραμεν, &c]

As to the other Commentator, *Pachymere*, he
 speaks plain enough, you know, in Mr. *W*’s Col-
 lection ; and less than one *fourth* Part of his
 Quotation (p. 19.) is sufficient for our present
 Purpose. *The Wonder was*, (says *Pachymere*)
that the Eclipse lasted from the Sixth Hour to the
Ninth ; and from the Ninth Hour till the Even-
ing, the Moon was diametrically opposite to the
Sun. Here you have the Case clearly stated in
 a nar-

is there improper : For the *Fact* relating to the Space of Time be-
 tween the *Sixth* and *Ninth* Hour, is told just before, viz. the *Moon’s*
coinciding with the Sun for three Hours till the ninth, (says the
Scholiast.) though the *Sixth* Hour be not mention’d ; nor was it
 necessary ; as I have said already.

a narrow Compass; and the Words of *Dionysius*, as well as *Suidas's* Extracts, set in their proper Light. [Καὶ τὸ θαυμάσιον ὅτι καὶ ἡ ἐκλειψὶς ἐγένετο ἀπὸ ὥρας 5. ἕως ὥρας ἐνάτης. Καὶ ἀπ' ἐνάτης ὥρας ἕως ἑσπέρας πάλιν κατὰ διάμετρον τῷ Ἡλίῳ ἢ Σελήνῃ ἐγένετο. Pachym. Paráph. in Ep. Dionys. ad Polyc.] Now, after all this, who can forbear reflecting upon such gross *Insincerity*? I wonder to hear Mr. *W.* talking of his own *Honour*, in taxing our *Anti-Pblegonist* with blundering in this Particular; when, you see, 'tis evidently a *premeditated Collusion*: *That Honour*, methinks, had been much better secur'd, if he had spoke out plainly, what he himself knew to be *true*.

B. Sir, you may spare your *Reflections* as to our *Anti-Pblegonist*; for, I dare say, when the judicious Part of Mankind comes to know the Truth of this Matter, they will make *them* fast enough. You have said so much of this Epistle of *Dionysius* the *Areopagite*; of its great *Antiquity*; and the Esteem the learned World has shewn for it, so many Ages past; that you have rais'd in me a Curiosity of knowing the Contents of it. If it be only concerning a Matter of *Fact*, viz. *the Moon's interposing, and then retiring in a wonderful Manner*; are we to call it *spurious* on this Account? don't we meet with *Facts* of the like nature in the Old Testament? Why may not *this* wonderful Proceeding of the Creator be here suppos'd, when we read of so many more *Wonders* at the same Time attending our Saviour's Crucifixion? And how comes it that

such an *Explication* of the *Wonder* shou'd not have been question'd by *Maximus* and other learned Men, in those early Days of Christianity? 'Tis plain they knew better, and highly approv'd of the *Explication*. The *Wonders* in the Old Testament led 'em more easily to the Acknowledgment of *this*, at a Time when there was to be a *Complication of Miracles*, as our *Anti-Pblegonist*, tho' *scoffingly* *, expresses himself upon this Occasion. Sir, I can't but renew my Request; for knowing the Contents of this Epistle, at least, so much as relates to this *wonderful Darkness* at our Saviour's Passion, I suppose the Infidel *Apollophanes* took a great deal of Liberty, in *Smyrna*, in aspersing *Dionysius* for his Credulity, after having heard *Paul* preaching *Jesus* and the *Resurrection*; which occasioned this Letter (as I take it) being written to the Bishop of that Place by *Dionysius* in his own Justification: But I want to know, if you please, first of all, whether there be the like Marks of *Spuriousness* to be found in *this* Epistle, as there are said to be in several other Pieces ascribed to *Dionysius* the *Areopagite*.

A. There is not any *such Mark*, I do assure you, unless the miraculous Motion of the *Moon* must be deemed as *such*. But why the *Moon* should not have its Share amongst the other *Wonderful Things* done at our Saviour's Passion, is what our *Anti-Pblegonist* (I dare say) can assign no Reason for; and therefore,

fore, methinks, he was too hasty in calling it a *Romance*; whatever Thanks he may have for it, from our *Deists* and *Free-Thinkers*. When the supreme Governor of the Universe was putting Nature out of its Course, is it not easy, nay, more probable to suppose, that the *Moon* should shew a *Disorder* likewise, than that it should continue a *regular* Motion for those *three Hours* of Darknes; and that it should some Way contribute to that *Darkness*, tho' it was not *in itself* naturally sufficient to make the Darknes *universal*, that Deficiency being easily supplied by the same Almighty Power? The Words in *Africanus* seem, to me, to countenance this *Explication* of the Eclipse, when he says, ὡς τι κατὰ τὴν ὕψιν; which Mr. *W.* translates, *it being just like it* [a solar Eclipse] *in Appearance*. Now, how could this be? How could a preternatural Eclipse be *just like* a natural one *in Appearance*; if *Origen*, or rather his *Wisemen*, say truly, *that the Clouds were so thick, that the Rays of the Sun it self were obstructed by them?* *Origen*, indeed, could not talk in this Manner; for in his Dispute with *Celsus*, he quotes *Pblegon*; and *Pblegon* says expressly, *that the Stars appeared in the Heavens*; so that it must have been the Opinion of *Origen's* FREE-THINKERS, and not his own. And yet, how does our *Anti-Pblegonist*, upon this Occasion, with the most notorious *Insincerity*, charge *this* upon *Origen*, when he knew the Case to be otherwise?

“ *Pblegon* says, *That the Stars appeared in the*
“ *Heavens*

“ *Heavens* (so argues our *Anti-Phlegonist*, Page
 “ 30.) during his Eclipse; whereas, *Origen*
 “ *says* the Clouds were so thick, that the Rays
 “ of the Sun itself were obstructed by them.”

B. Sir, I am almost sick with this Writer's
Insincerity. You need not remark any Thing
 farther upon it. But, as to your Quotation
 from *Africanus*; why may not the *Words* be
 taken to signify no more, than that it was the
Darkness only, and nothing else, that made it
just like a natural Eclipse, in Appearance?

A. The *Darkness only* cannot properly (I
 think) justify the Expression in *Africanus*; and if
 there was nothing more required, in the present
 Case, to make the *Resemblance*, our *dark Nights*
 may be said to have the *Appearance* of an Eclipse,
 when, by the orbicular Form of the Earth,
 we are deprived of the Sun's Light. The
 Words then κατὰ τὴν ὥσιν, seem to imply thus
 much, That, there being a serene clear Sky, and
 the Stars appearing when this *Darkness* hap-
 pened, the Eclipse was (*to look at it*) just like
 a *natural* one, when the Moon is in Conjunction
 with the Sun, *i. e.* there was an *opaque* Body
 that did interpose in a wonderful Manner, for
 the Space of *three Hours*: It was just like a
 natural Eclipse, as to the *Manner* of the Sun's
Obscurity, in *that* it was ἐν τι κατὰ τὴν ὥσιν,
 though in the *Duration* there was no *Likeness*
 at all. A learned *Jesuit* * observes upon *Mat.*
 xxvii. 45. whereas the *Moon* did thus miracu-
 lously coincide with the Sun, and yet the Sun

* Corn. à Lapide,

would

would not thereby be *totally* eclipsed, as the Case was at the *Passion*; that this is best accounted for in those Expressions used by St. *Jerom*, *Cyprian*, and *Chrysostom*. St. *Jerom* says, *that the Sun* (in his Opinion) *drew back its Rays*; and the other *two* speak much after the same Manner †. But observe, I am here only indulging a Conjecture: However, had *Africanus* been in *Egypt* at the Time and Place that the *Areopagite* was, and it had been recorded that he made the like Observations, I cannot see, why such a wonderful Account given, should be interpreted as a Mark of *Spuriousness*: And therefore, I am, for my own Part, inclined to believe, that some *genuine* Pieces of the true *Dionysius*, might for a long Time lie buried in Oblivion; that they were afterwards blended with other Pieces, manifestly *suppositious*; and that the *Collector* being fond (as well he might) of having so great a *Name* for ushering them into the World, unadvisedly did it, without any Discrimination made in the Affair. That there was such a Person as *Apollophanes*, Contemporary with the *Areopagite*, no body will deny: *Suidas* tells us, that the *Areopagite* (in *Tiberius's* Reign) went into *Egypt*, to converse with the Wisemen of that Country; that *Apollophanes* the Sophist went with him; and that this *Apollophanes* instructed one *Polemo*; which *Polemo* was afterwards *Aristides's* Master. And

Pachymere

† Id autem factum est hac ratione, quod Sol, ea parte qua Luna non tegebatur, Deo agente, subtraxerit radios suos a Terra Christiana. Corn. à Lap.

Pachymere says, moreover, that it was usual *then* (or at that Time) among the *Greeks* to travel from every Place into *Egypt*, for the sake of Learning. It is not then to be questioned, but that our *Areopagite* and *Apollophanes* were together in *Egypt*, when this wonderful Eclipse happened. The *Areopagite* being afterwards converted, and *Apollophanes* continuing hardened in his Infidelity at *Smyrna*; what is more natural to suppose, than that the *Sophist* (like a *T——n——list* now a Days) might be *very free* in his Reflections upon the *Areopagite's* Conduct; and this *Freedom* might occasion the *Apologetique* Epistle, we are speaking of? It must then be owned, as highly probable, that *such* an Epistle was writ; and if so, why may not *that* Epistle which we now have be *genuine*; though we should suppose neither *Eusebius*, St. *Jerom*, nor *Gennadius* KNEW any Thing of it, as the famous *Dallee* earnestly contends *? *Dallee*, indeed, is known to have laboured the Point more than any other, in detecting the *counterfeit Areopagite*. His Arguments drawn from the *Cœlestial Hierarchy*, &c. are solid and good. *Du-Pin* himself has used them; and who does not

* Uterque (Hieronymus & Gennadius) *Dionysiana* æque ac Eusebius tacuit. Quid ergo? *Arianismè* vel Hieronymus vel Gennadius faverunt? Stultum est vel hoc quæere. Atqui si *Dionysiana* ne ii quidem memorant, quos ab *Arianismo* plane penitusque alienos fuisse constat, profectò cur *Dionysiana* Eusebius tacuerit, nullum *Arianismi* fluciem causa fuit, sed aliquid aliud quod utrorumque, *Arianismo* scilicet vel faventium, vel adversantium, commune fuit. Id verò aliud esse non potest, nisi hoc unum; quod nimirum *Dionysiana*, & Eusebius Arianorum fautor, & Hieronymus, Gennadiusque ab iis alieni, utrique juxta, pariterque nescierunt. Jo. *Dallaus* de Scriptis Pseud. *Dionys.* Cap. 6. p. 28. De *Eusebii* *Arianismo*, vide Ep. Apologet. V. Cl. Gul. *Cave*,

not agree to them? I will not lay much Stress
 neither, upon what some have argued about
 the *Arians* having suppressed these Works of
Dionysius; and, I think, as *Pere Halloix* does,
 † that *Eusebius* is wrongfully charged in that
 Particular: But then, I must think that the
Arians in general, when they had it in their
Power, never wanted the *Will* to suppress any
 Thing that made against them. So *bad a Cause*,
 as theirs is, always makes it necessary: And I
 shall have Occasion to shew you, in a very lit-
 tle Time, that our modern *Arians*, and *Semi-*
Arians, are so bent upon this dirty Work, that
 they will venture to give their *English* Reader
partial Representations, and *half Sentences* from
 the ancient *Fathers*, and other Writers too;
 though they know, at the same Time, that it is
 not in their *Power* to conceal this for any
long Term. However the Case then be, as to
 suppressing or concealing these Works ascribed
 to *Dionysius* in general, we see, that *Maximus*
 (who lived in the *sixth* and *seventh* Centuries)
 had not the worse Opinion of *this Epistle* for
 the *Miracle* it mentioned; and believed it to
 have lain concealed by one Means or other.
 “ Almost all Expositors, says he, who lived
 “ long since those Times (*when the Eclipse hap-*
 “ *pened*) were of Opinion, that the Sun con-
 “ tracted or refused || its Rays for *three* Hours,
 “ until the *ninth*: ” But here (*by the Arcopa-*
 T gite,

† *Halloix*. de operibus *Dion.* q. 72. p. 35.

|| Ἀποβαλεῖν τὰς ἀκτίνας.

“ gite, *an Eye-Witness*) we are told (says he) after what *a strange Manner* the Sun was eclipsed. The long Time of this Epistle’s disappearing in the World, (if that was really the Case,) is no more an Objection to the *Genuineness* of it, than it is to the *Commentaries* of *Cassiodorus*, which, having lain dormant near twelve hundred Years, were lately happily rescued from Darknefs, as I told you this Morning ; and which I am to give you an Account of at our next Meeting. Thus I have very briefly answered your Query about the *Spuriousness* of this particular Epistle. I see no *Marks* of it myself ; but shall not determine any Thing farther about it. It is an Affair that our *Anti-Phlegonist* has not entered into himself, and therefore I am not concerned to pursue it any farther ; nor should I have thought it necessary to have said so much, had he not at Random given *it* the modest Appellation of a *Romance*. My Business was (and, I hope, I have done it to your Satisfaction) to shew, that this Epistle does not make the Eclipse *to begin at the ninth Hour, or at nine o’Clock in the Morning*, as our *Anti-Phlegonist* [p. 62.] expressly charges ; and I have shewn, at the same Time, whilst I have vindicated the Writer of this Epistle from any such *Absurdity*, that our *Anti-Phlegonist* has been most notoriously *insincere* in the *Charge* that he has made himself : I will now proceed in acquitting myself as to the other Particular you requested of me, which was, to give you in
English

English, some of the most material Passages in this *Greek Epistle*. The *Areopagite* (then Bishop of *Athens*) is vindicating himself, as you observed, against the Aspersions of *Apollophanes*; and he does it in Manner following: “ You tell me, (says he “ to *Polycarp*, Bishop of *Smyrna*,) that *Apollo-* “ *phanes*, the Sophist, reproaches me, and calls “ me a *Parricide*, as if I had offered Violence “ to their *Deities*, or had not sincerely and “ honestly argued from the *Greek* or *Gentile* “ Authors, in Opposition to themselves: And “ yet we might more truly, and with greater “ Justice, retort *this* upon himself; as, that “ the *Greeks* or *Gentiles* do not justly, or *re-* “ *ligiously* argue this Way in divine Matters; “ they endeavouring to abolish the *Divine* “ Worship, by the Help of that *Wisdom*, which “ is the *Wisdom* of God himself. Nor do I, “ in this Case, mean what the Multitude say “ about it, who are so grossly attach’d to the “ Works of their Poets, *serving the Creature* “ *more than the Creator*: But *Apollophanes* him- “ self has not behaved *honestly* or *sincerely* “ in this way of arguing about divine Matters: “ For *that* very *Knowledge* of Things, which “ he rightly calls *Philosophy*, and which St. “ *Paul* calls the *Wisdom* of God, ought to lead “ every *true Philosopher* to the Author or “ Cause of such Things, and of the *Knowledge* “ of the Things themselves. And, that I may “ keep close to the Point, in the Confutation “ of him or others, *Apollophanes*, being a

“ Wise Man, ought to have considered, that
 “ there can be no Change or Variation in the
 “ Order and Motion of the heavenly Bodies,
 “ without the Direction of him who is the
 “ Creator and Upholder of them; who, ac-
 “ cording to the Scripture, *performeth and*
 “ *transformeth all Things, as it seemeth best to*
 “ *him*. Now, since from hence we know *him*,
 “ as being verily the God of the Universe,
 “ how comes it, that he (*Apollophanes*) does
 “ not worship *him* as such, on Account of his
 “ Almighty and Ineffable Power? — Tell
 “ him from me, *thus*; What have you to say
 “ [*Apollophanes*] to that *Eclipse*, that happen’d
 “ at our Saviour’s Crucifixion? For we were
 “ *then* both present, and standing together, at
 “ or near *Heliopolis*, when we saw the Moon
 “ *coinciding* with the Sun in a *wonderful Man-*
 “ *ner*; (for it was not the Time for a *Con-*
 “ *junction*;) and from the *ninth* Hour till the
 “ Evening, we saw it again as wonderfully
 “ standing diametrically * *opposite* to the Sun.
 “ Put him in Mind also of one Thing more:
 “ For he knows, that we saw the Beginning
 “ of the *Moon’s* Entrance under the *Sun* from
 “ the *East*, and its Progress quite to the Verge
 “ of the Sun’s *Disc*, and then returning; and
 “ farther,

* ’Εἰς τὸ τῇ ἡλίου διάμετρον ἀντικαταστάσαν. Our *Anti-Phle-*
gonist is pleased to translate it, *from the ninth Hour quite to the*
Evening, standing diametrically UNDER the Sun. Whether this
 was done with Sincerity, let Mr. *W.* judge. Soon after, our
Anti-Phlegonist charges *Dionysius* with saying, that the Eclipse
 BEGAN at the *ninth* Hour. p. 59, 62.

“ farther, we saw, that the *Conjunction* or Dark-
 “ nefs and the Sun’s shining again, was not on
 “ the *same Side (as usual)* but directly the
 “ contrary. These are the Things that hap-
 “ pened preternaturally at that Time ; possible
 “ with Christ *only*, the Cause of all Things,
 “ who doth Things great and wonderful, that
 “ are not to be numbered.” Thus far the Bi-
 shop of *Athens* to the Bishop of *Smyrna*.

B. Sir, I thank you. Whatever Marks of
Spuriousness there may be in other Pieces as-
 cribed to the *Areopagite*, I see no Reason why
 our *Anti-Phlegonist* should imagine, that there
 are *any* such in this *Epistle*, at least, in what you
 have cited: And for the *rest* of it, I believe you
 are faithful, and would have told me, if you had
 judg’d it otherwise. Considering the great *Anti-*
quity then of this *Epistle*, (as is acknowledged
 on all Hands,) I must highly reverence it, who-
 ever was the Author. I observe, our *Anti-*
Phlegonist takes no Notice of the last Sentence,
 which you cite from this *Epistle*. This oc-
 casions some Speculation; and, perhaps, was
 the Reason, why he quoted *Suidas*, rather than
 the *Epistle* itself. I forbear making any far-
 ther Enquiry about that Matter, but chuse ra-
 ther to remind you of the *Chinese* Affair: name-
 ly, whether there be any sort of *Proof* amongst
 those People, that they had formerly a Know-
 ledge of a *crucified* Saviour? and whether, in
 particular, this preternatural Eclipse is, or has
 been taken Notice of in their *Annals*? I should
 be

be pleased to see this Matter farther enquired into ; and the more so, because, as I have told you already, both Mr. *W.* and our *Anti-Phlegonist* seem to make a *Jest* of it ; and the latter (I find) would have the *like Credit* given to the Accounts from *thence*, as to the Accounts given by *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*, upon the same Subject.

A. You must remember, when I had the Favour of your Company, some Time ago, in this Room, I told you, * that it was a Subject of some Importance ; and that (in my Opinion) it might be much for the Honour of the Christian Religion, to have *it* farther enquired into. Your Sentiments were then the same, and we agreed to drop it for the present. I have now something more to offer to your Consideration ; and what, I hope, may give you some Satisfaction in these *two* very Particulars, that you now desire to be satisfied in. The first Thing I have to offer, is an *Account* lately † transmitted to the *Royal Society*, or an *Explanation of the new chronological Table of the CHINESE HISTORY, translated into Latin from the ORIGINAL CHINESE* ; and it will thence appear, from their own ancient *Language* itself, that they had a Knowledge of a *crucified Saviour*. The other Thing that I shall offer, are
two

* Part I. p. 43, 44, 45.

† See *Philosophical Transactions* for the Months of *September* and *October*, 1730. p. 397, &c. one of the original CHINESE Tables, printed at *Canton*, has been presented to the Society, by *Sir Thomas Dereham*, and is now repositied in their Library.

two *Dissertations*, written by two learned *Chinese Fathers*, *pro* and *con*, upon this very Subject, *viz.* whether the *preternatural Eclipse*, that happened at Christ's Passion, ever was, or is entered in the *Chinese Annals*. But, before I treat of these Things any farther, I desire you would recollect what has past between us this Day, in *general*, relating to such *extensive Darknes*s. I think, by *comparing* the Expressions used by the *Ancients*, on that Account, (as we did about Half an * Hour ago) it may reasonably be concluded, that this *Darknes*s was *universal*; and I desire you will now carry in your Mind, the particular Expression of St. *Chrysostom*, † *viz.* “ That this Darknes was
 “ over all the habitable Earth; that it came
 “ at Noon, that all the Inhabitants of the Earth
 “ might learn by it : For it was *Day-Time*
 “ every where in the habitable Earth.” Our *Anti-Pblegonist's* Observation here is this ;
 “ *Pekin* || (says he) lies in such a Degree of
 “ Latitude, that in the very Beginning of
 “ *April*, the Sun sets at near, if not full *seven*
 “ o'Clock; and consequently they [*the Chinese*]
 “ might have seen it [*the Eclipse*] during its
 “ whole Progress.” Mr. *W.* expresses himself
 ** thus ; “ Nor could a *Darknes*s, visible at
 “ the Meridian of *Jerusalem*, from Noon to
 “ three o'Clock in the Afternoon, be seen long
 “ at

* Page

† In *Mat.* xxvii. 45;

|| Page 87.

** Page 28.

“ at the Meridian of *China*; because the *Sun*
 “ was there set, when about *three quarters of*
 “ *an Hour* of that three Hours Darknes was
 “ over; and all the rest of the Time it was
 “ under their Horizon.” These Gentlemen both
 say enough for our present Purpose; only re-
 member what St. *Chrysostom* says, *It was Day-*
time every where in the Habitable Earth. As to
 Mr. *W*’s Objection, about the *Bible*’s not taking
 in *China*, when ’tis said the *whole Earth*, I be-
 lieve you think it too weak, especially after
 what has been observ’d already *, to need any
 Answer at all.

B. I do not well see how Mr. *W*. is very con-
 sistent with himself, in talking about this *Chinese*
 Affair. He calls them *very weak People*, who
 have interested themselves in Defence of this
 Story from *China*; and yet, but two or three
 Pages farther †, he bids his Reader in other
 Matters, *take the Judgment of the very learned*
Huetius. Now *Huetius*, you know, with all his
 Judgment hearken’d very much to the *China Sto-*
ry, as Mr. *W*. calls it. You read to me out of
 him this Morning ‡, I remember, Words to this
 Effect: “ Nothing more deserves a nice and ac-
 “ curate Observation, as to this Affair, than
 “ what is related in the *Chinese* History lately
 “ written by *Hadrian Gresson*, viz. It there
 “ stands recorded among the *Chinese*, at that ve-
 “ ry Time that corresponds with the XXXIId
 Year

* Page .

† Page 31.

‡ Page .

“ Year of the Christian *Æra*, about the Month of
 “ *April*, that there happen’d a *Solar Eclipse*,
 “ *contrary to the Laws of Nature* and the regu-
 “ lar Motions of the Planets ; at which strange
 “ Occurrence their Emperor *QUAM-VUTI* was
 “ very much disturb’d”. I can’t but observe
 the short Method *Mr. W* takes for confuting this
Chinese Account: ’Tis short indeed, and a very
 odd one too. “ It was about the *New Moon*, and
 “ so could not be this Eclipse, which was at the
 “ *Full*; and as it came on somewhat sooner than
 “ the Calculation, it was therefore, no doubt,
 “ a natural Eclipse of the Sun, whose Calcula-
 “ tion had probably been carelessly made ; and
 “ yet the Astronomers were loth to confess it,
 “ lest they should have been capitally punish’d”.
 I believe you never met with so strong an *Ipse-*
dixit before in so few Words ; nothing being
 brought to support it ; no *Historian* of any
 sort quoted ; no *Chinese Tables* referr’d to ; nor
 any Adjustment of *Time* made by himself ; and
 yet all these Things were but necessary to in-
 duce his Reader to hearken to him. This makes
 me the more desirous to hear the *Authorities*
 you are going to produce concerning these
 Things : And I hope you will not defer giv-
 ing me the Pleasure any longer.

A. I am under some Concern, that I cannot
now talk to you upon this Affair out of *Pere*
Greslon, (mention’d by *Huetius*,) not having yet
 been able to obtain a Sight of that History ; but
 I make no question, against our next meeting, I

shall be in a Condition to do it; and then, I hope to do Justice to *Dom. de Colonia*, who, I suspect, is not well used by our *Anti-Phlegonist*. From the *Authorities* then, I have already propos'd to lay before you, take as follows; The two *Accounts* of the *new Chronological Table*, &c. (one of them transmitted by *Pere Guillemeau*, a *Barnabite* at *Paris*, to Sir *Hans Sloane* Bart. Pr. R. S.) inform us, that the *Memoirs* on *China* *, which have made some Noise in the World, are without Foundation of Truth, in regard to the true *Epoque* of the *Chinese* History; that the *Chronology*, which the Author of these *Memoirs* declares for, is not built on any Observation of *Eclipses*; that the *Eclipses* mark'd in that Author's Chronology, and the other Astronomical Characters by which he would fain establish it, are contradicted by the *Tables* and *Calculations* of the most learned Astronomers of these later Times; that there is nothing, that is certainly of *Confucius*, to serve as *Proof* for a Chronology, that is manifestly *imaginary*; that several Treatises ascrib'd to *Confucius*, as they appear'd in the World *many Ages* after the Death of *that* Philosopher, are to be suspected as Apocryphal; that such Treatises are generally rejected by the most able of the *Chinese*; being full of Circumstances which those learned Men deny, or at least call in doubt. We are, after this, more particularly inform'd of

* *Pere Le Comte* Nouveaux Memoires sur l'Etat present de la *Chine*.

of the *true Epoque* of the *Chinese* History, fix'd by some of their *own* Writers, at a small Number of Centuries before *Jesus Christ*. Among these is the Compiler of a *New Chronological Table* of the *Chinese* History, publish'd in *Latin* by Father *Fouquet*, (Soc. Jes.) the present Bishop of *Eleutheropolis*, who has liv'd near *Twenty-three* Years in *China*, The *Chinese* Original is owing to the Learned *Nien Hi Yao*, a *Tartar*, illustrious by Birth and Merit, and Viceroy of *Canton* in the Year 1724. This Gentleman tells us, that he has taken this *Chronological System* from the most valued Historical Work in his * Country. What renders this Writer praise-worthy, is his ranging his System in a beautiful Order; which gives an extream Facility of seeing at first Sight the Series of the *Dynasties*, or Imperial Houses; the Names and Succession of the *Emperors*; the Beginning, End, and Duration of each of their *Reigns*. *Se ma quang* and *Tebu Hi*, the two gravest Historians *China* has produced, were Followers of this *System*: The first flourish'd in the Year of Christ 1061; the other about the end of the *Twelfth* Century. They have both omitted whatever is *before* the Time of *Guei lie Wang*, a Prince so call'd, who began his *Reign* 424 Years before the vulgar *Æra*, Now, by fixing this *Epoque* at *Guei lie Wang*, fabulous Times, and a thousand Errors and Absurdities current in *Europe*, are retrench'd. These

* *China* is now the Country of these *Tartars*, who were born there since the Conquest, that is, about Ninety Years since.

Errors will soon vanish of their own accord ; so that the Subject of so much laborious, but useless Lucubration and Study, will at length cease : A worthy Motive for congratulating the learned World.

B. Your Author's *Apparatus*, Sir, is curious, and I like it very well ; but you don't use to be so long, before you come to the *main Point* ; which, I do assure you, I'm waiting for with some sort of Impatience : However, please to take your own Time ; and I don't question but you have a Reason for what you are a-doing.

A. The Nature of the Subject we are upon, or the *main Point*, (as you call it,) does, in my Opinion, require such a *Preliminary* : I'll shorten it as much as I can. Please to observe farther, that in this *New Chronological Table* is placed the *Cycle of Sixty Years*, call'd KIA TSE ; so much esteem'd by the *Chinese*, that it is as the Soul, Link, and Foundation of their whole *Chronology* ; a Point, which requires Explanation. The *Chinese* are not acquainted with our *Olympiads* ; but from Time out of Mind they have used this Period of LX Years, which is of as great Service at least as the *Olympiads*, or the most celebrated Periods among the *Greeks*. As we mark the Incidents of ancient History by the Years of the *Olympiads*, so the *Chinese* mark what has happen'd in their Country by the Years of *this Revolution*. This general *Epoque*, as has been said already, is the first Year of Guei lie Wang. Every Year of the *Chinese Cycle* is
mark'd

mark'd by *two Letters*, which make up its proper *Character*, and distinguish it from the other *LIX*. Thus the *first Year* (as the *Table* shews) is call'd *Kia Tse*, and gives its Name to the whole *Cycle*. Thus the *Fifty-second Year* of the *fourth Cycle*, in which the Prince, who finish'd the great * *Wall*, began his Reign, is call'd *Y mao*. Here a Question naturally arises concerning the *Signification* of these *Characteristicks*, which distinguish the Years of the *Cycle* and Emperors; and it must be pleasing to the Reader to dive into *their* true Sense. It is to be wish'd, it were as easy to answer this Question, as 'tis natural to propose it; but it regards *Characters* so infinitely different from ours, that their Nature or Origin have never been well extricated. Yet since an Answer must be given; to lead the Reader by Degrees to the Knowledge of so new a Subject, we must remark, 1st, That it is not possible to give these *Names* any Translation: *Kia Tse* will still be *Kia Tse* in all Languages: *Y mao* will still be *Y mao*, and so the other *LVIII Names*: And this no *European*, that understands the *Chinese Tongue*, will contradict. 2^{dly}, That these *Names* are compos'd of *two sorts of Characters* † very famous among the *Chinese*, who get them by heart in their Youth, and employ them on a thousand Occasions.

These

* This great Wall justly passes for one of the *Wonders* of the World, beginning at the *Eastern Sea*, and extending to near *Thibet*, 50 French Leagues.

† These *Characters* are to be seen in the Plate annex'd to this Account in the *Philosophical Transactions*, as above cited.

These of the first sort are *ten* in number, and are call'd the *Year Letters*; these of the second, *twelve*, and are named *Hour Letters*. 3dly, That these two sorts of *Characters* are combined, by repeating the *ten Year Letters* six times, and the *twelve Hour Letters* but five Times; for six times Ten, and five Times Twelve, equally make Sixty: And from this Combination result LX *Names* for the LX *Years* that compose the *Cycle*.

B. I suppose, these *three Points* well comprehended suffice for the Use and Understanding of the *Chronological Table*. Methinks, this is a very dry sort of Learning; it does not enlighten the Understanding. These *Names*, as far as I can yet see, remain unintelligible, and the Reader's Curiosity is not satisfied.

A. True: But will it be more so, by adding what the *Chinese* take out of their *Traditions*? No one can easily believe that *these Words* are void of all *Meaning*, or that the *Letters*, whose Names they are, are Figures made at hazard, or arbitrarily imagin'd. The Inventor of these *Names* must have propos'd to himself some *End*.

B. I now begin to perceive what your Discourse is tending to: Pray, oblige me with a Sight of these *Characters*. They are indeed very odd; but, no doubt, as you say, there was an *End* propos'd when they were first invented, and had each of them some *Signification* or other.

A. It

A. It is already known in general, and is demonstrated elsewhere, that the *Characters* preserv'd by the *Chinese* (but much more *ancient* than them) are true *Hieroglyphicks*. It is likewise known, and strongly demonstrated, that the *Doctrine*, veil'd under the Appearance of these *Hieroglyphicks*, is very mysterious and sublime; and it is *unreasonable* to regard as *Nonsense*, and reject *such* as we understand not, purely because we do not understand them. “ And indeed, when we closely examine the XXII
 “ *Letters* in question, we perceive in several of
 “ them somewhat very *mysterious*, which the
 “ *Chinese* themselves present us with, *without*
 “ *understanding them*. For Example, Tse, the
 “ first of the *Hour Letters*, signifies with the
 “ *Chinese* both the *Moment of Midnight*, and a
 “ *tender Babe* just born, wrap'd up in his Baby-
 “ *Clothes*. Again, Ou, the seventh of the *Hour-*
 “ *Letters*, signifies the *Moment of Noon*, and a
 “ *Man lifted on a Cross*. This Letter signifies
 “ *Noon*, according to the primitive Meaning;
 “ which still subsists without ever having been
 “ disused: It also signifies a Man lifted on a
 “ *Cross*, as is evident to the Eye of any Person
 “ who has the first tincture of the *Characters*.
 “ Now, *where* have this People got such Ideas?
 “ They are *incomprehensible* to them at pre-
 “ sent; and yet (it is strange!) they preserve
 “ them precious, and use their utmost Endeav-
 “ ours to find out the Sense of them, but to

‘ n o



“ no purpose. That TSE signifies both *Mid-*
 “ *night* and an *Infant* just come to the World ;
 “ that Ou marks *Noon* and a *Man* lifted on a
 “ *Cross*, are *Facts* cited, as they are found in the
 “ *Chinese Vocabularies*, without Comments, Con-
 “ jectures, or any other of one’s private Thoughts;
 “ which shou’d be the more surprizing to the
 “ Reader. It will increase the Surprize, to re-
 “ flect on a *Chinese Axiom* ; the Sense whereof
 “ is, that the Heavens *opened* at the Hour of
 “ TSE ; which, according to the foregoing Ex-
 “ position, ought to be understood of the *Mo-*
 “ *ment of Midnight*. And in order to raise the
 “ Admiration a Degree higher, TSE, which sig-
 “ nifies an *Infant*, is literally and properly used
 “ to signify *Son*. Now let the Reader give At-
 “ tention to the surprizing Words of a *Chinese*
 “ Writer on this *Son*. *The first Instant* (says he)
 “ *of the Production of Things, their Principle and*
 “ *Origin came from the SON. The SON is the*
 “ *Cause by which all Things had a Beginning.*”
 I could proceed farther, if it was necessary ; but
 I hope there is enough said, from this curious
 Treatise, to make it highly probable to any rea-
 sonable Person, that the *Chinese* had formerly a
 Knowledge of a *crucify’d Saviour*.

B. Sir, I don’t doubt, but *this Account* has
 its due Weight with the *Royal Society*. The
Chinese are a People, I have ever had in
 great Veneration ; and their *Antiquity* is
 such, that (as *Pers le Comte* expresses it)

“ * ’tis

“ * ’Tis as difficult to trace their *Origin*, as ’tis
 “ *that* of the great Rivers. The Children or
 “ Grandchildren of *Noah* (as he says) seem to
 “ have spread themselves to the Western Parts
 “ of *China*”. This *Authority* then that you
 have produced from their own *Language*, join’d
 with *that* you have produced from the *Fathers*,
 and other ancient Writers, seems to put the
 Matter out of all Doubt, whether our *Lord’s*
Passion, and the wonderful *Darkness*, were
 Things known to the *Chinese*, or no: And
 therefore I am less solicitous about the *other*
 Particular, *viz*, Whether their *Annals* ever *did*,
 or do now, bear Witness to any *such Darkness*.
 However, please to let me know, whether you
 have any Thing to offer in Defence of what
 you formerly advanc’d upon that Subject; for
 I cannot help thinking, as the great *Huetius* did,
 that it *deserves* the nicest and most accurate En-
 quiry that’s possible.

A. As to this *last* Particular you mention,
 you may remember, I just hinted to you, some
 little Time ago, that there are *two* Dissertations,
 (the *one* published since the last Visit I paid
 you,) written by two learned *Chinese Fathers* †,

X

(*Peres*

* Les Chinois sont si anciens dans le Monde, qu’il en est de
 leur Origine comme de ces grand Fleuves, dont on ne peut pres-
 que découvrir la Source. — Il y a de l’apparence que les Enfants
 ou les petits Fils de Noë se répandirent dans l’Asie & percèrent en-
 fin jusques dans cette partie de la Chine qui est la plus Occidentale,
 & qu’on nomme à présent le Chensi & le Chenfi. Voyez Me-
 moires de la Chine par Pere le Comte, en Lettre a Mons. le Marq.
 de Torfi Secrétaire d’Etat. &c.

† Vid. Pere Souciet Observations Mathematiques, Astronom. &c.
 tirées des anciens Livres Chinois, Tom. II. p. 163, 164, &c.

(*Peres Bouvet* and *Gaubil*), on both Sides of the Question, *viz.* Whether, the *preternatural Eclipse*, that happened at *Christ's* Passion, ever was, or now stands entered in the *Chinese Annals*. *Pere Gaubil* opposes the History of *Hadrian Greslon*, in this Particular, and *Pere Bouvet* defends it. *P. Gaubil* observes first, from the *Chinese Text*, “ that there was an “ Eclipse of the Sun in the *seventh Year*; the “ *third Moon*, and the last Day, QUEY-HAY †. ” *Then* remarks, that this *seventh Year* is to be understood in relation to the Reign of the Emperor QUANG-VOU-TI; and affirms, that this *seventh Year* does certainly correspond with, or answer to the XXXIst Year of the *Vulgar Æra*. The 10th of May, in the XXXIst Year of *Jesus Christ*, is the only Day that could have been the *first* of the *Moon*, and at the same Time be called QUEY-HAY; and there is no other Day but *that*, when we find an *Eclipse* visible at *Loyang*, (the Emperor *Quang-vou-ti's* Palace,) distinguished by several other Circumstances that are taken || Notice of in the Text. Next to the Text, there is an *astronomical* Note, in which are quoted these Words of TSIEN-TAN-PA; Upon the Day QUEY-HAY there was an *Eclipse of the Sun*: The
heavenly

† That is, says *Gaubil*, the *sixtieth Day* of the Cycle of LX Days. Les deux Caracteres QUEY-HAY ou KOUËI-HAI sont ceux du soixantième jour du Cycle de 60 jours.

|| *Pere Gaubil* here refers his Reader to a Table of *Latitudes* and *Longitudes*; which we meet with in the first Tom. p. 251, &c.

heavenly * (or divine) *Man falls dead*. Pere Gaubil gives Instances of *two Eclipses*, the one happening 668, the other 626 Years before Jesus Christ; to both which TSIEN-TAN-PA applies his TCHEN, † or *Divination*: And in the Commentary it is remarked, *that the Eclipse of the Day QUEY-HAY denotes the Death of a heavenly (or divine) Man*. TSIEN-TAN-PA says, that an Eclipse upon the Day KIA-tse, denotes a *Revolt* among Subjects; and the eastern *Han* quote this *Tchen*, or Augury of *Tsien-tan-pa*, in their Account of an Eclipse that happened upon the Day KIA-TSE. Pere Gaubil, having considered the Text that marks this *Eclipse*, (agreeing to the 10th of May in the XXXIst Year of the *Vulgar Æra*.) proceeds to the *historical* Part; giving an Account, from the *Chinese* History, what passed at the *Emperor's Court (Loyang)* after the Observation

X 2

that

* Au jour QUEY-HAY il y a Eclipse du ☉ : Le Homme céleste tombe meurt. Pere Gaubil here remarks, that the *Death* of Kings and Princes is expressed by PENG, the Character here made use of.

† The TCHEN is explained by Pere Gaubil in the foregoing Page, thus. There is a *Court*, or *College*, to whom the Care or Business of the TCHEN is committed. The TCHEN consists in examining the Relation one Star has to another, in their Situations in the Heavens; as also in inquiring into the good or ill ascribed to the several *Constellations*, to *Days*, and to *Years* of the Cycle, to *Moons* and to *Seasons*. After such Examination and Enquiry made, they then determine what ought to be expected to betaf the *Empire*, the *Royal Family*, the *Emperor* himself, &c. Whether they are to *hope* or to *fear* from a celestial *Phenomenon*, such as an *Eclipse*. All this is grounded upon the Relation or Affinity, which they suppose there is between such *Appearances* in the Heavens, and *human* Actions; and was formerly, more than it is at this Day, the Occasion of an infinite deal of Superstition.

that was made upon it. He informs us, that the *Emperor* shut himself up for *five Days*, (*re-tira cinq jours*,) that he might think of nothing but how to behave himself for the future in the Government of his Subjects: He also published an *Edict*, the Tenour of which is exactly as follows. *The Sight * we have had of the Sun, and of the Moon, calls upon us to bethink, or to reflect seriously with ourselves: An Amendment of Life is necessary; by that Means also to prevent the Evils which Heaven threatens you with. As for myself, I can speak it with great Trouble of Mind; I tremble at the Sight, or Recollection of my own Offences: My Will is, that the Nobles at my Court do give me sincerely their Advice in Placets, or Memorials, sealed up: And I forbid having the Title of CHING given to me.* Conformably to this *Edict*, the Nobles gave in their *Memorials*, severally sealed up. One of them is still preserved in the *Chinese History*, offered to the Emperor by TCHING-HING; and is as follows. *According to the Rules of Astronomy, the solar Eclipses should not happen but upon the first Day of the Moon: Nevertheless, for some Years past, there have been several observed upon the last Day of the Moon; the Reason of which is, that the Moon has moved faster,*

* La Vûë du ☉ & de la ☾ nous avérte de penser à Nous. Il faut se corriger de ses fautes, & par-là prévenir les Maux dont le Ciel vous menace. Pour Moy, à peine puis-je parler, je tremble à la vûë de mes Fautes. Je veux que les Grands de ma Cour me donnent sincèrement leurs Avis dans des Placets cachetés, & je ne veux pas qu'on me donne le titre de Ching.

*faster, || and by that Means there has been an Anticipation, as to the Time of the Eclipse. In the Sun we behold the Sovereign; in the Moon his Subjects. The Failures in these have generally been owing to those of the Sovereign. Pere Gaubil proceeds, and informs us of a second Edict * published the 29th of May, of the same Year, the XXXIst of Jesus Christ; wherein are these Words; The YN and the YANG do not agree; which we are given † to understand by the Eclipse of the SUN, and of the MOON. Pere Gaubil here comments, that YANG amongst the Chinese signifies that which is above, more perfect, more grand; and YN all that is beneath, less perfect, less grand. Nothing worse digested or considered of, (says Gaubil,) or more confused than what the Chinese talk of concerning this YN and YANG. What the Emperor Means, is to point out the Prince and the Subjects by YN and YANG; and that the Eclipse of the Sun, caused by the Interposition of the moon, is the Notice that Heaven gives for Reformation in the Government. Pere Gaubil having thus given an Account (together with his own Comment)*

|| Selon les Regles de l'Astronomie, les Eclipses du Soleil ne doivent paroître qu'au premier Jour de la Lune. Cependant depuis quelques Années on en voit plusieurs au dernier Jour de la Lune; Cela vient de ce que la Lune a accéléré son mouvement, & par là le Temps de l'Eclipse est anticipé. Le ☉ est l'Image du Souverain; La Lune est l'Image des Sujets. Les défauts de ceux-ci ont ordinairement leur source dans ceux du Souverain.

* La grande Histoire Chinoise, NIEN-Y-SEE, Histoire de QUANG-VOU-TI.

† L'YN & l'YANG ne sont pas d'accord: Le Poche du ☉ & de la ☾ nous le fait connoître.

Comment) from the *Chinese* History and Astronomy, concerning the solar Eclipse in the XXXIst Year of *Jesus Christ*, upon the *last* Day of the third Moon : He observes, that *this Eclipse* is what many *Europeans* have thought to be the *same* with that famous Eclipse that was visible at *Jerusalem* when our Saviour suffered.

B. Sir, I don't know who this *Father Gaubil* is ; nor shall I enquire : But if you have already done him *Justice*, in giving me the Strength of his Argument upon this Affair, there is no need, I should think, of calling upon *Father Bouvet*, on the other Side of the Question : For this Author seems to have produced such *Authorities*, as entirely destroy the *Cause* he would maintain. The Emperor's *two Edicts* surely are sufficient for that Purpose.

A. If you please, a little Patience ; what you hinted at shall be considered presently. In the mean Time, hear what *Pere Gaubil* replies to the Belief of the *Europeans* in this Matter. He says, “ many *Missionaries*, that have advanced this *Fact*, (*i. e.* the Eclipse in *China* being the same with *that* at *Jerusalem*) have not been in a Condition to *examine* all the Circumstances that occur in the *Chinese* History and Astronomy. Those Gentlemen, he says, had not such a thorough Knowledge, as they ought to have had, of the *European* and *Chinese* Astronomy ; nor had they advanced a *Fact* of such Importance, but be-
“ cause

“ cause they knew in general, that, by the Ac-
 “ count of several Authors, our Lord suffered
 “ in the XXXIst Year of the Christian *Æra*;
 “ and they had not considered what the *Fact*
 “ implies; that our Lord should then have
 “ died upon one of the Days *QUEY-HAY*, of
 “ the Year XXXI: They did not take No-
 “ tice that the *Text* speaks of the *last* Day of
 “ the *third* Moon, or of the *first* Day of the
 “ *fourth* Moon: They did not mind where
 “ Astronomy had fixed the *Place* of the Sun,
 “ (or under what Constellation,) and where it
 “ is impossible it should have been, * upon the
 “ Day of the *Passion*. ”

A. A good deal of this *Reply* sounds very
 like the *Ipse-dixit* that you justly charged Mr.
W. with a while ago. I believe, it is not hard
 to prove, from the learned Works of many
Missionaries, who have advanced this *Fact*, that
 they were thoroughly qualified in all Sorts of
 of Learning, and did apply themselves in giv-
 ing as good an Account as History and Astro-
 nomy in *China* would allow them to do. I
 speak this, upon the Observations I have made
 in reading several of these *Missionary Accounts*
 myself.

* Pere *Souciet* has the following Note upon what here is laid
 down by *Gaubil* “ See the first Tome of these Observations,
 “ p. 22, 23. where we meet with P. *Gaubil*'s Calculation of this
 “ Eclipse, It happened the 10th of May, at ten o'Clock in the
 “ Morning 33' 28" at *Caifong-fou*. The Sun and the Moon
 “ were in in *Taurus* 16° 0' 28". The *Passover* that Year there,
 “ ought to have been about the *first* of April; and it was at the
 “ *Passover* that our Lord was crucified. An Eclipse upon the
 “ 10th of May could not then be *that* which happened at his
 “ *Passion*.

myself. I think, I am not mistaken, as to their Capacity, their Knowledge, and their Diligence; and I am apt to think, you will find all this true, when you light on Father *Greslon's* History; and then please to give me an Account out of it. However, let this pass at present: I'll admit, P. *Gaubil* has been very exact in his *Calculations*, provided the *two Imperial Edicts* are not found to interfere; but I am strongly of an Opinion, that these *Edicts*, and the Father's *Calculations*, will not prove to be very *consistent* with each other. We have *sure Chinese* History, it seems, for the Truth of the *one*; but without a certain *Adjustment* also of *European* and *Chinese* Astronomy, give me Leave to say, we cannot be sure of the *other*. And, pray, what a strange, odd, intricate *Adjustment* have we of the *Chinese* and *Sacred* Chronology in Mr. *W's* *Memoirs*, which you quoted to me an Hour * or two ago? I remember also, you shew'd from Pere *Pagi* very plainly, that amongst the Ancients there was a *Difference* in computing the *Olympiads*; such *Difference* particularly appearing, and made use of, in *Africanus*; whence *Pagi* makes it evident, that both *Kepler* and *Petavius* were deceiv'd, in relation to *Eusebius*: And 'tis as evident, that there can be no Reliance (if there was no other Objection) upon the perfect *Agreement* Mr. *W.* || makes between

* See above, p. 52, 53.

|| Histor. Memoirs, &c, p. 149.

between the *Chinese Annals* and the old Astronomical Characters and Sacred Chronology, till he has better consider'd this *different* Computation of the *Olympiads*. And yet 'tis upon this *Adjustment* of his, we are to suppose, that he grounds his Assertion, in saying *, That the *Chinese Eclipse*, we have been talking of, *was about the New Moon, and so could not be the Eclipse of the Passion of Christ*. But, with Submission, I think, there is no need of observing any Thing farther about this Matter, because there seems to be *Evidence* enough otherwise from *Pere Gaubil*, to make good the Point which he professedly opposes: And I hope, you will presently give me your own Thoughts upon those *two Edicts* of the Emperor *Quan-wou-ti*, occasioned by the great Disturbance this Eclipse gave him.

A. Sir, I have not yet given you all the Strength of *P. Gaubil's* Argument. He mentions his Adversary, *Pere Bouvet*, in a very honourable Manner; † and ('tis very remarkable) he allows him (which takes off the *Objection* he made just now) to be a Man, not only of great Learning, but skilled in the Language and History of *China*, where he was a *Missionary*; and particularly owns, that he had a thorough Knowledge of the *Chinese* and Euro-
Y
pean

* Testimony of *Phlegon*, &c. p. 28.

† Pour appuyer son Sentiment, il (*P. Bouvet*) se sert avec beaucoup d'Erudition & d'Esprit, des grandes connoissances qu' il a de la Langue & de l'Histoire *Chinoise*; & de l'Astronomie *Chinoise* & *Européenne*.

pean Astronomy. You may easily imagine, *Pere Gaubil* did not think his Point sufficiently secured, till he had answered the *Arguments* of so learned an Adversary. I am so unhappy as not to have *P. Bouvet* here, to speak for himself; you must therefore be contented with his *Arguments*, as they are with great Brevity produced by *Pere Gaubil*; after which, you shall hear the *Answer* given; and then, if you please, you may have my Thoughts upon the *Whole*. *Pere Gaubil* then represents *Pere Bouvet* arguing thus; “ According to the *Chinese* History,
 “ we are to *distinguish*, as to two Sorts of *Eclipses*.
 “ The first is a *natural* one; and is *that* which
 “ stands marked upon the *last Day of the last*
 “ *Moon*: The second is *supernatural*; and is
 “ *that* which the second Imperial *Edict* mentions under these Words *PO-CHE*; it is *that*
 “ which *TSIEN-TAN-PA* speaks of, as is to
 “ be understood in the first Imperial *Edict*,
 “ and from the *Opinion* given by *TCHING-*
 “ *HING*. This *supernatural* Eclipse, (as is visible at the very first Sight) was formerly
 “ entered in the (*Chinese*) Books. But in
 “ Process of Time, the History being revised,
 “ and there appearing an Eclipse of the Sun,
 “ marked about the *fifteenth* or *sixteenth* Day
 “ of the Moon, the Revisers changed this Eclipse, and by a Rasure, they put in its Place
 “ *that* of the 10th of *May*. Yet in spite of
 “ such a *Change* made, there are evident *Signs*
 “ yet remaining, of the Eclipse attending our
 “ Saviour’s

“ Saviour’s Passion. First, In the Behavi-
 “ our of the Emperor. Secondly, In the Words
 “ of TSIEN-TAN-PA. Thirdly, In the Opini-
 “ on given by TCHING-HING. Fourthly, In
 “ the second Imperial *Edict*, which speaks of
 “ PO-CHE.” This is the Foundation of *Pere*
Bouvet’s Reasoning, which I believe to be *false*
*in * every Point*, says *Pere Gaubil*, and which
 I shew to be so, as follows.

B. It is very strange, that *Pere Bouvet*, with
 all his Learning and Application ; with all that
 Skill in *European* and *Chinese* Astronomy,
 which *Pere Gaubil* allows him to be Master
 of, should be so sadly mistaken, as not to be
 right in any *one Point* about this Affair. But
 pray inform me, how *Pere Gaubil* confutes
 what the other has asserted.

A. *Pere Gaubil* answers thus ; “ The Distinc-
 “ tion of *two Eclipses*, in the present Case, has
 “ not any Foundation. It is likewise confess’d,
 “ by *Pere Bouvet*, that the Eclipse upon the
 “ Day KOU-Y-HAY, the last Day of the third
 “ Moon, was a *natural* Eclipse. Now, ac-
 “ cording to the *Chinese* History and Astro-
 “ nomy, the two *Edicts*; TCHING-HING’S
 “ Opinion or Memorial ; and the Emperor’s
 “ Retirement ; were all in consequence of, or oc-
 “ casioned by this *natural* Eclipse upon the Day
 “ QUEY-HAY, the *last* Day of the third Moon ;
 “ and this is what ought here particularly to
 “ be taken notice of.”

Y 2

B. I

* Je crois faux dans tous ses points.

B. I don't remember, that either the two *Edicts*, or TCHING-HING's Memorial, make Mention of the Day QUEY-HAY; or that they do understand the Eclipse, they were concerned about, to have happened upon the *last* Day of the *third* Moon. I wonder his Imperial Majesty should have been in such a terrible Fright upon so short an *Anticipation* in Time; especially when they had been used to it, it seems, for many Years before. If *Pere Bouvet* had all the Knowledge in *Chinese* Affairs, that *Pere Gaubil* allows him to have, and yet still is so much *out* in every Particular; he must have done by his Readers, as too many others do at this Day, *i. e.* grossly *impose* upon them. I see no Reason yet to charge *this* upon *Pere Bouvet*. I beg Pardon for the Interruption, and desire you will proceed.

A. *Pere Gaubil* continues his Answer thus:
 “ I have already (in this Discourse) made it
 “ appear particularly, that a *supernatural* E-
 “ clipse could no Ways be proved from the
 “ Words of TSIEN-TAN-PA, nor from the
 “ first Imperial *Edict*, nor yet from the Memo-
 “ rial of TCHING-HING. As to the *super-*
 “ *natural* Eclipse being *razed* out of the *Books*,
 “ it is only a Suspicion, and a Conjecture of
 “ *Pere Bouvet's*. But in this Case there must
 “ be *Facts*, and *Facts* well attested too. It is
 “ certain, the *Mathematicians* and *Historians* did
 “ then hold their Courts in Conjunction toge-
 “ ther.

“ ther. It is moreover certain, that the Ma-
 “ thematicians often found Means to *strike out*
 “ of *their Books false Calculations, and to place*
 “ *true ones in their Room.* But the *History of*
 “ *Eclipses*, where we have particularly an Ac-
 “ count preserved of several of these * *under-*
 “ *hand Doings*, in relation to the Eclipses
 “ seen during the Reign of *Quan-you-ti*, says
 “ nothing that favours the *Conjecture of Pere*
 “ *Bouvet*, concerning the Eclipse in the XXXIst
 “ Year of *Jesus Christ*. As to the Proof, which
 “ this *Father* grounds upon the Characters
 “ PO-CHE, mentioned in the second Imperial
 “ *Edict*; it is certain that KING-FANG, as we
 “ see it in the Astronomy of *former Princes* †,
 “ did define PO-CHE thus, *viz. An Eclipse that*
 “ *happens neither upon the first nor the last Day.*
 “ Others have explained it thus; *an Eclipse*
 “ *that is out of KIAO, i. e. out of the Bounds*
 “ *of the Ecliptique.* Upon which it is to be
 “ *remarked*, First, That this Definition of
 “ PO-CHE was given by some private Persons
 “ only, who, without doubt, had seen *natural*
 “ Eclipses; but not agreeing with their Cal-
 “ culations, instead of saying, *the Calculation*
 “ *is false*, they have said, that *the Eclipse is*
 “ *contrary to the Rules of Astronomy*: And
 “ KING-FANG thought fit, before the Time of
 “ *Jesus*

* Plusieurs de ces Intrigues.

† Dans l'Astronomy des HAN antérieurs. *Pere Gouvil's* Note here, is, *The Western HAN; they reigned at SIGAN-FOU, before the Time of Jesus Christ. QUAN-YOU-TI was the first Prince of the Eastern HAN.*

“ *Jesus Christ*, to give these Eclipses the Name
 “ of PO-CHE. Secondly, There are ancient Au-
 “ thors, who apply the Name of PO-CHE to
 “ the Bodies both of the Sun and Moon, when
 “ deprived of their Light. In Astronomy they
 “ call all the Eclipses of the Sun, and of the
 “ Moon PO-CHE; and it appears that PO-CHE,
 “ in the strict Sense of the *Word*, Means the
 “ very * *Height* of the Eclipse. From the *Text*
 “ in the second *Edict*, nothing more is to be
 “ collected, than that the Emperor so understood
 “ the *solar* Eclipse, as an *Indication*, that he
 “ should reform what was amiss in his Govern-
 “ ment: And it is certain, that the *Chinese*
 “ History says, that the Eclipse, upon the Day
 “ KOU-HEY-HAY of the third Moon, did occa-
 “ sion this *second* *Edict*. This Eclipse was a
 “ *natural* one; and therefore the Emperor’s
 “ *second* *Edict* is to be understood of a *natu-*
 “ *ral* Eclipse.” Thus I have given you *Pere*
Gaubil’s Argument, with all its Force, a-
 gainst the Assertions of the learned *Pere Bou-*
vet, concerning a supernatural Eclipse in *China*,
 in the XXXIst Year of the *Vulgar Æra*. If
 you are now disposed to have my Thoughts
 upon the whole Matter, I am ready to give
 them you.

B. Sir, I thank you: I would first beg leave
 to observe two or three Things, that just occur,
 from some *Chinese* Authors I have been lately
 reading,

* Le Fort de l’Eclipse,

reading, having a near Relation to what you have been now reading to me from *Pere Gaubil*. I perceive, from him, as I do from several other Writers, that the *Words* in the *Chinese* Language admit of *various* Significations; which makes it so difficult often to know what the *Chinese* mean. And I do not at all wonder at this; because one of their Writers assures me, that the *Chinese Language* * has but about *three hundred and thirty Words* in it; and this Author has given himself the *Trouble*, in a *Table*, to let us know the *Words* themselves; so that I should think, *Pere Gaubil's* arguing, as he does, from the Sense or Meaning of *Chinese* Words should have no great Weight in the Opposition he makes to *Pere Bouvet*. I would farther observe, as to the *Razure* that *Pere Bouvet* takes notice of in the *Chinese* Books, that it has been a Thing often practised by Order of the *Emperors* themselves, nay, sometimes it has been done with their own Hands. For in the Case of *Pere Intorcetta*, a Missionary, (who is mentioned among others by our *Anti-Pblegonist*,) the Emperor then reigning, thought fit to make

* Cette Langue ne contient que trois Cens trente Mots ou environ, tous d'une Syllabe, ou qu'on prononce au moins d'une maniere si serrée, qu'on n'en distingue presque jamais qu'une. ---- Le même mot (avec nous) prononcé avec une inflexion de voix plus forte ou plus foible a diverses significations: Ainsi la Langue *Chinoise*, quand on la parle exactement, est une *Especede Musique*, & renferme une véritable Harmonie qui en fait l'essence & le Caractere particulier. P. Louis le Compte Nouveaux Memoires de la *Chine*. Tom. I. p. 266, 267.

make a *Razure*, † though not of an Eclipse, with his own Hands, in the *publick Books*: And *Pere Gaubil*, I observe, owns that the *Mathematicians* did often find Means to *strike out* of their *Books* such *Calculations* of Eclipses, as were in *their Opinion false*. But what if we should say, those *Mathematicians* themselves were *mistaken* in their *Razures*; must we take *Pere Gaubil's* Word for it, that they were not so?

A. Sir, I am pleased to hear your Observations. Let me add a few more; and then we will make an End of this *Chinese* Affair. Can it possibly be conceived, that the Emperor QUANG-VOU-TI should have been thrown into such Convulsions; his Soul ruffled in so terrible a Manner; only because the *Eclipse* came on about twenty four Hours sooner than was expected? Had not the same Things happened for several Years before? And was it giving *any Ease*, or any Sort of Advice to their *Emperor*, to tell him the same Story over again; which, we may reasonably suppose, he knew as well as they that told it him? Or in case he knew it not, it was a very *insignificant* Story, though a true one: So that *Pere Gaubil* does not seem to put a right Construction by any Means upon those Words of TCHING-HING; *for some Years past there have been several Eclipses observed upon the last Day of the Moon*. TCHING-HING
does

* L'Empereur peu d'Années auparavant, avoit de sa propre Main rayé plusieurs Lignes d'un Livre, &c. Le *Comte*, uti supra. Tom. II. p. 270.

does not say, that the Eclipse, which the Emperor was *then* consulting him about, did happen upon the *last Day of the Moon*: What is said, is (no doubt) to induce the Emperor to lay all the Blame upon the Moon's irregular Motions; that as it was a Thing notoriously known, for some Years past, that there had been an *Anticipation* (in Time) of *one Day*; so, by Parity of Argument, his Imperial Majesty was to conclude, that the Moon happening that Year (the XXXIst of the Vulgar *Æra*) to have been upon a much *fuller March* than formerly, there might be a reasonable Allowance made for an *Anticipation* of *several Days*, as well as *one*, in the present Eclipse, in Proportion to such *Celerity* of the Moon's Movement. And thus, as I take it, TCHING-HING comforts his Sovereign, as if he had said more explicitly; *The Reason is this, the strange Eclipse that has now happened, is owing to a much swifter Motion of the Moon, than has been for several Years past.* Cela vient (*dit* CHIN-HING) de ce que la Lune a *accélééré* son Mouvement, & par là le Temps de (*cette*) Eclipse est *anticipé*. If we understand TCHING-HING arguing in this Manner with his Prince, it is all easy and natural, and a pretty Amusement offered to cure the disordered Mind of his Prince; but otherwise, the Argument, in my Opinion, is insipid and Lifeless, and no Ways agreeable with the known Spirit and Genius of the *Chinese*.

B. Your talking so merrily upon the Moon's *full March*, puts me in mind of those *Irregularities* that our *modern* Astronomers lay to her charge : For, I think, 'tis universally agreed on, that the Moon does not always revolve *exactly* in the Ecliptick, but runs sometimes *five* or *six* Degrees above *it* to the North, and sometimes below *it* to the Southward : Nor does she always keep the same Distance from the Earth ; as appears by her Diameter, which, when measur'd, is found sometimes considerably larger than at others. These *Irregularities*, no doubt, gave the *Chinese* Disturbance in their *Calculations*, and were a good Handle for coming off with Honour, when the Emperors charg'd their *Astronomers* with Mistakes of this kind.

A. Mr. *W.* (you know,) * says, “ That the
 “ Calculation of this Eclipse had probably
 “ been *carelessly* made by the Astronomers ;
 “ and that they were loth to confess it, lest
 “ they should have been *capitally* punish'd.”
 You see quite the *Reverse* in the Conduct and Behaviour of the Emperor *Quang-vou-ti*, upon this Occasion. His Concern was inexpressible ; but there was no Anger, no knitting of his Brows, no Threats of any sort : He gave himself up to Meditation, and took Advice of his Nobles. I make no question, but the *Sight* of the *Moon* at that Time affected him very much ;
La Vue du Sol & de la Lune nous avertit (dit
l'Em-

* Ibid. p. 18.

l'Empereur) *de penser à nous*. Why may we not suppose QUANG-VOU-TI to be then looking and wondering, from his Palace of *Loyang*, in the *same Manner* as the *Areopagite* was at *Heliopolis* in *Egypt*? I am more confirm'd than ever, from the *Words* of this *Edict*, that the Case was really so: And *P. Gaublin*, I must think, has said a good many Things, that when they come to be sifted, and more narrowly enquir'd into, make much more *against*, than *for* his Side of the Question: For instance, his quoting those Definitions of PO-CHE, viz. *An Eclipse that happens neither upon the first nor the last Day of the Moon*; or *an Eclipse that is out of KIAO, or out of the Bounds of the Ecliptick*; really hurts his Cause, though at first sight it *seemingly* favours it: For he says, the Use of the Word *Po-che*, in *these Senses*, was long before the Time of our Saviour. What then? Was it not a proper *Word* to be made use of, when the *wonderful* Eclipse was seen, upon *Xerxes's* transporting his Army over the *Hellepont*, near five hundred Years before Christ? And did it not continue as proper a *Word* to be used when our Saviour suffer'd, and another *wonderful* Eclipse happen'd? More might be offer'd in favour of *Pere Bouvet's* Assertions: But, I think, enough has been said; and so let the *Chinese* Affair rest at present.

B. You just now mention'd the wonderful Eclipse that *Xerxes* saw. Our *Anti-Pblegonist*

(you know) has some *Criticisms* upon it, (pag. 68, 69.) Pray how stands that Passage in *Herodotus*?

A. Our *Anti-Pblegonist* does *criticize* indeed; but he makes sad Work o't, surely. The Passage in *English* reads to this Purpose *; “*Xerxes’s* Army being upon a full March towards *Abydus*, “the Sun disappear’d, *failing to run its wonted Course*; no Clouds, but a very clear Sky: Instead “of Day, it became Night. *Xerxes*, considering “the Matter, was very solicitous to know the “Meaning of it. Upon which he apply’d himself to the *Magi*, that they might inform him what this *φάσμα*, or *Failure* in the Sun, portended. Their Answer was, that God, by this *Failure* in the Sun, signify’d to the *Grecians*, that there should be a *Failure*, or a *Defection* amongst their Cities: For the *Sun*, they said, was the *Greeks* Protector; but, that the *Moon* was *theirs*. *Xerxes* hearing this, and growing very cheerful upon it, pursued his March.” Now, what Occasion was there for our *Anti-Pblegonist’s* making his *Difference*? viz. Whether *Herodotus’s* saying, that the *Sun* fail’d running its *Course*, or (more strictly render’d) the *Sun* quitting its *Place in Heaven*,] ὁ ἥλιος ἐκλιπὼν τὴν ἐκ τῆς ἑρᾶς ἑδρην,] be the same as calling it an *Eclipse*? The whole Tenour of the Paragraph makes it plain, that this was a *Poetical Expression*

* *Herod. Hist. Lib. VII.*

pression of *Herodotus*, and cannot admit of any other Interpretation : The *Defection* or Revolt-
ing amongst the Greeks, and the *Defection* of the
Sun, in leaving its Place, is express'd by the
same Word in the Original ; and had there been
the least Room for a *Criticism*, so accurate a
Person as Dr. *Gale* would not have omitted it :
But *he* has made none at all.

B. Pray, Sir, what has been the Opinion of
our Astronomers and Chronologers about this
extraordinary Eclipse ?

A. I think, when you hear *Calvisius* speak,
(to whom Dr. *Gale* refers his Reader,) you hear
enough. His Judgment then take as follows * ;
“ 'Tis affirm'd by all Chronologers, that when *Xer-*
“ *xes* was marching at the Beginning of the *Spring*,
“ there was an Eclipse of the Sun : But *Herodo-*
“ *tus*, from whom they have their Knowledge of
“ it, does not there define any *Natural* Eclipse ;
“ nor do our Astronomical Tables furnish us with
“ any Eclipse in these Months. *Herodotus* says, the
“ Sun disappear'd, and yet there was a clear
“ Sky ; that he left his Seat, or appear'd no
“ where. But now, in every Eclipse the Sun
“ is darken'd by Degrees, and the Place, where
“ it is, appears ; therefore *here* there was not
“ properly an Eclipse, but there was some sort of
“ *Phænomenon*, or φάσμα, (as *Herodotus* calls it,)
“ whence the Sun disappear'd all on a sudden,
“ Nor

* *Calvis.* opus Chronol, ad An. Mundi 3470 & 3472. Ante
C. N. 478, 476.

“ Nor was *Herodotus* so little vers’d in Astro-
 “ nomy, as not to be able to describe a Solar
 “ Eclipse ; for he writes, how that *this* very
 “ Year, in Autumn, there was an Eclipse of
 “ the Sun, when *Cleombrutus*, the *Spartan* King,
 “ sacrificed at *Isthmus*. So likewise he describes
 “ another Eclipse, as we have it above, when
 “ the *Lydians* were at War with *Cyaxares*.
 “ Besides, *Astronomers* know very well, that
 “ two great Solar Eclipses cannot possibly hap-
 “ pen in the *same* Climate, in one and the *same*
 “ Year ; so that seeing *that* Eclipse, which
 “ happen’d in *Autumn*, may be rightly demon-
 “ strated, or accounted for, it follows, that in
 “ the *Spring* there could be no Eclipse in the
 “ *same* Parts of the Earth. *Buntinck*, accord-
 “ ing to his usual Practice, charges *Herodotus*
 “ here, as guilty of *two Mistakes* : The one is,
 “ in asserting an Eclipse to have been *this* Year
 “ in the *Spring* ; when yet *Buntinck* has not
 “ been able to make out an Eclipse himself all
 “ *this whole* Year : The other is, in *Herodotus*’s
 “ asserting that the Sun was *totally* darken’d ;
 “ whereas, says *Buntinck*, the Sun was eclips’d
 “ no more than *two Digits*, and happen’d in
 “ the *foregoing* Year besides. But he’s in a very
 “ gross Mistake himself ; for there was both a
 “ very great Eclipse this Year, (as we shall shew
 “ below,) and also *that* which happen’d the
 “ preceeding Year, was a very inconsiderable
 “ one ; was neither visible, nor could any Ob-
 “ servation

“ servation have been made, had the Sky been
 “ never so clear ; and besides, ’tis an Eclipse
 “ that *Herodotus* has taken no Notice of. *Co-*
 “ *domannus*, a Chronologer, *confounds* this E-
 “ clipse of *Herodotus* with another, that hap-
 “ pen’d about two Years after, *A. M.* 3472.
 “ But *Herodotus* being then living himself, and
 “ having so well distinguish’d the *Time* of *Xer-*
 “ *xes*’s passing over the *Hellepont*, there can be
 “ no room to doubt of *Codomannus*’s being in
 “ an Error.” Thus I have given you as con-
 cise an Account, as I well could, of what *Cal-*
visius has said upon this *Extraordinary* Eclipse ;
 an Eclipse, by which God was pleas’d to make
 a mighty Prince reflect upon the Weakness of a
 numerous Army ; and thought it proper to puz-
 zle the wisest among the Heathen in their *natu-*
ral Calculations ; and this, about *Four hundred*
and seventy Years before they were puzzled
 again with an Eclipse of a much more extraor-
 dinary Nature.

B. Sir, it now grows late : I thank you heartily
 for the agreeable Entertainment I have had
 this Day. I have seen with Pleasure the po-
 lite, the knowing, the learned *Phlegon* rescued
 out of very *insincere* Hands ; after a severe *Or-*
deal, shining out with greater Lustre ; and by
 that Means becoming a *stronger Evidence* in be-
 half of Christianity. I was wondering, if you
 remember, this Morning, (soon after we met,)
 how you and the *Anti-Phlegonist* could, both of
 you,

you, be *doing real Service* in this Matter, to the *Cause of Christ*. I am now thoroughly convinc'd where the *Truth* lies; and, after that, more need not be said, to shew who have best contributed to the *Cause of Christianity*. Let him have the Thanks of *Deists* and *Free-Thinkers*, if he pleases; and I'll venture to make him this Compliment myself, "That he has done more to serve those Gentlemen, than most of them are able to do themselves." There is one Thing, however, that falls out very *unluckily* for these Persons, when they are extolling this *Dissertation* of our *Anti-Pblegonist*: For whilst they are commending *that* and its Author, they are at the same time making a very scurvy Reflection upon the *Judgment* and *Memory* of Dr. *Samuel Clarke*. I cannot believe, that any *impartial* Person will now be of an Opinion, (since our *Anti-Pblegonist's Reasons* are known,) that Dr. *Clarke's Understanding* could ever receive any *Bias*, or that he could *thence* be inclin'd to *strike* such a noble *Testimony*, as that of *Pblegon*, out of his *Boyle's Lectures*. But if the *Understanding* was not to be bias'd, is it not too plain, that the *Will* must have been tamper'd with in this Case?

A. Your Question implies a very home *Affirmative*. I would not indulge such Reflections, did not the same Argument (that our *Anti-Pblegonist* makes use of) oblige me to the doing of it. 'Tis the *Cause* of our great Lord
and

and Master *Jesus Christ*. Christianity requires this at your Hands, and mine, To do all the *real Service* we can to it, by detecting such *Antichristian Sophistry* as now prevails too much in the World. The *enticing Words of Man's Wisdom* are also more especially to be guarded against at this Time ; but when *Insincerity* has been once plainly prov'd, I should think less Danger is to be fear'd from *such as lie in wait to deceive*. I have long ago (as I told you this Morning) charg'd Dr. *Clarke* with the most flagrant *Insincerity* in Matters of the greatest Importance ; and I'll take Care (God willing) at our next meeting, which I hope will be very soon, to make good my Promise, in giving you farther Proof (not hitherto taken notice of by any Writer, that I know of,) of such sort of Dealing in the very *fundamental* Points of Christianity. You are not then to wonder, if I come pretty easily into your Way of Thinking, upon the Close of the Day. I hope you go away satisfied, that those ancient *Fathers*, *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*, have been basely used by this *Anti-Pblegonist* ; and that what I have said, has been sufficient to wipe off the *Aspersions* that have been cast on them. There is one Expression or two, indeed, of our *Anti-Pblegonist*, relating to those *Fathers*, that sticks very close with me ; and since it carries a very ugly *Innuendo* along with it, I should think him oblig'd to *explain* himself,

A a

and

and to tell the World plainly, whether those *Fathers* did not (in his Opinion) shew their *Weakness*, or were not in their *Dotage*, when they took upon 'em to expound some *Fundamental* Point or other in Christianity? I am pretty sure, his *Masters*, that he has been serving, do apply the *Expressions* that way; and many honest well-meaning People may probably stumble at it, and be apt to think that this *Design* or *Weakness*, charg'd upon *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*, may be extended much farther than to this *Affair of Phlegon*.

B. If our *Anti-Phlegonist* should be minded to *explain* himself, I am apt to think *Tan. Faber*, that you mention'd some Time ago, when you quoted *Bishop Pearson*, may be a likely Person to help him out in this Matter. Our *Anti-Phlegonist* seems to have been pretty much beholden to him already. But pray, Sir, before we part, let me hear you read again these remarkable *Expressions*, which I find you have taken so much Umbrage at.

A. I believe he may likewise have been beholden to one *Dan. Zuicker* a *Prussian*, of whom more by-and-by. Our *Anti-Phlegonist* thus expresses himself*: “That the Things for
“ which *Justin Martyr* appeals to the Acts of
“ *Pilate*, were ever sent to *Tiberius* †, has no
“ Foun-

* Page 37, 39, 40.

† The Vanity and Falsity of this Assertion has been sufficiently shewn above, p. 90 — 108.

“ Foundation of *Probability*. Could *Pilate*
 “ possibly say some of the Things which *Ter-*
 “ *tullian* puts upon him? — It seems there-
 “ fore much the most natural, to suppose that
 “ *these* Acts of *Pilate* came out of the same
 “ Mint, which some other early *Forgeries* did;
 “ and were *mistaken* by these good Men, (*Ju-*
 “ *stin Martyr* and *Tertullian*), and quoted as
 “ *genuine*; just as they did *some other Things*,
 “ which seem’d to make so strongly for *their*
 “ *Cause*.” I ever thought *their Cause* had been
 ours, (as I observ’d in the Morning ;) but our
Anti-Pblegonist has thought proper to distin-
 guish. What those *some other Things* are, which
 those *Fathers* quoted by Mistake or Design as
genuine, to SERVE their Cause, is not yet ex-
 plain’d ; but there is Room to conjecture, that
they were communicated to Dr. *Clarke*; for our
Anti-Pblegonist, in the very Beginning of his
 Introduction, has the very *same* Words as here :
 He says, “ *Amongst some other Things*, which on
 “ that Occasion I *suggested* to him, [Dr. *Clarke*]
 “ I told him my Apprehension, that the E-
 “ *clipse*, &c.” Now, suppose the Expressions,
 concerning the blessed *Trinity*, that we meet
 with in *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*, were in
 the Number of those *some other Things*, that were
 suggested to Dr. *Clarke*, (’tis certain you and
 I may *suggest*, as well as our *Anti-Pblegonist*,)
 what Method would you take to convince an
Anti-Trinitarian from the Works of those two

Fathers ? No doubt, you would quote such *Expressions*, (and certainly there are very *strong* ones.) as were most pertinent to confirm the Doctrine : But would not your *Authority* quoted be immediately disputed, upon the foot that our *Anti-Phelegonist* has now put it ? Would not you be told, that *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian* were *mistaken good Men*, and consequently, that their Judgment was not to be depended on, because they had quoted *some Things* themselves without good *Authority*, that *seem to make strongly for their Cause* ? Has our *Anti-Phelegonist* left you any Room thence to distinguish in Favour of Christianity, besides the sneering Appellation of *Good Men* ? I need not enlarge upon this Topick. You see the natural Tendency of this sort of Argument, that our *Anti-Phelegonist* has put into the Mouths of our Adversaries. However, I hope what I have said, has set those *Fathers* in a true Light, by removing the particular *Objections* that have been made ; and if so, then the *Argument* form'd from *them* will be of no Force.

B. Sir, I perceive these two *Fathers* (*Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*) are remarkable, as well for their *Antiquity*, as for their *Expressions* about the *Trinity*. I own, 'tis very likely such *Objections* may be made, as you talk of ; and 'tis easy to imagine, that those, who do not approve of some *Doctrines* contain'd in their Works, will do all they can to bring those *Authors* into *Disrepute*.

pute. But pray, how do these Writers express themselves in relation to the *Divinity* of Christ? For they being, as we call 'em, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, I am the more desirous to be inform'd about it.

A. Justin Martyr, amongst other Arguments used for proving the *Divinity* of our Blessed Saviour, produces *one* from the *Worship and Adoration* due to him, from several Texts of *Holy Scripture* : And our *Anti-Trinitarians* know very well, that their *Cause* can never be good, so long as *Justin Martyr's* Exposition and Argument shall find *Credit* amongst us. The Judicious and Learned Bishop *Bull* has set this Matter * in a fine Light; and Time will not allow me to observe so much from him as I otherwise would : Your own good Judgment will direct you to make the same Conclusion as *Justin Martyr* does, *viz.* where the *Worship and Adoration* paid is truly *Divine*, there God *only* can be the Object; and no *Creature*, (how excellent soever,) can be render'd capable of receiving it. That Christ then can be *really* God †, and yet not be so *by Nature*, must be one of those

incom-

* *Primitiva & Apostolica Traditio de Jesu Christi Divinitate*, Cap. 6. " Quis credat (inquit *Bullus*) egregium Fidei Christianæ Doctorem, [*Just. Mart.*] Elementarem. quæ est de Uno Deo, Evangelii Doctrinam (vel Idiotæ cuivis Inter Catechumenos præbe notam) non fuisse plenissime edoctum : aut fortissimum Christi contra *Paganicas* Superstitiones Impietatesq; Athletam ac Martyrem, adeo turpiter in ipsius *Paganismi* luto adhuc hæsisse ? Ib. contra *Zuikerum*.

† Si homo tantummodo Christus, *quomodo* adest ubiq; invocatus ? Cum hæc Hominis natura non sit sed Dei, ut *adesse* omni *Loco* possit, &c. *Novat. Lib. de Trin. Cap. 14.*

incomprehensible Doctrines that our *Anti-Trinitarians* can easily swallow, rather than believe as *Justin Martyr* has taught 'em from the *Holy Scriptures*. I desire you will not fail consulting Bishop *Bull* * at your Leisure : I am apt to think, you will from thence be able to make a pretty good Conjecture, what those *some other Things* are, which were the Subject of this Conversation between our *Anti-Phlegonist* and Dr. *Clarke*. You'll find 'em to be *Romantick Notions*, vamp'd up many Years ago by one *Dan. Zuicker*, a *Prussian*, and transmitted hither for the Edification of our *Free-Thinkers*. The Author would have the World believe, that the Disciples of *Simon Magus* sadly impos'd upon *Justin* ; and that this *Martyr* was the most early Writer that began to talk, in the *Simonian* Stile, concerning a *New Generation of Christ*, &c. No Wonder then, (some may say,) that *Justin Martyr* should be so warmly attack'd, and such *Innuendo's* thrown out, as might lessen his Reputation. Our *Unitarians* at Home soon built upon this *wild Scheme* of *D. Zuicker*, saying, That *Justin Martyr* had made a *Change* in the Doctrine of Christ ; thus taking Exceptions to what Bishop *Bull* had said upon the Matter ; and one of them charging *Justin Martyr* directly, as the *first* Person that advanc'd the *Coexistence of the Son with the Father before the Creation of the World*. I cannot help thinking, till I am better inform'd, that
these

* Prim. & Apost. Trad. de Christi Divinitate.

these *Whimfies* of *D. Zuicker*, improv'd by some of our own Countrymen, in relation to *Justin Martyr*, though they have been so thoroughly confuted by this Bishop, are what our *Anti-Pblegonist* seems desirous should be brought upon the *Tapis* again. Is it a proper Time, or no, my Friend?

B. If we may make any Guess from the *Liberty* taken by this Writer, in *defaming* these ancient *Fathers* of the Church, it should seem, that he knows his *Strength* as to Numbers. My own Conversation, some Time ago, led me deep into this Affair; and I cannot but think, (all Things considered,) our *Anti-Pblegonist* has hit it off pretty well, in Point of Time. — But pray, after *Justin Martyr*, what has *Tertullian* done, to make our *Anti-Pblegonist* speak such hard Things of him? He charges him with something more than *Weakness*: He says, this *Father* has put upon the World, in Things of a religious Nature. I am thoroughly satisfied, from the Remarks you have made, that *Tertullian* has, by no Means, put upon us in the Particular as this Writer charges. Why then so much *Spleen* and *Invective* against this *Father*?

A. *Tertullian*, it is certain, had his Failings, and some very great ones: But it is to be observed, that, even whilst he was fallen into *Montanism*, his Notions about the *Trinity* continued the same: “ And do but read his single
“ Book.

“ Book against *Praxeas* (says Bishop Bull *)
 “ and you will find him asserting the Con-
 “ *substantiality* of the Son (i. e. *the Sameness*
 “ *of Substance or Essence with the Father*) so
 “ fully, and with such Plainness and Openness,
 “ that one would think he wrote *after* (and not
 “ before) the Council of *Nice*.” I must refer you
 to the same learned Author for *Particulars*,
 considering you have already moved for going
 Home. Let me observe to you, that there is
 but little Difference, in Point of Time, between
Justin Martyr and *Tertullian*; and that of
 all the Writers of the *Latin Church*, now ex-
 tant, *Tertullian* is the *oldest*. The *Apology*,
 (which our *Anti-Phelegonist* has been so free in
 censuring,) is generally observed by most Wri-
 ters, to be the Flower of all his Writings.
 There is, in *that*, established the Doctrine of
Three Person and one God, so long as *Tertul-*
lian's Authority shall have its Weight amongst
 us. But it is certain, no Piece of *Tertullian's*
 does more gall our *Anti-Trinitarians*, than
 that single Book of his against *Praxeas*, just
 now mention'd: For in this Book it is, *that*
ancient Father manifestly refers to those re-
 markable Words of St. *John* (1 Ep. v. 7.) *There*
are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father,
the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and THESE THREE
ARE

* Def. Fid. Nic. Cap. 7. Unum ejus Librum adversus
Praxeam legas, in quo de SS. Trinitate fusc & ex professo agit;
 toties ibi ac tam aperte Filii asserit *Consubstantialitatem*, ut Auc-
 torem crederes *post Niceni Concilii tempora scripsisse*.

ARE ONE. Our *Anti-Trinitarians* leave no Stone unturned to evade the Force of this Passage in *Tertullian*. It is a *Passage*, that shall be thoroughly discussed (if you please) at our next Meeting, when *Lucian's Philopatrias*, with Dr. *Cave's* Manuscript Comment, &c. when the ancient Manuscript of *Cassiodorus*, and Dr. *Samuel Clarke's* Notions about that *Passage*, in his Letters to Mr. *Nelson*, Dr. *Wells*, &c. come to be considered: And then further *Evidence* shall be deduced in behalf of *Christianity*. This Passage in *Tertullian* undeniably confutes the *Objection* that the *Anti-Trinitarians* have sometimes made to the Genuineness of that Text, (1 *John* v. 7.) as if it had been clandestinely put into St. *John's* Epistle, after the *Nicene Council*; whereas it is plain, *Tertullian* flourished a *Hundred and thirty Years* before that *Council* was held; and in which the *Arian* Heresy was condemned by above *three hundred* Bishops. Our *Anti-Trinitarians* do not so much as attempt to prove the *Spuriousness* of this Book of *Tertullian's*, or the particular *Passage* in it: But (says * Dr. *Clarke*) those Words in *Tertullian*, THESE THREE ARE ONE, are plainly the Words of that Author himself, and not a Citation of the Text, (1 *John* v. 7.) I think, our *Anti-Phlegonist* might as well have advised him, to have struck out this *Explication* of *Tertullian's* Passage, as the *Testimony* of *Phlegon*: For though

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the

* Dr. *Clarke's* Reply to Mr. *Nelson*, p. 210.

the Doctor says, *they are* PLAINLY *the Words*, &c. yet he does not give so much as the Shadow of a *Reason* for his saying so: Whereas he *knew*, that Dr. *Hammond*, Bishop *Bull*, Dr. *Mills*, and several more learned Men, had not only given their Opinion quite contrary to his own, but had also alledged their *Reasons* for saying, that these Words, THESE THREE ARE ONE in that Passage, were not *Tertullian's*, but *Scripture Words*, there referred to by him. Since Dr. *Clarke* then, was not able to assign any *Reason*, it is certain, he might as well have taken the *same short Method* in explaining, as our *Anti-Phelegonist* has done in censuring *Tertullian*, viz. that he was one of those *weak*, mistaken *good Men*, that had a fruitful Invention for serving his *own Cause*; that those Words, THESE THREE ARE ONE, luckily coming into his Head, when he was arguing against *Praxeas*, were, after the Council of *Nice*, catched hold of by the Orthodox Party, and so inserted into St. *John's* Epistle.

B. There seems to be a strange Sort of *Liberty* taken, now a Days, in reflecting upon those ancient *Fathers* of the Christian Church. I remember I was a Witness to a great deal of it, three or four Years ago: And in our *first Conference*, you took * Notice, “ That I was
“ very much *prejudiced* against those *primitive*
“ *Gentlemen*;

* Part I. p. 15.

“ *Gentlemen* ; and withal, you then promised
 “ me, that, if I desired it, you would vindi-
 “ cate *them* from those vile Reproaches and
 “ unjust Reflections that are cast upon them in
 “ a late *Free-thinking* Book, called *Christi-*
 “ *anity as Old as the Creation.*” I can now ea-
 sily excuse you that Trouble : For your Vin-
 dication already appeared sufficient in our
 subsequent Debates ; and particularly so in this
 Day’s Conversation. I began to think as much
 (you know) at our *second* Meeting, † viz. that
Heathen Writers and the *Fathers* do support one
 another in *Facts* relating to the Truth of the
Christian Religion. But, before we part with
Tertullian, I desire to be better informed about
 his *Montanism* ; for I perceive *that* was the
 great *Failure* in his Life, which you have
 already hinted at. I hope the *Failure* admits
 of some Alleviations.

A. Sir, I perceive, you are a Stranger to
 Mr. Reeve’s *English* Translation of the *Apo-*
logies of these ancient *Fathers*. You will there
 find a very satisfactory Account, as to this
 Matter, in his *Preliminary* Discourse to *Ter-*
tullian’s Apologetick ; and, if you would read
 over likewise Mr. Reeve’s *Epistolary* Discourse
 to Mr. Nelson, upon some *seasonable* Subjects,
 you would highly oblige me, and give your
 self a real Pleasure at the same Time. I can
 only now just tell you, that in *Tertullian*

B b 2

“ there

† *Ibid.* p. 51.

“ there is a complicated Instance of *Learning*
 “ and *Frailty*; in which we may read the
 “ Necessity of our Dependance upon the Grace
 “ of God; the Danger of climbing after ex-
 “ traordinary Heights and *Austerities*, with-
 “ out a humble Spirit; of leaving the Com-
 “ munion of the Church, to go to Heaven
 “ by ourselves; and of wandering after new
 “ Lights, and new Prophets, when we have
 “ the Word of God to be *a Lanthorn to our*
 “ *Feet, and a Light unto our Paths.*” *Tertullian*
 (says Mr. Reeves) being of a Temper much
 like his Style, extremely hard and severe; and
 and hearing of *Montanus*, that he was no
 Holder-forth of *strange Doctrines*, but only of
 strange *Strictness and Severity in Discipline*; a
 a Man of Mortification, and of a most sanctified
 Spirit; that he out-fasted and out-prayed the car-
 nal Catholicks by many Degrees; that he was a
 powerful Teacher, and gifted with the *Pa-*
raclete, with the Spirit of Prophecy, with a-
 mazing Visions and Extasies, &c. Such a Cha-
 racter hit *Tertullian’s* Temper to a Hair. ‘The
honest, but morose Man, was imposed upon;
 and so separated from the Church, and closed with
 a Discipline after his own Heart. Now,
 great Allowances may be made *Tertullian*, for
 being carried off by so strong a Delusion; and
 in his Book against *Praxeas* aforesaid, he says,
That he always believed in one only God, and
three Persons; and that he still believes it more
firmly,

firmly, since he has been instructed by the Paraclete or Comforter, &c. He thought, that the *Paraclete* operated by the Ministry of *Montanus*: But *Tertullian*, and the first *Montanists* never believed, that *Montanus* himself was the *Paraclete*. So that, after this grand Failure in *Tertullian*, you will find no other Marks of *Weakness*, or of the *mistaken good Man*, as our *Anti-Phlegonist* describes him.

B. Are we then to suppose, that our *Anti-Phlegonist*, when he says, * that *Tertullian* quoted *some other Things as genuine*, (besides the Acts of *Pilate*,) which were not so, and which seemed to make so strongly for his own Cause; would have these Words only to be understood in relation to these Errors of *Montanism*? Pray, how is it?

A. You and I may suppose what we please; but you see our *Anti-Phlegonist* has not thought proper to explained himself. However, admit that his Words are to be so understood; what then? You observe, that the Doctrine of the Trinity was one Part of his own Cause; which, amongst all his Errors of *Montanism*, he still pleaded for; and I'll venture to say, he never quoted any Thing, but what was genuine in defence of it. He may be reckon'd a crabbed, obscure Writer, if you please; but he is not to be rank'd amongst your *mistaken Good Men*, quoting *some Things as genuine, that are not so*; till our

Anti-Phlegonist shall explain himself, and prove it to be so. *Montanism*, you see, will not clear up the Difficulty ; and should you talk in that Manner to an *Anti-Trinitarian*, our *Anti-Phlegonist's Reflection* would still give the *Heretick* an Advantage against you. Read *Balzac's Letter* to *Rigaltius*, upon his publishing *Tertullian* ; you will find, this ancient *Father* is not there suspected either of *Weakness* or *Design* ; and, with all his *Obscurity*, is had in the highest Veneration. “ I have had a Value (says he) a
“ long Time for this Author [*Tertullian* ;] and
“ as harsh and crabbed as he is, yet he is not
“ at all unpleasant to me. I have found in
“ his Writings that *black Light* mention'd in
“ one of the ancient Poets ; and I look upon
“ his *Obscurity* with the same Pleasure as upon
“ *Ebony*, which is very bright, and curiously
“ wrought. This has always been my Opi-
“ nion : For as the Beauties of *Africk* are not
“ less amiable, tho' they are not like ours ;
“ and as *Sophonisba* has eclips'd several *Italian*
“ Ladies ; so the Wits of that Country are not
“ less pleasing, with this Outlandish sort of
“ Eloquence. I shall prefer *him* before a great
“ many affected Imitators of *Cicero* ; and though
“ we should grant to the nicest Criticks, that
“ his Stile is of Iron, yet they must likewise
“ own, that out of this Iron he has forg'd
“ most excellent Weapons for the Defence of Chri-
“ stianity.”

B. Sir,

B. Sir, I will make no more *Queries* about our *Anti-Phlegonist*: I think there is just Reason to wonder at his Confidence, in *mal-treating* these *Primitive Fathers* in the Manner he has done. I remember you quoted *Daille* about an Hour or two ago; which is an Author our *Anti-Phlegonist* seems to be well acquainted with. This I know; he's an Author our *Free-Thinking* Society often read, to help 'em out in railing more plentifully against the *Fathers*: But you have convinc'd me, that the *Invectives* used by those Gentlemen are without Foundation; especially when we talk of *Facts*: And I am strongly of an Opinion, that, at our next Meeting, you will give me a farther Proof, that these *Ante-Nicene Fathers* were the faithful Guardians of the *Gospel* deposited in their several Churches; and that their Writings will speak them to be as *great* by Nature and Education, as any the most exalted *Reasoners* of the present Age.

A. Sir, I am much pleas'd to see you expressing your self in this Manner. The Arguments I have all-along offer'd you in Defence of Christianity are undeniable Matters of *Fact*; and they will subsist as *such*, when you and I are gone hence, and shall be no more seen. This is not *Priestcraft*, my good Friend, whatever your *quondam* Fraternity may again suggest to you, when you next meet with any of 'em: And as to the ill Use they make of *Daille*, let 'em but
own

own what *Daillé* himself has said, and you may easily forgive 'em all the rest. Mr. Reeves begins his excellent Preface, (concerning the right Use of the *Fathers*,) with this very Acknowledgment made by *Daillé*, viz. *That those Times which came nearest to the Apostles, were necessarily the purest, and less subject to Suspicion of Corruptions, either in Doctrine, Manners, or Christian Discipline; it being reasonable to believe, that if there be any Corruptions crept into the Church, they crept in by Degrees, by little and little, as it happens in all other Things. But such Talk as this in Daillé, is what your quondam refined Gentry no more mind, than they do Mr. Lock, when he is reasoning in the strongest Manner for Divine Revelation. They treat Mr. Lock, just as our Anti-Pblegonist treats Justin Martyr and Tertullian: — One of the mistaken good Men, that out-live their Judgment and good Sense, and then dream of nothing but Life and Immortality coming to Light by the Gospel. Mr. Lock was of an Opinion, that the most rational Method for understanding the Holy Scriptures, was to consult the general Sense of those Writers that lived in the purest Ages of the Church, or (as *Daillé* just now expressed it) in those Times which came nearest to the Apostles. But we have Reasoners now in abundance, that will pay no Regard to the Judgment of those ancient Writers: They are for setting the Sun (says the same ingenious*

Writer,

Writer, already * quoted) by their own *Dials* ; for making *pure Reason*, exclusive of the *primitive Fathers*, the best Interpreter or Judge of Scripture. The Language, Idioms, Rites, Customs, and Discipline of the *Apostolick Age*, are Things (no Man questions) very necessary for understanding the obscurer Passages of the Gospel : But the *primitive Fathers* were, in a Manner, born to these Advantages. Besides, our present Controversies are mostly concerning *Facts*, whether such and such *Doctrines* were taught, &c. What can *pure Reason* do here, without the Testimony of the *Fathers*, concerning Matters of *Fact* at such a Distance ? Should our *Anti-Phlegonist* then proceed in lessening the Authority of *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*, the stubborn *Facts* they have related will always have their Weight. I find, for Instance, *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian* (says Mr. Reeve †) with all the rest of the Holy *Fathers*, about their *Time*, positively asserting the Son of God, the Man *Christ Jesus*, to be truly and properly God, and explaining his *eternal Generation*, without any Diminution of the *Father*, by a *Ray* from the Sun, or the Kindling of one Light from another. Now, perhaps, though I may not think their *Reasoning* or *Similitude* hold exactly true in every Point, yet, I am sure, as to the *Fact*, viz. that the *Divinity of Christ* was the *Article* they maintained, though they should

C c differ

* Mr. Reeve's Pref.

† *Ibid.* p. 5.

differ in their Explications of it. “ Indeed,
 “ was the *Christian Religion* to be mended,
 “ after it came out of the Hands of *Christ*
 “ and his *Apostles*, and the Work expressly
 “ left to the *Reasoners* of latter Days ; some-
 “ thing might be said for our *Modern Refiners* :
 “ But all the mending that I know of late (says
 “ Mr. *Reeve*) has been only *making Holes in the*
 “ Creed and Constitution of our *Church* : And
 “ that some *Free-Thinkers*, by the Help of
 “ clear Ideas, have made a Shift to *reason*
 “ themselves clearly out of all *Gospel-Mystery*,
 “ and the very *Canon* of Scripture it-self.”

B. By this firm Attachment of yours to the
Primitive Fathers, it is easy to foresee the *Dis-*
pleasure you must draw on your self, from great
 Numbers, that still continue in the same Way
 of thinking, as I was three or four Years ago
 myself. The Society that I then belonged to,
 let me into one *Secret*, which I must disclose
 to you before we *part*, because it has a Re-
 lation both to you and to our *Anti-Pblegonist*,
 though you *differ* so much in your Princi-
 ples.

A. The *Displeasure* you foresee, gives me
 no Manner of Pain. It is too apparent (as I
 told you in our *first Day's Conference*, from an *
Authority that our Adversaries will not care to
 dispute) that “ *absolute Libertinism* is the
 “ Thing they really aim at ; and however their
 “ Creed

* Part I. p. 11.

“ *Creed* may pretend to be the *Creed* of *Deists*,
 “ yet almost always their *Practice* is the Prac-
 “ tice of very *Atheists*.” Dr. *Clarke* has said
 it in his *Boyle’s Lectures*; and, I think, our
Anti-Phlegonist has not prevail’d to have it struck
 out. I still hope, such Adversaries may see
 their Errors: But the *Secret* you mention, sur-
 prizes me. Pray what is it?

B. The *Secret* is this: When any Member of
that Society is minded to shew his Skill and
 Parts, in being profane, and in declaiming
 lustily against *Revealed Religion*, (Leave being
 first obtained from the *Board*,) he often chuses
 to *personate* a *Clergyman*, in the doing of it.
 Though your *Order* in general must (I fear)
 suffer from this *Hellish* Proceeding, yet are they
such only, like your *Anti-Phlegonist*, (in my Opi-
 nion,) that must take the Shame to themselves;
 they being the Occasion of it: For your At-
 tachment, as I say, to the *Primitive Fathers*, and
Fundamentals, make a plain Distinction, and would
 otherwise spoil the Scheme of such Wretches. I
 brought a *Pamphlet* with me this Morning, (and
 have it here in my Pocket,) drawn up by one of
 our young *Gentlemen* in Town; wherein he makes
 a *Country Clergyman* speak thus to his Friend
 in * *London*, on account of an excellent Book
 lately published, that gives our *Free-Thinkers* a
 great deal of Disturbance; as well it may. In-

C c 2

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* Remarks on the *Minute Philosopher*. In a Letter from a
Country Clergyman to his Friend in *London*. Printed for J. Ro-
 berts, 1732.

deed our *Younker*, who pretends to know, when
 a *Character* is preserved, and when not, has
 sadly overshot himself in this Point : And no
Anti-Phlegonist whatever, I dare say, ever came
 up to it: However, take the *Character* as it is now
 given to the Publick; and let our *Ant-Phle-*
gonists, *Deists*, *Socinians*, and *Arians*, consider
 of it, and answer for the Consequences, if only
 in regard to *Civil Society*. The *Clergyman* is
 made to set out in this Manner, by telling his
 Friend, “ That he was not born a Fool, nor
 “ educated a Blockhead: That he supposes the
 “ Author of the *Minute Philosopher* has Learn-
 “ ing and Knowledge, &c. but that he intro-
 “ duces Personages, without *preserving Cha-*
 “ *acters*; and has least Perspicuity where
 “ the Reader will naturally have most Cu-
 “ riosity; which is an *irremissible Sin*: That,
 “ in his Opinion, the Author of the *Minute*
 “ *Philosopher* is hastening the Decay of the
 “ Christian Religion; at which he feels a very
 “ great Resentment: That the *Fable of the*
 “ *Bees* sneers a little at our modern *Reverend*
 “ and *Right Reverend Apostles*, who are paid
 “ for preaching what they do not practice, and
 “ *propagating* what they do not understand:
 “ That many well-disposed People measure
 “ their Merit to God, by the Difficulty they
 “ find in reconciling their Belief to their Com-
 “ prehension; and, with Dr. *Brown* (*Religio*
 “ *Medici*) are sorry that God Almighty would
 “ not

“ not have the Goodness to impose something more
 “ incomprehensible than the Trinity, &c. That
 “ the Pulpit ought to do by the Gospel, as
 “ Westminster-Hall does by the Law ; which is
 “ to determine by Authority, Prescription, and
 “ Precedents, what is Law, and not to *examine*
 “ the Right which the first Legislator had to
 “ institute it, and make it such. I am so fully
 “ convinced of this being the proper Office of
 “ a Divine, that, for my own Part, when any
 “ of these cavilling Genius’s, who have a Mind
 “ to hamper us Sticklers for Christianity, talk of
 “ Enquiry, I always answer, *Mystery* ; when
 “ they ask for Proof, I cry, *Faith* ; if they
 “ raise Doubts, I quote *Authority* ; and when-
 “ ever they mention *Reason*, I bid them con-
 “ sult *Tradition*. By these Means, fighting
 “ with my own Weapons, and never encounter-
 “ ing them with their Arms, I always stand my
 “ Ground, and make my Party good. People
 “ are now come to consider, not what is *meant*
 “ in the Gospel, but whether that Meaning,
 “ when it is agreed upon, be *worth* the Search ;
 “ or the Gospel it self be *worth* minding : They
 “ want to have the Divinity of Christ’s Mission
 “ itself *authenticated* ; whereas that is a Point
 “ that ought never to come into play, any more
 “ than the King at Chess : Whenever they give
 “ him Check, your only Recourse is, to cover
 “ it ; and when you cannot cover it any longer,
 “ the Game is lost.”

A. This

A. This *personating a Clergyman*, and throwing out so much *Profaness* and *Infidelity*, in the doing of it, (may the Author timely repent, and find Mercy in the Day, that he shall stand in need of it!) puts me in mind of another Sort of *personating our Order*: When, after a Debauch, Pockets empty, and a warm Head, the young *Free-Thinking Rake* affects to reel Home in the *Habit of a Clergyman*; but being just able to belch out *Oaths* and terrible *Imprecations*, (those habitual Imbellishments,) the Wolf in Sheep's Cloathing is soon discovered; the leud Design as soon ends in his own Shame. If you should happen to meet with any of your old *Fraternity*, let them tell the Author of this Pamphlet, to take care, when he personates a *Clergyman again*, that he don't *over-do* it; for, as he has remarked himself, if a *proper Character* is not preserved, the *Design* is quite lost in him that draws it. Such *Venom*, and so much rank *Poison* as this, must be better *gilded* over; otherwise, the *Composition*, it is to be hoped, will hurt no body but the filthy Hand that made it up. I dare say, your own good Judgment is not in the least *biaſſed*; and if you are disposed to dip any farther into *it*, it will have one Effect, and no other, in making us lament the Degeneracy of the Times we live in, and wish, and pray, that we may soon see *better*. Please to read on.

B. Our

B. Our Clergyman supposes, (Page 17.) but then he tells you, it is only for Argument sake,
 “ That the sanguine Followers of *Christ*, in
 “ the early Days of the Propagation of the
 “ Gospel, might possibly say a little more of
 “ *him*, with regard to his *Parentage*, than was
 “ strictly and literally true : But what then?
 “ &c. Does it prove (says he) the Practice of
 “ *his* Rules less conducive to the general Good
 “ of Mankind? Was *Alexander* a less able
 “ Captain, or his Conquests less glorious, be-
 “ cause his Flatterers, in their mean Adula-
 “ tion, told a few Fables about his Birth;
 “ and, in order to Deify his Extraction on his
 “ Father’s Side, said, that Jove lay with his
 “ Mother in the Shape of a Serpent? All the
 “ Wrangling and Jangling upon the strict lite-
 “ ral Meaning of *Moses’s* being inspired, and
 “ the contesting God’s personal Appearance to
 “ him on *Mount Sinai*, in order to depreciate
 “ *Moses’s* Wisdom as a Legislator, is just as ri-
 “ diculous. Were the Laws of *Numa Pom-*
 “ *pilius* the worse, because he pretended they
 “ were dictated to him by a Divinity? The
 “ Story of the *Warming-Pan* was very proper
 “ to be given out, when the *Revolution* was
 “ but young. It had its Weight : But when
 “ the good Effects of it came by Experience
 “ and long Trial to be felt, those *Frauds* that
 “ were necessary in its Commencement, to de-
 “ ceive People into their own Good, became
 “ gradually

“ gradually quite *useless* ; and no body now
 “ troubles his Head, whether the Pretender is,
 “ or is not an *Impostor*.” (You have heard the
 Blasphemy, and I see your Astonishment.) This
Clergyman is moreover made to argue thus, *viz.*
 (p. 38, 39.) “ That, as for saying *Grace* before
 “ and after Meat, (the Neglect of which the
 “ *Minute Philosopher* complains of,) no Institu-
 “ tion for divine Worship is, perhaps, more
 “ liable to Objection than this. Addres-
 “ sing ourselves to Heaven, (says he) because
 “ Food is necessary for our Support, seems to
 “ me no more a *reasonable* Act of Christian
 “ Piety, than it would be for any *intemperate*
 “ *Whoremonger* to throw up a little Hymn of
 “ Praise in a *Bau dy-House*, because the World
 “ would cease without the Use of Women.
 The *Profane* Raillery on this Subject, is car-
 ried on to such a Height, by this poor miserable
depending Creature, that I cannot go on with
 it : And, I am to suppose, that out of *sixty five*
 Pages, of horrid *Blasphemy* and *Profaness*, you
 have heard enough from *two* or *three* of them.
 The only Objection I have to that excellent
 Work, called the *Minute Philosopher*, is, that
 he is sometimes too *abstruse* and *intricate*, (at
 least to my Capacity,) where he ought to have
 been most plain and intelligible : And so far
 this *Remarker*, seems to me, to be in the Right,
 when he says, “ *Metaphysicks* are an improper
 “ *Method* to take for the Support of Christi-
 “ *anity* ;

“ *nity*, because whatever is designed for common
 “ Use, should be levelled to common Apprehen-
 “ sions; and whatever is to be universally re-
 “ ceived, ought to be universally understood.”

I desire to hear more of your well-attested *Facts*; and after that, your own *Reasoning* upon them. Your *appealing* in that Manner, where *Reason* and *Enquiry* have their full Scope allowed them, for proving or disproving such *Facts*, is the *Method* that best pleases me, for *evincing* the Truth of the Christian Religion, and its *primitive* Doctrines. *Adieu*. I heartily wish you a good Night.

A. Remember Dean *Prideaux's* two Reflections *. *Adieu*.

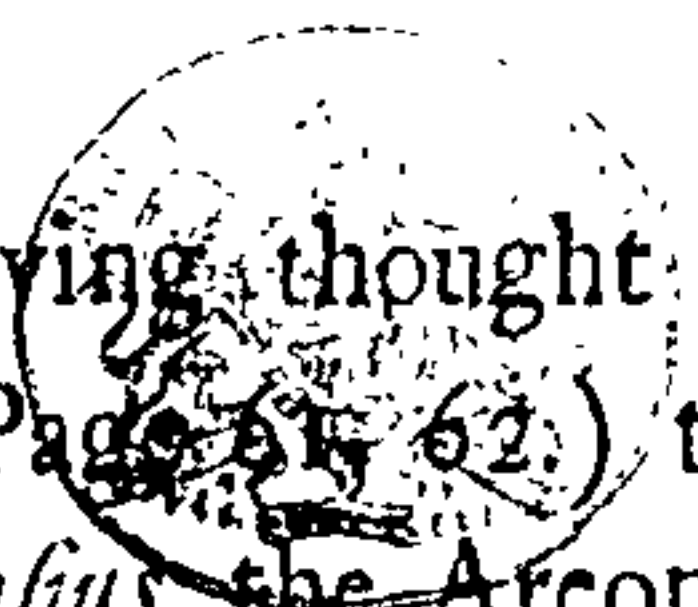
* Above, Pag. 9, 10, 11, 12.

F I N I S.

D d

A D.

ADVERTISEMENT.

**D**R. Sykes having thought fit, in his *Dissertation* (Page 61, 62.) to stile the *Greek Epistle of Dionysius the Arcopagite* (Bishop of *Athens*) an *absurd Romance*; and afterwards running into great *Absurdities* himself, either by not understanding, or rather wilfully perverting the Sense of some Passages in that *Epistle*, (as has been shewn at large, and the *Genuineness* of it asserted, in this and the following *Conference*,) it was judged proper to make a large *Extract* from the *Epistle* itself; such as might be sufficient to set the *Affair* in a better Light, and to convince the *English* Reader, that the said *Epistle* does not deserve the opprobrious Name of a *Romance*; there being, in Truth, no *Marks* of *Spuriousness* throughout the Whole of it. Happening unwarily * (not having his *Dissertation* then by me) to charge this Writer with omitting the last Words in that *Extract*, which I since find to be otherwise, and that they were taken by him out of *Suidas* likewise: I hereby acknowledge the *Mistake*; as I shall be ready to do any other, when made appear to be one.

* *Fourth Conference*, Page 141.

A N
A P P E A L
T O T H E
Genuine Records.

PART II. CONFERENCE V.

B. **W**ELL met Sir! I was coming to give you another troublesome Visit. I find, this Park has its pleasures even in Winter: However I had now much rather adjourn to your warm study, and hear *Lucian* give his Evidence about that remarkable verse in St. John's 1st Ep. *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven &c.* You told me, I remember, the last time, that none ever had been so hardy, as to call in question the *Genuineness* of this Epistle; and if *Lucian* made himself merry with *this Verse*, the beginning of the *second Century*, I hope we shall hear no more of its *spuriousness* from our *Arians* and *Free-*

43-4-25 (6-21)



thinking Gentry. You told me likewise, that the late learned Dr. *Cave* Canon of *Windsor*, has set this affair of *Lucian's* in a fine light, highly convincing to any unprejudic'd Reader, above what Bp. *Bull* and others have said upon the same Subject. It seems, tis yet in *M.S.*: being part of his *Historia Literaria*, that the World has been so long enquiring after. I own I begin to be somewhat impatient, till you summon this *Lucian* and the Venerable Canon. I'm sorry, *that* trifling *Anti-Pblegonist* should have been the occasion of postponing *them* so long.

A. You see a *new* Pamphlet lying on the Table: It belongs to Your *Ant. Pbl.* He has been lately looking out *afresh*, for a juster calculation, than his friend *Whiston* gave Him ; and He is now very sanguine, that his *November* Eclipse is the very Eclipse that *Pblegon* speaks of ; so that the Antients who *Appeal'd* to the *Roman Records* about it, are either now (He says) all of *his side*, † or else that they were miserably mistaken, and did not Know what they were a doing, when they made such an *Appeal* in defense of Christianity. Now, I leave you to Judge, whether this Man's *Sincerity* or his *Knowledge* are most to be call'd in question. The *different Supputation* of years, as to the Reign of *Tiberius* (well Known to the learned World) is what our *Anti-Pbl.*: either artfully conceals, or is shamefully ignorant of. He stiles the accurate *Africanus* p. 39 &c. *inaccurate*, because He, as well as *Tertullian*, *Lactantius* and others said, that Christ suffered in the XVth of *Tiberius*; whereas, let but the *Pro-*
consular

† *Sylor's* *Def.* p. 40:

consular and *Imperial* Government of *Tiberius* be carefully attended to, and the *different* Supputations consequent thereupon; and which were long observ'd in the World, till *Eusebius* first began to *reform* in the matter;) all the mighty *Difficulties*, with which your *Anti-Pbl.* has been amusing the World, vanish at once; and when the time of year and manner of computing from the beginning of the Emperor's Reign is further remark'd; the Difference of about *three* years, which is the *Mist* cast before People's Eyes, will be clearly accounted for; and was always well understood by those who were seemingly at so much variance in the matter. Nay depend on't, you will find no occasion to make so many scruples and Doubts about the *Year* of such or such an *Olympiad*; when you are once inform'd, upon good Authority, that there are even *two* ways of computing by the *Olympiads*. In short, our *Anti-Pbl.* will never do his Cause any service by Calculation of Eclipses, tho' they shou'd be *amended* several times more for Him by the ablest Hands.

The *Appeals* that have been made to the *Roman Records* concerning a *Preternatural* Eclipse; and such *Appeals* never contradicted; *Pblegon's* Eclipse also nam'd as *such*; these things are a *Stubborn Fact*; that supercedes all such Methods of confuting *Pblegon's* Testimony. No body disputes the *Natural Eclipse* that *Kepler* and our *Moderns* calculate. But let Him get the ablest Mathematician to say, that *such* Eclipse was actually *Pblegon's*: this is the Point; when that is done, I will only reply in the words of

Scaliger; † ‘ *Phlegon* in his Chronicle was not silent,
 ‘ even touching the *Miracles* of Christ. *Tertullian*
 ‘ had *Phlegon*’s Testimony in his Thoughts, when
 ‘ (in his Apologetick) He says, *In the same moment*
 ‘ *that Christ dismiss’d Life, the Light departed from*
 ‘ *the Sun, and the World was benighted at noon day,-----*
 ‘ *and this wonder of the World you have related, and*
 ‘ *the Relation preserved in your Archives.* ’ Our
Anti-Pbl. will perhaps soon have the honour done
 Him, of having these last words of *Tertullian* struck
 out of Dr. S. Clarke’s Boyle’s Lectures, as well as
 the Testimony of *Phlegon*; tho’ they have stood
 there unmolested for *seven* Editions together. This
 is the *Problem*, that even Mr. *Wh.* cannot solve.

B. I was in great hopes, there had been no farther occasion for spending Time upon this *second* trifling performance, which I have read too with some sort of resentment, I own; having beforehand pretty well digested all that had passed at our last Meeting: I am glad to find, He is growing sick of such sort of Work; I wish I could hear of his Repentance too, as to the *disservice* He has been doing Christianity. * He says, ‘ He shall now
 ‘ dismiss all thoughts of a further Examination of
 this subject --- ’Tis high time indeed so to do---
 whether Mr. *Wh*’s- *Copernicus* will likewise be
 laid aside in this matter I can’t say; nor much
 do

† *Phlegon* in *Cronicis* ne de Christi quidem *Miraculis* tacuit. *Phlegontis* Testimonium habebat in animo *Tertullianus* quando ait, *Eodem Memento Dies*, &c. *Scalig.* Animadv. in *Euseb.* Cron.

* p. 61.

do I care. I hear, He intends shortly to *explain* *Pblegon's* Eclipse. What the meaning of *that* is, I don't well know. I think you quoted an old scholiast *Maximus*, when I last saw you, who had seen *Pblegon's* Works, and says expressly, that *Pblegon* had not offered to *explain* it, or had given no account of the *manner* of it. † I am satisfied, we shall never have *Pblegon's* Testimony either confuted or cleared up *that* Way. However, tis Amazing, to see our *Anti-phl*: making his Controversial *exit* after such an obstinate manner as He does, without any signs of Remorse for the mischief his Pamphlets are every day doing amongst our young Libertines. ‘ Whatever my Abilities are, says He, ‘ p. 72. which I freely acknowledge to be not ‘ great, yet be they more or less, Truth I love, and ‘ Truth I constantly search after &c.’ I saw his two Pamphlets the other Day, I mean his *Dissertation* and *Defence*, lying upon the Table, close by the well-thumb'd *Quarto*, at the same House, whence I gave you some account, when I last saw you. There was now indeed a much greater Appearance, than before; and all concluded, that Thanks was due to our *Anti-Pbl*. and said moreover, that they did not dislike his Way of *explaining* some *Prophecies*, no more than they did his *Defence* of the Answer to the *Remarks* upon Dr. *Clarke's* Exposition of the Church Catechism. I endeavoured to make the best use I could of the Reflections which they made on this occasion; and I am pretty sure the

Con-

† ἡ μὲν γὰρ τὸν τρόπον ἀνέγραφε.

Conversation ended, in shewing the *unreasonableness of Infidelity* in regard to *Revelation*.

A. I should not have troubled you with any thing farther about *Phlegon's* Testimony, (for, I think, nothing in our *Anti-Pbl. Defence* does require it) but purely to clear up farther, and Justify what I have already said; and to make some few Remarks upon these obstinate mistakes our *Anti-Pbl.* seems resolved to adhere to. I perceive, you have been engaging with a great number of *Deists*: I am in some pain, how you behaved in that Matter; and what method you could take, to give you such an assurance of Victory.

B. You will be Surprized, when I tell You. If I may be allowed to say it, There was some sort of *Finesse* in the doing of it. Dr. *Prideaux's* two Reflections, as you advised me, were a piece of Armour that did me real Service; and when I found it was proof, I attack'd them with *Weapons* they were not at first Aware of. Upon my requiring, that they would give a plain and explicit account of their *Natural Religion*, which I Promis'd, I would either except to, in giving the best Reasons I could; or else acquiesce in what they said; I soon found, they were much divided in their Religious Scheme. No less than *Four* different Opinions Prevailed amongst them, concerning their Religion; which, you'l say, made the Conquest still easier on my Side. One of them said to me, that, for his part, whatever opprobrious Distinctions the *Deists* might labour under, He should for ever disclaim the name of an *Atbeist*; for that He did
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believe the Existence of an Eternal, Infinite, Independent, Intelligent Being; and that this Supreme Being *made* the World; tho at the same time, He could not help thinking, as the *Epicureans* did, that this Supreme Being does not at all concern Himself in the Government of the World. The Reply made was this; To fancy, that the Supreme Being, after creating a certain *Quantity of Matter and Motion*, should leave them to frame a World without any determinate and particular View, design or direction: can no way be defended consistently, but must of necessity recur to downright *Atheism*. I was going on to enforce the Argument, when another streight interrupted me, saying, that He beleived not only the *Being* but also the *Providence* of God; and therefore must differ in opinion so far from the Gentleman I was talking to. I reply'd; his *Scheme* should be immediately hearkened to; and I made no question, but that *his*, though more plausible, would be found very defective. Addressing my self then again to the first person, I proceeded thus; the late Improvements in Mathematicks and Natural Philosophy have discovered, that, as things now are, such a *Scheme* as yours is plainly false and impossible in Fact. Since *Matter* is utterly uncapable of obeying any Laws; the very original Laws of Motion themselves cannot continue to take place, but by something Superior to matter, *continually* exerting on it a certain force, or power, according to such certain and determinate Laws. Tis moreover now evident beyond question, that the Bodies of all *Plants* and *Animals*,

animals, Much the most considerable parts of the World, could not possibly have been formed by meer Matter according to any general Laws of Motion. And not only so; but *that* most universal principle of *Gravitation* itself, the spring of almost all the great and regular inanimate Motions in the World, answering not at all to the *Surfaces* of Bodies, (by which alone they can act one upon another) but entirely to their *solid Content*; cannot possibly be the result of any Motion originally impressed on Matter, but must of necessity be caused (either *immediately* or *mediately*) by something which penetrates the very solid substance of all Bodies, and continually puts forth in them a force or power entirely different from *that* by which Matter acts upon matter. The Gentleman here interposed, saying, that *Gravitation*, He believed, was a *Secret* that the Almighty had reserved, as such: which I readily admitted; and hoped, He would allow, that many more *secret things did belong* to the same Infinite Being. I then desired him farther to attend to the force of the same Argument which demonstrably proved, not only that the World was made originally by a Supreme Intelligent Cause; but that moreover it *depended every Moment* on some Superior Being, for the *Preservation* of its Frame: and that all the great Motions in it are caused by some *Immaterial Power*, not having *originally* impressed a *certain Quantity of Motion* upon Matter, but *perpetually and actually* exerting itself every Moment in every part of the World. which *preserving and governing Power*, whether it be *immediately* the

Power

Power and action of the same Supreme Cause that created the World ; of Him, *without whom* not a Sparrow falls to the ground, and *with whom the very Hairs of our Head are all numbred* ; or whether it be the action of some *subordinate Instruments* appointed by Him to direct and preside respectively over certain parts thereof ; does either way equally give us a very noble Idea of *Providence*.

A. I begin now to guess at the Quiver, whence you took your Arrows ; and I like the *Design* : for there is more hope of Success, when Arguments are brought from *that Quarter* : But perhaps the Gentlemen did not yet perceive, in what Manner you was pressing them.

B. I much question, whether they did or no : for, generally Speaking ; these sort of Refiners upon the Reason of Mankind, chuse rather to *talk* of Books than to read them thoroughly and digest them : But be that as it will in the present Case, when Arguments are strong and good, they ought to have their Weight, and will have their force in every unprejudic'd Mind ; yet still *they* are easier apprehended, sooner admitted, and make a deeper impression, if they come offered by one, whose Judgment we very much esteem and value in other matters. I was told however, that I had by no means made good the main thing I undertook to prove ; for admitting, says He, that your Argument hitherto is conclusive, concerning a *governing and preserving Power* in the manner you have laid it down ; yet what is that to the monstrous charge of *Atheism*, that you

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just

just now made? I told you, that I did believe in a Supreme Being, and that this Supreme Being made the World. Now, because I did not carry my Belief farther, as to the *governing and preserving part*; you draw a consequence, that my opinion must of necessity recur to *down-right Atheism*. I say, this remains yet to be prov'd: and so bid me go on. I proceeded thus;

That I was satisfied, there were many Persons in the World, who, thro' a certain Vanity of Philosophizing, are tempted to embrace the *same Opinion* with Himself, without attending whither it would lead 'em; and therefore I so far agreed, that neither He nor they ought to be directly, *charged* with all the *Consequences* of it. But 'tis certain, many under *that* Cover have really been *Atheists*; and the Opinion itself, I again say, leads *necessarily*, and by unavoidable Consequence, to plain *Atheism*. For, if God be an All-powerful-Omnipresent, Intelligent, Wise and Free Being (as you must acknowledge) He cannot possibly but *know*, at all Times and in all Places, every thing that *is*; and *foreknow* what at all Times and in all Places 'tis fittest and wisest *should be*; and have perfect *Power*, without the least labour, difficulty, or opposition, to *order and bring to pass* what He so judges fit to be accomplished: and consequently it is impossible, but He must actually direct and appoint every particular thing and circumstance, that is in the World or ever shall be, excepting only what by his own Pleasure He puts under the power and choice of subordinate Free Agents. If therefore

fore God does not concern Himself in the Government of the World, nor has any regard to what is done therein ; it will follow, that he is not an Omnipresent, All-powerful, Intelligent and Wise Being ; and consequently, that He is not at all. Wherefore, the Opinion of such sort of *Deists* as yourself, stands not upon any consistent Principles, but leads unavoidably to *downright Atheism*. The Gentleman who first interrupted me in this Reply, thinking I had dwelt too long upon it, told me again,

II. That He could not agree with the Gentleman, that I had been engag'd with : For, tho' a *Deist*, He readily allow'd, that every *natural* thing that is done in the World, is produc'd by the Power, appointed by the Wisdom, and directed by the Government of God : But then, He could not so easily allow of the Difference, as is generally maintain'd, between *Moral Good and Evil* ; and therefore was of an Opinion, that God does not take notice of the *morally good or evil Actions of Men* ; but rather thought, these things depended merely on the arbitrary Constitution of humane Laws. The Answer made to him was this ;

That, though he seem'd to speak honourably of the *natural* Attributes of God, such as his Knowledge, Wisdom and Power ; yet such an Opinion could not be settled on any certain Principles, nor defended by any consistent Reasoning ; that the *natural Attributes* of God cannot be so separated from the *moral*, but that He who denies the latter, may be reduced to a Necessity of denying the for-

mer likewise. For since (as it has been thoroughly prov'd by Persons whose Learning and Judgment you will by no means call in question) there cannot but be eternal and necessary Differences of different things one from another ; and from these necessary Differences of things, there cannot but arise a Fitness or Unfitness of the Application of different things or different Relations one to another ; and infinite Knowledge can no more fail to know, or infinite Wisdom to choose, or infinite Power to act according to these eternal Reasons and proportions of Things, than Knowledge can be Ignorance, Wisdom be Folly, or Power Weakness ; and consequently the *Justice* and *Goodness* of God are as certain and necessary, as his Wisdom and Power : It follows unavoidably, that He who denies the *Justice* or *Goodness* of God, or, which is all one, denies his Exercise of these Attributes, in inspecting and regarding the *moral* Actions of Men, must also deny, either his Wisdom or his Power, or both ; and consequently must needs be driven into *absolute Atheism*.

A. I confess, this is good Reasoning, not to be confuted by the strongest Heads amongst your old *Fraternity* : but, it seems to be a little too *Metaphysical* for the younger sort of 'em. I hope, you illustrated this from the *Practice* of such sort of *Deists* : for, let their Professions be never so honourable concerning some particular Attributes of God ; we may in this Case judge of their true Opinion from their *Practice*.

B. This,

B. This, you'll say, was a tender Point ; but, as I thought it a proper Time to speak the Truth, I took the Liberty of observing, that it could not be deny'd, but that the *Practice and Behaviour* of such, as maintain'd the like Opinions with Himself and the Gentleman I had been talking with before, was generally agreeable to *that* of the most openly profess'd *Atheists*. I observ'd it, as a thing too notorious, that they do not only oppose the *Revelation* of Christianity, and reject all the *moral* Obligations of *Natural* Religion, as such ; but generally they despise also the Wisdom of all *Humane Constitutions* made for the Order and Benefit of Mankind ; and are as much Contemners of *common Decency* as they are of *Religion*. They pretend commonly in their Discourse and Writings, to expose the Abuses and Corruptions of Religion ; but (as is too manifest in some of their Books, as well as in their Talk) they aim really against all Virtue in general, and all good Manners, and against whatsoever is truly valuable and commendable in Men. They pretend to ridicule certain Vices and Follies of ignorant or superstitious Men ; but the many very profane and lewd Images, with which they industriously affect to dress up their Discourse, show plainly, that they really do not so much intend to expose and deride any Vice or Folly, as on the contrary to foment and please the debauched and vicious Inclinations of others as void of Shame as themselves. They discover clearly, that they have no sense at all of the Dignity of humane Nature, nor of the Superiority and

and Excellency of their Reason above even the meanest of Brutes. They will sometimes in Words seem to magnify the Wisdom and other natural Attributes of God ; but in reality, by ridiculing whatever bears any Resemblance to it in Men, they show undeniably, that they do not indeed believe there is any real Difference in Things, or any true Excellency in one thing more than in another. They seem not to have any Esteem or Value for those distinguishing Powers and Faculties, with which God has endow'd them, and by which He has (*Job 35. 11.*) *taught them more than the Beasts of the Field, and made them wiser than the Fowls of Heaven.* In a word, *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any Virtue, if there be any praise ;* these things they make the constant Subject of their mockery and abuse, ridicule and railery. On the contrary, whatsoever things are profane, impure, filthy and dishonourable ; these things they make it their Business to represent as harmless and indifferent, and to laugh Men out of their natural shame and abhorrence of them ; nay, even to recommend them with their utmost Wit. Such Men as these, I took the freedom to say, are not to be argued with, till they can be persuaded to use *Arguments* instead of *Drollery*. For *Banter* is not capable of being answered by *Reason* : not because it has any Strength in it ; but because it runs out of all the Bounds of Reason and good Sense, by extravagantly joining

together such Images, as have not in themselves any manner of Similitude or Connexion ; by which means, all things are alike easie to be render'd ridiculous, by being represented only in an absurd Drefs.

A. I easily imagine, that you was now told, that you *rail'd* instead of *disputed* ; tho' it is obvious to the whole World, that what you said to 'em is matter of Fact : but the polite Age we live in, will not allow of such a Procedure. They call it a Breach of *good Manners*, and that it often hinders the Force of a nervous Argument, and consequently does disservice to the very Cause 'tis defending. I am very sure, (as I could shew by innumerable Instances, were it necessary) that the *primitive* Writers thought otherwise of the Matter. They did not only press their Adversaries by dint of Argument and sound Reasoning ; but their Blasphemy, or Profaneness, or an irreverent Treatment of things sacred, often made it necessary for 'em besides to *rebuke sharply*, which is now call'd *Railing*. And let any of those well-meaning Persons, who practise these *soft* Methods of convincing such sort of People as you have been describing ; let 'em, I say, tell me, where *such Methods* have been found successful. 'Till that is made appear, I cannot think that any Person, who is manifestly doing *disservice* to the Christian Religion, and openly persists in the doing of it, is entitled to any other Usage than what the Apostle has prescribed on the like Occasions.

B. You

B. Your Conjecture about *Railing* is very right. I was soon told, that He who had made me such a Philosopher and Reasoner in so small a time, did not teach me to behave with so much ill Manners ; and that no Gentleman of Learning and good Sense could say such things, or ever think of being successful, either in conversing or writing after such a manner as that. I own, I could not help smiling at the *Rebuke* ; thinking, it would not be long before I should find my Advantage from it. Having promis'd, that at present there should be no more such *plaineſs* of Speech used, but downright Argument ; another Gentleman directing himself to me, said, that He thought the Religion of a *Deist* was not yet truly represented by either of those Gentlemen that I had been talking with ; and desir'd that I would not leave 'em with any wrong Notion that I might entertain of the matter. He then proceeded, in assuring me.

III. That he did believe the supreme Being to be a Being of infinite Justice, Goodness and Truth ; that He governs the Universe by these Perfections, and expects suitable Obedience from all his Rational Creatures. But then I soon found, that this was spoken in a *qualified* Sense : for when I came to press him about the *Immortality* of *Humane Souls*, I found it was a Notion He did not care to come into. He was rather inclin'd to think, he said, that one Generation will *perpetually* be succeeding another : but that there would be no *future* Restoration or Renovation of Things. He moreover told me, that He thought Mankind

were not sufficient Judges concerning the *Attributes* of God, so as to argue from thence with any assurance of the Certainty of a *future State*. He was immediately answer'd,

That his Opinion could not stand upon any consistent Principle : For if Justice and Goodness be not the *same* in God, as in our *Ideas*, then we mean nothing, when we say that God is necessarily just and good : And for the same Reason, it may as well be said, that we know not what we mean, when we affirm, that He is an Intelligent and Wise Being ; and there will be no Foundation at all left, on which we can fix any thing. Thus the *moral* Attributes of God, I told him, however he seem'd to acknowledge 'em in *Words*, yet in reality he destroy'd 'em ; and upon the same Grounds, the *natural* Attributes may be also deny'd : so that upon the whole, such an Opinion, if it be argu'd upon consistently, must finally recur to absolute *Atheism*.

A. One would think after these *several Opinions*, our Free-thinking Gentry shou'd grow asham'd of their having so many fancied *Schemes* of Religion ; and not venture to pull down the Christian, till they are able to substitute a better in the room of it. There are some *Deists* indeed, who would be thought to improve vastly upon these *three* Opinions that you have been giving an account of : and if they did indeed *believe* what they *pretend*, they would be (like the Man in the Gospel) *not far from the Kingdom of God*.

B. Just such a *Pretender*, a little before I left the Assembly, address'd himself to me, desiring I would take notice, that the *Deists Religion* had not been yet *fully explain'd*, as it ought to have been ; that he was ready to do it ; and when that was done, he did expect that I would make some Reply or other to it, before the whole Company. This being consented to ; a sly, old, blear-ey'd, hypocritical *Deist* argued thus, *viz.*

IV. That the *Deists*, in the main, were often grossly misrepresented ; and he hop'd, those that had now given their *Opinions*, would think better on't, and come entirely into his *System* ; which was this : That an Infinite Being did unquestionably make the World for the Manifestation of his Power and Wisdom, and to communicate his Goodness and Happiness to his Creatures ; that He preserves it by His continual, all-wise Providence, and governs it according to the eternal Rules of Infinite Justice, Equity, Goodness, Mercy and Truth : That all Rational Beings, depending continually upon Him, are bound to adore, worship, and obey Him ; to praise Him for all things they enjoy, and to pray to him for every thing they want ; that Men, in particular, are every one obliged to make it their Business, by an universal Benevolence, to promote the Happiness of all others ; that every Man is bound to have an exact Government of his Passions, and carefully to abstain from all Debaucheries and Abuses of himself, which tend either to the destruction of his own Being, or to the disordering of his Faculties, and disabling him
from

from performing his Duty : and lastly, that accordingly as Men regard or neglect these Obligations, so they are proportionably acceptable or displeasing unto God ; who, being supreme Governor of the World, cannot but testify his Favour or Displeasure at some time or other ; and consequently, since this is not done in the present State, therefore there must be a future State of Rewards and Punishments in a Life to come.

I told him, I believ'd there were few such *Deists* among modern Deniers of *Revelation*. To profess all this, and yet to believe it only so far, as 'tis discoverable by the Light of Nature alone, without believing *Divine Revelation*, was not to be defended upon consistent Principles. A little Attention to the Consequences of what he had now profess'd to believe, should, methinks, naturally carry him farther, to embrace Christianity : For, if his Professions were now *sincere*, I was then to suppose him fully convinced of two very material Points, *viz.* of the *Obligations of Natural Religion* ; and the *Certainty of a future State of Rewards and Punishments*. And how then ? He could not but observe, and own, what little Use Men generally are able to make of the *Light of Reason*, to discover the *one*, or to convince themselves effectually of the *Certainty and Importance of the other*. And if that be the Case, 'tis impossible but they must be sensible of the want of a *Revelation* ; 'tis impossible but they must earnestly desire God would be pleased, by some direct Discovery of his Will, to make these things more *clear and plain*, more *easy and obvious*,

obvious, more *certain* and *evident* to all Capacities ; 'tis impossible but they must wish, God would be pleased particularly, to signify expressly the *acceptableness* of Repentance, and his willingness to forgive returning Sinners ; 'tis impossible, but they must be very solicitous to have some more particular and certain Information concerning the Nature of that *future State*, which Reason reaches them in general to expect. The Consequence of this, is, that they must needs be possess'd beforehand with a *strong Hope*, that the Christian Revelation may, upon due Examination, appear to be *true*. They must be infinitely far from *ridiculing* and *despising* any thing that claims to be a *Divine Revelation*, before they have *sincerely* and thoroughly examin'd it to the bottom. They must needs be before-hand very much disposed in *its* favour, and be very willing to be convinc'd, that, what tends to the *advancing and perfecting the Obligations of Natural Religion*, to the securing their great Hopes, and ascertaining the Truth of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments ; and can *any way* be made appear to be worthy of God, and consistent with his Attributes ; and has any reasonable Proof of the *Matters of Fact* it depends upon ; is really and truly what it pretends to be, a *Divine Revelation*. I then *appeal'd* to his own Breast, whether 'twas possible that he could be *sincerely* of the *Opinion*, that he said he was ; and not to have such *Dispositions* as these ? I then told 'em all, that it was very evident, from what had pass'd, that they had no consistent *Scheme* of *Deism* amongst themselves ;
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and that the Case was not *now*, as it was of old among the *Heathen Philosophers* : The Scheme of *Deism* is not any longer consistent with its own Principles, if it does not *now* lead Men to embrace and believe *Revelation*, as it did of *old* teach them to *hope* for it. I was, after this, told by 'em all, that a *second Volume in Quarto* was soon to come out, and then I should find all my fine Arguments fully confuted; which was an Answer, you easily imagine, gave me some Pleasure : for let the 2d Volume of *Christianity as old as the Creation*, &c. appear when it will, and be as well *thumb'd* as the *first* has been ; I am persuaded, that it will only discover more *Obstinacy* and *Insincerity*, and a stronger Inclination to traduce and bespatter the *Testimonies* of ancient and modern Writers ; as the Authors have done in the *first* : but their Cause, I'm satisfied, will still stand upon the same sandy Foundation it has done hitherto.

A. I'm mightily pleas'd to see, that you acquitted yourself in *this manner* ; and I believe, none but this *old Fraternity* of yours, will be displeased, when they come to know the *Method* you took in disputing with 'em ; or *whose* the Weapons were that you made use of in this Engagement. But, pray, what pass'd remarkable at parting ? or did they dismiss you in the like sullen Mood, as when they threaten'd you with a 2d Vol. in *Quarto* ?

B. I took up Dr. Sykes's two Pamphlets, which I told you some time ago lay upon the Table, and bid 'em all take notice, that Mr. Boyle's Lectures, (which those Pamphlets referr'd to) preach'd and publish'd
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by the late Dr. S. Clarke, did contain all the *Arguments* that I had made use of at their Board in Defence of *Divine Revelation*, and that very often their Objections happen'd to be in his own Words: so that I desir'd, when their 2d *Volume* came out, that those *Arguments* might be consider'd and examin'd as Dr. Clarke's, and not as *mine*: and I made no question, but, when they had so consider'd 'em, there would be enow to justify the Soundness of them; and to shew, that *they* will ever be unanswerable. But I desir'd 'em first to answer Dr. Stebbing, as to their XIVth Chapter. I made no question, I said, but that, as often as they visited the *Royal Hermitage*, and saw Dr. Clarke's *Busto*, they would think of *these Arguments*; and gratefully acknowledge the bounteous Hand, that had plac'd there so strenuous a Defender of *Divine Revelation* in general.

A. The Close after this, I suppose, was a profound Silence; 'bating the usual Form of *Your humble Servant Sir, Adieu*.

B. It happen'd quite otherwise. They own'd, they ever had a great regard to the Name of Dr. S. Clarke: But Dr. Sykes, they said, in those two Pamphlets had taught 'em not to lay so much Stress, as they had done, upon what Dr. Clarke should say concerning Christianity. They bid me recollect, in what Light that Gentleman had plac'd those venerable Fathers, *Justin M.* and *Tertullian*, in their way of propagating Christianity: and why might not Dr. Clarke (they said) be guilty in like manner? 'Tis plain, say they, that the Lecturer of St. James's charges the late Rector with having
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liv'd on for many Years together, in alledging a Testimony (a Matter of *Fact*) in behalf of Christianity, that, He says, had no relation to it: and if this be true; why may not Dr. *Clarke* be mistaken in other material Points relating to the Christian Religion? I thought it then sufficient to answer, that what I had now laid before 'em from Dr. *Clarke*, were not Matters of *Fact*, but plain *Reasoning* (such as they always declar'd for) and just Deductions drawn in behalf of the Points He had been debating.

A. Your *Distinction* was certainly very right; and after this, I take it for granted, no more was said.

B. I was willing to pursue the Blow, that, by Dr. *Clarke's* means; I had given 'em; so desir'd 'em to remember, that the *Railing* (as they call'd it) which they objected to me, was Dr. *Clarke's* likewise, and not mine; and, if they had Patience, they should hear a little more of it from the Words of the same Author; requesting, that they would shew the Weakness of it also in their 2d Volume. I then began, in saying; ' *Deists*, in our Days, ' who obstinately reject *Revelation* when offer'd ' to them, are not such Men as *Socrates* and *Tully* ' were; but, under pretence of *Deism*, 'tis plain, ' they are generally *Ridiculers* of all that is truly ' excellent even in *Natural Religion* itself. He that ' cannot prevail with Himself to obey the *Chri-* ' *stian Doctrine*, and embrace those Hopes of *Life* ' and *Immortality*, which our Saviour has brought ' to Light through the Gospel; cannot now be ima- ' gined to maintain with any Firmness, Steadiness

ness and Certainty, the Belief of the *Immortality*
 of the Soul, and a future State of Rewards and Pu-
 nishments after Death ; because all the main Dif-
 ficulties and Objections lie equally against *both*.
 Such then is the present corrupted State of the
 World ; such is the Carelessness, Inconsiderate-
 ness and want of Attention of the greater Part
 of Mankind ; so many the Prejudices and false
 Notions imbibed by evil Education ; so strong
 and violent the unreasonable Lusts, Appetites
 and Desires of Sense ; and so great the Blind-
 ness, introduced by superstitious Opinions, vici-
 ous Customs, and debauched Practices through-
 out the World ; that very few are able, in reality
 and effect, to discover these things clearly and
 plainly for themselves : which shews undeniably
 the want of a *Divine Revelation*, to recover Man-
 kind out of their universally degenerate Estate,
 into a State more suitable to the *Original* Excel-
 lency of their Nature : Both the Necessities of
 Men, and their *natural* Notions of God, gave
 them reasonable ground therefore to expect a
Divine Revelation : The same thing appears
 from the Acknowledgements made by the best
 and wisest of the Heathen Philosophers them-
 selves ; and from their Expressions of the *Hopes*
 they had entertain'd, that God would some time
 or other vouchsafe it unto them. What then can
 be said in Excuse for the vain Arguings of cer-
 tain vitious and profane Men, who merely upon
 account of their Incredulity, would be thought to
 be *strict Adherers to Reason*, and sincere and dili-
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gent Enquirers into Truth ; when indeed, on the contrary, there is but too much Cause to fear, that they are not at all *sincerely* and really desirous to be satisfy'd in the true State of things, but only seek, under the Pretence and Cover of Infidelity, to excuse their Vices and Debaucheries ; which they are so strongly enslav'd to, that they cannot prevail with themselves upon any account to forsake them : and yet a rational submitting to such Truths, as *just Evidence* and unanswerable Reason would induce them to believe, must necessarily make them uneasy under those Vices, and self-condemn'd in the Practice of them. Thus far Dr. *Clarke*, I told 'em, tho' dead, yet speaketh ; and let them shew, that He speaks amiss.

A. 'Tis certain, they will never be able to do it in this Matter. Happy had it been for Himself and others too, had his *Humility* been as conspicuous in receiving the *mysterious* Truths of Christianity, as his Knowledge was confessedly strong and extensive in defending the Christian Religion in *general* ; he had never then incurr'd the Censure of an *English Convocation*, nor yet been struck out of the List of Chaplains by his Royal Mistress Queen *Ann*. Humility in Things Divine, is that shining Virtue, with which Mr. *Lock* will ever stand recorded. He saw Mysteries in Nature ; and he saw Mysteries in Reveal'd Religion ; He perceiv'd, upon Examination, as *clear Evidence* for *one* Fact, as for the *other* ; and therefore his Reason taught Him to submit to *both* ; and made *Him rejoice* (as

He says Himself) in *Revelation*, which had set Him at Rest in many things. The other Gentleman's Philosophical Genius did not so well know how to submit to *some* Limitations made to his Understanding ; which put Him upon making those Objections, which he has done, about the *Christian Religion's* having been *corrupted*, or not rightly understood. And did these Enquiries appear to have been *sincerely* made, there had been some room to plead for Dr. Clarke's not being satisfied (as Mr. Lock was) with that *uncorrupted* Christianity, which has been convey'd to us for so many Ages. But alas ! his want of *Sincerity* in his late *Enquiries* about these Matters, spoil'd all : and you will have *this* fully laid open to you, when I have next the Pleasure of seeing You in this Place.

B. There is one Paragraph in his *Boyle's Lectures*, that seems to favour him as to this Matter. 'Tis this : * He tells the *Deists*, ' that all the *Credenda* or *Doctrines*, which the true, simple and ' uncorrupted Christian Religion teaches ; (that is, ' not only those plain Doctrines, which it requires ' to be believed as fundamental and of necessity to ' eternal Salvation, but even *all* the Doctrines ' which it teaches as *Matters of Truth* ;) are, tho' ' indeed many of them not discoverable by bare ' Reason unassisted with Revelation, yet, when ' discovered by *Revelation*, apparently most agree- ' able to sound unprejudiced Reason ; have every ' one of them a natural tendency, and a direct and

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* Dr. Clarke's *Boyle's Lectures*, p. 154. Ed. 7th.

‘ powerful *Influence*, to reform Men’s Lives, and
 ‘ correct their Manners ; and do *together* make up
 ‘ an infinitely more *consistent and rational Scheme* of
 ‘ Belief, than any of the wisest of the ancient Phi-
 ‘ losophers ever did, or the cunningest of modern
 ‘ Unbelievers can invent or contrive.

A. This Paragraph sets Dr. *Clarke* in the following Light, if I mistake not ; and I desire, He may be set in as *fair* a one, as his own Words will allow. He believ’d in several Doctrines of Christianity that are not discoverable by *bare Reason* unassisted with Revelation ; He believed in *all* the Doctrines which the *true, simple and uncorrupted* Christian Religion teaches ; He believ’d that they had *all* a natural tendency, &c. and did *all together* make up a more rational Scheme of Belief, &c. But then peruse His *Scripture Doctrine* ; his Letters to Mr. *Nelson* and Dr. *Wells*, &c. and tell me, whether that great *Mystery* of the Holy and ever blessed *Trinity* is ranked or esteemed of by Him, as one of those Doctrines, which the *true, simple and uncorrupted* Christian Religion teaches : Tell me, whether he has not willfully misrepresented the *sacred Writings* in that respect ; whether his Expositions, in his *Scripture Doctrine* and in his *Paraphrases*, are not sometimes manifestly different, if not contradictory ; whether He has not notoriously arraign’d the Judgment of the Catholick Church in this matter ; whether He has not knowingly perverted the Sense and Meaning of the ancient *Fathers* ; and whether He has not grossly abused his Mother Church of *England*, by wresting her

Liturgy to serve his *Heretical* Purposes? I told you when I last saw you, that I had many Years ago, in a publick manner, made good this heavy Charge against Him, concerning his *Insincere* Dealings as to this Doctrine of the *Trinity* ; and, according to my Promise, I shall make it farther appear, in a much stronger Light, when the next happy Meeting shall call for it. At present, let it be our Business to examine what our *Anti-Pbl.* has to say for Himself in this *Defence* of His ; whether He has yet made it probable, that Dr. *Clarke* could possibly be convinc'd of a *Mistake*, in relation to *Pblegon's* Eclipse, by such Arguments as he had to lay before Him.

B. Before you enter upon such an *Examination*, I should think it proper to let Dr. *Clarke* Himself be heard in his own Words concerning *Pblegon's* Testimony ; as it stands in all the *seven* Editions ; and by this means we shall form a better Judgment about his coming into our *Anti-Pbl's* Notions. Dr. *Clarke* had hitherto believ'd, that the Primitive Christians, when they *Appeal'd* to *Pblegon's* Eclipse, which he had taken from the *Roman Records*, were in their *right Senses* ; and that, as well those, who expressly mention *Pblegon*, as those who intentionally meant the same thing, were all thoroughly convinc'd, that the *Date* of the Eclipse corresponded with the *Time* of Christ's Passion : otherwise, who does not see, that they and their Religion too must have suffer'd ; and instead of propagating Christianity as they propos'd, must have render'd themselves inevitably both odious and

and ridiculous in the Eye of the Heathen part of the World? Now, if Dr. *Clarke* once conceiv'd thus of the Matter, (as will be better seen by producing the Passage itself) we are to enquire, how he came to change his Mind; How such an *Agreement*, as there once was betwixt the *Gentile* and the *Christian*, touching *Phlegon's* Eclipse and our Saviour's Crucifixion, comes *now* to be call'd in question; and why *that Eclipse*, which was once acknowledged by *Heathens, Jews, and Christians* to be *Preternatural*, should *now*, in Dr. *Clarke's* Opinion, pass for a *Natural* one. If you please then, let Dr. *Clarke* speak Himself; and then let our *Anti-phl.* clear up these Difficulties in his *Defence*.

A. I can have no Objection to your Method; and accordingly I observe, that the late Dr. *Sam. Clarke*, Rector of *St. James's Westminster*, in the *seventh* Edition of his *Boyle's Lectures*, † where He is saying (in opposition to the *Deists*) that many Particulars in the History of Christ contain'd in the New Testament are confirm'd by concurrent Testimonies of profane and unquestionably unprejudiced Authors; expresses Himself as follows: 'The Crucifixion of Christ under *Pontius Pilate* is related by *Tacitus*, thus:

Tiberio Imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat. L. 15.

In the Reign of *Tiberius* Christ was put to Death by *Pontius Pilate* the Governour.

‘ And

• And diverse of the most remarkable Circumstances (says He) attending it, such as the Earthquake and *miraculous Darkneſs*, were recorded in the publick *Roman Registers*, commonly *Appeal'd* to by the first Christian Writers, as what could not be *denied* by the Adverſaries themſelves. So *Tertullian* ;

Eum Mundi Caſum relatatum in *Arcanis veſtris* habetis. *Tertull. Apol.* †

This Wonder of the World you have related, and the Relation preſerv'd in your *Archives*.

• And theſe Circumſtances (ſays He) are in a very particular manner attested by *Pblegon*, as followeth ;

Τετάρτῳ δ' ετει τῆς διακοσιουτῆς δευτέρας ὀλυμπιάδος ἐγένετο ἑκλειψις ἡλίου μεγίστη τῶν ἐγνωρισμένων πρότερον. Καὶ Νύξ ὥρα ἕκτη τῆς ἡμέρας ἐγένετο, ὥστε καὶ ἀστέρας ἐν ἕραν φανῆναι. Καὶ σεισμός, &c. *Pblegon ap. Euseb.*

In the IVth Year of the CCIId Olympiad, there was the greatest Eclipse of the Sun that ever was known before : and Night came on at the sixth Hour of the Day, inſomuch that the Stars appear'd in the Sky.

• And this Teſtimony of *Pblegon* is cited by *Origen* for the ſame Purpoſe, as followeth ;

† Our *Anti-Pbl.* (in his Def. p. 8.) does not allow this Teſtimony to be *Authentic* ; but gives no *Reason*. Query, if He gave *Dr. Clarke* any ?

Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἐπὶ Τιβερίῳ Καίσαρος
ἐκλείψεως ἡ Βασιλεύουσα καὶ ὁ Ἰη-
σοῦς ἔοικεν ἐσταυρῶθαι. καὶ περὶ
τῶν μεγάλων τότε γενόμενων σεισ-
μῶν τῆς γῆς, ἀνέγραψε καὶ Φλέ-
γων. *Origen. adv. Cell. Lib. 2. f.*

But concerning the
Eclipse under *Tiberius*
Cæsar, in whose Reign
(we know) Christ was
crucified; and con-
cerning the great
Earthquakes which
then happen'd, *Pble-*
gon also has written.

Thus far *Dr. Clarke*; who was of an Opinion,
we see, for *seven* Editions together of these *Lectures*,
(levell'd directly against the *Deists*) that these Par-
ticulars in the *Gospel History* concerning the *Earth-*
quake and the *miraculous Darknefs*, were confirm'd
by the concurrent Testimonies of *profane and un-*
questionably unprejudiced Authors. The Case then
stands thus;

Since *Dr. Clarke's Death*, the Lecturer of his
Parish Church, one *Dr. Sykes*, has thought proper
to inform the World, that He Himself did con-
vince the *Rector* of *St. James's* of a Mistake con-
cerning *Pblegon's* Testimony; by offering him
such *Reasons* (now published and also defended)
as first induc'd Himself and afterwards the Doctor,
to think, that the *Eclipse* mention'd by *Pblegon*
had no relation to the *Darknefs* at our Saviour's
Passion. Accordingly, in the *eighth* Edition of
these *Lectures*, those Testimonies of *Pblegon*, and
Origen's Appeal to it, are both struck out; the
Reader is advertis'd withal, that these and other
Alterations in this *eighth Edition* are all truly printed
from

from the Author's own Copy, that He left behind Him : and to prevent the *Deists* taking any Advantage from such *Alterations* as these made by Dr. Sykes ; He himself has assur'd the World, that his own *Essays* and other Pieces by Him already published, are an undeniable Proof of his firm Attachment to *Reveal'd Religion* : but that still, in his Opinion, the alledging *such Testimonies* as these (from *Phlegon*, *Tert. Origen*, &c.) is so far from adding any Force to what is urged for the Truth of Christianity, that, on the contrary, 'tis rather doing a *Disservice to the Cause of Christ* ; and that therefore He *guards* against such *Testimonies*. Thus our *Lecturer* has taken the *Chair*, and sits in Judgment upon ancient and modern Writers. *Phlegon* and *Origen* are already discarded, *i. e.* no more to be heard of in Mr. Boyle's Lectures ; as bearing their Testimony in the manner Dr. Clarke had produc'd 'em ; and *Tertullian* in another Edition may possibly share the same Fate. The *Aversion* then of our *Anti-phl.* let it be never so strong, He must be contented to hear his *Praises* sung by our *Liber-tines* : when they see him plung'd so deep in their Service, and endeavouring *at least* to do a dirty Piece of Work for 'em, which neither they nor their Fore-Fathers were hardy enough to attempt the doing themselves. If Dr. Clarke, a Man of those fine Parts, great Learning, and solid Judgment (as the World generally represents him to have been) was induc'd to *submit* to such *Reasons* as our *Anti-phl.* has offer'd to the World ; what is the Victory, (say the *Deists*) that we mayn't promise

promise to ourselves in this respect? Nay, why may not Dr. *Clarke* (say they) have *doted* or else have been *prejudiced* in favour of *Reveal'd Religion*; * since *Justin M.* and *Tertullian* (as our *Anti-Pbl.* has told us) * were *good Men*; but had mistaken the *Acts* of *Pilate*, and quoted them as *genuine*, just as they did *some other things*, which seem'd to make so strongly *for their Cause*? "Now, tho' this be a false way of arguing in our *Deists*; yet I agree with you, many of your superficial Sparks are ready enough to run away with it for sound Reasoning: whereas the Consequence, 'tis manifest, is very faulty: for, when the *Deist* with his Senses and Understanding about Him, comes to be argued with; what He requires of his Adversary, is, that such and such *Premises* be laid down; be made plainly appear by the just Rules of Argument; and that the several *Deductions* from those Principles be naturally made, and as evident as the Truth of the Premises themselves. To object, *after* this is done, *Insincerity* in other *Matters*, if it cannot be prov'd in *this*; is only shewing a great deal of weakness; just the same, as telling the World, that because my Adversary is known to be a *bad Man* in several things, He must not be allow'd to *argue well* or justly in any thing.

B. After the Case thus stated, and the Remark you have made; let me ask you freely, what it is, that you take to be the great *Difficulty*, which our *Anti-Pbl.* throws in the way of every sober Reader,

der, concerning this *Testimony* of *Phlegon* ; and whether such *Difficulty* can be supposed sufficient to have influenc'd Dr. *Clarke* so far, as to strike out of his *Lectures* what had been said by *unquestionably unprejudic'd Authors*, (as He calls 'em) and *what cou'd not be deny'd* (He says) *by the Adversaries themselves*. To suppose Dr. *Clarke*, after such Expressions as these, to give Ear to an old blind Hypothesis of *Kepler's* (which Mr. *Wb.* has enough expos'd already) or indeed, to hearken to any Argument whatever, drawn from *Eclipses*, to prove *that natural*, which Friends and Foes have in all Ages (Dr. *Clarke* was very sure) agreed to be *supernatural* ; is to suppose, that Dr. *Clarke* paid a greater deference to the *Ipse Dixit* of his *Lecturer*, than to the concurrent Testimony of all Antiquity.

A. The great *Difficulty*, as I take it, that our *Anti-Pbl.* starts, in this Affair of *Phlegon's* Eclipse, is what I took some Notice of, when I last saw you ; and it may perhaps (since our *Anti-Pbl.* in his *Defence* seems to cast a greater Mist than before) now want to be farther explain'd. The *Difficulty* then arises from *different Epochs's*, or from the Way and Manner of adjusting *Time*, both before and after this Eclipse of *Phlegon's*. If you turn to the 39th page of his *Defence*, you find Him, after He has triumph'd for about two or three Pages, on account of these seeming *Difficulties* in *Chronology* ; (which he conceals from his Reader) arguing thus. ' When I produced *Jerome's* Authority, says He, to prove, that *Africanus* thought
' that

* that Christ died in the XVth of *Tiberius* ; unless
 * there were some clear Evidence, that *Jerome*
 * mistook or misrepresented Him, it ought to be
 * admitted sufficient to prove, that *Africanus*
 * thought *Phlegon's* Eclipse to have happen'd some
 * time in the IVth Year of the 201st or in the 1st
 * Year of the 202d Olympiad. But my Argument
 * went farther : For, I shewed that *Origen* was in
 * the same Opinion, or varied but little from it ;
 * and so was *Tertullian* and *Lactantius* and *Clemens*
 * *Alexandrinus* ; and, in general, this was the cur-
 * rent Notion of all the Primitive Christians, or
 * all but one. It follows therefore, that *Origen*
 * and all the Primitive Christians, as well as *Afri-*
 * *canus*, must conceive *Phlegon's* Eclipse to have
 * happen'd in that Year (the XVth of *Tiberius*)
 * since they thought that Christ died in that Year :
 * And since it appears, that in Fact there was such
 * an Eclipse in that Year, (the XVth of *Tiberius*)
 * their *Testimonies* are so many Evidences, that
 * *Phlegon* spoke of an Eclipse in *that* Year, and
 * not of a Darkness that happen'd *three* Years af-
 * ter." Here our *Anti-phl.* thinks Himself secure
 of his Point ; whereas he is grossly mistaken through
 the whole Paragraph. It is readily granted, if He
 pleases, that *Jerome* did not misrepresent *Africa-*
nus in saying that Christ died in the XVth of *Ti-*
berius : but then, the Consequence that he draws
 from it, is utterly denied, when He says, that
 therefore it ought to be admitted sufficient to prove,
 that *Africanus* thought *Phlegon's* Eclipse to have hap-
 pen'd some time in the IVth Year of the 201st or in

the 1st Year of the 202d Olympiad ; for if *Africanus's* Supputation of Years be rightly consider'd, he could not possibly think any such thing : for, as he computed from the beginning of the *Imperial Power* of *Tiberius* ; and it being well known, that there were two *Epocha's* then observ'd in the *Roman Empire* ; viz. the *Proconsular* and the *Imperial Power* of *Tiberius* ; 'tis plain, that the XVth and the XVIIIth of *Tiberius* are really one and the same Year, corresponding with the 3d or 4th of the 202d Olympiad ; so that *Africanus* could not think, as our *Anti-Pbl.* would have it admitted, that *Pblegon's* Eclipse happened sometime in the 4th Year of the 201st or in the 1st Year of the 202d Olympiad ; because he could not then have thought consistently with his own *Supputation* : for his XVth (as I shall shew more fully by and by) agrees with *St. Luke's* XVIIIth of *Tiberius* ; and consequently, by our *Anti-pbl's* own way of arguing in this Paragraph, *Pblegon's* Eclipse was not a *natural* one. How Romantick then are the *Remarks* that He makes, after He has done with the several *Calculations*, that were given Him of a *Natural* Eclipse in *November A. D. 29* ? † ' It appears by Calculation, says He, (and who disputes it ?) that the Total Eclipse in the first Year of the 202d Olympiad was at its height within a few Minutes after 12 at Noon, &c. But does this prove, that *Pblegon's* Eclipse happen'd in the 1st Year of the 202d Olympiad ? I am persuaded, that the

ablest

† De^s. p. 64, 65,

ablest *Mathematician* that He has consulted (whom all the World mentions with the greatest Honour) will never tell him so. *Africanus* flourish'd, not 100 Years after *Pblegon* Himself. *Africanus* (our *Anti-Pbl.* cannot deny) has apply'd *Pblegon's* Eclipse (to say nothing of the *Full Moon* at present) in the strongest Terms to the Passion of Christ. Now then, whatever was the Year of Christ's Passion, according to *Africanus's* Supputation, whether the XVth or the XVIIIth of *Tiberius*, 'tis plain, the Date of *Pblegon's* Olympiad must agree with it; otherways, it would not have been *appeal'd* to: and if the Date of the Olympiad does agree with those Supputations of the XVth and XVIIIth of *Tiberius*, 'tis demonstrable, that the *Darkness* mention'd by *Pblegon*, and *that* by the Evangelists, must be *one* and the same. 'Tis ridiculous to imagine, if there had not been such an Agreement in these Supputations, or if *Pblegon's* Eclipse had been a *Natural* one, that *Africanus* would ever have said, as he does, * 'Tis plain, says He, that *Pblegon* speaks of this universal prodigy. † I shall say no more of *Africanus* now: for I intend to take an Opportunity, before we part, to justify the Reading of *Africanus*, in *Syncellus*, as well against Mr. *Wb--'s* imaginary *Interpolations*, as the Charge of *Inaccuracy* in *Syncellus*.

B. I

* ὁπλον ὡς ταύτην,

† Τὸ Κόσμιον Τέρας ἡλίου ἐκλειψίς.

B. I remember, you open'd this Affair to me of *different Supputations*, at our last Meeting, and it gave me a good deal of Satisfaction ; but I should now be further oblig'd to you, if you would enter deeper into it : for I plainly perceive by the *Defence* that our *Anti-phl.* has made, that He endeavours to intrench Himself as strong as possible by the help of these *Chronological Difficulties*. He knew, that if *these* could not be solv'd, the *Liber-tines* would have some reason to rejoice ; and yet methinks, how stupid must their Mirth be, when, according to this way of arguing, which their *Anti-phl.* teaches 'em, they are to make *Origen*, in his own native *Greek*, and several others, appealing to a mere *Natural Eclipse* ; the *one*, in his Dispute with *Celsus* ; and the *others* in their several *Defences* made in behalf of Christianity ? Such is the refuge, such are the miserable shifts, I find, that our *Anti-phl.* is forc'd to have recourse to at last !

A. I will, then, since you require it, search farther into this Affair, concerning the *different Supputation* of Years amongst the *Antients*, relating to Christ's Passion : and I will first state the Matter in the very same Words, as our *Anti-phl.* has stated it in his *first performance* on this Subject. † ' Tho' ' *Africanus* (says He) has not nam'd the Year, ' yet by his Application of the Eclipse of *Phlegon* ' to the *Death* of Christ, 'tis plain, He supposed ' it to be the *same* Year. If therefore *it can be* ' found out, what Year was the universally allow'd Year,

† Dissert. p. 15, 16.

Year, amongst the Antients, of our Saviour's Death, and what was *Africanus's* Notion in particular, *That* must be the *Year*, in which *Phlegon's* Eclipse happened. You may remember, when I last talk'd with you upon this Subject, I often quoted the celebrated P. Pagi, whom, I think, our *Anti-phl.* has once nam'd in his *Defence*, and taken no farther Notice of Him : whereas, no body perhaps has been more successful in removing such Difficulties, as our *Anti-phl.* raises, than the very same P. Pagi. First of all then, this learned Man observes ; * That it does not so clearly appear, whether St. *Luke*, when He mentions the *Year* of Christ's Baptism is to be understood of the XVth of the *Proconsular*, or the XVth of the *Imperial* Power of *Tiberius* ; and, therefore, as to the exact Time of Christ's Birth, every one is left to be of that Opinion, which He judges most probable. I have shewn (says He) how, or upon what foot, it may be maintain'd, that Christ was born in the Year of *Rome* 748 ; baptiz'd in the 26th of the Christian *Æra*, and crucified in the 29th Year of the same. But if any one shall be disposed to object, in saying, it contradicts the *Astronomical* Tables, that Christ should be said to suffer upon the 25th of *March* of the *Dionysian* Year 29 ; that's an Opinion which I can easily come into : for according to that, Christ was baptiz'd in the 26th of the *Vulgar Æra*, when it was the XVth Year

cur-

* P. Ant. Pagi Apparatus Chronolog, ad Annales Baronij, p. 39. Ed. Par. 1689.

current of the *Proconsular* Power of *Tiberius* ; *John*, the Baptist exercised his Ministry for four Years ; and after that, *Christ*, having kept four *Passovers*, was crucified for us upon the third Day of *April*, in the 33d Year of the Christian *Æra* : and I am very much inclin'd to believe (says *P. Pagi*) that *St. Luke* is * to be understood of the XVth Year of the *proconsular* Power of *Tiberius*. However, as to the Year of *Christ's* Passion, I don't take upon me to determine myself ; but only to explain the general Sense or Opinion of the *Ancients* upon it.

B. I remember you did give me some of those *Explications* of *Pagi* ; but pray go on, and let me hear more : and should you repeat sometimes any thing already said, I shall think it time well spent, now that we are so closely engag'd in an Affair, that I hope will be clear'd up by this sagacious
Wri-

* The Original in *St. Luke* (Cap. 3. 1.) seems, I think, to favour *P. Pagi's* Judgment about the *Proconsular* Power of *Tiberius* ; the same Word is us'd to express *Tiberius's* Government as that of *Pontius Pilate* ; not *ἡ ἀρχὴ*, but *ἡ ἡγεμονία* *Ταύτης Καίσαρος* ; so *ἡ ἡγεμονεύουσα Περσικῆς Παλάης*. Nor is the Word *Cæsar* any Objection : for 'tis certain, whenever there appear'd to be *Collegues* or *Copartners* in the Empire, they always shar'd alike, in taking the Name of *Emperor*. *Comperi autem* (inquit *Pagi*, in *Crit. Histor. Chronol.* p. 7. Ed. Par.) *Titum a Vespasiano, Trajanum a Nerva, Antoninum ab Adriano, & Marcum Aurelium ab eodem Antonino in Societatem Imperij adscitos fuisse, & Imperatoris prænomen non minùs quàm ipsos Augustos tulisse. Conclufi, id Augusti Exemplo factum fuisse, minimeq; dubitandum, quin Tiberias vere Collega Imperij fuerit; atniquè ejus ab ea Epocha aliquando deducti.*

Writer so far, that even our *Anti-Phleg.* may find out (as He says) *what Year was the universally allowed Year, amongst the Ancients, of our Saviour's Death*; and then we have him confessing, that **THAT** *must be the Year, in which Phlegon's Eclipse happened.*

A. P. Pagi says expressly, that the *ancient* Fathers of the Christian Church laid it down, as a thing certain, not only that *Tiberius* was a *Colleague* in the Empire, but that the *Years* of his Reign were computed from the Time that he was invested with that Dignity; † I remember, I told you, when we last talk'd upon this Subject, that *Eusebius* was one of the first that broke the Ice, in changing the ancient way of *supputing* the Death of our Lord. I rather chuse to refer you to your *Commonplace-Book*, than to spend Time in repeating what was then said upon that Matter. I now go on in observing from *P. Pagi*, as follows; As to the *Month* and the *Day*, says He, wherein Christ was crucify'd; it was held by Christians, for the *three first Centuries*, that it was upon the *25th of March*, as appears from several *Martyrologies* taken notice of by *Henschene* and *Papebroche*; and This Opinion of Christ's suffering in the Month of *March*, prevail'd even to the *XIIIth Century*; when *Roger Bacon* an Englishman, of the *Franciscan Order*;

G

con.

† Ab ea Dignitate, (*viz.* Proconsulari) Annos ejus numeratos pro certo posuerunt *Antiqui Ecclesiæ Patres*, ut de Baptismo Christi loquentes ostendemus. *Crit. Hist. Chron.* p. 7.

|| *Ib.* p. 25, 26.

con-temporary with *Bonaventure*, and well skill'd in the *Matbematicks*, took a *new* Method, by his *Calculations* ; affirming, that Christ suffered upon the *third* Day of *April* : and from that time the *old Tradition* was laid aside.

B. Notwithstanding it was our Countryman that had the Honour of making this Change ; there seems to be one great Difficulty in such an Attempt : Several of the Ancients, I find, support their Opinion, in saying, that Christ suffer'd on the *25th* of *March* A. D. 29 ; because, say they, the two *Gemini* were *Consuls* that Year. Now, such a material *Circumstance* as this, being assign'd ; it may be ask'd, how the *old Opinion* came to be laid aside ?

A. The Question is by no means improper ; and *P. Pagi* discourses upon it thus. First, the Knowledge of *profane History*, He says, is very necessary for discovering the *Year* of our Lord's Passion ; The *old Opinion* therefore was laid aside, by neglecting or not attending carefully to such sort of History ; as also by laying too much Stress upon *Astronomical Calculations*. *St. Austin*, He says, seems to inform us, as to the first, in the following Words, † ‘ Many of our *Researches* are made by
‘ the help of the *Olympiads*, and by the Names of
‘ the *Consuls* ; and the being ignorant of the *Consulship*, when our Lord was born and when He
‘ suffer'd, has led some People into a Mistake. A little after this, *St. Austin* says also ; ‘ By comparing
‘ the

† De Doctr. Christ. L. 2. C. 28.

‘ the *Gospel* with *prophane History* in this Matter;
 ‘ a much better Judgment may be form’d, as to
 ‘ the Number of *Years* that Christ liv’d upon Earth.
 Therefore, says *Pagi*, there seems to have been
 a double *Error* committed in this Matter; and
 which occasion’d the altering and removing the
 Year of our Lord’s Passion from the Year XXIX
 of the Vulgar *Æra*. The first *Error*, (says He)
 was, in the way of explaining the *Year* of *Pblegon*’s
 Olympiad. As to this, I must refer you to what
 pass’d in our last Conference, where I took notice
 from this Author, that there had been *two* ways
 of computing the *Olympiads* anciently observ’d;
 and particularly so by *Africanus*; and that both
Kepler and *Petavius*, not attending to this, they
 started Difficulties from *Eusebius*’s *Chronicon*, where
 there really were none: for the Fault, says *Pagi*,
 does not lie in the *Year* (as they imagin’d) but in
 the *Olympiad*, &c. The other *Error*, that *Pagi* as-
 signs, was the ignorance of *some*, as to the way of com-
 puting from the commencement of the *proconsular*
authority of *Tiberius*; which was a sort of Igno-
 rance that gradually got footing; and the Minds
 of Men were by degrees so much in the dark a-
 bout *proconsular* Authority, that even in this learn-
 ed Age it was call’d in question: for it being plain
 from St. *Luke*’s Gospel, that Christ was baptiz’d in
 the XVth of *Tiberius*; *that Year*, in process of
 Time, was understood to be the XVth of his *Im-*
perial Authority or his *Augustean Empire*. So
Prosper in his Chronicle, as publish’d by *Phil. Lab-*
beë in his *Bibliothèque*; ‘ Some imagine, says He,
 ‘ that

‘ that our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified in the
 ‘ XVth of *Tiberius*, *i. e.* when the two *Gemini*
 ‘ were Consuls ; whereas ’tis evident, upon the
 ‘ undoubted Authority of *Luke* the Evangelist,
 ‘ that Christ was baptiz’d that very Year, and be-
 ‘ gan to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of
 ‘ Heaven.” P. *Pagi*’s Remark here is this ; But
 the *Ancients*, says He, had told the World other-
 wise ; their Opinion having been, that St. *Luke* is
 to be understood of the XVth Year of the *Procon-*
sular, and not of the XVth of the *Imperial* Autho-
 rity of *Tiberius* ; nor was the *Credit* of those *An-*
cients to be so easily disputed.

B. I desire now, if you please, to have some
 Account of the *Error*, that (in P. *Pagi*’s Judg-
 ment) those fell into, (relating to the *Year* of our
 Lord’s Passion) who laid too great a Stress upon
 their *Astronomical* Calculations, in that Affair.

A. P. *Pagi*’s Opinion is, that the *Testimony* from
 Antiquity, and not *Astronomy*, is the surest Guide
 for finding out the *Year* of Christ’s Passion. How-
 ever some learned Men, He says, being accurate-
 ly vers’d in that Science, have ventur’d to assign
 another *Year* for Christ’s Passion, than what the *An-*
cients, who liv’d next the Age of our Saviour, have
 delivered down to us. I shall spend too much of
 our Time, (I fear) if I give you the whole of what
 He says upon this Head, and therefore must refer
 you † to the Author Himself, to be read at your
 Leisure,

† P. *Pagi* Crit. Hist. Chron. in *Annales Baronij* p. 26.
 Ed. Par.

Leisure. Thus much I observe however : Amongst these learned Men, He again names our *Roger Bacon*, as asserting, from his *Astronomical Calculations*, that Christ died the *third* of *April* in the Year XXXIII of the Vulgar *Æra*. In the next Century *Paulus Burgenfis* taught the very same Doctrine ; having made a *Lunar Calculation* ; as He affirms Himself in his 26th Chapter upon *Matthew*. Some Years afterwards, *Tostatus* reassumed the Debate, and, in his Disputations held in *Tuscany*, one of his *Thesis*'s was this, *viz.* ‘ that Christ ‘ did not die upon the 25th of *March*, but upon ‘ the *third* of *April* ; and *that* too in his XXXIII^d ‘ Year current, but not compleat. *Tostatus* writ an *Apology* in Defence of his *Thesis*, alledging, that this Question in his time had been debated and determined, as he had done it, in the Courts of *two Popes* ; both *Astronomers* and *Jews* being called into the Debate. ’Tis no wonder, says *Pagi*, that this Opinion afterwards prevail’d ; for they that talk’d or writ about the Year and Day of Christ’s Passion, commonly took all they had to say or write, from P. *Burgenfis* and *Tostatus*. This is attested by *Petavius* ; ‘ All ‡ the Disputations ‘ and Commentaries, of such as were vers’d in this ‘ Controversy, were deriv’d, as from a Fountain, ‘ from the Writings of *those* two Men. But in one thing *Petavius* is much mistaken, || when He believes, that the *Ancients* did not know so well, how to account for the Motions of the *Sun* and *Moon* ; and that

‡ De Doctr. Temp. Lib. 12. Cap. 15.

|| Cap. 13.

that therefore; having rather a regard, in their *Calculations*, to the *Days* of the *Week*, than to the *Age* of the *Moon* ; did accordingly fix the *Passion* of *Christ* to the *Julian* Year 74, or the 29th of the *Vulgar Æra* ; because they found, that in *that* Year only the 25th of *March* and *Friday* did coincide : For, (says *Pagi*) considering the many *Controversies* had concerning *Easter* ; so many *National* *Disputes* about it ; such severe *Dissentions* between the *Eastern* and *Western* *Parts* of the *World* upon that *Subject* ; so many *Synods* held all the *World* over ; the *Decree* of the great *Council* of *Nice* in particular, receiving the *Approbation* of subsequent *Councils* concerning that *Matter* ; lastly, the many *Paschal* *Cycles* contriv'd, to adjust the various *Courses* of *Sun* and *Moon* : These are all *Arguments* sufficient to prove, that *they* were not wanting in the *Knowledge* of *Astronomy*, in the first *Ages* of the *Church* ; but yet, were firmly persuaded, that this *Question* was not to be decided by *Astronomical* *Calculations*, but rather from the *Testimony* of the *Ancients* deliver'd down in an unquestionable manner. Thus you have *P. Pagi's* Judgment in this *Matter* ; which he gives with a great deal of *Modesty*, and leaves it to be farther examin'd by the learned *World*. After this, He proceeds to consider a mistaken *Notion* of the Great and learned *Gerhard Vossius*, who had just then publish'd a *Dissertation*, wherein He asserts, ' that *Christ* was born in the *Julian* Year 43, ' and that He was crucified the 25th of *March* in ' XXIXth of the *Christian Æra*, and in the XVth of

of *Tiberius*, after He had kept *two Passovers*, according to the Opinion (says He) of the *ancient Doctors*. *Pagi* agrees with *Vossius*, that the ancient *Fathers* did assign to Christ the holding of *two Passovers*; but then denies, what the other had advanc'd, *viz.* that those *Fathers* understood St. *Luke* concerning the *Augustean Year* of *Tiberius*: for those *Fathers*, says *Pagi*, grounded their Opinion quite otherwise, *viz.* upon the *proconsular* way of supputing the *Years* of *Tiberius*; and that *they* did accordingly so understand St. *Luke*. And to put that Matter quite out of dispute, *Pagi* produces a very remarkable Passage from *Tertullian*, * where that *Father* says, Christ was Baptiz'd in the *twelfth* Year of *Tiberius*; and a little after; that he was Baptiz'd in the *fifteenth* Year of *Tiberius*. There is no Mistake: they are different *Supputations*, and both true; which makes *Pagi* remark in these Words: † *Tertullian* distinguish'd thus on purpose, in using both the *Epocha's* belonging to *Tiberius's* Reign, that so the *Time* of Christ's Baptism might still appear plainer.

B. I thank you, Sir for these agreeable Observations from that learned Man. But could our
Anti-

* Lib. 1. contra Marcionem, Cap. 15.

† Ut secundum utramq; Tiberij Epocham, Annum Baptismi Christi magis manifestaret *Tertullianus*. ib. p. 27.

Anti-Pble. read all this and not think it proper to acquaint his Reader with one tittle of it; especially, where He talks so much about the *Time* of Christ's suffering? Was the XVth and the XVIIIth of *Tiberius* really the *same* Year (tho' according to different Supputations) and was *this* to be conceal'd, that He might the better amuse the World, and destroy a *Heathen Testimony* of such Importance? I now easily perceive, *how* He comes to make the Testimonies of *Africanus*, *Tertullian*, *Origin*, *Lactantius*, and all the Primitive Christians to be of *his side* of the Question; and when he tells us, that they are as *so many Evidences*, that *Pblegon* spoke only of a *Natural Eclipse*.

A. After what you have heard, please now to consider the State of the Question, as I have already put it in our *Anti-pblegonist's* own Words. 'If
' it can be *found out*, says He, || *what year* was the
' universally allowed year, amongst the *Antients*,
' of our *Saviours Death*, and what was *Africanus's*
' notion in particular; *That* must be the year in
' which *Pblegon's Eclipse* happened.' We have joyn'd *Issue*, you see, upon this; and how does the matter come out at last? Can any thing be plainer, than that there was such a *different Supputation* of years amongst the *Antients*, as we have now been talking of? Is it not self-evident therefore, that the XVth and XVIIIth of *Tiberius* mean *one* and the *same* year, wherein *Christ Dyed*? The *universally allowed Year* then of Christ's Death is certainly
found

found out; and our *Anti-phl.* must know, that it had been long so. *Africanus's* notion was pretty well considered, when I last saw you, concerning *Christ's Death*: so that we have now a right to conclude in the very words of our *Anti-phlegonist* viz. *The Year of Christ's Death being found out; That* must be the very *year*, in which *Phlegon's* Eclipse happened.

B. I could be glad, methinks, to hear something more of this *Africanus's* notion about *Christ's Death*; I am apt to think, there is something abstruse and intricate in it; which makes our *Anti-phl.* lay so much stress upon it.

A. I believe; if you please to recollect all that passed upon that Subject, when we were last together; you will not want much more to be said, for giving you full satisfaction. But if more should be found necessary, I must refer you to a *Dissertation* written by the same learned Hand, that I have already been making use of, called *Periodus Græco-Romana*; where you will see abundance of usefull Learning, and a solid Judgment in the management of it. There are some few *Excerpta* which I formerly made from it, now lying before me. if they may be of any further service to you, I will read them now: and they are, as follow.

P. *Pagi* in that Dissertation introduces *Petavius* confessing, that an enquiry into *Africanus's* opinion about these matters, would be of great service towards a right understanding of the *Greek Æra's*: but, that *Africanus's* opinion was *obscure*, says *Petavius*. *Pagi* thereupon observes thus: If we could
 13 penetrate

penetrate as easily into the sense or opinion of other *Greek Writers*, as we may into *that* of *Africanus*; we should not be so often in the dark, in reading them, as we are. There are two things therefore, says *Pagi*, which escaped *Petavius*, and which are to be laid down as certain Truths: The *one* is, that *Africanus*, as also many more amongst the *Antients*, who lived in the *four* first Centuries, did compute the XVth of *Tiberius*, not from the Death of *Augustus Cæsar*; but from the *Time* that his *Proconsular* Power and Authority did commence, agreeing with the XI. or XII. of the *Dionysian Æra*. The *other* is, that *Africanus* had a way of computing the *Olympiads* peculiar to Himself, viz: *two* years before the commonly received opinion: and yet to make Himself mote clearly understood, *Africanus* sometimes uses the common *Supputation*; and at other times, when He is minded to fix any certain Point, He makes use of and applys *both* of them. According to *Africanus's* Notion, (says *Pagi*) Christ was baptized in the year of the World 5529; of his Incarnation 29; of the *Dionysian Æra* 26; when the XVth year of the *Proconsular* Power of *Tiberius* was then currant till the 28th Day of *September*. In the Fragment recorded by *Syncellus*, the *common* Supputation used in the *Olympiads* is there made use of, says *Pagi*; and therefore, as to Christ's *Passion*, *Africanus's* notion there appears to be, that Christ Suffered in the 4th year of the 201 Olympiad, coinciding with the 29th year of the *Vulgar Æra*. This added to what has been said already, will be sufficient, I hope, to guard you

you against the attempts of any *Libertine*, in their opposition to this *notion* of *Africanus*. And now upon the whole, reflect a little with your self, and you must soon see the *Fallacious* Argument that our *Anti-phl.* has so artfully pursued both in his *Dissertation* and his *Defence*. Will He say, that there was a *Natural Eclipse* of the Sun in the XVth of *Tiberius*, according to the *Augustean* Supputation, which commenced from the Death of *Augustus*? It is easily granted Him. Will He say, that *Phlegon's* Eclipse happened likewise in this XVth of *Tiberius*, according to the same *Epocha*? 'Tis utterly denied. For *Phlegon's* Eclipse happened *three* years afterwards; which, by the *Proconsular* Supputation, was the XVIIIth of *Tiberius*; And in this year, *Africanus* and the rest of the Primitive Christians, did conceive *Phlegon's* Eclipse to have happen'd; tho, by using another *Epocha*, they did as truly say, that it happened in the XVth of *Tiberius*; and when they made their *Appeal* to the *Roman Records*, whence *Phlegon* had the Account of this *miraculous Darknes*; they were unquestionably equally understood, whether they made use of one *Epocha* or the other: *both* being so well Known in the Roman Empire; tho' tis very reasonable to suppose, when they were *Appealing* in a matter of such Importance, they took especial care, to use the same *Epocha*, as was made use of in the *Record* it self. I well remember how I argued with you as to this matter from P. *Pagi* the last time I saw you here; and I can't forbear taking notice of it again. P. *Pagi* speaking of the

Eclipse

Eclipse at Christ's Passion, † § says thus; ' Ter-
 ' tullian, Origen, Julius Africanus, Austin and
 ' Jerome, who 'tis certain, were of an opinion that
 ' Christ suffered when the two *Gemini* were Consuls;
 ' they inculcate and insist upon *that* wonderfull Eclipse
 ' by using the Authority of *Phlegon*; which plainly
 ' shews, says He, that they fix'd the very same
 ' year for our Lord's Passion, as Phlegon (from
 ' the Records) had done for his Eclipse: For, if
 ' they had assign'd *another* year for the *Passion*,
 ' than what *Phlegon* had done for the *Eclipse*;
 ' their endeavours had not only been frustrated,
 ' in making Converts to Christianity from such a
 ' *miraculous* Death; but they had moreover soon
 ' become the Jest and Scorn of the Gentile World.

B. As to *so many* of the *Antients* quoting *Phle-*
gon's Eclipse and applying it to our Saviour's
 Passion; our *Anti-phl.* seems to think Himself ve-
 ry safe, in putting the following Question; *a*
 ' What reason can be given, says He, why se-
 ' veral of *these* are cited as *original Testimonies*, to
 the

† Tertullianus, Origenes, Iulius Africanus, Augustinus
 et Hieronymus, quos certum est Christum duobus *Geminis*
 Consulibus passum existimasse, eam Eclipsim, *Phlegontis* auc-
 toritate, suadent; Argumento manifesto, eos *Passionem* eo an-
 no consignasse, quo *Phlegon* illud Solis Deliquium. Si enim
Passionem altero, quam *Phlegon* Eclipsim collocassent anno;
 non mortem Christi miraculosam, quod intendebant, *Genti-*
libus persuasissent, sed seipso ludibrio exposuissent. *Crit.*
Hist. &c.

§ Crit. Hist. Chron. in Annal, Bar. P. 27:

a Def. P. 6.

‘ the Darkneſs at the Paſſion, and to *Phlegon’s*
 ‘ Authority, which will not *equally* prove every
 ‘ *modern* Writer that has cited *Phlegon*, or has
 ‘ mention’d the Darkneſs at the Paſſion, to be
 ‘ an *original* *Testimony*? Mr. Wh. might as well
 ‘ have deſcended much lower, and have quoted
 ‘ *Voffius’s* Harmony, and *Scaliger*, and *Petavius*,
 ‘ and Bp *Mountague*, and *Huetius* and *Grotius*, and
 ‘ *Baſnage*, and *Tillemont*, and *Pagi*, and *Bayle*,
 ‘ and all the Defenders of Chriſtianity down to
 ‘ the preſent Generation; and He might have gi-
 ‘ ven them all the name of *Original* *Evidences*; as
 ‘ *well* as he has given this Name to ſo many
 ‘ Writers; who lived ſo many Centuries after the
 ‘ Fact.

A. And can you think, this Queſtion or Ob-
 jection deſerves a ſerious Anſwer? Who are theſe
 men, whoſe *original* *Testimonies* are thus traduced
 by our *Anti-pbl.*? Are they not *Africanus*,
Origen, *Eusebius*, *Maximus*, *Ierome*, the *Chronicon*,
Alexandrinum, *Philoponus* and *Malcla*? Did all
 theſe cite *Phlegon*; and is the name of *Original* *Evi-*
dences no more due to them, than to the *modern*
 Writers, that He takes notice of? Were not the
Works of *Phlegon* extant for about *eight Hundred*
 years, to be perus’d and copy’d by ALL theſe an-
 cient Writers? Did not *Photius* make extracts out
 of ſeveral Books of *Phlegon*, *b* even in the *ninth*
 Cen-

b The learned *Pagi* was once under a *miſtake* about the
 continuance of theſe *Works* of *Phlegon*; but his modeſty and
 love

Century ? And shall all the *several Extracts*, made likewise by these other antient Writers from *Pblegon's Works*, be call'd *mere Transcripts from one another, or the mere Copyings of later Writers out of preceding ones*, as our *Anti-phl.* is pleased to express Himself. p. 7. ? ‘ An *Authentick Writing*, He says, ‘ signifies either an *Original*, or else so faithfull ‘ and exact and so well attested a *Transcript*, that ‘ you cannot justly dispute it's faithfullness. Does He not, in this very Explication of an *Authentic Writing*, fully confute Himself in the present Debate ? He will not deny, but that *Pblegon*, by favour of his master *Adrian*, had free access to the *Roman Records* ; He will not call in question *Pblegon's* veracity and fidelity in transcribing from those *Records* ; nor can He dispute the faithfullness of those *Ancients*, who for about *eight Hundred* years together have copyed ; some *one* particular, some *another*, from the very *Works* of *Pblegon* Himself, concerning this wonderfull Eclipse.

B.

love of truth soon made Him correct it. *Olympicorum et chronicorum Collectio* edita à *Pblegonte Tralliano* ad huc extabat nono Ecclesiæ seculo, quo *Photius* in sua Bibliotheca (Cod. XCVII) se quinque *Illius* Libros legisse asserit ; ex qua et aliqua decerpfit. Quare eam videre potuit *Philoponus*, qui longè ante *Photium* vixit. vid. P. Pagi inter *Corrigenda*, Seculo primo P. 302. et confer (inter *Crit. Hist, Chron.*) P. 27- 28. ed. Par.

B. Tis true, this very Explication of an *Authentic Writing*, considering that *Pblegon's Works* were so *long extant*, is an ugly Argument formed against Himself; and I am apt to think, such a Reply is what He does not expect to hear of. ‘ What ‘ (says He) is *Philoponus*, c who lived 600 years ‘ after Christ, an original Evidence *more* than *Grotius*, who lived 1600 years after the Fact? Yes surely; because *Grotius* never saw *Pblegon's Works*, [who had the Fact from the *Roman Records*,] as *Philoponus* did: and therefore, if *Philoponus* and those other *Antients* may be allowed to have been *faithfull* in *transcribing* from *Pblegon*; then, by our *Anti-phl.* own way of arguing, whatever they have so *transcribed* concerning the Fact, must be deemed an *Authentic Account*. I am thinking, in order to illustrate this Matter; what if the precious Works of BAYLE (the last of the *Moderns* nam'd by our *Anti-phl.*) should happen by some turn of Fate (which I own, is by no means likely) to be irrecoverably lost; and our *Anti-phl.* should luckily have *transcrib'd* some memorable passages from that celebrated Writer; wou'd not his *Evidence* two or three Hundred years hence (provided, His *Fidelity* should not otherwise happen to be question'd) pass for an *Authentic Account*? and would it be a *gross Imposition upon the Reader*, if He should be told, that our *Anti-phl.* was more an *original Evidence*, than any other, who had never *seen* the Works

Works of Bayle ? When *Dugdale's Warwickshire* is produc'd in any Court at *Westminster-Hall* ; I have been told, that his known *Fidelity* in transcribing from *Records*, makes every thing pass as *Authentic*, tho' the *Records* should be lost : But will any one say, that *Dugdale* who saw the *Records*, and faithfully transcrib'd from them, is not an *Original Evidence* MORE than He, who never saw the *Records*, but only transcrib'd from *Dugdale* ? and yet such a *transcript*, when so well attested, that you cannot justly dispute its faithfulness, is, I find, by the Concession of our *Anti-Pbl.* himself, to be reckon'd an *Authentic Writing*. I therefore must agree with you, in thinking our *Anti-Pbl.* to be a very great *Trifler*, in his way of talking about *Original Testimonies* ; *Original Evidence* ; *Authentic Records* and *Chronicles* ; *Authentic Accounts* ; and *Authentic Writing*.-----All this is meer *Jargon* ; 'tis casting a Mist before People's Eyes ; or, to use his own Phrase, 'tis a *most gross Imposition upon his Reader*.

A. There's another gross Imposition upon his Reader, that runs through both his *Dissertation* and *Defence* ; which I will now remind you of ; 'tis this : He would have his Reader believe, that *Pbl-gon* said nothing *more*, really and truly in his *Olympiads* concerning this *Eclipse*, than what is recorded, in a short Chronological manner, by *Eusebius* ; and you perceive his Drift all along is to make the Description of his *Natural Eclipse* to a-

gree

gree with the same short Description that *Eusebius* and *Jerom* have given : and yet I dont find, but Mr. *Wh---*'s *distinguishing Characters* will still make the *Difference* between *Pblegon's* and *Kepler's* Eclipse, even according to *Eusebius's* short Account ; batin the *ninth* Hour ; which perhaps is not to be decided, till Mr. *Wh.* takes the Pains again to calculate by his *Copernicus*. But, I say, there are many more Writers, both before and after *Eusebius's* time, who had it all in their Power (as I have observed already) to look into *Pblegon's* Works themselves, for *several Hundred Years*. It must then be proper to see, what *Extracts* these *ancient Writers* have made from *Pblegon's* Works, as well as *Eusebius*, concerning this *Eclipse* : and if neither the *Fidelity* of these Writers, nor the *genuiness* of their *Extracts* in this respect can truly be call'd in question ; 'tis then evident, that whatever *distinguishing Characters* shall be found in such *Extracts* concerning *Pblegon's* Eclipse, ought to be apply'd in Opposition to *Kepler's* or any other *Natural* Eclipse, that shall be brought upon the *Tapis* : so that it will be incumbent on our *Anti-phl.* either to prove such *Extracts* not to be *genuine* (for *Pblegon's* Works were extant) or else to reconcile those *Characters*, found in *them*, with such *Eclipse* as He shall next think fit to produce.

B. I like the Proposal ; and your arguing upon it is very just: but I'm afraid there will be some troublesome Work for you in proving the *Genuineness* of some of these *Extracts*. Both Mr. *Wh.* and our *Anti-Pbl.* (you know) have excepted to *that*

of *Africanus* already, which is so material a one ; Good Success to your *Enquiries* however. You'll oblige me first, in laying these *Extracts* before me, so long as *Plegon's* Works were known to be *extant* ; and then defend *them* as well as you can : 'Tis a certain Consequence, that none will deny, *viz.* that if such *Extracts* are *genuine*, and remain as *such* uncontested ; or if contested, the Arguments shall be found trifling or of no Force ; (such as our *Anti-phl.* has hitherto dealt in) then, I say, whatever *distinguishing Characters* of an Eclipse, shall be found in such *Extracts* ; if they will not suit with a *Natural* Eclipse, they must and ought to be apply'd to one that is *supernatural*.

A. Please then to take the *Extracts*, as follows ; and I will then make the best *Defence* I can, against the Objections that are or *shall* be made against the *genuineness* of any of them. You must remember, that, at our last Meeting, I said something in Defence of *Africanus's* Fragment in *Syncellus*, in Opposition to what had been argued both by our *Anti-phl.* and Mr. *Wh.* You may presently expect to hear more upon that Subject : but first take the *Extracts* ; as they now stand in the Authors themselves.

Africanus apud *Syncell.*
pag. 322,
323.

Τὸ Κόσμιον Τέρας ἡλίου ἐκλείψις ὑπονοεῖται
ἐν τῇ Καίσαρος ἱστορίᾳ. Φλέγων ἱστορεῖ ἐπὶ Τι-
βερίῳ Καίσαρος ἐν Πανσελήνῳ ἐκλείψιν ἡλίου
γεγονέναι τελείαν ἀπὸ ὥρας ἑκτῆς μέχρις ὀκτώ-
της δ' ἡλὸν ὡς ταύτην.

‘ Let this universal Prodigy (the mi-
 ‘ raculous Darkneſs at Chriſt’s Death)
 ‘ be ſuppos’d to be the *ſame* as an
 ‘ Eclipse of the Sun, ſince in reſpect
 ‘ of our ſight ’twas all one. *Phlegon*
 ‘ tells us, that, in *Tiberius Cæſar’s*
 ‘ Reign; at the time of the *Full Moon*;
 ‘ there was a Total Eclipse of the Sun
 ‘ from the *ſixth* Hour to the *ninth*.
 ‘ ’Tis plain, (ſays *Africanus*) He ſpeaks
 of *this*. i. e. *this* Eclipse or miracu-
 lous Darkneſs; which *Africanus* had
 juſt before been talking of; and which
Thallus, (a *Heathen* Writer) He ſays,
 had call’d an *Eclipse* of the Sun, in
 the *third* Book of his *History*.

II

Tertull.
 Apol.
 Cap.
 21^ſ

‘ Eodem momento Dies media, Or-
 ‘ bem ſignante Sole, ſubducta eſt.
 ‘ Deliquium utiq’ putaverunt, qui
 ‘ id quoq’ ſuper Chriſto prædicatum
 ‘ non ſcierunt: ratione non deprehen-
 ‘ ſa, negaverunt. Et tamen *eum mun-*
 ‘ *di Caſum relatum in Arcanis* (Ar-
 ‘ chivis) *veſtris habetis*.
 ‘ Exactly at the ſame time, (*that*
 ‘ *Chriſt was upon the Croſs*) Day-light
 ‘ was withdrawn, at Mid-Day. They
 ‘ realy at firſt took it for a regular
 ‘ Eclipse; who were *alſo* ignorant,
 2 that

' that such Darknefs .was foretold of
 ' Christ: But when they came to con-
 ' sider the matter, (that it was then
 ' *full Moon*) and cou'd not find out the
 ' meaning of it, they deny'd, that it
 ' was an Eclipse , (*such* a one) as they
 ' first took it for. And yet this
 ' Event or strange accident you have
 ' related in your *Archives*.

III

Origen contra
 Celsum pag.
 80, 96.

' Περὶ δὲ τοῦ ἐπὶ Τιβερίου Καίσαρος Ἐκλεί-
 ' ψους, ὃ βασιλεύοντος καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔοικεν ἐς-
 ' ταυρῶσθαι, καὶ περὶ τῶν μεγάλων τότε γε-
 ' νομένων σεισμῶν τῆς γῆς, ἀνέγραψε καὶ φλέ-
 ' γων ἐν τῷ Ἰσσηκαίδειῳ, ὅμαι, τῶν χρονι-
 ' κῶν.

' But concerning the *Eclipse* under
 ' *Tiberius Cæsar*, in whose Reign, it
 ' seems, Jesus was crucified; and
 ' concerning the great *Earthquakes*
 ' which *then* happen,d; *Pblegon* has
 ' written in the 13th Book (as I think
 ' it is) of his *Chronicles*.

' Οἰεῖται δὲ (Κέλσος) τερατεῖαν εἶναι καὶ
 ' τὸν σείσμον καὶ τὸ σκότος. περὶ ὧν, κατὰ
 ' τὸ δύνασθον, ἐν τοῖς ἀνωτέρω ἀπελογησάμε-
 ' θα, παραθέμενοι τὸν Φλέγοντα ἰσορήσαντα
 ' κατὰ τὸν χρόνον. τῷ πάθῃ τῷ Σωτῆρι τοι-
 ' αῦτα ἀπονηνκέναί.

Cel-

‘ Celsus fancies the Earthquake
 ‘ and the Darknefs to be *fictitious*
 ‘ *Wonders*; concerning which matters
 ‘ We have, according to our ability,
 ‘ made our *Defence* above; produc-
 ‘ ing *Pblegon*, who *relates that fuch*
 ‘ *things happened at the time of our*
 ‘ *Saviour’s Passion.*

IV

Lucianus
Martyr
A. D. 310.
ap. Rufi.
in Euseb.
Hift. Eccl.
ix. 6.

‘ Requirite in Annalibus veftris;
 ‘ (*Romanis*) invenietis, Temporibus
 ‘ *Pilati*, Chrifto patiente, fugato fole,
 ‘ interruptum tenebris Diem.
 ‘ Look into your (*Roman*) Annals;
 ‘ you’ll find there, that, in the time
 ‘ of *Pilate*, when Chrift fuffer’d and
 ‘ the Sun had the Almighty’s order
 ‘ to difappear; the Light of the Day
 ‘ was interrupted with Darknefs.

V

Maximus
in fchol.
P. 97.

‘ Μέμνηται μὲν καὶ Φλέγων ὁ Ἑλληνικὸς
 ‘ χρονολόγος ἐν τρισκαιδεκάτῳ χρονολογιῶν
 ‘ ἐν τῇ σγ Ολυμπιάδι, τῆς ἐκλείψεως ταύ-
 ‘ της, παρὰ τὸ Εἰωθὸς αὐτὴν λέγων γενέσθαι,
 ‘ ἣ μὲν ἴον ἴρῳον ἀνέγραψε.

‘ *Pblegon* the Grecian Chronologer,
 ‘ in the 13th Book of his Chronicle,
 ‘ mentions *this Eclipse (the Darknefs*

at

‘ *at Christ’s Crucifixion*) in his 203 O-
 ‘ *lympiad*: and *says*, that it came to
 ‘ *pass contrary to the usual course of*
 ‘ *Nature*; but He (*Pblegon*) did not
 ‘ describe the *manner* of it:

VI

Orosius
Histor.
 VII. 4.

‘ Quod, non solum sanctorum E-
 ‘ vangeliolorum Fides, sed etiam *ali-*
 ‘ *quanti Græcorum Libri* attestantur.
 ‘ Sane *Asiæ Civitates* illo Terræ
 ‘ motu dirutas, tributo dismisso, pro-
 ‘ pria etiam libertate donavit (*Tibe-*
 ‘ *rius*.)

‘ Which (*præternatural Darkness*)
 ‘ is attested to, not only by the Au-
 ‘ thority of the *Gospels*, but by some
 ‘ *Books of the Grecian Writers*. ’Tis
 ‘ also true, that *Tiberius* made those
 ‘ Cities in *Asia* free from Tribute,
 ‘ and gave them their own liberty,
 ‘ which had been thrown down by
 ‘ this Earthquake.

VII

VII

Chronicon.
Alexand. ad
an. Tiberij
XVIII.

Καὶ ἐσκορίσθη ὁ ἥλιος εἰς ὅλην τὸν κόσ-
 μον ἀπὸ ἑκλῆς τῆς ὥρας. περὶ ἧ σκοτίας
 μέμνηται Διονύσιος ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης ἐν τῇ
 πρὸς Πολύκαρπον Ἐπιστολῇ, τῆς κατὰ τὸ
 ἔτος γενομένης καινοπρεπῆς τῆς ἡλίου ἐκ-
 λείψεως. Καὶ οἱ ἔξωθεν δὲ τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν
 τῆς ἐπισημάνου, ἀσφαλῶς εἰπόντες, καὶ
 τὸν σεισμὸν γερόμενον καὶ κατεξαίρετον
 φλέγων, ὁ τὰς Ολυμπιάδας συναγαγων,
 λέγει γὰρ ἐν τῷ ιγ συγγράμματι ἕως.
 Τῷ δὲ τετάτῳ ἔτει τῆς ΣΒ' Ολυμπιάδος
 ἐγένετο ἐκλείψις ἡλίου μεγίστη τῶν ἐγνωσ-
 μένων πρότερον. καὶ νύξ ὥρα ἑκλή τῆς ἡ-
 μέρας ἐγένετο, ὥστε καὶ ἀστέρας ἐν ἔρανῳ
 φανῆναι, σεισμὸς τε μέγας κατὰ Βιθυνίαν
 γερόμενος. Ταῦτα ὁ δηλωθεὶς ἀνὴρ, γνὼς
 τὸ παράδοξον τῆς ἐκλείψεως τῆς ἡλίου. ἕτε-
 ρα γὰρ ἠκέσθη, ἐδὲ γέγονεν τοῖς ἐμπροσθεν
 αἰῶσιν περὶ τὴν πανσέληνον ἐκλείψις ἡλίου.

And the Sun was darkened over
 all the World from the sixth Hour.
 Of which darkness *Dionysius* the *A-*
reopagite makes mention in his *E-*
pistle to Polycarp, as of an extra-
 ordinary Eclipse of the Sun this
 Year. Other Writers likewise
 (whether *Heathen* or *Jewish*) have
 pointed out this same year; round-
 ly affirming, that there was both
 an *Earthquake* and a *distinguishing*
 one too from all others. (particu-
 larly

larly) Phlegon, who collected the
 Olympiads, says thus in his 13th
 Book; Now in the 4th year of the
 202 Olympiad, there was the great-
 est Eclipse of the Sun that ever was
 Known: and night came on at the
 Sixth Hour of the Day, insomuch that
 the stars also appeared in the Sky;
 There was also a great Earthquake
 in Bithynia. These things are re-
 lated by the Author just now quo-
 ted, who Knew and own'd the ex-
 traordinary nature of this Eclipse of
 the Sun: For an Eclipse of the
 Sun, when it was Full Moon, is
 a thing that was never heard of,
 or ever happen'd in any age be-
 fore.

VIII

Philoponus
 de Creatione
 p. 88, 89,
 116.

ὅτι δὲ τῆς ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Δεσπότης Χρισ-
 τοῦ γενομένης τοῦ ἡλίου ἐκλείψεως, καὶ ἐκ ἐ-
 τέρους ἐμνήσθη καὶ Φλέγων, πρῶτον μὲν ἐκ
 τοῦ λέγειν μὴ ἐγνωσθαι τὴν τοιαύτην ἐκλεί-
 ψιν τοῖς πρότερον χρόνοις ἐστὶ δῆλον. εἰς
 γὰρ ἱερόπος ἐστὶν ἀπάσης ἐκλείψεως ἡλια-
 κῆς φυσικός. — Καὶ ἀπὸ αὐτῆς δὲ περὶ
 Καίσαρος ἱστορίας δείκνυται. Βασιλεύειν
 μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν φήσιν ὁ Φλέγων, τῷ δευτέρῳ
 ἔτει τῆς ἐκατοστῆς ἐνενηκὸστῆς ὀγδόης Ὀ-
 λυμπιάδος. Τὴν δὲ ἐκλείψιν γεγονέναι ἐν
 τῷ τετάρτῳ ἔτει τῆς διακοστῆς δευτέρας Ὀ-
 λυμπιάδος. &c.

Now

‘ Now ’tis evident that *Pblegon*
 ‘ takes notice of the *Eclipse* happen-
 ‘ ing at the Crucifixion of our *Lord*
 ‘ Christ, and *no other* ; first, because
 ‘ he says, that there never was known
 ‘ *such* an Eclipse in former times : for
 ‘ there is but *one natural* way of eve-
 ‘ ry Eclipse of the Sun. ’Tis more-
 ‘ over evident from the very History
 ‘ of *Tiberius Cæsar* : For *Pblegon* says,
 ‘ He began to reign on the 2^d Year
 ‘ of the 198th Olympiad ; but tha
 ‘ the Eclipse happened in the 4th Year
 ‘ of the 202^d Olympiad, &c.

‘ Διὸ ὑπὲρ φύσιν ἢ ἐπὶ τῷ σταυρῷ τῷ Σω-
 ‘ τήρος ἡλιακὴ γέγονεν ἑκλειψις, ἐν πανσελή-
 ‘ νῳ γενομένη, ἥς καὶ φλέγων ἐν ταῖς Ολυμ-
 ‘ πιάσι μεμνήσκει.

‘ Wherefore *that* Eclipse of the Sun,
 ‘ which was at the Crucifixion of our
 ‘ Saviour Christ, was *supernatural*, as
 ‘ being at the *Full Moon* ; of which
 ‘ *Pblegon* also makes mention in his
 ‘ Olympiads.

Thus have I given you some *Testimonies* concern-
 ing the miraculous Eclipse at our Saviour’s Pas-
 sion : and I now desire, you will *view* ’em in the
 following Light. *Some* of them, you observe, tell
 us, that *more Greek Writers* than *one*, have taken
 notice of this *preternatural* Darkness ; others, you
 may easily imagine, were taken from the *Roman*
Records themselves by some of the most ancient

Writers that we have mention'd ; and those, that did not consult the *Records*, we may justly conclude, did take what they have said upon that Subject, from the *Works* of *Pblegon* himself ; because, as I have shewn, his *Works* were *extant* even in the *ninth* Century ; and the several Writers, that I have produc'd to you out of Mr. *W---*'s Catalogue, with some little Variation in the *English*, are known to have flourish'd long before that time. So that you see, how *groundless* the Suggestion is in our *Anti-Pblegonist*, concerning these *Ancients transcribing from one another*, when they had *Pblegon's Works* to peruse themselves ; and with what an assuming Air He puts the Question, I just now took notice of, after he has nam'd *Africanus, Origen, Eusebius, Maximus, Jerome, the Chronicon Alexandr. Philoponus* and *Malela* ; ‘ What reason, * says He, can be given, why *several* of these are cited as Original Testimonies, to the Darknes at the Passion, and to *Pblegon's Authority, which will not EQUALLY* prove every modern Writer, that has cited *Pblegon* or has mention'd the Darknes at the Passion, to be an Original Testimony ? *Risum teneatis ?*

B. This Gentleman's singular *Confidence* gave me no small Disturbance, you may please to remember, when I last saw you : and therefore I am the less surpriz'd to hear Him talking in this manner now. But I wish heartily, He would have *reform'd* in one Particular, and not gone on *canting*, (as He does in the *Preface* to his rare *Defence*) in
still

* Def. F. 6, 7.

still telling the World, that his destroying *Phlegon's* Testimony, in so important a Cause, is doing a real service to Christianity. I see then, in this Gentleman's great Wisdom, and out of a sincere regard (it seems) for the Welfare of the Christian Religion at this time of Day ; We are only to pity, but no longer to *bearken* to those great *Lights* of the Christian Church, which you have been mentioning. I heartily thank you for thus applying these *select* Testimonies ; and should our *Anti-Phleg.* go on putting his Question, *What reason can be given, &c.* I am thoroughly satisfied, if such Testimonies are genuine, His Question will be no more regarded, than his Declaration is, as a *Minister of the Gospel*, that He is doing great Service to the Cause of Christ.

A. Sir, as to the *Genuineness* of these Testimonies ; I grant you, it ought to be spoke to : and this is what I now propose to do ; and withal to make some other *Remarks* (as may be useful in the present Enquiry) upon the several Testimonies which I have here alledg'd. As to *Africanus* ; somewhat, you know, has been said already, when we last met : I have *thisfarther* to add ; and I desire no greater Stress may be laid upon it, than what you think the Matter of *Fact* may deserve. Mr. *Wb.* wishes the *MSS.* of *Syncellus* were consulted in this Matter : but *why* He does so, I cannot easily conceive ; when he must know, that perhaps the most ancient, most [a] perfect and most valuable *MS.* of

a Geo Syncellus inter sapientissimas Regiæ Bibliothecæ opes latenter servatus. Ita de hoc MS. P. Gar in Epist. Nuncup.

Syncellus (now extant) has been publish'd with so much Fidelity and Exactness from the Royal Library in France by the learned P. Goar, that more cannot reasonably be expected to satisfy the most curious in that respect. And, when Scaliger shew'd a great uneasiness, (as appears by his *Epistles*) till he had seen this MS. in order to compleat his *Animadversions* on *Eusebius's Chronicon*; and when afterwards He acted the Part of a sour Critick upon the MS. itself; the World was soon convinc'd, that P. Goar had Abilities sufficient to shew, that a supercilious Critick had committed many Mistakes in that Affair, and thereby often offer'd Violence to *Syncellus*. The Text then of *Africanus*, in the present Dispute, as publish'd from *Syncellus* by P. Goar, stands thus.----

B. Sir, I ask Pardon for interrupting you: but I could wish, before you enter into the Consideration of *Africanus's* Text, that you would inform me a little about this *Syncellus* who has preserv'd such a curious *Fragment* to us. Oh! that He had luckily preserv'd another *Fragment* or two of *Ibalius*, and those other *Grecian* Writers, that the Author of the *Chronicon Alexandrinum* made use of; I am thoroughly persuaded, that our *Anti-Pbl.* could then have had no Pretence (unless from the different *Epocha's* in *Tiberius's* Reign, which I perceive He has artfully conceal'd) to have drawn Himself into such a Debate; and for striking such glorious *Testimonies* (as those of *Phlegon* and *Origen*) out of Dr. Clarke's Lectures. However, it would well have become Him, I should think

think, when He was making his *Apology* (in the Preface to his *Defence*) to have given the World some small Account at least of *what the Dr. had to say for Himself*, before he parted with those *ancient Writers* ; and, among other *Reasons* there assign'd, to have given us *one* ; why Dr. *Clarke*, after such *Conviction* (as our *Anti-Pbl.* would have us believe) should say nothing of the matter Himself ; nor commit any thing to Writing, signifying *why* He was prevail'd upon *to leave out* these Testimonies ; no, not one *Note* to explain Himself, when a New Edition should be wanted : and if our *Anti-Pbl.* will tell us, that He is not to answer for the Doctor's Conduct in this Matter ; He should then have assign'd a better *Reason* than *that* from Mr. *Wh--'s Memoirs*, *why* the World was not to know it, *in so important a Cause* (as He calls it Himself) till the Doctor *was dead*, and could not speak for Himself. But I forget to ask,--- I desire to hear something about *Syncellus* ; the rather, because Mr. *Wh.*, I observe, represents Him but *oddly* ; For He makes him an *inaccurate* Transcriber ; and appeals, for this purpose, as well to the *Reading* of *Eusebius* in the *Greek*, as of *Jerome* in the *Latin* Version, when compar'd with the remaining Part of this Fragment of *Africanus* ; as he does also to the *Complaints* of *Theophanes*, *Goar* and *Scaliger*, in that respect. *Theophanes* is an Author, that I as seldom hear of as *Syncellus* ; and, methinks, I should have a better Notion of the Subject you are going to speak to, if something might first be truly said in behalf of *Syncellus's* Abilities, accuracy and Fidelity:

A. None

A. None can give a better or truer Account of *Syncellus*, than his Contemporary *Theophanes* ; who also undertook the *continuance* of *Syncellus*'s Chronography : for which Account, I must refer you to the *Byzantine History* [a] and P. Goar's Preface. You will there find, that *Syncellus* sometimes severely corrected the Faults of *Eusebius* himself ; and *Allatius* condemns the hard Language that *Syncellus* undeservedly met with from *Scaliger*. *Vossius* [b] expressly says, ' that *Syncellus* often had ' just reason to differ from *Eusebius* ; and sometimes ' *Syncellus* (says He) was as culpable as the other. The Character that *Theophanes* gives of *Syncellus* is a very singular one, viz. that he was a Man of great Learning ; [c] one that had turn'd over the old

[a] Vid. L. *Allatij* Diatr. de *Georgij* ap. *Hist. Byzant* p. 324. ubi *Syncelli* studium, Diligentiam, & in contexenda Historia conatus, *Theophanes* Isaurus, Historiæ illius Continuator varie expressit. ib. p. 325, ita de *Syncello* *Allatius* ; Quemadmodum ' *Eusebius Africanum* & alios, qui ante eum huic Scripti-
' tioni manum admoverunt, castigabat ; sic ipsum *Eusebium*
' Geo. iste *Syncellus*, ubi quid Ille paulo alienius à vero dixit, aut
' fecit, graviter objurgavit. Eum (*Syncellum*) merito ab *Eusebio*
' dissentire sæpe, sæpe etiam immerito, *Jos. Scaliger* passim conatus est ostendere in *Eusebij* Chronico ; cui (*Scaligero*)
' ut in multis subscribe, ita in pluribus meram animi contentionem
' agnosces.--- A *Josepho Scal.* prope et honeste dissentio ; male-
' dicentiamq; illam in Auctorem tantopere ab eo perpolitam
' condemno. Frustra enim in immeritum ac optimum Scriptorem
' convicia illa, quæ sine Stomacho non audies, jaciuntur.

[b] Meritò sæpe ab *Eusebio* dissentit Geo. *Syncellus*--- est etiam cum *Syncellus* ipse non minus latæ sit culpæ reus. *Voss.* de *Histor. Gr.* L. 2. C. 24.

[c] πολυμαθὲς ἑστᾶτος

old Historiographers, and examin'd 'em *accurately*, or with uncommon Diligence ; [d] and that no body before Him had written in the *Chronographi- cal* way like Him. [e] As to the *MS.* of *Syncellus*, which contains this remarkable Fragment of *Africanus*, (now in the King of *France's* Library, found at *Corinth* above 200 Years ago) it appears to be about 700 Years old ; *Syncellus* himself flourishing about A. D. 790. This *Ms.* notwithstanding it's Antiquity, *P. Goar* says, is whole and in good condition, excepting *three Leaves*, which relate to Affairs, from the time of *Valerian Probus*.

It appears farther, how exceeding [f] careful *P. Goar* was, in giving us the *Text* of *Syncellus*, as He found it in this *ancient Ms.*; and being so ancient, I shou'd think *P. Goar* might be depended on in this Matter, without making any farther search after *MS.* There are several *Imperfect MS.* of *Syncellus* (as the *Bodleian Catalogue* informs us) to be met with here in *England*: But *P. Goar* says, that there was not in the World, as He cou'd find out, above *one* or *two* more compleat *MS.* of *Syncellus*. besides *this*: For what were taken from *this Ms.* are not to be reckon'd. Now, after a strict Col- lation made by *P. Goar* with those other *MS.*; the *Text* relating to *Phlegon's* Eclipse stands thus in the *Royal* one, just as our *Anti-phl.* has copy'd it ; and
who

[d] ἀκριβῶς διεξερυνησάμενος ἀκριβῶς συνεγράψατο

[e] εἰς ἄλλος τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ

[f] Georgij Opus, haud meum, publico daturus, *Syncelli Textum, verba, scripta, fideliter excerpta* &c. *Goar* in *Praef.*

who (to do Him justice) does not talk of *Interpolations* or *Inaccuracy*, as Mr. *Wb.* does ; but only says in general, [g] that *Africanus* was in the number of those, *who had a survy trick of lying for God's sake.* *Africanus's* Words then, as I lately repeated them, stand thus in *Syncellus's* Text.

Φλέγων ἱστορεῖ ἐπὶ Τιβερίῳ Καίσαρος ἐν πανσελήνῳ ἔκλειψιν ἡλίου γεγονέναι τελείαν ἀπο ὥρας ἑκλῆς μέχρις ἐντάτης: δῆλον ὡς Ταύτην.

Phlegon relates, that in *Tiberius Cæsar's* Reign, there was a total Eclipse of the Sun, when it was *Full Moon*, from the *sixth* Hour to the *ninth* : tis plain, He speaks of *this*. ----- i. e. (*this Eclipse at Full Moon, when Christ suffer'd ; which Africanus is just before talking of.*

Now Mr. *Wb.* is pleas'd to fancy, that the words, *at the full Moon*, and *to the ninth Hour* ; were either *late* Interpolations that had crept out of the Margin into the Text of a *Ms*, that is *seven Hundred* years old ; or else, that *Syncellus* himself (in the *eighth* Century) might have *inaccurately* transcrib'd these Words, *full Moon* and *ninth Hour* into his Text. It so happens for once, that instead of Mr. *Wb.* we have got the *Anti-phl.* on our side. He rebukes Mr. *Wb.* pretty sharply, ‡ and, I think, very justly. ‘ ’Tis not enough, says He, to say, ‘ that *very probably* these are later *Interpolations* : for ‘ ’tis certain, that this *Addition* (as He our *Ant-phl.* calls

[g] Def. p. 20, 21, 22.

calls it) to *Phlegon's* Testimony is as old as *Africanus's* time; and since we find it in *Fact* in *Africanus*; whence so probably did it come as from *Africanus* himself? so that this merry Gentleman grants to Mr. *VVb.* (you see) that those Words, *Full Moon* and *ninth Hour*, were genuine Words in *Africanus's* Copy 1500 Years ago: but then denys, that *Africanus* had any right to place 'em there. And yet tis observable, after he has made this bold confident Assertion, He seems to be sadly puzzl'd, what to say for Himself; (as indeed well He might be after such a concession) That *Africanus* was far from being a *Credulous* or a *careless* Writer; He knew was a thing, that was not to be deny'd; that *Africanus* was the most learned, faithful, and accurate Chronologer of all Antiquity; the World (He knew likewise) was agreed in. *Photius* read *Africanus's* Works in the *ninth* Century; He tells us * that the

L whole

* *Photij* Bibl. Cod. 34. ἔστι (Ἀφρικανὸς) σύντομος μὲν, ἀλλὰ μηδὲν τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἱστορηθῆναι παραλίμπανων. Ita etiam de eodem *Africano* P. Goar (in Praef. ad Geo. Syncelli Chron) Non arcana modo Scripturae, sed omnium pene Gentium Bibliothecas evolverat. Nay *Africanus* was, for his Learning and Judgment, so considerable a Person in the World, that He sometimes shew'd even *Origen* himself his Errors. vld. *Du Pin* Vol. 1. p. 116. But it was the *Love of Truth*, *Du Pin* add, pure Sincerity in *Africanus*, that made Him engage with *Origen*, and not any Itch of Disputing. Il paroît pourtant qu' *Africanus* lui écrivoit plutôt pour S'instruire de la Verite, que pour disputer contre lui (*Origene.*) There was a humble happy temper of mind in *Africanus*; whilst He was seeking out for Instruction Himself, He was really informing others. A beautiful Character this! And yet, tis plain, our *Antiphlegon*: has now nothing left, but to rob *Africanus* of it.

whole consisted of 14 Books in 5 Volumes; and then gives this character of Him, viz. That He was a concise Author indeed, but had *omitted* nothing that was proper to be known. But our *Anti-phl.* is of another opinion; that *Africanus* was rather guilty of *adding* what shou'd *not* have been said, than *omitting* what shou'd have been known: and therefore, being reduc'd to some straits, after such concession, that *the full Moon and the ninth Hour* were the *genuine* Words of *Africanus*; He soon bethought himself of the old useful *Maxim*; *Calumniare fortiter*--- roundly affirming, that *Africanus* was an arrant *impostor*. He does this indeed with some *seeming* confusion: but I defy the most abandon'd *Libertine* amongst us, to speak more villainously of the *Ancients* (not the least Distinction made) than the Lecturer of St. *James's* has here done, at the same time that he is puzzled. I *know not very well, how to account for it*; (says He) † But in fact the Men of the second and third Centuries had a scurvy trick of lying for God's sake.

B. Those Gentlemen, (I forgot to tell you) that I was giving you some Account of this Morning, were wonderfully pleas'd with *this Expression* of our *Anti-phl.* and it being deliver'd in that gross loose manner, wou'd be of much greater service, they said; and they cou'd now better apply it upon any Occasion, when those *mysterious* sayings about the *Trinity* shou'd be trump'd up upon 'em out of *Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Tertullian &c.* Alas! can this *Anti-phl.* imagin, that He has a right to

Civil

† Def. p. 21.

Civil Treatment from any orthodox member of the Christian Church? I begin to think, He does not expect it: For I observe in the Preface to his *Defence*, He is very apprehensive, that *many* don't take Him for a *Friend* to the Religion, He professes. He may assure Himself, the Number is very great that think *so* of Him; and they think moreover, that any Person must be an *Enemy* to it, who wou'd destroy *Testimonies* of such importance; that shine so clearly in defence of Christianity, amidst the Works of those venerable learned Writers, that you have lately been talking of. But not to dwell much upon such an odious Topick; pray, how does *Scaliger* differ from the *ancient Ms.* of *Syncellus*, in this particular about *Africanus's* citing *Pblegon*, concerning the *Full Moon* and the *ninth Hour*?

A. *Scaliger* complains in several of his Epistles, * that some Author or Antiquary had sadly abus'd this *Ms.* of *Syncellus* in the *Royal Library*; but hop'd, that the *Vatican Ms.* wou'd supply the Defects of the other; However, owns, that He had receiv'd such Advantages from *Syncellus*, in the *Royal Library*, that no other Writer cou'd have afforded

* Inter Georgij (Syncelli) Textus à Scaligero vitiatos, truncatos, immutatos vel omisso, (inquit P. Geor p. 528.) hæc omittit *Scaliger*; viz. ἐκλείψις ὑπονοείσθω ἐν τι κατὰ τὴν ὥσιν Φλέγων ἱστορεῖ ἐπὶ Τιβερίου Καίσαρος ἐν πανσελήνῳ ἐκλείψιν ἡλίου. Here *Scaliger* has left out the Words *Full Moon*, but not the *ninth Hour*, no more than the *Sixth*; for had *that* been done, it wou'd have *class'd* with the Passage in his *Eusebius*.

* vid. *Scal. Epp*, L. 2. Ep. 159, 161, &c.

afforded Him. † *Scaliger* owns † this *Ms.* to have been written but 200 Years after the Author's time; and that the Character or Manner of writing shews it to be so; and, in another Epistle (163) He says expressly, ' that He did not believe, there was an older *Ms.* of *Syncellus* extant, than this in the Royal Library.' But, as I observ'd from *Huetius*, when I last saw you, *Scaliger* cou'd not help thinking, that by the Word *ἑλίου* nothing more cou'd be meant than a *natural Eclipse*; and therefore [in his Opinion] to make it more consistent with his Author has thought fit to leave out that Passage in *Syncellus*; as *P. Goar* observes. Whereas, tis evident from the *Testimonies* just now alledg'd, that there were several things related by *Phlegon* concerning the *miraculous Eclipse* at Christ's Passion, that are not taken notice of by *Eusebius*; and yet have every whit as good Authority to support 'em; *Phlegon's* Works being in the Hands of the learned, (you see) for above four Hundred Years after *Eusebius's* time; and *Photius*, as I took notice, was well acquainted with *Africanus's* writings in the ninth Century. *Philoponus*, who flourish'd between the times of *Eusebius* and *Photius*, does not only say, in general; tis evident, that *Phlegon* takes notice of the *Eclipse* at our Saviour's Passion, and no other; (there being, says He, but one *natural* way of every

Eclipse

† *Georgium ex Bibliotheca Regia habeo, non lacunosum quidem, qualem Vaticanum esse ferunt, sed à Bibliographo, sive Antiquario, multis patribus mutilatum. — Habeo quæ alius Scriptor suppeditare non possit &c. Ep. 159.*

|| Ep. 161;

Eclipse of the Sun; and yet *Pblegon* saying of his Eclipse, that there never had been any *such before*; But *Philoponus* afterwards mentions, in particular, the *Full Moon*; and takes notice of *Pblegon*, as the Person mentioning it likewise; The Eclipse, He says, was *supernatural* at Christ's Death; *which Eclipse* (ἡ ἐκλείψις) *Pblegon* mentions in his *Olympiads*. How then? What if we don't learn any thing at this Day from *Eusebius* concerning the *Full Moon*, and we had not seen *there* the *ninth Hour*; must it therefore follow, that *Pblegon* took no notice of the *Full Moon* or the *ninth Hour*? must it follow that *Africanus* impos'd upon the World knowingly and willfully, when He thus cited *Pblegon*? or is *Eusebius* the only Person to be credited, as having told the *whole Truth* and nothing but the Truth of this matter? Does not *Origen*, in his Dispute with *Celsus*, say, that *Pblegon* relates ----- *relates* what? It had been very trifling and impertinent in *Origen*, to have said no more, than that *Pblegon* had taken notice of a *wonderful Darkness* and an *Earthquake*; *Facts*, that *Celsus* was appriz'd of, as well as Himself: But *Origen* proceeds farther, in reminding *Celsus* from the *Date* of *Pblegon's Eclipse*, that these things *happen'd at the time of our Saviour's Passion*. It was *this* (no doubt) that confounded *Celsus*; and if He cou'd possibly have prov'd *Pblegon's Eclipse* to have been a *Natural* one, (as our *Anti-phl.* is endeavouring to do for his party now) or that it did not appear from the *Date* to be truly applied; *Origen*, no doubt, wou'd soon have heard

heard of it from *Celsus*; and *that* knowing and learned Physician wou'd never have had recourse to such mean, stupid *solutions* of *those Facts*, which He found He cou'd not contradict; being so plainly related and so justly apply'd. Our *Anti-phl.* and Mr. *Wh.* have both rais'd *Doubts* here about rendring the Words *καὶ αὐτὸν χρόνον*; which is meer *trifling*. *καὶ αὐτὴν μέραν σαββάτων* — Upon the first Day of the Week. 1. Cor. 16. 2. It were easy to multiply Instances, in shewing it: I think *Origen* himself has sufficiently explain'd it in another Place himself, by using the Word (ἵνα) *tunc*, *then at that time*, instead of *καὶ αὐτὸν χρόνον*; where He is speaking of *Pblegon's* Eclipse, and applying it to the *very time* of our Saviour's Passion *περὶ τῶν μεγάλων τοῦτεγενομένων* — ἀνέγραψε καὶ φλέγων — There is also a great deal of weakness and ill design shewn by our *Anti-phl.* in his translating *Origen's* *καὶ αὐτὸν δύνασθαι*; *We have vindicated these things as well as we cou'd*, (*καὶ αὐτὸν δύνασθαι*) so He translates it. * He wou'd have the *English* Reader believe, that *Origen's* meaning was, that He had said and argu'd as much, as a *bad* Cause wou'd allow of; whereas *Origen* most certainly cou'd have no other meaning, than that He had been defending (in his Opinion) a *good* Cause against *Celsus*, to the utmost of his power; and don't his power and abilities appear to have been very great in defending such Cause? But still it was agreeable to modesty and humility to say no more, than *καὶ αὐτὸν δύνασθαι*; * We have, according to our abilities, says He, made our Defence; having produced the authority of *Pblegon*, who relates, that these things happen'd at the

* Dissert. p. 25.

‘ the Time that Christ Suffer’d. Does *Phlegon* re-
 late this? And what says our modest *Anti-Phlegon*?
 ‘ The truth is, says He, † *Origen* knew, that *Phle-*
 ‘ *gon*’s Authority cou’d not be proved to *relate* to
 ‘ our Saviour’s Passion, and therefore He very
 ‘ fairly gave up his Testimony; meaning in his
 ‘ *Commentaries*; that have been translated, corrupt-
 ed, and mangled by some *rude Hand*: But no Bo-
 dy well knows *who*; || or how they came to be so
imperfect and contradictory to the *real Sense* of *Ori-*
gen, in his *Greek original* performance on this Sub-
 ject; which was also compos’d *long after* this *Com-*
mentary: And yet our *Anti-phl.* (the better to serve
 his Purpose) wou’d fain have his Reader to under-
 stand it otherwise: * *Origen*, says He, * against
 ‘ *Celsus* strove to make the best of a thing: which,
 ‘ when He consider’d and treated of at large, in
 ‘ *another Place* (*his Commentaries*) He fully gives
 ‘ up.’ What a *vile* way of talking is this of that
 great Man; whose Reputation He is endeavouring
 to *blast*, at the same time, that He wou’d have the
 World in one respect to give Him credit! But to
 let that pass ---As to *Origen*’s Latin *Commentaries*;
 I cannot think it necessary to say any thing further,
 after what Mr. *Wh.* has told Him already concern-
 ing it: And yet this is the broken Reed our *Anti-*
phl. relays upon so very much. The Passage, which
Mr.

† Dissert. p. 28.

|| vid. *Mills* in *Luke*, 23. 44.

* Diss p. 29.

Mr. *Wh.* cites from *Huetius* to this purpose, is so very strong and remarkable (especially considering, *Huetius* had, of all Men, most studied the Works and Opinions of *Origen*) that I cannot but again recommend it to your perusal, as I did, when I last saw you. †

B. I have carefully perus'd already, what you so kindly recommended; and must think, the Arguments of *Huetius* and Mr. *Wh.* together will give every impartial Reader full Satisfaction in that Matter. I now beg leave to ask the Reason, why *Tertullian* is plac'd by you in the List of antient Writers, as having to do with *Pblegon*; since it does not appear, that He made use of the name of *Pblegon*?

A. 'Tis true, it does not appear: But can you, or any one else, read that remarkable Passage in his Apology, where He is *Appealing* to the *Roman Records*, and not think of *Pblegon* at the same time? 'Tis certain, I have *Scaliger's* Authority for placing this Testimony here: For (as I told you this Morning) He makes no doubt; but that *Tertullian* had *Pblegon* in his Thoughts, when He made his *Apology*, in *that* particular; and therefore 'tis much the same thing, as if like *Origen* and others, He had expressly nam'd *Pblegon*. As to the *Translation* that I have given of *it*, I must, for my own part, think, that it contains the plain obvious Sense of the Author, which our *Anti-phleg.* (both in his *Dissertation* and *Defence*) has taken so much pains

† See Mr. *Wh's* Vindication of *Pblegon's* Testimony, p. 30, 31, 32.

pains to render *obscure*; and that his Negative (*non*) is highly ridiculous. For the same reason that I place *Tertullian*, I here place *Lucian*; whose *Testimonies* are now both call'd in question, as to their being *Authentic*, † with the most consummate assurance by our *Anti-phl.* without any *Reason* assign'd, but only his Will and pleasure, because He did not like *them*. And, as to Mr. *Wh*'s 20th Testimony, which our *Anti-phl.* there likewise excepts to, I'll venture to affirm, that, after all the *great Names* which I very well know are to be produc'd in his favour, He will not be able to make out his point so cleverly, as He imagins; viz. that *that particular* Epistle to *Polycarp* is *spurious*. I told you, when I last saw you, that I thought there was just reason to believe, many *genuine* Epistles of *Dionysius* were mix'd and huddl'd together with *counterfiet* ones by the *Collector*, who ever He was; and that *this* to *Polycarp* had, in particular, the marks of it's *Authenticity*, I am still of the same opinion; and have *more reasons* to support it, were it necessary to assign 'em, in opposition both to our *Anti-phl.* and Mr. *Wh.* too: tho' it looks very odd in the *latter*, to bring in *Dionysius*'s Epistle as *Evidence*, and yet to call it *spurious* at the same time.

B. Sir, I think, the *Testimony*, that you have alledg'd from *Maximus* in the 6th Century, seems to countenance very much the *Genuinness* of that Epistle to *Polycarp*. For, when *Maximus* says, that *Phlegon* had not describ'd the *manner* of that Eclipse;

† Def. p. 9.

it seems to imply, that the *Antients* were not unacquainted otherwise with the *manner* of it, tho' *Phlegon* happen'd to be defective in that point. But there is *one* thing in this Testimony of *Maximus*, that you'll pardon me, if I am beforehand with you in taking notice of it. 'Tis certainly very much to your present Purpose; because it shews that the Passage in *Eusebius* is not to be so esteem'd of, as containing *all* that *Phlegon* had said about this *Eclipse*; and this, I take it, is the Point that you chiefly have in view at present.

A. 'Tis true: And I'll turn to the Passage, and read it with you ---- It runs thus, (amongst the *Scholion* or Exposition of *Maximus*) ' *Phlegon* says, this
' *Eclipse* happen'd contrary to the usual course of things:
' (or the known Laws of Nature) but He had not
' describ'd the MANNER ¹ of it.' *Maximus*, you see, is very positive, that *Phlegon* say'd so; and it had been easy to have confuted Him, if the Case had been otherwise: For *Phlegon*'s Works were in People's Hands (as I have more than once observ'd already) for *three* Hundred Years at least after *Maximus*'s Time. But, does *Eusebius* give such an Account from *Phlegon*? Or, must *Maximus*'s Testimony not be allow'd of as good *Evidence*, because 'tis not found in *Eusebius*? Or has our *Anti-phl.* any the least Authority for saying as He does, ² when He is opposing *Africanus*'s Testimony; ' The Pas-
' sage

¹ παρὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀνέγερσιν (ἐλέγαν) γενέσθαι. ἢ μὲν τὴν ἰσχυρὰν ἀνέγερσιν.

² Dissert. p. 14.

† sage in *Pblegon* itself being preserved, (in *Eusebius*)
 ‘ it is *evident*, that *Pblegon* says not one Word a-
 bout it’s being at the *Full Moon*? But I humbly
 conceive, what this Gentleman says is far from be-
 ing *evident*; because, He must first make it appear,
 that the *whole* Passage in *Pblegon*’s Olympiads re-
 lating to this *Eclipse*, is contain’d in *Eusebius*; which
 is a peice of Work, you easily perceive, He will
 not care to undertake; for it appears plain enough,
 that the *whole* Passage is not in *Eusebius*. All that
 I shall remark further on the *Testimonies* now al-
 ledg’d, is from the Words contain’d in the *Chroni-*
con Alexandrinum; a Work compos’d about *twelve*
 or *thirteen* Hundred Years ago, according to Mr.
Wh. or [as more justly judg’d by † Dr. *Mills*] some-
 what *later*; Dr. *Mills* observing, that this *Chronicle*
 contains abundance of Learning || amongst the *An-*
tients, not to be met with elsewhere. This Author,
 whoever He was, says thus; [as you have heard
 already] ‘ These Things are related by *Pblegon* as
 ¶ 2 *knowing*

† *Fastes Siculos seu Chronicon Alexandrinum*, quo mundi Tem-
 pora ad decimum usq. *Heraclij* Consulatum, seu A. D. 628,
 disposuit Auctor, quisquis Ille. In prol. p. 98, 99. *ed.*
Kust.

|| In hoc Chronico varijs Veterum Monumentis, nusquam
 alibi reperiendis, pleno. *Mullij* Prolegom: in N. T.

‘ knowing or † owning the extraordinary nature of this
 ‘ Eclipse of the Sun : For an Eclipse of the Sun,
 ‘ when it was *Full Moon*, is a thing, that was never
 ‘ heard of, or ever happen’d in any age before.’
 Now, if you shall at any time recapitulate, and duly
 consider the *Remarks* that I have made upon the
 several *Testimonies* now laid before you ; do but
 but take the pains to view ’em in whatever light you
 please ; I’m persuaded, you will be soon convinc’d,
 that our *Anti-phl.* has not the *least Foundation* for
 saying, as He does, that *Pblegon’s* Eclipse was a *na-*
tural one, or that it had no relation to the *Darkness*
 at our Saviour’s Passion. And if you shall conclude
 from the *Remarks*, that *Eusebius* has not told us *all*
 that was in *Pblegon’s* Olympiads concerning this
 Eclipse ; it follows, that *Eusebius’s* defect, in that
 Point, ought to be supplied out of the *genuine*
 Works of those Venerable Writers, that I have
 been naming to you : And what then must become
 of our *Anti-phlegon’s* Argument, shou’d *Eusebius*
 fail Him in this Matter ? But admitting, that these
Passages, I have been *remarking* upon, do imply no
 more, than *Explications* or *Illustrations* of what is
 contain’d in *Eusebius* already, viz. when He says
 from

† γνῆς (Φλέγων) τὸ παράδοξον τῆς ἐκλείψεως &c. what
 is here call’d παράδοξον, is at the beginning of this Quotation
 you observe) call’d καινοπρεπές ; a compound Word, so
 rare and uncommon in the Greek Language, that it seems to
 be used on purpose ; denoting, that it was such a sort of *Dark-*
ness, as was proper and suitable to the Time ; that it was *con-*
venient, the Sun should hide its Face, when the Lord of Glor-
 y was hanging on the Cross.

from *Pblegon*, that there was the *greatest Eclipse of the Sun, that had been known*; (which is the other light these *Passages* perhaps may be taken in) yet admittina, I say, such *Passages* to be only a *Gloss* or *Comment* upon *Pblegon*; 'tis apparent, our *Anti-phlegon's* Argument falls to the ground at once; unless you can suppose, that our *Anti-phlegon's* consummate *Assurance* ought to outweigh the *Judgment* of those primitive Writers; which yet, in his great modesty, He tells the World, it ought to do.

B. Believe me, Sir I begin now to be as heartily Sick about this *Anti-phlegon's* behaviour, as He seems to be about his *own Work* Himself--- 'I shall dismiss all thoughts, says He, of a further Examination of this Subject.' † 'Tis high time indeed, as I said before, this Morning. He talks mightily of *serving the Cause of Christ*. But let Him take care in time: Otherwise instead of the gentle Appellation of *Anti-phlegonist*, He may come to have that of *Christomachus*; which He seems to bid far for already, considering his *reviling* conduct towards those very Persons, who have transmitted the *Holy Scriptures* themselves; and have also attested to this Eclipse of *Pblegon*, as relating to the same *miraculous* Darknefs, that is *there* recorded. I can easily say, [as our *Anti-phl.* does at the close of his Preface] *that there cannot be a meaner part acted, than to defend an Error, as the support of Truth, to the last Extremity; and when it can be defended no longer; then to give it up with reluctance and unwillingly.*

A. I

† Def. p. 61.

A. I am as desirous of getting rid of this *Anti-phl.* and laying the Wag *Lucian* before you, as you can be for your Heart: But you know, I was oblig'd [and you told me as much, when I last saw you] to say all I cou'd [*καὶ ὅσον δύναμαι*] in defence of *Phlegon*; from whom I had talk'd, above a Year before, in a quite different Manner to you, than this Gentleman has since thought fit to do. You told me moreover, that you wanted very much to be inform'd, how I and this *Anti-phl.* cou'd both be said to be doing Service to the Cause of Christ in this Matter, when we differ'd so extremely in our Opinions about it. You have now heard it pretty largely discuss'd; and your own Judgment must determine you. You'll excuse me, if I detain you a little longer, in making one or two short Observations upon our *Anti-phlegon's Defence*, before We part with Him: And if He is minded to proceed, in this Affair, I'm apt to think, you'll call upon me; and say, 'tis reasonable I shou'd do so too. 'Tis possible, I may have committed mistakes in some Things; and I am ready to hear of 'em: But I can venture to affirm, they are neither willful nor dangerous ones; and yet such I charge and will charge upon this *Anti-phl.* till I see good Reasons offer'd for my thinking otherwise. But to say no more of this; or without any farther loss of Time, take the following Remarks upon his Defence. He first of all bids you observe, that three Gentlemen (one of whom is the justly renown'd Dr. Halley) have calculated an Eclipse with great accuracy; differing three or

four

four Hours from Mr. *Whiston* in his *Calculation* ; But He does not say, that these Gentlemen were of an *Opinion*, or any thing like it, that this *Natural Eclipse* and *Phlegon's* were *one* and the *same*. This, I take for granted, He had not leave to say ; and therefore He stands by Himself and desires the Reader to take his own Word for it. ‘ I receiv’d, ‘ says He (p. 61.) from a Gentleman, to whom I ‘ was then a perfect Stranger, a Computation of ‘ that Eclipse ; which I CONCEIVED, (or *fan-* ‘ *cied*) *Phlegon* to mean’ : And elsewhere (p. 52.) He says, ‘ The Eclipse, which happened A. D. 29. ‘ and which I CONTEND that *Phlegon* speaks of, ‘ lasted at most not above *two Minutes*’. Can you easily imagin, that the *Antients* wou’d appeal to *Phlegon's* Eclipse by Name, if it lasted otherwise than *three Hours* ? Either *their Heads* then were very much out of order, or our *Anti-phlegon's* must be reckon’d so. There’s no *Medium* : One or the other must be admitted. But do we find, that either this unknown *Gentleman*, or Mr. *Hodgson* or Dr. *Halley*, do any ways CONCEIVE much less CONTEND as the Lecturer of St. *James's* does ? Nothing at all of the Matter : So that He is still as far off from proving his Point, as when He first set out ; excepting the *three* or *four Hours* ; whence, He thinks, He has got an Advantage over Mr. *Whiston* ; because He has now brought his *Natural Eclipse* to be *Total* at 12, (which Mr. *Wh.* told Him, was about 9 o’clock) and therefore it must be the *same* (He says) as *Phlegon's*. You can’t but observe

observe how artfully He blends and confounds these *two* Eclipses together. He first *conceives* or fancies 'em to be the *same*; and then amuses his Reader with *Computations*, as if the Makers of them really *conceiv'd*, as He has done. Thus, when the unknown Gentleman says---- ' At *Cairo* I make the middle of ' THIS Eclipse to have happen'd just at noon; but ' at *Jerusalem*, not till above a quarter of an Hour after noon; when the accurate Mr. *Hodgson* is said ' to have communicated to Him his Calculation of ' the SAME Eclipse; that the greatest Obscurati- ' on, according to Him, at *Jerusalem* was at 12^b ' 24 Minutes; and that the duration of Total Dark- ' ness was 1^b--31["] and when Dr. *Halley* says; Ha- ving revised a former Calculation, which I had made of ' THIS Eclipse, &c. I find, that THIS Eclipse ' was Total at *Jerusalem*, or near it, about 11 ' Minutes after Noon, and that where it was Cen- ' tral at that Time, the Darkness was not less than 1^b--40["]; I say, our *Anti-pbl.* wou'd have it be- liev'd, that, by the Words THIS *Eclipse*, those learned Gentlemen understood *it* to be the *same* as *that* of *Pblegon's*: And yet who does not see, un- less they do *so* understand it, as our *Anti-pbl.* does, that all their kind Calculations do our *Anti-pbl.'s* Cause no manner of Service? yet still we may se- curely depend upon the Calculations of such accu- rate Astronomers. In short then, as a *præternatural* Eclipse cannot be calculated; so *Pblegon's* will ever be so esteem'd, [as it has been in all Ages hitherto] till our *Anti-pbl.* CONCEIVES better; or brings better

better *Vouchers* than his own *Dear self*, for proving it to be a *Natural* one.

B. This confounding of the *two* Eclipses, made me wonder very much, what this Gentleman cou'd mean, when, before I had read the *third* page quite over in his *Defence*, and before He had in the least enter'd into the Merits of the Cause, in confuting what Mr. *Wh.* had said; He roundly charges Mr. *Wh.* as if PHLEGON'S Eclipse, according to *Him*, was Total and Central soon after *nine* in the Morning; whereas *Pblegon* had said, that it was dark at the *sixth* Hour, says our *Anti-phl.* i. e. at *twelve* at Noon. I knew the Charge was false, and that Mr. *Wh.* had made no such *Computation*; turning therefore to his *48th* page, I find Mr. *Wh.* says thus. ' *Pblegon's* Eclipse began at the *sixth* Hour of the Day, or *noon*; as did the Darknels at our Saviour's Passion. But *Kepler's* Eclipse about the *second* or *third* Hour, i. e. about 8 or 9 o'clock in the Morning, or a little after Sunrising: which *three* or *four* Hours, at that time of the Year, is a very great Difference.'

A. As to those *three* or *four* Hours; I suppose Mr. *Wh.* will endeavour to set all to rights in his *March* Lectures; of which the News Papers are just now advertising us: and He will not fail, to be sure, taking notice of such foul Practice in our *Anti-phl.* He wou'd have had the World conceive, as He did at his first setting out in his *Defence*, that Mr. *Wh.* had been contradicting *Pblegon* in a very material point. The cunning of the Man, you see, was to prepossess his

P

Reader,

Reader, that *Kepler's* Eclipse was the *same* as *Pblegon's*; because *Kepler's* forsooth was now going to be made out to be about 12 o' clock, as well as *Pblegon's*; and therefore, by a certain consequence, they must, it seems be *one* and the *same* Eclipse. ' The principal *Difficulty* therefore, says ' He, [p. 65.] which attended my former account, ' is now absolutely removed: and every *Character* ' which *Pblegon* has mentioned, will agree to this ' Eclipse. But Mr. *Wb.* need not be in any pain for the *five Characters* He has assign'd, (except the 4th, notwithstanding all that our *Anti-phl.* has or can say to the contray. I find, that *remarking* upon this Gentleman's *Defence*, begins now to be highly disagreeable to you; tho' I dare say, you have some pleasure, in seeing that our *Anti-phlegon's* Cause appears to be much worse by his *Defence*, than it did before. Permit me only to quote Him once more; I dare say, you'll own the Quotation to be as *Singular*, as any that you have heard? ' Tis not ' my Design, says He p. 48. to account for the ' *Darkness*, which happen'd at the time of our Saviour's Passion. The Fact is owned; not from ' what *Ecclesiastical* Historians have said upon this ' Occasion, *who knew no more of the Matter than we do now*; but from the Authority of the *Evangeliſts*, who are properly *Original Testimonies*, ' and the *only Authentic Records* about it; and from ' whom the *Fathers* had *all that they knew* about it.' Then follows the odd *Chorus* with a *single Voice*--- ' What I contend for, says He, is (*without the concurrence of Argument or Mathematician*) that the ' Eclipse

‘ Eclipse mention’d by *Phlegon* has no manner of
 ‘ relation to such Darknefs.’ You see, here’s
 work enough [was you in the humour to hear it]
 for a half Hour’s Comment upon the several *Falsi-
 ties* and *Absurdities* contain’d in these few Lines.
 But I will not disoblige you ; and I know, your
 own good Sense will soon make proper Reflections
 upon the whole ; especially considering the Dis-
 course, that has pass’d between us this Day. You
 know, you have heard a good deal about *Authentic
 Records* and *original Testimonies*: Let me only re-
 mind you of Dr. *Clarke*’s own Words, which I
 repeated to you this Morning ; [a] where He owns
 the *Fact* [the *Darkness*] not only from the *Evange-
 lists*, but from other *Authentic Records*, The *Dark-
 ness* related by the *Evangelists*, is **CONFIRMED**
to us [says He] *by concurrent Testimonies of profane
 and unquestionably unprejudic’d Authors*. Besides, can
 it be imagin’d, that Dr. *Clarke*, with all his good
 Sense, wou’d give an Ear to *such Talk* as this ; viz.
that the Ecclesiastical Historians [who had *Phlegon*’s
Works, &c. lying before ’em] *Knew no MORE*
of the Matter than we do now, and that the Fathers
knew NOTHING concerning this Darknefs from
any other Authentick Records besides the Scriptures?
 You see the Infatuation---- But I forbear.

B. I can’t but take notice, what an aversion our
Anti-phl. seems to have for those old *Ecclesiasticks*,
 that either consulted the *Records* at *Rome*, at *Nico-
 media* &c. or else read *Phlegon*’s *Works*; and by that

¶ 2

means

[a] *Boyle’s Lectures*, p. 354, 355. I d. 7.

means often apply'd the Eclipse so recorded to the *miraculous* Darkness mention'd by the Evangelists. But whence so much spite and rancour to those venerable Persons who were instrumental in conveying down to us the *sacred Writings* themselves, as well as such Account of the *Eclipse* from *Authentick Records*? Why must the *Acts* of *Pilate*, which *Justin M.* and *Tertullian* talk of, be censur'd as coming out of the *same mint with other Forgeries*? Why are those great Men [Defenders of our common Faith] to be *stigmatiz'd*, as having done *some odd things* or (b) other, that *seem'd to make strongly for their Cause*? And why are *they*, amongst others of the *second and third Centuries*, represented (c) as Men, that had got a *scurfy trick of lying for God's sake*? Surely there must be some *extraordinary Reason* for so much *inveteracy* against these primitive Writers: And I want sadly to know, whether such *Reflections* as these were *part* of the Conversation between our *Anti-phl.* and *Dr. Clarke*, when the latter was prevail'd on to *castrate* his *Boyle's Lectures*.

A. 'Tis highly reasonable to think so: But you see, matters being so order'd, that there was no opportunity to be given of *appealing* to the *Dr.* It appears however from the *Doctor's Works*, that He did not *like* those *two Fathers*, no more than our *Anti-phl.* does. We may reasonably judge, He was willing enough to have a *flur* cast upon *them*, if any Person wou'd do *that dirty Work* for Him;

(b) Dissert. p. 39, 40.

(c) Def. p. 21.

Him: But He knew better, than to treat *them* with such vile, opprobrious Language himself. I shall shew you, when I have next the pleasure of seeing you here, that *Justin M.* in particular gave *Dr. Clarke* so much Disturbance, that He was forc'd some times to *mangle* the *Martyr's* Arguments, as his Enemies had done his Body ; or just, as some of our *Witts* do, when they make *David* an *Atheist* ; in leaving out the first part of the Sentence, and saying [what none but a *Fool* wou'd have said] *There is no God.* But grant, that the *Dr.* did not *bearken* to such vile *suggestions* concerning the *Fathers*, as our *Anti-phl.* has given them out to the World ; methinks, it shou'd be incumbent upon Him, now the *Dr.* is dead, to say as *much* ; or that it was *purely* by dint of Argument, that He was induced to think as He did upon the Matter : And (if it be not a favour too great to be ask'd) let Him speak out plainly, what those *some other things* were, (as He expresses Himself, in the first page of his *Introduction*) *which upon that occasion (He says) He suggested to the Dr.* But whatever He shall determine with Himself to do in these matters ; there is one thing, I'm very sure He ought to do ; and that is doing justice to those injur'd *Fathers* ; chiefly to that excellent Religion, of which He professes Himself to be a Member ; as well by *acknowledging* such *Facts*, as are of real *Importance* to Christianity, to be as they are by *them* represented, unless He is able to bring good *Substantial proof* to the contrary ; (which I am very sure, He never can) as also by declaring, that He
gives

gives his *heartly assent* to such Explanations or Expositions of any *Fundamental* Article of our Faith, as have been given by those venerable Persons; who lived so near the Fountain Head, and may therefore be allow'd to have had a more thorough Knowledge of the sense and meaning of the *Scriptures*, than we have. And as a *Test* of this, I'll just give you a passage out of each of those *Fathers* (*Justin M:* and *Tertullian*) that you may occasionally propose 'em; and by that means learn perhaps what He and His Admirers have to say to such *Passages*.

B. I like the thought extreamly; and surely 'tis highly reasonable, there should be such a *Test*; notwithstanding, He tells his Reader, that He has writ *Essays upon the Truth of the Christian Religion*. Please to go on --- you need not now apologize, as if trespassing upon my Patience; for I hear you with the same pleasure, as I did, when I met you in the *Park* this Morning.

A. The passage from *Justin M.* relates to *Prophecies* concerning Christ; which, in his *Apology*, He acquaints the *Gentiles* with from the *old Testament*; and then *appeals* to the *Acts* of *Pontius Pilate*, whether it was not related in *them*, how Christ did actually perform such *Miracles*, as had been so *prophecy'd* of Him. I give you Mr. *Reeves's* Translation, in *both passages*; and now and then his own excellent *Notes*. Now the *Martyr* apprizes the *Gentiles*, as follows; 'There were of old, among the Jews, certain Prophets of God, by whom the prophetic Spirit made Proclamation

' mation of things to come, long before they
 ' were in being. These Prophecies, just as they
 ' were deliver'd, were committed to writing by
 ' the Prophets themselves in their own *Hebrew*
 ' Mother Tongue, and the Books put into the
 ' Custody of the Kings of *Judea* then in being. ---
 ' Now, in these Books of the *Prophets* we find
 ' it foretold, that there was *one* a coming into
 ' the World, who being born of a *Virgin* and
 ' grown up to Man's Estate, shou'd *cure every*
 ' *Disease* and *Malady in Nature*, *raise the Dead*
 ' &c. *At his coming* (Is. 35. 5, 6.) *the lame shall*
 ' *leap like a Stag; and the Tongue of the Dumb*
 ' *shall be Eloquent; the Lepers shall be cleansed;*
 ' *and the Dead shall rise and walk about.*' And
 ' how He perform'd these *Miracles*, you may ea-
 ' sily be satisfied from the *Acts* (1) of *Pontius Pilate*.
 You may remember, we had a good deal of dis-
 course, the last time, about these *Acts* of *Pilate*;
 for which I must refer to your own (2) *Notes*.
 With what an assuming air, and unparallell'd
 confidence, has our *Anti-phl.* discarded these *Acts*
 of *Pilate*, containing such important *Testimonies*
 taken from *Heathen Records*? Is the World to
 be told, and *only* told (without the least shadow
 of an *Argument* for disproving the *Fact*) that
those Acts of Pilate have no foundation (3) of proba-
 bility? that *Justin M.* and *Tertullian* were weak good
 Men,

(1) See Mr. *Reeser's* Translation of *Justin M's Apology*, p. 61, 62, 86.

(2) Conf. IV. p.

(3) Dissert. p. 37, 39.

Men, yet *errant cheats*; and that they *PUT* such things as these upon poor *Pilate*? Surely 'tis high time for this Gentleman to make *Satisfaction* for the great *Indignity* offer'd to those glorious *Lights* of the Christian Church, But if this is not to be done; He ought to consider, that even *Woolston* Himself has reckon'd Him amongst the *Unbelievers* for (4) denying *these ACTS* of *Pilate*. *Woolston* makes his *unbeliever* talk thus; 'Tis uncertain
 ' that *Pilate* ever writ at all to *Tiberins* of Christ
 ' Jesus. So 'tis possible (5) (says our *Anti-phl.*)
 ' that *Pilate* might give an account to *Tiberius*
 ' of the Death of Christ: But that He wrote the
 ' Things &c. Supposing *Pilate* might write, (says
 ' *Woolston's* Unbeliever) it is yet more uncertain,
 ' what things He wrote of *Him*: for *that* Letter
 ' is long since lost; and as to what the *Fathers*
 ' do say of it, I will not [says his Unbeliever]
 ' believe one Word of it.' I own to you, that I
 had not seen this piece of Mr. *Woolston's*, when
 I lately talk'd to you from Bp *Pearson* and o-
 thers, about these *ACTS* of *Pilate*: But I think,
 it may not be amiss now, when you next hear any
 of your old *Fraternity* talking against these *ACTS*
 of *Pilate*, to ask 'em what they have to object
 to the Arguments, that their *Friend Woolston*
 makes use of upon that head. 'tis very proba-
 ble, they'l give no more heed to *Woolston*, than
 they did to Dr. *Clarke*, when you flily attack'd
 'em

[4] See *Woolston's* old Appology reviv'd; p. 35, &c.

[5] ib. p. 37.

em in his *own* Words; or perhaps will refer you (for an answer) to their *second* intended *Quarto*. However, don't despair in either Case; and press home as vigorously the *Arguments* of *Woolston*, as you did those of *Clarke*,. The *Arguments* of the former are digested under these *three* Heads; 1. In considering what were the *things*, that *Pilate* must needs Know of *Christ Jesus*. 2. In proving, that *Pilate* must needs write to *Tiberius* of the *things* that He knew of Him; and that it was impossible, but that he should write of such and such things to Him. 3. In proving, that *Christ*, in the contents of this Letter of *Pilate's*, was manifested to *Tiberius* as a most *true God*; who did justly claim Adoration and Worship from *Him*: and his leave to let the People depart from *Idolatry* to his Service: Our Time is too far spent, to say any more of this *piece*; I think it by much the best *piece*, which *that* unfortunate Person wrote; long before He, (*a*) fell to *blaspheme*. The Book lies near you; and you may take it home; and I don't doubt, but, with what you have heard me say already, you'll soon be master of the Argument so far, that neither your *Anti-phl.* nor any of his Friends will be able to cope with you.

B. Sr. I thank you. I believe, I shall soon have a rencounter with some of our young *Libertines*; but their *Line*, I'm apt to think, goes



no

[*a*] This Book was printed at the University Press, Cambridge, in the year 1705. so says the Writer of his Life.

no deeper than our *Anti-phl.*'s has done. Shou'd I happen to meet again the *old blear Ey'd Deist*, I took notice of in the Morning, there might perhaps some Honour redound, from such an Engagement. But whatever shall be the Event in that particular; I will not fail, some way or other, of throwing out these *Test-passages*, in order to get the best intelligence I can, in what manner *they* are receiv'd. Please to give me the other *Passage*, you promis'd me, from *Tertullian*, and then I'll take my Leave.

A. The *other* relates to the *Divinity* of the Son of God; his being of the *same Nature and Essence* with God the *Father*. You find it thus in *Tertullian's* Apologetick --- (1) ' I have already
' said, that God reared this Fabrick of the World
' out of Nothing, by his *Word*, Wisdom or Power;
' and 'tis evident, that your Sages of old were of
' the *same* opinion, that the *Λόγος*, *i. e.* the *Word*
' or the Wisdom was the maker of the Universe:
' For *Zeno* determines the *Logos* to be the Creator
' and adjuster of every thing in nature. The same
' *Logos*, He affirms, is called by the name of *Fate*,
' God, Mind of Jove, and *Necessity* of all things.
' *Cleanthes* will have the Author of the World to
' be a *Spirit* which pervades every part of it.
' And We *Christians* also do affirm a *Spirit* to be
' the proper substance of the *Logos*; by whom all
things

[1] See Mr. Reeves's Translation of *Tertullian's* Apologetick, p. 256, 257, 258.

' things were made; in which He subsisted before
 ' He was *spoken* (2) out; and was the *Wisdom* that
 ' assisted at the Creation, and the *Power* that presi-
 ' ded over the whole Work. The *Logos* or Word,
 ' issuing forth from that *spiritual* Substance at
 ' the Creation of the World, and generated by
 ' that Issuing or Progression, is for this *reason*
 ' call'd the *Son of God*; and *the God*, from his
 ' *Unity of Substance* with God the Father: for God
 ' is a *Spirit*. An imperfect Image of this you have
 ' in the *derivation of a Ray* from the *Body of the*
 ' *Sun*: for this Ray is a *part* without any diminu-
 ' tion of the whole; but the Sun is always in the
 ' Ray, because the Ray is always from the Sun;
 ' nor is the *Substance separated*, but only extended.
 ' Thus is it, in some measure, in the *eternal Ge-*
neration

(2) There is a *threefold* Generation of the *Son of God* fre-
 quently mention'd by the Primitive Writers. The *First* is the
 true and proper Generation of the *Son*, which was from the
Father before all Worlds. The *second* is the *progression* of the
Logos from his Father at the Creation; which they call *ἀπο-*
έλευσις, ἐπευξις &c. The *third* was at his Incarnation in the
 Womb of the blessed Virgin overshadow'd by the Power
 of the most High. The *Second* Kind of Generation, is that
 which *Tertullian* hints at in this place. For the fuller sa-
 tisfaction in this point, I advise the Reader to consult Bp
Bull's incomparable Defence of the *Nicene Faith* (C. 5) con-
 cerning the *Coeternity* of the *Son*. And so likewise, Cap. 7.
 Sect. 5. where He will find several things in this place
clear'd, and our Author vindicated beyond exception, as to
 the Doctrine of the *Consubstantiality* of the *Son*.

‘ *generation* of the *Logos*. He is a Spirit of a Spirit ;
 ‘ (3) a *God of God* ; as one Light is generated by
 ‘ another ; the Original, Parent Light remaining
 ‘ entire and undiminished, notwithstanding the
 ‘ Communication of itself to many other Lights.
 ‘ Thus it is, that the *Logos*, which *came forth*
 ‘ *from God*, is both *God and the Son of God*. and
 ‘ *THOSE TWO ARE ONE.*’ Hence it is, that
 ‘ a Spirit of a Spirit, or a *God of God*, makes ano-
 ‘ ther in *mode* of *Subsistence*, but not in *number* ;
 ‘ in *order* of Nature, but not in Numericalness
 ‘ or *Identity* of *Essence* : and so the Son, is su-
 ‘ bordinate to the Father, as He comes from
 ‘ Him as the Principle, but is never Separated.
 ‘ Him therefore (Christ) they could not see (says
 ‘ *Tertullian* :) to be a *God* in the humble Dis-
 ‘ guise of a *Man* ; yet seeing the Miracles He
 ‘ did, they cry’d Him down for a *Conjurer* ; for
 ‘ dealing with the Devil, when He was turn-
 ‘ ing the Devils out of all their possessions at
 ‘ a Word’s speaking : and with the same Word
 ‘ bid Sight return to the *blind*, and it return’d ;
 ‘ and cleansed the *Leapers* ; and new-braced the
 ‘ *Paralytick* Joynts ; and Spoke the *Dead* to Life ;
 ‘ and made the Elements obey ; stilling the
 ‘ Storms ; and walking upon the Seas ; and de-
 ‘ monstrating Himself to be the *Logos* of God. &c.
 B.

(3) This Similitude of a Ray from the Sun, or a Light
 from a Light, is not to be look’d upon as a full and ade-
 quate Illustration of the *Mode*, how the Son of God was ge-
 nerated by the Father, nor will any thing in Nature give us

B. Sir If I may be allow'd to conjecture; our *Anti-phl.* will never care to atone for his *Offences* against the *Fathers*, by giving you or any one else satisfaction, as to these *two Test-passages*. I'm rather inclin'd to think, that He'l try to improve upon *Daille* and some other of your four Writers against the *Fathers*, in giving these ancient Writers still more *hard Words* (if possible) than He has yet done; sooner than be *explicit* as to this *Fundamental Point*; no otherwise *explicit* I dare say, than you are to suppose Him to have been already by *Subscriptions* &c. And how far, or in what manner such *Subscriptions* have of late Years been thought *obligatory*, is a Subject too extensive, to be enquir'd into at present. All that I farther request of you, is, that since *Dr. Clarke* is not alive to speak for Himself; nor are we likely to know from any one what He did speak on this Head; that you will please to *recapitulate*, from what He has said in His *Boyle's Lectures* concerning this *Testimony of Pblegon*; what the Sum and Strength of his Argument

a perfect representation of it" 'Tis what *Iustin M.* and others have chosen to represent it by; nor do I know a better to make this incomprehensible *Mystery* apprehended: Which is all they drive at; and it serves sufficiently to declare *their Sense and notion of it*, namely, that *Christ from all Eternity did coexist with the Father*, as Light does with the Sun; that He was *God of God*, without any diminution of the Divine Substance, as one Light is kindled from another &c. 'Tis evident likewise, from this Expression, of *God of God, as Light of Light*, what the notion of the *Fathers* was about the *Divinity of Christ*, before the *Establishment of the Nicene Fathers*; who make use of this Expression in their Creed.

ment is, for *Phlegon's* Eclipse being *præternatural* ; and what our *Anti-phl.* has advanc'd, on the contrary, for it's being a *Natural* one.

A. The *Arguments* on both sides stand thus ; and at one view, you are left to determine upon the whole, after what you have heard each Day.

Dr. *Clarke* argues thus ;

1. **T**HE *miraculous* Darkness at our Saviour's Crucifixion (mention'd by the Evangelists) is one of those particulars that are CONFIRMED by *concurrent Testimonies* of profane and unquestionably unprejudic'd Authors.

2. The *miraculous* Darkness, that happen'd at our Saviour's Passion was recorded in the *publick Roman Registers*.

Dr. *Sykes* argues thus ;

1. **T**IS a most gross *Imposition* on the Reader, to call such *Testimonies* *Original*, which were not wrote till very many Years after the *Faëts* happen'd. The Evangelists are the *only true* Witnesses of the *Faëts*, that happen'd at Christ's Passion. As to the Debate about *Phle's* *Testimony*, it stands (notwithstanding such *concurrent Testimonies*) upon the *probabilities* on one side or other.

2. Those *public* Records were *secret Accounts*: The Passage in *Tertullian*, that is quoted by Dr. *Clarke* is not *Authentic*. ALL that the Fathers had

3. Such *miraculous* Dark-
ness at Christ's Death, is,
in a particular manner,
attested to by *Phlegon* in
his *Olympiads*.

4. Such *miraculous* Dark-
ness at Christ's Death, was
commonly *Appeal'd* to
by the first Christian
Writers.

5. *Tertullian* and *Ori-
gen* are two particular
Authorities, who have
Appeal'd, either to the

had concerning such Dark-
ness, was from the Evan-
gelists.

3. *Phlegon's* Eclipse
happen'd in the XVth
of *Tiberius*, about *three*
Years before Christ's Pas-
sion and therefore was a
Natural Eclipse. The pri-
mitive Writers thought
that Christ died in the
XVth of *Tiberius* also :
And therefore they must
so conceive of *Phlegon's*
Eclipse, as *Natural*, hap-
pening in that Year.

4. 'Tis a *Weakness*
which learned Men have
for many Centuries main-
tained, and still maintain.
What harm can ensue, if
you *shew*, that any Man,
Antient or Modern, has
been mistaken? 'Tis a
very proper Work for a
Minister of the Gospel.

5. *Tertullian* has PUT
UPON the World, in
regard to the *Acts* of
Pilate; and therefore not
Phlegon

Roman Records or to *Pblegon*, concerning such *miraculous* Darknefs.

6. When the first Christian Writers thus *Appeal'd*, either to the *Roman Records* or to *Pblegon* concerning this *miraculous* Darknefs, it is *what none of their Adversaries* cou'd deny themselves.

to be credited in this Matter. *Origen's* Latin *Translation* of his Commentary on *Mat.* (*tho' written long before his Original Greek Defence against Celsus*) ought to be regarded rather than the *other*.

6. Those *Adversaries* not denying the *Fact*, might be owing to their not knowing better at that Time: However, it now appears, that *Pblegon's* Eclipse was a *Natural* one; and therefore, expunging it out of *Dr. Clarke's*, *Boyle's* Lectures; and denying the concurrent *Testimonies* of *Pblegon*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, &c. is the best Service that can be done for Christianity, next to the proving it to be true; which I have endeavour'd to do ---- (†)

(†) Κατὰ τὸ δύνατον, as He remarks upon *Origen*.

B. Sir

B. Sir If my memory serves me right, you have (with an agreeable *contraste*) made these *two* Authors really speak in their *own* Words; at least, I'm very sure, you have done them so far Justice, as not to misrepresent *their* true Sense and Meaning upon this Subject. Now when we see *both* their Arguments [thus contracted] at one view; is it not *Sceptical* in the highest Degree; is it not monstrous, to make the least doubt, on which side the *Truth* lies? And yet, with what *front* has this *Anti-phl.* been telling the World, and persisting in it too till He can hold out no longer; that such *bagatelle* Arguments as these, wrought a conviction upon the mind of the learned Dr. S. Clarke; and permitting the 8th Edition of his *Boyle's* Lectures to appear *castrated* in so base a manner, after his Death? This *Testimony* of *Pblegon* therefore, being of such Importance, cou'd not, wou'd not have been *parted* with by Dr. Clarke, nor He have been so hard press'd by our *Anti-phl.* for the doing it; except for *other Reasons*, that are obvious enough to be guess'd at: And, if it shall appear accordingly, at our next meeting, that Dr. Clarke's *Insincerity* was very great in other Matters of high Importance, (as you have already intimated, and told the World of [*thirteen* or *fourteen* Years ago from the *Press*]) I shall then the less wonder at *this*. I hope, our next Meeting will soon fall out: For *Lucian's Philopatris*, and the two *MSs.* of *Verona* and *Windsor*, are very often in my thoughts; and I want extremely to know the use you'll make of all *three*, in clearing up the *Genuineness* of that controverted Text, 1 John, 5: 7. *There*

are Three that bear Record in Heaven, &c. I the rather desire it, because it seems to be *fresh Evidence* for the *Text*; and I wish, our *first Reformers* had known it; for then this *verse* would not have stood with a *Parenthesis*; as 'tis seen to do in *some* of our old *English Bibles*: which is a matter, that may deserve your consideration, when I have next the pleasure of seeing you. I find, *Luther* would not put it in at all, in any Edition of his *German Bible*.

A. The respective *Authorities*, that you mention, lie all ready before you upon the Table; and I hope, you'll soon find me making such a proper use of *them*, as to give you that Satisfaction which I observe you are very *Sollicitous* for having in this *Affair*. The *Scruples* likewise that our *first Reformers* appear to have had about it, shall be fully consider'd: and, I hope, entirely removed for the future. Had the learned and judicious Mr. *Martin* of *Utrecht* liv'd to see the *Verona MS.* you wou'd probably have seen the Matter plac'd in a stronger Light; and the same use made of *this*, as was, (a little before his Death) of the *Greek MS.* found at *Dublin*, in the University Library; formerly belonging to the great *Primate*, A. Bp. *Usher*, who run over all the most considerable Places in *England* (as the Writer of his *Life* tells us) for getting the best Books, and the most valuable *MSs.* His Library suffer'd very much in the *Civil Wars*; which occasion'd it's being often remov'd from one Place to another, and at last carried into *Ireland*, and plac'd at *Dublin*, where it now is. This antient
MS.

MS. as it has this controverted *Text* in it ; so it gives me no small Joy (says Mr. Martin) to see the sacred *Text*, which found so many Contradictors, arise from the obscurity, in which it had lain hid with the *MS.* that contains it. This was communicated to Mr. Martin by Mr. Ycard the worthy Dean of Aconry at Dublin, with a very exact Attestation of the Librarian Mr. Wm. Lewis. The same has since been communicated to me by another Hand : And when this Matter comes to be farther enquir'd into, at our next Meeting ; this *MS.* will appear to be the same with the *Montfortian* taken notice of in our *Polyglott Bible*. The antient *MS.* of *Cassiodore* (a *Work* that Dr. Cave gave over, as lost) in conjunction with this *Dublin MS.* will still be a stronger Evidence for the genuineness of this *Tex* : And don't fancy, that the Cause suffers at all, because that of *Cassiodore* is in *Latin* ; for tho' He writ in that Language, He was conversant, as I told you to Day, with the best and most antient *Greek Copies* as well as *Latin* ones. Pere Simon indeed (the greatest Adversary, that this *Text* ever met with, and whom all the *Free-thinking* Gentry are known to have copy'd after) has laid down the following *Rule* as a sure and good one to go by, in judging of the Validity of a *MS.* viz. ' The most antient *Greek* ' Copies of the *New Testa.* that We have at present ' are not the best ; since they are conformable to those ' *Latin Copies*, which St. Jerom found so ALTER'D, that He judg'd it convenient to reform them. (†) Let now our *Arians* then talk as they please about the Antiquity of this *Dublin Greek MS.* 'tis evident that

(†) See P. Simon's pref. to the Crit. Hist. of the New-Testament.

ibai, and this *Latin* one at *Verona* (which we shall prove to be conformable to the *Italic Version* made in the *second Century*) do both retain this Passage of the *Cælestial Testimonies* in *St. John's Epistle*; and do agree likewise with the Bible of *St. Jerom.* But this is not a proper time for discussing these things. However, I am pleas'd to see you expressing a more than ordinary concern for having the *Genuineness* of this Text establish'd in the strongest Manner possible: For I can by no means think, as some do, that 'tis a Thing indifferent whether *this Text* be prov'd *genuine* or no; because, say they, there are *other Texts* that secure the *Doctrine* of the *Blessed Trinity*. Mr *Martin* has well observ'd, that this does not seem a *sufficient* Reason for giving up the great Advantage *this Passage* affords us. *There is danger*, lays He, *in the Experiment*; besides, *that the surrender is too cheap, and We hereby pay a complaisance to the Heresy, that this Text encounters; which in no wise it deserves.* I therefore so far agree with the modest Mr. *Emlyn* in his *Address* made (not many Years ago) to † both Houses of *Convocation*, (p. 42.) that *adding to, or diminishing from the sacred Writings*, is a Matter that highly concerns every one to think of, and to guard against. If this Text (1 *John* 5. 7.) be not *Canonical* (for the *Epistle* in general has *always* been allow'd to be so) We ought to reject it for that very Reason, because 'tis *not Scripture*: But if the *Authenticity* of the Verse is found to be thoroughly establish'd, notwithstanding

(†) See His Enquiry into the Original Authority of 1 *John* 5. 7. Address'd to both Houses of *Convocation*. 1716.

withstanding the *Silence* of some antient Writers, or *Omissions* in some *Greek MSs.* We ought to be as *zealous* in contending for *that* part of *Holy Scripture*, as for any other. It is
 ‘ *high time* (says a learned *Prelate* now liv-
 ‘ ing §) that this celebrated passage 1 *John*, 5. 7.
 ‘ should be examin’d with the greatest accuracy:
 ‘ that either its *Authority* may be satisfactorily
 ‘ vindicated; or be fairly given up for an *Interpo-*
 ‘ *lation*, if it is not capable of being defended.

B. ’Tis that very *Address* of *Emlyn’s*, Sir, that has made me so anxious and sollicitous, and express my self with so much concern (as you now took notice of) for having the *Genuinenesse* of this *Text* settled beyond the power of *contradiction* ; I mean, when there shall not be any colour of Reason or Argument left to Support it. Mr. *Emlyn*, in that *Address*, lays a great stress upon what Dr. *Mills* has said in his *Dissertation* upon *this Text*. which I hope, you will consider and remark upon. I find the Doctor’s opinion clear and express against this *Writer*, tho’ *Emlyn* would have the *English* Reader to believe Him *wavering* ; and upon the Doctor’s stating the Case on both sides, I observe, He founds this *Address* ; wherein, you know, He arrogantly requires of the Bps. and Clergy of *England* to *Decree* in *Convocation*, that, for the future, this *Text* should not be inserted into the Editions of this Epistle of St. *John*. And seeing the *Convocation* would not comply with
 the

§ An Enquiry into the Authority of the Primitive *Complutensian* Edition of the *New Test.* in a Letter to Dr. *Bentley* 1722.

the Request of the modest Mr. *Emlyn*, (as you call Him) He, or some of his Fraternity, have since thought fit to give the World such an *Edition* of the *New Testament*; wherein *this Text* is *struck* out according to their own Will and pleasure; dedicated to the present Lord High *Chancellor* of great *Brittaine*; and the many Blunders, false Versions, and fallacious notes contain'd in *that* Edition (I need not tell you) have been lately detected and publickly censur'd by a very able Hand. ¶

A. 'Tis true; such an *Edition* of the *New Testament* (to our shame be it spoken) makes its Appearance both in Town and Country. It pleases our *Free-thinkers*; who yet want to get rid of the *whole-Castrations* alone won't serve their purpose; no more than *those* made by our *Anti-phl*: will give *them* full and entire Satisfaction, till He farther proceeds, and tries to confute the *whole* of what Dr. *Clarke* has offer'd in his *Boyle's Lectures*, in behalf of *Reveal'd Religion*. Some *Queries* of your pious *Hibernian Addresser*, and his *Harranguing* about this *Text*, are pretty remarkable. In one Place He expresses Himself thus; (*ib. p. 49*) ' If your *Lordships* and
' the Revd. *Clergy* don't think this *Text* to be cer-
' tainly *spurious*; I wou'd humbly propose whether
' it be not *most likely* to be so? And then whether
' it be not safer to put it *out*, than to keep it in the
' place 'tis *in*? Nay, whether it be not at least *du-*
' bious? And then, whether it ought not to be
' mark'd as *such*, for your People's observation? I
' beseech

¶ see the Revd. Mr. *Leon. Twells* his Critical Examination &c.

beseech you, let us but obtain *so much* as I think
 your selves will, and as the *first* Reformers did see
 to be just and *reasonable* ; or *convince* us, this Re-
 quest is not *so* : Else what remains, but to sit
 down, wonder, and despair? 'Tis but an easier
 Step [and will be well warranted] to return to
 that which our *first* Reformers wisely and unblam-
 ably did. It can be no reproach, to be as just
 to the People as they were ; and to return again
 with Reason, to that which has been alter'd with-
 out Reason---'tis certain, the common People have
 their Eyes upon *this*, more than on any undoubt-
 ed Text in the Bible, in this Controversy. And
 so far they must be deceived, if it be *spurious*.
 And it is in your Lordships and the Clergy's pow-
 er to let them know it ; and to refer 'em to other
 Texts, which you can assure them are *genuine*.---
 It might indeed, in your Wisdom, seem meet to
 wait a while, to see what coul'd be said in Defence
 of the Words ; which are charg'd to be an Inter-
 polation of the true and sacred Text ; before the
 Convocation should determine what to do with
 them. But, since no Man has attempted it
 to any purpose ; and all seem silent under
 the Imputation of so great a wrong done
 to the Holy Scripture, and the Church of
 God, &c.' Thus far the *Refugié*. The Con-
 vocation, notwithstanding his loud Exclamations,
 dropt the Affair. Whether the same Prudence
 ought to be continu'd, must be left to the Judg-
 ment of our Superiours. For my own part, I
 I can't but wish, a Convocation might soon take
 this

this and other Matters into their serious Consideration ; and remedy some *Evils*, which other-ways may prove *fatal*. *Righteousness will exalt a Nation* &c. was the saying, you know, of a wise King ; and the truth of it has appear'd in the various changes, that the greatest *Monarchies* of the World have since undergon. 'Tis now time to wish you well home : the sooner you return, the more obliging will be the visit. Only take these two Words along with you---Be every day upon your guard against the *well thumb'd Quarto* ; and don't forget, that you have been threatn'd with a *Second Volume*. *Adieu*.



Lately publish'd, The *Regius* Professor *Whitaker's* unanswerable *Arguments* (made *English*) against *Popery*. To which are subjoyn'd seasonable *Remarks* on a late boasted *Popish* Performance, Entituled, *England's Conversion and Reformation compar'd*, &c. which is chiefly borrowed from *Parsons* the Jesuite.