THERON AND *ASPASIO:*

OR, A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES

AND

LETTERS,

UPON THE

Moſt *Important* and *Intereſting* SUBJECTS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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

The Memorial of thine abundant Kindneſs *ſhall be ſhewed, and Men ſhall ſing of thy* Righteouſneſs. *Pſal.* cxlv. 7.

VOL. I.

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MDCCLXXXIX.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

Lady FRANCES SHIRLEY.

MADAM,

IF Chriſtianity was inconſiſtent with true *Politeneſs*, or prejudicial to real *Happineſs*, I ſhould be extremely injudicious, and inexcuſably ungrateful, in preſenting theſe Eſſays to your LADYSHIP. But as the Religion of *JESUS* is the grand Ornament of our Nature, and a

Source of the ſublimeſt Joy, the Purport of the following Pages cannot be unworthy the Countenance and Protection of the *moſt accompliſhed* Perſon. Neither can there be a Wiſh, more ſuitable to the Obligations or the Dictates of a *grateful* Heart, than that You may experience what You read, and *be* what You patronize.

Did Religion conſiſt in a *formal* Round of external Obſervances, or a *forced* Submiſſion to ſome rigorous Auſterities, I ſhould not ſcruple to join with the Infidel and the Senſualiſt, to dread it in one View, and to deſpiſe it in another. You need not be informed, Madam, that it is as much ſuperior to all ſuch *low* and *forbidding* Singularities, as the Heavens are higher than the Earth. It is deſcribed by an Author, who learnt its Theory in the Regions of Paradiſe, and who diſplayed its Efficacy in his own moſt

moſt exemplary Converſation—It is thus deſcribed by that incomparable Author; *The Kingdom of* GOD, *is not Meat and Drink, but Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the* HOLY GHOST.

To be reconciled to the Omnipotent GOD—To be intereſted in the unſearchable Riches of *CHRIST*—To be renewed in our Hearts, and influenced in our Lives, by the ſanctifying Operations of the Divine SPIRIT—This is *evangelical* Righteouſneſs. This is *genuine* Religion. This, MADAM, is the Kingdom of GOD eſtabliſhed in the Soul.—How benign and inviting is ſuch an Inſtitution! How honourable and advantageous ſuch a State! And from ſuch Privileges, what other Effects can flow, but that *Peace, which paſſeth all Underſtanding?* That *Joy, which is unſpeakable and glorious?*

Is there any Thing in the Amuſements of the Gay, and Purſuits of the Ambitious, of greater, of equal, of comparable Value? Is not all that Wealth can purchaſe, all that Grandeur can beſtow, ſomewhat like thoſe glittering Bubbles, which when viewed are *Emptineſs*, when graſped are *Nothing*? Whereas, the Comforts, the Benefits, the Hopes of Chriſtianity, are at once ſupremely excellent, and infinitely durable. A Portion, ſuited to the Dignity of a rational Soul; large as its Faculties, and immortal as its Being.

All theſe Bleſſings are centered in *CHRIST*; were purchaſed by *CHRIST*; are communicated from *CHRIST*.—It is for want of knowing thoſe boundleſs and everlaſting Treaſures of *pardoning*, *juſtifying*, *ſaving* Merit, which the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* poſſeſſes, and

and which He freely diſpenſes even to Sinners, that ſo many *unthinking* Perſons are attached to ignoble Objects, and beguiled by delufory Pleaſures. *Unhappy* Creatures! What can they do, but catch at Shadows, and ſtoop to Trifles, while they are ignorant of the grand, the ſubſtantial, the exalted Good?—It is for want of duly attending to that Fulneſs of Grace, and that Plenteouſneſs of Redemption, which dwell in our moſt adorable SAVIOUR, that ſo many *ſerious* Perſons are Strangers to the Tranquility and Sweetneſs of Religion: are ſubject to all its Reſtraints, but enjoy few, if any of its Delights. *Miſtaken* Zealots! How can they avoid the gloomy Situation and the uncomfortable Circumſtance, ſo long as they withdraw themſelves from the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS and his all-chearing Beams?

MAY your LADYSHIP live continually under his heavenly Light and healing Wings! Be more fully assured of his dying Love, and have brighter, still brighter Manifestations of his immense Perfections! By these delightful Views, and by that precious Faith, may your Heart be transformed into his *holy*, his *amiable*, his *divine* Image! Your Happiness will then be just such as is wished, but far greater than can be expressed by,

MADAM,

Your most obliged, and

Most obedient humble Servant,

Weston-Favell,
Jan. 6, 1755.

JAMES HERVEY.

PREFACE.

THE Reader will probably expect ſome Account of the enſuing Work; and, to gratify Him in this Particular, will be a real Pleaſure to the Author.

The Beauty and Excellency of the Scriptures *—The Ruin and* Depravity *of human Nature —Its happy* Recovery, *founded on the Atonement, and effected by the SPIRIT of* CHRIST *—Theſe are* ſome *of the chief Points, vindicated, illuſtrated, and applied in the following Sheets.—But the* grand *Article, that which makes the principal Figure, is the* IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS *of our divine LORD; from whence ariſes our Juſtification before* GOD, *and our renewed Title to every heavenly Bleſſing.*

ſing. An Article, which, though eminent for its Importance, ſeems to be little underſtood, and leſs regarded; if not much miſtaken, and almoſt forgotten.

The Importance *of this great evangelical Doctrine—how worthy it is of the moſt attentive Conſideration, and of univerſal Acceptance—is hinted in the ſecond Dialogue. So that I need, in this Place, do nothing more, than give the Senſe of a Paſſage from* Witſius, *which is there introduced in the* Notes.—"*The* "*Doctrine of Juſtification,* ſays that excellent "Author, *ſpreads itſelf through the whole* "*Syſtem of Divinity. As this is either ſolidly* "*eſtabliſhed, or ſuperficially touched; fully* "*ſtated, or ſlightly diſmiſſed; accordingly, the* "*whole Structure of Religion, either riſes* "*graceful and magnificent, ſuperior to Aſſault,* "*and beyond the Power of Decay; or elſe it* "*appears diſproportionate and defective, totters* "*on its Foundation, and threatens an opprobri-* "*ous Fall**."

The Deſign is executed in the Form of Dialogue. *Thoſe Parts only excepted, in which it was not eaſy to carry on a Converſation, and aſſign to each Perſon a proper Degree of Significancy. Here, to avoid the common Imputation, of bringing upon the Stage a* Mute *or a* Shadow—

* See p. 65, 66.

Shadow—*one who fights without Weapons, and ſubmits without a Conteſt—the Scene ſhifts. Our Gentlemen ſeparate; and, inſtead of converſing, enter upon an* epiſtolary *Correſpondence.*

The Dialogue Form ſeems, on many Conſiderations, a very eligible Way of Writing.—Hereby, the Author gives an Air both of Dignity and of Modeſty to his Sentiments. Of Dignity; *by delivering them from the Mouths of Perſons, in every reſpect ſuperior to Himſelf.* Of Modeſty; *becauſe We no longer conſider Him in the raiſed, but invidious Capacity of a Teacher. Inſtead of calling Us to his Feet, and dictating his Precepts, He gratifies our* Curioſity. *He turns back a Curtain, and admits Us to ſome remarkable Interviews, or intereſting Conferences. We over-hear, by a kind of innocent or imaginary Stealth, the Debates which paſs in the Receſſes of Privacy; which are carried on, with the moſt unreſerved Freedom of Speech, and Openneſs of Heart.—A Circumſtance, which will* apologize *for ſome Peculiarities, that might otherwiſe be inconſiſtent with Humility, or offenſive to Delicacy. Particularly, it may obviate the Diſguſt, which generally, and indeed deſervedly, attends the frequent Intruſion of that ambitious and uſurping little Monoſyllable,* I.

The

The Names *of the Perſons are prefixed, each to his reſpective Share of the Diſcourſe; in Imitation of* Cicero, *and for the Reaſons which he aſſigns.* Quaſi enim ipſos induxi loquentes: ne *Inquam* & *Inquit* ſæpius interponerentur. Atque id eo feci, ut tanquam præſentibus coram haberi Sermo videretur*. *This Method, He very juſtly intimates, is removed fartheſt from the Narrative, and makes the neareſt Approaches to* Life *and* Reality. *It quite ſecretes the Author; and, by introducing the Perſons themſelves, renders all that paſſes entirely their own.—It prevents likewiſe the Repetition of thoſe interlocutory Words,* He ſaid, He replied. *Which, unleſs the Speeches are very long, muſt frequently recur, and have no pleaſing Effect upon the Ear. And if the Speeches are long, the Spirit of Converſation is loſt. The Aſſociates are no longer talking; but one of them, or the Author, is* lecturing.

Though I have ſo much to ſay in Behalf of the Model, I have very little to ſay with regard to the Execution—*unleſs it be to confeſs the Deficiency. There is not, I am ſenſible, that* peculiar *Air and* diſtinguiſhing *Turn, which ſhould mark and characterize each Speaker. This is what the Nature of finiſhed Dialogue requires, and what the Author applauds*

* *De Amicitia.*

plauds in ſome very ſuperior Writers. But, not having the Ability to copy it, He has not the Vanity to affect it.—Nevertheleſs, the attentive Reader will, all along, perceive a Difference in the Sentiment, *if not in the Language. The Materials vary, even when they run into the ſame Mould, and take the ſame Form.—In the Diction alſo there muſt be* ſome *Diverſity. Becauſe, ſeveral of the Objections are propoſed in the very Words of one or two eminent Writers, who have appeared on the other Side of the Queſtion. Theſe are not particularized by the Mark of Quotation; becauſe, the Man of* Reading *will have no Occaſion for the Aſſiſtance of ſuch an Index, and the Man of* Taſte *will probably diſcern them by the Singularity of the Style.*

Some of the following Pieces, it muſt be acknowledged, are of the controverſial *Kind. A Species of Writing, leaſt ſuſceptible of the Graces, which embelliſh Compoſition; or rather moſt deſtitute of the Attractives, which engage Attention, and create Delight.—Yet I have ſometimes thought, that it is not abſolutely impoſſible, to make even the* ſtern *Face of Controverſy wear a Smile; and to reap ſome valuable Fruit, from the* rugged *Furrows of Diſputation. Whether this is effected in the preſent Work, the Public muſt judge; that it has been attempted,*

tempted, the Author may be permitted to declare.

To soften the Asperities of Argument, Views *of* Nature *are interspersed. That, if the former should carry the appearance of a rude entangled Forest, or of a frowning gloomy Recess, there may be some agreeable* Openings, *and lightsome* Avenues, *to admit a Prospect of the Country: which is always arrayed in Charms, and never fails to please.*

The Author confesses a very peculiar Fondness for the amiable Scenes of Creation. It is therefore not at all improbable, but his Excursions on this Topic may be of the diffusive *Kind, and his Descriptions somewhat* luxuriant. *It is hoped, however, that the benevolent Reader will indulge Him in this favourite Foible.—If any should feel the same prevailing Passion for the Beauties of Nature, 'tis possible these Persons may be inclined, not only to* excuse, *but to* approve *the Fault; and may take Part with the Lover, even in Opposition to the Critic.*

Farther to diversify the Piece, Sketches *of* Philosophy *are introduced. Easy to be understood, and calculated to entertain the Imagination, as well as to improve the Heart. More particularly, to display the* wise *and* beneficent *Design of Providence, in the various Appearances and numberless Productions of the material*

World. Neither are theſe Remarks altogether foreign to the main Point. But, as far as the Wonders of Creation may comport with the Riches of Grace, ſubſerve *the general End.*

As to the Choice *of my Subjects—Some People have deſired to ſee an Invective, againſt the* faſhionable *and* predominant *Vices of the Age. This, I apprehend, would be like picking off the Leaves, or clipping away the Twigs, from ſome over-grown and noxious Tree. Waving this tedious and ineffectual Toil, I would rather lay the Axe to the Root. Let the Knowledge and Love of* CHRIST *take place in the Heart, and not only a* few *of the* Branches, *but the* whole Body *of Sin will fall at once.*

Some would have the Author inſiſt upon the conſcientious Obſervation of the Sabbath, inculcate the daily Worſhip of GOD in the Family, and urge a devout Attendance on the public Ordinances of Religion.—But when a Perſon is convinced of Sin, and made ſenſible of Miſery: when he has taſted the good Word of GOD *, and ſeen by Faith the LORD's *CHRIST* †, *He will want no Solicitation or Incitement, to theſe Means of Grace, and Exerciſes of Godlineſs. He will have juſt the ſame Diſpoſition to them all, as the* hungry *Appetite has to wholeſome*

* Heb. vi. 5. † Luke ii. 26.

ſome Food, or the new-born *Babe* to the Milk of the Breaſt.*

Others may imagine, that I have neglected the Intereſts of Morality; *becauſe, here is no profeſſed Attempt to delineate its Duties, or enforce its Practice.—Let theſe Perſons remember, that Morality never makes ſuch* vigorous *Shoots, never produces ſuch* generous *Fruit, as when engrafted on evangelical Principles.—And if I do not crop the Pink, the Roſe, and the Carnation; if I do not gather the Peach, the Nectarine, and the Pine-apple; and put them into my Reader's Hand, for his immediate Enjoyment: I am endeavouring to ſow the* Seeds, *and plant the* Roots, *in his Garden; which, if cheriſhed by the favourable Influence of Heaven, will yield Him, not an* occaſional, *but a* conſtant *Supply of all.*

As

* 1 *Pet.* ii. 2. This Compariſon is, perhaps, the moſt *exact* and *expreſſive*, that Words can form, or Fancy conceive. Babes covet nothing but the Milk of the Breaſt. They are indifferent about all other Things. Give them Riches, give them Honours, give them whatever you pleaſe, without this rich, delicious, balmy Nutriment, they will not, they cannot be ſatisfied.—How finely does this illuſtrate, and how forcibly inculcate, what our LORD ſtiles, *The ſingle Eye*, and *The One Thing needful!* Or, the ſalutary Doctrines, and delightful Privileges of the Goſpel; together with that ſupreme Value for them, and undivided Complacency in them, which are the diſtinguiſhing Character of *the Chriſtian!*

As ſeveral Texts of Scripture come under Conſideration, Criticiſms *upon the Original are frequently ſubjoined. In order to clear up ſome Difficulties, to rectify ſome Miſtranſlations, or point out the many delicate and maſterly Strokes, which occur in the* BIBLE.—*And glad ſhould I be, extremely glad, if I might recommend and endear that invaluable Book. If, as the Divine* REDEEMER rideth on in the Word of Truth, of Meekneſs, and Righteouſneſs *, *this Hand might ſcatter a Palm Branch, or this Performance might lie as a Floweret, to ſtrew his Way* †, *and ſolemnize his Triumph.*

In the Courſe of the Diſputation, I dare not ſuppoſe, that I have diſcuſſed all *the* Arguments, *which Sagacity may deviſe, or Sophiſtry urge. Perhaps, I have not removed* all *the* Scruples, *which may awaken Prejudice, or embarraſs Integrity. This, however, I may venture to affirm, that I myſelf have met with no conſiderable Objection, which is not either expreſly anſwered, or virtually refuted, in theſe Conferences.—And, though I ſhould neither ſatisfy nor ſilence the Gainſayer, I ſhall think my Endeavours happily employed, if they may throw Light upon the* dim *Apprehenſion; eſtabliſh the* wavering *Faith; or comfort the* afflicted *Conſcience.*

* Pſal. xlv. 4. † Alluding to *Matt.* xxi. 8.

If any ſhould burleſque or ridicule theſe venerable Truths, and exalted Privileges, I ſhall only ſay with my Divine MASTER; O! that Thou hadſt known, in this thy Day, the Things that belong to thy Peace! But now they are hid, *it is evident from ſuch a Procedure*, they are hid from thine Eyes *.—*Should any, in the Spirit of* Decency *and* Candor, *either ſtart new, or revive old Objections, I doubt not, but they will receive both a due Examination and a proper Reply. As theſe Doctrines enter into the very* Eſſence *of the Goſpel, and conſtitute the* Glory *of our Religion, they can never want a Succeſſion of Advocates, ſo long as the Sun and Moon endure.—For my own part, I muſt beg leave to retire from the Liſts, and lay down the Weapons of Controverſy.* Virgil's *Language is my Reſolution*;

Diſcedam, explebo Numerum, reddarque Tenebris.

This Declaration is made, not from any the leaſt Suſpicion, that my Tenets are indefenſible; *but becauſe I would apprize my Friends, and the Friends of our common Chriſtianity, that the Field is* clear *and* open *for them to advance; that I reſign to others the glorious*

Com

* Luke xix. 42.

Combat; and ſhall content myſelf with wiſhing them Succeſs in the Name of the LORD. —*Becauſe, it becomes a Perſon in my* declining *State, to be more peculiarly intent upon encountering a different Adverſary; who is ſure to overcome, and never allows Quarter. Yet, by this* Word of my Teſtimony, *and* by the Blood of the LAMB*, *I hope to triumph even when I fall; and to be more than Conqueror, through* JEHOVAH my Righteouſneſs.

Should any Thing be urged, forcible enough to overthrow my Arguments, or detect a Miſtake in my Sentiments, the World may depend upon ſeeing a free *and* undiſſembled *Retractation. I ſhall look upon it as a Duty, which I owe to my Conſcience, to my Readers, and to my* GOD, *publicly to acknowledge the Error.* —*It is one Thing to be* ſilent; *another to be* obſtinate. *As I ſhall inflexibly adhere to the firſt; I would, with equal Steadineſs, renounce the laſt. Though I withdraw from the Strife of Pens and of Tongues, I ſhall take care to preſerve a Mind, ever acceſſible to Truth, ever open to Conviction. A Mind, infinitely more concerned for the* Purity *and* Proſperity *of the everlaſting Goſpel, than for the Prevalence of*

* Rev. xii. 11.

my own Opinion, or the Credit of my own Performance.

As I have the Happineſs of being a Member, and the Honour of being a Miniſter, of the reformed eſtabliſhed Church; *I cannot but reflect, with a peculiar Pleaſure, that every Doctrine of Note, maintained in theſe Dialogues and Letters, is either implied in our* Liturgy, *aſſerted in our* Articles, *or taught in our* Homilies.—*It affords me likewiſe ſome Degree of Satisfaction to obſerve, that the moſt material of the Sentiments, have been adopted by* Milton; *are incorporated into his* Paradiſe Loſt; *and add Dignity to the ſublimeſt Poem in the World.—To have the higheſt human Authority, and the firſt Genius of the Nation on a Writer's Side, is no contemptible Support. This muſt ſurely give a Sanction, where-ever our religious* Eſtabliſhment *is reverenced, or polite* Literature *is held in Repute. Yet even this Sanction, compared with the Oracle of Revelation, is only like a Range of Cyphers, connected with the initial Figure. Which, were they* detached, *would be inſignificant; but, in ſuch a* Subordination, *are conſiderable.*

Perhaps, it ſhould be farther acknowledged, that I have not always confined myſelf to the Method of our Syſtematic *Writers, nor followed their Train of Thoughts with a ſcrupulous Regularity.*

gularity. I would conduct my Fellow-creature to the ſupreme and eternal Good, CHRIST JESUS. *I have choſen the Path, which ſeemed moſt* agreeable *and* inviting, *rather than moſt beaten and frequented. If this leads, with equal Certainty, to the great and deſirable End, I dare promiſe myſelf an eaſy Excuſe. However, that* Method *and* Order, *in the doctrinal Parts of the Plan, are not wholly neglected, the following Summary of Contents may ſhew.*

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Aſpaſio *exemplifies the laſt Particular, in two very memorable Inſtances — Eſpecially, in the Conduct of* Abraham, *offering up his Son* Iſaac.

LETTER XII.

Aſpaſio *touches upon Union with* CHRIST—*How deſcribed in Scripture—Its bleſſed and glorious Effects.*

DIALOGUE XV.

Aſpaſio *reviſits* Theron—Theron *under Anxiety of Spirit — Partly to entertain, partly to comfort his Friend,* Aſpaſio *enlarges upon the Bounty of the CREATOR, both in the animal and vegetable World—The new Convert is ſlow of Heart to believe Perfect Freeneſs, with which the Evangelical Righteouſneſs is beſtowed.*

DIALOGUE XVI.

Harveſt Scene — Philenor's *Gardens — Statues — Grove of Ever-Greens — CHRIST and his Righteouſneſs free for Sinners; for the chief of Sinners; merely as Sinners; without any good Qualifications whatever.*

DIA-

DIALOGUE XVII.

View of the Country, through a fine Vista—The Nature of Faith—Is an appropriating Perſuaſion—Aſſurance of my Title, and a Perſonal Application, enter into its Eſſence.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

A terrible Storm—Retreat to the Summer-houſe—Motives and Encouragements to that moſt bleſſed Aſſurance, for which the foregoing Dialogue pleads—Some Obſervations on, what is uſually called, the direct and reflex Act of Faith.

DIALOGUE XIX.

A River Voyage—The diverſified Proſpect—Comparative Happineſs—Advantages of Peace—A Celebration of the Goſpel and its Bleſſings, in a Kind of Rhapſody—CHRIST's *Righteouſneſs applied to every Caſe of Diſtreſs, and every Time of Need.*

A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES.

DIALOGUE I.

THERON, was a Gentleman of fine Taſte; of accurate, rather than extenſive Reading; and particularly charmed with the Study of Nature. He traced the Planets in their Courſes, and examined the Formation of the meaneſt Vegetable; not merely to gratify a refined Curioſity, but chiefly to cultivate the nobler Principles of Morality. Several Diſcoveries He made, and every Diſcovery He improved, to this important End—to raiſe in his Mind, more *exalted* Apprehenſions of the Supreme BEING—and to inlarge his Affections, with a *diſintereſted* Benevolence; conformable, in ſome Degree, to that boundleſs Liberality, which pervades and animates the whole Creation.

ASPASIO, was not without his Share of polite Literature, and philoſophical Knowledge. He had taken a Tour through the Circle of the Sciences; and, having tranſiently ſurveyed the Productions of human Learning, devoted his final Attention to the inſpired Writings. Theſe He ſtudied, with the unbiaſſed Impartiality of a Critic; yet with the reverential Simplicity of a Chriſtian. Theſe He regarded, as the *unerring* Standard of Duty—the *authentic* Charter of Salvation—and the *brighteſt* Mirror of the DEITY; affording the moſt ſatisfactory and ſublime Diſplay of all the divine Attributes.

Theron, was ſomewhat warm in his Temper; and would, upon Occaſion, make uſe of a little innocent Rallery; not to expoſe his Friend, but to enliven the Converſation. Sometimes *diſguiſing* his real Sentiments; in order to ſift the Subject, or diſcover the Opinion of others.—*Aſpaſio* ſeldom indulges the humorous or ſatyrical Vein, but argues with *Meekneſs of Wiſdom**. Never puts on the Appearance of Guile, but always ſpeaks the Dictates of his Heart.

Aſpaſio was on a Viſit at *Theron*'s Seat.—One Evening, when ſome neighbouring Gentlemen were juſt gone, and had left them alone, the Converſation took the following Turn.

Aſp. I would always be ready, both to acknowledge and applaud, whatever is amiable in the Conduct

* —— *Mitis Sapientia Læli,* HOR.

is a moſt amiable Character, and delicately drawn. But it is expreſſed with greater Strength, and ſuperior Beauty, by the ſacred Penman; *Let Him ſhew out of a good Converſation his Works with* all the Gentleneſs, or (ἐν πραΰτητι σοφίας) with the very *Meekneſs of Wiſdom*. Jam. iii. 13.

duct of Others. The Gentlemen, who gave Us their Company at Dinner, ſeem to be all of a different Character. Yet each, in his own Way, is extremely agreeable.

Lyſander has lively Parts, and is quick at Repartee. But He never abuſes his Wit, to create Uneaſineſs in the honeſt Heart, or to fluſh the modeſt Cheek with Confuſion.—What Solidity of Judgment, and Depth of Penetration, appear in *Crito!* Yet, how free are his Diſcourſes, from the magiſterial Tone, or the dictatorial Solemnity!—*Philenor*'s Taſte in the polite Arts, is remarkably correct: yet, without the leaſt Tincture of Vanity, or any weak Fondneſs for Applauſe. He never interrupts the Progreſs, or wreſts the Topic of Converſation; in order to ſhine in his particular Province.—*Trebonius*, I find, has ſignalized his Valour in ſeveral Campaigns. Though a Warrior and a Traveller, He gives Himſelf no overbearing or oſtentatious Airs. In *Trebonius*, You ſee the brave Officer, regulated by all the Decency of the Academic, and ſweetened with all the Affability of the Courtier.

No one affects a moroſe *Reſerve*, or aſſumes an immoderate *Loquacity**. To engroſs the Talk, is tyrannical: to ſeal up the Lips, is monkiſh. Every one, therefore, from a Fund of good Senſe, contributes his Quota: and each ſpeaks, not with an Am-

* *Zeno* being preſent, where a Perſon of this loquacious Diſpoſition played Himſelf off, ſaid, with an air of Concern in his Countenance; *I perceive, that poor Gentleman is ill. He has a violent Flux upon Him.* The Company was alarmed, and the R' ,rician ſtopped in his Career. *Yes*; added the Philoſopher, *The Flux is ſo violent, that it has carried his Ears into his Tongue.*

bition to *ſet off* Himſelf, but from a Deſire to *pleaſe* the Company.

Ther. Indeed, *Aſpaſio*, I think myſelf happy, in this accompliſhed Set of Acquaintance. Who add all the Complaiſance and Politeneſs of the Gentleman, to the Benevolence and Fidelity of the Friend.

Their Converſation is as innocent as their Taſte is refined.—They have a noble Abhorrence of Slander, and deteſt the low ungenerous Artifices of Detraction.—No looſe Jeſt, has either the Service of their Tongue, or the Sanction of their Smile.—Was You to be with them, in their freeſt Moments; You would hear Nothing, that has a Tendency to *Profaneneſs*, or is any Way injurious to *Purity* of Morals. Even their Gaiety is remote from Indecency, and their very Wit free from Gall.

Aſp. There is but *one* Qualification wanting, to render your Friends completely valuable; and their ſocial Interviews a continual Bleſſing.

Ther. Pray, what is that?

Aſp. A Turn for more ſerious Conferences.—Their literary Debates are beautiful Sketches, of whatever is curious in the Sciences, or delicate in the Arts. From their Remarks on our national Affairs, and on foreign Occurrences, a Perſon may almoſt form a Syſtem of Politics.—But, they never touch upon any Topic of *Religion*; never celebrate the *ſublime Perfections* of the DEITY; never illuſtrate the Beauties, nor enforce the Truths—

Ther. Fie upon You, *Aſpaſio*, for your unpolite Hint! Who can forbear interrupting the Harangue, which pleads for ſuch an outrageous Violation of the *Mode?* Which would introduce religious

gious Talk into our fashionable Assemblies!—How is it that You, who, in other Instances, are a Gentleman of Refinement, can be so strangely inelegant in this Particular?

Asp. For such a Practice, *Theron*, We have no inconsiderable Precedents.—Thus *Socrates* *, the wisest of the *Athenian* Sages; thus *Scipio* †, the most accomplished of the *Roman* Generals, conversed.—Thus *Cicero* ‡, the Prince of Orators, improved his elegant Retirement at the *Tusculan* Villa.—And *Horace* ‖, the brightest Genius in the Court of *Augustus*, formed the most agreeable Hours of his Conversation, upon this very Plan.

Was I to enumerate all the Patrons of this, forgive me if I say, *more honourable* Mode; the most illustrious Names of Antiquity, would appear on the List.

Ther. This Practice, however extolled by the philosophic Gentry of antient Times; would make a very *singular* Figure, in the present Age.

Asp. And should not the *Copy*, after which the Generality of Mankind write, be singularly correct? Persons of Taste and Distinction, are the Pattern for general Imitation: are the Copy, in Conformity to which, the World adjust their Manners,

* Vid. *Socratis Memorabilia*, per *Xenoph.*

† See *Cicero*'s Dialogue *De Amicitiâ*, in which we are informed, That it was a customary Practice with *Scipio*, with his polite Friend *Lælius*, and some of the most distinguished Nobility of *Rome*, to discourse upon the Interests of the Republic, and Immortality of the Soul.

‡ Vid. *Tuscul. Quæst.*

‖ Such were the Interviews, of which he speaks with a Kind of Rapture,

O Noctes Cœnæque Deûm.

and regulate their Behaviour. *They*, therefore, are under the ſtrongeſt Obligations, not to give a contemptible Stamp to the Faſhion.—Benevolence to their Fellow-creatures calls loudly upon them, a Concern for the public Good challenges it at their Hands, that *they* ſignalize themſelves by a Pre-eminence in all that is excellent.

Ther. Away, away with theſe auſtere Notions! Such a Strain of Converſation would *damp* the Gaiety of our Spirits, and *flatten* the Reliſh of Society. It would turn the Aſſembly into a Conventicle, and make it Lent all the Year round.

Aſp. Can it then be an auſtere Practice, to cultivate the Underſtanding, and improve the Heart?—Can it damp the Gaiety of our Spirits, to refine and exalt them, after the Model of the higheſt Perfection?—Or, will it flatten the Reliſh of Society, to ſecure and anticipate everlaſting Delights?

Ther. Everlaſting Delights, *Aſpaſio!*—To talk of ſuch a Subject, would be termed, in every Circle of Wit and Gallantry, an Uſurpation of the Parſon's Office. A low Method, of retailing by Scraps, in the Parlour; what the Man in Black, vends by wholeſale, from the Pulpit.—It would infallibly mark Us out for *Pedants.* And, for aught I know, might expoſe us to the Suſpicion of *Enthuſiaſm.*

Aſp. Your Men of Wit muſt excuſe me, if I cannot perſuade myſelf to admire, either the Delicacy of their Language, or the Juſtneſs of their Opinion.

The firſt, be it ever ſo *humane* and *graceful*, I reſign to themſelves.—As for the other, I would beg Leave to inquire; "Are the Clergy, then, the *only* "Perſons, who ſhould act the becoming Part, and "converſe like rational Beings? Is ſolid Wiſdom,

"and

" and ſacred Truth, the Privilege of their Order?
" While nothing is left for You and me, but the
" Play of Fancy, or the Luxuries of Senſe."

I would farther aſk the Circles of Gallantry; " Where is the Impropriety, of interweaving the " *noble* Doctrines, diſplayed by the Preacher, with " our common Diſcourſe? Or, what the Incon- " venience, of introducing the *amiable* Graces, " recommended by his Lectures, into our ordinary " Practice?"

Will ſuch an Exerciſe of our Speech, rank Us among Pedants? Is *this* the Badge of Enthuſiaſm? A ſplendid and honourable Badge truly! Such as muſt add Weight to any Cauſe, and Worth to any Character.

Ther. This would curb the ſprightly Sallies of Wit; and extinguiſh that engaging Glow of Good-humour, which enlivens our genteel Intercourſes. Accordingly, You may obſerve; That if any *formal Creature*, takes upon Him to mention, in polite Company, an edifying Truth, or a Text of Scripture; the pretty Chat, though ever ſo profuſely flowing, ſtagnates in an Inſtant. Each voluble and facetious Tongue ſeems to be ſtruck with a ſudden Palſy. Every one wonders at the ſtrange Man's Face; and they all conclude Him, either *mad*, or a *Methodiſt*.

Aſp. Agreeable Strokes of Wit, are by no Means incompatible with uſeful Converſation. Unleſs we miſtake an *inſipid* Vivacity, or *fantaſtic* Levity, for Wit and Facetiouſneſs.—Neither have I heard, that, among all our Acts of Parliament, any one has paſſed to *divorce* Good Senſe and Good-humour. Why may they not both reſide on the ſame Lips, and both

circulate through the ſame Aſſembly?—For my own Part, I would neither have our Diſcourſe *ſoured* with Auſterity, nor *evaporate* into Impertinence: but unite (as a judicious Antient adviſes) the Benefits of Improvement, with the Blandiſhments of Pleaſantry *.—And as to your polite People; if they can find more Muſic, in the Magpie's Voice, than in the Nightingale's Note; I muſt own myſelf as much ſurpriſed at *their* Ears, as they are at the ſtrange Man's Face.

Ther. With all your grey-headed Authorities, I fancy, You will find very few Proſelytes, among the Profeſſors of modern Refinement. Faſhion is, with the World, the Standard of Morals, as well as of Clothes. And He muſt be of a very *peculiar* Turn indeed, who would chooſe to be ridiculous in either.

Aſp. Rather, *Theron*, He muſt be of a very *pliant* Turn, who tamely delivers up his Conduct, to be moulded by a Faſhion; which has neither true Elegance to dignify it, nor the leaſt Uſefulneſs to recommend it.

And which, I beſeech You, is moſt ridiculous?—He, who ſervilely imitates every *idle* Faſhion, and is the very *Ape* of corrupt Cuſtom?—Or He, who aſſerts his native Liberty; and reſolutely follows, where Wiſdom and Truth lead the Way.

Ther. Would you then obtrude religious Diſcourſe, upon *every* Company? Conſider, *Aſpaſio*, what a motley Figure this would make.—A Wedding, and a Sermon!—Quadrille, and St. *Paul!*—The laſt new Play, and primitive Chriſtianity!

Aſp.

* *Cum quadam Illecebrâ ac Voluptate utiles.* AUL. GEL.

Aſp. You know the Rule, *Theron*, which is given by the great "MASTER of our Aſſemblies;" *Caſt not your Pearls before Swine**." Some there are, ſo immerſed in Senſuality, that they can reliſh nothing, but the coarſeſt Huſks of Converſation. To theſe, neither offer your Pearls, nor proſtitute your Intimacy.

But, when Perſons of a liberal Education, and elevated Sentiments—when *thoſe* meet together; why ſhould not their Diſcourſe be ſuitable to the Eminence of their Rank, and the Superiority of their Genius? Raiſed, far above the Level of that *trite* and *effeminate* Strain—"Upon my Honour, the Actreſs "topt her Part. Heavens! How charmingly ſhe "ſung! How gracefully ſhe trod the Stage!"

Ther. Indeed, my *Aſpaſio*, I am entirely in your Way of Thinking; however I have hitherto put on the Maſk.—The Gift of Speech, is one great *Prerogative* of our rational Nature. And 'tis Pity, that ſuch a ſuperior Faculty, ſhould be debaſed to the meaneſt Purpoſes.

Suppoſe, all our ſtately Veſſels, which paſs and repaſs the Ocean, were to carry out nothing but Tinſel, and theatrical Decorations; were to import nothing but glittering Baubles, and nicely-fanſied Toys. Would ſuch a Method of Trading, be well-judged in itſelf, or beneficial in its Conſequences?—Articulate Speech, is the Inſtrument of a much nobler Commerce; intended to tranſmit and diffuſe the Treaſures of the Mind. And will not the Practice be altogether *as injudicious*, muſt not the Iſſue be infinitely *more detrimental*, if this Vehicle of intellectual Wealth, is freighted only with pleaſing Fopperies?

Aſp.

* Matt. vii. 6.

Ag. Such Folly and Extravagance, would be hiſſed out of the commercial World. Why then are they admitted and cheriſhed in the ſocial?

Theo. Why indeed? He muſt be far more acute than your *Theron*, who can aſſign a ſingle Reaſon to countenance them. To explode them, ten thouſand Arguments occur.—A continual Round of gay and trifling Converſation *, of Viſits quite modiſh, and Entertainments not moral, muſt give an indolent Turn to the Mind. Such as will *enervate* its Powers; and *ſap* the very Foundation of Virtue.—Whereas, a frequent Conference on the Glories of the GODHEAD, or the Wonders of Creation, would invigorate and ennoble the Soul. Would inlarge her Faculties, and elevate her Deſires.

Aſp. *Did not our Heart burn within us*, ſaid the Travelers at *Emmaus*, *while HE talked with us by the Way* †? Thoſe Diſcourſes, 'tis true, were conducted

* The *Significancy* and *Importance* of ſuch Converſation, was ſmartly repreſented by the Philoſopher. Who, being aſked, How he left the Company employed, made Anſwer; *Some in milking the Ram, Others in holding the Pail.*

† *Luke* xxiv. 32. An ingenious Friend has favoured me with a Criticiſm on this Paſſage, as it ſtands in the former Editions. It is there, through Inadvertence, printed *our Hearts*. By which Inaccuracy, he obſerves, the delicate and inſtructive Spirit of the Text is loſt. The Pronoun ſhould be a Plural; and the Noun, in the ſingular Number; and the Clauſe ſhould run thus, *Did not* our Heart *burn?* To denote the Unanimity, and (if I may ſo ſpeak) the *Oneneſs* of true Believers. Whoſe Sentiments and Affections are as harmonious, as if *one Heart* ſubſiſted in both, in all their Breaſts. *μια καρδια ησαν.*—This is, undoubtedly, a curious and refined Remark; whether it be equally judicious and ſolid, I ſubmit to the Determination of the Reader. Whether He will allow it to expreſs, by the Variation of a ſingle Syllable, all that is implied in the Communion of Saints.

ducted with a Spirit, and enforced with an Energy, abſolutely unequaled. Yet the ſame happy Effects would, in *ſome* inferior Degree, reſult from our friendly Conferences, if they turned upon the ſame important Points. We alſo ſhould feel our Hearts, *warmed* with holy Zeal, and *glowing* with heavenly Love.

Ther. Such Conferences would not only be productive of preſent Advantage; but yield a renewed Pleaſure, in the Retroſpect. We might *reflect*, with real Complacency, on Hours ſpent in ſo rational a Manner. And who would not prefer the ſilent Applauſe of the Heart, far, far before thoſe tumultuous Joys; which wanton Jeſts create, or the circling Glaſs inſpires?

Aſp. One*, who thoroughly knew Mankind, and had tried the Merits of the jovial Board, very pertinently compares ſuch Flaſhes of Mirth, to the *Crackling of Thorns under a Pot* †. The tranſient Blaze of the One, and the ſenſeleſs Noiſe of the Other, continue but for a Moment; and then expire, *that* in Smoke and Darkneſs, *this* in Spleen and Melancholy.

I ſaid, Spleen and Melancholy.—For, however jauntee and alert the various Methods of modiſh Trifling may ſeem, whatever Eaſe and Grace they are ſuppoſed to give the Converſation; ſure I am, it will be afflictive, to *look back* upon Interviews, ſquandered away in very Vanity; and ſhocking, to *look forward* upon the Account, which We muſt all ſhortly render.—What Figure will *ſuch* an Article make, in the final Reckoning, and at the deciſive Bar? "Our ſocial Hours, which might have pro-

"moted

* King *Solomon*. † Eccleſ. vii. 6.

" noted our mutual Edification, and been subser-
" vient to our CREATOR's Glory, all lost in
" Merriment and Whim; or worse than lost, in
" Flattery and Detraction. A *Blank*, or a *Blot!*"

Ther. *Venus*, we find, has her zealous Knight-Errants, and *Bacchus* his professed Votaries, in almost every Company. Is it not shameful and deplorable, that the GOD of Nature alone, has none to assert his Honour, none to celebrate his Perfections? Though He is the *Original* of all Beauty, and the *Parent* of all Good.

When I have taken my Morning Walk, amidst Dews and Flowers; with the Sun shedding Lustre round Him, and unveiling the happy Landscape; how has my Eye been charmed, with the lovely Prospect! How has my Ear been ravished, with the Music of the Grove! Methought, every Note was a *Tribute* of Harmony; and all Nature seemed one *grand Chorus*, swelling with the CREATOR's Praise.—But, how has the Scene been reversed; when, leaving my rural Elysium, I entered the Haunts of Men! Where I saw Faculties divine, meanly engaged in Trifles. Where I heard the Tongue, prompt to utter, and fluent to express, every Thing but its MAKER's Glory.

I assure you, I have often been chagrined on this Occasion: and sometimes said within myself—
" What! Shall *Trifles* be regarded, and the MA-
" JESTY of *Heaven* neglected? Shall every
" Friend, shall every Visitant, receive his Share of
" Respect? And no Acknowledgments be paid to
" that incomprehensibly glorious BEING, who
" is worthy, more than worthy, of all our Vene-
" ration?"

Asp. This will be ſtill more affective to an ingenuous Mind, if we conſider, That the infinite and eternal GOD is *preſent* at all our Interviews: vouchſafes to expreſs his Satisfaction, and acknowledge Himſelf magnified; when, with Admiration and Love, We talk of his tranſcendent Excellencies.—Nay: We are aſſured, that the LORD of all Lords, not only hearkens, but keeps *a Book of Remembrance*; and will diſtinguiſh ſuch Perſons, at the Day of univerſal Retribution. When the looſe Train of licentious Talkers, are driven away as the deſpicable *Chaff*; theſe ſhall be ſelected for his peculiar Treaſure, and numbered among the *Jewels* of JEHOVAH*.

Ther. If the Gentlemen, who make high Pretenſions to Reaſon, think themſelves diſcharged from theſe Doctrines of Revelation; they ſhould not forget *their own* Scriptures.—A *Philoſopher* will tell them the Duty of employing their Time, as in the awful Preſence, and under the immediate Inſpection, of the Supreme BEING †.—An *Orator* will ſhew them the egregious Impropriety, of waſting their friendly Interviews, in the Fumes of Drollery, or the Froth of Impertinence ‡.

Asp.

* *Mal.* iii. 16, 17. This is a Paſſage much to be obſerved. A moſt emphatical Recommendation of religious Diſcourſe! Perhaps, the moſt *emphatical*, that ever was uſed; and the moſt *endearing*, that can poſſibly be conceived.

† *Sic certe vivendum eſt, tanquam in Conſpectu vivamus: ſic cogitandum, tanquam aliquis in Pectus intimum inſpicere poſſit: & poteſt. Quid enim proſit ab Homine aliquid eſſe ſecretum? Nihil Deo clauſum eſt. Intereſt Animis noſtris, & Cogitationibus mediis intervenit.* SENEC. Epiſt. 83.

‡ *Cicero* ſays, with an Air of graceful Indignation; *Quaſi vero clarorum Virorum aut tacitus Congreſſus eſſe oporteat, aut ludicros Sermones, aut Rerum Colloquia levium.* Academ. Quæſt. Lib. IV.

Asp. Who then, that is wise, would not habituate Himself to a *Practice*; which comes recommended by the Voice of Reason, and is enforced by the Authority of GOD? A Practice, which will administer *present Good*—will afford *pleasing Reviews*—and terminate in *everlasting Honour?*

Ther. 'Tis strange, that Subjects, which deserve to be received, as the universal Topic, are almost universally banished from our Discourse.—Was this Cabinet enriched, with a Series of antique *Medals*, or a Collection of the finest *Gems*; my Friends would naturally expect to be entertained, with a Sight of those Rarities, and an Explanation of their Meaning. Why should we not as naturally expect, and as constantly agree, to entertain each other with Remarks on those admirable Curiosities, which are deposited in the boundless *Musæum** of the Universe?

When a *General* has won some important Victory, or an *Admiral* has destroyed the Enemy's Fleet; every Company resounds with their Achievements; every Tongue is the Trumpet of their Fame. And why should We not celebrate, with equal Delight and Ardour, that ALMIGHTY Hand; which formed the Structure, and furnished the Regions, of this stupendous System?

Asp. Especially, if to his *immensely glorious*, We add his *supremely amiable* Perfections.—When the victorious Commander is our most cordial Friend: when He has professed the tenderest Love; done Us the

* *Musæum*—Alluding to a remarkable Edifice in the City of *Oxford*, distinguished by this Name; and appropriated to the Reception of Curiosities, both natural and artificial.

the moſt ſignal Good; and promiſed Us a perpetual Enjoyment of his Favours; it will be impoſſible to neglect ſuch an illuſtrious and generous Perſon. His Name muſt be engraven upon our Hearts; muſt ſlide inſenſibly into our Tongues; and be as Muſic to our Ears.

Is not all this true, and in the moſt ſupereminent Degree, with regard to the bleſſed GOD?—Can greater *Kindneſs* be exerciſed, or greater *Love* be conceived; than to deliver up his own SON to Torments and Death, for the Expiation of our Sins?—Can *Benefits*, more deſirable, be granted; than to adopt Us for his Children, and ſanctify Us by his SPIRIT?—Can *Promiſes*, more invaluable, be made; than thoſe, which inſure to Us the Preferments of Heaven, and the Riches of Eternity?

All this is atteſted, concerning the Almighty MAJESTY, in the Scriptures of Truth. What a Fund, therefore, for pleaſing and delicate Converſation, are *the Scriptures!*

Ther. Here alſo I have the Pleaſure of concurring with my *Aſpaſio*. Though I believe, He ſuſpects me to be ſomewhat wavering or defective, in my Veneration for the Scriptures.

Aſp. No, *Theron:* I have a better Opinion of your Taſte and Diſcernment, than to harbour any ſuch Suſpicion.

Ther. The Scriptures are certainly an inexhauſtible Fund of Materials, for the moſt delightful and ennobling Diſcourſe. When we conſider the Author of thoſe ſacred Books—that they came originally from *Heaven*—were dictated by *divine* Wiſdom—have the ſame *conſummate* Excellency, as the moſt finiſhed Works of Creation—It is really ſur-

prising, that We are not always searching, by Study, by Meditation, or Converse, into one or other of those grand Volumes.

Asp. When *Sacher* preaches, or *Murray* pleads; the Church is crouded. and the Bar thronged. When *Spence* produces the Refinements of Criticism, or *Young* displays the Graces of Poetry; the Press toils, yet is scarce able to supply the Demands of the Public.—Are We eager to hear, and impatient to purchase, what proceeds from such eloquent Tongues, and masterly Pens? And can We be *coldly indifferent*, when—not the most accomplished of Mankind—not the most exalted of Creatures—but the Adorable AUTHOR of all Wisdom, speaks in his revealed Word? Strange! that our Attention does not *hang** upon the venerable Accents, and our Talk *dwell* upon the incomparable Truths!

Ther. I admire, I must confess, the very *Language* of the Bible. In this, methinks, I discern a Conformity, between the Book of Nature, and the Book of Scripture

In the Book of Nature, the Divine TEACHER speaks not barely to our Ears, but to all our Senses. And it is very remarkable, how He *varies* his Address!—Observe his grander Works. In these, He uses the Style of Majesty. We may call it, the true *Sublime*. It strikes with Awe, and transports the Mind.

* St. *Luke*, in his evangelical History, uses this beautiful Image, ἐξεκρέματο. The People *hung upon* the Lips of their all-wise TEACHER. *Luke* xix. 48. Which implies two very strong Ideas—an *Attention*, that nothing could interrupt—and an *Eagerness*, scarce ever to be satisfied.

——*Pendetque loquentis ab Ore.* VIRG.

Mind.—View his ordinary Operations. Here, He deſcends to a plainer Dialect. This may be termed, the *familiar* Style. We comprehend it with Eaſe, and attend to it with Pleaſure.—In the more ornamented Parts of the Creation, He clothes his Meaning with Elegance. All is rich and brilliant. We are delighted; we are charmed. And what is this, but the *florid* Style?

A Variety, ſomewhat ſimilar, runs through the Scriptures.—Would You ſee *Hiſtory*, in all her Simplicity, and all her Force; moſt beautifully eaſy, yet irreſiſtibly ſtriking? See Her, or rather *feel* her Energy, touching the niceſt Movements of the Soul, and triumphing over our Paſſions, in the inimitable Narrative of *Joſeph*'s Life.—The Repreſentation of *Eſau*'s bitter Diſtreſs *; the Converſation-pieces of *Jonathan*, and his gallant Friend †; the memorable Journal of the Diſciples going to *Emmaus* ‡; are finiſhed Models of the *Impaſſioned* and *Affecting*.—Here is nothing ſtudied; no Flights of Fancy; no Embelliſhments of Oratory. Yet, how inferior is the Epiſode of *Niſus* and *Eurialus*, though worked up by the moſt maſterly Hand in the World, to the undiſſembled artleſs Fervency of theſe ſcriptural Sketches ‖!

* Gen. xxvii. 30, &c. † 1 Sam. xviii, xix, xx.
‡ Luke xxiv. 13, &c.

‖ Let a Perſon of true Taſte, peruſe, in a *critical* View, the two firſt Chapters of St. *Luke*. He will there find a Series of the moſt ſurpriſing Incidents, related with the greateſt *Simplicity*, yet with the utmoſt *Majeſty*.—All which, extremely affecting in themſelves, are *heightened* and *illuminated*, by a judicious Intermixture of the ſublimeſt Pieces of Poetry. For my own Part, I know not how

Are We pleaſed with the Elevation and Dignity of an *Heroic Poem*; or the Tenderneſs and Perplexity of a *Dramatic* Performance? In the Book of *Job*, they are both united, and both unequal.—Conformably to the exacteſt Rules of Art, as the Action advances, the Incidents are more alarming, and the Images more magnificent. The Language glows, and the Pathos ſwells. Till, at laſt, the DEITY Himſelf makes his Entrance. He ſpeaks from the Whirlwind, and ſummons the Creation: ſummons Heaven, and all its ſhining Hoſt; the Elements, and their moſt wonderful Productions; to vouch for the Wiſdom of his providential Diſpenſations.—His Word ſtrikes Terror, and flaſhes Conviction: decides the momentous Controverſy, and cloſes the auguſt Drama, with all poſſible Propriety, Solemnity, and Grandeur.

If We ſometimes chooſe a *plaintive* Strain; ſuch as ſoftens the Mind, and induces an agreeable Melancholy: are any of the antient Tragedies ſuperior, in the Eloquence of Mourning, to *David*'s pathetic Elegy on his beloved *Jonathan**; to his moſt paſſionate and inconſolable Moan†, over the lovely but unhappy

how to characterize them more properly, than by *Solomon*'s elegant Compariſon.—*They are as gold Rings ſet with the Beryl, or as bright Ivory over-laid with Sapphires.* Cantic. v. 14.

* 2 Sam. i. 19, *&c.*

† 2 *Sam.* xviii. 33. *The King was* vehemently affected (יִרְגַּז) *and went up to the Chamber, and wept: and as he went, He ſaid; O my Son Abſalom! my Son, my Son Abſalom! Would* GOD *I had died for Thee! O Abſalom, my Son, my Son!*—Such a Picture, and ſo much Pathos; ſo artleſs both, and both ſo exquiſite; I muſt acknowledge,

unhappy *Abſalom*; or to that melodious Woe, which warbles and bleeds, in every Line of *Jeremiah*'s Lamentations?

Would we be entertained with the daring Sublimity of *Homer*, or the correct Majeſty of *Virgil*? With the expreſſive Delicacy of *Horace*, or the rapid Excurſions of *Pindar*? Behold them joined, behold them excelled, in the Odes of *Moſes*, and the euchariſtic Hymn of *Deborah*; in the exalted Devotion of the Pſalms, and the glorious Enthuſiaſm of the Prophets.

Aſp. Only with this Difference, that the former are *tuneful Trifiers**, and amuſe the Fancy with

 empty

ſledge, I never met with, among all the Repreſentations of Dignity in Diſtreſs.—The King's Troops had gained a ſignal Victory. His Crown and his Life were reſcued from the moſt imminent Danger. Yet all the Honours and all the Joys of this ſucceſsful Day, were ſwallowed up and loſt in the News of *Abſalom*'s Death.—The News of *Abſalom*'s Death ſtruck, like a Dagger, the afflicted Father. He ſtarts from his Seat. He haſtens into Retirement, there to pour out his Soul in copious Lamentation. But his Anguiſh is too impetuous, to bear a Moment's Reſtraint. He burſts immediately into a Flood of Tears; and cries. as He departs, O *Abſalom*, &c.

What ſays *Mezentius*, when his Son is ſlain? When, to ſharpen his Sorrow, the pale Corpſe, the miſerable Spectacle, is before his Eyes, and within his Arms? The moſt pathetic Word He utters, is

——*Heu! nunc miſero mihi demum*
Exilium infœlix, nunc altè Vulnus adactum.

How *languid* is *Virgil?* How *inexpreſſive* the Prince of *Latin* Poetry! compared with the royal Mourner in *Iſrael!* Moſt evident, from this and many other Inſtances, is the Superiority of the Scriptures, in copying Nature, and painting the Paſſions.

* *Ludit amabiliter.*

empty Fiction: the latter are Teachers ſent from GOD, and make the Soul *wiſe unto Salvation*.—The Bible, is not only the brighteſt Ornament, but the moſt invaluable Depoſitum. On a right, a practical Knowledge of theſe lively Oracles, depends the preſent Comfort, and the endleſs Felicity of Mankind. Whatever, therefore, in Study or Converſation, has no Connection with their divine Contents; may be reckoned among the *Toys* of Literature, or the *Cyphers* of Diſcourſe.

Ther. Here again the Book of Scripture is ſomewhat like the Magazine of Nature. What can We deſire, for our Accommodation and Delight, which this Store-houſe of Conveniences does not afford? What can We wiſh, for our Edification and Improvement, which that Fund of Knowledge does not ſupply? Of theſe We may truly affirm, each, in its reſpective Kind, *is profitable unto all Things*.

Are We Admirers of *Antiquity?*—Here, We are led back, beyond the univerſal Deluge, and far beyond the Date of any other Annals.—We are introduced among the earlieſt Inhabitants of the Earth. We take a View of Mankind, in their undiſguiſed primitive Plainneſs; when the Days of their Life were but little ſhort of a *thouſand Years*.—We are brought acquainted with the Original of Nations; with the Creation of the World; and with the Birth of Time itſelf.

Are We delighted with *vaſt* Achievements?—Where is any Thing comparable to the Miracles in *Egypt*, and the Wonders in the Field of *Zoan?* To the Memoirs of the *Iſraelites*, paſſing through the Depths of the Sea; ſojourning amidſt the inhoſpitable Deſarts; and conquering the Kingdom of *Canaan?*

naan?—Where ſhall we meet with Inſtances of martial Bravery, equal to the prodigious Exploits of the *Judges*; or the adventurous Deeds of *Jeſſe*'s valiant Son, and his matchleſs Band of *Worthies* *?—Here, We behold the fundamental Laws of the Univerſe, ſometimes ſuſpended, ſometimes reverſed: and not only the Current of *Jordan*, but the Courſe of Nature controuled. In ſhort; when We enter the Field of Scripture, We tread—on *enchanted*, ſhall I ſay? rather—on *conſecrated* Ground. Where Aſtoniſhment and Awe are awakened, at every Turn. Where is all, more than all, the Marvelous of Romance †; connected with all the Preciſion and Sanctity of Truth.

If We want *Maxims* of *Wiſdom*, or have a Taſte for the *Laconic Style*; how copiouſly may our Wants be ſupplied, and how delicately our Taſte gratified! Eſpecially in the Book of Proverbs, Eccleſiaſtes, and ſome of the minor Prophets.—Here, are the moſt ſage Leſſons of Inſtruction; adapted to every Circumſtance of Life; formed upon the Experience of all preceding Ages; and perfected by the unerring SPIRIT of Inſpiration.—Theſe delivered, with ſuch remarkable Conciſeneſs; that One might venture to ſay, every Word is a Sentence ‡; at leaſt,

* See 2 Sam. xxiii. 8, &c. 1 Chron. xi. 10, &c.

† ——— *Heroum Fabula veris*
Vincitur Hiſtoriis.

‡ What *Cicero* ſaid of *Thucidides*, is more eminently true, concerning our royal Moraliſt, and his rich Collection of Ethics; concerning our evangelical Hiſtorians, and their copious Variety of Facts. *Eum adeo eſſe Rebus plenum refertumque, ut prope Verborum Numerum Numero Rerum æquet.*

every Sentence may be called an Apothegm; ſparkling with Brightneſs of Thought, or weighty with Solidity of Senſe. The Whole, like a Profuſion of Pearls—*each* containing, in a very ſmall Compaſs, a Value almoſt immenſe—*all* heaped up (as an ingenious Critic ſpeaks) with a confuſed Magnificence, above the little Niceties of Order.

If We look for the *Strength* of Reaſoning, and the *Warmth* of Exhortation: the *inſinuating Arts* of genteel Addreſs, or the *manly* Boldneſs of impartial Reproof: all the Thunder of the Orator, without any of his Oſtentation; all the Politeneſs of the Courtier, without any of his Flattery:—let Us have Recourſe to the Acts of the Apoſtles, and to the Epiſtles of St. *Paul**. Theſe are a *Specimen*, or rather theſe are the *Standard*, of them all.

I do not wonder, therefore, that a Taſte ſo refined, and a Judgment ſo correct as *Milton*'s, ſhould diſcern higher Attractives in the Volume of Inſpiration,

* Another very remarkable Inſtance of Propriety in St. *Paul*'s Writings, is, That though *diffuſe* in the *doctrinal*, they are *conciſe* in the *preceptive* Parts. On the former, it was abſolutely neceſſary to enlarge. On the latter, it is always judicious to be ſhort. The celebrated Rule of *Horace*,

Quicquid præcipies, eſto brevis,

was never more exactly obſerved, nor more finely exemplified, than by our Apoſtolic Author. See that noble String of Precepts, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 16, 17, &c.—See another choice Collection of the ſame Kind, *Rom.* xii. 9, 10, &c. In which the *Energy* of the Diction is no leſs admirable than the *Conciſeneſs* of the Sentence. Αποστυγουντες—κολλωμενοι—φιλοστοργοι—ζεοντες—προσκαρτερουντες—διωκοντες—are ſome of the moſt *vigorous* Words, that Language can furniſh; and form the moſt *animated* Meaning, that Imagination can conceive.

ration, than in the moſt celebrated Authors of *Greece* and *Rome*.

——————— *Yet not the more*
Ceaſe I to wander, where the Muſes haunt
Clear Spring, or ſhady Grove, or ſunny Hill,
Smit with the Love of ſacred Song: but CHIEF
Thee Sion, *and the flow'ry Banks beneath,*
That waſh thy hallowed Feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I viſit *.

Aſp. Another Recommendation of the Scriptures, is, That they afford the moſt *awful* and moſt *amiable* Manifeſtations of the GODHEAD. His Glory ſhines, and his Goodneſs ſmiles, in thoſe divine Pages, with unparalleled Luſtre.—Here, We have a ſatisfactory Explanation of *our own* State. The Origin of Evil is traced; the Cauſe of all our Miſery diſcovered; and the Remedy, the infallible Remedy, both clearly ſhewn, and freely offered.—The Merits of the bleeding *JESUS*, lay a firm Foundation for all our Hopes: while Gratitude for his dying Love, ſuggeſts the moſt winning Incitement to every Duty. —Morality, *Theron*, your (and let me add, *my*) admired Morality, is delineated in all its Branches. Is placed upon its proper Baſis, and raiſed to its higheſt Elevation.—The SPIRIT of GOD is promiſed, to enlighten the Darkneſs of our Underſtandings, and ſtrengthen the Imbecility of our

* That is, "He ſtill was pleaſed to ſtudy the Beau-
"ties of the antient Poets; but his higheſt Delight was
"in the Songs of *Sion*, in the holy Scriptures, and in
"theſe He meditated Day and Night."
See Dr. Newton's *Edit.*

Wills. What an ample—Can you indulge me, on this favourite Topic?

Ther. It is, I assure You, equally pleasing to myself. Your Enlargements, therefore, need no Apology.

Asp. What ample Provision is made, by these blessed Books, for *all* our spiritual Wants! And, in this Respect, how indisputable is their Superiority to all other Compositions!

Is any One convinced of *Guilt*, as provoking Heaven, and ruining the Soul?—Let Him ask *Reason*, to point out a Means of Reconciliation, and a Refuge of Safety*. Reason hesitates, as She replies; "The DEITY *may*, perhaps, accept our "Supplications, and grant Forgiveness."—But the Scriptures leave Us not to the sad Uncertainty of Conjecture. They speak the Language of clear Assurance.

* The Sentiment, says an anonymous Writer, should have been thus worded; "Let the guilty Person ask his "Price."—It might have been observed by this Writer, That the Words express the faintest Degree of Hope; rather than a real Persuasion; a Thing ardently wished, rather than truly believed;—*hesitates*—*may*—*perhaps*.

However, I am willing to acknowledge some Force and Propriety in the Remark. It is not Reason, but Pride under the Mask of Reason, which dictates every such Notion. Reason, unbiassed and impartial, would pronounce the Condition of sinful Man irremediable. That GOD, being infinitely holy, must abhor the *polluted*, and being infinitely just, would in no wise spare the *guilty* Creature.—It is the Gospel, the Gospel alone, which opens the Door of Hope. Opens it, from a most unexpected Quarter, the Redemption that is in *CHRIST JESUS*; and on poor forlorn Wretches, who *sat in Darkness, and the Shadow of Death*. Having no Gleam of Consolation, from all that their own Wisdom could devise, or their own Ability perform.

Aſſurance. GOD *has* ſet forth a Propitiation *: He *does* forgive our Iniquities †: He *will* remember our Sins no more ‡.

Are We *aſſaulted* by Temptation, or *averſe* to Duty?—Philoſophy may attempt to parry the Thruſt, or to ſtir up the reluctant Mind; by diſcloſing the *Deformity* of Vice, and urging the *Fitneſs* of Things. Feeble Expedients! Juſt as well calculated, to accompliſh the Ends propoſed; as the flimſy Fortification of a Cobweb, to defend Us from the Ball of a Cannon; or, as the gentle Vibrations of a Lady's Fan, to make a Wind-bound Navy ſail.—The Bible recommends no ſuch incompetent Succours. *My Grace*, ſays its Almighty AUTHOR, *is ſufficient for Thee* ‖.—*Sin ſhall not have Dominion over You* §.—The great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlaſting Strength, *He worketh in Us, both to will, and to do, of his good Pleaſure* †.

Should We be viſited with *Sickneſs*, or overtaken by any *Calamity*, the Conſolation which *Platò* offers, is; That ſuch Diſpenſations coincide with the univerſal Plan of Divine Government. *Virgil* will tell Us, for our Relief; That afflictive Viſitants are, more or leſs, the unavoidable Lot of all Men. Another Moraliſt whiſpers in the dejected Sufferer's Ear, "Impatience adds to the Load: whereas, a calm "Submiſſion renders it more ſupportable."—Does the Word of Revelation diſpenſe ſuch *ſpiritleſs* and *fugitive* Cordials? No: Thoſe ſacred Pages inform Us, That Tribulations are fatherly Chaſtiſements; Tokens of our MAKER's Love, and Fruits of his

* Rom. iii. 25. † Pſal. ciii. 3. ‡ Heb. viii. 12.
‖ 2 Cor. xii. 9. § Rom. vi. 14. † Phil. ii. 13.

his Care. That they are intended to work *in Us*, the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs; and to work out *for Us*, an eternal Weight of Glory *.

Should We, under the Summons of *Death*, have Recourſe to the moſt celebrated *Comforters* in the Heathen World; they would increaſe our Apprehenſions, rather than mitigate our Dread. Death is repreſented, by the great Maſter of their Schools; as "The moſt formidable of all Evils." They were not able *poſitively* to determine, whether the Soul ſurvived; and never ſo much as *dreamt* of the Reſurrection of the Body.—Whereas, the Book of GOD ſtrips the Monſter of his Horrors, or turns Him into a Meſſenger of Peace: gives Him an Angel's Face, and a Deliverer's Hand. Aſcertaining to the Souls of the Righteous, an immediate *Tranſlation* into the Regions of Bliſs; and inſuring to their Bodies, a moſt advantageous *Revival*, at the Reſtoration of all Things.

Invaluable Book! It heals the Maladies of Life, and ſubdues the Fear of Death. It ſtrikes a light-

ſome

* 2 *Cor.* iv. 17. What are *all* the conſolatory Expedients, preſcribed in all the Volumes of Heathen Morality, compared with this *one* Recipe of Revelation? They are, in Point of chearing Efficacy, ſomewhat like the *Frith* on the Conflux of a thouſand Streams, compared with a ſingle Draught of *Homer*'s *Nepenthe*. Which, He tells Us, was

Temper'd with Drugs of ſov'reign Uſe t' aſſwage
The boiling Boſom of tumultuous Rage;
To clear the cloudy Front of wrinkled Care,
And dry the tearful Sluices of Deſpair.
Charm'd with that virtuous Draught, th' exalted Mind
All Senſe of Woe delivers to the Wind.

Odyſſ. IV.

ſome Viſta, through the Gloom of the Grave; and opens a charming, a glorious Proſpect of Immortality in the Heavens.

Theſe, with many other Excellencies peculiar to the Scriptures, One would imagine more than ſufficient, to engage every ſenſible Heart in their Favour; and introduce them, with the higheſt Eſteem, into every improved Converſation.—They had ſuch an Effect upon the *fineſt* Genius, and *moſt accompliſhed* * Perſon, that former or latter Ages can boaſt. Inſomuch, that He made, while living, this public Declaration; and left it, when He died, upon everlaſting Record—*How ſweet are thy Words unto my Taſte!*

* If we conſider *David*, in the great Variety of his fine Qualifications—The Ornaments of his Perſon, and the far more illuſtrious Endowments of his Mind—The ſurpriſing Revolutions in his Fortune; ſometimes, reduced to the loweſt Ebb of Adverſity; ſometimes, riding upon the higheſt Tide of Proſperity—His ſingular Dexterity, in extricating Himſelf from Difficulties; and peculiar Felicity, in accommodating Himſelf to all Circumſtances—The Prizes He won, as a youthful Champion; and the Victories He gained, as an experienced General—His maſterly Hand upon the Harp, and his inimitable Talent for Poetry—The admirable Regulations of his royal Government, and the incomparable Uſefulneſs of his public Writings—The Depth of his Repentance, and the Height of his Devotion—The Vigour of his Faith in the Divine Promiſes, and the Ardour of his Love to the Divine MAJESTY—If We conſider theſe, with ſeveral other Marks of Honour and Grace, which ennoble the Hiſtory of his Life; We ſhall ſee ſuch an *Aſſemblage* of ſhining Qualities, as perhaps were never united in any *other* merely human Character.

This Obſervation was expunged. But, upon maturer Thoughts it is offered to the Public. In order to convince a *polite* Reader, That the Love of the Scriptures, and the Exerciſe of Devotion, are by no Means the low Peculiarities of a *vulgar* Mind.

Taſte! Yea, ſweeter than Honey unto my Mouth *.—*O! how I love thy Law! It is my Meditation all the Day* †.—*Mine Eyes prevent the Night-watches, that I may be occupied in thy Precepts; and I will ſpeak of thy Teſtimonies even before Kings* ‡.—If *David* taſted ſo much Sweetneſs in a *ſmall*, and that the *leaſt valuable*, Part of the divine Word; how much richer is the Feaſt to Us! Since the Goſpel is added to the Law, and the Canon of Scripture completed! Since (to borrow the Words of a Prophet) the LORD GOD *has, now ſealed up the Sum*; has put the laſt Hand to his Work; and rendered it *full of Wiſdom, and perfect in Beauty* ||.

Ther. Another remarkable Peculiarity of the ſacred Writings, juſt occurs to my Mind—The Method, of communicating Advice, or adminiſtering Reproof, by *Parables*. A Method, which levels itſelf to the loweſt Apprehenſion, without giving Offence to the moſt ſupercilious Temper. Yet, is as much ſuperior, to plain unornamented Precept; as the enlivened Scenes of a well-wrought Tragedy, are more impreſſive and affecting, than a ſimple Narration of the Plot.

Our LORD was aſked, by a Student of the *Jewiſh* Law, *Who is my Neighbour?* Which implied another Queſtion, *How is he to be loved?*—The Enquirer was conceited of Himſelf; yet, ignorant of the Truth, and deficient in his Duty. Had the wife INSTRUCTOR of Mankind abruptly declared, *You neither know the former, nor fulfil the latter.* Probably,

* Pſal. cxix. 103. † Pſal. cxix. 97. ‡ Pſal. cxix. 45. || Ezek. xxviii. 12.

bably, the Queriſt would have reddened with Indignation, and departed in a Rage.—Therefore, to teach, and not diſguſt; to *convince* the Man of his Error, and not *exaſperate* his Mind; the bleſſed *JESUS* frames a Reply, as amiable in the Manner, as it was pertinent to the Purpoſe.

A certain *Jew*, going down from *Jeruſalem* to *Jericho*, fell among Thieves *. They rifle Him of his Money; ſtrip Him of his Clothes; wound Him with great Barbarity; then leave Him, expiring on the Road.—Soon after this diſaſtrous Accident, a Traveler appears, and advances that Way. A Sight, inexpreſſibly welcome to this afflicted Creature. What renders it more likely, that He ſhall receive Relief, this Traveller is one of the *ſacred Order*. One, who taught others the lovely Leſſons of Humanity and Charity; and was, therefore, under the ſtrongeſt Obligations, to exemplify them in his own Practice. He juſt glances an Eye upon the deplorable Object; ſees Him ſtretched on the Ground, and weltering in his Blood. But takes no farther Notice. Nay, to avoid the Trouble of an Enquiry, turns out of the Road, and paſſes by on the other Side.—Scarce was He departed, when a *Levite* approaches. This Man *comes nearer, and looks on* the miſerable Spectacle. He takes a leiſurely and attentive Survey of the Caſe †. Though every Gaſh, and every Groan, plead for Compaſſion; this Miniſter of the Sanctuary obſerves all, with the coldeſt

* Luke x. 30, *&c.*

† This ſeems to be the Import of ελθων κ) ιδων. Luke x. 32. This *diverſifies* the Conduct of the two unnatural Paſſengers, and *heightens* the Deſcription of *Jewiſh* Inhumanity.

coldeſt Indifference. He neither moves a Hand to help Him; nor ſpeaks a Word to comfort Him; but leaves the poor, naked, mangled Wretch to periſh in his Calamity.—Laſt comes a *Samaritan* *; one

* If this was a Parable, we cannot but admire the Accuracy of our LORD, both in *laying* the Scene, and *ſelecting* the Circumſtances.—It is the Maxim of a great Critic,

Ficta Voluptatis Causâ ſint proxima veris.

And how very apparent is the Air of *Probability*, in this ſacred Apologue!—The Way from *Jeruſalem* to *Jericho*, lying through a Deſart, was much infeſted by Thieves, and too commodious for their Purpoſes of Violence.—What could be more likely to happen, than the Paſſage of a *Prieſt* and *Levite* along that Road? Since *Jericho* was a City, appropriated to the *Levitical* Order; and contained no leſs than twelve thouſand Attendants, on the Service of the Temple.

How judiciouſly is the *principal* Figure circumſtanced!—Had the *Calamity* befallen a *Samaritan*, it would have made but feeble Impreſſions of Pity; and thoſe, perhaps, immediately effaced by ſtronger Emotions of Hatred. But, when it was a *Jew*, that lay bleeding to death; the Repreſentation was ſure to intereſt the Hearer in the Diſtreſs, and awaken a tender Concern.—Had the Relief been adminiſtered by a *Jew*, the Benevolence would have ſhone, but in a much fainter Light. Whereas, when it came from the Hands of a *Samaritan*, whom all the *Jews* had agreed to execrate, and rank with the very Fiends of Hell, how bright was the Luſtre of *ſuch* Charity!

It was moſt charmingly, and indeed irreſiſtibly bright, ſince it compelled a *Jewiſh* Lawyer, to acknowledge the ſuperior Excellence of a deſpiſed and hated *Samaritan*. Nay, it compelled Him to acknowledge the Superiority of this hated *Samaritan*, not only to his Countrymen in general, but to thoſe who bore the moſt venerable Character, and diſcharged the moſt ſacred Office.

Let the Reader conſider the Temper, expreſſed in that rancorous Reflection; *Thou art a* Samaritan, *and haſt a Devil*,

one of the abhorred Nation: whom the *Jew* hated with the moſt implacable Malignity. Though the *Levite* had neglected a bleeding Brother: though the Prieſt had with-held his Pity, from one of the LORD's peculiar People: the very Moment this *Samaritan* ſees the unhappy Sufferer, He melts into Commiſeration. He forgets the *imbittered Foe*, and conſiders only the *diſtreſſed Fellow-Creature*. He ſprings from his Horſe, and reſolves to intermit his Journey. The Oil and Wine, intended for his own Refreſhment, He freely converts into healing Unguents. He binds up the Wounds; ſets the diſabled Stranger, upon his own Beaſt; and with all the Aſſiduity of a Servant, with all the Tenderneſs of a Brother, conducts Him to an Inn.—There, He does all that can be contrived *, to ſoothe his preſent Sorrows, and to provide againſt his future Wants. He lays down, for his immediate Uſe, what Money He can ſpare; charges the Hoſt to omit nothing, that may promote the Recovery or Comfort

Devil, John viii. 48.—Let Him compare that inveterate Malevolence, with the benign and compaſſionate Spirit of our amiable Traveler.—Then, let Him ſay; Whether He ever beheld a finer or a bolder Contraſt? Whether, upon the Whole, He ever ſaw the *Ordonnance* of deſcriptive Painting, more juſtly deſigned, or more happily executed?

I would beg Leave to obſerve farther, That the virulent Animoſity of the *Jew* diſcovers itſelf, even in the Lawyer's Reply; *He that ſhewed Mercy on Him*. He will not ſo much as *name* the *Samaritan*. Eſpecially in a Caſe, where He could not be named, without an honourable Diſtinction.—So ſtrongly marked, and ſo exactly preſerved, are the τα ηθη, the *Manners* or diſtinguiſhing Qualities of each Perſon, in the ſacred Narrations!

* Επεμεληθη αυτου.

Comfort of his Gueſt; and promiſes, to defray the whole Expence of his Lodging, his Maintenance, and his Cure.

What a lively Picture this, of the moſt *diſintereſted* and *active* Benevolence! A Benevolence, which excludes no Perſons, not even Strangers or Enemies, from its tender Regards. Which diſdains no Condeſcenſion, grudges no Coſt, in its Labours of Love. —Could any Method of Conviction have been more forcible, and at the ſame Time more pleaſing, than the Interrogatory, propoſed by our LORD, and deduced from the Story? *Which now of theſe Three, thinkeſt Thou, was Neighbour unto Him, that fell among the Thieves?*—Or, can there be an Advice, more ſuitable to the Occaſion; more important in its Nature; and expreſſed with a more ſententious Energy, than *Go Thou, and do likewiſe?*—In this Caſe, the Learner inſtructs, the Delinquent condemns*, Himſelf. *Bigotry* hears away its Prejudice; and *Pride* (when the Moral ſo ſweetly, ſo imperceptibly inſinuates) even Pride itſelf lends a willing Ear to Admonition.

Jſp. This Eloquence of Similitudes, is at once affecting to the Wiſe, and intelligible to the Ignorant.—It *ſhews* †, rather than *relates*, the Point to be illuſtrated; and often makes, as in the fine Inſtance You have ſelected, the Feelings of the Heart overcome the Prejudices of the Underſtanding.—It has always been admired, by the beſt Judges of human Nature, and polite Literature. But, never was carried to its higheſt Perfection, till our LORD ſpoke

* 2 Sam. xii. 5.

† *Diſcentem*, ſays *Seneca* upon the Subject, *& audientem in rem præſentem adducunt.* Epiſt. lix.

ſpoke the Parable of the *Prodigal**.—Which has a Beauty, that no Paraphraſe can heighten: a Perſpicuity, that renders all Interpretation needleſs: and a Force, which every Reader, not totally inſenſible, muſt feel †.

Ther. The Condeſcenſion and Goodneſs of GOD are, every where, conſpicuous.—In the Productions of the Bough, He conveys to Us the moſt valuable Fruits, by the Intervention of the loveliеſt Bloſſoms. Though the Preſent is, in itſelf, extremely acceptable; He has given it an *additional Endearment*, by the Beauties which array it, or the Perfumes which ſurround it.—In the Pages of Revelation, He has communicated to Us the Truths of Heaven, adorned with all the Graces of Compoſition. Such as may poliſh the Man of Genius, and improve the Man of Worth. Such as gratify and captivate our Imagination, even while they cultivate and refine our Morals.—So that they really are, as one of their divine Authors very elegantly ſpeaks; *Like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver* ‡.

* Luke xv. 11, *&c.*

† If the Reader ſhould be diſſatisfied with this Method of extolling the Parable in general, without *ſpecifying* its particular Beauties; He may find ſomething of the latter Kind attempted, in *Contemplations on the Starry Heavens*, Pag. 181, *&c.*

‡ *Prov.* xx. 11.—*Theron* follows the received Tranſlation. I ſhould prefer the Expoſition of *Glaſſius*; who ſuppoſes משכיות כסף to ſignify, *Retiacula argentea, in quibus Oculi ſunt minutiſſimi, penetrabiles tamen Viſu.* According to this Interpretation, the Paſſage will preſent Us with *Apples of Gold in* Net-work, or Lattice-work, *of Silver.* Where the fine Fruit receives a new Charm, by ſhewing itſelf through the elegant Apertures of the Baſket.

Asp. Who then would not gladly receive that gracious Exhortation? *Let the Word of CHRIST dwell in You richly**. Who would not willingly obey that benign Command? *Thou shalt talk of it, when thou sittest in thine House, and when thou walkest by the Way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up*†. Since, in this Case, Duty is evidently inlaid with Delight.

When I consider the *Language* of the Scriptures, and sometimes experience their Energy on my Soul; I am inclined to say—"Other Writings, though "polished with the nicest Touches of Art, only "*tinkle* on the Ear, or affect Us like the Shepherd's "Reed. But these, even amidst all their Simpli-"city and Negligence, *strike—alarm—transport Us* "—somewhat like the Voice of Thunder, or the "Archangel's Trumpet."

When I consider the *Contents* of the Scriptures; and believe myself interested, in the Promises they exhibit, and the Privileges they confer; I am induced to cry out—"What are all the other Books "in the World, compared with these inestimable "Volumes? No more than an entertaining No-"vel, or a few prudential Rules for domestic Oe-"conomy, compared with a *Parent*'s Will; a *royal* "Charter;

* *Col.* iii. 16. *The Word of CHRIST*; so the Apostle entitles the whole inspired Writings, and thereby asserts the *Divinity* of his MASTER—*Dwell*; not make a short Stay, or an occasional Visit, but take up a fixed and stated Residence—*Richly*; in the largest Measure, and with the greatest Efficacy; so as to fill the Memory; sway the Will; and actuate all the Affections.

† Deut. vi. 7.

" Charter*; or an *imperial* Grant of Titles and " Manors."

I ſaid, *Promiſes* and *Privileges*. For, theſe I look upon as imparting the moſt ſovereign Worth to the Scriptures. Agreeably to our LORD's Teſtimony, *Search the Scriptures*. Why? What recommends them to our attentive Regard? Becauſe they give the nobleſt Diſplay of the divine Perfections, and the trueſt Eſtimate of human Nature? Becauſe they open the inviſible World, and diſcover the Secrets of Eternity? Preſent Us with the moſt refined Rule of Duty, and preſs upon Us the moſt forcible Motives to Obedience?—All this they unqueſtionably do. Yet this is not their moſt diſtinguiſhing Excellence. *Search them*, ſays our bleſſed LORD, with a cloſe, an exact, an unwearied Aſſiduity; becauſe, *they teſtify of ME*. Of my all-ſurpaſſing Dignity, and infinite Merits. Of free Juſtification through my Blood, and everlaſting Life through my Righteouſneſs. This is their crowning Perfection. From hence they derive the moſt exalted Merit.

* The Contents of the Scripture are called, by the wiſe Man, נגדים *Prov.* viii. 6. *Excellent things*, *royal* Truths, *princely* Sentiments. Teſtifying of *Meſſiah the Prince*, his Perſon, Righteouſneſs, and Salvation.—Exceeding all the Works and Writings of the Learned, as much as *Solomon* Himſelf, when ſeated on his Throne of Ivory and Gold; ſurrounded with all the Splendour of his brilliant Court; and delivering the Dictates of Inſpiration, to liſtening Sages—as much as that magnificent Monarch, in ſuch Circumſtances of Dignity, and amidſt ſuch Diſplays of Wiſdom, exceeded the Populace of *Iſrael*.

All these Circumstances remind me of a very emphatical Attestation, bore to the exalted Merit of the BIBLE. Which, though quite *artless*, is, I think, abundantly more expressive, than the most laboured Efforts of Panegyric.—It came from the Lips of a Martyr. Who, being condemned to die, for his inviolable Adherence to the Doctrines of Scripture; when he arrived at the Stake, and had composed Himself for Execution, took his final Leave in these affecting Words: "Farewel Sun "and Moon! Farewel all the Beauties of Crea- "tion, and Comforts of Life! Farewel my ho- "noured Friends! Farewel my beloved Relations! "And farewel thou *precious*, *precious Book of* "GOD!"

Aspasio had scarce uttered the last Sentence, when a Servant came to let them know; "Supper was "upon the Table."—Very opportunely, said *Theron*, has our Repast waited, till our Conference is ended. We have shewed, what a large Field of delightful Speculation, the Scriptures open: and what ample Materials for the most refined Discourse*, they afford. As nothing can be more ungraceful, than to neglect in *our own* Conduct, what

* Should the serious Reader want any *farther* Persuasives, to this most beneficial Practice; He may see—How particularly our Divine MASTER *observes* the Strain of our Conversation; *Luke* xxiv. 17.—How expressly He has commanded such social Communications, as may tend to the *Use of Edifying*, Eph. iv. 29.—And what an *Evidence* will arise from this Article, either for our Acquittal or Condemnation, at the Day of everlasting Judgment, *Matt.* xii. 36, 37.

what We recommend to the Practice of *Others**; let Us, this very Night, begin to ennoble our Interviews with theſe improving Subjects. Let Us endeavour to make religious Converſation, which is in all Reſpects *deſirable*, in ſome Degree *faſhionable*.

* Οι γαρ ἱερεις παιδευειν καλαδεξαμενοι, ερυθριασομεν καὶ αισχυνομεθα, α τοις αλλοις επιλατομεν, ταυτα ελλιμπανοντες αυτοι φαινεσθαι.

Chryſoſt. Ανδρ. θ.

DIALOGUE II.

THE next Morning, when Breakfaſt was over, *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* took a Walk into the Garden—Their Spirits cheared, and their Imagination lively—Gratitude glowing in their Hearts, and the whole Creation ſmiling round them.

The Spot adjoining to the Houſe, was appropriated to the Cultivation of *Flowers*.—In a Variety of handſome Compartments, were aſſembled the choiceſt Beauties of blooming Nature. Here, the *Hyacinth* hung her ſilken Bells, or the *Lilies* reared their ſilver Pyramids. There, ſtood the neat *Narciſſus*, looſely* attired in a Mantle of ſnowy Luſtre; while the ſplendid *Ranunculus* wore a full-trimmed Suit of radiant Scarlet. *Pinks* were riſing to enamel the Borders; *Roſes* were opening to dreſs the Walls; ſurrounded, on all Sides, with a Profuſion of beauteous Forms, either latent in the Stalk, or burſting the Buds, or blown into full Expanſion.

This was bounded by a ſlight Partition, a Sort of verdant Parapet. Through which they deſcend by an eaſy Flight of Steps; and are preſented with the elegant Simplicity of the *Kitchen-Garden*.—In one Place,

* ——— *Hiantem Flore decore Narciſſum.*

Place, You might ſee the Marigold flowering, or the Beans in Bloſſom. In another, the Endive curled her Leaves, or the Lettuce thickened her Tufts. Cauliflowers ſheltered their fair Complection, under a green Umbrella; while the Borage diſhevelled * her Locks, and braided them with native Jewels, of a finer Azure than the fineſt Sapphires.—On the *ſunny Slopes*, the Cucumber and Melon lay baſking in the collected Beams. On the *raiſed Beds*, the Artichoke ſeemed to be erecting a Standard, while the Aſparagus ſhot † into Ranks of Spears. The *level Ground* produced all Manner of cooling Sallets and nouriſhing Eſculents. Which, like the Brows of the *Olympic* Conquerors, were bound with a Fillet of unfading Parſley; or, like the Pictures of the Mountain-Nymphs, were graced with a Chaplet of fragrant Marjoram.—In ſhort, nothing was wanting to furniſh out the wholeſome Luxury of an *Antediluvian* Banquet.

Soon, a high Wall intervenes. Through which a Wicket opens, and tranſmits them into the regular and equi-diſtant Rows of an *Orchard*.—This Plantation is ſo nicely adjuſted, that it looks like an Arrangement of rural Piazzas, or a Collection of diverſified Viſtas. The Eye is, every where, entertained with the exacteſt Uniformity; and darts, with unobſtructed Eaſe, from one End of the branching Files

* Referring to the *looſe irregular* Manner of its Foliation.

† Alluding, not only to the *Shape*, but alſo to the *Growth* of this Plant; which is ſo unuſually quick, that it may almoſt be ſaid to *ſtart*, rather than to *riſe* out of the Earth.

to the other.—On all the Boughs, lay a lovely Evolution of *Bloſſoms*; arrayed in milky White, or tinged with the ſofteſt Red. Crouding into one general Cluſter, without relinquiſhing a vacant Space for Leaves, they formed the faireſt, the gayeſt, the grandeſt Alcove, that Fancy itſelf can imagine.—It is really like the *Court* of the *Graces*. None can approach it, without finding his Ideas brightened, and feeling his Temper exhilarated.

Contiguous to this correct Diſpoſition of Things, Nature has thrown a *Wilderneſs*; hoary, groteſque, and magnificently confuſed. It ſtretched itſelf, with a large circular Sweep, to the North; and ſecured both the Olitory and the Orchard from incommoding Winds.—Copſes of Hazel, and flowering Shrubs, filled the lower Spaces. While Poplars quivered aloft in Air, and Pines pierced the Clouds with their leafy Spires. Here, grew Clumps of Fir, clad in everlaſting Green. There, ſtood Groves of Oak, which had weathered, for Ages, the wintry Storm.—This woody Theatre, was interſected by a *winding Walk*; lined with Elms of inſuperable Height. Whoſe Branches, uniting at the Top, reared a majeſtic Arch, and projected a ſolemn Shade. It was impoſſible to enter this lofty Labyrinth, without being ſtruck with a pleaſing Dread *. As they proceed, every Inflection diffuſes a deeper Gloom, and awakens a more penſive Attention.

Having ſtrolled in this darkſome Avenue, without a Speck of Sunſhine, without a Glimpſe of the Heavens; on a ſudden, they ſtep into open Day.—Surpriſing!

* —— *Caligantem nigra Formidine Lucum.*
VIRG.

priſing! cries *Aſpaſio*. What a Change is this! What delightful Enchantment is Here!—One Inſtant, whelmed in *Trophonius*'s Cave *; where Darkneſs lours, and Horrour frowns. Tranſported, the next, into the romantic Scenes of *Arcadia*; where all is lightſome, and all is gay.—Quick as Thought †, the Arches of Heaven expand their Azure. Turrets and Spires ſhoot into the Skies. Towns, with their ſpacious Edifices, ſpread themſelves to the admiring View. Thoſe Lawns, green with freſheſt Herbage; thoſe Fields, rich with undulating Corn; where were they all, a Moment ago?—It brings to my Mind that remarkable Situation of the *Jewiſh* Law-giver; when, elevated on the Summit of *Piſgah*, He ſurveyed the goodly Land of Promiſe—ſurveyed *the Rivers, the Floods, the Brooks of Honey and Butter*—ſurveyed *the Mountains dropping with Wine, and the Hills flowing with Milk.*

* The Reader may find a *curious* Account of this Cave, together with a very *humorous*, and (which ſhould always accompany Humour, or elſe it will be like a Sting without the Honey) an *improving* Deſcription of its Effects. *Spect.* Vol. VIII. N° 598, 599.

† Such a ſudden Alteration of the Proſpect, is beautifully deſcribed by *Milton*;

——————— *As when a Scout,*
Through dark and deſart Ways, with Peril gone
All Night, at laſt by Break of cheerful Dawn
Obtains the Brow of ſome high-climbing Hill,
Which to his Eye diſcovers unaware
The goodly Proſpect of ſome foreign Land,
Firſt ſeen; or ſome renown'd Metropolis,
With gliſtering Spires and Pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the riſing Sun gilds with his Beams.

Book III.

Milk *.—Surveyed all with thoſe Eyes, which, for forty tedious Years, had been confined to dry Sands, ragged Rocks, and the irkſome Waſtes of a deſolate bowling Wilderneſs.

On the firſt *mighty Hillock* †, which offered its Couch, our Gentlemen ſeated themſelves. The riſing Sun had viſited the Spot, to dry up the Dews, and exhale the Damps, that might endanger Health; to open the Violets, and expand the Primroſes, that decked the Green. The whole Shade of the Wood was collected *behind* them; and a beautiful, extenſive, moſt diverſified Landſcape ſpread itſelf *before* them.

Theron, according to his uſual Manner, made many improving Remarks on the Proſpect, and its Furniture. He traced the Footſteps of an all-comprehending Contrivance, and pointed out the Strokes of inimitable Skill. He obſerved the grand Exertions of Power, and the rich Exuberance of Goodneſs, moſt ſignally, moſt charmingly conſpicuous through the Whole.—Upon one Circumſtance He enlarged, with a particular Satisfaction.

Ther. See! *Aſpaſio*; how all is calculated, to adminiſter the higheſt *Delight* to Mankind.—Thoſe Trees

* This is the Language of the Book of *Job*, and the Prophecy of *Joel*. A Language, like the Scene it deſcribes, not beautiful only, but beautiful and rich even to *Luxuriancy*, Job xx. 17. Joel iii. 18.—One would almoſt ſuſpect, the *Lyric* Poet had read theſe Paſſages, and attempted an Imitation of their Delicacies.

Vinique Fontem, Lactis & uberes
Cantare Rivos, atque truncis
Lapſa cavis iterare Mella. Lib. II. Od. 19.

† *Horace* would have called it, *Coſpes fortuitus.*

Trees and Hedges, which ſkirt the Extremities of the Landſcape; ſtealing away from their real Bulk, and leſſening by gentle Diminutions; appear like elegant Pictures in *Miniature*. Thoſe, which occupy the nearer Situations, are a Set of noble Images; ſwelling upon the Eye, in *full Proportion*; and in a Variety of graceful Attitudes. Both of them ornamenting the ſeveral Apartments of our common Abode, with a Mixture of Delicacy and Grandeur.

The Bloſſoms, that array the Branches; the Flowers, that embroider the Mead; addreſs and entertain *our* Eyes with every Charm of Beauty *. Whereas, to *other* Creatures, they are deſtitute of all thoſe Attractives; which reſult from a Combination of the loveliеſt Colours, and moſt alluring Forms.—Yonder Streams, that glide, with ſmooth Serenity,

* Therefore, when the Prophet deſcribes the Chriſtian Church, adorned with all the *Beauties of Holineſs*, He borrows his Imagery from theſe amiable Objects. *Iſrael ſhall bud and bloſſom*, Iſai. xxvii. 6.—Nay, *the* very *Wilderneſs*, even the Gentile Nations, being converted unto *CHRIST*, *ſhall bloſſom as a Roſe*, Iſai. xxxv. 1.—*I will be as the Dew unto Iſrael*; *He ſhall bloſſom as the Lily*, *and caſt forth his Roots as Lebanon*, Hoſ. xiv. 5. What an elegant Picture! And what a comfortable Promiſe! Here is the Queen of Flowers, and the Prince of Trees. Nothing *fairer* than the full-blown Lily: nothing *firmer* than the deep-rooted Cedars. Yet theſe are a Repreſentation (and but a faint Repreſentation) of the *Comelineſs*, which the All gracious REDEEMER puts upon his People; and of the *Stability*, which they derive from his inviolable Faithfulneſs.

N. B. The fourteenth of *Hoſea*, is one of thoſe Chapters, which, for their peculiar Importance and Excellency, deſerve not only to have a *Turn* in our Reading, but a *Place* in our Memory.

Serenity, along the Vallies; glittering to the diſtant View, like Sheets of poliſhed Silver; or ſoothing the attentive Ear, with the Softneſs of aquatic Murmurs; are no leſs *exhilarating* to the Fancy, than to the Soil, through which they paſs.—The huge enormous Mountain; the ſteep and dizzy Precipice; the pendent Horrors of the craggy Promontory: wild and tremendous as they are, furniſh out an agreeable Entertainment to the human Mind; and *pleaſe*, even while they *terrify*. Whereas, the Beaſts take no other Notice of thoſe majeſtic Deformities, than only to avoid the Dangers, they threaten.

Aſp. How do ſuch Conſiderations exalt our Idea of the CREATOR's Goodneſs; his very diſtinguiſhing Goodneſs to Mankind! Should they not proportionably endear that eternal Benefactor; and render Him, both the ſupreme Deſire of our Souls, and the ſupreme Delight of our Affections?

His ever-bountiful Hand has ſcattered Bleſſings, and with profuſe Liberality, among *all* the Ranks of animated Exiſtence. But his Beneficence to *Us*, is of the moſt engaging Kind; is of a very ſuperior Order. *We* are treated as his peculiar Favourites; being admitted to the Knowledge of his Deſigns, as well as to the Uſe of his Works. We are introduced to Scenes of Beauty, which none but Ourſelves are able to diſcern. We are preſented with a Series of Gratifications, which none but Ourſelves are capable of reliſhing.

Theo. Another Remark, though very obvious, is equally important. The Deſtination of all theſe external Things, is no leſs *advantageous*, than their Formation is beautiful.—The Bloom, which engages

gages the Eye with its delicate Hues, is cheriſhing the Embrio Fruit; and forming, within its ſilken Folds, the Rudiments of a future Deſſert.—Thoſe Streams, which ſhine from afar, like fluid Chryſtal, are more valuable in their Productions, and beneficial in their Services, than they are amiable in their Appearance. They diſtribute, as they roll along their winding Banks, Cleanlineſs to our Houſes, and Fruitfulneſs to our Lands. They nouriſh, and at their own Expence, a never-failing Supply of the fineſt Fiſh. They viſit our Cities, and attend our Wharfs, as ſo many public Vehicles, ready to ſet out at all Hours.

Thoſe Sheep, which give their Udders to be drained by the buſy friſking Lambs, are fattening their Fleſh for *our* Support; and while they fill their own Fleeces, are providing for *our* comfortable Clothing. —Yonder Kine, ſome of which are browzing upon the tender Herb; others, ſatiated with Paſturage, ruminate under the ſhady Covert; are, though conſcious of no ſuch Deſign, concocting for our Uſe, one of the ſofteſt, pureſt, healthieſt Liquors in the World.—The Bees, that fly humming about our Seat, and purſue their Work on the fragrant Bloſſoms, are collecting Balm and Sweetneſs, to compoſe the richeſt of Syrups. Which, though the Produce of *their Toil*, is intended for *our Good*.

Nature, and her whole Family, are our obſequious Servants, our ever-active Labourers. They bring the Fruits of their united Induſtry, and pour them into our Lap, or depoſit them in our Store-rooms.

Aſp. Who can ſufficiently admire this moſt charming and immenſe Benignity?—The Supreme DISPOSER of Events, has commanded Delight and Profit

Profit to walk Hand in Hand, through his ample Creation. Making all Things ſo *perfectly pleaſing*, as if Beauty was their only End; yet all Things ſo *eminently ſerviceable* *, as if Uſefulneſs had been their ſole Deſign.—As a farther Invitation to our Gratitude, He has rendered Man the Center, in which all the Emanations of his Beneficence, diffuſed through this Terreſtrial Syſtem, conſtantly terminate.

But, my dear *Theron*, is not this apparent, in a much more wonderful Manner, throughout the whole Oeconomy of REDEMPTION?—It were a ſmall Thing for this inferior Claſs of *unintelligent* Creatures, to be continually employing themſelves for our Benefit. Even the *SON* of the moſt *High GOD*, through all his incarnate State, acted the very ſame Part.—He took Fleſh, and bore the Infirmities of human Nature, not for Himſelf, but for Us Men, and our Salvation. He ſuffered Want, and endured Miſery in all its Forms; that We might poſſeſs the Fulneſs of Joy, and abound in Pleaſures for evermore.—When He poured out his Soul in Agonies, under the Curſe of an *avenging* Law; was it not with a compaſſionate View, to make *Us* Partakers of eternal Bleſſedneſs? When He fulfilled, perfectly fulfilled the whole *commanding* Law; was it not for this gracious Purpoſe, that his Righteouſneſs might be imputed to Us? Yes;

——— *For Us He liv'd,*
Toil'd for our Eaſe, and for our Safety bled.

Nothing in the whole Courſe——

Ther.

* *Omnes Mundi Partes ita conſtitutæ ſunt, ut neque ad Uſum meliores eſſe poterint, neque ad Speciem pulchriores.*
CIC. De Nat. Deor. Lib. II.

Ther. Pardon me for interrupting You, *Aſpaſio.* I have no Objection to the general Drift of your Diſcourſe. But that particular Notion of *imputed* Righteouſneſs, has always appeared to me in a very ridiculous Light. And I muſt ſay, that ſuch a *Puritanical Noſtrum* makes a very unbecoming Figure, amongſt your other manly and correct Sentiments of Religion.

Aſp. You know, *Theron*, I have long ago diſavowed that ignoble Prejudice, which rejects Doctrines, or deſpiſes Perſons, becauſe they happen to be branded with contemptible Names. 'Tis true, the Writers ſtyled *Puritans*, are remarkable for their Attachment to this Peculiarity of the Goſpel. It runs through all their Theological Works; and very eminently diſtinguiſhes them, from the Generality of our modern Treatiſes.—But, muſt it *therefore* be wrong, becauſe maintained by that particular Set of People? Or, are they the *only* Advocates for this important Truth?

Ther. Aye: it is as I ſuſpected. I have lately conjectured, from ſeveral Hints in my *Aſpaſio*'s Diſcourſe, that He has been warping to the low ungentleman-like Peculiarities of thoſe whimſical Fanatics.

Aſp. I cannot conceive, why You ſhould call them *whimſical.*—To ſettle Faith on its proper Baſis, the meritorious Righteouſneſs of the REDEEMER; and to deduce Obedience from its true Origin, the Love of GOD ſhed abroad in the Heart.—To ſearch the Conſcience, and convince the Judgment.—To awaken the lethargic, and comfort the afflicted Soul—To do all this, from a thorough Knowledge, joined to a maſterly

Application,

Application, of the divine Word—Theſe, ſure, are not whimſical Talents, but *real* Excellencies. Yet theſe, if We may credit Hiſtory, entered into the Preaching; theſe, if We will examine impartially, are to be found in the Writings of the Puritans.—And a Pearl, you will pleaſe to remember, is a Pearl ſtill, though it ſhould hang in the *Ethiopian*'s Ear.

Ther. *Ethiopian* indeed! You have truly characterized, that *demure* and *gloomy* Generation. I hope, You don't intend to introduce their affected Solemnity and forbidding Reſerve, into your own eaſy and engaging Converſation. Though, for aught I can judge, this would be no more ungraceful, than to patch ſuch aukward and antiquated Notions, on the refined Scheme of Chriſtianity.

Aſp. My dear Friend, You are too ludicrous; and I begin to catch the Infection. Away with your Wit, I beſeech You. Or, if You muſt have it in your Retinue, let it be your Page, not your Privy-Counſellor. Let it wait at the Door, not preſide at our Councils.—We had better return to our firſt Topic. Let us contemplate the Wonders of Creation; and as We admire the Works, learn to adore the MAKER.

Ther. None of your Evaſions, good *Aſpaſio*. You muſt not think to put me off at this Rate. I have wanted an Opportunity to rally you upon this Head; and to argue or laugh You, out of theſe *religious Oddities*.

Aſp. If You will not agree to Terms of Peace; I hope, you will allow ſome Ceſſation of Arms. At leaſt, till I can muſter my Forces, and prepare for the Vindication of my Principles.

Ther.

Ther. No: upon the Spot, and out of Hand, You are required to anſwer for yourſelf, and theſe ſame queer Opinions.—I ſhall ſerve You, as the *Roman* Conſul * ſerved the *procraſtinating* Monarch †. When, demurring about his Reply to the Demands of the Senate, He ſaid, "He would conſider of the "Matter:" the reſolute Ambaſſador drew a Circle round him with his Cane, and inſiſted upon a poſitive Anſwer, before he ſtepped over thoſe Limits.

Aſp. This, however, You muſt give me Leave to obſerve, That the Affair is of a very ſerious Nature. Upon Condition, that you will diſmiſs your Flouriſhes of Humour, and Strokes of Satyre; I will acquaint You with the Reaſons, which have made me a Convert to this Doctrine.—Once, I held it in the utmoſt Contempt; and pitied the Simplicity of (as I then ſtyled them) its *deluded* Admirers. But, I am now become *ſuch* a Fool, that I may be truly wiſe, and ſubſtantially happy. I have ſeen my ruined State; and I bleſs GOD for this ſovereign Reſtorative. It is the Source of my ſtrongeſt Conſolations, and the very Foundation of my eternal Hopes.

Ther. Excuſe me, *Aſpaſio*; if the Vivacity of my Temper, and the ſeemingly uncouth Tenet, kindled me into a more humorous Gaiety, than became the Occaſion. You ſpeak of the Point, with ſo much Serioufneſs, and in ſuch weighty Terms, as check my Levity, and command my Reſpect. Be pleaſed to execute, what You have promiſed; and the moſt *engaged* Attention of my Mind, ſhall atone for the *petulant* Sallies of my Tongue.

* *Popilius Lænas.* † *Antiochus*, King of *Syria*.

Asp. To conceive a Diſlike of any Doctrine, only becauſe Perſons of a particular Denomination, have been active and zealous to promote its Reception; this is hardly conſiſtent with an impartial Enquiry after Truth.

Ther. I grant it, *Aſpaſio.* And I ſhould be aſhamed of my Oppoſition, if it was founded on ſo ſlight a Bottom. But, abſtracted from all Party Conſiderations, I can ſee nothing in this ſuppoſed Article of our Faith, which may recommend it to the unprejudiced Enquirer.—What can be more aukward than the Term, or more *irrational* than the Sentiment?

Asp. The Word *imputed*, when uſed in this Connection, may poſſibly convey a diſagreeable Sound to the Ears of ſome People. Becauſe, they look upon it, as the peculiar Phraſeology of a few *ſuperſtitious Sectariſts*; and reject it, merely on the Foot of that unreaſonable Surmiſe.—But, how can *You* be diſguſted at the Expreſſion, *Theron*; who have ſo often read it, in the moſt approved and judicious Writers? St. *Paul*, who might affirm with relation to his Epiſtles, much more truly than the Painter concerning his Pourtraits, *I write for Eternity* *; ſcruples not to uſe this aukward Language, ſeveral Times in the ſame Chapter †. *Milton*, the Correctneſs

* Alluding to the Painter, who, apologizing for the *ſlow* Procedure and ſcrupulouſly *nice* Touches of his Pencil, ſaid; *Æternitati pingo, I paint for Eternity.* And thoſe Strokes had need be correct, which are intended, not barely to ſolicit, but to command the Admiration, of all ſucceeding Ages.

† See *Rom.* iv. In which ſingle Chapter, ſome Branch of the Word λογιζεσθαι, *to be imputed*, occurs no leſs than ten or eleven Times.

rectneſs of whoſe Taſte, and the Propriety of whoſe Style, no Perſon of Genius will ever queſtion; delights to copy, in various Parts of his incomparable Poem, the Apoſtle's Diction.—Authorized by *ſuch* Precedents, it is ſuperior to Cavil, and warranted beyond all Exception.

As to the Sentiment, I take it to be the *very fundamental* Article of the Goſpel: and I believe, whoever is acquainted with eccleſiaſtical Affairs, will allow, that it was the moſt mortal Arrow in the Heart of *Popery*, and the principal Pillar in the Eſtabliſhment of the *Reformation*.—What ſays our LORD, with regard to the Love of GOD, and the Love of our Neighbour? *On theſe two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.* Much the ſame would I venture to ſay, concerning the Imputation of our Sins to *CHRIST*, and the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs to Us: On *theſe two* Doctrines, hang all the Privileges and the whole Glory of the Goſpel.

Ther. In our laſt Converſation, I muſt own, I ſaw a ſtrong Reſemblance between the Works and the Word of GOD. But I never obſerved any Thing in Nature, that bore the leaſt *Analogy* to imputed Sin, or imputed Righteouſneſs.—To me your two Doctrines ſeem ſtrange, unaccountable, and irrational.

Aſp. That our Sins ſhould be charged upon the only begotten SON of GOD, and that his Righteouſneſs ſhould be imputed to ſinful Worms, is ſtrange, exceeding ſtrange. The Pſalmiſt calls it, *marvelous Loving-Kindneſs* *. The Apoſtle ſtyles it, *Love that paſſeth Knowledge* †. And it has ſome-

* Pſal. xvii. 7. † Eph. iii. 19.

times, I muſt freely confeſs, been almoſt ready to ſtagger my Belief.—However, I have found myſelf relieved in this Perplexity, not only by the Teſtimonies of Scripture, but even from the Contemplation of Nature. Is not all Nature full of ſtrange, unaccountable, and myſterious Effects?

Ther. That Nature is full of ſtrange Effects, is undeniable. Strange are the Experiments of *Electricity*, and the occult Qualities of the *Load-ſtone!* Strange and ſurpriſing are thoſe countleſs Legions of *Effluvia*, which tranſpire from a ſmall odoriferous Body! More ſurpriſing ſtill, are the infinite Myriads of *luminous* Particles, which iſſue from a ſmaller flaming Subſtance*.—There's not a Tree, or a Twig, or a Leaf, but ſurpaſſes the Comprehenſion of all Mankind. Even the minuteſt Atom, is big with Wonders.

Take a nearer Inſtance. This Cow, which comes grazing up to our very Feet. What is her Food? Graſs; nothing but Graſs, the wild Production of the Earth. Give the ſame Materials to the Confectioner, the Cook, or the moſt ſkilful Artiſt in the World. They, with all their Application and Induſtry, will never be able to work them up into a palatable Diſh, or any ſerviceable Subſtance. Whereas this poor Animal, without ſo much as thinking on her Buſineſs, refines and concocts

* Dr. *Nieuwentyt* has computed, That, from a lighted Candle, about the Size of ſix to the Pound, there iſſues, in the Second of a Minute, an Effuſion of Particles, vaſtly more than ten hundred thouſand million Times the Number of Sands, which the whole Globe of the Earth contains.—To call this a *very great* Multitude, would be ſaying little. It nonpluſſes our *Thoughts*, and exceeds the utmoſt Stretch of *Imagination!*

concocts them, in the moſt perfect Manner. The Juices of ſo contemptible an Herb, *compounded* and *ſecreted* in her Body, harden into Bone, and ſoften into Fleſh: grow tough, as a Cord, in the Sinews; and become tender, as a Jelly, in the Fat. They ooze through the Udder, and form a delicious Stream of Milk; they flow along the Veins, in reeking Tides of Blood. Here, they take a crimſon Stain; there, they equal the Lily in Whiteneſs; on the Skin and in the Hair, they transform themſelves into every Variety of Colours.

Aſp. Pray, can you account for *all* theſe extraordinary Tranſmutations? Or, not to taſk your Philoſophy too heavily, can you tell Us, how one —only *one* of them is wrought? How the coarſe and bitter Herbage, chewed and concocted by this dumb Creature, is converted into ſo rich a Dainty as Cream?

Ther. As well may our Sight penetrate the Center of the Globe, as Philoſophy explain this, and many other ſuch Secrets. The Operations of Nature, are nice and delicate, beyond all Parallel, and beyond all Conception. Inſomuch, that the *intelligent* Obſerver, can no where caſt his Eye, or fix his Thoughts, without being aſtoniſhed, tranſported, and even loſt in Admiration.

Aſp. Are not then the Operations of Nature, ſo many Vouchers for the myſterious Truths of Chriſtianity? Since the Procedure of Providence in this viſible Syſtem, is a continued Series of ſtupendous and unſearchable Operations; need We be alarmed, can We reaſonably be offended, if the Scheme of Redemption is equally ſtupendous, is far more amazing? Yet, though *amazing*, I hope it will

not appear, what You was pleaſed to inſinuate, irrational.

Suppoſe, We ſtate the Signification of the *Terms*; and adjuſt the Boundaries of our Subject, before We enter upon a Survey of its Contents?

Ther. Such a Caution would have prevented, at leaſt have ſhortened, many a vehement and tedious Controverſy —You ſee, on yonder Heath, the Preparations for an approaching Race. There ſtand the *Poſts*, which are to mark out the Limits of the Courſe. Without this previous reſtrictive Care, how irregular would be the Excurſions of the contending Steeds! How *difficult*, rather how *impoſſible*, to declare the Conqueror, and award the Prize!— A clear Definition of Terms, ſeems equally neceſſary for candid Diſputants. Without it, they may wrangle for Ages, yet never come to a Determination.

Asp. We were lately conſidering the tranſcendent Excellency of the Scriptures. Here We have a moſt inviting and capital Exemplification of the Subject.—The Light of Nature might teach Us ſomewhat, relating to the Juſtification of Man in a State of Innocence. But it knows nothing of the Method, whereby *fallen* and guilty Man, may be juſtified in the Sight of GOD. This is a Secret, hid from all the Reſearches of Reaſon, and from all the Sages of Antiquity To the Prophets and Apoſtles alone, We owe the Diſcovery of this Mine —this rich and inexhauſtible Mine, of holy Conſolation and heavenly Treaſure.

Ther. I wait for a Specimen of your Treaſure, or a Definition of your favourite Point.

Aſp.

Asp. Justification is an Act of GOD Almighty's Grace; whereby He acquits Sinners from their Guilt, and accounts them righteous*; for the Sake of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, wrought out for them, and imputed to them.

Ther. Two of your Terms want some farther Explanation. What do You understand by *CHRIST*'s *Righteousness*, and what is the Meaning of *imputed?*

Asp. By *CHRIST*'s Righteousness I understand, the Whole of his *active* and *passive* Obedience; springing from the perfect Holiness of his Heart; continued through every Stage of his Life; and extending to the very last Pang of his Death.—By the Word *imputed* I would signify, That this Righteousness, though performed by our LORD, is placed to our Account; is reckoned or adjudged by GOD as *our own*. Insomuch, that We may plead it, and rely on it, for the Pardon of our Sins; for the Communication of Grace; and for the Enjoyment of Life eternal.—Shall I illustrate my Meaning by a well-attested Fact?

Ther. Nothing gives Us so easy a Conception of any difficult Point, as this Method of explaining, by *parallel* Facts, or proper Similitudes.

Asp. I don't say the Case is parallel. I only produce it, to aid our Conceptions.—*Onesimus*, You know, was *Philemon*'s Slave†. He had perfidiously deserted his Master's Service, and still more perfidiously stole his Goods. The Fugitive, in his guilty

* Should any Reader object to the Definition; apprehending, that Justification implies no more, than *the Pardon of Sins*; I would desire Him to suspend his Judgment, till He has perused *Dialogue* X. where this Point is more circumstantially considered.

† See the Epistle to *Philemon*.

Rambles, providentially meets with St. *Paul*. He is charmed and captivated with that gracious Gospel, which proclaims Mercy even for the vileſt of Sinners. He becomes a ſincere Convert to the Religion of *JESUS*, and is received into the ſpiritual Patronage of the Apoſtle. Who, being informed of his diſhoneſt Conduct, and obnoxious State, undertakes to bring about a Reconciliation, with his offended Maſter: diſpatches Him, for this Purpoſe, with a Letter to *Philemon*: and, amongſt other Perſuaſives, writes thus in the poor Criminal's Behalf; *If He hath wronged Thee, or oweth Thee aught, put that on mine Account. I* Paul *have written it with mine own Hand; I will repay it.*

That, which the zealous Preacher of Chriſtianity *offered*, the adored AUTHOR of Chriſtianity *executed*.—We had revolted from the LORD of all Lords, and broke his holy Commandments. The SON of GOD, infinitely compaſſionate, vouchſafes to become our Mediator. That nothing might be wanting, to render his Mediation ſucceſsful, He places Himſelf in our Stead. The Puniſhment, which *We* deſerved, *He* endures. The Obedience, which *We* owed, *He* fulfils.—Both which, being imputed to Us, and accepted for Us, are the Foundation of our Pardon, are the proeuring Cauſe of our Juſtification.

Ther. Is this the exact Signification of the original Word, which We tranſlate *imputed?*

Aſp. In the Book of *Numbers*, We meet with this Phraſe; and in ſuch a Connection, as clears up its Meaning.—JEHOVAH enacts a Decree concerning the *Levites*; who had no Vintages to gather, nor any Harveſts to reap; only the Tythes

of

of both, to receive. The tenth Part of theſe their Tythes, He directs them to preſent, in the Form of a Heave-offering: adding, *And this your Heave-offering ſhall be* reckoned * unto *You, as though it were the Corn of the Threſhing-floor, and as the Fulneſs of the Wine-preſs:* as ſatisfactory to me, and as beneficial to You, as if it was the Tenth of your own Labours, and the Tythe of your own Increaſe.—So, the expiatory Sufferings, which *CHRIST* endured; the complete Obedience, which He performed; are *reckoned to* true Believers. *As though* the former were ſuſtained in their own Perſons, and the latter fulfilled in their own Lives. Are altogether *as effectual*, for obtaining their Salvation, as if they were their own perſonal Qualifications.

Ther.

* *Numb.* xviii. 27. נחשב exactly anſwers to St. *Paul's* ελογισθη, *Rom.* iv. 9.—The ſame Phraſe is uſed, and the ſame Doctrine taught, *Lev.* xvii. 3, 4. *What Man ſoever there be of the Houſe of Iſrael that killeth an Ox, or Lamb, or Goat in the Camp,* by way of Sacrifice, or for the Purpoſe of Atonement; *and bringeth it not unto the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, to offer unto the LORD an Offering before the Tabernacle,* the grand Type of the Body of *CHRIST*; *Blood ſhall be* imputed *to that Man*; *He hath ſhed Blood*; *and that Man ſhall be cut off from among his People.*—Here was no Murder committed by the Offender, yet the Crime of Murder is charged; or, as the Scripture ſpeaks, *Blood is imputed to Him.* Leſt Any ſhould miſtake the Meaning of this Expreſſion, or not underſtand it in its due Latitude, the Divine LAW-GIVER is his own Interpreter: *He hath* in the Eye of my Juſtice *ſhed Blood:* He ſhall paſs for a Murderer, and be puniſhed as a Murderer: He ſhall *be cut off from among his People.*—Thus alſo ſaith the eternal JUDGE concerning the Believers in *CHRIST*; "The *Righteouſneſs* of my SON *is im-*
"*puted* to them; *they are* in the Eye of my Juſtice *righ-*
"*teous:* they ſhall be dealt with, as righteous Perſons;
"made Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven."

Ther. The Imputation mentioned in your Paſſage, is the Imputation of ſomething done by the *Levites* themſelves, not of ſomething done by *Another*. This, I apprehend, is the true Import of the Word, when it occurs affirmatively in Scripture.

Aſp. This is *always* the Import—ſhould have been ſaid, in order to make the Objection forcible. But You could not ſo ſoon forget the Inſtance, juſt now alledged.

St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of the Crimes, which *Oneſimus* had committed; and of the Injuries, which *Philemon* had ſuſtained; ſays, "Charge them all on "me. The Original is, *impute* * them all to me. "The Meaning is, I will be reſponſible for all. "As much, as if the whole Guilt had been of my "own contracting †."—Here is ſuppoſed, not the Imputation of ſomething done by the Apoſtle *Himſelf*, but of *Another*'s criminal Behaviour.

What is written in the Law, and what is written in the Goſpel? In both theſe Places, How readeſt Thou?—In the Goſpel, I read; That *Righteouſneſs is imputed without Works* ‡. This utterly excludes every Thing performed, or acquired, by the Party Himſelf.—Beſides; We are aſſured, that GOD

* Εμοι ελλογει, the very Words uſed by the Apoſtle, when ſtating the Method of our Juſtification.

† Thus We may ſuppoſe our LORD ſpeaking; "Theſe poor Sinners have wronged Thee, O FA-"THER, by their Unrighteouſneſs and Ungodlineſs. "They owe Thee an inconceivably vaſt Sum. A Debt "of conſummate Obedience, and complete ſatisfaction. "*Put it all on my Account. I* JESUS *have written it* "*with my own Hand: I will repay it.* Now I give my "Bond; and, in the Fulneſs of Time, *Lo! I come, to* "fulfil my Engagement."

‡ Rom. iv. 6.

GOD *juſtifies the Ungodly* *; thoſe, who have nothing of their own, but abominable Iniquities. To thoſe, therefore, ſomething elſe muſt neceſſarily be imputed, beſides their own perſonal Deeds.

Under the Law, *Aaron* is commanded to *put the Iniquities* of *Iſrael* upon the Scape-Goat †.—The ſame Sentiment is reinculcated, when the Goat is ſaid to *bear the Iniquities* of the People ‡. This was plainly an Imputation; yet, could not poſſibly be the Imputation of any Thing done by the devoted Animal ‖.—The *Effects* which took place upon the Execution of this Ordinance, indicate a Tranſlation of Guilt. For, the Congregation was cleanſed, but the Goat polluted. The Congregation *ſo cleanſed*, that their Iniquities were conveyed away, and to be found no more. The Goat *ſo polluted*, that it communicated Defilement to the Man, who conducted it into "the Land not inhabited."—All this was GOD's own Appointment; and deſigned, like the whole Syſtem of *Moſaic* Ceremonies,

* Rom. iv. 5. † Lev. xv. 21. ‡ Lev. xvi. 22.

‖ The Words of the ſacred Ordinance are very emphatical. *Aaron ſhall lay both his Hands upon the Head of the live Goat, and confeſs over Him all the Iniquities of the Children of Iſrael, and all their Tranſgreſſions in all their Sins, putting them upon the Head of the Goat, and ſhall ſend Him away by the Hand of a fit Man into the Wilderneſs. And the Goat ſhall bear upon Him all their Iniquities, unto a Land not inhabited.*—Whatever Senſe the Men of Learning and Refinement may *force* upon theſe Words, *Aaron ſhall put all their Tranſgreſſions upon the Head of the Goat; The Goat ſhall bear upon Him all their Iniquities*; I think the common People of *Iſrael* could *find* no other Meaning in them, than ſuch as denoted a transferring of Guilt, from the Congregation to their Victim. And this is Imputation.

nies, to inſtruct his Church in the Knowledge of the great MEDIATOR. In the Knowledge of that wonderful Method, whereby we have Redemption from our Sins, and Righteouſneſs unto Life.

Ther. If this is your Meaning, *Aſpaſio*; I am apt to think, it will be a difficult Matter to make me a Proſelyte. I muſt be content to paſs for one of the ſtiff-necked Generation. Since, I can ſee neither Wiſdom nor Equity, in aſcribing to a Perſon, what He has not; or imputing to Him, what He does not.

Aſp. It was not *Aſpaſio*, but his Friend, who ſet out with a View of making Proſelytes. If I can maintain my Ground, and vindicate my own Belief, it will be no inconſiderable Acquiſition.—However, I ſhall not deſpair of ſeeing the Partner of my Heart, become a Sharer of my Faith. When We are convinced of our *numberleſs* Sins; when We feel the *Depravity* of our Nature; and begin to diſcern the *inconceivable* Sanctity of our JUDGE; THEN, perhaps, this exploded Article may be found worthy of Acceptance—its Conſtitution admired, as the Wiſdom of GOD—and its Privilege coveted, as the Conſolation of our Souls.

Ther. I ſhall wave at preſent, an Examination of each Particular; and only make ſome *remote* Obſervations. Which ſeem, nevertheleſs, pretty nearly to affect your Scheme.—Some Perſons, I dare be poſitive, have not ſo much as heard of your Terms; many and more have not the leaſt Acquaintance with your Doctrine. Will you ſtrike off all theſe from

from the Liſt of Chriſtians? Will you condemn all theſe as deſperate Infidels?

Aſp. Not heard of them!—In a Proteſtant Nation! Where the Goſpel is publicly preached, and the Bible in every One's Hand!—This, if true, is much to be lamented.

In Anſwer to your Queſtion—It is not my Cuſtom, much leſs is it my Prerogative, to *condemn* Others. Has GOD committed all Judgment unto me? That I ſhould preſume to anticipate the deciſive Sentence, or launch the Thunderbolts of eternal Vengeance?—Neither do I affirm the Condition of ſuch Perſons to be deſperate. There may be Thoſe, who have no *explicit* Knowledge of the Doctrine; who are even *prejudiced* againſt the Expreſſions; yet live under the Belief of the Truth, and in the Exerciſe of the Duty.—"They are never "diverted, by the Splendor of any Thing that is "great, or by the Conceit of any Thing that is "good in them, from looking upon themſelves as "*ſinful* Duſt and Aſhes." Their whole Dependence is upon that *JUST ONE*, who expired on the Croſs, and whom the Heavens have received. They ſeek the ſanctifying SPIRIT, in conſequence of their SAVIOUR's Death; and give all Diligence, to *add to their Faith Virtue* *.

Ther. If People may be ſafe, and their eternal Intereſts ſecure, without any Knowledge of theſe Particularities; why ſhould you offer to puzzle their Heads, about a few unneceſſary *ſcholaſtic* Terms?

Aſp. Scriptural Terms, You ſhould have ſaid, *Theron.*—However, We are not very ſolicitous, as to

* 2 Pet. i. 5.

to the Credit, or the Uſe, of any particular Set of Phraſes. Only let Men be humbled, as *convicted Criminals*, at the REDEEMER's Feet: let them rely, as *devoted Penſioners*, on his precious Merits: and they are undoubtedly in the Way to a bliſsful Immortality.—Yet, will their Way be leſs clear, their Steps more embarraſſed, by not diſtinctly underſtanding the benign and conſolatory Doctrine, of *free Juſtification through the Righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST*. A proper Information, as to this important Point, would ſhed Light upon their Paths, and encourage them in their Journey; would further their Progreſs in Holineſs, and increaſe their Joy in the LORD.

Theo. The Followers of your Opinion, I have obſerved, are perpetually dwelling upon this *one favourite* Topic; to the Excluſion of that grand and truly eſſential Part of Chriſtianity, Sanctification.

Aſp. If you have ever taken notice of ſuch a Conduct, You are unqueſtionably right, in with-holding your Approbation. It is a manifeſt Incongruity, and deſerves your Cenſure. But, aſſure Yourſelf, it proceeds from a Miſapprehenſion in the Perſons, and has no Connection with the Nature of the Doctrine.

I am far, very far from reducing the *various* Parts of Chriſtianity, (which, when connected, make up ſo well-proportioned a Syſtem) to this *ſingle*, however diſtinguiſhed Branch. Sanctification is equally neceſſary, both to our preſent Peace, and to our final Felicity*. Indeed, they are as reciprocally neceſſary,

* Not to *obtain* our Peace and Felicity. This is done ſolely and completely by *JESUS CHRIST*. But as a neceſſary and eminent *Ingredient* in both.

neceſſary, for the Purpoſes of intellectual and eternal Happineſs; as the *Heart* and the *Lungs* are, to the Subſiſtence of the animal Oeconomy. The former muſt tranſmit, the latter muſt refine, the vital Fluid; or elſe, Diſeaſe will take place, and Death will enſue.—My Intention is, that thoſe fundamental Truths of the Goſpel, like theſe Maſter-Organs in the Body, may have each its proper Office aſſigned; each concur to ſupport the better Health, and to promote the ſpiritual Growth of the Chriſtian.

Ther. Other of your zealous Folks I have known, who are all for the *ſanctifying* Influence of the SPIRIT; and reckon this Affiance on the SAVIOUR's Merits, among the beggarly Elements of Religion. They ſcarce ever mention what *CHRIST* has done *for Us*; but inſiſt wholly upon, What He does *in Us*.—When the religious People are ſo divided among themſelves *, how can a Stranger act? Which Opinion ſhall He prefer?

Aſp. Let Him not prefer, but aſſociate. Diſcard neither, but chooſe both.—If the All-gracious REDEEMER has poured out his Blood on the Croſs, that my Guilt may be expiated; and preſents

* *Theron*'s Enquiry concerning theſe *two* Particulars, is ſometimes made an Objection againſt *all* Religion.—Have the Gentlemen, who adopt this Objection, never ſeen the Naturaliſts divided in their Judgment; with relation to the Deſign and Uſe of ſeveral Appearances in the material, the vegetable, the animal Creation? While One decries as a *Nuiſance*, what another admires as a *Beauty*.—Yet no One, I believe, ever took it into his Head, from ſuch a Diverſity of Opinions, to *doubt* whether the Frame of Nature is a juſt, a regular, and a finiſhed Syſtem; or to *deny*, That Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, ſupport, direct, and pervade the Whole.

ſents his Interceſſion in Heaven, that I may be endued with the SPIRIT:—If He will be the *meritorious Cauſe* of my Juſtification, and the *operative Principle* of my Sanctification:—Why ſhould I ſcruple to receive Him, in either, in both Capacities? Who would lop off the Right-hand, in order to impart the higher Dignity, or the greater Importance to the Left? I would be no Partialiſt in Chriſtianity: neither diminiſh her Dowry, nor mutilate her Privileges.

Ther. You ſeem, if not to mutilate, yet to *ſplit* the Merits of *CHRIST*, and parcel out the Efficacy of his mediatorial Undertaking. Aſcribing ſo much to his active, and ſo much to his paſſive Righteouſneſs; Pardon to *this*, and Life to *that*.

Aſp. Some, perhaps, may be pleaſed with this Way of ſtating the Matter. But, it is a Method, which I neither attempt to defend, nor wiſh to imitate.—To *diſtinguiſh* between the active and paſſive Righteouſneſs, I think, is not amiſs. Becauſe, this ſets the Fulneſs of our LORD's Merit in the cleareſt Light; and gives the completeſt Honour to GOD's holy Law.—But to *divide* them into detached Portions, independent on each other, ſeems to be fanciful, rather than judicious. For, had either Part of the mediatorial Obedience been wanting; I apprehend, neither Pardon, nor Acceptance, nor any ſpiritual Bleſſing, could have been vouchſafed to fallen Man.

The two *Parts* are inſeparable; making, in their Connection, a neceſſary and noble *Whole*, for the Accompliſhment of our Salvation. Juſt as the Light and the Heat of yonder Sun, unite their Operation; to produce this delightful Day, and

this

this fruitful Weather.—However, therefore, I may happen to expreſs myſelf, I never conſider the active or the paſſive Righteouſneſs, in the *excluſive* Senſe; but would always have them underſtood, as a grand and glorious Aggregate. Looking upon our SAVIOUR's univerſal Obedience, which commenced at his Incarnation; was carried on through his Life; and terminated in his Death;—looking upon all this, in its *collective* Form, as the Object of my Faith, and the Foundation of my Hopes *.

Ther. I think, You lay too much Streſs upon this controverted, and perhaps *merely ſpeculative* Point.

Aſp. Merely ſpeculative! Say not thus, my dear Friend.—"How I may be juſtified before GOD, "my Maker, my Governor, and my Judge?" Is, of all Enquiries, the moſt *intereſting* and *important*. It is the main Hinge, on which every Inſtance of practical Religion turns †. True Comfort, willing Obe-

* In this Opinion, *Aſpaſio* has *Milton*'s Archangel for his Precedent. *Michael* ſpeaking of *his* LORD and *our* LORD, ſays;

The Law of GOD exact he ſhall fulfil,
Both by Obedience and by Love, though Love
Alone fulfil the Law; thy Puniſhment
He ſhall endure, *by coming in the Fleſh*
To a reproachful Life and curſed Death;
Proclaiming Life *to all who ſhall believe*
In his Redemption. B. XII. 402:

According to the Tenour of theſe very valuable Lines, our LORD's fulfilling the Law, and enduring the Puniſhment, are the *concurring* Cauſes, or the one *compound* Cauſe, of Life and Redemption to Sinners.

† *Diffundit ſe*, ſays the judicious *Witſius*, *Juſtificationis, Doctrina per totum Theologiæ Corpus; & prout Fundamenta*

Obedience, holy Communion with the Divine MAJESTY, *all* depend upon this capital Point.

Far from being a merely ſpeculative Point, it aſcribes the moſt undivided Glory to the ever-bleſſed GOD, and his free Grace.—It adminiſters the moſt ſerene and *ſubſtantial* Satisfactions to frail, but believing Man.—It cheriſhes, with the moſt kindly Influence, that pure and undefiled Religion, which has its Seat in the Heart; has its Birth from Love; and is a real Antepaſt, both of the Buſineſs and the Bliſs of Saints in Light.

In ſhort; Juſtification through the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*, is an Article of Religion, whoſe Benefits are (to uſe a charming Simile ſuggeſted by this rural Proſpect) numerous *as the Bud of the Field**.—Can We, then, lay too much Streſs upon a Doctrine, ſo greatly momentous; upon a Privilege, ſo extenſively beneficial?

Ther. When all this is *proved*, then for my Reply, *Aſpaſio*. Nay, then You ſhall have more than a Reply; I promiſe You my cordial Aſſent.

Aſp. And if all this be incapable of Proof, I aſſure You, *Theron*, I will not ſolicit *your* Aſſent. Nay more, I will revoke and renounce *my own*.

Ther. At preſent, I believe, We muſt go in, and prepare for our Viſitants. Some other Interview may

hic, vel bene, vel male, jacta ſunt, eo univerſum Ædificium vel ſolidius auguſtiusque aſcendit, vel male ſtatuminatum fœdam minitatur Ruinam. De Œcon.

" The Article of free Juſtification, *ſays the zealous* " Luther, is the chiefeſt Article of all Chriſtian Doctrine. " The Majeſty and Utility whereof, whoſo rightly eſ- " teemeth, to Him all other Things ſhall ſeem but vile, " and nothing worth." *Comment. on Galat.*

* Ezek. xvi. 7.

may afford Us Leiſure, to canvaſs this Queſtion more minutely.

Aſp. Though I have never much Inclination, even when there is the moſt Leiſure, for Controverſy; yet, if You inſiſt upon it, I ſhall not abſolutely refuſe to engage in a Debate with my *Theron*. Becauſe, He will come to the amicable Rencounter, without bringing *angry Paſſions* for his Second.—My Reaſons will be impartially weighed, not artfully eluded, much leſs anſwered with Invective.—If ſome inadvertent Expreſſion ſhould drop from my Lips, He will not rigorouſly proſecute the Slip; nor aggravate an ungarded Sentence into the Crime of Hereſy —Candour will form his Judgment, and Good-nature dictate his Expreſſions.

Ther. I thank You, my dear *Aſpaſio*, for your genteel Admonition. What *I am*, in the Language of Complaiſance, means, What I *ſhould be*.—Well: I will endeavour to take your Hint, and check this my Impetuoſity of Spirit. I have admired, O! that I could imitate, the beautiful Example of St. *Paul*. When *Feſtus*, forgetting the Dignity of the Governor, and the Politeneſs of the Gentleman, uttered that indecent Reflection; *Paul, thou art beſide thyſelf: much Learning doth make Thee mad.* Did the great Preacher of Chriſtianity kindle into Reſentment?—The Charge was unjuſt and abuſive. But the Apoſtle, with a perfect Command of Himſelf, returned the ſofteſt, yet the moſt ſpirited Anſwer imaginable. *I am not mad, moſt noble* Feſtus; *but ſpeak the Words of Truth and Soberneſs* *.—Inexpreſſibly

* See *Acts* xxvi. Where We have an Apology, the moſt delicate and maſterly, perhaps, that ever was made;

preſſibly graceful was this calm and obliging Reply. Though ſhort, infinitely more convincing than a whole Torrent of bitter or recriminating Words. It diſarmed the Judge of his riſing Diſpleaſure; it conciliated the Favour of his royal Aſſeſſor; and brought Honour to the Chriſtian Cauſe.

This amiable Self-Regimen, and Moderation of Temper, I ſhall be ſure to ſee exemplified in my Friend's Converſation; however, I may fail of it myſelf, or be Proof againſt all his Arguments.

Aſp. Ah! *Theron*, We want no Monitor, to remind Us of our ſuppoſed Excellencies. And if You begin with your Compliments, it is Time to put an end to our Diſcourſe.

Only let me juſt obſerve, That *divine Truths* cannot be properly diſcerned, but by the enlightening Influences of the *Divine SPIRIT*. We muſt addreſs Ourſelves to this Enquiry, not only with unprejudiced Minds, but likewiſe with praying Hearts, We muſt bring to this Diſpute, not barely the Quiver of Logic, but that *Unction from the HOLY ONE*,

eminent for *fine* Addreſs, *clear* Reaſoning, and *important* Truth. Which, notwithſtanding all theſe very ſuperior Recommendations, is deemed *Madneſs:* and that, by a Nobleman from *Rome*; the Seat of Science, and Fountain-head of polite Literature.—An Evidence this, no leſs demonſtrative than deplorable, of the Apoſtle's Aſſertion; *The natural Man*, however ingenious or accompliſhed, *receiveth not the Things of the SPIRIT of GOD. Nay, they are Fooliſhneſs unto Him.* The *Roman* Virtue, and the *Athenian* Philoſophy; the ſelf-admiring Phariſee, and the free-thinking Sadducee; all concur to pour Contempt upon that Perſon and that Righteouſneſs, which are the one adequate Object of the divine Delight. Therefore our LORD moſt juſtly declared; *Bleſſed is He, whoſoever ſhall not be offended in me.*

ONE, which may teach Us all Things *.—Let Us then adopt the Poet's Aſpiration;

——————— *Thou celeſtial Light,*
Shine inward, and the Mind through all her Powers
Irradiate; there plant Eyes; all Miſt from thence
Purge and diſperſe!

MILTON, B. III. 51.

* 1 John ii. 20, 27.

DIALOGUE III.

THERON.

WE are now, *Aſpaſio*, about two Miles diſtant from my Houſe. The Horſe-Road lies through a narrow duſty Lane. The Foot-Path leads along a ſpacious pleaſant *Meadow*. Suppoſe, We deliver our Horſes to the Servant, and walk the Remainder of the Way?

Aſp. You could not make a Propoſal, more agreeable to my Inclination. Eſpecially, as the Air is become cool, and the Walk is ſo inviting.

What a magnificent and charming Scene?—Hills, on either Side, gently riſing, and widely ſpreading. Their Summits, crowned with ſcattered Villages, and cluſtering Trees. Their Slopes, divided into a beauteous Chequer-work; conſiſting partly of Tillage, with its waving Crops; partly of Paſturage, with its grazing Herds.—Before Us, the Trefoil, the Clover, and a Variety of graſſy Plants, differently bladed, and differently branched, weave themſelves into a *Carpet* of living Green. Can any of the Manufactures formed in the Looms, or extended in the Palaces of *Perſia*, vie with the Cover-

ing of this ample Area? Vie with it, in Grandeur of Size, or Delicacy of Decoration?

What a Profuſion of the gayeſt Flowers, fringing the Banks, and embroidering the Plain!—Nothing can be brighter, than the Luſtre of thoſe ſilver *Daiſies*; nothing deeper, than the Tinge of thoſe golden *Crowfoots*. Yet, both ſeem to acquire additional Livelineſs, by ſucceeding to the Deformity of Winter, and by flouriſhing amidſt the freſheſt Verdure.

Ther. Nature is truly in *her Prime*.—The vegetable Tribes are putting on their richeſt Attire. Thoſe Cheſnuts, on our Right-hand, begin to rear their flowering Pyramids; thoſe Willows, on our left, are tipt with Taſſels of Grey; while yonder Poplars, which overlook the River, and ſeem to command the Meadows, are pointed with Rolls of Silver.

The Hawthorn, in every *Hedge*, is partly turgid with ſilken Gems, partly diffuſed into a milk white Bloom. Not a ſtraggling Furze, nor a ſolitary Thicket on the *Heath*, but wears a rural Noſegay. Even amidſt that neglected *Dike*, the Arum * riſes in humble State; moſt curiouſly ſhrouded in her leafy Tabernacle, and ſurrounded with luxuriant Families, each diſtinguiſhed by a peculiar Livery

* *Arum*—a wild Herb, which unfolds but one Leaf; formed after a very ſingular Pattern; bearing ſome Reſemblance to the Hare's Ear. It is really one of the pretticſt Fancies in Nature's Wardrobe. So much admired by the Country People, that they have dignified it with the Appellation of *Lords and Ladies*. Becauſe it looks, I ſuppoſe, ſomewhat like a Perſon of Quality, ſitting, with an Air of Eaſe and Dignity, in his open Sedan.

of Green. Look wherever We will, all is a delightful Diſplay of preſent Fertility, and a joyous Pledge of future Plenty.—Now we experience what the royal Poet, in very delicate Imagery, deſcribes: *The Winter is paſt; the Rain is over and gone. The Flowers appear on the Earth; the Time of the Singing of Birds is come; and the Voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land. The Fig-Tree putteth forth her green Figs; and the Vine with the tender Grapes give a good Smell* *.

Aſp. Your Quotation and the Scene remind me of a Remark, which ſhould have taken place in our laſt Night's Diſcourſe. When we were enumerating the Excellencies of the ſacred Writings, methinks, we might have added;—Are you fond of *Paſtoral*, in all its flowery Graces, and blooming Honours? Never have ye ſeen ſuch exquiſite Touches of rural Painting, or ſuch ſweet Images of endeared Affection, as in the *Song of Songs which is Solomon*'s. All the brilliant and amiable Appearances in Nature are employed, to delineate the Tenderneſs of *his* Heart, who is Love itſelf—to pourtray the Beauty of *his* Perſon, who is *The chiefeſt among ten thouſand*—and deſcribe the Happineſs of *thoſe* Souls, whoſe *Fellowſhip is with the FATHER, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST* †.

See! *Theron*, what the chearing Warmth, and the genial Showers, of Spring have done! The rough Tree ſoftens into Verdure. The ragged Thorn is robed with Beauty. Even the unculti-
vated Lanes teem with Herbage. *Such* a Change, ſo pleaſing and ſo ennobling, the Goſpel of *CHRIST* introduces into the Soul.—Not a Day, ſcarce

* Cant. ii. 11, 12, 13. † 1 John 1. 3.

ſcarce an Hour paſſes, but this Seaſon of univerſal Fecundity produces ſomething *new*; ſomething that improves the Aſpect, and increaſes the Riches of Nature. And is there any State or any Circumſtance of Life, in which the Faith of *CHRIST* does not exert a ſimilar Efficacy? Does not purify the Heart, and bring forth Fruit unto GOD?

This is ſuppoſed to be the ſpiritual Meaning of that fine deſcriptive Picture *, which You have borrowed

* A fine Picture indeed! Moſt judiciouſly planned; moſt ſtrongly contraſted; and executed in the moſt maſterly Manner. As it is produced to View, I will beg Leave to point out ſome of the highly-finiſhed Strokes.

The Winter is paſt, with all its howling Winds, and piercing Froſts —*The Rains are over*, which deluged the Meadows; *and* the Clouds are *gone*, which darkened the Skies.—All is Serenity and Splendour above. While all is Gaiety and Beauty below.

Flowers, of every graceful Form, and every gloſſy Stain, *appear on the Earth*. Enamelling the Hills and Plains; embroidering the Robe of Spring; and diffuſing Smiles over all the Face of Nature.

The Time of Singing of Birds is come. The Woodland Choirs awake. Every green Bough, and every blooming Spray, reſounds with Harmony. From all Quarters, the Ear is charmed with artleſs Strains; which are, at once, the Perfection of Muſic, and the very Language of Joy.

The Vine, with the tender Grapes, give a good Smell. In the Vineyard, the ſi ken Gems burſt, and the infant Cluſters appear. They breathe Balm on the gentle Gales, and perfume the ſoft delicious Air. In every Garden and every Grove, the flowery Caſkets are unlocked. They diffuſe far and near theſe exquiſite Odours, which regale the Smell, and "rejoice the "Heart."

The Fig-Tree putteth forth her green Figs; forms the embryo Fruit; and excites the agreeable Idea of approaching Plenty. Adding to all the Entertainments of the

borrowed from the *Canticles*. It diſplays the *benign Agency* of Grace and its Doctrines; eſpecially, of our LORD's Satisfaction for Sin, and of his Righteouſneſs imputed to Sinners. The Bleſſings operate, with much the ſame favourable and happy Energy, both on our Morals and our Comforts; as the *ſweet Influences* of the vernal Sun operate, on the ſprouting Herbs, and opening Flowers.

Ther. If ſuch were the Effects of your Doctrine, it would ſtand the fairer Chance for general Acceptation.—But there are ſeveral weighty Scruples to be removed, before Perſons of a liberal and enlarged Way of Thinking, can acquieſce in your Opinion. Who, for Inſtance, can perſuade Himſelf, that what You call *The Satisfaction of CHRIST*, is conſiſtent with the Dictates of Reaſon, or with the Perfections of the DEITY?

Aſp. Let Gentlemen be candid in their Enquiries, and *truly* liberal in their Way of Thinking; then, I flatter myſelf, theſe Scruples may be removed, without much Difficulty.

GOD, the Almighty Creator, and ſupreme Governor of the World, having made Man, gave Him a Law; with a *Penalty* annexed, in caſe of Diſobedience.—This ſacred Law our Fore-father *Adam* preſumptuouſly broke; and We, his Poſterity, were *involved* in his Guilt. Or, ſhould that Point be con-

the Eye and the Ear, the more pleaſing, becauſe the more important, Supplies of Life and Health.

Here then the moſt diſtinguiſhing and delicate Circumſtances are ſelected. Whatever moſt eminently and moſt amiably characteriſes the Seaſon. All is heightened, by a Retroſpect on Winter and its Horrours, from which we are delivered. All is endeared, by a Proſpect of autumnal Delights, for which Preparation is making.

controverted, We have undeniably made, by many perſonal Tranſgreſſions, his Apoſtacy *our own*.—Inſomuch, that all have ſinned; have forfeited their Happineſs, and are become obnoxious to Puniſhment.

Man being thus ruined, none could recover Him, except his injured MAKER. But ſhall He be recovered, ſhall He be reſtored, without ſuffering the Puniſhment, *due* to his Crime, and *threatened* by his CREATOR?—What then will become of the *Juſtice* of the Divine LAWGIVER? And how ſhall the *Honour* of his Holy Law be maintained? At this rate, who would reverence its Authority, or fear to violate its Precepts?—Sinners might be emboldened to multiply their Tranſgreſſions; and tempted to think, that the GOD of immaculate Holineſs, the GOD of unchangeable Veracity, is *altogether ſuch an One as themſelves* *.

Does it not appear needful, that *ſome* Expedient be deviſed, in order to prevent theſe diſhonourable and horrid Conſequences?

Ther. Proceed to inform Us, what the Expedient is.

Aſp. To aſcertain the Dignity of the ſupreme Adminiſtration, yet reſcue Mankind from utter Deſtruction, this admirable Purpoſe was formed, and in the Fulneſs of Time executed. The ſecond Perſon of the ever-bleſſed TRINITY unites the human Nature to the Divine; *ſubmits* Himſelf to the

* This was actually the Caſe, as We are informed by the SEARCHER of Hearts, when, on a particular Occaſion, Puniſhment was only *retarded*. How much more would ſuch impious Opinions have prevailed, if, on this grand Act of Diſobedience, Puniſhment had been intirely *forborne?* Pſal. l. 21.

the Obligations of his People; and becomes *reſponſible* for all their Guilt. In this Capacity, He performs a perfect Obedience, and undergoes the Sentence of Death: makes a full Expiation of their Sins, and eſtabliſhes their Title to Life.—By which Means, the Law is ſatisfied; Juſtice is magnified; and the richeſt Grace exerciſed. Man enjoys a great Salvation, not to the Diſcredit of *any*, but to the unſpeakable Glory of *all*, the divine Attributes.

This is what We mean by *CHRIST*'s Satisfaction. And this, I ſhould imagine, wants no Recommendation to our *unprejudiced Reaſon*; as, I am ſure, it is moſt delightfully accommodated to our *diſtreſſed Condition*.—It is alſo confirmed by many expreſs Paſſages of Scripture, and illuſtrated by a Variety of very ſignificant Images.

Ther. Pray, let me be favoured with ſome of your ſcriptural Images.—After which, We may enquire, whether your Doctrine will ſtand the Teſt of Reaſon.

Aſp. What is your Notion of a *Ranſom?*

Ther. To ranſom, is to redeem any One from Captivity or Miſery, by Purchaſe, by Exchange, or ſome other valuable Conſideration.

Aſp. When *Priam* ranſomed the dead Body of *Hector* from the victorious *Achilles*, how was it done?

Ther. By paying a *Price**.—Thus *Fabius* recovered the Captives, which were taken by *Hannibal*. He tranſmitted the Sum required, and they were diſcharged from their Confinement.

Aſp.

* ——————— ϕερων τ' απερεισι' αποινα,
an *infinitely* rich Price. *Hyperbolical* this, as applied by *Homer*: *ſtrictly true*, when referred to *CHRIST*.

Aſp. Such is the Redemption procured for Sinners by our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Of ſuch a Nature, (though incomparably more grand and auguſt in all its Circumſtances) and expreſſed by the very ſame Word *. *The Son of Man came, not to be miniſtered unto, but to miniſter; and to give his Life a Ranſom for Many.*

CHRIST alſo paid a Price—a real Price—a moſt ſatisfactory Price. In Conſideration of which, our Freedom from Death, from Hell, from every penal Evil is granted. *Ye are redeemed* †, ſays the Apoſtle, *not with corruptible Things, Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of CHRIST.*—Let me add one Text more; which, in the ſame Style of commutative Juſtice, aſſerts the ſame Truth. *CHRIST has redeemed Us* ‡, not by way of Entreaty,

* Λυτρον απολυτροω, are uſed in this *preciſe* Signification, by the moſt approved Authors of *Greece*.—Απιπεμψε τα λυτρα τω Αννιβα, κ) τυς αιχμαλωτυς απελαβε, ſays *Plutarch*. Ο υι@· τυ ανθρωπυ ηλθε δυναι την ψυχην αυτυ λυτρον αν'α πολλων, ſays our bleſſed SAVIOUR, *Matt.* xx. 28 — Απελυτρωσε ταλαντιων εννεα, is the Language of *Demoſthenes*. Εν ω εχομεν την απολυτρωσω δια τυ αιματ@· αυτυ, are the Words of St. *Paul*, Eph. i. 7.—To *eſtabliſh* this important Point, and to *familiariſe* the comfortable Idea to our Minds, the ſacred Writers abound in this Phraſeology. See *Luke* i. 68. ii. 38. xxiv. 21.—*Rom.* iii. 24.—*Tit.* ii. 14.—*Heb.* ix. 12.

† 1 *Pet.* i. 18. We have an *equivalent* Expreſſion, uſed in the *ſame* Signification, by one of the correcteſt Writers in the World;

Et Fratrem Pollux alterna *Morte* redemit. VIRG.

‡ *Gal.* iii. 13. Εξηγορασεν—We are ſaid to be *bought*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. Not in a metaphorical Senſe, but really and properly. For, here the Price is *mentioned* in general; by St. *Peter* the Price is particularly *ſpecified*, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

treaty, but by paying a Redemption-Price. He hath bought, not begged Us off, *from the Curſe of the Law*.—Yes, my Friend,

The Ranſom was paid down. The Fund of Heav'n,
Heav'n's inexhauſtible exhauſted Fund,
Amazing and amaz'd, pour'd forth the Price,
All Price beyond. Though curious to compute,
Archangels fail'd to caſt the mighty Sum *.

Ther. Hold a little, good *Aſpaſio*. Conſider the Conſequence of what You maintain. If there was a Ranſom in the Caſe, to *Whom* was it paid?—The Devil had led Sinners captive. They are ſaid to be the Slaves of Satan. And ſhall the bleſſed *JESUS* pay his Life to that accurſed Fiend? Shocking to imagine!—Yet, ſhocking as it is, it muſt follow from your own, and your Poet's Aſſertion.

Aſp. You miſapprehend the Caſe, *Theron*. The Ranſom was paid to GOD. *Thou haſt redeemed Us to* GOD †, is the Confeſſion of the Saints in Light.—He is the great *Law-giver*, againſt whom our Sins are committed ‡. He is the great *Houſholder*, to whom the Debt is due ‖. Satisfaction, therefore, was made to the divine *Law*, and to the divine *Juſtice*. The one of which was offended; the other violated; and both concurred to denounce the Tranſgreſſor's Doom.—Of which Doom *Satan* was only the deſtined Executioner. Whoſe Malignity, and implacable Rage, GOD is pleaſed to make the Inſtrument of inflicting his Vengeance.

As

* Night-Thoughts, N° IV. † Rev. v. 9.
‡ Pſal. li. 5. ‖ Matt. xviii. 23, 24.

As He formerly uſed the idolatrous Kings of *Aſſyria* and *Babylon*, to chaſtiſe the diſobedient *Iſraelites*.

*When We were without Strength**, utterly ruined, yet abſolutely helpleſs—when None, in Heaven or Earth, could afford Us any Succour—then our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* moſt graciouſly and moſt ſeaſonably interpoſed. He *ſaid*, as it is very emphatically repreſented by *Elihu*; *Deliver them from going down into the Pit*; *I have found a Ranſom* †. He *did*, what is very beautifully deſcribed by our *Engliſh Claſſic*;

——— *So Man, as is moſt juſt,*
Shall ſatisfy *for Man, be judg'd, and die*;
And dying riſe, and riſing with Him raiſe
His Brethren, ranſom'd *with his own dear Life* ‡.

Ther. But pray, do not You allow, that *CHRIST* is truly and properly GOD?

Aſp. We not only allow it, but We inſiſt upon it, and make our boaſt of it. This is the very Foundation of *his* Merit, and the Support of *our* Hope.

Ther. This may aggrandize the Merit of *CHRIST*, but it will increaſe the Difficulty of your Taſk. For, according to this Opinion, *CHRIST* muſt make Satisfaction *to Himſelf*. And is not this a Practice quite unprecedented? A Notion perfectly abſurd?

Aſp. It is quite unprecedented, You ſay.—On this Point, I ſhall not vehemently contend. Only let me mention one Inſtance. *Zaleucus*, You know, the Prince of the *Locrians*, made a Decree, That whoever

* Rom. v. 6. † Job. xxxiii. 24. ‡ MILT.
B. III. 294.

whoever was convicted of Adultery, ſhould be puniſhed with the Loſs of both his Eyes. Soon after this Eſtabliſhment, the Legiſlator's *own Son* was apprehended in the very Fact, and brought to a public Trial.—How could the Father proceed, in ſo tender and delicate a Conjuncture?—Should He execute the Law, in all its Rigour? This would be worſe than Death to the unhappy Youth.—Should He pardon ſo notorious a Delinquent? This would defeat the Deſign of his ſalutary Inſtitution.—To avoid both theſe Inconveniencies, He ordered one of his own Eyes to be pulled out, and one of his Son's. By which Means, the Rights of Juſtice were preſerved inviolate; yet the Tenderneſs of a Parent was remarkably indulged. And may We not venture to ſay? That, in this Caſe, *Zaleucus* both received and made the Satisfaction.—*Received* it, as a Magiſtrate; even while He *made* it, as a Father.

Ther. I cannot ſee, how this Suffering of the Father was, in any Degree, *ſatisfactory* to the Law: ſince the Father and the Son could not be conſidered, as *one* and the *ſame* Perſon. It may paſs for an extraordinary Inſtance of parental Indulgence. It may ſtrike the benevolent and compaſſionate Hearer. But, if tried at the Bar of Equity and Reaſon, it will hardly be admitted as any legal Satisfaction. It will probably be condemned, as a Breach of Nature's firſt and fundamental Law, Self-preſervation.

Aſp. Your Objection, I muſt confeſs, has Weight. It will oblige me to give up my Illuſtration.—Nevertheleſs, what my Friend urges againſt the Propriety of the Compariſon, tends to eſtabliſh the

Certainty of the Doctrine. For, *CHRIST* and his People are actually conſidered, as one and the ſame Perſon. They are *one* myſtical *Body*: He the Head, they the Members: ſo intimately united to Him, that they are *Bone of his Bone, and Fleſh of his Fleſh* *, —By Virtue of which Union, their Sins were puniſhed in Him; and *by his Stripes they are healed* †, they obtain Impunity and Life.

Though there may be nothing, in the Procedure of Men, which bears any Reſemblance to this Miracle of heavenly Goodneſs; it receives a ſufficient Confirmation from the Language of Scripture. He, who wrote as an Amanuenſis to the unerring SPIRIT, has declared; That *GOD was in CHRIST, reconciling the World*—unto Whom? Unto ſome third Party? No; but reconciling it, by the Death and Obedience of *CHRIST—unto Himſelf* ‡. And I can very readily grant, that this divine Exertion of Benignity and Wiſdom, ſhould be without a Precedent, and without a Parallel ||.

Difficulties, I own, may attend the Explication of this Article, or be interwoven with its Conſequences. But ſince our Apprehenſions of heavenly Things, eſpecially of the adorable TRINITY, are ſo obſcure and inadequate, We may very eaſily miſtake; and fancy that to be abſurd, which is

* Eph. v. 30. † Iſai. liii. 5. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 19. Col. i. 20.

|| *Fancy*, in the Perſon of *Horace*, ſaid of *Jupiter* and his fabulous Exploits,

Cui nihil viget ſimile aut ſecundum,

Much more will *Reaſon*, in the Character of a *Believer*, ſay the ſame of JEHOVAH, and his marvelous *Grace*.

only great, wonderful, and incomprehenſible *.—Nor let me be thought preſumptuous, if I venture to add; That it will be impoſſible, for all the Sagacity in the World, to prove this Doctrine *an Abſurdity*, though it ſhould ever remain *an inexplicable* Myſtery.—How many Phænomena in the Works of external Nature, are confeſſedly myſterious and inexplicable! As to the *Reality* of their Exiſtence, they challenge, they command our Aſſent; as to the *Manner* of their Exiſtence, they baffle all our Reſearches, and defy our utmoſt Penetration. If therefore the Point under Debate, be fully and inconteſtably revealed in the Bible, We muſt renounce the Philoſopher, before We can conſiſtently act the Sceptic.

Ther.

* The *unparalleled*, nay, the *incomprehenſible* Nature of this great Tranſaction, is no Objection to its Truth and Reality. This is rather a Circumſtance, which perfectly agrees with the Teſtimony of the inſpired Writers; and affords, in my Opinion, an unanſwerable Argument for the divine Origin of Chriſtianity.

It agrees with the Teſtimony of the inſpired Writers; who call the Work of our Redemption, not only *wiſe*, but *Wiſdom* itſelf! the Wiſdom *of GOD!* his Wiſdom *in a Myſtery!* even *his hidden* Wiſdom! Or that deep myſterious Plan, which has every Character of the moſt conſummate Wiſdom; which was long concealed from Ages and Generations; and appears, now revealed, to contain ſuch a Series of Wonders, as no Underſtanding of Man or Angel can fully penetrate. 1 *Cor.* ii. 7.

It affords *an unanſwerable Argument for the divine Origin of Chriſtianity.* Since it was infinitely too deep for the Contrivance of Men, and Angels; ſince it is abſolutely undiſcoverable by the moſt ſagacious of created Intelligences; *how* could it be known, but by Manifeſtation from above? *Whence* could it take its Riſe, but from an eſpecial Revelation?

Ther. Let Us ſee then, Whether it be ſo fully and inconteſtably revealed in the Bible.—You have given me, as yet, but one of your ſcriptural Images.

Aſp. I have another at your Service.—*CHRIST* is called an *High-Prieſt*. What do You take to be the Nature of the Prieſtly Office?

Ther. The Buſineſs of the Prieſt was, I apprehend, To offer Sacrifices, and to make Interceſſion for the People.

Aſp. Very true: and *CHRIST* could not with any Propriety, receive this Appellation, if He had been defective in performing *either* of the ſacerdotal Functions.—Now, that he offered no ſuch Victim as ſlain Beaſts, is univerſally acknowledged. We might preſume therefore, even though We had not the Authority of an Apoſtle to aſſure us, That *He offered HIMSELF, through the eternal SPIRIT, to GOD* *.

The Croſs †, ſhall I ſay? Rather his divine Nature was the *Altar*. His Soul and Body, each immaculately pure, were the *Holocauſt*. Theſe He re-

* Heb. ix. 14.

† The *Croſs* is, by ſome Authors, ſtyled The *Altar*. But, I think, improperly. This Notion ſeems to have ſprung from, or given riſe to, the *Popiſh* Practice of idolizing the *Crucifix*. At leaſt, it countenances ſuch a Kind of foppiſh or ſacrilegious Devotion, more than a Proteſtant Writer could wiſh.—It was the Property of the Altar, to *ſanctify the Gift*. This therefore, when referred to our LORD's Sacrifice, is a far more exalted Office, than We dare aſcribe to the *Inſtrument* of his Suffering. This muſt be the Honour and Prerogative of his DIVINE NATURE, which did indeed ſanctify the great Oblation: gave it a Dignity, a Merit, an Efficacy, unſpeakable and everlaſting.

ſigned; the one, to deadly Wounds; the other, to inexpreſſible Anguiſh; and both, to be inſtead of all whole Burnt-Offerings.—On this invaluable Oblation, his Interceſſion at the Right-hand of his FATHER is founded: from this it derives that prevailing Efficacy, which is the Security of his ſtanding, and the Recovery of his fallen Diſciples.

Give me Leave to aſk farther; What is your Idea of a *Sacrifice?* When *Iphigenia* was ſlain at the Altar, What was the Import of that memorable Action?

Ther. It was intended, if We may credit *Virgil*'s Account *, to *appeaſe* the Indignation of ſome Elementary Deity; and thereby obtain a *propitious* Gale, for the wind-bound Fleet, and confederate Forces of *Greece*. But, I hope, You would not make that ſolemn Butchery of the royal Virgin, a Pattern for the ſupreme Goodneſs; nor the Practice of groſs Idolaters, a Model for the Religion of the holy *JESUS*.

Aſh. By no means, *Theron*. Only I would obſerve—That the Cuſtom of offering Sacrifices obtained, among the moſt cultivated Nations of the Heathen World—That theſe Sacrifices were frequently of the *vicarious* † Kind; in which the Victim

* *Sanguine placaſti Ventos, & Virgine cæsâ.*

† *Seneca* ſays, alluding to the Cuſtom of Sacrifices, and the prevailing Opinion concerning them; *Furiis tantum nunquam ampliùs delituræ Domus Piamentum.*—What we are to underſtand by *Piamentum*, our Author himſelf explains, in the preceding Clauſe; *Quicquid Matri dolendum fuerit, in me tranſierit; quicquid Aviæ, in me.* To which his judicious Commentator *Lipſius*, from an extenſive Knowledge of Antiquity, adds; *nalopua ſive ſimulacris Helena.* SEN. ad. *Helv.*

The

tim was ſubſtituted, inſtead of the Offerer; and the former being cut off, the latter was diſcharged from Puniſhment—Conſequently, that the *Claſſic* Authors would (in caſe there was any Need of ſuch Auxiliaries) join with the ſacred Writers, to declare the *Expediency*, and explain the *Nature* of Sacrifices.—This alſo You will permit me to add; That, if the Heathens talk ſenſibly on any Part of religious Worſhip, it is on the Subject of Sacrifices. Their Sentiments concerning expiatory Oblations, ſeem to be the faint and diſtant Echo of Revelation. I have uſually conſidered them, not as the Inſtitutions of mere Reaſon, but as the Remains of ſome broken Tradition.

However, the trueſt and moſt authentic Signification of a Sacrifice, is to be learned from the *Jewiſh* Ritual, explained by the Goſpel Comment. Do You remember the *Moſaic* Account of that Ordinance?

The ſame Writer, in the ſame conſolatory Epiſtle, has another Sentence, ſtill more to our Purpoſe; *Nobilitatur omnium Carminibus, quæ* ſe pro *Conjuge* vicariam dedit.—*Juvenal*, ſpeaking of the ſame Fact, expreſſes Himſelf in very remarkable Language. Such as ſhews Us, with the utmoſt *Clearneſs* and *Preciſion*, what the Antients meant, when they affirmed of a ſuffering or dying Perſon, That *He gave Himſelf for* Another:

——— *Spectat* ſubeuntem Fata *Mariti*
Alceſtim, & ſimilis ſi Permutatio *detur*. Sat. VI.

There is a Paſſage in *Livy*, which moſt of all deſerves our Notice. As it ſeems to imply a popular Belief of the Dignity, the more than human Dignity of the Sacrifice which was neceſſary to appeaſe the Wrath of Heaven. It relates to *Decius*, devoting himſelf for the public Good; *Conſpectus ab utraque Acie*, aliquanto auguſtior humano Viſu, *ſicuti Cælo miſſus, Piaculum omnis Deorum Iræ*. Lib. VIII. Cap. ix.

Ther. You are much better acquainted, *Aſpaſio*, with thoſe ſacred Antiquities; and can give the moſt ſatisfactory Information, with regard to this Particular. Only let me remind You, That *Alms* are ſtyled Offerings; and *Praiſes*, both in the prophetical and evangelical Writings, come under the Denomination of Sacrifices.

Aſp. Though Praiſes and Alms are ſtyled Sacrifices, they are not of the *propitiatory*, but *euchariſtic* Kind. They are never ſaid to expiate Tranſgreſſions, only are repreſented as acceptable to GOD through *JESUS CHRIST*; that divinely precious Victim, whoſe Merits both Cancel our Guilt, and commend our Services! According to—

Ther. Stay a Moment, *Aſpaſio*.—Let me recollect myſelf.—This may be the Meaning of Sacrifices, as ordained by *Moſes*, and ſolemnized among the *Jews*. —"Sacrifices were a ſymbolical Addreſs to GOD; "intended to expreſs before Him the Devotion, "Affections, Diſpoſitions, and Deſires of the "Heart, by ſignificative and emblematical Ac- "tions."

Aſp. This is the firſt *Time*, I ever heard of a *ſymbolical Addreſs* to GOD. Sacrifices were, if you pleaſe, a *real* Addreſs to GOD, attended with ſignificant Ceremonies, or expreſſive Symbols.

"They expreſſed, You ſay, the Devotion, Af- "fections, Diſpoſitions, and Deſires of the Heart." I rather think, they expreſſed the Guilt and the Faith of the Offerer.—*His Guilt*; this ſeems to be intimated, by the very Names of the propitiatory Sacrifices. The Sin and the Sacrifice, the offending Action and the expiatory Rite, being ſignified by

by one and the ſame Word *. It is ſomewhat more than intimated, by the Occaſion of the Offering, and the State of the Offerer. Since it was only on account of Guilt contracted, that piacular Oblations were made; and only from a guilty Perſon, that they were required.—*His Faith*; or firm Belief, that ceremonial Guilt, which ſhut Him out from the Communion of the viſible Church, and ſubjected Him to the Infliction of temporal Judgments, was removed by *theſe*; but that moral Guilt, which defiles the Soul, and excludes from Heaven, ſhould be purged by *ſome better Sacrifice than theſe* †.—In the Exerciſe of this Faith, *Abel* offered up a more acceptable Sacrifice than *Cain*; and without this Faith, exerciſed in ſome Degree, it was impoſſible to pleaſe GOD.

Ther. If you diſlike this Account of Sacrifices, take another. Which, as well as the preceding, I have learned from an eminent Pen. "The Prieſt "made Atonement for Sin, by ſacrificing a Beaſt, "*only* as that was a Sign and Teſtimony of the "Sacrificer's pure and upright Heart."

Aſp. So then you would aſcribe *all* the Efficacy of Sacrifices, to the Purity and Uprightneſs of the Sacrificer. Whereas, I think, they had no Share at all in the Matter. The Types were effectual, *only* by virtue of their Connection with the great Sacrifice—ordained, in the eternal Counſels of JEHOVAH—prepared, when the SON of the Moſt

* חטאת denotes a *Sin*, and *Sin-Offering*. Lev. iv. 3, 24. אשם ſignifies the *Treſpaſs*, and the *Treſpaſs-Offering*. Lev. v. 15, 19.

† They *ſanctified to the purifying of the Fleſh*, Heb. ix. 13. *But could not make Him that did the Service perfect, as pertaining to the Conſcience*, Heb. ix. 9.

HIGH was made Flesh—offered, when the blessed *JESUS* surrendered Himself, to be led as a Lamb to the Slaughter.—They were so far from being independent on this divine Oblation, that they acted in perpetual Subserviency to it, and derived all their Value from it. *They* were the Shadow, but the Body was *CHRIST*. And does not the former owe all its Existence to the latter?

If Sacrifices were intended to bespeak Integrity of Heart, methinks, the State of *Innocency* had been the propereſt Period, for their Institution and Oblation. But this awful Ceremony had no Existence, till Man was fallen, and Sin committed.—If intended to denote Purity of Heart, why should Sacrifices be particularly injoined on that solemn Day, when Confession was made of *all the Sins* *, of the whole Congregation? An oddly concerted Device this; in which the Tongue must contradict, what the ceremony would recognize.

How could it be proper, after the *Violation* of some Law, or the *Neglect* of some Ordinance, immediately to go and offer a Sacrifice? What would be the Language of such a Practice, as interpreted by your eminent Pen? "I have done wickedly, "but my Heart is pure and upright." Is this consistent with the Spirit of Humility, of Modesty, or of common Ingenuity? Is this the Way of giving Glory to GOD, or of taking Shame to ourselves? —Whereas, let the Sacrifice be a typical Expiation, and this is the Significancy of the Action: "LORD, I confess myself guilty. Punishment "and Death are my *Due*. Let them fall, I be-

"seech

* Lev. xvi. 21.

"seech Thee, on *my Victim**. That thy Justice "being glorified, and thy Law satisfied, thy "Mercy may be honourably displayed in my For- "giveness."

Besides, *Theron*; What *Likeness*, what *Agreement* is there, between the Profession of Integrity, and an Animal mortally wounded; wallowing in its own Blood; and struggling in the Agonies of Death?—Whereas, between these dying Pangs, and the Punishment due to Sin, or the Sorrows sustained by the crucified SAVIOUR, there is an apparent, a striking, and, in various Respects, an edifying Resemblance.

Ther. They declared, perhaps, the Sacrificer's Readiness and Resolution, to slay the Brute in Himself, and to lay down his Life in Adherence to GOD.

Asp. I don't remember, to have seen this asserted in the Bible; neither have I met with any Hint, to countenance such an Interpretation. It seems, in some Cases, to be incompatible with the very Nature of Things, and contrary to the express Declarations of Scripture.—*Doves*, You know, *Lambs*, and *Sheep*, were offered in Sacrifice. But shall we slay the Lamb, the Dove, the Sheep in Ourselves? So far from it, that *CHRIST*'s Disciples are either described by these Creatures, or commanded to imitate their Properties. *Be ye harmless as Doves* †. *Peter, feed my Lambs* ‡. *My Sheep, hear my Voice* ||.

Supposing,

* What says, that Prodigy of oriental Learning, *Bochart? Hoc eodem Ritu Iram Dei Peccator deprecabatur, eamque immitti petebat in illius Victimæ Caput, quam suo Loco ponebat.* Hierozoic. Tom. I. Lib. ii. Cap. 54.

† Matt. x. 16. ‡ John xxi. 15. || John x. 27.

Suppoſing, however, that, on ſome Occaſions, this might be a ſubordinate Deſign, or a valuable Improvement of the ſacrificial Acts: yet their primary Intention, and ultimate End, were widely different. Were much more ſignificant of the divine Compaſſions, and much better adapted to the Comfort of Mankind. They were—An *awful Indication*, that Death was the Wages of Sin: At the ſame Time, a *chearing Declaration*, that GOD was pleaſed to accept the Death of the Animal, inſtead of the Sinner's: a *figurative Repreſentation** alſo of that illuſtrious PERSON, who was *to bear the Sin of many, and pour out his Soul for Tranſgreſſors.*

Ther. Since Sacrifices were of a religious Nature, they ſhould not only be inſtructive and beneficial in their Tendency, but have their *due Effects*, with regard to GOD, to Sin, and to the Perſon who brought them.

Diſp. They had, in all theſe Inſtances, their due Effects—with regard to GOD; that his Juſtice might be magnified, and his Anger appeaſed—*to Sin*; that its Demerit might be diſplayed, yet its Guilt be done away—*to the Perſon who brought them*; that he might receive Remiſſion of Sins, together with Peace and Joy in believing.

Ther.

* What ſays *Milton*, upon the Subject of Sacrifices, and with reference to their *principal* Deſign? He calls them, and very properly,

——————————*Religious Rites*
Of Sacrifice; informing Men by Types
And Shadows, of that deſtin'd Seed to bruiſe
The Serpent, by what means he ſhall achieve
Mankind's Deliverance. B. XII. 231.

Ther. There are ſo many Sorts of Sacrifices, appointed in the *Jewiſh* Rubric, that I am at a Loſs for a *diſtinct* Idea; unleſs ſome one be ſingled out, and ſeparately conſidered.

Aſp. Among all the Sacrifices inſtituted by *Moſes*, none more circumſtantially typefied the bleſſed *JESUS*; none more appoſitely expreſſed the Benefits of his Oblation; than the *Lamb* ſlain at the Feaſt of the *Paſſover*, and the *Sin-offering* on the Day of Atonement.

An Expoſitor, who cannot be miſtaken, has given Us this Interpretation of the Paſchal Lamb; *CHRIST our Paſſover is ſacrificed for Us**. Declaring

* 1 *Cor.* v. 7. Would any One venture to ſay? Paul *our Paſſover is ſacrificed for Us.* Yet this, I think, *may be*, or rather *is*, in effect ſaid, by the Account which ſome Perſons give of *CHRIST*'s Satisfaction: ſince *Paul* actually ſacrificed his Life, in Confirmation of the Truth, and for the Good of the Church. *Phil.* ii. 17.—The very Thought of ſuch a blaſphemous Abſurdity, is too *painful* and *offenſive* for the ſerious Chriſtian to dwell upon. I would therefore divert his Attention to a more pleaſing Conſideration. Let Him obſerve the exquiſite Skill, which, here and every where, conducts the Zeal of our inſpired Writer.—The Odes of *Pindar* are celebrated for their *fine Tranſitions*; which, though bold and ſurpriſing, are perfectly natural. We have, in this Place, a very maſterly Stroke of the ſame Kind. The Apoſtle, ſpeaking of the inceſtuous Criminal, ſlides into his darling Topic, a crucified SAVIOUR. Who would have expected ſuch a Sentiment, on ſuch an Occaſion? Yet, when *thus* brought in, who does not ſee and admire, both the Propriety of its Application, and the Delicacy of its Introduction?—With the ſame eaſy and graceful Air, our ſacred Orator *enters* upon his Subject, *Rom.* i. 14, 15, 16. With no leſs Dexterity and Addreſs He *returns* to it, after a long but very uſeful Digreſſion, *Heb.* vi. 20. compared with *Heb.* v. 10.

claring hereby—That *CHRIST* is a real Sacrifice—That He was prefigured, in this Capacity, by the Paſchal Lamb—That the Circumſtances, which diſtinguiſhed it, met in Him; and the Advantages, which reſulted from it, were procured by Him: *theſe*, in their trueſt Import; *theſe*, in their largeſt Extent.—The Words of the Apoſtle ſpeak this Senſe, to the plaineſt ſimpleſt Reader. Whereas, to extort any other Signification from them, what Subtilty of Wit, and what Refinement, or rather Violence of Criticiſm, muſt be uſed!

The Paſchal Lamb was *without Blemiſh*. Such was the LAMB of GOD: free from all Taint of original Sin, and from every Spot of actual Tranſgreſſion.—A Lamb of *the firſt Year*, in all the Sprightlineſs and Floridity of Youth. *CHRIST* alſo laid down his Life, not when worn with Age, or debilitated with Sickneſs; but in the very Prime of his Days; amidſt all the Bloom of Health, and all the Vigour of Manhood. That his Sacrifice might have every recommending Circumſtance, which could render it acceptable to GOD, and available for Man.

The Lamb was to be ſlain in ſuch a Manner, as might occaſion the moſt *copious Effuſion* of its Blood. And was not this very exactly fulfilled in our ſuffering SAVIOUR? His Blood flowed out, in vaſt Abundance, by the amazing Sweat in the Garden; by the rending Laſhes of the Scourge; by the lacerating Points of the Thorns; by the dreadful Nails, which cleft his Hands and his Feet; by the deadly Spear, which ripped open his Side, and cut its Way to his Heart.—Though the Blood was to be ſo liberally ſhed, *a Bone* of the *Lamb* was

not

not to be broken. And You cannot but recollect, You cannot but admire, the wonderful Interpoſition of Providence, to accompliſh this emblematical Prediction. When the Soldiers had received a Command, to break the Legs of the three crucified Perſons; when they had actually broke the Legs of each Malefactor, which hung on the right Side of our LORD, and on the left; their Minds were over-ruled (by a divine Influence, no doubt) to ſpare the bleſſed *JESUS*, and to leave all his Bones *unhurt, untouched.*

The Lamb was to be killed *before the whole Aſſembly*; in the Preſence, either of the whole Congregation of *Iſrael*, or elſe of that particular Society, which concurred in eating the Fleſh. And did not the whole Multitude of the *Jews* conſpire againſt our REDEEMER, to put Him to death? Did they not all cry out, as with one Voice? *Crucify Him! Crucify Him!* Was He not executed, at one of their grand Feſtivals, and in the Sight of the whole aſſembled Nation?—The Blood was not to be poured heedleſly upon the Ground, but received carefully into a Baſon; and *ſprinkled*, with the utmoſt Punctuality. Sprinkled, not upon the Threſhold, but upon the *Lintel and Door-poſts.* In like Manner, the Blood of the heavenly LAMB, is not to be trampled under Foot, by a contemptuous Diſregard. It is the Treaſure of the Church, and the Medicine of Life. To be received therefore by an adoring Faith, and moſt thankfully applied to our Conſciences, our Converſation, our whole Man.—The Sprinkling of that Blood *ſecured* every *Iſraelitiſh* Family, from the deſtroying Angel's Sword.

So,

So, the Merits of the ſlaughtered SAVIOUR* ſcreen every believing Sinner, from the Stroke of offended Juſtice, and from the Pains of eternal Death. What muſt have become of the *Iſraelite*, who, truſting to the Uprightneſs of his Heart, ſhould neglect to make uſe of this divinely appointed Safeguard? He muſt inevitably have been puniſhed with the Death of his Firſt-born. Equally certain, but infinitely more dreadful, will be *his* Condemnation; who, before the Omniſcient JUDGE, ſhall preſume to plead his own Integrity, or confide in his own Repentance, and reject the Atonement of the dying *JESUS*.

Ther. Now, if You pleaſe, for the *Sin-offering*†; which ſeems to have been the moſt eminent Sacrifice of them all.

Aſp. It was the moſt *comprehenſive*; becauſe, it ſhadowed forth, not only the Death of *CHRIST*, but his Reſurrection from the Dead, and his Aſcenſion into Heaven.—As the various Actions of ſome illuſtrious

* Both St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* ſpeak of *The Blood of Sprinkling*. 1 Pet. i. 2. Heb. xii. 24. Intimating, by this remarkable Form of Speech, that the Death of *CHRIST* will be of *no Advantage* to the Sinner, unleſs it be *applied* to his Heart. As the Blood of the Paſchal Lamb was no Protection to an *Iſraelite*, till it had tinged the Poſts of his Door.—*Iſaiah*, uſing the ſame Phraſe, and alluding to the ſame Cuſtom, ſays of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, *He ſhall ſprinkle many Nations*, lii. 15. Not only initiate them into his Church by Baptiſm; but alſo, by the Application of his Blood, ſhall *cleanſe* them from their Guilt, and *deliver* them from the Wrath to come.

† For the Circumſtances relating to the *Sin-offering*, the Reader will conſult *Lev.* xvi.—For thoſe which concern the *Paſchal Lamb*, He will have recourſe to *Exod.* xii.

illuſtrious Perſonage, which cannot be exhibited by the Painter in a ſingle Draught, are diſplayed in *ſeveral Compartments*; yet all conſtitute one and the ſame grand hiſtorical Picture. So, theſe glorious Events, incapable of being repreſented by any *ſingle* Animal, were typeſied by *two Kids of the Goats*: which nevertheleſs were reputed, but as *one* * Offering.

Theſe Goats were brought to the Door of the Tabernacle, and there preſented before the LORD. *CHRIST*

* How runs the divine Command? *He* (the High-Prieſt) *ſhall take of the Congregation two Kids of the Goats for a Sin-offering*, Lev. xvi. 5. Are not theſe two Kids ſtyled, in the ſingular Number and collective Senſe, *an Offering?*—That We might not miſtake, GOD is pleaſed to add; *And one Ram for a Burnt-offering*. Here He particularly mentions *one*; to inform *Us*, that the one Ram in this Inſtitution, and the two Goats in the preceding, were to come under the ſame general Denomination, *An Offering*. To render his Meaning ſtill more apparent; the LORD, contrary to his own Rule in all other Caſes, orders the High-Prieſt to *lay his Hands* upon the Head of the *Scape-Goat*, not upon the Head of the Goat devoted to Death. He *divides* the neceſſary Circumſtances of a Sacrifice between them *both*. To intimate, in the cleareſt Manner, that neither the One nor the Other *ſeparate*, but both *taken together*, were the one ſacrificial Oblation, appointed for this diſtinguiſhed Solemnity.

If this be true, I think, the Paſſage is a pretty conſiderable Proof, That *Atonement* was made by ſuffering *vicarious* Puniſhment; notwithſtanding what has been urged againſt it, from the tenth Verſe of the Chapter.—Should We require human Authority for the Support of this Interpretation, one of the greateſt human Authorities may be ſeen in the celebrated *Witſius*: *Uterque Hircus pertinebat ad unum Sacrificium pro Peccato, Hoſtiæ unius loco. Uterque erat Pecus piacularis, vicaria Iſraeli Peccatori, ejuſque Peccatum ferens.* De Oecon. Lib. IV. Cap. vi.

CHRIST alſo preſented Himſelf before GOD, when *He went up to Jeruſalem, that all Things written by the Prophets concerning Him might be accompliſhed* *.—The Goat, on which *the LORD's Lot fell*, was devoted to Death. *CHRIST* alſo, being delivered by the *determinate Counſel and Foreknowledge of GOD* †, was crucified and ſlain.—The Body *was burnt without the Camp*. Which pointed at the very Place, and pictured out the very Nature, of our LORD's Sufferings. For *He ſuffered without the Gate* ‡: was there expoſed to the Rage of Men, and the Wrath of GOD; under the moſt exquiſite Pains of Body, and the moſt inſupportable Agonies of Soul. All ſignificantly typefied, by the Flame of a devouring *Fire*. Than which nothing is more fierce, nothing more penetrating, or more ſeverely tormenting.

As the Animal which was ſlaughtered, ſhewed forth the REDEEMER *dying for our Sins*; that which eſcaped, prefigured the ſame SAVIOUR, *riſing again for our Juſtification*.—The High-Prieſt put his Hands upon the Head of the Scape-Goat, and with great Solemnity, *confeſſed* the Sins of the whole Congregation. The Import of this Ceremony is expreſly declared in the ſacred Canon; *The Goat ſhall bear upon Him their Iniquity* ‖. It is moſt comfortably explained by the Prophet, *The LORD laid on HIM the Iniquity of Us all* §; and moſt

* Luke xviii. 31. † Acts ii. 23. ‡ Heb. xiii. 12.

‖ It is obſervable, that whereas the Scape-Goat is ſaid to *bear* נשא the Sins of *Iſrael*, Lev. xvi. 22. the very ſame Phraſe is applied to *CHRIST*, Iſai. liii. 12.

§ Iſai. liii. 6.

moſt delightfully confirmed by the Apoſtle, *He Himſelf bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree* *.

Confeſſion being made, the Goat was diſmiſſed into *a Land not inhabited:* a Place ſeparated from all Reſort of Men: where he was never likely to be found any more. To teach Us, That our Offences, having been expiated by the bleeding *JESUS*, are entirely done away; ſhall never riſe up in judgment againſt Us; but, according to the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, *When the Iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, there ſhall be none; and the Sins of Judah, they ſhall not be found* †.—It is farther enjoined, That *Aaron ſhall confeſs all the Iniquities of the Children of Iſrael, and all their Tranſgreſſions, in all their Sins. Iniquities, Tranſgreſſions, Sins*, are particularized; and, to this Cluſter of Expreſſions, the Word *all* is added. To inform Us, that the *leaſt* Sins need the Atonement of *CHRIST*'s Death; to aſſure Us, that the greateſt Sins are not beyond the Compaſs of its Efficacy; and that *all* Sins, be they ever ſo heinous, or ever ſo numerous, are forgiven to the true Believer.

The High-Prieſt carried the Blood of the Victim into the ſecond Tabernacle, even *within the Veil.* So *CHRIST entered with his own Blood*, not into the Holy Places made with Hands, but *into Heaven itſelf* ‡.—The Blood was ſprinkled upon the Mercy-ſeat, before the Mercy-ſeat; and left in the Holy of Holies, that it might always remain before the LORD. And does not *CHRIST always appear* in the Preſence of GOD for Us? Does He not *ever live* to make Interceſſion for Us? To plead his all-ſufficient Propitiation in our Behalf?

* 1 Pet. ii. 24. † Jer. l. 20. ‡ Heb. ix. 24.

That the Benefits procured thereby, may be communicated, may be ratified, and perpetuated to his People?

Theo. The Scripture aſcribes theſe Benefits, to Repentance and Reformation of Life, Qualifications of *our own*; not to any ſuch Cauſe, as a vicarious Sacrifice; where the Merit muſt neceſſarily ſubſiſt *in another*. What ſays the Apoſtle *Peter*, when He had juſt received his Inſtructions from the HOLY GHOST? *Repent and be converted*, not look unto an Atonement, or depend upon a Propitiation, *that your Sins may be blotted out* *.

Aſp. 'Tis true, the Benefits of the new Covenant are promiſed to Penitents, as their happy Portion; but never aſſigned to their Repentance, as the *procuring Cauſe*. Never to their Repentance, but to the Blood of the great HIGH-PRIEST, called therefore *The Blood of the everlaſting Covenant* †: being the Condition ſtipulated in it, required by it, and in Conſequence of which, all its unſpeakable Privileges are beſtowed.

Beſides; the Qualifications You ſuppoſe, are the Gift of the LORD. We are not able to exerciſe, till *CHRIST*, who is exalted for this very Purpoſe, *gives* Repentance ‡.—A Converſion to GOD, and a Newneſs of Life, are not the Effect of human Abilities, but the Work of the Divine SPIRIT, and the Fruit of the REDEEMER's Death.—Excluſive of this Death, there had been no ſuch Thing, as a repenting Sinner, or a renewed Soul.—The Merit of this Death opens the Heaven of Heavens, and all its inexhauſtible Stores.

By

* Acts iii. 19. † Heb. xiii. 20. ‡ Acts v. 31.

By this Death, by this alone, We have the Enjoyment of Grace, and the Hope of Glory.

Ther. You begin to be in Raptures, *Aſpaſio!*

Aſp. Excuſe me, *Theron.* It is not eaſy to repreſs the Sallies of Delight and Devotion, when we muſe upon ſuch Wonders of Loving-kindneſs; when We are touched with a Senſe of ſuch immenſely rich Benefits.—A great HIGH-PRIEST! Who is *higher than the Heavens* *; yet humbled Himſelf to Death, even the Death of the Croſs!—Who is *conſecrated for evermore* †; and pleads all his Merit, improves all his Influence, for our conſummate Felicity!

What Heart of Stone but glows at Thoughts like Theſe?
Such Contemplations mount Us, and ſhould mount
The Mind ſtill higher; nor ever glance in Man
Unraptur'd, uninflam'd ‡.

But I check myſelf; and will either reply to your Objections, or liſten to your Sentiments. Liſten as attentively, as You Yourſelf attend to the Muſic of that *ſhrill-tongued Thruſh.*

Ther. Its ſweetly-modulated Lays, eminent even in the Symphony of Spring, having indeed attracted my Ears. But my Mind is diſengaged, and free for your Converſation.

Aſp. I can repeat a Song, ſweeter far than this, or all the Melody of the Woodland Choirs. A Song, which has Harmony enough, to make the Brow of Melancholy wear a Smile, or to ſooth away the Sorrows of Death itſelf. *Who ſhall lay any Thing*

* Heb. vii. 26. † Heb. vii. 28. ‡ Night-Thoughts, N° IV.

to the Charge of GOD's *Elect? It is* GOD *that juſtifieth. Who is He that condemneth? It is* CHRIST *that died; yea rather, that is riſen again; who is even at the Right-hand of* GOD; *who alſo maketh Interceſſion for Us* *.—According to my Friend's Principles, the Strain of this triumphant Exclamation was ill-judged, and ſhould have run in the following Manner: "Who ſhall lay any thing to our Charge? "We have endeavoured to preſerve a Rectitude of "Diſpoſition, and to perſiſt in a laudable Courſe "of Action. Wherever We failed, We have "been ſorry for the Fault, and have implored Par-"don from the Divine MAJESTY. What "then ſhall diſmay Us? Or who ſhall condemn "Us?"—*Your* Topics of Conſolation would be complete, without having recourſe to the Death of *CHRIST*, as an Atonement for Sin; or to the Reſurrection of *CHRIST*, as an Evidence that the Atonement is accepted; or to the Interceſſion of *CHRIST*, as the Cauſe of our Intereſt in that tranſcendent Bleſſing.

Ther. Since You ſo frequently mention, and ſo earneſtly inſiſt upon *Atonement*, I ſhould be glad to know the preciſe Signification of the Word. I am told, the original Phraſe has nothing to do with the Idea of making Satisfaction.

Aſp. We may learn the preciſe Signification of Atonement, by conſidering the Means; the Effect; and the Manner, whereby the Means accompliſh the Effect.—The *Effect* of Atonement, is Pardon—The *Means* of obtaining it, are the Sacrifice and Death of *CHRIST*—The Way or *Manner*,

* Rom. viii. 33, 34.

Manner, whereby the Death of *CHRIST* becomes efficacious for this bleſſed Purpoſe, is the ſovereign Appointment of his FATHER; the infinite Dignity of his Perſon; and eſpecially the *vicarious* Nature of his Sufferings, or their being undergone in the Stead of Sinners.

Ther. It has been ſuppoſed, and is affirmed too, that our SAVIOUR's Obedience and Death were conducive to our Redemption, *only* in virtue of His FATHER's Will and Appointment.

Aſp. I am glad it is ſome Other, and not my *Theron*, who eſpouſes this Opinion. Which is highly injurious to the *Dignity* of our REDEEMER's Perſon, and to the *Merit* of his Obedience.—Neither is it very honourable to the Wiſdom of the FATHER; unleſs We ſuppoſe Him *therefore* to have appointed the Death of *CHRIST*, becauſe He knew it would be a *plenary* Satisfaction; fully ſufficient for the glorious Purpoſe.

And why ſhould We uſe that weak inadequate Expreſſion, *conducive* to our Redemption? Would any One ſay, of the "holy and beautiful Houſe" which *Solomon* built, That it was conducive to the Accompliſhment of what *Moſes* foretold*?—*David*'s Proviſion of Stones, of Timber, and of Gold †, was, if You pleaſe, conducive to it. But *Solomon*'s Act was *perfective* of it; was the very Execution of the Thing itſelf. Such are the Obedience and Death of *CHRIST*, with reſpect to our Redemption.

Ther. But We forget the original Word, and neglect to enquire into its true Meaning.

* Exod. xv. 17. † 1 Chron. xxix. 2.

Aſp. The Word, which We tranſlate *Atonement*, implies, in its primary Acceptation, the Notion of *Covering*. Thus the Ark was covered *, *was overlaid with Pitch, within and without:* that all its Chinks might be ſecured, againſt the inſinuating Force of the Water; and all its Timber defended, from the Injuries of the liquid Element.—When an Object, in this or any other Manner, is covered over for Safety; the Covering *receives* every Shock, and *ſuſtains* all Damages, which would otherwiſe fall upon the Thing covered. The Image, therefore, is very pertinently uſed, to expreſs the true evangelical Nature of Atonement; and the Word is uſed, with equal Propriety, to deſcribe the *Mercy-ſeat* †. Which was a coſtly covering for the Ark, made of pure Gold, and exactly commenſurate to that ſacred Repoſitory. In this were lodged the Tables of the Law; whoſe Precepts We have violated, and to whoſe Curſe We were ſubject. Conſequently the Mercy-ſeat, both by its Situation, its Extent, and its Office, prefigured the REDEEMER. Who, all pure and ſpotleſs, intervenes between the Law and the Offender; fulfils the Commands, and ſuſtains the Curſe of the former; merits Pardon, and procures Salvation for the latter.

Obſerve ſome delicate Flower. Having entertained our Eye with one beautiful Colour, it ſuddenly

* כפרת Thou ſhalt *beſmear, cover*, or *overlay*, Gen. vi. 14. This is the firſt Place, in which our Word occurs. It is ſuppoſed to give Us the genuine and native Senſe of the Phraſe—Perhaps, the *Engliſh* Expreſſion *cover*, may be derived from the Participle כפר *cophĕr*.

† כפרת Exod. xxv. 17.

denly breaks, or gradually ſoftens into another, and gives Us a renewed Pleaſure. Such, methinks, is the Import of this delightful Word.—Beſides the preceding Signification, it is expreſſive of *Hoar-froſt* *. Which, in a ſerene, but ſharp wintry Morning, covers the Houſes; covers the Trees; covers the whole Face of the Earth. So, the Blood of *JESUS*, according to the Pſalmiſt's Repreſentation, covers † all our Guilt, and hides every Offence. Inſomuch that, when this Blood is applied by the Divine SPIRIT, the LORD *ſees no Iniquity in Jacob* ‡. He acts, as if He ſaw none; neither puniſhes the Sinner, though his Conduct has been ever ſo criminal; nor abhors the Sinner, though his Perſon has been ever ſo polluted.

The ſame Expreſſion is uſed with reference to a *Covenant*, and ſignifies the *Abolition* of the Contract ‖. Which was done by cancelling the Deed; expunging the Articles of Stipulation, or reducing them to one intire Blot. By the Covenant of Works, all Mankind became obnoxious to Condemnation;

* כפור Pſal. cxlviii. 16. The Idea deduced from *Hoar-froſt*, is not ſo exact and ſtriking, in our northern Clime, as in the more ſouthern Regions. *There*, the Exhalations and Dews being more copious, the Hoar-Froſt muſt fall thicker, lie deeper, and more fully correſpond with the Notion of Covering.

† Pſal. xxxii. 1. ‡ Numb. xxiii. 21.

‖ *Iſai.* xxviii. 18, כפר *abolebitur. Proprie ſonat, oblinetur, oblitcrabitur. Eſt enim* כפר *Hebræis proprie quid cbducere, atque inde* (*cum* obducta & oblita *diſpareant*) *delere, abolere.* (Thus, I apprehend, the Words ſhould be pointed. According to the preſent Punctuation, at leaſt in my Edition, I can make out neither Syntax nor Senſe.) *Alluditur hoc loco ad Fœdera Scripto comprehenſa, quæ abolentur & irrita fiunt, ſi Scriptura inducatur, cancellatur, antiquetur, obliterctur.* VITRING. *in loc.*

were bound over to Death. By the Grace of *CHRIST*, our Obligation to Punishment is disannulled, and the *Hand-writing* of Condemnation *is blotted out*.—Should You ask, *How* this is effected? By paying a Ransom, and offering a Sacrifice.—Should You farther enquire, Of *what* this Ransom and this Sacrifice consisted? Of nothing less than the precious Blood *, the ineſtimable Life †, the divinely magnificent Person of *CHRIST* ‡.

Ther. These then are the capital Ideas included in the original Word, a Covering by way of *Defence*, a Covering by way of *Concealment*; and a Blotting, in order to *cancel*.

Asp. They are, *Theron*.—As the Brain (the Source of Sensation) sends out various Detachments of Nerves, to animate and actuate all the Parts of the vital System: So, this capital Idea, the Idea of *Atonement*, branches itself into a Variety of subordinate, yet similar Significations. Which run through the whole Oeconomy of the Gospel, to enliven and quicken the Spirit of a Believer. Let me instance in a few Particulars. This richly significant Word denotes—The exercise of divine Mercy ‖—The Pardon of Sin §—A Cleansing from Guilt ¶—Purging from Transgression ⸸—Reconciliation for Iniquity **—The Pacifying of Wrath.

* *Not by the Blood of Goats and Calves, but by his* own *Blood.* Heb. ix. 12.

† *The Son of Man came to give* his Life *a Ransom for Many.* Mark x. 45.

‡ *Who through the eternal SPIRIT offered* Himself *without Spot to GOD.* Heb. ix. 14.

‖ Deut. xxxii. 43. § Deut. xxi. 8. 2 Chron. xxx. 18. ¶ Numb. xxxv. 33. ⸸ Psal. lxv. 3. ** Dan. ix. 24.

Wrath *.—Do not theſe Paſſages (each expreſſed by ſome Branch of the Verb, which conveys to Us the Idea of *atoning*) plainly intimate—That the Atonement of *CHRIST* is the meritorious Cauſe of all theſe deſirable Effects; is the Foundation of *every* Act of divine Goodneſs; and of *every* Bleſſing vouchſafed to Sinners?

Ther. After all, *this* is the Conſideration, which principally offends and perplexes me—GOD is a Spirit; an abſolutely perfect and infinitely pure Being; remote, inconceivably remote, from whatever is groſs or corporeal. How then can He take pleaſure, in the Effuſion of Blood, or the Burning of Fleſh? How can any ſuch *low carnal* Inducements, make Him merciful to Sinners; or appeaſe, what You call, his Wrath?

Aſp. Rather, what the *Scriptures* call his Wrath. —You miſtake our Doctrine, my dear *Theron*. We never maintain, that any Sacrifice whatever, not even the Propitiation of *CHRIST*'s Death, was intended to *make* GOD merciful. Only to *make way* for his eternal Purpoſes of Mercy †, without any Prejudice either to the Demands of his Law, or the Rights of his Juſtice.—Our Sentiments on this Head, are exactly conſonant to his own Declaration, and to his own Procedure, in the Caſe of *Job*'s calumniating Friends ‡. Though diſpleaſed with

* Ezek. xvi. 63.

† הוא רחום יכפר עון Pſal. lxxviii. 38. Which, exactly tranſlated, ſpeaks to this Effect. *HE, being full of Compaſſion, forgave their Sins through an Atonement. Being full of Compaſſion,* here is the firſt impulſive Cauſe —*through an Atonement*, this is the proper appointed Way—of granting Forgiveneſs.

‡ *See* Job xlii. 7, 8.

with their Conduct, He was merciful to their Perſons. Nevertheleſs, He would not exerciſe that Mercy, till they had firſt offered a Sacrifice, and acted Faith in a dying SAVIOUR.

Neither is it ever ſuppoſed; That the infinitely wiſe and pure GOD, can take Pleaſure in the Effuſion of Blood, or the Burning of Fleſh, *ſimply* conſidered. This is diſclaimed by the HOLY GHOST; *Burnt-offerings and Offering for Sin Thou wouldeſt not, neither hadſt Pleaſure therein.* The LORD had no Regard to them; took no Complacency in them; only as they bore a Reference to that noble and ineſtimable Sacrifice, which brings the higheſt Honour to his Name; which thoſe ſlaughtered Animals exhibited in a Figure; and to which every true *Iſraelite* had a believing Regard.

I ſay, had *a believing Regard.* For, it is affirmed by the Author to the *Hebrews*, That the Goſpel was preached to the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs *.—*What* does He mean by the Goſpel? The very Eſſence of this benevolent Scheme, according to the Apoſtle's own Definition, is, That *CHRIST died for our Sins* †.—*How* was this Goſpel preached to our Fathers in the Wilderneſs? It was preached to their Eyes, by many expreſſive Emblems; eſpecially, by ſlaughtered Animals, and bleeding Victims. By which *CHRIST* was almoſt continually, though not ſo evidently as in theſe latter Times, *ſet forth crucified* ‡ for Sinners.

In this Senſe alone, thoſe carnal Uſages were worthy the Wiſdom of GOD to appoint, and the Majeſty

* Heb. iv. 2. † 1 Cor. xv. 3. ‡ Gal. iii. 1.

Majeſty of GOD to accept.—This gave them a peculiar *Dignity* and *Importance*; and ſet them far above all the ſimilar Obſervances, uſed in the Heathen Worſhip.—They were alſo, when thus explained, thus improved, extremely profitable to Believers; as they directed their Contemplation to the *future* Sufferings of a SAVIOUR*, and ratified to their Faith the Benefits of his *ever-operating* Sacrifice. Which, We are aſſured by an infallible Voice, was effectual *for the Redemption of the Tranſgreſſions under the firſt Covenant* †.

Ther.

* *See* Iſai. liii. Luke xxiv. 25, 26. Acts xvii. 3.

† *Heb.* ix. 15. When I reflect on theſe Words, I wonder how any One can aſſert, That *all the Jews died under the Curſe of the Law.*—Died under the Curſe of the Law! Even though the Apoſtle has warranted it for a Truth, That *All theſe* (meaning *Abraham, Sarah, Iſaac, Jacob,* &c.) *died in Faith.* Heb. xi. 13.—Even though He has elſewhere laid it down as a Maxim, *So then they which are of Faith,* in whatever Period of Time they live, or under whatever Diſpenſation of Religion they worſhip, *are bleſſed with faithful Abraham.* Gal. iii. 9.—Even though the Pſalmiſt, in one Place, affirms, *Bleſſed are they whoſe Unrighteouſneſſes are forgiven, and whoſe Sin is covered.* And, in another Place, declares concerning Himſelf and his pious Cotemporaries; *Look how wide the Eaſt is from the Weſt! So far hath He ſet our Sins from Us.* Pſalm xxxii. 1. Pſalm ciii. 12.

From theſe and many other Texts, I think, it is evident, That the faithful *Jews* no more died under the Curſe of the Law, than the faithful *Chriſtians.* The Death of *CHRIST* procured the Pardon and Acceptance of Sinners, even before He came in the Fleſh. From the Beginning, He had covenanted with the FATHER, as their MEDIATOR: and GOD, to whom all Things are preſent, ſaw the certain Accompliſhment of his Undertaking. He was therefore, by Virtue of the divine Decree, and in Point of ſaving Efficacy, *A LAMB ſlain from the Foundation of the World.* Though He laid down his Life in the Reign of *Tiberius,* He was a real REDEEMER in *all Ages.*

Ther. So You apprehend, that, in thoſe Uſages, practiſed by the antient *Jews*, the Goſpel was *emblematically* preached, and *CHRIST* in *a Figure* exhibited.

Aſp. Moſt certainly, *Theron.* And for this Cauſe, under the Law, *almoſt all Things were purged with Blood* *. The Multiplicity, the Variety, the Conſtancy of their Sacrifices, were all deſigned to impreſs upon their Minds, and familiarize to their Thoughts, this great evangelical Truth.—Was any One overtaken by a Fault? He muſt preſent a Victim, and the Prieſt muſt ſlay it, by way of *Treſpaſs-offering*. To ſignify, that the Guilt which was contracted, could be done away only by the atoning Death of *CHRIST*.—Had any One received a ſignal Bleſſing? A Beaſt was ſlain by way of *Peace-offering*; as a public Expreſſion of Gratitude for the Mercy, and alſo as an emphatical Declaration, that all Good vouchſafed to fallen Man, is owing to the REDEEMER's Ranſom.—Was any One to be inveſted with the *prieſtly* Office, or admitted to miniſter in the Sanctuary? A Ram or a Bullock muſt bleed, for the Purpoſes of Conſecration and Atonement †. In order to teſtify, that no Man can officiate with Acceptance in the Worſhip of GOD: that no Service, though of a religious Kind, can be pleaſing in his Sight; *till* the former is intereſted in the Merits, *unleſs* the latter is recommended by the Death, of the great HIGH-PRIEST.

And not only by their ſolemn ſacrificial Acts, but even by their *ordinary* Meals, this grand Leſſon was inculcated. They were forbidden to eat the Blood, in

* Heb. ix. 22. † Lev. viii. 22. Numb. viii. 12.

in order to awaken and preſerve in their Conſciences, a reverential and fiducial Regard to the precious Blood of *CHRIST*. The HOLY GHOST, aſſigning a Reaſon for this ſacred Prohibition, ſays expreſly, *Becauſe the Blood maketh an Atonement for Your Souls* *: the Blood of Beaſts typically, the Blood of *CHRIST* effectually.—O! that *Chriſtians* would, in this Particular, learn of *Jews*. Learn, at leaſt, from *Jewiſh* Ordinances, to have their Attention inceſſantly fixed on that Divine HIGH-PRIEST; who, *by one Offering, hath perfected for ever*—not barely "conduced or contributed to the "Work," but fully accompliſhed it. Hath obtained complete and everlaſting Redemption for—*them that are ſanctified* †.

Ther. Some Offerings were made without any Effuſion of Blood. What could thoſe mean? Or how could *they* typefy the Sacrifice of *CHRIST*?

Aſp. Perhaps, the Apoſtle might foreſee ſuch an Objection, when He made uſe of that guarded Expreſſion, *almoſt* all Things were purged with Blood.—If, in theſe Caſes, there was no Effuſion of Blood, yet there was a Deſtruction of the Subſtance. The *Meat-offerings* were conſumed by Fire. Which is much the ſame to inanimate Things, as ſhedding of the Blood is to living Creatures.—The ſame Effect is aſcribed to theſe Oblations, as to thoſe of the ſanguinary Kind. It is expreſly declared of the poor Man's *Sin-offering*, which conſiſted of fine Flour, and was burnt upon the Altar, *It ſhall make an Atonement for Him* ‡.—So that Here alſo was, what We may truly call a *viſible Prediction* of *CHRIST*.

* Lev. xvii. 11. † Heb. x. 14. ‡ Lev. v. 11, 12, 13.

CHRIST. The Offerings which flamed, as well as the Victims which bled, ſhewed forth our dying LORD. Whoſe "*one* Oblation of Himſelf once "offered," compriſed all the Qualities, and realized the whole Efficacy, repreſented by *every* other Sacrifice *.

Thet. Another odd Circumſtance has often given me Diſguſt, and been apt to prejudice me againſt the Inſtitutions of the Old Teſtament. Many of them appear mean, contemptible, and perfectly *puerile*. "Can theſe, I have ſaid within myſelf, be ordained "by a GOD of infinite Wiſdom, and tranſcen-"dent Glory? Can We reaſonably imagine, that "a Mandate ſhould be iſſued from the Court of "Heaven, on purpoſe to forbid the *Boiling*, and "injoin the *Roaſting* †, of ſome particular Piece "of Meat?—Will the great RULER of the "Skies, concern Himſelf about the preciſe Man-"ner of *killing* one inſignificant Bird, and *re-*"*leaſing* another ‡?—Will He, who claims the "Worſhip of the Heart, have ſuch an eſpecial "Regard to a Drop or two of deſpicable Blood, "put upon the *Tip* of the Right-ear, or the *Thumb* "of the Right-hand ‖?—Surely, ſuch childiſh Ce-"remonies are too minute and trivial for the No-"tice, much more for the ſolemn Appointment, of "the ſupreme MAJESTY."

Aſp.

* For this Reaſon, it is thought, the Apoſtle ſtyles the Sacrifice of *CHRIST*, κρειττοσι θυσιαις, *Better Sacrifices*. Becauſe, this *one* Sacrifice comprehended the whole Virtue, and procured every Benefit, ſignified by *all* the other. *Heb.* ix. 23.

† Exod. xii. 9. ‡ Lev. xiv. 4, 5, 6, 7.
‖ Exod. xxix. 20.

Aſp. You will pleaſe to remember, that, when thoſe Ceremonies were ordained, it was the *Infancy**, at leaſt the *Minority* of the Church. If We advert to this Circumſtance, We ſhall have Reaſon to admire, both the all-comprehending Wiſdom, and the no leſs condeſcending Goodneſs, of JEHOVAH. —*His all-comprehending Wiſdom*, in conforming, ſo accurately and ſo minutely, the Type to the Event. Though the former was eſtabliſhed long, long before the latter exiſted. Many Ages before the *Deſire of Nations* appeared, his Picture was drawn; was preſented to public View; and is now found to correſpond, in every Feature, with the illuſtrious Original. What Hand could be equal to ſuch a Taſk? Only the Hand of an Omniſcient LIMNER.—*His condeſcending Goodneſs*, in adapting the Tenour of his Revelation to the State of his People; *ſpeaking unto them, even as unto Babes*†. Not by naked Precepts, or abſtracted Truths; but by earthly Similitudes‡, and (if I may ſo expreſs myſelf) by embodied

* St. *Paul* calls the Church of thoſe Times νηπιος, An *Infant*, or *Babe*, Gal. iv. 1, 3. And the ceremonial Inſtitutions have been ſtyled, with as much Truth as Ingenuity, *Evangelium elementare & præliminare.*

† 1 Cor. iii. 1.

‡ This ſeems to be our LORD's Meaning, when He ſays to *Nicodemus, If I have told you earthly Things.* He had been treating of that internal ſpiritual *Renovation*, which is the Root and Spring of all Holineſs. He had been ſpeaking of that Divine SPIRIT, whoſe gracious and almighty Agency produces this deſirable Change. The Nature of the former was repreſented, under the Similitude of *a Birth*; by which We enter upon a new State, and habituate Ourſelves to new Practices, Pleaſures, Purſuits. The Operations of the latter were deſcribed, by the common and well-known Properties

embodied Inſtructions. Such as were level to their low Capacities, and calculated to affect their dull Apprehenſions.

The Inſtitutions to which You allude, were undoubtedly mean and trifling, if conſidered *in themſelves*. Accordingly, their majeſtic AUTHOR cautions his People, againſt ſuch erroneous and unworthy Notions. "*I ſpake not unto your Fathers,* "*nor commanded them, in the Day that I brought them* "*out of the Land of Egypt, concerning Burnt-offerings* "*or Sacrifices**. It was not my Deſign, that they "ſhould acquieſce in the Shadow, and neglect the "Subſtance. I never intended, that they ſhould "reſt in the Porch; but paſs through theſe infe-"rior Ordinances, to much ſublimer Things. "*CHRIST* and ſpiritual Bleſſings were princi-"pally in my View. To which all the *Moſaical* "Uſages were relative, ſubſervient, and one con-"tinual Manduction."—Conſidered in this Light; as bearing a Reference to the ever-bleſſed MEDIATOR; as Emblems of his Perſon, or Pledges of his Grace; they acquire a real Magnificence, and convey the moſt ſalutary Leſſons.

The Blood put upon the Tip of the Right-Ear, and the Thumb of the Right-Hand, denotes our *perſonal* Application of the Death of *CHRIST*. Without which all its Virtue, though boundleſs and

ties of *the Wind*.—This He mentions as a plain and familiar Method of teaching: this He oppoſes to the more elevated Strain of *telling* Him *heavenly Things*; or delivering refined and exalted Truths, not accommodated to a low Capacity, not brought within the Compaſs of an infantile Underſtanding, by an Aſſimilation to ſenſible Objects. *John* iii. 12.

* Jer. vii. 22.

and inconceivable, will profit Us nothing. Thoſe particular Parts of the Body, may ſignify the *perceptive* and *executive* Faculties: in both which We offend, and for both which We need the great Propitiation.—Of the two Birds You mention, one was to be *killed*, the other was to *fly away*, after it had been dipped in the Blood of its Fellow. Thus the *LORD JESUS* was ſlain for our Sins: and We being *waſhed* in his Blood; being intereſted in the Atonement of our holy Victim, and elder Brother; are acquitted from Guilt, and *eſcape* Condemnation.—Concerning the *Paſchal Lamb*, it was particularly enjoined; That the Fleſh *ſhould not be eaten raw, nor ſodden with water, but roaſted with Fire.* As to every Offering from the Herd or from the Flock, the Fat and the Inwards were, by an expreſs Command of GOD, delivered up to the devouring Flame. All this was an Emblem of that tremendous Indignation, which is *poured out like Fire** ; which *ſeized* our immaculate SACRIFICE, that it might *ſpare* polluted Sinners; and which muſt have conſumed utterly any Mediator, who was leſs than infinite, or other than divine.

Had You, while unacquainted with experimental Philoſophy, beheld our renowned *Newton*; blowing, with great Aſſiduity and Attention, his little watery Bladders into the Air; You would, probably, have deſpiſed the venerable Philoſopher, and have thought him an *hoary Idiot.* But when You was made to underſtand; That, in every one of thoſe volatile ſopy Bubbles, He diſcovered the beauteous *Colours* of the *Rain-bow*; That, from this ſeemingly childiſh

* Nah. i. 6.

Experiment, He explained the Formation of the fineſt Appearance in Nature; You would then entertain a different Notion both of the Man and of his Employ.—So, when You diſcern the bleſſed *JESUS, looking forth at theſe Windows, and ſhewing Himſelf through theſe Lattices** of the *Jewiſh* Oeconomy; You will, I hope, conceive a higher Opinion of them, and derive richer Advantage from them.

Ther. There are ſeveral *Perſons*, as well as ritual Obſervances, of a very ſingular Character, mentioned in the *Moſaic* Law. The *Leper*, for Inſtance, the *Nazarite*, with others of the ſame antiquated and groteſque Stamp. Theſe are not only mentioned, but their Caſe is very circumſtantially, and with no ſmall Solemnity, deſcribed. All which ſeem, to me at leaſt, ſo many pompous, but *unmeaning* Narratives; that convey no manner of Edification to Readers in the preſent Age.—I have frequently had an Inclination, and now I have a proper Opportunity, to aſk your Opinion upon theſe Points.

Aſp. I am obliged to You, *Theron*, for giving me the Hint. What You propoſe, is by no Means foreign to the Topic of our Diſcourſe.—Thoſe Perſons were truly remarkable; neither are the Peculiarities

* *Cantic.* ii. 9. The Word, in the firſt Edition, is *flouriſhing* through. It was taken from the *Hebrew*, without conſulting the *Engliſh* Bible, and is a literal Tranſlation of מציץ. Which ſignifies more than barely *ſhewing Himſelf*; ſhewing Himſelf with Luſtre and Beauty. Like a delicate Flower, in its moſt blooming State, and all its gloſſy Colours.—Yet flouriſhing *through Lattices*; manifeſting Himſelf, not completely, but in part; concealing ſome, while He reveals much, of his mediatorial Glory.

liarities of their Caſe recorded in vain. They picture out, in *diſmal* and *delightful* Colours, the Sinner and the SAVIOUR.—To know Ourſelves, and to know *CHRIST*, is true Wiſdom; is indeed the Conſummation of all Knowledge. Here, We have a Lecture of hieroglyphical Inſtruction, on both thoſe important Subjects.

The *Leper** was an Emblem of a *Sinner*.—His Diſeaſe extremely afflictive to Himſelf, and intolerably loathſome to others. Sin likewiſe is the *moſt* of all Miſeries, to the Wretch who commits it; and moſt *deteſtably* odious, to the GOD who forbids it.—The *Leper* was ſecluded from the *Benefits* of *Society*, and all Communication with his Fellow-citizens. The Sinner alſo, while impenitent and unpardoned, is an *Alien* from the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*†; without any Enjoyment of the Comforts, or any Intereſt in the Privileges of the Goſpel. If He dies in this Condition, He muſt be for ever *ſhut out* from the Kingdom of Heaven; for ever *cut off* from the Preſence of the LORD.

The Contagion was ſometimes ſo *peſtilent*; that it not only tainted the Clothes of the Diſeaſed, but ſpread itſelf over the Walls of his Houſe, and infected the Timber of the Beams. It was ſometimes ſo *inveterate*; that there was no other poſſible Way of eradicating it, but only by burning the Garment, and demoliſhing the Building. Does not this give Us a clear, but melancholy View, of *original* Corruption? Which has transfuſed its Poiſon, through all the Faculties of the Soul, and all the Members of the Body. Nor will ever be in-

 tirely

* *See* Lev. Chap. xiii, xiv. † Eph. ii, 12.

tirely expelled, till Death releaſes the former, and conſigns the latter to the Duſt.

What could cure this terrible Diſtemper, even in its *mildeſt* State? Not all the Balm of *Gilead*; not all the Drugs on a thouſand Hills; nothing but the *conſecrated* Oil and *ſacrificial* Blood, duly applied by the High-Prieſt. And what can heal the Diſorders of our fallen Souls? So far heal them, as to purge away their Guilt, and ſubdue the Prevalence of their Iniquities? No Acts of Mortification, no Vigilance, nor any Efforts of our own; nothing but the *atoning* Death, and *ſanctifying* SPIRIT of the bleſſed *JESUS*. The Malignity and Virulence of this Plague of the Heart, are abſolutely incorrigible by any other Remedy. But, bleſſed be divine Grace, *this* Remedy, provided by our great HIGH-PRIEST, and adminiſtered by our great PHYSICIAN, is ſovereign, is infallible.

The Caſe of the *Nazarites* * was the very reverſe of the State of the *Lepers*. *Her Nazarites*, Jeremiah ſays, *were purer than Snow, they were whiter than Milk; they were more ruddy in Body than Rubies, their Poliſhing was of Sapphires* †. A faint Repreſentation of the only begotten SON, who is *the faireſt among ten thouſand*; the Brightneſs of his FATHER's Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon; both GOD and Man in one ſacred, wonderful, adorable SAVIOUR.—*They*, during the Time of their Separation, abſtained from Wine; withdrew from ſecular Buſineſs; avoided every Kind of Pollution; and dedicated themſelves, in an eſpecial Manner, to the Service of GOD. A Type of that *glorious NAZARITE*, who was ſeparated, for

* *See* Numb. chap. vi. † Lam. iv. 7.

for a Seaſon, from the Fruitions of Heaven: who was holy, harmleſs, and undefiled, both in his Nature and all his Converſation: who ſanctified Himſelf, and devoted his Life and Labours, his Soul and Body, to the Glory of his FATHER, and the Redemption of his People.—The *Nazarites*, even when they had diſcharged their Vow, and were ceremonially clean, yet were obliged to offer a Sin-offering, a Burnt-offering, and a Peace-offering. So, the great REDEEMER, though He had *perfectly obeyed* all the preceptive Parts of the divine Law, yet was required to offer up a Sacrifice—even the *incomparably precious* Sacrifice of Himſelf—in order to conſummate the Work of our Salvation.

Ther. Have You a ſufficient Warrant, for this Strain of Interpretation? Is it *ſound*, is it *rational*, or conformable to any *authentic* Standard of ſcriptural Expoſition? Methinks, it looks more like the Child of Fancy, than the Offspring of Judgment; more like the Sally of a ſportive Imagination, than the Reſult of a ſober Diſquiſition.

You cannot be ignorant, *Aſpaſio*, how the ruling Paſſion tinctures the whole Conduct. Hence it is, I apprehend, that your *religious Inamoratoes* find heavenly Beauties, where Scripture intended no more than natural Truths. Hence it is, that they turn plain Facts into profound Figures, and allegorize common Senſe into pious Abſurdity.—Have You never ſeen the *myſtic* Interpretations of ſome antient, and I may add, ſome modern Divines? The Honeſty of their Deſign is tranſparent, and the Piety of their Hearts is unqueſtionable; otherwiſe, We ſhould be

tempted to ſuſpect, that they meant to burleſque the Scriptures, and diſgrace their Author.

Who can ever perſuade Himſelf, that the ſupremely wiſe GOD, would ſend Us to ſearch for a *Body* of *Divinity*, in a *Bundle* of *Rods*? Or ſet Us to ſpin all the Myſteries of Chriſtianity, from a few Fleeces of Wool, *ring-ſtreaked*, *ſpeckled*, and *ſpotted**? Thus to expound the Scriptures, is, not to open them clearly, and apply them judiciouſly, but rather to whip them into Froth †.

Aſp. We have the Authority of our LORD Himſelf. Who has informed Us—That the *brazen Serpent* lifted up in the Wilderneſs ‡, was figurative of his own Suſpenſion and Death on the Croſs.—That the *Temple*, built on Mount *Sion*, was typical of his immaculate Body, in which dwelt all the Fulneſs of the GODHEAD ‖.—That the Prophet *Jonah*, lodged in the Belly of the Whale, and diſcharged from that ſtrange Confinement, on the third Day §; was an Emblem of his own deſcending into the Grave, and riſing again before his Fleſh ſaw Corruption.

We have alſo the Teſtimony and the Practice of the chiefeſt of the Apoſtles, for our Warrant. Speaking of *Hagar* and *Sarah*, He expreſly ſays: *Which Things are an Allegory.* A figurative Tranſaction; where one Thing is done, another deſigned; or the apparent Hiſtory, comprehends a latent Myſtery.—He aſſures Us, That the *Rock* ſmitten by *Moſes*,

* Gen. xxx. 39.

† *Luther* uſed to call ſuch far-fetched and unnatural Allegories, *Sputnam Scripturæ.*

‡ John iii. 14. ‖ John ii. 19, 21. Col. ii. 9.

§ Matt. xii. 39, 40.

Moſes, had a Reference to *CHRIST**; who was wounded for our Sins, and is the Foundation of our Hopes. That the *Waters*, iſſuing at the Stroke, were ſignificative of thoſe ſpiritual Bleſſings, which flow from a crucified SAVIOUR. That, as the former *followed* the Sons of *Jacob*, through all the Circumvolutions of their tedious Journey; the latter accompany the Diſciples of *JESUS*, in every Stage of their earthly Pilgrimage.—Let the great Teacher of the *Gentiles* be our Expoſitor; and We ſhall ſee the *Veil* of the *Temple* dignified with a Significancy, richer far than its coſtly Materials, and curious Workmanſhip. Its Silk and Embroidery exhibit, to the Eye of Faith, the pure and ſpotleſs Fleſh of *CHRIST*†. As, by rending the material Veil, the Holy of Holies became viſible and acceſſible; ſo, by piercing the Body, and ſpilling the Blood of *CHRIST*, the GOD of Heaven was *manifeſted* in all his Goodneſs, and the Kingdom of Heaven was *opened* to all Believers.

Every Reader muſt admire thoſe *divided Waves*; which, inſtead of overwhelming the *Iſraelites* with a reſiſtleſs Deluge, ſtood like a Wall of Defence on their Right-hand, and on their left, as they marched through the Depths of the Sea.—Every Reader muſt admire that *ſuſpended Cloud*, which ſpread itſelf like a ſpacious Canopy over the Hoſts of *Iſrael*; and ſcreened them from the annoying Sun-beams, as they paſſed through the ſultry Deſart‡.—Our

* 1 Cor. x. 4. † Heb. x. 20.

‡ It is ſaid, That the *Iſraelites*, paſſing through the Deſarts of *Arabia*, ſaw not a green Tree, nor a ſhady Spot, for many Months. If ſo, this miraculous Cloud, this grand Umbrella, muſt be unſpeakably ſerviceable and refreſhing.

Admiration muſt be heightened, when We find *that*, which was a Cloud by Day, becoming a *Pillar* of *Fire* by Night; and illuminating their Camp with the moſt amazing, as well as the moſt chearing Splendor.—But St. *Paul* diſcerned a greater Glory, and a deeper Deſign, in theſe unparalleled Events. The People, He ſays, *were baptized unto Moſes, in the Cloud and in the Sea**. Theſe ſymbolically repreſented, The Baptiſm of Water and of Fire; or the Application of *CHRIST*'s Blood to our Souls, and the Efficacy of his SPIRIT on our Hearts. In the former of which, conſiſts our Juſtification; from the latter of which, proceeds our Sanctification.

I fear, You would think my Diſcourſe, ſomewhat like the Journey juſt now mentioned, if I was to touch upon the Ordinances of the *civil* Conſtitution. The Ox not to be muzzled, in treading out the Corn†; was a virtual Proviſion for the Maintenance of Miniſters, who "labour in the "Word and Doctrine." The Fields not to be ſowed with divers Kinds of Seed; Linen and Woollen not to be intermingled in the ſame Manufacture‡; ſeem to prohibit all diſſimilar and unnatural Combinations. Eſpecially of a Believer and Infidel, in the Bond of Marriage; or of human Righteouſneſs and divine, in the Caſe of Juſtification. Theſe Particulars, with others of the ſame Nature, I paſs over. But I muſt not wholly omit the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*. Which is the moſt unexceptionable Vindication, as well as the faultleſs Model, of allegorical Expoſition.

It

* 1 Cor. x. 2. † Deut. xxv. 4. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10.
‡ Levit. xix. 19.

It is delightful to obſerve, what Propriety of Addreſs, the inſpired Writer uſes. He ſpeaks to the *Jews*, in *their own* Way: alludes to their own Uſages, Ordinances, and Ceremonies: proves them to be Types of, and Guides to, a more clear, a more benign, and in all reſpects a more excellent * Oeconomy. More particularly He diſplays the *tranſcendent Superiority* of *CHRIST* and his Gifts, even to thoſe Perſons and Privileges, which they held in the higheſt Eſteem. Theſe, like the Morning Star, were introductory to, yet totally eclipſed by, the riſing Sun.

They had exalted Apprehenſions of the *Angelic* Excellencies. The Apoſtle therefore celebrates the REDEEMER, as the LORD whom Angels obey, as the GOD whom Angels adore.—They always reckoned *Moſes* to be the *firſt Favourite* of Heaven, and chief among the Children of Men. He lets them know, that *Moſes*, with all his extraordinary Endowments, was but a *Servant* in the Houſe

* He ſtyles the legal Oblations, and indeed the whole Service of the *Jewiſh* Sanctuary, *The Example and Shadow of heavenly Things*; or of *CHRIST JESUS*, and evangelical Worſhip, and ſpiritual Bleſſings, *Heb.* viii. 5.—Υποδειγμα, *the Pattern:* ſomewhat like the Strokes, penciled out upon a Piece of fine Linen; which preſent You with the Figure of Sprigs, of Leaves, and of Flowers; but have not yet received their ſplendid Colours, their curious Shades, and beautiful Enrichments, from the Labours of the Needle.—Σκια, *A ſhadowy Repreſentation:* which gives You ſome dim and imperfect Idea of the Body; but not the fine Features, not the diſtinguiſhing Air, none of thoſe living Graces, which adorn the real Perſon.—Yet, both the Pattern and the Shadow lead our Minds to ſomething nobler than themſelves. The Pattern, to that which *completes* it; the Shadow, to that which *occaſions* it.

Houſe of *JESUS*. It was his greateſt Honour, to miniſter unto this Prince of Peace.—As the Prieſthood and Sacrifices were ſome of their diſtinguiſhing Privileges; He ſhews the Pre-eminence of *CHRIST*'s Office to all the *Aaronic* Orders. He demonſtrates the extenſive and everlaſting Efficacy of *his one* Atonement; in Preference to every Form, and the whole temporary Series of *Levitical* Oblations.

Ther. Thus interpreted, I muſt acknowledge, the Book of *Levitical* Ceremonies is *ſignificant* and *edifying*. Whereas, abſtracted from this evangelical Improvement, nothing can be more empty and jejune. I once thought, that, to peruſe thoſe obſolete Canons, was like ſitting down to an Entertainment of dry Bones. But, if ſuch be their Import, they may yield Marrow and Fatneſs to the attentive Mind.

Due Care, however, ſhould be taken, not to ſuppoſe a Type, where there is no *apparent* Foundation of Analogy in the Thing itſelf; or no *Hint* of this Nature given Us by the unerring SPIRIT. Leſt, inſtead of being guided by Truth, We are bewildered by Fancy.—And, when either or both theſe Handles preſent themſelves, I think, We ſhould beware of ſtraining the Subject, beyond the Bounds of a *juſt* and *reaſonable* Compariſon. Leſt, inſtead of following the Clue, We ſtretch it till it breaks.—If the firſt Caution is not obſerved, the Senſe of Scripture will lie ſo deep, or be removed to ſuch a Diſtance; that none but Perſons of the moſt acute Diſcernment, can find it; or none but Perſons of the moſt excurſive Imagination, can reach it. If the ſecond is not regarded, the Meaning of thoſe divine Volumes

lumes will become ſo vague and volatile, that there will hardly remain any Poſſibility of aſcertaining or fixing it.

Aſp. As to the Expedience and Neceſſity of theſe cautionary Limitations *, I have the Pleaſure of agreeing entirely with my Friend.—Let our Fancy ſubmit to the Reins of Judgment, otherwiſe her Excurſions will be *wild* and *lawleſs*. Let our Zeal borrow the Eyes of Diſcretion, otherwiſe her Efforts will be *blind* and *extravagant*. And let all, thus tempered, thus regulated, be under the Influence of enlightening Grace. *Then*, to ſpiritualize the antient Scriptures, will be to convert the Stones of the Sanctuary into the Jewels of a Crown; and to fetch, not Water only, but Milk and Honey, from the flinty Rock.

Then, how pleaſing muſt it be, as well as inſtructive, to diſcover the bleſſed *JESUS*, in all the Inſtitutions of the *Moſaic* Law †.—To ſee his Incarnation prefigured by the Feaſt of *Tabernacles* ‡. When the *Iſraelites* were to relinquiſh their Houſes, and

* The Cautions, neceſſary to be uſed on this Occaſion, are more copiouſly and very particularly laid down, by *Witſius* in his *Miſcellanea*, pag. 673, *&c.* Concerning which Rules, our elegant and judicious Author obſerves; *Hæ ſunt allegoricarum & typicarum Interpretationum Leges. Quibus ſpretis neglectiſque, ſi quis Ingenio ſuo indulgeat, ipſeque ſibi myſticos Senſus excogitet, ut ea quæ ſunt* מליצות locutiones planæ, *in* חידות ænignata *transformet*; *is non Senſum Dei, ſed Cerebri ſui obtrudit Figmenta*; *et, ut Hieronymus ait*, In Scripturis lymphatico errore verſatur.

† Agreeably to the juſt and beautiful Obſervation of *Theodoret*; Οσα ο νομος εσκιαγραφησε ταυτα ο Χριστος τελειως εξωγραφησε. *What the Law ſketched out in a ſhadowy Draught, CHRIST exhibited in real Life and Subſtance.*

‡ Lev. xxiii. 34, 40, 42.

and lodge in Booths. Even as the SON of GOD left the Bosom of his FATHER, and the Seats of Bliss, to inhabit a Cottage of Clay, and sojourn in a Vale of Tears.—To see our spotless and Divine VICTIM, typically slain at the joyful Solemnity of the *Passover*, and the anniversary Feast of *Expiation*.—To see his Death, that inestimable Ransom for our Souls, presented to our Faith, in every Morning and Evening *Sacrifice* *: his Intercession, that prevailing Recommendation of our Prayers, most sweetly expressed by the rich *Incense*, which attended the sacred Rite.—To see the various Methods of *Purification*; some pointing at the Foun-tain † for Sin and for Uncleanness, opened in our REDEEMER's bleeding Heart; others referring to those sanctifying Operations of the SPIRIT, which act *as a Refiner's Fire* ‡, *or as Fullers Sope*.—To see, in the *City of Refuge* ||, that inviolable Sanctuary, that most perfect Security, which *CHRIST*'s meritorious Sufferings, yield to the believing, and tender to every Sinner.

Was it so very affecting, and so very encouraging to *Æneas*, when He beheld the Story of the *Trojan* Heroes, pictured upon the Walls of the *Carthaginian* Temple §? How much greater Encouragement and Joy

* Exod. xxix. 38, 39. † Exod. xxix. 4. Numb. xix. 18. Psal. li. 7. ‡ Numb. xxxi. 23. Isai. iv. 4. || Numb. xxxv. 11, 12.

§ VIRG. Æn. I. 454, &c. *Æneas*, shipwrecked upon a Coast unknown, goes abroad, accompanied with a single Friend, in order to make Discoveries. To learn the Name of the Country, the Nature of the Inhabitants, and what Treatment Himself and his Companions were likely to find. Wandering in this Manner, He enters a stately Temple, adorned with historical Paintings. And

Joy muſt ariſe in the Chriſtian's Breaſt, when He perceives the amiable Lineaments of his Everlaſting FRIEND, pourtrayed in all the Peculiarities of the *Jewiſh* Worſhip, and in the moſt diſtinguiſhing Events of the *Jewiſh* Hiſtory! This muſt highly ennoble the Bible, and inexpreſſibly endear it to our Affections. This ſpreads *Luſtre*, *Life*, and *Glory*, through every Page of that bleſſed Book.—Though I would beware of indulging, what might be called a pious Wantonneſs of Imagination; yet I ſhould much rather chooſe, in expounding the Scriptures, to ramble a little with *Auguſtine*, among the Groves, the Fountains, and the Flowers of the Goſpel; than to ſtumble with *Grotius* *, amidſt the dark and barren Deſarts of unevangelical Criticiſm. I would ſee, or think I ſee my SAVIOUR, where it may not, perhaps, be eaſy to make out the Traces of his Dignity, to the Satisfaction of a rigorous Enquirer; rather than ſhut my Eyes upon the Diſplay of his Perfections, when they beam forth with the moſt inviting Beauty.

Ther.

And what are the Subjects of theſe fine Decorations? To his great Surpriſe, and equal Satisfaction, He finds them to be the *Trojan* War, and the Exploits of his Countrymen. This Incident affects Him extremely. Diſpels his Fears; animates his Hopes; and turns his Deſpondency into Confidence.

* *Grotius*, it is too well known, could not, or would not ſee the Perſon and the Sufferings of *CHRIST*, even in the liiid Chapter of *Iſaiah*. No, not in that Chapter, where the *Earl* of *Rocheſter* ſaw ſuch a bright and endearing Manifeſtation of the REDEEMER's Grace, as laid the Foundation for his extraordinary Converſion. Strange! that a learned and renowned Expoſitor, ſhould have leſs ſpiritual Diſcernment, ſhould be abundantly more dim-ſighted, (μυωπαζων) than a diſſolute and infamous Libertine.

Ther. How ſoon is our Walk finiſhed! How imperceptibly has the Time ſtole away!—Theſe *Garden-Gates* I always uſed to approach with a particular Complacency. They ſeemed to afford me a *welcome Retreat* from the Impertinence and Vanity of the World. Now, methinks, I enter them with Reluctance. Becauſe, they are likely to put a Period to this agreeable Converſation.—However, as my *Aſpaſio* enters with me, I am reconciled, I am ſatisfied. It will be in his Power to reſtore the Pleaſure, which muſt now be interrupted. And this is what I ſhall ere long requeſt; becauſe, I have not ſpoke my whole Mind upon the preſent Subject.

Aſp. Whenever You think proper, *Theron.* This is, to me, a *favourite* Subject: and not to me only, but to incomparably better Judges.—The Man, who had been caught up into the third Heavens, and ſeen the Viſions of GOD, determined to know *nothing* but *JESUS CHRIST* and Him *crucified* *.—At the grandeſt Aſſembly, that ever was convened on Earth, this furniſhed the *principal*, if not the *only* Topic of Converſation.—And in that World, where the Voice of Joy and Thankſgiving is perpetually heard, this conſtitutes the *Burden* of the Song; *Thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed Us to GOD by thy Blood* †.

* 1 Cor. ii. 2. † Rev. v. 9.

DIALOGUE IV.

THERON.

I MUST now desire my *Aspasio* to inform me —Of *whom* that grand Assembly consisted, (which He mentioned in the Close of our last Discourse) and *where* it was convened?

Asp. Can't you guess, *Theron?*—Was it in the Plains of *Thessaly*; when *Xerxes* drew together the Forces of more than half the known World, and appeared at the Head of all the Potentates of the East?—Was it in the *Roman* Forum; when the Senators were assembled in their Robes, and the Barbarians took them for a Synod of Gods?—No; it was on the Mount of *Transfiguration.* Where the SON of the true GOD, the LORD of eternal Glory, shone forth in some of his celestial and native Splendour; with Garments white as the new-fallen Snows *, and a Countenance bright as the

* *Mark* ix. 3. The Evangelist's Description is, like the Scene, *remarkably bright*; and the *Gradation* of his Images, is almost as worthy of Observation, as the memorable Fact.—The Garments were *white—exceeding* white

the meridian Sun. Where He converſed with two of his moſt diſtinguiſhed Saints, juſt come down from .the Regions of Bliſs and Immortality: with *Moſes* the meek Deliverer of the Law, and with *Elijah* the reſolute Reſtorer of its Honours. Where He was attended by three of his principal Ambaſſadors; who were to be the Reformers of Mankind, and the Lights of the World.

This, I think, is the moſt venerable and auguſt Aſſembly, which the Annals of Hiſtory have recorded.—And what was the Topic of Converſation, among theſe illuſtrious Perſonages?—Not the Affairs of State, nor the Revolutions of Empire; not the curious Refinements of Literature, nor the wonderful Diſcoveries of Philoſophy; but the *ignominious* and *bloody* Exit*, which the Divine *JESUS* was ſoon to make at *Jeruſalem*.—This Circumſtance, methinks, ſhould recommend the Subject to our frequent Diſcourſe; even though it was leſs eminent, for intrinſic Dignity, and comfortable Import.

Talking in this manner, they arrive at the *Park*. Which, the Moment You enter, fills the View with its

white—white *as the Snow*—whiter than any *Fuller* on Earth could make them—ſurpaſſing all the Works of *Art*, equaling the firſt and fineſt Productions of *Nature*.—Nay, ſo great was the Luſtre, ſo ſweetly yet ſo ſtrongly refulgent, that it *gliſtered* (ἠστίλο γιλθοσία) like the Lightning, and even dazzled the Sight.

* Does not this very delicately, yet very forcibly intimate, That the Sufferings and Death of *CHRIST*, were the principal End of the *Moſaic* Inſtitutions, and the principal Subject of the *Prophetic* Teachings? For, is it not natural to ſuppoſe, that *Moſes* and *Elijah* intended, when miniſtering on Earth, that very Thing, which their Converſation dwelt upon, when they deſcended from Heaven?

its bold, enlarged, and magnificent Sweep.—It was diverſified with level and riſing Ground. Here, ſcooped into mimic Amphitheatres; with the *Deer* pendent on the little Summit, or ſhooting down the eaſy Precipice. There, raiſed into gentle Hillocks; ſome of which were canopied with a large, ſpreading, ſolitary Oak; others were tufted with a Cluſter of tapering and verdant Elms. Two or three *Caſcades*, gleaming from afar, as they poured along the ſlanting Rock, or the graſſy Slope, gave a pleaſing Variation to the Proſpect. While they ſtartled the timorous unexperienced Fawns, with their foaming Current, and watery Roar.—*Grandeur* and *Simplicity* ſeemed to be the Genius of the Place. Every Thing breathed an Air of noble Negligence, and artleſs Majeſty.

In the Center of all, roſe a curious, *romantic Mount*.—Its Form was exactly round. Somewhat like a Sugar-loaf, whoſe Cone is lopt off, a little below the Point.—Not coeval with Nature, but the Work of human Induſtry. Thrown up, 'tis ſuppoſed, in thoſe perilous Times, when *Britain* was alarmed by foreign Invaſions, or bled with inteſtine Wounds.—It was covered, all around, with Elder-ſhrubs. Whoſe Ranks, gradually riſing, and ſpreading Shade above Shade, compoſed a kind of woody Theatre. Through which were ſtruck two or three *ſpiral Walks*; leading, by a gentle Aſcent, and under embowering Verdure, to the Summit.—At proper Intervals, and on every Side of the Hill, were formed little *Arbours*; with Apertures, cut through the Boughs, to admit a Proſpect of the Country.—In one or other of theſe leafy Boxes, You command, at every Hour of the Day, either the enliven-

ing Sun, or the refreſhing Shade.—All along the circling Avenues, and all round the beauteous Reſts, ſprung Daffodils, Primroſes, and Violets: which, mingling with Hyacinths and Cowſlips, compoſed many a charming Piece of *natural Moſaic*.

How agreeable, as they climb and wind themſelves round the Hill, to reflect on the *happy Change*, which has now taken place!—Where ſteely Helmets gleamed, or brazen Shields claſhed, the *Goldfinches* twitter their Loves, and diſplay their painted Plumes. The Dens of Rapine, or the horrid Haunts of Bloodſhed, are become the Retreats of calm Contemplation, and friendly Converſe.—In yonder lower Spaces, where the armed Troops were wont to patrol; from whence they made Excurſions, to ravage the Villages, or terrify the Swains; the *Fallow-deer* trip lightly, or the full-headed Stags ſtand at bay.

From a ſmall Eminence, but at a conſiderable Diſtance, guſhed a Couple of Springs. Which, rambling through a Grove, loſt one another in the ſhady Labyrinth. Emerging, at length, from the Gloom, they approached nearer and nearer, and fell into Embraces at the Foot of this Hill. They rolled, in amicable Conjunction, along the pebbly Channel, which incircles its Baſis; and added their *ſober Melody* to the *ſprightly Warbling* of the Birds.—Flowing off in one common Stream, they formed the fine Pieces of Water, which beautified the Park. From thence, they ſtole into the Meadow, and widened into a *River*. There, enamoured as it were with each other, they glide by wealthy Towns, and ſweep through flowery Vales; regardleſs of the blooming Toys, which deck the one, and of the noiſy Crowds, which throng the other.

So,

So, ſaid *Aſpaſio*, may *Theron* and his *Selina*, pleaſing and pleaſed with each other, paſs through the buſy and the amuſing Scenes of Life; neither captivated by the one, nor anxious for the other. With ſuch harmonious Agreement, and indiſſoluble Union, may they purſue the Courſe, marked out by Providence; their Happineſs *increaſing*, and their Uſefulneſs *enlarging*, as they draw nearer the Ocean of all Good. Then, parted by a gentle Stroke of Fate, like the Waters of ſome ample Stream ſevered by the Piers of an intervening Bridge, may they ſpeedily reunite!—Reunite in conſummate Bliſs, and never be ſeparated more!

Ther. I thank You, *Aſpaſio*, for your affectionate Compliment. Nor can I wiſh You, by way of Return, a greater Recompence, than the continual Exerciſe of ſuch a *benevolent* Temper. For, to exerciſe Benevolence, is to enjoy the moſt refined and exalted Pleaſure; ſuch as makes the neareſt Approaches to the Felicity of the eternal Mind; who, as the Scripture moſt beautifully ſpeaks, *has Pleaſure in the Proſperity of his Servants.*

But while We are ſeated on this Mount, our Situation reminds Us of (what You juſt now mentioned) the grand Conference relating to the Death of *CHRIST*.—An Event, for which you have indeed accounted; but in a Manner, not the moſt honourable to the divine Attributes.

Aſp. I have repreſented it, as a *Ranſom* for our Souls, and a *Sacrifice* for our Sins. If You diſapprove my Account, be pleaſed to favour me with *your* own.—For what Purpoſe, according to *your* Opinion, did that ever-bleſſed PERSON die?

Ther. To confirm the *Truth* of his Doctrine, and leave Us a *Pattern* of the moſt perfect Reſignation.

Aſp. And is this all? Shall We thus impoveriſh the Riches of Grace?—Was this Notion *defenſible*, it could never be *deſirable*. But it has as little to ſupport it, as it has to recommend it.—For, upon ſuch a Suppoſition, where is the Difference between the Death of *CHRIST*, and the Death of the Martyrs? *They* confirmed the Truth of the Goſpel. In *their* Sufferings was Obedience and Reſignation; the ſame in Quality, though not in Degree.—Upon ſuch a Suppoſition, what *Benefit* could the antient Patriarchs receive from the REDEEMER? Since None could be improved by the Example of his Patience, or the Pattern of his Obedience, till they were actually exhibited.—Or how could *CHRIST* be ſtyled, *The LAMB ſlain from the Foundation of the World**? The Advantages of whoſe Death, commenced from the very Beginning, as they will be prolonged even to the End of Time.

Not to depend on conſequential Arguments, let Us hear the expreſs Declaration of our Divine MASTER Himſelf: *This is my Blood, which is ſhed*—for what? To give Credibility to my Goſpel, or yield an Example of entire Reſignation? Rather —*for the Remiſſion of Sins*†. Will any One attempt to make, The Remiſſion of Sins, and the Propoſal of a Pattern or the Ratification of a Doctrine, ſynonimous Terms?—They, who can torture and tranſmute the genuine Senſe of Words, at this extraordinary rate, may metamorphoſe any Expreſſion into any Meaning.

If

* Rev. xiii. 8.

† Matt. xxvi. 28.

If then We would conſider our LORD's Death, in its *due Amplitude*; We muſt conſider it, both as a Pattern of Piety, and as a Ranſom for Sinners. We muſt neither ſeparate nor confound theſe very diſtinct, yet very conſiſtent Effects.

Ther. Is it not inconſiſtent with the acknowledged Principles of Juſtice, That the Innocent ſhould be puniſhed, inſtead of the Offender?

Aſp. If the innocent Perſon has an *abſolute* Power over his own Life; *willingly* ſubſtitutes Himſelf in the Place of the Guilty; and, by his vicarious Sufferings, fully anſwers all the Purpoſes of a *righteous* Government;—In this Caſe, which was the Caſe with our LORD, I ſee not the leaſt Repugnancy to the Rules of Juſtice.

The Bible, that authentic Tranſcript of the Counſels of Heaven, avows; and, by avowing, vindicates the Practice. *The LORD hath laid on Him the Iniquity of Us all**: when all We like Sheep

* *Iſai.* liii. 6. הפגיע בו *made to meet*, or *fall upon*, in an hoſtile, vindictive Manner; with a Deſign to take Vengeance, or inflict Death; as an armed Man falls upon his Enemy, or the fierce Lion on the helpleſs Lamb. This is by far the moſt uſual Signification of the Phraſe.

I could not obſerve, without Surpriſe and Sorrow, the late Attempt of a learned Writer, to interpret away the Force and Spirit of this Text. He ſays, "the Word We "tranſlate *hath laid*, is the ſame that We render *meet*, "Exod. xxiii. 4. *If Thou* meet *thine Enemy's Ox or Aſs* "*going aſtray, thou ſhalt ſurely bring them back to Him* "*again.* And the Meaning is, By Him the LORD "hath *cauſed to meet* and *ſtop the Iniquities* of Us all, "wherein We have wandered from Him."

To this I might object; That, though the *Verb*, in each Paſſage, is the ſame, the *Conſtruction* is by no means parallel. The Prefix ב occurs in one Caſe, is omitted

Sheep had gone aſtray, and were expoſed to the Stroke of Vengeance, as thoſe wandering Creatures to the ravenous Beaſt; the good SHEPHERD interpoſed, and the juſt GOD made that Vengeance to fall upon Him, which muſt otherwiſe have been executed upon Us.—*He ſuffered*, ſays another inſpired Writer, *the Juſt for the Unjuſt* *; *that*,

in the other.—I might farther enquire; Whether the Language of this Interpretation, be conformable to the Laws of *Grammar*; and ſuch as ſufficiently expreſſes, what I ſuppoſe is intended, "The LORD cauſed our "Iniquities to be met, and to be ſtopped."—But theſe Particulars I wave, and ſhall only examine, whether the *Senſe* is ſuitable to Scripture. According to this Gentleman's Idea, the Prophet's Doctrine is as follows; "Our Sins were running away, like a ſtray Sheep, or "like a wandering Ox. But they were met by *CHRIST*; "who graciouſly turned them back, and reſtored them "to their rightful Owner."—To avoid this glaring Impropriety, our Author has added a kind of Salvo; "to "turn *Us* back to Himſelf, who is the *Shepherd* of Souls." But this is to depart from the Prophet's Subject; who is ſpeaking not of *Us*, but of *our Iniquities*. This is to depart from the Tenour of *his own* Explication: If He adheres to the Clue, which He borrows from the Book of *Exodus*, what I have repreſented, is the unavoidable Conſequence.

See! to what wretched Shifts, diſhonourable to the Word of GOD, and even to the Art of Criticiſm, *They* muſt have recourſe! Who refuſe to acknowledge, the *real Subſtitution* of *CHRIST* in our Stead, and the *proper Atonement* made by his Death.—How much more like a true Critic, and like a true Chriſtian, has *Vitringa* explained the Paſſage! *Cum Nos inſtar Ovium diſperſarum eſſemus in Erroribus, & Pœna Criminum noſtrorum, inſtar Lupi aut Beſtiæ voracis Nos perſequeretur ad Exitium: intervenit ſervus JEHOVÆ juſtus, qui illam Pœnam in ſe ſuſcepit; in quem irruit ad Necem uſque; quique adeo medius inter Pœnam & Nos, eandem Pœnam tulit, & Nos ab Exitio vindicavit.*

* 1 Pet. iii. 18.

that, by expiating our Guilt, *He might bring Us to GOD*—now, to His gracious Favour—hereafter, to His bliſsful Preſence.

You will permit me to add a Paſſage, from our common Favourite *Milton*. Becauſe, it is no leſs beautiful in itſelf; than it is pertinent to the Occaſion; muſt pleaſe the Critic, and may expound the Apoſtle.—*MESSIAH*, pleading in behalf of fallen Man, thus addreſſes his Almighty FATHER;

——————— *Man, dead in Sins and loſt,*
Atonement for Himſelf, or Offering meet
(Indebted and undone!) hath none to bring.
Behold Me then! Me for Him! Life for Life
I offer. On me let thine Anger fall.
Account me Man: I for his Sake will leave
Thy Boſom, and this Glory next to Thee
Freely put off; and for Him laſtly die
Well-pleas'd; on me let Death wreak all his Rage *.

Ther. The fine Imagination of a Poet, will hardly paſs for a deciſive Argument. When We are ſearching after Truth, We muſt attend to the Dictates of Reaſon, not follow the Vagaries of Fancy. And Reaſon, *Aſpaſio*, remonſtrates againſt your Notion of a vicarious Sacrifice. Reaſon! that primary Guide, and final Teſt, both in diſcovering and determining the Senſe of Scripture.

Aſp. Suppoſe You then, my dear *Theron*, that None are in Poſſeſſion of Reaſon, but the Pupils of *Socinus*, and the Zealots for *Deiſm?* Or, that None

* MILTON, Book III. 233.

make uſe of Reaſon, in their religious Enquiries, but Men of this Mould?

Wrong not the Chriſtian, think not Reaſon yours;
'Tis Reaſon *our great* MASTER *holds ſo dear;*
'Tis Reaſon's *injur'd Rights his Wrath reſents;*
'Tis Reaſon's *Voice obey'd his Glories crown.*
Through Reaſon's *Wounds alone thy* Faith *can die* *.

Poets, You ſee, are far from diſclaiming Reaſon. Equally far is Chriſtianity from diſcarding the *ſober*, the *ſanctified* Uſe of this noble Faculty. When Reaſon is under the Influence and Direction of the Divine SPIRIT, We have the ſame high Opinion of her Excellence, as Yourſelf. And, when thus regulated, We have, I am perſuaded, the Sanction of her Authority, for all our Sentiments.

Reaſon, as She operated in the Sages of the Heathen World, inſtead of rejecting, approved and adopted this very Scheme. Approved it, even under the Diſadvantage of a mutilated and defective, or rather of a perverted and dead Form. The current Language of the Claſſic Authors, and almoſt every Hiſtorian of *Greece* and *Rome*, are Vouchers for the Truth of this Obſervation †.—As the *Gentiles* were unanimous in the Cuſtom of offering Sacrifices, and equally unanimous in ſuppoſing their vicarious Nature, ſo alſo are the *Jewiſh* Writers.

Ther. What Man of Senſe, pays any Regard to the *Jewiſh* Writers? Legendary they are, and extravagant to the laſt Degree. Dotards I might call them, rather than Writers.

Aſp.

* Night-Thoughts, N° IV.
† *See the Note, in* Dialogue III. *p.* 84, 85.

Aſp. They are, I believe, extravagant enough in their Comments upon Scripture. But they relate, with ſufficient Exactneſs and Fidelity, the *prevailing Belief* of their Nation. In this Caſe, their Teſtimony is as unexceptionable; as in the other, their Notions are chimerical.—Now, had it been a miſtaken Belief, ſurely our bleſſed LORD, that *infallible* Judge, and *impartial* Reprover, would have teſtified his Diſapprobation of it. Surely his Diſciples, who were actuated by the *unerring* and *undaunted* Spirit of their MASTER, would have entered their Proteſt againſt it. Surely St. *Paul*, in his Epiſtle to that very People, and in his Treatiſe on that very Subject, would have ſet Himſelf to rectify ſuch an Error; and have weeded out the Tares, before He ſowed the good Seed. But there is not the leaſt Hint of this Kind, in all the Diſcourſes of our SAVIOUR, or in all the Writings of his Apoſtles.

They ſpeak to a People, who were accuſtomed to look upon their Sacrifices, as piacular Ob'ations *, and a typical Expiation of Guilt. They ſpeak of our REDEEMER's Crucifixion, and the Benefits of his Death, in thoſe ſacrificial Terms, which were of *current* Uſe, and *eſtabliſhed* Signification. If therefore the popular Opinion was improper, their Manner of Expreſſion and Addreſs, muſt be calculated rather to authenticate Error, than to propagate Truth.—So that, I think, even the Silence of the inſpired Penman on this Occaſion, is but little inferior to a loud Atteſtation. Did they only ſay

* This, I dare promiſe the learned Reader, He will find inconteſtably proved by *Outram*, in his Treatiſe *De Sacrificiis*.

ſay nothing *againſt* the Doctrine of Satisfaction by Sacrifice; it would, in effect, and Circumſtances conſidered, be ſaying Abundance *for* it.—But they are very copious and explicit upon the Point.

Ther. Where are they ſo copious? If You have ſuch a Heap of their Allegations, it will be eaſy to pick out a few, and give Us a Specimen.

Aſp. It is as eaſy, *Theron*, as it is delightful.—*MESSIAH ſhall be cut off*, ſays the Prophet *Daniel, but not for Himſelf* *.—For whom then, and for What? *Iſaiah* informs Us concerning both: *For the Tranſgreſſion of my People was He ſtricken* †.—Becauſe, this is an Article of the laſt Importance, it is repeated; it is confirmed; it is explained, with the moſt remarkable Particularity: *He was wounded for our Tranſgreſſions; He was bruiſed for our Iniquities; the Chaſtiſement of our Peace was upon Him* ‡, *and with his Stripes We are healed* ‖.—Our LORD himſelf aſſerts the ſame Truth in the very ſame Style; *I am the good Shepherd, and lay down my Life for the Sheep* §. St. *Paul*, in a Multitude of Paſſages, ſets his Seal to this momentous Doctrine.—St. *Peter* maintains it, in very forcible Words; *Who*

* Dan. ix. 26. † Iſai. liii. 8.

‡ *The Chaſtiſement of our Peace*, the Puniſhment neceſſary to make our Peace with GOD, *was upon Him*, עליו. This Form of Expreſſion is uſed, *Judg.* xix. 20. *Pſal.* lvi. 13. In the former Place, it ſignifies A *voluntary* Engagement, to perform a friendly Office. In the latter, it implies the *Neceſſity* of performing, what is thus undertaken. Both the Ideas ſeem to be comprehended in the preſent Paſſage. Our LORD willingly engaged to ſupply our Wants, and pay our Debts. Which, when once undertaken, He lay under an Obligation to execute.

‖ Iſai. liii. 5. § John x. 15.

Who his own Self bare our Sins, in his own Body on the Tree *.

The ſacred Writers not only aſſert this capital Article, but uſe every Diverſity of Speech, in order to give it the fulleſt Evidence, and the ſtrongeſt Eſtabliſhment. *He made* Reconciliation *for the Sins of the People* †. *JESUS CHRIST the Righteous is the* Propitiation *for our Sins* ‡. *He loved Us, and* waſhed *Us from our Sins in his own Blood* ‖. *He was* made Sin *for Us, though He knew no Sin* §.

Ther. No body makes any Objection to theſe Texts. But the Senſe, the *true Senſe* of ſuch Phraſes, is the Thing in queſtion.

Aſp. What You call the Queſtion, to me appears ſo plain, as not to want a Deciſion, or admit of a Doubt.

However, ſince You ſeem to demand a *critical Scrutiny*, it will not be thought pedantic, if I make an Obſervation or two upon the original Languages: or rather, as You are not acquainted with the *Hebrew*, upon that Language, of which You yourſelf are a Judge and a Maſter.

If One died for All, then were All dead. The Preposition υπερ, in this Connection, muſt neceſſarily ſignify more than, "on our Account, or for our "Advan-

* 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. Very forcible Words indeed—Ος—αυτος—εν τω σωματι αυτου—He *bare*—Himſelf *bare our Sins* —*in* his own *Body*. Intended, One would imagine, to make the Article of our LORD's vicarious Sufferings, *clear* beyond all Miſapprehenſion, and *ſure* beyond all Doubt.

† Heb. ii. 17. ‡ 1 John ii. 2. ‖ Rev. i. 5. § 2 Cor. v. 21.

"Advantage." Becauſe, if it be taken in this unſettled rambling Senſe, the Apoſtle's Argument is vague and inconcluſive.—In caſe our LORD had ſuffered, only "to free Us from ſome Evil, and "procure Us ſome Benefit;" this would by no means imply, that *all were dead*; under the Sentence of Condemnation; obnoxious and doomed to Death *. The utmoſt, You can infer from ſuch Premiſes, is; That All ſtood in Need of a Deliverance from ſome Evil, or wanted the Procurement of ſome Good. Whereas, ſuppoſe the ſacred Writer to intend, that our LORD's Death was truly vicarious, and undergone in our Stead; that He ſuffered, what was *our* Due, and *our* Doom; then, the Reaſoning is juſt, and the Inference undeniable.

He gave Himſelf, ανλιλυτρον υπερ †, *A Ranſom for All.* If this does not imply the Notion of *vicarious*, I very much queſtion, whether Language itſelf can expreſs it.—Λυτρον, is a *Ranſom*; which conveys a vicarious Senſe, in its moſt common and authorized Accept-

* 2 *Cor.* v. 14. Should any chooſe to tranſlate the Words, Ει εις υπερ παντων απεθανεν, αρα οι παντες απεθανον, *If One died for All, then all have died*; I have no Objection to make. Here the Idea of vicarious Suffering, or vicarious Payment, preſents itſelf with great Tranſparency. As though the Apoſtle had ſaid; "If One "hath ſuffered, or been puniſhed for All: then All, "in Effect, have ſuffered, or been puniſhed. Or, to "take in the Notion of Debt, If One hath made full "Payment for twenty inſolvent Debtors, then all the "twenty have, according to the acknowledged Rules "of Law and Equity, made the full Payment."

† 1 Tim. ii. 6.

Acceptation.—Ανλι, which is equivalent to *inſtead**, more fully aſcertains and ſtrengthens the Idea.—Υπερ, which is tranſlated *for*, and denotes a Subſtitution of One in the Place of another †. This added

* Ανλι, Matt. ii. 22. By this Word the *Septuagint* tranſlate the *Hebrew* תחת. And that תחת denotes the *Subſtitution* of One inſtead of Another, no Student of the ſacred Language will venture to deny. See *Gen.* xxii. 13. 2 *Sam.* xviii. 33. 2 *Kings* x. 24.

† Δεομεθα υπερ Χριϛϑ, *We beſeech You* in *CHRIST's* Stead, 2 Cor. v. 20.—Ινα υπερ σϑ διακονη μοι, *That* in thy Stead *He might have miniſtered unto me*, Philem. *ver.* 13. As I was conſidering the Force of this Argument, a Perſon of ſome Diſtinction, but of a malignant gloomy Aſpect, came in my Way. He deſired, I would introduce Him to *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, as an Evidence for fixing the Signification of υπερ, when relative to the Death of *CHRIST*.—I muſt confeſs, I did not like either his Character or his Aſpect; and cannot certainly tell, whether any Perſon has made uſe of Him, on this Occaſion. But St. *John* ſtood by, and ſaid; "Introduce "Him. He propheſies in this Inſtance."—Perhaps, the Reader is at a loſs to gueſs, *Whom* I mean. To keep Him no longer in Suſpenſe, I mean *Caiaphas* the High-Prieſt.—He bears the following Teſtimony; IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR US, THAT ONE MAN DIE FOR THE PEOPLE, AND THAT THE WHOLE NATION PERISH NOT.—Now, as *to periſh* ſignifies, not only to die, but to die miſerably; if One Man dies for the People, that the People may not die miſerably, He ſaves them from Death, by dying Himſelf; and what is this, but to die in *their Stead?* See *John* xi. 50.

To this Teſtimony from the Mouth of an *Enemy*, let me add an Atteſtation under the Hand of our *Friends*, and then leave the impartial Reader to determine, concerning the Validity of all. Thus writes *Clemens Romanus*; Το αιμα αϑϑ εδωκεν υπερ ημων Ιησϑς Χριϛϑ ο Κϑριϑ ημων, κ) την σαρκα υπερ της σαρκϑ ημων, κ) την Ψυχων υπερ των Ψυχην ημων. Epiſt. 1. ad Corinth.—Exactly to the ſame Purpoſe *Juſtin the Martyr* expreſſes Himſelf; Αϑλος τον ιδιον

added to all, renders the Expreſſion as determinate and emphatical as poſſible. Emphatical to declare the vicarious Nature of our LORD's Death. That it was really endured in our Stead; and *thus* made Satisfaction for our Sins; *thus* ranſomed Us from Death eternal.

Shall I argue from a more obvious Topic; which has no ſuch Dependence, on the preciſe Significancy of the Original?—*Surely*, ſays the Prophet. He ſpeaks with Vehemence, as of an Affair which is very weighty. He ſpeaks with Confidence, as of a Fact which is very certain. *He hath borne our Griefs, and carried our Sorrows**. What can this mean, but He hath taken upon Himſelf *that* Affliction, and *thoſe* Miſeries, which properly belonged to Us?—Let us read on, and this Meaning will preſent itſelf, in the cleareſt View. *We did eſteem Him ſtricken, ſmitten of GOD, and afflicted:* We took Him for a real Malefactor, and thought that He was puniſhed for *his own* Miſconduct.—In oppoſition to which injurious and falſe Surmiſe, it is added; *But He was wounded for our Tranſgreſſions, He was bruiſed for our Iniquities.* True it is, that He was wounded, not only by Tranſgreſſors, but *for* or on Account of Tranſgreſſions. Yet not any committed by Himſelf, but thoſe committed by Us.—May I not here borrow the Prophet's Language, and ſay with an Air of Certainty? *Surely*, this is the plaineſt Proof in the World, that our Sins were the meritorious Cauſe of *CHRIST*'s Sufferings. And

τον απειδιο λυτρον υπερ ημων, τον αγιον υπερ ανομων, τον ανακον υπερ των κακων, τον δικαιον υπερ των αδικων, τον αφθαρτον υπερ των θνητων. Epiſt. ad Diogn.

* Iſai. liii. 4.

And if our Sins were the meritorious Cauſe of his Sufferings, then they muſt be charged upon Him, and puniſhed in Him.

St. *Paul* affirms, That *CHRIST has delivered Us from the Curſe of the Law**. How? By taking our Place, and enduring what We deſerved. Or, as the Apoſtle Himſelf ſpeaks, to the ſame Effect, but in a much more expreſſive Manner, *by being made a Curſe for Us*. Does not this evidently denote both a Commutation of Perſons, and a Tranſlation of Puniſhment? *He* ſuffered, who was innocent; not *We*, who are guilty.—He alſo ſuffered that very Sentence, which the Law denounced on Us. For, it is written, *Curſed is every One that continueth not in all Things* †; to this We were obnoxious. It is written again, *Curſed is every One that hangeth on a Tree* ‡; to this *CHRIST* ſubmitted. Now if *CHRIST* endured *that very* Curſe, which We deſerved: if, by this Means, He delivered Us from *all* Malediction; either this muſt be ſuffering in *our Stead* ‖, or elſe Nothing can be called by that Name.

Shall

* Gal. iii. 13. † Deut. xxvii. 26. ‡ Gal. iii. 13.

‖ "This (ſays Dr. *South*, in his ſmart Manner) is "ſpoke ſo plain and loud by the univerſal Voice of the "whole Book of GOD, that Scripture muſt be *crucified* "as well as *CHRIST*, to give any other tolerable "Senſe of the Expreſſions."—And not Scripture only, but the common Import of Language. What ſays *Mezentius?* When his Son, interpoſing in his Behalf, is ſlain by *Æneas*.

——— *Pro me hoſtili paterer ſuccedere Dextræ*
Quem genui? Tuane hæc Genitor, per Vulnera ſervor?
Morte tuâ vivens?

Here,

Shall I deſcend lower ſtill, and refer our Point to the Determination of *illiterate* Men?—Aſk any of your ſerious Tenants, What Ideas ariſe in their Minds, upon the Peruſal of the aforementioned Texts?—I dare venture to foretel, that, artleſs and unimproved as their Underſtandings are, they will not heſitate for an Anſwer. They will neither complain of Obſcurity, nor aſk the Aſſiſtance of Learning. But will *immediately* diſcern, in all theſe Paſſages, a gracious REDEEMER ſuffering in their Stead; and, by his bitter, but expiatory Paſſion, procuring the Pardon of their Sins.—Nay farther; as they are not accuſtomed to the Fineſſes of Criticiſm, I apprehend, they will be at a loſs to conceive, how it is poſſible to underſtand ſuch Paſſages in *any other* Senſe.

Say not, this is an improper Appeal; or theſe are incompetent Judges. The Scriptures were written for *their* Edification; not to exerciſe the Ingenuity of ſubtle Diſputants, but to inſtruct the meaneſt of Mankind in the Way of Salvation. Therefore, on funda-

Here, the Father is *ſaved* by his Son's *Wounds*; *lives* by his Son's *Death*. How, and in what Manner? By a Subſtitution of One inſtead of the Other; by the Son's *ſuffering*, what muſt otherwiſe have *fallen* upon the Father.—Should the *Socinian* Interpreters try the ſame Experiment on theſe Lines of *Virgil*, which they make upon Paſſages of a parallel Signification in Scripture; is there a Critic in the whole World, that *could approve*, that *could endure*, ſuch flagrant Violations of Grammar, Senſe, and Taſte?—Yet I believe, there is no ſincere Chriſtian, but would readily and gratefully ſay;

——————— *Pro me ultrici ſuccedere Dextræ*
Dignaſti, Tua CHRISTE DEUS, *per Vulnera ſervor;*
Morte tuâ vivens.

fundamental Articles, We may aſſuredly conclude, The Expreſſion will be eaſy, and the Doctrine perſpicuous: ſo that *He who runs may read, and the wayfaring Men, though Fools* *, *ſhall not err therein.*—And, though I am far from under-valuing the Aids of Literature, yet, upon theſe momentous Subjects, which are inſeparably connected with our eternal Felicity, I cannot but regard the *common Senſe* of plain, honeſt, humble Chriſtians, as the very beſt of Critics.

Ther. It has been ſaid by a *learned* Critic, That vicarious Puniſhment or Suffering, gives us too low Ideas of the SON of GOD, as it ſinks them to the Pain and Suffering of a Malefactor, the very meaneſt Idea We can have of them.

Aſp. Be the Idea ever ſo mean, it is plainly ſuggeſted by the Word of Prophecy; and fully ſupported, by the Atteſtation of Sacred Hiſtory. In *that* it was foretold, and in *this* it is recorded, That *He was numbered with Tranſgreſſors* †.—And not only by his Accuſers, who called him a Glutton, a Drunkard, a Seducer of the People. Not only by his Executioners, who led him forth to die with Malefactors, and crucified Him between two Thieves. But by his Almighty FATHER alſo. By Him *CHRIST was made Sin* ‡: by Him the

* *Iſai.* xxxv. 8. The Word *Fools*, ſeems to denote Perſons of *ſlow* Underſtanding, and *dull* Apprehenſion; as *Luke* xxiv. 25. Or elſe it ſignifies Thoſe, who, for want of a cultivated Education and the Improvements of Literature, are *accounted* Fools by the Sons of Science; as 1 *Cor.* i. 27.

† Iſai. liii. 12. Luke xxii. 37. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 21.

only begotten SON was treated as a Tranſgreſſor: by *his* Hand and *his* Counſel * delivered He was, to endure the Vengeance due to the vileſt Miſcreants.

Yes, my dear *Theron*; that glorious PERSON whom the higheſt Angel adores, "ſuffered, as if He "had been the Criminal, the Pain and Puniſhment, "which We, or equivalent to that which We, the "real Criminals, ſhould have ſuffered."—If, to conſider this, gives Us a low Idea; if, to ſuffer this, was a deep Abaſement; how exceedingly *high*, and how immenſely *grand*, is the Goodneſs and the Grace manifeſted therein! The lower You draw the Arrow on the String, the loftier Flight it makes in the Sky. And the greater our LORD's Humiliation for Us, the more wonderful and adorable his Love to Us.

Ther. As there cannot be a vicarious Guilt, or as no One can be guilty in the Stead of Another, ſo there cannot be a vicarious Puniſhment, or no One can be puniſhed inſtead of Another. Becauſe Puniſhment, in its very Nature, connotes Guilt in the Perſon who bears it.

Aſp. If You mean by Guilt, the Conſciouſneſs of having committed a Sin, and the internal Defilement conſequent upon it, We never ſuppoſe *ſuch* a vicarious Guilt. It is not ſo much as intimated, that *CHRIST* was ſtung with the Remorſe, or ſtained with the Pollution, of the adulterous *David*, the perfidious *Peter*, and the perſecuting *Saul*. But that He was treated by the righteous GOD, *as if* He had perpetrated theſe, and all the Crimes of all Believers, either in the paſt or ſucceeding Ages.

If

* Acts iv. 28.

If by Guilt You mean (what, I think, is the true Meaning of the Word) The *Charge* of a criminal Action, and the *Obligation* to ſuffer Penalty, your Aſſertion is nothing more than begging the Queſtion. It nakedly affirms the very Thing in Debate. And bare Affirmations, unſupported by Evidence, are ſeldom admitted as deciſive Proofs.—We, on the other Hand, are inclined to believe, That all our criminal Actions were charged upon *CHRIST*; and that He ſuffered the Puniſhment, which they deſerved. The former of theſe, is not ſo properly called vicarious, as *real Guilt*; reſulting from Sins, committed by One, imputed to Another. The latter We readily allow to be *vicarious Puniſhment*, ſuſtained in their Stead, whoſe Sins were imputed.—For both theſe Points, We have the Authority of Truth itſelf, ſpeaking in the Scriptures. *The LORD laid on Him the Iniquities of Us all*; here is the Imputation. *CHRIST has redeemed Us from the Curſe of the Law, being made a Curſe for Us*; here is the vicarious Puniſhment. And You know, to what Caſuiſts We ſubmit the Interpretation of theſe Texts—common Senſe, and an honeſt Heart.

Ther. Is not this *ſhocking* to ſuppoſe? *horrid* to affirm? If Sin was really imputed to *CHRIST*, and Guilt is the Reſult of ſuch Imputation, then Puniſhment was his Due—Juſtice might inſiſt upon it—And He could not eſcape it.

Aſp. To ſuppoſe this, is ſo far from ſhocking my Apprehenſion, that it appears, even on your own Principles, right and neceſſary.—*Right*, becauſe Puniſhment, as You yourſelf have declared, always connotes Guilt; I would add, ariſing either from

Crimes committed, or from Crimes imputed. Indeed, the Sufferings of *CHRIST* could not be of a *penal* Nature, unleſs He endured them as under a Charge of Sin, and in a State of Guilt.—It is *neceſſary* to ſuppoſe this, otherwiſe how will You vindicate the Juſtice of GOD? He bid his Sword awake, and ſmite * the bleſſed *JESUS*. But ſhall the JUDGE of all the Earth do wrong? Shall He ſmite, where there is nothing but Innocence? No Sin, either perſonal or imputed? That be far from Him! The Thought be far from Us!

Whereas, upon this Suppoſition, it becomes a *juſt* and *righteous* Thing, That GOD ſhould inflict the moſt rigorous Puniſhment; or, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, ſhould *condemn* and puniſh *Sin in the Fleſh* † of his SON.—I do not know, but this might be the Cauſe of our LORD's Silence, when He was accuſed at *Pilate's* Bar, and at *Herod*'s Judgment-ſeat. It is probable, He conſidered Himſelf as ſtanding before a higher Tribunal; and reſponſible to eternal Juſtice, for the Crimes of all his People. In this Situation, and in this Capacity, clear Himſelf of *perſonal* Demerit He could; clear Himſelf of *imputed* Iniquity He could not. *Therefore* He was dumb; like a convicted and guilty Perſon, He opened not his Mouth. For though, as the SON of the moſt high GOD, Glory and Immortality were his undoubted Right; yet, as SURETY for ſinful Men, Tribulation and Death were his condign Portion.

And why ſhould this be thought ſhocking? It is not the leaſt Derogation to the tranſcendent Excellency of *CHRIST*. It caſts not the leaſt Stain on

* Zech. xiii. 7. † Rom. viii. 3.

on the unſpotted Sanctity, either of his Nature, or his Life.—To bear Sin, as a voluntary Surety, is infinitely different from committing it, as an actual Tranſgreſſor. To ſay, that *CHRIST* was puniſhed for any Miſconduct of *his own*, would be falſe, impious, and horrid. To ſay, that He was charged with *our* ſinful Omiſſions and Commiſſions; that He endured the Puniſhment due—in the plain and full Senſe of the Word *due*—to them all; is ſo far from being injurious to his Dignity, that it pays the proper Honour to his *mediatorial* Undertaking. It pays Him the Honour of—the higheſt Obedience to his FATHER's Will—the deepeſt Humiliation of his own illuſtrious Perſon—and the moſt boundleſs Benevolence to Mankind.

Ther. GOD is Love, *Aſpaſio*, all Love. Whereas You would—

Aſp. —not often interrupt a Friend's Diſcourſe. But I cannot forbear interpoſing a Query, on this Occaſion.—Is there, then, no *juſt Diſpleaſure* in the DEITY? What meaneth that ſolemn Denunciation of the Supreme LAWGIVER? *The Anger of the LORD ſhall ſmoke againſt ſuch a Man* *. —What meaneth that awful Declaration of the Apoſtle? *The Wrath of GOD is revealed from Heaven, againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men* †. —Or, in what Senſe are We to explain that alarming Interrogatory of the Prophet? *Who can ſtand before his Indignation* ‡? —Whence could thoſe avenging Viſitations proceed, which deſtroyed *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* with a Tempeſt of Fire ‖?

* Deut. xxix. 20. † Rom. i. 18. ‡ Nah. i. 6. ‖ Gen. xix. 24.

Which ſwept away ſo many Thouſands of the polluted *Iſraelites* with a raging Peſtilence *? And conſigned over ſo many Millions † of rebellious *Angels* to Chains of Darkneſs?

Surely, *Theron*, if there be any determinate Signification in Language; if any Leſſon to be learnt from the moſt tremendous Judgments; it is, That the LORD, though free from all the Diſcompoſure of Paſſion, is nevertheleſs *angry with the Wicked* ‡; and will make impenitent Offenders feel the Effects of his holy Indignation.

Ther. Does not your Doctrine repreſent the All-merciful GOD, as a *rigorous* Being? Who, when once diſpleaſed, will hardly be pacified? Whereas, the LORD himſelf declares by his Prophet; *Fury is not in me.*—Men of ſatyrical Wit would be apt to inſinuate, That You had miſtaken JEHOVAH for *Moloch*; and was erecting a Chriſtian Church in the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*.

Aſp. We take our Repreſentations of GOD, not from the vain Conjectures of Men, but from the

* Numb. xxv. 9.

† *Millions*—The *Number* of the fallen Angels is no where ſpecified; and the Veil ſits deep upon the ſpiritual World; ſo that We can ſee no farther, than Revelation has diſcovered. Yet, I think, there is ſufficient Room to ground a Conjecture, upon the Reply which one of thoſe execrable Apoſtates made to our LORD. *My Name is Legion*; (a Word ſignifying a great Multitude, five or ſix thouſand) *for We are many*. If *ſo* many were employed in tempting and tormenting a *ſingle* Perſon, what Armies, what Myriads of thoſe inviſible Enemies, muſt exiſt through univerſal Nature!—It is an *alarming* Thought; ſhould make Us fly to our Divine PROTECTOR, and Almighty DELIVERER. See *Mark* v. 9. and 2 *Pet.* ii. 4.

‡ Pſal. vii. 11. Deut. ix. 8.

the Records of infallible Truth. There he is deſcribed, as a *righteous GOD*; a *jealous GOD* *; and, to incorrigible Sinners, *a conſuming Fire* †.—Though wonderfully condeſcending, yet tranſcendently majeſtic. Inſomuch, that none of the fallen Race are permitted to approach his Throne, but only through the Intervention of a great MEDIATOR ‡.—Though unſpeakably merciful, yet inflexibly juſt. Inſomuch that, without Shedding of Blood, even the Blood of a PERSON higher than the Heavens, there is *no Remiſſion* ‖ of any Offences.

When the LORD ſays, *Fury is not in me* §, the Words have a peculiar Reference to his Church: which, in a preceding Verſe, He had deſcribed as *a Vineyard of Red Wine.* From his Church, from his own People, his fierce Anger is turned away, on Account of the Satisfaction made by their SAVIOUR.—Though his own People are the Objects, not of his Indignation, but of his Love, let no ungodly Wretches audaciouſly preſume. It is not ſo with them. They are *the Briars and Thorns* ¶, mentioned in the next Clauſe: Cumberers of the Ground, unprofitable and noxious. Them He warns; them He challenges; *Who will ſet them in Battle againſt me?* Let them come on; they ſhall find it a fearful Thing, to fall into the Hands of

* Exod. xx. 5. † Heb. xii. 29. ‡ John xiv. 6.
‖ Heb. ix. 22. Heb. vii. 26. § Iſai. xxvii. 4.

¶ There is a fine Contraſt between the *Vines* and the *Thorns*; at the ſame Time a regular Continuation of the Metaphor. As nothing is more common, than to ſee the latter ſhooting up amidſt the former; ſo nothing is more common, than to have Hypocrites intermingle themſelves with Believers.

the living GOD.—Nay; He will not ſtay for their Approach: *I will march againſt them* *, is his Threatening; *I will paſs through them*; *I will burn them together*.—This will certainly be the Caſe, if not in the preſent, yet in a future World. When once the Maſter of the Houſe is riſen up, and has ſhut to the Door, Mercy is gone for ever. Then Nothing muſt be expected, nothing will then be experienced, but *Vengeance and fiery Indignation, to devour the Adverſaries of the Goſpel.* GOD will then *execute Judgments*, on every Soul of Man, that has perſiſted in Evil. With ſuch awful Severity will He execute them, as ſhall cauſe Heaven to adore, and Hell to tremble.

Yet in all this, there is not the leaſt Tincture of *that outrageous* Temper, which in Man We properly call Fury. *In Man* Fury implies an immoderate Degree of Reſentment, which will hearken to no Reaſoning, and accede to no Terms. The Goſpel Account proves, even to a Demonſtration, that this has no Place in the divine Nature. So far from it, that GOD, though highly provoked, has *provided* an Atonement—has made *Overtures* of Reconciliation to his diſobedient Creatures—has even *beſought* †

a

* אנשעה.

† 2 *Cor.* v. 20. It was an Inſtance of ſingular Compaſſion in the bleſſed GOD, that, though offended with *Job*'s Friends, He admitted of a Sacrifice, and directed them to an Interceſſor; both typical of *CHRIST JESUS.* But what unparalleled Condeſcenſion, and divinely tender Mercies, are diſplayed in this Verſe! *As though GOD did beſeech You by Us: We pray You in CHRIST's Stead, be ye reconciled to GOD.*—Did the Judge ever *beſeech* a condemned Criminal, to accept of Pardon? Does the Creditor, at any Time, *beſeech* a ruined Debtor, to receive an Acquittance in full? Yet

a guilty World, to accept of Forgiveneſs. This is the Purport of that gracious Invitation, which follows in the Prophet. *Let Him*, let the wicked Man, *take hold of my Strength:* let Him fly to my crucified SON, who is the Power of GOD for the Salvation of Sinners; cleaving to his Merits by Faith, as ſome poor Delinquent to the Horns of the Altar*. Thus *He ſhall make Peace*; all his Iniquities ſhall be forgiven, and all my Diſpleaſure ſhall be pacified.—So that the Inſinuations of your ſatyrical Gentlemen, are as egregiouſly miſtaken, as they are ſhockingly worded.

You are a Man of Senſe, *Theron*; and eſteem that Character, far above the idle Reputation of a Wit. As ſuch, let me aſk You ſeriouſly; Is it not for the Honour of the Divine MAJESTY, to exerciſe Juſtice, as well as Mercy? Always to pardon, and never to puniſh, would be *Tameneſs*, rather than Benignity; a Renunciation of Holineſs, rather than a Diſplay of Goodneſs.—Or, can it be right in Us, ſo extravagantly to magnify the amiable, as to depreciate, nay even annihilate, the *awful* Attributes of the DEITY?—This, ſays a Poet, is the Theology, not of Chriſtians, but of Infidels;

Who ſet at odds Heaven's jarring Attributes,
And with one Excellence another wound;

Maim

our Almighty LORD, and our Eternal JUDGE, not only vouchſafes to offer theſe Bleſſings, but invites Us—intreats Us—with the moſt affectionate Importunity beſeeches Us—not to reject them!

* This is the preciſe Idea included in the Original יחזק; and the Idea is as comfortable, as the Image is expreſſive. *Iſai.* xxvii. 5. 1 *Kings* i. 50.

Maim Heaven's Perfection, break its equal Beams,
Bid Mercy triumph over—GOD himself,
Undeified by their opprobrious Praise:
A GOD all *Mercy is a GOD unjust* *.

Ther. But We have lately been told, that the particular Grace of the LAWGIVER is not obſtructed by any Demands of Law and Juſtice. For He can ſet them aſide.

Aſp. What! Set aſide a Law, which is holy, righteous, and good!—Set aſide a Juſtice, which is eternal, inflexible, and infinite!—St. *Paul* gives a very different Solution of this Difficulty. He tells Us—not that GOD *ſet aſide* his Law and his Juſtice—but that *He ſet forth* the bleſſed *JESUS for a Propitiation.* With this expreſs Deſign, *that He might declare his Righteouſneſs* †; might demonſtrate, not only his Clemency, but his Juſtice; even that *vindictive* Juſtice, whoſe Nature is, to abhor, and whoſe Office, to puniſh Sin.

This ſeems to be the Import of the Word *Righteouſneſs*, in the preſent Connection. And more than ſeems, if We conſult the following Verſe. *To declare, I ſay, at this Time his Righteouſneſs; that He might be juſt* ‡, evidence Himſelf to be ſtrictly and inviolably righteous, in the Adminiſtration of his Government; even while He is the all-forgiving gracious

* Night-Thoughts, N° IV. † Rom. iii. 25.

‡ *Rom.* iii. 26. The Attribute of Juſtice *muſt* be preſerved inviolate. And inviolate it *is* preſerved, if there was a real Infliction of Puniſhment on our SAVIOUR. Nothing elſe can thoroughly *clear up* this great Evangelical *Paradox*—JUST, YET JUSTIFIER OF THE UNGODLY!

gracious *JUSTIFIER of* the Sinner, *that believeth in JESUS.*—According to this Plan, *Mercy and Truth meet together*; *Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſs each other**. All the Attributes harmonize; every Attribute is glorified, and not one ſuperſeded, no, not ſo much as clouded.

Ther. If ſome are verging to one Extreme, are not you inclining to the other? Our Ears tingle, and our Blood runs chill, at the very Thoughts of ſo ſevere a Vengeance, executed on an Object ſo worthy and illuſtrious.—Beſides, how can We ſuppoſe, that the beneficent CREATOR and PRESERVER of Men, ſhould *take Pleaſure* in the Sufferings of the moſt unblameable Perſon, that ever exiſted? Eſpecially, ſince He himſelf has made this tender Declaration; *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice* †.

Aſp. A tender Declaration indeed it is: ſignifying, that GOD is better pleaſed with the Duties of Humanity and Charity, than with the moſt coſtly and pompous Train of Sacrifices. Nay, that He will even diſpenſe with the Obſervance of *his own* cere-monial Inſtitutions, when they interfere with our Exerciſe of Beneficence *One to another*. Thus reſigning (ſo admirable is his Goodneſs) the Services due to Himſelf, for the Benefit and Comfort of his Creatures—But this has no Sort of Relation to the Death of *CHRIST*. In which Mercy and Sacrifice, were not disjoined, but united. Which had, therefore, every Requiſite, to make it moſt perfectly acceptable to the KING of Heaven.

We are aſſured by a Prophet, That *it pleaſed the LORD to bruiſe* his holy Child *JESUS*. GOD not

* Pſal. lxxxv. 10. † Matt. ix. 13.

not only gave up his SON to Sufferings, but gave Him up with a divine Complacency*.—In like manner, the bleſſed *JESUS* addreſſed Himſelf to the dreadful Taſk, not only without Reluctance, but with the utmoſt Alacrity †. *I delight to do thy Will*, was the Language of his Soul.—Should You aſk; How could the SON take pleaſure in undergoing, or

* *Divine Complacency*.—This is the Idea included in the original Word רצה Iſai. liii. 10. Which is but poorly and faintly repreſented by the Βεβλεται of the *Septuagint*. It correſponds with the vigorous Phraſe, uſed by the Voice from Heaven, ευδοκησα, Matt. iii. 17. Or, it may be very exactly tranſlated by St. *Paul*'s beautiful Expreſſion, ευαρεστειται, Heb. xiii. 16 —In Conformity to this Sentiment, the great JEHOVAH is ſaid to ſmell a ſweet Savour, or a *Savour of Reſt* ריח ניחוח in thoſe Sacrifices, which prefigured the crucified *JESUS*, Gen. viii. 21.

† *Utmoſt Alacrity*.—There is no *Inconſiſtency* between this Aſſertion, and our LORD's Supplication; *FATHER, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me: nevertheleſs, not my Will, but thine be done.* Φωνη, ſays *Origen*, ου μονον επιεικους, αλλα και συμφωνου, *This was the Voice, not only of Reſignation, but of Acquieſcence and Complacency*.—Such a deprecatory Requeſt, put up with ſo much Earneſtneſs, yet with ſo much Submiſſion, betrayed not any Weakneſs of Mind. It only ſhewed the Reality of our LORD's Manhood: that his Senſations were exactly like ours: that He affected no *Stoical* Apathy, but willingly endured, not proudly deſpiſed, Tribulation and Anguiſh. It demonſtrated likewiſe, beyond the Power of Deſcription, the extreme Severity, and almoſt inſupportable Weight, of our REDEEMER's Affliction.

His tender Love to Mankind, and fervent Zeal for his FATHER's Glory, prompted Him to *deſire* theſe Sufferings. His invincible Reſolution and unequaled Magnanimity, emboldened Him to *meet* them, with a generous Ardour. Yet they were ſo terrible, that his Nature, being human, could not but *recoil* a little, at their Approach; and, had it not been divine alſo, muſt inevitably have *ſunk* under the Load.

or the FATHER in inflicting, the moſt agonizing Sorrows? I anſwer; On Account of that grand Series of Advantages, which, reſulting from thence, will extend—upwards to Heaven—downwards to Earth—forwards through Eternity.

" A ſevere Vengeance, You ſay, ſuch as makes " our Ears to tingle."—This is the very Thing intended, to awaken and alarm preſumptuous Offenders. That they may ſee their horrid Guilt; ſee their extreme Danger; and trifle no longer with the only Method of Reconciliation. A Method, calculated to ſtrike the deepeſt Terror, even while it cheriſhes the brighteſt Hope—ſtrike the *deepeſt Terror*, on every perſevering Sinner—while it cheriſhes the *brighteſt Hope*, in every returning Tranſgreſſor.

Ther. If one of my Servants had affronted or injured me; I ſhould, upon his ſubmiſſive Acknowledgment, forgive his Fault, and not inſiſt upon Satisfaction for the Wrong. Will You make the FATHER of Compaſſions, more inexorable in his Nature, more rigid in his Demands, than a human *Maſter?*

Aſp. When You have a Servant, that owes his Being to your Power; that has received innumerable Benefits from your Bounty; yet has offered You innumerable Affronts, all attended with the moſt aggravating Circumſtances, and all in *Defiance* of the *moſt righteous* Threatenings—When You are poſſeſſed of immortal Majeſty, and incomprehenſible Perfection; when Truth inviolable, and Juſtice inflexible, are eſſential to your Character—Then, *Theron*, the Parallel will hold good; and

Your

Your Conduct ſhall be a Pattern for the Procedure of THE MOST HIGHEST.

Till then, You and I muſt be willing to forgive, becauſe GOD has made it our bounden Duty; and becauſe We have incomparably more to be forgiven by the JUDGE of the World, than We can poſſibly remit to our Fellow-creatures. In the mean Time, You will allow the great JEHOVAH, who is *glorious in Holineſs*, to communicate his heavenly Favours, after a Manner becoming Himſelf. On ſuch *auguſt* and *honourable* Terms, as ſhall maintain the Rights of his univerſal Government, and manifeſt the conſummate, the infinite Rectitude of his Nature.

Ther. *Might* not GOD have canceled our Tranſgreſſions, and received fallen Men into his Favour, without any Propitiation?—To deny this, would be to limit the HOLY ONE of *Iſrael*; and impoſe Conditions on that uncontroulable Sovereign, *Who giveth not Account of any of his Matters.*

Aſp. We need not embarraſs Ourſelves, by entering upon Enquiries, which may ſeem to lie beyond the Limits of human Underſtanding. Enough for Us to know, that this Propitiation was *abſolutely neceſſary*, with regard to the firſt Covenant. For, as GOD had ſolemnly declared, *In the Day Thou eateſt thereof, dying Thou ſhalt die*; his Truth and Juſtice ſtood engaged to execute the Threatening. And no ſecond *Adam* could reſtore the firſt, but by taking this Curſe upon Himſelf.

Die Man, or Juſtice muſt; unleſs for Him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid Satisfaction, Death for Death *.

There-

* MILTON, Book III. 210.

Therefore the Divine *JESUS*, who lay in the Boſom of the FATHER, and knew the Counſels of Heaven, ſaid; *The Son of Man* MUST *be lifted up* * on the Croſs. From which it appears, that a Propitiation was indiſpenſably requiſite.—Becauſe, it was expreſly foretold by the antient Prophets (and the Scripture cannot be broken) that the MESSIAH *ſhould be cut off out of the Land of the Living*.—Becauſe, a Variety of Types, and a Multitude of Sacrifices, *prefigured* his Death. One of the Types, pointed out the very Manner of his Suffering; and *all* the Sacrifices, detached from their Dependence on this great Oblation, would have been beggarly Elements—mere, unavailing, empty Ceremonies.

I apprehend, it is no Limitation of the uncontroulable SOVEREIGN, to ſuppoſe Him incapable of acting otherwiſe, than in perfect and perpetual Conſiſtency with Himſelf.—Neither is it any Infringement on his abſolute Sovereignty, that He

* *John* iii. 14. Δει τον, &c. The ſame Expreſſion is uſed, *Luke* xxiv. 26.—Perfectly conformable to this leading Truth, is the current Language both of the Law and of the Goſpel. Under the *Law*, GOD himſelf proteſts; *I have ſworn, that the Iniquity of the Houſe of* Eli *ſhall not be purged* בזבח ובמנחה *with Slaughtered-offering, or with Meat-offering for ever*; that is, no Kind of Oblation ſhall be accepted; the Guilt ſhall never be expiated, 1 *Sam.* iii. 14. Under the *Goſpel*, the Apoſtle forewarns; *If We ſin wilfully*, by a final Apoſtacy from *CHRIST*, *there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins*; they are, to ſuch Perſons, and in ſuch Circumſtances, abſolutely irremiſſible, *Heb.* x. 26.—Which Phraſes are evidently connected with, and founded on, this grand Doctrine; That the appointed, the *only* Way of obtaining Pardon from the righteous GOD, is, by the Intervention of an expiatory Sacrifice.

He *cannot but* order all Affairs, for the Honour of his Juſtice, his Fidelity, and each of his exalted Perfections.—This is the very Thing, which the ſacred Writers expreſs in their plain but ſtrong Language; *GOD who cannot lie* *: *He cannot deny Himſelf.* †

Ther. GOD is often ſaid to *forgive* our Sins; particularly, in that ſublime Paſſage, where He proclaims his Name to *Moſes*. *The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, abundant in Goodneſs and Truth; keeping Mercy for thouſands, forgiving Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin.* Now, Forgiveneſs is a *free* Thing. Freeneſs is implied in the very Nature of Pardon. Take away the former, and You deſtroy the latter.—If an Equivalent be given, Pardon is no longer Pardon, but a *Purchaſe*. Forgiveneſs ceaſes to be an Act of Grace, and becomes the Payment of a Debt.

Aſp. The Text you quote is truly ſublime, and equally comfortable. But You forget to mention one Article of very great Moment, which cloſes and completes the glorious Character. Which ſeems added on purpoſe, to prevent any wrong Apprehenſions of the DEITY, and to guard againſt all Abuſe of the Doctrine. *He will in no wiſe clear the Guilty* ‡.—GOD will not, on any Conſidera-

tion

* Tit. i. 2. † 2 Tim. ii. 13.

‡ *He will in no wiſe clear the Guilty*, Exod. xxxiv. 7. This Text is not without its Difficulty, eſpecially in the Original.—*Stuchius* interprets the Words, *Et innocens non erit ſine Piaculo*: He ſhall not be acquitted without a piacular Sacrifice.—I think, they may be tranſlated, with a little more Propriety and Exactneſs, thus; *Pardoning Iniquity*,

tion whatever, abſolve the obſtinate, perſevering, irreclaimable Offender: neither will He acquit any of the guilty Race, abſolutely, unconditionally, or without ſuch a Satisfaction, as may repair the Honour of his injured Law.

We have Redemption through his Blood, ſays the Apoſtle, *even the Forgiveneſs of our Sins* *. It is Forgiveneſs, You ſee, though bought with a Price. It is Remiſſion, though procured by Blood.—It is free, with regard to that ſovereign BEING, who pardons. For, He was under no Obligation to *admit* of a propitiatory Sacrifice; but might, without any Diminution of his Dignity, have left all Mankind to periſh in their Sins.—It is free, with regard to the obnoxious Creatures, who are pardoned. For, it is vouchſafed, without any Satisfaction demanded at *their* Hands, or any Penalty inflicted on *their* Perſons.—It is in this reſpect alſo free; that an In-

quity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin, ונקה לא ינקה *though He will by no means let* it *go unpuniſhed*, meaning *Sin*: which is the immediate *Antecedent*; is expreſſed in the three preceding Words; and may very properly be referred to in this Clauſe. Then the Senſe will be, as follows; "Though GOD pardons Sin, yet it ſhall not go un-
"puniſhed. He will certainly inflict his righteous Ven-
"geance, and exerciſe his punitive Juſtice, though not
"on the Sinner, whom He ſpares; yet on the SURE-
"TY, whom He has provided."—In the ſame Manner *Cocceius* renders the Paſſage, *Et non exercens Impunitatem*; and expounds it much to the ſame Purpoſe.—We have this very Word, in the ſame remarkable Conſtruction, *Jer.* xxx. 11. ונקה לא אנקה; which is tranſlated, *I will not leave thee altogether unpuniſhed.* Which preciſely ſignifies, *Abſolving I will not abſolve Thee*; and, according to our Manner of ſpeaking, imports, *I will by no Means acquit Thee, as innocent.*

* Eph. i. 7.

tereſt in the great Atonement is granted to Us, without the leaſt Merit, or any *deſerving* Qualifications of our own.

In all this, GOD is not only merciful, but moſt tenderly and inexpreſſibly merciful. And will any One calumniate this majeſtic and venerable Method of exerciſing Mercy? Becauſe Proviſion is made for the equal Glory of Truth and Holineſs?—Calumniate! Surely, it becomes Us to admire and adore, ſaying with the Pſalmiſt; *Juſtice and Judgment are the Habitation of thy Throne**. Juſtice ſatisfied, and Judgment fully executed, in the Perſon of the MEDIATOR, are the Baſis or Foundation of thy Throne. The Foundation, on which thy Throne of Grace is erected, and from which all its Adminiſtrations proceed.

Ther. Does not your Notion of a propitiatory Sacrifice, derogate from the Goodneſs of the Almighty FATHER; and transfer all our Obligations to the incarnate SON?

Aſp. Is there not Goodneſs, in *allowing* a Subſtitute to ſuffer in our Stead?—Is there not ſtill greater Goodneſs, in *providing* a Subſtitute for Us, without any Solicitation on our Part?—Is there not the very higheſt Exertion of Goodneſs, in devoting a dear, an only, an incomparably excellent SON; in devoting HIM to the dreadful Purpoſe?—This marvelous Scheme, far, very far from obſcuring, moſt illuſtriouſly diſplays, the ſuperabundant Loving-kindneſs of the FATHER.

GOD

* *Pſal.* lxxxix. 14. The Original מכון ſignifies a *Baſis*, or *Supporter*. Which, when applied to a *Throne*, is evidently more proper than the Word *Habitation*.

GOD *ſo loved the World*, apoſtate and polluted as it was—*How* did He love it? To a Degree, unutterable by any Tongue; inconceivable by any Imagination; and only to be expreſſed by the infinitely precious Effects. *Loved it* ſo, *that He gave his only-begotten* SON, *that whoſoever believeth on Him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life**. And does this derogate from the Goodneſs of the Almighty FATHER? Not barely to give Pardon and Life, but to give them through the Hands, nay, through the Wounds, the Agonies, the Death of his divineſt, deareſt SON!

Such Privileges, vouchſafed in any Way, muſt challenge the devouteſt Acknowledgments. But, when attended with this additional Demonſtration of Favour, they inflame Us with Gratitude, and tranſport Us with Admiration. They not only manifeſt, but † *commend* the divine Love: they ſhew it to the greateſt Advantage; ſhew it in the utmoſt Perfection; with every Circumſtance, of grand Recommendation, and high Endearment.—By this Means, bleſſed GOD, Thou haſt unſpeakably enhanced thy Benefits! Thou haſt rendered them,

* John iii. 16.

† *Rom.* v. 8. Συνιστησι. It ſeems to be an Image taken from the Practice of *Tradeſmen*. Who, in ſhewing their Goods, point out and enlarge upon their Excellencies; ſetting in the cleareſt Light, whatever may beſpeak their Worth, or recommend them to the Purchaſer.—Perhaps, it may allude to the Cuſtom of ſending, with ſome favourite and worthy Perſon, *recommendatory Letters*. In which his good Qualities are deſcribed; and every Thing is mentioned, that may embelliſh his Character, and render his Preſence reſpectable. In this Senſe St. *Paul* uſes thoſe nearly related Words, Συνιστανειν, Συστατικαι, 2 Cor. iii. 1.

them, though invaluable in *themſelves*, exceedingly more ſo, by the *Manner* of conferring them!

Ther. Again in your Elevations, *Aſpaſio?*—The World, You know, is grown very rational and inquiſitive; will admit nothing, but upon clear Evidence, and full Conviction. We expect, therefore, in all religious Enquiries, not the Flights of Fancy, or the Sallies of Zeal; but a Sobriety of Reaſon, and Solidity of Argument.

Aſp. The World, rational as it is, ſeems, by the Taſte of the preſent Age, no Enemy to Works of Fancy. The World, therefore, may not be diſpleaſed with an affecting Story. And a Story, ſuitable to the Occaſion, juſt occurs to my Mind. Such as may ſerve to ſhadow forth, though very *faintly*, the ſurpaſſing Benignity and Grace of our crucified LORD.

A certain *Aſiatic* Queen, departing this Life, left behind Her three accompliſhed Sons; all arrived to Years of Maturity.—The young Princes were at ſtrife, who ſhould pay the higheſt Reſpect to their royal Mother's Memory. To give Scope for their generous Contention, they agreed to meet at the Place of her Interment; and there preſent the moſt honourable Gift, they knew how to deviſe, or were able to procure.—The *Eldeſt* came, and exhibited a ſumptuous Monument; conſiſting of the richeſt Materials, and ornamented with the moſt exquiſite Workmanſhip.—The *Second* ranſacked all the Beauties of the blooming Creation; and offered a Garland of ſuch admirable Colours, and delightful Odours, as had never been ſeen before.—The *Youngeſt* appeared, without any pompous Preparation; having only a cryſtal Baſon in one Hand, and a ſilver

a ſilver Bodkin in the other. As ſoon as He approached, He threw open his Breaſt; pierced a Vein, which lay oppoſite to his Heart; received the Blood in the tranſparent Vaſe; and, with an Air of affectionate Reverence, placed it on the Tomb.—The Spectators, ſtruck with the Sight, burſt into a Shout of general Applauſe; and immediately gave the Preference to this laſt Oblation.

If it was reckoned ſuch a ſingular Expreſſion of Love, to expend a *few* of thoſe precious Drops, for the Honour of a Parent; O! how matchleſs! how ineffable was the Love of *JESUS*, in pouring out *all* his vital Blood, for the Salvation of Enemies!

Ther. My greateſt Objection is ſtill to come.—If *CHRIST* ſuffered in our Stead; He muſt ſuffer *that very* Puniſhment, which was due to our Iniquities. This your orthodox Divines affirm to be incomparably worſe than bodily Death; to be nothing leſs than the everlaſting Diſpleaſure of GOD.

Aſp. The Puniſhment due to our Iniquities, was Shame, Death, and the divine Wrath.

As for *Shame*—Was ever Shame, like that Shame, which our deſpiſed REDEEMER bore?—Tho' Prince of the Kings of the Earth, yet born in a Stable, and laid in a Manger.—When an Infant, exiled from his own Country, and a Vagabond in a foreign Land.—When engaged in the Diſcharge of his Miniſtry, accuſed of the moſt flagitious Crimes, and branded with the blackeſt Names.—When brought to his Exit, apprehended as a Thief; condemned as a Malefactor; nay, the vileſt of Malefactors, a Robber and a Murderer, is preferred before him.—His Executioners poured Contempt

upon all his venerable Offices. As a *King*, they ridiculed Him, by putting a Mock-Sceptre into his Hand; and crowning Him with ragged Thorns *, instead of a royal Diadem. They vilified his *prophetic* Character, by hood-winking his Eyes; striking his bleſſed Head; and then aſking, in cruel Deriſion, *Who it was that ſmote Him* †. They caſt Reproach upon his *prieſtly* Undertaking, when they ſharpened their Tongues with malicious Irony, and ſhot out thoſe bitter Words; *He ſaved Others, Himſelf He cannot ſave* ‡.—To render his Infamy as public, as it was ſhocking, they hung Him on a Tree; and expoſed Him, defiled as He was with Spitting, and diſfigured with Wounds, to the gazing Eyes and contumelious Scoffs of numberleſs Spectators.

If You doubt, whether *CHRIST* ſuſtained the *Wrath* of GOD, let Us follow Him to the Garden of *Gethſemane*. A Scene, which I would always recollect, when I walk along the fertile Vale, or expatiate amidſt the flowery Garden ‖, or enjoy the Delights of any rural Retirement.—He had no Remorſe, to alarm his ſpotleſs Conſcience; yet Fearfulneſs

* To have crowned the bleſſed *JESUS* with *Straw*, would have been a vile Inſult, and treating Him like an ambitious Madman. But to crown Him with *keen, pungent, lacerating* Thorns, was adding Cruelty to their Inſults; unheard of Barbarity to the moſt contemptuous Mockery. *Matt.* xxvii. 29.

† Scornfully inſinuating, that his ſacred prophetic Office was fit for nothing, but to ſerve ſuch deſpicable Purpoſes, *Matt.* xxvi. 68.

‡ Matt. xxvii. 42.

‖ Alluding to the Evangeliſt's Deſcription of *Gethſemane*, who repreſents it as a *Garden*; and to the Etymology of the Word, which ſignifies a *fat* or *fruitful Valley*, גת שמנים John xviii. 1. Matt. xxvi. 36.

fulneſs and Trembling came upon Him. No Violence was offered to his ſacred Perſon; yet a horrible Dread overwhelmed Him.—He was anointed with the Oil of Gladneſs, above his Fellows *. Yet ſo intenſe was his Affliction, that it fetched Tears † from his Eyes, and forced that melancholy Cry from his Lips; *My Soul is* ſorrowful; exceeding *ſorrowful*; ſorrowful *even unto Death* ‡.—'Twas Night, cold Night; and though our Divine MASTER lay proſtrate upon the Earth, amidſt the Fall of chilling Dews, He *ſweat*—He ſweat *Blood*—Yea, ſo ſore was this ſtrange, unſeen Conflict, that He ſweat *great Drops* of Blood; *running down*, in reeking Streams, to the Ground.—What Cauſe, what adequate Cauſe, can be aſſigned for this amazing Anguiſh? None but the Wrath of his Almighty FATHER. Who was now become an inexorable JUDGE; treated Him no longer as the SON of his Love, but as the SURETY for unnumbered Millions of guilty Creatures.

Ther. Was it poſſible, that the innocent and holy *JESUS*, the *dearly beloved* SON of GOD, ſhould become an Object of His FATHER's Wrath?

Aſp. It was not only poſſible, but unavoidable and neceſſary. *Unavoidable*, with reſpect to the divine Holineſs; *neceſſary*, for the Procurement of our Redemption.—Sin was charged upon *CHRIST*; all the Sins of all Believers, in all Ages and Places of the World. And could the infinitely righteous GOD behold ſuch a Deluge of Iniquities, (thoſe abominable Things, which He hateth) without expreſſing his Diſpleaſure? Or could the bleſſed *JE-*

* Pſal. xlv. 7. † Heb. v. 7. ‡ Matt. xxvi. 38.

SUS be puniſhed, *truly* puniſhed for them, without any painful Senſation of their horrid Evil, and of that tremendous Indignation which they deſerved?

If this was not the Caſe, who can maintain the *Dignity* of his Conduct, during the Agony in the Garden?—Was there no Pouring out of the divine Diſpleaſure? Then his Behaviour in that Hour of Tryal, did not equal the Intrepidity of the three *Hebrew* Youths; who continued calm, and without the leaſt Perturbation, while the Furnace was heated into ſeven-fold Rage *.—But if this was the Time, in which, (no created Arm being ſtrong enough to give the Blow) *it pleaſed the LORD to bruiſe Him* †; if this was the Time, in which the moſt high GOD *bent his Bow like an Enemy, and ſtood with his Right-hand as an Adverſary* ‡; it is eaſy, very eaſy to account for the prodigious Conſternation of our REDEEMER. No wonder that his Heart, though endued with otherwiſe invincible Fortitude, ſhould become like melting Wax. For, who knoweth the Power of *that* Wrath, at which the Pillars of Heaven tremble ‖?

Ah! *Theron*; the Vinegar and the Gall, which they gave Him to drink, were not half *ſo bitter*, as the Cup of his FATHER's Wrath. Yet, for our ſake, He drank it off to the very Dregs.—The Nails, that pierced his Hands; the Spear, that cleft his Heart; were not half *ſo ſharp*, as the Frowns of his eternal FATHER's Countenance. Which, for our Conſolation, He patiently ſubmitted

* Dan. iii. 16, 17, 18.

† *Iſai.* liii. 10. The Prophet ſays not, It pleaſed the LORD, that wicked Men ſhould bruiſe Him; but, *It pleaſed the LORD* himſelf *to bruiſe Him.*

‡ Lam. ii. 4. ‖ Job xxvi. 11.

mitted to bear.—He was rent with Wounds, and racked with Pain; his Bones were diſlocated, and his Nerves convulſed; a thouſand thorny Daggers were planted in his Temples, and Life flowed out at ten thouſand guſhing Veins. Yet this, all this was *gentle*, was *lenient*, in compariſon of thoſe inexpreſſible Agonies, which penetrated his very Soul. The former, drew not a ſingle Complaint from his Mouth: the latter, wrung from his breaking Heart that paſſionate Exclamation; *My GOD! My GOD! why haſt Thou forſaken me?*—Aſtoniſhing Words: Surely, a Diſtreſs, beyond all Imagination grievous*, uttered them. Surely, the Vengeance, not of Men, but of Heaven itſelf, extorted them. Every Syllable of which ſpeaks, what the mourning Prophet deſcribes; *Is it nothing to You, all*

* To heighten our Idea of this Diſtreſs, the Evangeliſts make uſe of the *moſt forcible* Words—ηρξαλο εκθαμβεισθαι, He was ſeized with the *moſt alarming* Aſtoniſhment—αδημονειν, He was overwhelmed with *inſupportable Dejection*—περιλυπος, He was *beſieged* on all ſides, as it were, with an Army of *invading Sorrows*—He *wreſtled*, amidſt ſtrong Cries and Tears, not only with the Malice of Men, and Rage of Devils, but with the infinitely more dreaded Indignation of GOD: He wreſtled even unto *an Agony* of Spirit, εν αγωνια. All theſe Circumſtances of Horror and Anguiſh, conſtitute what a celebrated Poet very juſtly ſtyles,

A Weight of Woe more than ten Worlds could bear!

The *Critic*, probably, will admire the Propriety and Beauty of this Line. Which, compoſed of nothing but Monoſyllables, and clogged with the frequent Repetition of a cumbrous Conſonant, makes the Sound remarkably appoſite to the Senſe.—May We all be *ſacred* Critics! Have, not only a refined Taſte, to reliſh ſuch Elegancies of Compoſition, but an awakened Heart, to feel the Energy of ſuch important Truths!

all Ye that pass by? Behold and see! if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me, in the Day of his fierce Anger *?

Here, now, is *our whole* Punishment endured; Shame of the Cross, and the Sorrows of Death; the Suspensions of the ALMIGHTY's Favour, and the terrible Sensations of his Wrath.

Ther. Be it so. Yet all this amounts to no more, than Part of Payment. For, these Sufferings were transient; *temporary* only, not *eternal.* Therefore, the main Circumstance, the most bitter Ingredient, was wanting.

Asp. In the Estimate of divine Justice, and in point of penal Satisfaction, they were equivalent to our endless Punishment †. Especially, if We consider the Severity of the Sufferings, and the Dignity of the SUFFERER.

The *Severity* of the Sufferings.—Let me illustrate this Point by a Comparison. At the last Day, all those fierce eruptive Flames, which have raged in *Ætna*, in *Vesuvius*, and in every other burning Mountain throughout the World—All those confined subterranean Fires, which have so terribly shaken the Foundations of *Jamaica*, *Sicily*, and *Constantinople*—In a Word; the whole Element of Fire, however employed through all the Revolutions of Time, wherever diffused through all the Regions of the Globe, will then be collected from all Quarters, and burst forth in one vast, resistless, general Conflagration. In *some such* Manner, all that

* Lam. i. 12.

† *Ita quidem ut brevis Passio* CHRISTI *æternæ Damnandorum æquipolleat: & Unius Passio tot Electorum Myriadibus redimendis sufficiat.* WITS. *in Symb.*

that Wrath, which was due to the innumerable Multitude of Sinners, redeemed from every People, and Nation; which, if executed on the offending Creatures, had been prolonged to eternal Ages; all that Wrath, contracted into one inconceivably dreadful Blaze, was *at once* poured out upon the interposing SURETY; *at once* flamed forth on our heavenly VICTIM.—This will appear more than probable, if, among other Particulars, We contemplate the unequaled Magnanimity of our LORD, who is ſtyled *the Lion of the Tribe of* Judah *; and compare it with his bloody Sweat in the Garden, and his exceeding bitter Cry on the Croſs †.

The *Dignity* of the SUFFERER.—Had our SAVIOUR's Sufferings been the Sufferings of a mere Man, or of the moſt exalted Angel, I acknowledge, they could have bore no Proportion to our Demerit But they were the Sufferings of the PRINCE of Heaven, and the LORD of Glory: before whom all Men are as Duſt, and all Angels as Worms.—Was an infinite MAJESTY offended? An infinite MEDIATOR atoned. Weigh the Dignity, the divine Dignity of the REDEEMER's Perſon, againſt the everlaſting Duration of our Puniſhment. It will not only *counter-balance*, but *preponderate*.—Finite Creatures can never make an infinite Satisfaction; no, not through

* Rev. v. 5.

† I think, the Language of the *Greek* Liturgy, is the Language of ſtrict Propriety, as well as of fervent Devotion, Δι' αγνωστων και παθημαλων. The Sufferings of our LORD were, in their Meaſure and Weight, vaſt, tremendous, *unknown*: abſolutely beyond the Reach of human Imagination.

through the moſt unlimited Progreſſion of Ages. Whereas, when our LORD undertook the Work, being truly and properly infinite, He finiſhed it *at once*.—So that his Sufferings, though temporary, have an All-ſufficiency of Merit and Efficacy. They are, in this Reſpect, adequate; nay, on Account of the Infinitude of his Nature, they are more than adequate to an Eternity of Puniſhment.

It was *IMMANUEL*, it was the incarnate GOD, who *purchaſed the Church*, and redeemed Sinners, *with his own Blood**. The immenſe Dignity and Grandeur of our SAVIOUR, communicated their ennobling Influence, to every Tear He ſhed, to every Sigh He heaved, to every Pang He felt. This renders his Sufferings a *perfect*, as their vicarious Nature renders them a *proper* Satisfaction. And though *the Wood* of *Lebanon was not ſufficient to burn, nor all the Beaſts thereof ſufficient for a Burnt-offering* †; yet this Sacrifice fully anſwers the Exigence of the Caſe.—This Sacrifice ſends up an ever-acceptable Odour to the Skies, and diffuſes its ſweet Perfume through all Generations: ſuch as appeaſes Heaven, and revives the World.

Yes, *Theron*; You muſt give me Leave to repeat the ſublime and delightful Truth. It was GOD, *the great GOD, even our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, who gave Himſelf for Us* ‡. His Sacrifice

* *Acts* xx. 28. The original Words are remarkably emphatical. They expreſs with the utmoſt Preciſion, they aſcertain with the greateſt Cogency, the moſt important and precious of all Truths. Την εκκλησιαν του Θεου, ην περιεποιησατο δια του ιδιου αιματος. *The Church of GOD, which HE hath purchaſed with* HIS OWN PROPER *Blood.*

† Iſai. xl. 16. ‡ Tit. ii. 13, 14.

fice therefore muſt be *inconceivably meritorious*. O! that Sinners, the *vileſt* of Sinners, knew its all-ſufficient Efficacy! They would no longer be holden in the Bonds of Iniquity, by that deſtructive Suggeſtion of the Devil, *There is no Hope**.

Ther. What valuable End could ſuch vicarious Sufferings accompliſh? Suppoſe GOD abſolutely inexorable, and they cannot avail. Suppoſe Him divinely merciful, and they are needleſs.

Aſp. The Difficulty You propoſe, I think, has been obviated already. So that I have no Occaſion to ſolve your Dilemma, but only to anſwer your Queſtion. Which I ſhall do, firſt in general; by collecting into a Point, the Subſtance of this and the preceding Conference. Theſe Sufferings—as a *Puniſhment*, gave ample Satisfaction to the divine violated Law—as a *Sacrifice*, they perfectly reconciled Us to our offended GOD—as a *Price*, they redeemed Us from every Evil, and purchaſed for Us a Title to all Good.

This is a Subject of the moſt diſtinguiſhed Importance. Let not my *Theron* imagine, I would abuſe his Patience, if I dwell a Moment longer on the favourite Topic.—A Topic, which attracts the Attention of Heaven, Earth, and Hell. The Croſs of *CHRIST* is the Object of Approbation and ineffable Complacency, to the eternal CREATOR; of Wonder and Admiration, to all intelligent and holy Creatures; of Alarm and Anguiſh, to the infernal Hoſts.—The Church of GOD, for above four thouſand Years, was continually looking *towards it*, with Expectation and longing Deſire.

* Jer. ii. 25.

fire. We are now looking *to it*, as the one Foundation of our Comfort; while other Generations are rising, and will rise in uninterrupted Successions, to behold it with renewed Ardour and Delight, And when Time shall be no more, innumerable Multitudes of Saints and Angels, will be looking *backwards on it*, with Adoration and Transport, even in the remotest Ages of Eternity.

Ther. True; but You have not mentioned the particular Ends, accomplished by this great Transaction.

Asp. I might enumerate many Ends, all magnificent and gracious. I content myself with specifying a few. But such as bring the highest *Glory* to GOD—administer the most solid *Comfort* to Man—and most effectually promote the Interests of *Piety*.

Here We have a Manifestation of inflexible Justice, in Concert with unbounded Goodness.—*Inflexible Justice*; in that the great and terrible GOD, though determined to exercise Mercy, would exercise it only in such a Manner, as might vindicate the Authority of his Law; might testify the Purity of his Nature; and declare the inviolable Faithfulness of his Word.—*Unbounded Goodness*; in that He with-held not his SON, his only SON, but freely gave Him up for Us all. Gave up "the "BRIGHTNESS of his Glory," to be covered with Infamy; gave up "the BELOVED of his "Soul," to expire in Agonies; on purpose to obtain Honour and Immortality for apostate Men.—The Torments inflicted on all the *Damned* in Hell, are not so fearful a Monument of GOD's Justice, as those dying Agonies of the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.

CHRIST. Nor could a *thouſand Worlds*, beſtowed on every Believer, have been ſuch an Act of ſuper-abundant Munificence, as that Gift of his ever-bleſſed SON.

Look We for *Power* and *Wiſdom*?—To uphold the Humanity of *CHRIST*, under all the ſtudied Cruelties of Men, under the inſatiate Rage of Devils, and the far more tremendous Curſe of the divine Law*: to conquer Sin, and Death, and Hell, by a Perſon bound with Fetters, nailed to a Tree, and *crucified in Weakneſs*: to expiate, by *one* Offering, the innumerable Millions of Crimes, committed by all his People, from the Beginning to the End of Time: was not this Power? matchleſs Power? aſtoniſhing Power?—And as for *Wiſdom*, how admirable was the Contrivance, which could harmonize the ſeemingly oppoſite Claims of Mercy and of Juſtice! Could not only ſatisfy each, but magnify both!—Had Puniſhment been executed on the wretched helpleſs Sinner, Mercy had loſt her amiable Honours. Had the Sinner been reſtored to Favour, without *any Penalties* ſuſtained either by Himſelf or his SURETY, Juſtice had been ſet aſide as an inſignificant Attribute. Whereas, by our LORD's vicarious and expiatory Sufferings, both are manifeſted, and both are exalted.

There-

* *Iſai.* xlii. 6. *I the LORD will hold thine Hand, and will keep Thee.* This is ſpoken of the *MESSIAH*. It gives Him Aſſurance of effectual Support, when the Vengeance of Heaven, the Fury of Hell, and the Sins of the World, ſhould fall upon Him with united Violence. To ſupport the MEDIATOR under theſe Circumſtances, is mentioned as a very diſtinguiſhed Act of that omnipotent Arm, which *created the Heavens, and ſpread forth the Earth, and giveth Spirit to them that walk therein.* Ver. 5.

Therefore the Scripture affirms, that GOD hath not only exerciſed, but *abounded in Wiſdom and Prudence*—nay, hath abounded in *all* Wiſdom and Prudence *, by this Combination of righteous Vengeance and triumphant Grace. Which is, at once, ſo honourable to Himſelf, and ſo advantageous to his People.

Ther. "Advantageous to his People."—I am glad, You are come to this Point. This is what I want to have cleared up I am for thoſe Doctrines, which glorify GOD, by doing Good to Man. Give *me* the Religion, whoſe Aſpect is benign, and whoſe Agency is beneficial. Not like a *Meteor*, to dazzle Us with a vain Glitter. Not like a *Comet*, to terrify Us with a formidable Glare. But like yonder *Sun*, whoſe Beams ſhed Light, and diffuſe Joy all around.

Aſp. Is this what You ſeek, and what You prize? Then the *Chriſtian* Religion, this Doctrine in particular, will anſwer your largeſt Expectations, and challenge your higheſt Eſteem. For it is rich with Benefits of the moſt needful, the moſt deſirable, and moſt exalted Kind.

The firſt and leading Bleſſing is *Pardon* of *Sins*.—Pardon, not of ſmall Sins only, but of the moſt *aggravated*, the moſt *horrid*, the moſt *enormous*. Be they flaming as Scarlet, be they foul as the Dunghill, be they black as Hell itſelf; yet they ſhall be as the ſpotleſs Wool, or as the Virgin Snows †: they ſhall, by Virtue of this grand Expiation, be as though they had never been.—Pardon, not of a few, but of *all* Sins. Be they numerous as the Hairs of our Head; numerous as the Stars of Heaven! or innumerable as the Sands upon the Seaſhore;

* Eph. i. 8. † Iſai. i. 18.

ſhore; *the Blood of* JESUS CHRIST *cleanſeth from them* ALL*.

Hereby We have *Victory* over *Death*, and *Admittance* into eternal *Life*.—For thus ſaith the holy Apoſtle, concerning the poor Sojourners in Clay; *Seeing therefore the Children were Partakers of Fleſh and Blood,* HE *alſo partook of the ſame; that by* undergoing *Death, He might deſtroy Him who had the Power of Death, that is the Devil; and deliver thoſe, who, through Fear of Death, were all their Life-time ſubject to Bondage* †.—And thus ſaith the venerable Elder, concerning the triumphant Inhabitants of Heaven; *Theſe are they, who came out of great Tribulation; and have waſhed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the* LAMB: *therefore are they before the Throne* ‡.

The *Philiſtines* rejoiced, when *Samſon*, the Deſtroyer of their Country, was delivered into their Hands. How much *greater Reaſon* have We to rejoice, ſince the bleſſed JESUS has vanquiſhed our laſt Enemy! Has made Death the Miniſter of endleſs Life, and the Grave a Gate to immortal Glory! —*Joſeph* had Cauſe to be glad, when He put off his Priſon-garments, and was clothed with Change of Raiment: when He was brought from the Dungeon to the Palace, and honoured with a Seat at the Right-hand of the King. But is it not an incomparably *richer Bleſſing*, to have our Robes waſhed in redeeming Blood, and our Souls cleanſed from all Guilt? Is it not an incomparably *higher Advancement*, to be admitted into the bliſsful Preſence, and to poſſeſs the everlaſting Kingdom of GOD?

* 1 John i. 7. † Heb. ii. 14, 15. ‡ Rev. vii. 14.

To comprehend all in a word—Hereby are procured, even for the moſt unworthy Creatures, all the *Benefits* of the *New* Covenant. Therefore, the Blood of *CHRIST* is ſtyled by a Prophet, *The Blood of thy Covenant* *; by an Apoſtle, *The Blood of the everlaſting Covenant* †; and our LORD himſelf ſays, *This is the new Covenant in my Blood* ‡.—Is it a Privilege to know GOD, the infinitely glorious Center and Source of all Perfection? Is it a moſt valuable Endowment, to have his holy Laws put into our Minds, and his heavenly Precepts written on our Hearts? Is it a Branch of real Felicity, to have our numberleſs Sins forgiven, and not one of our Iniquities remembered any more? Is it the Compendium of all Happineſs, to have GOD for our Portion, and our exceeding great Reward? To be his peculiar Treaſure, his loving and beloved People ‖.—Of all theſe We may ſay, They are *the Purchaſe* of IMMANUEL's Blood: and whoever is truly intereſted in the latter, is unqueſtionably intitled to all the former.

Who then would refuſe ſo *comfortable* a Doctrine? Which—

Ther. Is too comfortable, We might imagine, to be either *true* in itſelf, or *ſafe* in its Conſequences. Muſt it not tend to *embolden* the Sinner in the Proſecution of his Vices? Who need ſcruple to tranſgreſs, or be very ſolicitous to repent; if an all-atoning SACRIFICE has been offered, for every Kind, and every Degree of Wickedneſs?

* Zech. ix. 11. † Heb. xiii. 20.

‡ *Luke* xxii. 20. The original Word διαθηκη ſignifies either a *Teſtament*, or a *Covenant*.

‖ Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12.

Aſp. Would You have Sinners *intimidated?* Nothing ſpeaks ſuch Terror to the Children of Diſobedience, as the bitter Paſſion, and accurſed Death of *CHRIST.*—All the rhetorical Aggravations of Sin, with regard to its loathſome Nature, and execrable Vileneſs—all the Severity of Vengeance, executed upon rebellious Angels, or wicked Men—all, all are weak and inexpreſſive, compared with the *dreadful Emphaſis* of this great Tranſaction. For, if the LORD Almighty ſpared not *his own* SON, when Sin was, not committed by Him, but only imputed to Him; how much leſs ſhall He ſpare *incorrigible* Offenders, who both habitually commit, and obſtinately perſiſt in, their daring Impieties?

If, by Repentance, You mean an *ingenuous Sorrow* for our Tranſgreſſions; nothing is ſo likely to break the ſtony, or melt the icy Heart, as theſe doleful Effects of Sin.—Let Us imagine Ourſelves preſent at *Calvary*, and ſtanding by the Croſs. See! the innocent, the amiable, the illuſtrious SAVIOUR, hangs on a Tree. A Tree, torturous as the Rack, and ignominious as the Gibbet!—See! his Face is foul with ſpitting, and his Back tore with the Scourge. His Veins ſtream with Blood, and his Heart is wounded with Anguiſh.—There he hangs, abandoned by his Friends; reviled by his Enemies; and forſaken even by his GOD.—Can We reflect, that *We*, even *We* were the Cauſe of this inconſolable Miſery; and not feel Remorſe in our Conſciences, or Sorrow in our Minds? Can We reflect, that for *Us*, for *Us* He bore this amazing Torment; and not ſmite our Breaſts, or be pained at our very Souls?

If, by Repentance, You mean a *thorough Renunciation* of all Iniquity; no Motive is so effectual, to divorce the Heart from every abominable Idol, and divert the Feet from every evil Way, as an attentive Consideration of our REDEEMER's Death.—Whose Indignation does not rise against the infamous Wretch, that betrayed the blessed *JESUS?* Who is not ready to detest those invenomed Tongues, which accused Him; and those barbarous Hands, which crucified Him? Yet our Lusts were more guilty, in this Respect, than *Judas* or the *Jews*. Our Lusts and evil Deeds were the *principal* Actors in this deepest of Tragedies: How then can We caress; how can We entertain; yea, how can We endure those execrable Iniquities, which were *the Betrayers and Murderers* of the PRINCE of Life?—*He bore our Sins in his own* bleeding, agonizing *Body on the Tree*; not that We should be emboldened to repeat them, but incited to abhor them, and induced to forsake them. That, in our Practice and our Affections, We should be averse, be even *dead to Sin* *.

If You would have *Benevolence*, your favourite Principle, take place and operate; it is impossible to urge so endearing a Persuasive to universal Goodwill, as this *Kindness and Love of GOD our SAVIOUR* †. How can We indulge the Sallies of Resentment, or harbour the Seeds of Animosity; when the meek, the merciful, the infinitely gracious REDEEMER, laid down his Life for his *bitterest Enemies?* How can We treat with Contempt or Indifference, even the *meanest* of *Mankind*; since our Divine MASTER gave his all-glorious Per-

 son,

* 1 Pet. ii. 24. † Tit. iii. 4.

ſon, for the vileſt Wretches and moſt miſerable Sinners?—Never was there ſo winning a Call to diſintereſted Charity, as the amiable Example of *CHRIST*. Never ſo binding a Cement of brotherly Love, as the Blood of the crucified *JESUS*.

In ſhort; would You have People poſſeſſed of every heavenly Virtue, and animated to the Practice of every good Work? Nothing adminiſters ſo powerful an Incitement to them all, as a *lively* and *appropriating* Senſe of this wonderous Grace. Set home by the *HOLY GHOST**, it produces ſuch a warm Gratitude, and ſuch a Heart-felt Joy, as are far more operative, than the moſt awful Threatenings, or the moſt cogent Reaſonings.—So that, quite contrary to your Suſpicions, the native Tendency of this excellent Doctrine, is, to ſuppreſs Ungodlineſs, and promote Piety.

Obſerve the preſent calm Evening, yonder mild declining Sun, and theſe ſoft balmy Breezes. How they have unlocked the flowery Priſons, and poured a *Profuſion of Odours* through the Air. How they have inſpirited the little Songſters of the Grove, and fetched *laviſh Harmony* from their Throats. So ſweetly will a true Belief in *JESUS CHRIST*

* The Reader will give me Leave, on this Occaſion, to ſubjoin the noble Doxology of our Church. Which, when thus applied, may be an excellent Means, both of expreſſing our Gratitude, and of quickening our Devotion.—*Glory be to the FATHER*; for providing this all-ſufficient Atonement, and giving his SON to ſave a ruined World.—*Glory be to the SON*; for humbling Himſelf to the Death of the Croſs, and obtaining eternal Redemption for Sinners.—*Glory be to the HOLY GHOST*; for teſtifying of *CHRIST* in our Hearts, and appropriating this great Salvation to our Souls.

and Him crucified, draw forth all the Powers of the Soul, in Acts of ready and chearful Obedience.—He is therefore ſaid, not only to juſtify, but alſo to *ſanctify the People with his Blood* *.

Let Us conſider the Death of *CHRIST*, in this its full Grandeur and extenſive Efficacy; and We ſhall diſcern the admirable Propriety of the Apoſtle's Remark: *It became Him, for whom are all Things, and by whom are all Things, in bringing many Sons unto Glory, to make the CAPTAIN of their Salvation perfect through Sufferings* †. IT BECAME; as an *Act* of *Sovereignty* in GOD, it comported with the Dignity, and emblazoned (if I may ſo ſpeak) the incomprehenſible Majeſty of all his Perfections.—As an Execution of *impartial Vengeance* on our SURETY, it aſſerted the Rights of divine Government, and ſecured the utmoſt Veneration to the divine Law.—As an Emanation of *rich Indulgence* to Us, it redreſſed all our Miſery, and retrieves our whole Happineſs.—In *each*, in *every* Reſpect, it claims the moſt grateful and adoring Acceptance from ſinful Man; it will be had in everlaſting Honour, by the Choirs of Saints, and the Hoſts of Angels; and it is worthy of that high Encomium from JEHOVAH Himſelf, in this I AM WELL PLEASED.

Ther. I thank You, *Aſpaſio*. Your Arguments have not indeed converted me, but they have ſtrengthened my Faith. I never was ſo unhappily miſtaken, as to diſbelieve the Satisfaction made by our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*; made to divine Juſtice; made for the Sins of the World. But, I now ſee more clearly

* Heb. xiii. 12. † Heb. ii. 10.

clearly its Reaſonableneſs and Importance; its chearing Aſpect on the *guilty* Conſcience, and its benign Agency on the *moral* Conduct.

Aſp. I congratulate my dear *Theron*, on his thorough Conviction of this important Truth. May He be favoured with more enlarged and inſtructive Views of the fundamental Article! And may every renewed View be more and more influential on his Heart!

It is wonderfully pleaſing, to mark the Proceſs of Vegetation, in this opening Seaſon of the Year. How the Hedges begin to bud: how the Bud ſwells upon the admiring Sight, and ventures farther into the inviting Air: how the chearing Green expands itſelf more and more, and is continually upon the advancing Hand. Till it throws a Robe of Verdure, over Plants and Trees, over Hills and Vales, over all the Surface of the Earth. So, may our Views of the incarnate GOD, and our Faith in his grand Atonement, be always progreſſive, and always operative! Till they have diffuſed their Influence through the whole Soul; have refined the whole Temper; and beautified all our Converſation.

This is the Way, theſe Views of the incarnate GOD, and his great Atonement, to evangelical Holineſs. And is it not the Way of Peace and Pleaſantneſs? Reviving, raviſhing Thought! To have HIM for our bleeding *Victim!* HIM for our great *Propitiation!* at whoſe Feet the Armies of Heaven bow, and the Saints in Light adore!—Reviving, raviſhing Thought! To have *all* our Puniſhment ſuſtained, and the *whole* Curſe of the Law exhauſted; ſo that Juſtice itſelf can demand

no more!—Nay; to have ſo perfect a Ranſom paid for our Redemption, that it is not *barely* an Act of favourable Indulgence, but of Truth and Equity.* alſo, to pardon, accept, and glorify the Believer! —In SUCH a Method of Reconciliation, how fully does the Judgment acquieſce! How ſecurely may the Conſcience reſt!

Excuſe me, *Theron.* My Affections are again upon the Soar. But I clip their Wings.—Only let me aſk, Is not this Doctrine the *grand Peculiarity* of the Goſpel; by which it ſtands diſtinguiſhed from every other Religion, profeſſed in the World? —Is it not the *central Point*, in which all the Lines of Duty unite, and from which all the Rays of Conſolation proceed?—Strike this Article from the Creed, and You reduce the Myſtery of Godlineſs to a Syſtem of Ethics: You degrade the Chriſtian Church into a School of moral Philoſophy.—To deny the Expiation made by our REDEEMER's Sacrifice, is to obſcure the *brighteſt Manifeſtation* of divine Benignity, and to undermine the *principal Pillar* of practical Religion; is to make a deſperate Shipwreck of our everlaſting Intereſts, and daſh Ourſelves to death, on the very *Rock* of *Salvation.*

Ther.

* Therefore the Apoſtle ſays, *GOD is faithful and juſt to forgive Us our Sins*, 1 John i. 9. *Faithful*; becauſe He had promiſed this Bleſſing, by the unanimous Voice of all his Prophets.—*Juſt!* Surely then He will *puniſh!* No; for this very Reaſon He will pardon.—This may ſeem ſtrange: but, upon the evangelical Principles of Atonement and Redemption, it is apparently true. Becauſe, when the Debt is paid, or the Purchaſe made, it is the Part of *Equity* to cancel the Bond, and deliver up the purchaſed Poſſeſſion.

Ther. Now, I believe, it is Time to repair Homewards. And I hope, it will be no disagreeable Exchange to my *Aspasio*, if We resign our Seat on the Mount, for a Place in the Dining-room.

Asp. Pray, let me enquire, as We walk along (for I was unwilling to interrupt our Discourse, merely to gratify my Curiosity) What may be the *Design* of yonder *Edifice*; which rises on a small Eminence, near the public Road? It is neither a Tower, nor a Dwelling-house; but looks like a stately Column, erected on purpose to beautify the Prospect.

Ther. It is a sort of monumental Pile. Erected, as the Story goes, on a very memorable Occasion.—Queen *Eleanor* accompanied King *Edward the First* to (what was called) the Holy War. In which He gained signal Advantages over the Infidels, and acquired a large Share of Renown to Himself. After many gallant Exploits performed in the Field, a treacherous and desperate *Saracen*, being admitted into his Chamber, under Pretence of private Business, wounded Him with an impoisoned Dagger. The Consequence of which, his Physicians declared, must be inevitable and speedy Death, unless the Poison was sucked out by some human Mouth. This might possibly preserve the royal Patient, but would be extremely dangerous to the Operator.

Dangerous as it was, his Queen claimed the Office; insisted upon it, as the Consort's Right; and executed it so *faithfully*, that She saved the King's Life; so *happily*, that She lost not her own.—After this, She returned to *England*; lived many Years; and bore several Children. But, sooner or later, Royalty itself must pay the Debt to Nature. Dying,

on

on a Journey to *Scotland*, She was brought back to the laſt and long Home of our *Engliſh* Monarchs *. Where-ever her Corpſe reſted, in the Way to its Interment, a Structure † (ſuch as You now behold) was raiſed: as a public Teſtimony to her Merit, and in order *to perpetuate the Memory of her conjugal Affection.*

Aſp. And ſhould not our Hearts be a *Monument* of *Gratitude* to the bleſſed *JESUS?* Who drew the deadly Venom, not from our Veins, but from the immortal Part of our Nature: and not at the Hazard, but at the Loſs, the *certain* and *unavoidable* Loſs of his own moſt precious Life.—He opened his Breaſt, opened his very Soul, to the keeneſt Arrows of vindictive Juſtice; that, transfixing Him, they might drop ſhort of Us, "The Poiſon whereof "drank up *his* Spirits ‡," that the Balm of Peace might refreſh *ours.*

O my *Theron!* Let our Memories be the Tablet, to record this unexampled Inſtance of Compaſſion and Goodneſs. Let our Affections dwell upon the tragical, the delightful Hiſtory; till they are inflamed with Love, and melt into Contrition.—If We want an *Inſcription*, let Us make uſe of thoſe noble

* *Weſtminſter Abbey.*

† One of theſe Structures ſtands on the high Road, near *Northampton.* It is ſurrounded with a large Flight of Steps, at the Bottom; and ornamented, towards the Top, with four female Statues, in full Proportion. A *Latin* Inſcription informs the Traveler, concerning its Occaſion and Deſign;

In perpetuam conjugalis Amoris
Hoc Reginæ Eleanoræ Monumentum.

‡ Job vi. 4.

noble Lines, which, in the fineſt Climax imaginable, deſcribe the Magnificence and Grace of this moſt aſtoniſhing Tranſaction:

——— *Survey the wondrous Cure,*
And at each Step let higher Wonder riſe.
Pardon for infinite Offence!—And Pardon
Through Means that ſpeak its Value infinite!
A Pardon bought with Blood!—With Blood divine!—
With Blood divine of HIM, I made my Foe!—
Perſiſted to provoke!—Though woo'd and aw'd,
Bleſt and chaſtis'd, a flagrant Rebel ſtill!—
Nor I alone! A rebel Univerſe!
My Species up in Arms!—Not one exempt!
Yet for the foulеſt of the Foul, He dies!*

* Night-Thoughts, N° IV.

DIALOGUE V.

ASPASIO, having ſome Letters of Importance to anſwer, as ſoon as the Cloth was taken away, retired from Table.—His epiſtolary Engagements being diſpatched, he enquired for *Theron*. The Servants informed Him, that their Maſter walked into the Garden.—A very little Search found Him, ſeated on an airy Mount, and ſheltered by an *elegant Arbour*.

Strong and ſubſtantial Plants of *Laburnum* formed the Shell; while the ſlender and flexile Shoots of *Syringa* filled up the Interſtices.—Was it to compliment, as well as to accommodate their worthy Gueſts, that the Shrubs interwove the luxuriant Foliage? Was it to repreſent thoſe tender, but cloſe Attachments, which had *united* their Affections, and *blended* their Intereſts?—I will not too poſitively aſcribe ſuch a Deſign to the Diſpoſition of the Branches. They compoſed, however, by their twining Embraces, no inexpreſſive Emblem of the *Endearments* and the *Advantages* of Friendſhip. They compoſed a Canopy, of the freſheſt Verdure,

and

and of the thickeſt Texture. So thick, that it entirely excluded the ſultry Ray*; and ſhed both a cool Refreſhment, and an amuſive Gloom: while every unſheltered Tract, glared with Light, or fainted with Heat.

You enter by an eaſy Aſcent of Steps, lined with Turf, and fenced with a Baluſtrade of ſloping Bay-trees.—The Roof was a fine *Concave*, peculiarly elevated and ſtately. Not emboſſed with Sculpture; not mantled over with Fret-work; but far more delicately adorned with the Syringa's *ſilver Tufts*, and the Liburnum's *flowering Gold*. Whoſe large and lovely Cluſters, gracefully pendent from the leafy Dome; diſcloſing their Sweets to the delighted Bee; and gently waving to the balmy Breath of Spring; gave the utmoſt Enrichment to the charming Bower.

Facing the Entrance, lay a ſpacious graſſy Walk; terminated by an Octangular Baſon, with a curious *Jet d' Eau* playing in the Center. The Waters, ſpinning from the lower Orifices, were attenuated into innumerable little Threads; which diſperſed themſelves in an horizontal Direction, and returned to the Reſervoir in a drizling Shower. Thoſe, which iſſued from the higher Tubes, and larger Apertures, either ſprung perpendicularly, or ſpouted obliquely, and formed, as they fell, ſeveral lofty Arches of liquid Cryſtal; all *glittering* on the Eye, and *cooling* to the Air.

Parallel to the Walk ran a *Parterre*; planted with an Aſſemblage of Flowers. Which advanced, one above another, in regular Gradations of Height, of Dignity, and of Beauty.—Firſt a Row of *Daiſies*; gay

* *Solis inacceſſum Radiis.* VIRG.

gay as the Smile of Youth, and fair as the Virgin Snows.—Next, a Range of *Crocuſes*, like a long Stripe of yellow Sattin, quilted with Threads, or diverſified with Sprigs of Green.—A ſuperior Order of *Ranunculuſes*, each reſembling the Cap of an Earl's Coronet, repleniſhed the third Story with full-blown Tufts of gloſſy Scarlet.—Beyond this, a more elevated Line of *Tulips* *, raiſed their flouriſhed

* Here is, it muſt be confeſſed, ſome little Deviation from the general Laws of the Seaſon; ſome *Anachroniſm* in the Annals of the Parterre. The Flowers united in this Repreſentation, do not, according to the *uſual* Proceſs of Nature, make their Appearance *together*. However, as by the Oeconomy of a ſkilful Gardener, they *may* be thus aſſociated; I hope, the Poſſibility of the Thing, will ſcreen my flowery Productions from the Blaſts of Cenſure!—Or, may I not ſhelter my blooming Aſſembly, under the Remark of a maſterly Critic? Which is as *pertinent* to the Caſe, as if it had been written on purpoſe for our Vindication; and in all reſpects ſo *elegant*, that it muſt adorn any Work, which quotes it; and charm every Perſon, who reads it.

" A Painter of Nature is not obliged to attend Her in " her ſlow Advances, which ſhe makes from one Seaſon " to another; or to obſerve her Conduct in the ſucceſſive " Production of Plants and Flowers. He may draw into " his Deſcription all the Beauties of the Spring and Au- " tumn; and make the whole Year contribute ſomething " to render it more agreeable. His Roſe-trees, Wood- " bines, and Jeſſamines may flouriſh together; and his " Beds be covered at the ſame Time with Lilies, Violets, " and Amaranthuſes. His Soil is not reſtrained to any " particular Set of Plants, but is proper either for Oaks " or Myrtles, and adapts itſelf to the Product of every " Climate.—Oranges may grow wild in it; Myrrh may " be met with in every Hedge; and if He thinks it pro- " per to have a Grove of Spices, He can quickly com- " mand Sun enough to raiſe it. His Concerts of Birds " may be as full and harmonious, and his Woods as

" thick

flouriſhed Heads, and opened their enameled Cups; not bedecked with a ſingle Tint only, but glowing with an intermingled Variety of radiant Hues.—Above all aroſe, that noble Ornament of a royal Eſcutcheon, the *Flower-de-Luce*; bright with etherial Blue, and grand with imperial Purple. Which formed, by its graceful Projections, a Corniſh or a Capital of more than *Corinthian* Richneſs; and imparted the moſt conſummate Beauty to the blooming Colonade.

The Whole, viewed from the Arbour, looked like a *Rainbow*, painted upon the Ground. And wanted nothing to rival that reſplendent Arch, only the Boldneſs of its Sweep, and the Advantage of its ornamental Curve.

To this agreeable Receſs *Theron* had withdrawn Himſelf. Here He ſat muſing and thoughtful; with his Eye fixed upon a Picture, repreſenting ſome *magnificent Ruins*.—Wholly intent upon his Speculation, He never perceived the Approach of *Aſpaſio*; till He had reached the Summit of the Mount, and was ready to take a Seat by his Side.

Aſp.

" thick and gloomy, as He pleaſes. He is at no more
" Expence in a long Viſta, than a ſhort one; and can as
" eaſily throw his Caſcades from a Precipice of half a
" Mile high, as from one of twenty Yards. He has his
" Choice of the Winds, and can turn the Courſe of his
" Rivers, in all the Variety of *Mæanders*, that are moſt
" delightful to the Reader's Imagination. In a Word;
" He has the Modeling of Nature in his own Hands,
" and may give Her what Charms He pleaſes, provided
" He does not reform her too much, and run into Ab-
" ſurdities by endeavouring to excel."

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Asp. Loſt, *Theron!* quite loſt in Thought! And unaffected with all theſe amiable Objects; inſenſible amidſt this Profuſion of Beauties; which, from every Quarter, make their Court to your Senſes!—Methinks, the ſnarling *Cynic* in his Tub *, could hardly put on a greater Severity of Aſpect, than my polite Philoſopher in his blooming *Eden*.

Ther. Ah! my dear Friend, theſe flowery Toys which embelliſh the Garden, are *familiar* to my Eye, and therefore *cheap* in my Eſteem. I behold them frequently; and, for that Reaſon, feel but Little of the pleaſing Surpriſe, which they may poſſibly awaken in a Stranger.—Something like this We all experience, with regard to Events infinitely *more worthy* our admiring Notice. Elſe, why are We not ſtruck with a Mixture of Amazement, Veneration, and Delight, at the grand Machinery and magnificent Productions of Nature?

That the Hand of the ALMIGHTY ſhould wheel round the vaſt terreſtrial Globe, with ſuch prodigious *Rapidity*, and exact *Punctuality*; on purpoſe to produce the regular Viciſſitudes of Day and Night; on purpoſe to bring on the orderly Succeſſion of Seed-time and Harveſt!—We wonder, when we read of the *Iſraelites*, ſojourning forty Years in the Deſart, marching backward and forward over its burning Sands; and find neither their Clothes *waxing*

* *Diogenes*—Whoſe Houſe, We are told, was a Tub; and his whole Furniture, a Staff, a Leathern Bag, and a Wooden Cup. At this curious Manſion, *Alexander the Great*, attended with his Courtiers, made the Philoſopher a Viſit. The Monarch, having ſaluted Him in the moſt obliging Manner, aſked, If He wanted any Thing? *Yes*; replied the Cynic, *that You would ſtand a little out of the Sunſhine; and not take away what you cannot give.*

waxing old * by ſo long a Uſe, nor their Feet *ſwelling* † with ſuch painful Journies. Yet we are neither impreſſed with Wonder, nor affected with Gratitude, while We enjoy the Benefits of the *Air*, which clothes the Earth as it were with a Garment: which has neither contracted any *noxious* Taint, through the extenſive Revolution of almoſt ſix thouſand Years; nor ſuffered any *Diminution* of its natural Force, though exerciſed in a Series of unremitted Activity, ever ſince the elementary Operations began.

This Draught in my Hand, ſhews Us the Inſtability of the grandeſt, *moſt laboured* Monuments of human Art. They are ſoon ſwept away, among the other feeble Attempts of Mortality: Or remain only, as You ſee Here, in ſhattered Ruins; Memorials of the vain and powerleſs Ambition of the Builders.—How ſtrange then, that a Structure, incomparably more tender and delicate, ſhould be preſerved to *old Age*, and *hoary Hairs!* That the bodily Machine, which is ſo exquiſite in its Frame, ſo complicated in its Parts, and performs ſo many Thouſands ‡ of Motions

* Deut. viii. 4. † Neh. ix. 21.

‡ *Thouſands*—Not to mention the *ſpontaneous*, if We conſider only the *mechanical* Motions, which are continually performed in the animal Syſtem—the digeſtive Action of the Stomach—the vermicular Agitation of the Bowels—the Progreſs of the Chyle through the lacteal Veſſels—the many, many Operations of the ſecreting Glands—the Compreſſion of the Lungs, and all their little cellular Lodgments, by every Act of Reſpiration—above all, that grand Impetus, the Syſtole of the Heart; which, by every Conſtriction, darts the crimſon Current through an innumerable Multitude of Arteries; and drives, at the ſame Inſtant of Time, the refluent Blood through an in-

tions every Moment, ſhould continue *unimpaired*, yet act without Intermiſſion, ſo many Days, and Weeks, and Months, and Years.—How ſtrange all this! Yet, becauſe common, how ſeldom does it excite our Praiſe, or ſo much as engage our Notice!

Aſp. Your Remarks are as juſt, as the Neglect of them is cuſtomary.—Unaccountable Supineneſs! Though GOD *doeth great Things*, worthy of all Obſervation; *yea, and Wonders without Number*: We yawn with Indolence, inſtead of being animated with Devotion, or tranſported with Delight. *Lo! He goeth before Us*, in evident Manifeſtations of Wiſdom and Power, *yet We ſee Him not: He paſſeth on alſo*, and ſcatters unnumbered Bleſſings from his providential Hand, *but We perceive Him not* *.

This, though greatly culpable, is to be reckoned among the *ſmalleſt* Inſtances of our ungrateful Inſenſibility.—Are We not inattentive even to the Work of Redemption? That Work, which, according to the emphatical Declaration of Scripture, *exceeds in Glory* †. Is by far the greateſt, the moſt marvelous of all ſublunary, perhaps, of all divine Tranſactions.

The Sea has been divided: the Dead have been raiſed: a World has been created; created out of nothing; created only by a Word. But what are all theſe Miracles, compared with the Incarnation of the eternal GOD? And of *this* matchleſs Miracle have We not been careleſs, unmoved Spectators?

numerable Multitude of correſponding Views—Such a View will oblige Us to acknowledge, that *Theron*'s Account is far from being extravagant; that it rather *diminiſhes*, than *exaggerates* the real Fact.

* Job ix. 10, 11. † 2 Cor. iii. 9.

tors? Have We not admired many a trifling Incident, more, far more than this wonderful Diſpenſation of Grace?—O *Theron!* Are We not ſhamefully unaffected, even though the KING of Kings vouchſafes to exchange his Throne, for the low Eſtate of a Servant, and the curſed Death of a Malefactor? Though He is pleaſed, by the Imputation of his active as well as paſſive Obedience, to become *The LORD our Righteouſneſs*, yet—

Ther. You are taking an effectual Way, *Aſpaſio*, to rouſe me from my Reverie, and make me indeed like the ſnarling Philoſopher. "Imputed Righte-
"ouſneſs is a Scheme groſly frivolous and abſurd;
"utterly inſufficient to anſwer the End propoſed;
"and, One would think, could never be depended
"on, where there is the leaſt Degree of Under-
"ſtanding, and Capacity for Reaſoning*,"

Aſp.

* The Reader will probably be diſguſted, at this *Heat* of Temper, this *Aſperity* of Diction, and both ſo *abruptly* introduced.—I have no Apology to make for my *Theron*. The Reader has Reaſon to be diſguſted; has Reaſon to be chagrined. Only let me deſire Him to remember, That this is the very Spirit, nay theſe are the *very Words*, of a celebrated Oppoſer of our Doctrine; not added, when He has fully proved the Abſurdity of the Scheme; but aſſumed, even upon the Entrance to his Diſcourſe.

I have often wondered, that Diſputants, eſpecially on religious Subjects, ſhould chooſe to deal in ſuch *acrimonious* and *reproachful* Language. *Does the Wrath of Man work the Righteouſneſs of GOD?* Or, is a paſſionate Invective the proper Means, either to conciliate our Affections, or convince our Judgment?—Why ſhould We not *write* in the ſame genteel and obliging Strain, in which We *converſe?* Were We to meet our Antagoniſt in a Friend's Parlour, and have a perſonal Conference on the Subject, our Speech would be kind, and our Remonſtrances calm:—"I am ſorry, Sir, that You have eſpouſed

Asp. Who is warm now, *Theron?* May I not remind my Friend, that the *Resentful* is no more fitted to work Conviction, than the *Rapturous?*—Perhaps, You have not duly considered this Subject; nor seen it in the proper Point of View. I have sometimes beheld a Ship of War, several Leagues off at Sea. It seemed to be a *dim cloudy* Something, hovering on the Skirts of the Horizon; contemptibly mean, and not worthy of a Moment's Regard.—But, as the floating Citadel approached, the Masts arose; the Sails swelled out; its stately Form, and curious Proportions, struck the Sight. It was no longer a shapeless Mass, or a Blot in the Prospect, but the *Master-piece* of human Contrivance, and the *noblest* Spectacle in the World of Art.

Who knows, *Theron*, but this sacred Scheme likewise, which You now look upon as a *confused Heap* of Errors, may very much improve, when more closely examined. May, at length, appear a wise and benign Plan; admirably fitted to the Condition of our fallen Nature; and perfectly worthy, of GOD to ordain, of Man to accept.

Ther.

" such Notions. They seem to me, extremely wrong
" and equally dangerous. I am apt to think, You have
" not duly considered, either the little Ground, they
" have to support them; or the pernicious Conse-
" quences, that may attend them."

Why should not our Controversies from the Press be carried on, with such a *candid* and *amicable* Strife? This would certainly render them, more pleasing to the Reader; more profitable to the Public; and much more likely to have their desired Effect upon our Opponent. —For my Part, I admire the Humanity and Tenderness of the Poet's Resolution; even more than the Boldness of his Figures, or the Beauty of his Expression:

Tu Lapides loqueris, ego byssina Verba reponam.

Ther. I know not what may happen, *Aſpaſio*. But there ſeems to be very little Probability of ſuch a Change. For, though my laſt Oppoſition was a *mock Fight*; in my preſent Objections, I am *very ſincere*.—To go, by an *imputed* Righteouſneſs, to Heaven! To obtain Honour and Immortality, by the Obedience of *Another!* Who can credit ſuch Chimeras? Who can ſwallow ſuch Camels?

When ſuch Doctrines are ſeriouſly advanced, I cannot forbear recollecting the Scheme of Biſhop *Wilkins*. Who would perſuade Us (good Man!) to ſail or ride Poſt, not to our Neighbours on the other Side of the *Tweed*; not to our Colonies, on the other Side of the Globe; but to our Friends and Allies in the Moon. And this ſame Voyage or Journey we are to perform, by the Help of ſome Machine; to be conſtructed, I cannot tell where; to be managed, no body knows how.—"Ay; ſays "an arch Lady; All this would be very pretty. "But pray, Doctor, what ſhall We do for Lodg-"ing and Proviſions by the Way?"

Aſp. Don't you remember the Reply to this ironical Queſtion?—"We will call, ſays the Doctor, at "one of your Ladyſhip's Caſtles. Which, for our "ſingular Conveniency, you have been, theſe "many Years, building in the Air."—Every Attempt to enter into Heaven, unleſs it be founded on the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, I will venture to call *Building Caſtles in the Air*. And, if I may retort your own Simile, not a whit leſs chimerical, than the Whim of traveling to the Moon, with all this Luggage of Fleſh and Blood.

But I beſeech you, let Us diſcard *Irony*, as well as Whim. Turn them both out of the Court. If

a Jury is impanelled, to try me and my Doctrine, I ſhall certainly except againſt Irony. Generally ſpeaking, He is neither a *good* Man, nor a *true*. According to the beſt of my Remembrance, You Yourſelf conſented to ſet Him aſide in this Debate. Let Us therefore, not affect what is ſmart, but urge what is ſolid.

Ther. Agreed. The Notion of a ſubſtituted and vicarious Righteouſneſs, is abſurd even to common Senſe, and to the moſt natural and eaſy Reflections of Men.

Aſp. It may not, my dear Friend, agree with our natural Apprehenſions; nor fall in with the Method, which *We* might have deviſed, for the Salvation of Mankind. But this is the Voice of Scripture, and a Maxim never to be forgotten; *GOD's Thoughts are not as our Thoughts, nor his Ways as our Ways**.

"This Notion, you ſay, is abſurd even to com-
"mon Senſe."—A Saying, upon which I muſt beg Leave to put a Query. It was, I own, abſolutely beyond the Power of common Senſe, unaſſiſted by divine Revelation, to *diſcover* this Truth.—I will grant farther, That this Bleſſing infinitely *tranſcends*, whatever common Senſe has obſerved, in all her Converſe with finite Things.—But, if I have any the leaſt Acquaintance with common Senſe, I am perſuaded, She *will not*, She *cannot* pronounce it an Abſurdity. To this Judge I refer the Cauſe.

And to *open* the Cauſe a little, let me juſt obſerve, That GOD imputed our Sins to his SON. Why elſe is it ſaid? That, at his ſecond Coming, He ſhall appear *without* Sin†. Plainly implying, That, at his firſt Coming, He appeared *with Sin*. Not indeed

* Iſai. lv. 8. † Heb. ix. 28.

indeed committed by Him, but laid upon Him, or imputed to Him.

How elſe could the immaculate *JESUS* be puniſhed, as the moſt inexcuſable Tranſgreſſor? *Awake, O Sword, againſt the Man that is my Fellow, ſaith the LORD of Hoſts**.—Is not this the Voice of a Judge, pronouncing the Sentence, and authorizing the Execution? Or rather, does it not deſcribe the Action of Juſtice, turning the Sword from Us, and ſheathing it in *CHRIST*?

If *CHRIST*, then, was our Subſtitute, with regard to *penal Suffering*; why may He not ſtand in the ſame Relation, with regard to *juſtifying Obedience*? There is the ſame Reaſon for the one, as for the other. Every Argument in favour of the former, is equally concluſive in behalf of the latter.

Ther. I freely grant, that *CHRIST* was puniſhed in our Stead; that *his* Death is the Expiation of *our* Sin, and our Security from penal Suffering. But this—

Aſp. —will undeniably prove, that Sin was imputed to Him; otherwiſe He could not *truly* ſuffer in our Stead, nor be *juſtly* puniſhed at all. "And "Imputation is as reaſonable and juſtifiable in *one* "*Caſe*, as in the *other*; for they both ſtand upon "one and the ſame Foot; and for that Reaſon, He "who throws down one, throws down both."—I ſhould by no means have interrupted my *Theron*, were it not to introduce this Anſwer from an eminent Divine. Who adds, what ſhould be very ſeriouſly conſidered; "And therefore, whoever rejects the "Doctrine of the Imputation of our SAVIOUR's "*Righteouſneſs* to Man, does, by ſo doing, reject

* Zech. xiii. 7.

" the Imputation of Man's *Sin* to our SAVIOUR,
" and all the Conſequences of it. Or, in other
" Words, He who rejects the Doctrine of the *Im-*
" *putation*, does, by ſo doing, reject the Doctrine
" of the *Expiation* likewiſe *."

Ther. I know nothing of this Divine; and, eminent as He is, can hardly take his *Ipſe dixit* for a Deciſion.

Aſp. I was in hopes, You would pay the greater Regard to *his* Opinion, becauſe He is not in the Number of the whimſical Fanatics.—However, *ſay I theſe Things as a Man*, or on Man's Authority alone? *Saith not the Law the ſame alſo?* Speaking of the Peace-offering, the HOLY GHOST has declared; *If any of the Fleſh of the Sacrifice of his Peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third Day, it ſhall not be accepted, neither ſhall it be imputed unto Him that offereth it* †. Hence We learn, That Sacrifices and Offerings, when duly adminiſtered, were *imputed* to the Offerer. Imputed to Him, for Reconciliation and Peace with GOD. And wherefore? Becauſe, they were Figures of *CHRIST*, of his Atonement and Righteouſneſs. Which, in like manner, are imputed to Sinners, for their Pardon and Salvation.

Leſt you ſhould think this Proof, being deduced from *typical* Uſages, not ſufficiently concluſive—I would farther obſerve; That the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s

* STAYNOE *upon Salvation by JESUS CHRIST alone*, Vol. I. p. 334.—Where the Reader may find ſeveral weighty Conſiderations, clearly propoſed and ſtrongly urged, for the Explanation and Eſtabliſhment of this capital Doctrine.

† Levit. vii. 18.

CHARIOT. Righteouſneſs, bears an evident Analogy to another great and acknowledged Truth of Religion. We did not perſonally commit *Adam*'s Sin, yet are We chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Condemnation, on that—

Ther. How! *We* chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Condemnation, on Account of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion! This an acknowledged Truth? No; it is a Poſition I muſt deny; I had almoſt ſaid, which I cannot but abhor. None other could, in the Eye of Juſtice and Equity, be blameable for any Offence of our firſt Parents, but *they only*.

Aſp. So ſays *Theron*; but what ſays St. *Paul?* Yours may be the Voice of natural Reaſon, but what is the Language of divine Revelation? *In whom*, that is in *Adam*, *all have ſinned*.

Ther. The Words, if I remember right, are, *For that all have ſinned.* Is it poſſible, that *Aſpaſio* ſhould forge the Hand, or counterfeit the Seal of the HOLY GHOST, in order to eſtabliſh a favourite Notion?

Aſp. Impoſſible, I hope.—In the Margin, the Words are tranſlated, as I have repeated them. For this Interpretation I might contend, as not at all incompatible with the original Phraſe*, and as *moſt preciſely* ſuitable to the ſacred Argument. Εφ' ω παντες ημαρτον. In theſe Words, the Apoſtle aſſigns a Reaſon for the preceding Aſſertion, *By one Man's Sin Death came upon all.*—It might be replied; Is

* *Rom.* v. 12. Not to mention the famous Diſtinction of *Epictetus*, τα εφ' ημιν, nor the well known Adagy of *Heſiod*, μεγρον δ' επι πασιν αριστον. See Chap. iv. 18. v. 2. of this very Epiſtle. Where the Prepoſition επι is uſed in *Aſpaſio*'s Senſe.

Is not this ſtrange? Is not this unaccountable? No, ſays our ſacred Diſputant; We account for it on this Principle, Becauſe *all* have *ſinned*.—Which Sinning, if referred to every One's perſonal Iniquity, would neither clear up the Caſe, nor eſtabliſh the Doctrine. The Reaſoning would ſtand thus; "All are liable to Death by the Sin of One, "because all have in their own Conduct tranſ-"greſſed." As this is abſolutely inconcluſive, the Sentence ſhould, if We would preſerve the full Force of the Argument, be tranſlated, *In whom all have ſinned*. But I wave this Advantage. Let the Words run into your Mould, and the Tranſlation take your Form. They are equally deciſive of the Point in Debate.—They aſſign the *Reaſon*, why Death came upon all Men; *Infants* themſelves not excepted: *For that*, or *inaſmuch as*, all have ſinned. How? Not in their own Perſon. This were utterly impoſſible. Could the Babe, which received his Breath in the Morning, and reſigned it at Noon, be an actual Tranſgreſſor? But in that firſt grand Tranſgreſſion of our federal Head, even the Infants of a Day have ſinned. Which Sin, as it could not be actually committed by them, muſt, according to the Tenour of the Apoſtle's Arguing, be imputed to them.

Theo. Pray, what do You mean by that ſtiff, and to me unintelligible Phraſe, *federal Head?*

Aſp. I mean what *Milton* celebrates, when He repreſents the Almighty FATHER, thus addreſſing his eternal SON.

——— *Be Thou in Adam's* Room
The Head *of all Mankind, though Adam's Son.*

As

As in Him perish all Men, so in Thee,
As from a second Root, *shall be restor'd*
As many as are restor'd, without Thee none *.

I mean what the Apostle teaches, when He calls *CHRIST the second Man* †, and *the last Adam* ‡.—The second! The last! How? Not in a numerical Sense. Not in Order of Time. But in this Respect—That, as *Adam* was a public Person, and acted in the Stead of all Mankind; so *CHRIST* was a public Person, and acted in Behalf of all his People—That, as *Adam* was the *first* general Representative of this Kind, *CHRIST* was the *second* and the *last*: there never was, and there never will be, any other—That, what they severally did, in this Capacity, was not intended to *terminate* in themselves, but to *affect* as many as they respectively represented.—This is St. *Paul*'s Meaning, and on this the Doctrine of Imputation is founded.

Ther. If You build the Doctrine on no other Foundation, than *your own* particular Sense of the Apostle's Words; perhaps, your Ground may prove sandy, and treacherous to its Trust.

Asp. I build it upon my Sense of the Words, and I deduce it from yours, *Theron*.—But I am far from resting the whole Weight of the Cause upon a *single* Text. It is established, again and again, in this same Chapter.—Neither do I wonder at the Prejudices, which You and Others may entertain against the Doctrine. It lies quite out of the Road of Reason's Researches. It is among *the wonderful Things of GOD's Law*. This the inspired Penman foresaw,

* Book III. 285. † 1 Cor. xv. 47. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 45.

foreſaw, and modeled his Diſcourſe accordingly. Like ſome ſkilful Engineer, who, though He makes the whole Compaſs of his Fortification ſtrong, yet beſtows *peculiar* and *additional* Strength on thoſe Parts, which He apprehends will be expoſed to the fierceſt Attack. So the wiſe, the divinely wiſe Apoſtle, has inculcated, and reinculcated, this momentous Point. He has enforced it, with all the Aſſiduity of Zeal; and confirmed it, by all the Energy of Expreſſion.—*If through the Offence of* One, *many be dead—The Judgment was by* One *to Condemnation—By* one *Man's Offence Death reigned by One* *—*By the Offence of* One, *Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation* †.—That there may remain no Poſſibility, of miſtaking his Meaning, or of eluding his Argument, He adds; *By* ONE *Man's Diſobedience* MANY *were made Sinners* ‡.

Ther. Sin, I am told by a celebrated Expoſitor, ſometimes ſignifies *Puniſhment*. He farther informs me, that We may be ſaid to ſin in *Adam*, not by the Imputation of his Diſobedience to Us, but by becoming obnoxious to thoſe Sufferings which were due to his Sin.

Aſp.

* Τῳ ἑνὸς—διὰ τοῦ ἑνός. *Significantiſſima Repetitio. Ne Peccata per Singulos patrata videantur potius Mortem peperiſſe.* BENGEL.—Οὐκ ἀφῆκαι ΤΟΥ ΕΝΟΣ, ἀλλ' διὰ λέγῃ σοι Ἰουδαῖος, Πῶς, ἑνὸς καταρθωσαντος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ οἰκουμένη σωθῇ; δυνηθῇς αὖθις λέγειν, Πῶς ἑνὸς παρακοαῖς τὸν ἅπαντα ἡ οἰκουμένη κατεκρίθη; CHRYSOST. *The Apoſtle repeats, and can hardly deſiſt from, the Expreſſion* ONE. *That, if a* Jew *ſhould aſk, How can the World be ſaved by the Well-Doing of One, or by the Obedience of CHRIST? You may be able to reply, on his own Principles; How could the World be condemned by the Evil-Doing of One, or the Diſobedience of* Adam?

† Rom. v. 15, 16, 17, 18. ‡ Rom. v. 19.

Asp. Then the Apoſtle's Reaſoning will ſtand in this Form; *Death came upon all Men, for that all have ſinned*; that is, "Death came upon all Men, "becauſe all have been puniſhed: or, an Obnox-"iouſneſs to Puniſhment came upon all Men, be-"cauſe all are become obnoxious to Puniſhment." A *goodly* Strain of Argumentation for an unerring Writer to uſe.—Surely *Gamaliel*'s Pupil would diſclaim, much more would *CHRIST*'s Ambaſſador ſcorn, ſuch weak and unmeaning Chicanery. He mentions Sin and its Puniſhment; but never ſo much as hints, that they are intended to ſignify *one* and the *ſame* Thing. He all along maintains a Diſtinction between them; repreſents the former, as the Cauſe of the latter. *Judgment, Condemnation, Death* are owing to *Sin, Offence, Diſobedience.* It is by the Imputation of theſe, that We become obnoxious to thoſe.

This Account is clear, is natural, and wants no ſtrained Criticiſms to ſupport it. This Account demonſtrates the Equity of that providential Government, which executes the Sentence of Death, even on thoſe Deſcendents of *Adam*, who have not *ſinned* in their own Perſons. It alſo illuſtrates the Procedure of that ſovereign Grace, which treats as righteous, and intitles to Life, even thoſe Believers in *JESUS*, who have not *obeyed* in their own Perſons. —What ſays our Church? You have a great Veneration for the *Church of England, Theron.*

Ther. I have. But, I fear, my *Aſpaſio* has neither ſo honourable an Opinion of her Worſhip, nor ſo ſteady an Adherence to her Conſtitution. Otherwiſe, He would not ſo highly extol thoſe ambitious and canting Hypocrites the *Puritans.* Who were

the moſt inveterate Enemies of our excellent Eſtabliſhment, and would have rejoiced in its utter Subverſion.

Aſp. As to the Puritans *, You will do me the Juſtice to acknowledge, that I ſpeak only of their *evangelical* Tenets, abſtracted from all political Principles.—As to myſelf, your Fears are friendly, but I truſt they are *groundleſs*. I would only aſk; Who are to be deemed the moſt affectionate and faithful Sons of their ſacred Mother?—Thoſe, I preſume, who moſt *cordially* embrace her Doctrines, and moſt *dutifully* ſubmit to her Precepts. By this Touchſtone let my Fidelity be tried. And for an immediate Tryal, be pleaſed to repeat her Ninth Article.

Ther. I cannot ſay, that I remember the particular Words of any, though I have often read, and very much approve them all.

Aſp.

* As the *Puritans* have been mentioned, once and again, it may, perhaps, be thought neceſſary, that We ſhould explain the Term; by ſpecifying the Perſons, to whom it relates.—It relates to ſuch Authors, as the following.

Dr. Owen, with his correct Judgment, and an immenſe Fund of Learning.—*Mr Charnock*, with his maſculine Style, and an inexhauſtible Vein of Thought.—*Dr. Goodwin*, with Sentiments eminently evangelical; and a moſt happy Talent at opening, ſifting, and diſplaying the hidden Riches of Scripture.—Theſe, I think, are the *firſt Three*.

Then comes *Mr. Howe*, nervous and majeſtic; with all the Powers of Imagery at his Command.—*Dr. Bates*, fluent and poliſhed; with a never-ceaſing Store of beautiful Similitudes.—*Mr. Flavel*, fervent and affectionate; with a maſterly Hand, at probing the Conſcience, and ſtriking the Paſſions.—*Mr. Caryl, Dr. Manton, Mr. Pool*, with many Others; whoſe Works will ſpeak for them, ten thouſand times better, than the Tongue of Panegyric, or the Pen of Biography.

Aſp. I wiſh You would commit to your Memory, four or five of the moſt diſtinguiſhed *. They are a valuable Treaſure, and contain the Quinteſſence of the Goſpel.

Theſe are the Words of the Ninth Article. "Original Sin is the Fault and Corruption of every "Man, that naturally is ingendered of the Offspring "of *Adam*." It is the Fault, ſays the pious Biſhop *Beveridge*, and therefore We are guilty of it. It is the *Corruption* alſo, and therefore We are defiled with it.—Our Homilies have recourſe to no ſuch Palliatives, and qualifying Interpretations, as my *Theron*'s Expoſitor uſes. One of them affirms point-blank, that "in *Adam* all Men ſinned univerſally." This ſeems to be a Paraphraſe on the Text, whoſe Tranſlation You lately controverted.—In what Senſe our great poetical Divine underſtood the ſacred Writer, is apparent from the following Words; which are ſuppoſed to have been ſpoken by JEHOVAH himſelf;

——— *Adam's Crime*
Makes guilty all his Sons †.

And from another Paſſage, where our rebellious Progenitor, bewailing his aggravated Miſery, and the extenſive Malignity of his Guilt, declares;

——— *In me all*
Poſterity ſtands curs'd ‡.

For my own Part I muſt confeſs, That, if the Tranſmiſſion of original Depravity be granted, I know

* Eſpecially, Articles IX, X, XI, XII, XIII.
† MILTON, Book III. 290. ‡ Book X. 817.

know not how the Imputation of *Adam*'s deſtructive Apoſtacy can be denied. If We had no Concern in the one, how could We be juſtly puniſhed with the other?—I ſay *puniſhed*. For, to loſe the primitive Integrity of our Nature, and inherit a depraved Diſpoſition, is at once a moſt deplorable Calamity, and a moſt terrible Puniſhment.—Corruption tranſmitted, and Sin imputed, ſeem to be Doctrines *indiſſolubly* connected. To allow the former, and reject the latter, is, in my Apprehenſion, to acknowledge the Effect without admitting the Cauſe.

Ther. To make Us Parties in a Covenant, which We did not agree to, can this be *equitable?* To ruin Us for a Crime, which We never committed, can this be *merciful?* Surely, this is a flagrant Injuſtice, never to be aſcribed to the All-gracious GOD. A diabolical Barbarity, add Some, never to be mentioned without the utmoſt Deteſtation.

Aſp. I ſee no Cauſe for ſuch a tragical Outcry of Barbarity, nor indeed for any Complaint of Injuſtice. Not to inſiſt upon the Sovereignty of an All-creating GOD, and his unqueſtionable Right to *do what He will with his own**, I would only aſk—Did He not condeſcend to tranſact with Man, not on the Foot of abſolute uncontroulable Authority, but in the honourable and endearing Way of a *Covenant?*—Were not the Terms of this Covenant, perfectly eaſy, and wonderfully gracious? *Wonderfully gracious:* For, they propoſed a State of inconceivable and everlaſting Felicity† to Creatures, who were intitled to *no* Happineſs; had not the leaſt Claim to *any* Good; no, not ſo much as to the Privilege of Exiſtence. *Perfectly eaſy:* For, what was the Condition

* Matt. xx. 15.

† Luke x. 28.

Condition on Man's Part? Not any rigorous Act of Duty, not any ſevere Courſe of Self-denial, but the free Enjoyment of *Millions* of Bleſſings and Pleaſures, with only the Prohibition of *one* pernicious Indulgence.—Here then is made, on one hand, a Promiſe of the moſt *glorious* Reward, that GOD himſelf could give: and nothing required, on the other, but the *ſmalleſt* Expreſſion of Allegiance, that Man himſelf could wiſh.—And is this Injuſtice? Is this Barbarity?

Ther. All this was equitable enough with regard to *Adam*: but why ſhould We be condemned for *his* Violation of the Covenant?—Or how was ſuch a Conſtitution of Things gracious, with reſpect to *Us?*

Aſp. "Why condemned?"—Becauſe, We ſhould have been Partakers of the Benefit and the Glory, if He had perſevered in his Duty. To this, I preſume, None would object. And if they *would not* to the one, they *ought not* to the other.

You aſk farther; "How was ſuch a Conſtitution "of Things gracious, with reſpect to Us?"—I anſwer; Becauſe it was the *moſt likely* Means, to ſecure the Happineſs of Us and all Mankind. Was not *Adam*, of all Perſons, by far the beſt qualified to act as a general Head? He had a Pefection of Knowledge, to diſcern his true Intereſt: a Perfection of Holineſs, to capacitate Him for Obedience: and a Perfection of Happineſs, diſpoſing Him to Perſeverance. As None could have more eminent Qualifications, None could have *ſo many* Obligations. His own Welfare, both bodily and ſpiritual, was at ſtake: the eternal Intereſts of his riſing Family, and of his remoteſt Poſterity were depending:

the Lives, the Souls, the *everlaſting All* of the whole human Race, were embarked on the ſingle Bottom of his Fidelity. Therefore, the Felicity of every Individual, that ſhould ſpring from his Loins, was a freſh Motive to Vigilance, an additional Engagement to Duty*.—As *his* Love to his Offspring was more refined, more exalted, more godlike than ours, all theſe Conſiderations and Inducements muſt operate upon Him, in their fulleſt Scope, and with the ſtrongeſt Energy.—What an Entrenchment was here, to keep out Diſobedience, and ward off Ruin! An Entrenchment, *deep* as Hell; *high* as Heaven; *wide* as the whole Extent of the human Species.

Here then I may venture to throw the Gauntlet, and challenge the whole World. Let the moſt penetrating Mind deviſe a Scheme, ſo wiſely and graciouſly calculated to *aſcertain* the Succeſs of a *probationary* State. If this be impracticable, then muſt every Mouth be ſtopped. No Tongue can have the leaſt Reaſon to complain. I, for my Part, ſhall think myſelf obliged to admire the Benignity of my CREATOR's Conduct. And GOD may juſtly

* Should any Perſon imagine Himſelf more capable of ſtanding than *Adam*, who was endowed with all the Perfections of an innocent, holy, godlike Nature; I think, by this very Imagination, He begins to *fall*; fall into one of the vileſt Sins, Pride.—Is any Perſon ready to ſuppoſe, That, from a View to his own particular Salvation, He would continue faithful; when *Adam* was not engaged to Fidelity, from a Regard to his own and the final Happineſs of all his Poſterity? He ſeems to be juſt as wiſe as the Mariner, who perſuades Himſelf; That, though *ten thouſand* Anchors, firm and without a Flaw, could not ſecure the Ship in a Storm; yet a *ſingle* Anchor, crazy and damaged, might have done it effectually.

juſtly demand of all intelligent Creatures; *What could have been done more*, for the Preſervation and Felicity of Mankind, *that I have not done?* *

Eſpecially, when to all this We add, That the ſame Almighty BEING, who appointed *Adam* to be our Repreſentative in the firſt Covenant, without aſking our *actual Conſent*; appointed alſo *CHRIST* to be our Repreſentative in the ſecond Covenant, without ſtaying for our *actual Solicitation*. When We take *this* into the Account, there remains not the leaſt Shadow of Injuſtice; but Goodneſs, tranſcendently rich Goodneſs, ſhines forth with the brighteſt Luſtre.

Ther. Goodneſs, *Aſpaſio!* This is ſurpriſing indeed. Why, if *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion be laid to our Charge, We are *damnable* Creatures, the very Moment We exiſt; and are liable to the Torments of Hell, even on account of his Diſobedience. To term this Goodneſs, is the greateſt of Paradoxes! To affirm it of the DEITY, is little leſs than Blaſphemy!

Aſp. Let Us be calm, my dear Friend, and conſider the Caſe impartially. If it is not a real Truth, I ſhall be as willing to relinquiſh it, as Yourſelf.

Is not Death, eternal Death, the Wages of every Sin? And if of every Sin, then doubtleſs of *original*. Which is the *Fountain*, from whence all the Streams of actual Iniquity flow; or rather the *Abyſs*, from whence all the Torrents pour.—That, which could not be pardoned, but by the Humiliation and Agonies of GOD's adorable SON, may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to deſerve the moſt dreadful Vengeance. And it is affirmed, by an Authority which You will

* Iſai. v. 4.

not diſpute; that, "For original as well as actual "Sin, the Offering of *CHRIST* is a Propitiation "and Satisfaction*."

Does not St. *Paul* deliver it, as a Maxim in Divinity? That, *by the Offence of One*, Adam He undoubtedly means, *Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation* †. The Import of the Words, together with the Connection of the Paſſage, lead Us to underſtand this of a Condemnation to eternal Miſery.—*The Import of the Words*: for, they are doubled ‡, to make them peculiarly ſtrong in their Signification: and each Word, within the Compaſs of this very Epiſtle, is uſed in that awful Latitude of Meaning ||. *The Connection of the Paſſage*: becauſe, it ſtands oppoſed to that Juſtification which is unto Life. This, We are ſure, includes the Idea of an everlaſting Duration. And why ſhould its tremendous Counterpart be leſs extenſive?

This Senſe is evidently *patronized*, and this Doctrine moſt peremptorily *aſſerted*, by our eſtabliſhed Church. What ſays the Book of *Homilies*, when treating of the Miſeries conſequent upon the Fall? "This ſo great and miſerable a Plague, if it had "only reſted on *Adam*, who firſt offended, it had "been much eaſier, and might the better have been "borne. But it fell not only on Him, but alſo on "his Poſterity and Children for ever; ſo that the "whole Brood of *Adam*'s Race ſhould ſuſtain the "ſelf-ſame Fall and Puniſhment, which their Fore-"father by his Offence moſt juſtly had deſerved §."

—Leſt any ſhould miſapprehend the Deſign of our Reformers,

* Article XXXI. † Rom. v. 18. ‡ Κριμα εις το κατακριμα. || Rom. ii. 3. iii. 8. viii. 1.
§ Homily on the Nativity of *CHRIST*.

Reformers, and ſuppoſe the Puniſhment to conſiſt only of ſome bodily Suffering, or the Loſs of Immortality, it is added in the ſame alarming Diſcourſe; "Neither *Adam*, nor any of his, had any "Right or Intereſt at all in the Kingdom of Hea-"ven; but were become plain Reprobates and "Caſtaways, being perpetually damned to the ever-"laſting Pains of Hell."

Leſt You ſhould imagine, this might be written under a Sally of haſty Zeal, or that it is to be reckoned among the doting Opinions of a credulous Antiquity; let me remind my Friend, That it is engrafted into the *Articles*. Thoſe Articles, which were approved by the Archbiſhops and Biſhops of both Provinces; were ratified by the general Conſent of the Clergy; and are, to this Day, the *national Standard* of our Belief. The Ninth Article, beginning with a Deſcription of our depraved Nature, ſubjoins an Account of its proper Deſert; "In "every Perſon born into the World, it deſerveth "GOD's Wrath and Damnation*."

* I am ſurpriſed to ſee a learned Author, attempting to *ſheath* the *Sting* of this awful Denunciation: attempting to prove, that the Words "do not ſignify GOD's "eternal Wrath, and the Damnation of Hell."—I ſhall take no Pains to confute, what this Gentleman is pleaſed to advance. I ſhall leave the Queſtion in the Reader's own Breaſt. Let Him diſcover, if He can, a different Meaning in the Sentence. Unleſs He has a pretty ſhrewd Knack at Sophiſtry, I am perſuaded, He will find it a difficult Matter to give *any other* tolerable Turn to the Paſſage.—Surely, it muſt be a Reproach to our venerable Mother, if She delivers her Doctrine in Language ſo *fallacious*, as muſt neceſſarily miſlead the Generality of her Sons: or in Terms ſo *abſtruſe*, as even a good Underſtanding cannot develop, without ſome Proficiency in critical

Ther. How *miſerable* then is Man!

Aſp. In *Himſelf* He is miſerable beyond Expreſſion. But a Conviction of this Miſery is the Beginning of all Happineſs. *The Valley of* Achor *is a Door of Hope**.

Ther. Explain Yourſelf, *Aſpaſio*. You ſeem to deal very much in the Incomprehenſibles.

Aſp. Such a Conviction would demonſtrate the *abſolute Inſufficiency* of all human Attainments, and all human Endeavours, to procure Life and Salvation.—For, in caſe We could perform every Jot and Tittle of the divine Law; offend in no Inſtance; fall ſhort in no Degree; perſevere to the very End; yet this would be no more than our preſent bounden Duty. Not the leaſt Pittance of Merit could ariſe from all this. Much leſs could this be ſufficient to expiate original Guilt, or remove the dreadful Entail of the primitive all-deſtroying Sin.

This, therefore, would moſt effectually preclude every falſe Confidence; and *ſweep away*, at one Stroke, *every Refuge of Lies*†. It would lay Us under an immediate, indiſpenſible, and happy Neceſſity, of betaking Ourſelves to *CHRIST*.—I ſay *happy* Neceſſity; becauſe then We ſhould know, by Experience, what each Part of our LORD's awful yet tender Declaration meaneth; *O Iſrael! Thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf; but in ME is thy Help*‡. —We ſhould then find, that as Sin and Miſery have abounded through the firſt *Adam*, Mercy and Grace

critical Legerdemain. Far be it from me, to bring ſuch an *Odium* upon our Church.

* Hoſ. ii. 15. *Achor* ſignifies *Trouble*.

† Iſai. xxviii. 17. ‡ Hoſ. xiii. 9.

Grace have *much more abounded* through the ſecond. For, if We were ruined by a Crime, which We committed not; We are recovered by a Righteouſneſs, which We performed not. A Righteouſneſs, infinitely ſurpaſſing whatever We could have acquired; even though our Nature had been tranſmitted to Us, free from any Depravity, and exempt from all Guilt.

Ther. In your Opinion then, and according to your Scheme, *Salve* and a *Regimen* are better than a ſound Conſtitution!

Aſp. No, *Theron.* My Opinion is, that none can think Himſelf aggrieved, or have any Reaſon to complain, at that grand and beneficent Regulation, which ſuffers the *glimmering* Taper to be obſcured or extinguiſhed, but ſheds abroad the *boundleſs* and *majeſtic* Beams of Day. And if any Compariſon be made between the moſt perfect human Obedience, and the everlaſting divine Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, it ſhould be taken from the glimmering Taper and the meridian Sun.

Ther. I cannot perſuade myſelf to admire ſuch myſterious and unaccountable Notions. They muſt puzzle Some: will offend Others: but cannot edify Any.

Aſp. This Point, That *We all died in Adam*; were undone by his Apoſtacy; cannot *puzzle* the ſimpleſt, if unprejudiced Mind.—Nor will it *offend* Any, but the proud Philoſopher, or the ſelf-righteous Moraliſt. And I aſſure You, I ſhould not mention it, much leſs inſiſt upon it, did it not ſubſerve, and in a very ſingular Manner, the Purpoſes of *Edification.* The Doctrine of a REDEEMER, obeying and dying in our Stead, is the very Hinge

and Center of all evangelical Revelations: is the very Life and Soul of all evangelical Bleſſings. This Doctrine is not a little illuſtrated, and comes very much recommended, by the Imputation of *Adam*'s Sin.

Contraries, You know, caſt Light upon, and ſet off each other. Winter and its ſevere Cold, make Spring and its chearing Warmth, more ſenſibly perceived, and more highly pleaſing. Such an Influence has the preſent Subject, with reſpect to the vicarious Obedience of our MEDIATOR. The more clearly We ſee the *Reality* of the firſt, the more thoroughly We ſhall diſcern the *Expediency*, the *Excellency*, the *Glory* of the laſt. The more We are humbled under a Conviction of the former, the more We ſhall covet, or the more We ſhall triumph in, the Enjoyment of the latter.—The Apoſtle draws a long Parallel, or rather forms a ſtrong Contraſt between them, in the fifth Chapter to the *Romans*. He ſpeaks copiouſly of *Adam*'s Guilt, imputed to all Mankind for Condemnation and Death: that He may ſpeak the more acceptably, the more charmingly of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, imputed to all Believers for Juſtification and Life. In that *dark Ground*, He well knew, this faireſt lovelieſt Flower of Chriſtianity, appears with *peculiar Beauty*; indeed, with all the Beauty of conſummate Wiſdom, and adorable Benignity.

Ther. It really ſeems to me a Thing *impoſſible*, that one Man's Righteouſneſs ſhould be made Another's. Can one Man live by the Soul of Another? Or be learned by the Learning of Another?—Good *Aſpaſio*, never attempt to maintain ſuch palpable Abſur-

Abſurdities. They will expoſe Chriſtianity to the Scorn of Infidels.

Aſp. If Infidels ſcoff at this comfortable Truth, their Scoffing will be, like all their other Cavils, not the *Voice* of Reaſon, but the *Clamour* of Prejudice.

My Friend's Objection inſinuates, what We never aſſert; That the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* is *transfuſed* into Believers. Which would, doubtleſs, be in Fact impoſſible, as it is in Theory abſurd.—But this We diſavow, as ſtrenuouſly as You can oppoſe. The REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs is made ours, not by *Infuſion*, but by *Imputation*. The very Terms We uſe, may acquit Us from ſuch a ridiculous Charge; as Imputation ſignifies, "A placing to the Account of One, what "is done or ſuffered by Another." Accordingly We believe, That the Righteouſneſs which juſtifies, abides in *CHRIST*, but is placed to our Account: that *CHRIST*, and *CHRIST* alone, actually performed it: that *CHRIST*, and *CHRIST* alone, perſonally poſſeſſes it: but that performing it in our Stead, and poſſeſſing it as our Covenant-head, GOD imputes it to Us—GOD accepts Us for it—accepts Us as much, *as if* We had, on our own Behalf and in our own Perſons, ſeverally fulfilled it.

Though one Man cannot live, be actuated with a Principle of Life, *by the Soul* of another; yet You muſt allow, that one Man, nay, that many Men may live, be continued in the Poſſeſſion of Life, *for the Righteouſneſs of another*. Or elſe You muſt do, what I am ſure You abhor—You muſt charge, with Abſurdity and Impoſſibility, even the Declaration of JEHOVAH himſelf; *If I find in Sodom fifty Righteous*

Righteous within the City, then will I ſpare all the Place FOR THEIR SAKES *.

Ther. Not all your Refinements can reconcile me to this uncouth Notion.—The Practice is *unexampled*, and abſolutely inconſiſtent with the Rules of *diſtributive* Juſtice.

Aſp. Ah! my *Theron*, if We look for Examples of GOD's unbounded Goodneſs, amongſt the puny Proceedings of Men; We ſhall be led into the moſt extravagant Miſapprehenſions. To meaſure one of the Sparks on your Ring, and fancy We have taken the Dimenſion of the *Alps* or the *Andes*, would be, in compariſon of this Error, a ſmall Miſtake. Since, between a brilliant Speck, and a Range of Mountains, there is *ſome* Proportion: but between human Beneficence, and this heavenly Bounty, there cannot poſſibly be *any*.—However, the all-condeſcending CREATOR has been pleaſed, ſo to diſpenſe his infinitely rich Grace; that We may find, though nothing parallel in any, nothing correſpondent in all Circumſtances; yet ſome *faint* Shadow of its *Manner*, among the Affairs of Mankind. Something, that may perhaps give Us ſuch an Idea of the ſtupendous Subject, as a *Glow-worm* would give of the Sun's Splendor, in caſe a Perſon had never beheld that magnificent Luminary.—This Remark I muſt intreat You to recollect, whenever I attempt to *elucidate* the Myſteries of the Goſpel, by any Occurrences in common Life.

When your worthy Miniſter was diſabled, by a rheumatic Diſorder, from attending on the Buſineſs of his Function, ſeveral of the neighbouring Clergy gave Him their Aſſiſtance. Was He not, by this *vicarious*

* Gen. xviii. 26.

vicarious Performance of his Office, *intitled* to all the Profits of his Living?—It ſeems therefore not ſo unexampled a Thing, for one Perſon to act in another's Stead. And when a Service is thus diſcharged by the *Proxy*, the Benefit may, according to the received Maxims of Mankind, accrue to the *Principal*.—Did not *Jehu*'s Deſcendents, even to the fourth Generation *, reap the Advantage of their great Grandfather's Zeal? Does not the *Duke of* **** enjoy the Honours and Rewards, won by the Sword of a victorious Anceſtor?—And may not the whole World of Believers, with equal, with *far greater* Juſtice, receive Life and Salvation, on Account of their all-deſerving SAVIOUR? Eſpecially, ſince He and They are one myſtical Body; repreſented as ſuch in Scripture, and conſidered as ſuch by GOD.

No, ſay You: "this is contrary to the Rules "of diſtributive Juſtice."—What is your Idea of a *Surety?* How was the Affair ſtated, and how were Matters negotiated, with relation to your generous Acquaintance *Philander?* He, You know, was bound for an unfortunate Brother, who lately ſtepped aſide.

Ther. The Debt, by his Brother's abſconding, devolved upon *Philander*. He was reſponſible for all, and obliged to pay the whole Sum.

* 2 *Kings* x. 30. By this Inſtance—by bleſſing the *Iſraelites*, for the Sake of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*—by ſhewing Mercy to *Solomon*, and his Poſterity, on account of *David* their Father—and by many ſuch Patterns recorded in Scripture; the LORD ſeems to have conſtituted a Sign, and to have kept up a Memorial, of his Purpoſe to ſave Sinners, by the Deeds and Deſerts of *Another*.

Asp. Was not his Payment *as ſatisfactory* to the Creditor, as if the Money had been paid in the Debtor's own Perſon, by the Debtor's own Hand?

Ther. Certainly.

Asp. Was not the Debtor, by this vicarious Payment, releaſed from all Fear of Proſecution, and *acquitted* from any future Demand on this Score?

Ther. He was.

Asp. Apply this Inſtance to the Redemption of Sinners by *JESUS CHRIST:* who is, in the ſacred Writings, expreſly ſtyled *A SURETY**.—If *Philander*'s Act was deemed, in the Eſtimation of Law, the Act of his Brother; if the Deed of the former was imputed, in point of Advantage, intirely to the latter; why ſhould not the ſame Effects take place, with regard to the divine Bondſman, and poor inſolvent Sinners? Why ſhould *that* be exploded in our Syſtem of Divinity, which is univerſally admitted in our Courts of Juſtice?

Ther. Obedience and Righteouſneſs are, in the Nature of the Things themſelves, *perſonal* Qualities, and *only* ſo. Every Man is that only (and can be nothing elſe) which He is in Himſelf.

Aſp. Righteouſneſs, as *dwelling in* Us, is undoubtedly a perſonal Quality. Obedience, as *performed by* Us, comes under the ſame Denomination. But does this ſuperſede the Neceſſity, or deſtroy the Exiſtence of imputed Righteouſneſs?—Your firſt Propoſition is ambiguous. Let it ſpeak diſtinctly; add *inherent* to your Righteouſneſs; and the Senſe becomes determinate, but the Argument falls to the Ground.

" Every

* Heb. vi. 22.

" Every Man is that only (and can be nothing " elſe) which He is in Himſelf."—If I had never ſeen the Bible, I ſhould have yielded my ready Aſſent to this Propoſition. But, when I open the Old Teſtament, and find it written by the Prophet; *In the LORD ſhall all the Houſe of Iſrael be juſtified* *. When I turn to the New Teſtament, and hear the Apoſtle ſaying; *Ye are complete in HIM, who is the Head of all Principalities and Powers* †; I cannot concur with *Theron*, without contradicting Revelation.—*Iſrael*, or the true Believer, is ſaid to be juſtified; and the Foundation of this Bleſſing is declared to be, not in Himſelf, but in the LORD. The *Coloſſians* are ſaid to be complete; which, we are very certain, they were not in themſelves; and are expreſly aſſured, they were ſo in *CHRIST*.—Hence it appears, quite contrary to my Friend's Aſſertion, that Sinners both *have* and *are* that in *CHRIST*, which they neither have nor are in themſelves. They have, by Imputation, *a Righteouſneſs* in *CHRIST*; they are, by this imputed Righteouſneſs, *complete* before GOD.

I believe, your Miſtake proceeds from neglecting to diſtinguiſh between INHERENT and IMPUTED. —We never ſuppoſe; That a Profane Perſon is devout, or an intemperate Perſon, ſober. To live ſoberly and act devoutly, is *inherent* Righteouſneſs. But We maintain; That the Profane and Intemperate, being convinced of their Iniquity, and betaking themſelves to the all-ſufficient SAVIOUR for Redemption, are intereſted in the Merit both of his Life and of his Death. This is *imputed* Righteouſneſs.—We farther affirm; That, though criminal

* Iſai. xlv. 25. † Col. ii. 10.

minal in themſelves, they are made righteous in *CHRIST*; and are accepted by GOD, for his beloved SON's Sake. This is *Juſtification* through imputed Righteouſneſs.

Neither is this a precarious or unwarrantable Opinion, but the clear and poſitive Declaration of Scripture. *He juſtifieth*, He abſolves from Guilt, He treats as righteous—*Whom?* Upright, obedient, ſinleſs Creatures? This were nothing extraordinary —No; but *He juſtifieth the Ungodly* *, *that believe* in the *LORD JESUS*. Imputing, as the Ground of this Juſtification, *their* Treſpaſſes to Him, and *his* Righteouſneſs to them. This is divinely gracious indeed!

Ther. I ſee no Occaſion for ſuch *nice* Diſtinctions, and *metaphyſical* Subtilties, in plain popular Divinity. Hard Terms and abſtruſe Notions, may perplex the Head, but ſeldom improve the Heart.

Aſp. Why then do You oblige Us to make uſe of them? If ſome People twiſt and entangle the Reins, it behoves Others to *clear* them of the Embarraſſment, and *replace* them in their due Poſition.—Many Writers, either from an artful Deſign, or through a ſtrange Inadvertence, have jumbled and confounded theſe two very different Ideas. Hence, they have ſtarted Objections to our Doctrine, which, the Moment You introduce this obvious Diſtinction, vaniſh into Air. They broach a Miſtake of their own, and then charge the Abſurdity upon Others.

I am no more fond of hard Terms, and abſtruſe Notions, than my *Theron*. Neither can I think the Inſtance before Us, is ſo abſtruſe and intricate. I am very certain, You are capable of comprehending much

* Rom. iv. 5.

much higher and nicer Refinements. Therefore, I muſt once again entreat You to remember the very material Difference, between *inherent* and *imputed* Righteouſneſs. The former, is the Eſſence of Sanctification; the latter, is the Ground of Juſtification. By *this*, We are reſtored to the Favour of GOD; by *that*, We are made meet for his heavenly Kingdom.—Let this Diſtinction, which is eaſy, which is ſcriptural, which is important, take place; and We may for the future diſmiſs, what you call, the metaphyſical Subtilties. Our Diſagreement will ceaſe, and our Opinions tally.

Ther. I queſtion that, *Aſpaſio*. There are other Difficulties to be got over, before I can digeſt ſo crude an Opinion.—If we are juſtified by the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, then the Righteouſneſs which juſtifies Mankind is *already* wrought out.

Aſp. And this You take to be a notorious Falſhood. Whereas, I look upon it as a certain and moſt delightful Truth.—The Righteouſneſs, which juſtifies ſinful Man, was *ſet on foot*; when GOD ſent forth his SON from the Habitation of his Holineſs and Glory, to be born of a Woman, and made ſubject to the Law.—It was *carried on*, through the whole Courſe of our SAVIOUR's Life; in which He always did ſuch Things, as magnified the Law, and were pleaſing to his heavenly FATHER.—It was *completed* at that ever memorable, that grand Period of Time, when the bleſſed *IMMANUEL* bowed his dying Head; and cried, with a ſtrong triumphant Voice, IT IS FINISHED.

If the juſtifying Righteouſneſs was to be wrought by *Ourſelves*, We could never be truly and fully juſtified till Death; till our Warfare is accompliſhed, and

and our *laſt* Act of Obedience exerted.—But how uncomfortable is ſuch an Apprehenſion! And how miſerable would it render our Lives!—How contrary is ſuch a Sentiment, to the Determination of the Apoſtle; *Ye* ARE *juſtified* !* As well as to the Experience of Chriſtians; *We* ARE *paſſed from Death unto Life†*.

Ther. Soothed then with this pleaſing Surmiſe, may not the *Libertine* ſay to his Soul?—"Soul, "take thine Eaſe in the moſt indolent Security. "All my carnal Appetites, indulge Yourſelves "without Reſtraint. Conſcience, be under no "Solicitude to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godlily. For the Work *is done*; *all done* to my "Hands. I am like ſome fortunate Heir, whoſe "Parents have been ſucceſsfully induſtrious; and "have left nothing to exerciſe the Diligence of "their ſurviving Son, but only to poſſeſs the In"heritance, and live on Labours not his own."

Aſp. The Libertine, who only ſpeculates or diſputes, may indeed abuſe the *Doctrine* of Grace. But the Believer, who is guided and influenced by the *Power* of Grace, will improve it to better Purpoſes. Where the former only *fluctuates* on the Underſtanding, ſuch deteſtable Conſequences may enſue. Where the latter *operates* on the Heart, it will always produce very different Effects. Such a Perſon, from ſuch a Faith, will never be inclined to Inactivity or Licentiouſneſs. No more than our buſy Companions, with their humming Notes, and honied Thighs, are, by this bright Sunſhine and all theſe expanded Bloſſoms, inclined to *ſleep away* their Hours in the Hive. You may as ſoon expect to ſee theſe Colonies of the Spring, ſwarming in

December,

* 1 Cor. vi. 11. † 1 John v. 20.

December, clinging to an Icicle, or diſperſing themſelves to gather Honey on the Snow; as to ſee a truly gracious Man, who *is dead to Sin, living any longer therein* *.—*GOD forbid* †! He abhors the very Thought.

Whoever, therefore, ſo ſhamefully *perverts* ſo ſweet and glorious a Doctrine, is a Witneſs againſt Himſelf, that He has neither Lot nor Portion in the ineſtimable Privilege. Does an Animal ſuck Poiſon from the moſt wholeſome Herbs? We are ſure, from that infallible Indication, it is the vile Spider, or ſome envenomed Inſect, not the valuable and induſtrious Bee.

Ther. Truly, *Aſpaſio*, I know not how to call that Doctrine ſweet, much leſs can I recommend it as wholeſome; which renders Repentance, perſonal Reformation, and inherent Rectitude *needleſs*. And if your Tenet is once received, all theſe Duties may fairly be diſmiſſed. So that if the Thing was poſſible, yet it would be *pernicious*.

Aſp. The Prophet was of another Mind: *They ſhall look on Him, whom they have pierced, and mourn* ‡. Sinners ſhall look, by Faith, to their crucified LORD: ſhall ſee Him faſtened with Nails to the curſed Tree; ſee Him ſtabbed to the Heart by the bloody Spear. And *remembering*, that this was the Puniſhment due to their Provocations; *believing*, that by this Puniſhment, they are freed from all penal Sufferings, and intitled to all ſpiritual Bleſſings: they ſhall not be tempted to tranſgreſs, but incited to mourn; not play the Profligate, but act the Penitent.—The Apoſtle exactly agrees with the Prophet; and both are diametrically oppoſite to my

* Rom. vi. 2. † Rom. vi. 1, 2. ‡ Zech. xi. 10.

Friend; *The Goodneſs*, the tranſcendent and inconceivable Goodneſs *of GOD* our *SAVIOUR*, inſtead of diverting from, *leadeth to Repentance* *.

Far from obſtructing, it powerfully promotes, *perſonal Reformation*. For thus ſaith that all-wiſe BEING, who intimately knows our Frame, and diſcerns what is moſt effectual to work upon our Minds; *The Grace of GOD, which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared; teaching Us, that denying all Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, We ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godlily in this preſent evil World* †. Grace, You obſerve, even that glorioufly free Grace, which bringeth Salvation to unworthy Creatures, is a Diſſuaſive of all Vice, and an Encouragement to every Virtue.

As to *inherent Rectitude*, how can that be rendered needleſs by imputed Righteouſneſs? Is Health rendered inſignificant, by the Abundance of our Riches? Does Eaſe become ſuperfluous, through the Beauty of our Apparel?—Holineſs is the *Health* of our Souls, and the *Eaſe* of our Minds. Whereas, ungovernable Paſſions create keener Anguiſh, than a Brood of Vipers gnawing our Boſoms. Inordinate Deſires are a more intolerable Nuiſance, than Swarms of Locuſts infeſting our Abodes. To regulate *thoſe*, and to reſtrain *theſe*, can never be needleſs, till Comfort and Sorrow change their Properties; till the diabolical Nature becomes equally deſirable with the Divine.

Ther. The Believer, indeed, out of mere Generoſity, *may*, if He pleaſe, add Works of Righteouſneſs of his own. But his main Intereſt is ſecure without them.

Aſp.

* Rom. ii. 4. † Tit. ii. 11, 12.

Aſp. Rather, *Theron*, He *muſt* out of Duty, He *will* out of Gratitude, and from the new Diſpoſition of his Nature He *cannot but*, add to his Faith Works of Righteouſneſs.

How runs the heavenly *Edict*, in this Caſe made and provided? *I will, That they who have believed in GOD*, for Pardon of Sin and Life eternal, *be careful to maintain good Works* *.—How beats the *Pulſe* of a believing Soul? You may feel it, in that truly generous Demand, made by the *Pſalmiſt: What ſhall I render unto the LORD*, for delivering me from impending Death, from deſerved Damnation; and *for all the Benefits, that He hath done unto me* †? A grateful Heart wants not the Goad, but is a Spur to itſelf.—How leans the *Bias* of his Nature? He is new-born; created in *CHRIST JESUS* unto good Works ‡; his Delight is in the Law of the LORD ‖. Whatever is our ſupreme Delight, We are ſure to proſecute; and proſecute with Ardour. *We cannot but ſpeak the Things which We have ſeen and heard* §, was the Profeſſion of the Apoſtles; if

* *Tit.* iii. 8. The original Word προϊσασθαι has a Beauty and an Energy, which, I believe, it is impoſſible for our Language to preſerve, by any literal Tranſlation. It implies, That a Believer ſhould not only be exerciſed in, but eminent for, all good Works: ſhould *ſhew* Others the Way, and *outſtrip* them in the honourable Race: be both a *Pattern*, and a *Patron* of univerſal Godlineſs.

† Pſal. cxvi. 12. ‡ Eph. ii. 10. ‖ Pſal. i. 2.

§ *Cannot but*—This is an Expreſſion, uſed by the Apoſtles, *Acts* iv. 20. It deſcribes the genuine and habitual Propenſity of their *new* Nature. As the compaſſionate Bowels cannot but yearn at Spectacles of Miſery: as the benevolent Heart cannot but dilate with Pleaſure, at the Sight of a Brother's Happineſs; ſo the new Crea-

if applied to practical Godlineſs, it is the Experience of the *Chriſtian*.

Nor can his main Intereſt be ſecure without a holy Obedience. Becauſe, the Judge of the World, at the Day of eternal Retribution, will declare to the Workers of Iniquity; *I never knew You; depart from me* *. Becauſe Holineſs, though not the Cauſe of our Admittance to the beatific Viſion; is ſo neceſſary a Qualification, that *without it no Man ſhall ſee the LORD* †. Without it, there is no Acceſs to Heaven, neither could there be any Enjoyment in Heaven.

Ther. Pray, recollect Yourſelf, *Aſpaſio*. According to the Tenour of your own Illuſtration, the Neceſſity of *perſonal* Obedience is evidently vacated. For, how can the Law demand a Debt of the Principal, which has been fully diſcharged by the Surety? Does not ſuch a Doctrine ſupply Conſequences, very hurtful to Piety and Virtue?

Aſp. The Debt of penal Suffering, and the Debt of perfect Obedience, are fully diſcharged by our Divine SURETY. So that We are no longer under a Neceſſity of obeying, in order to obtain an Exemption from Puniſhment, or to lay the Foundation for our final Acceptance. We are nevertheleſs engaged, by many other Obligations, to walk in all dutiful and conſcientious Regard to the Law.

The *Levites* were a Type of *CHRIST*. *The Levites*, ſaith the holy One of *Iſrael*, *ſhall do the Service*

ture in *CHRIST*, cannot but *deſire* to glorify, and *delight* to obey, the ever-bleſſed GOD.

* Matt. vii. 23. † Heb. xii. 14.

Service of the Congregation, and bear their Iniquities *. —*Do the ſacred Service*, whereby the People were accepted before GOD—*Bear their ſeveral Iniquities*, whereby they obtained Remiſſion of Sins.—*Iſrael*, you ſee, by Means of the *Levites* and their Miniſtrations, were made Partakers of Pardon, of Peace, and the divine Favour. This is undeniable. But did this vacate the Neceſſity of their perſonal Obedience? Could this ſupply Conſequences very hurtful, or in any Degree hurtful, to their Piety and Virtue?—Where then was the Wiſdom of the Lawgiver? What a Reflection this on the Author of ſuch an Inſtitution? Either HE could not be wiſe and holy, or elſe this Charge muſt be falſe and groundleſs.

Ther. Many other Obligations, You ſay. Inſtance in ſome, and demonſtrate the Charge to be groundleſs.

Aſp. Obedience, perſonal Obedience, is neceſſary, becauſe—this is the moſt authentic Proof of our Love to the gracious REDEEMER; *If Ye love me, keep my Commandments* †—this is a comfortable Evidence of our Union with that exalted Head; *He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the ſame bringeth forth much Fruit* ‡—this is alſo the moſt effectual Method, of adorning our Profeſſion; and of winning our Neighbours, to embrace the Goſpel. *Let your Light*, the Light of your exemplary Converſation, not only appear, but *ſhine before Men: that they, ſeeing your good Works*, may think honourably of your Religion ‖. *May glorify your FATHER*,

* Numb. xviii. 23. † John xiv. 15. ‡ John xv. 5.

‖ *Matt.* v. 16. Therefore, by our LORD in this Place, and by St. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to *Titus*, good Works are called Καλα εργα, *graceful, beauteous, ornamental.*

which is in Heaven; and ſay, with thoſe Proſelytes mentioned by the Prophet, *We will go with you.*

Are not theſe Obligations?—Real Obligations? Obligations, whoſe Reality will never be diſputed, whoſe Force muſt always be felt, by the true Believer.—*Do we then make void the Law*, through an imputed Righteouſneſs? No, verily: but—if Gratitude to the crucified *JESUS*, have any conſtraining Influence; if a Concern for our own Comfort and Happineſs have any perſuaſive Energy; if there be any Thing inviting, any Thing deſirable, in the Proſpect of honouring GOD, and edifying Man—*we eſtabliſh the Law.* By all theſe generous, manly, endearing Motives, We enforce its Precepts, and provide for its Obſervance.

Ther. Should We admit this Doctrine, Mankind could no longer be conſidered as in themſelves, and ſolely in themſelves *accountable* Creatures. Nor would the future Judgment be an *equitable* Diſtribution of Rewards and Puniſhments; but only GOD's awful and uncontroulable Execution of his own arbitrary and irreverſible Decrees.

Alp. I have never been accuſtomed to conſider Mankind, under the Goſpel Diſpenſation, as accountable *ſolely* in themſelves. Becauſe, in this comfortable and benign Scheme, a MEDIATOR intervenes; undertakes to anſwer for his People; and bears the *Chaſtiſement of their Peace.*—Were We accountable ſolely in Ourſelves, *CHRIST* as our great HIGH-PRIEST, would be ſet aſide; and his Sacrifice, as a Propitiation for Sin, be of none Effect.

Why may not the future Judgment, be an equitable Diſtribution of Rewards and Puniſhments? If

thoſe, who reject the Atonement of the dying *JESUS*, and refuſe to depend on his conſummate Righteouſneſs, are left to ſtand or fall, according to the Iſſue of their own Obedience. If Believers, on the other hand, are accepted through their moſt meritorious REDEEMER; but rewarded with higher or inferior Degrees of Felicity, in Proportion to the Sanctity of their Nature, and Uſefulneſs of their Lives—I ſee nothing arbitrary in this Procedure; but an admirable Mixture of juſt Severity, and free Goodneſs—On thoſe, who reject the Atonement, *juſt Severity*—To thoſe, who rely on their SAVIOUR, *free Goodneſs*.

Ther. The Obedience of *CHRIST* was *wholly* due for Himſelf; and therefore could not merit for Another.

Aſp. A bold Aſſertion this! Whoever can make it good, will infallibly overthrow my Opinion; and abſolutely deſtroy my Hopes. But ſurely, *Theron*, it is not your real Sentiment.

Could it then be Matter of Duty in the eternal SON, to be born of a Woman; and in the LORD of Lords, to become the Servant of all? Could it be Matter of Duty in the KING of Glory, to embrace the Infamy of the Croſs; and in the PRINCE of Life, to pour out his Soul unto Death?—If all this was Matter of Duty, the ever-bleſſed *JESUS* (How ſhall I ſpeak it? Who can believe it?) was no better than an *unprofitable* Servant *. For, ſuch is the acknowledged Character of One, who does no more, than—

Ther. Not ſo faſt, nor quite ſo vehement, my Friend. Remember what the Scripture affirms.

* Luke xvii. 10.

CHRIST is there ſaid to receive a *Commandment*, and be *ſubject* to the Law. Both which Expreſſions imply Obligation and Duty.

Aſp. In order to accompliſh our Redemption, the SON of GOD ſubmitted Himſelf to the Commandment. But this was his own *ſpontaneous* Act. The Matter of his *free* Choice. To which He lay under no Obligation, till He engaged to become our Surety.

Being in the Form of GOD, He was Lord of the Law; and no more ſubject to its Commands, than obnoxious to its Curſe. Nevertheleſs, *He took upon Him the Form of a Servant*; and *was made under the Law*.—Wherefore? Becauſe it was his bounden Duty, to put his Neck under the Yoke *? Impoſſible to imagine!—Or, that *He might* obtain everlaſting Life and Glory for Himſelf? No ſuch Thing. But that He might *redeem thoſe who were under the Law* †. From which it appears, that both his Engagement and his Obedience were, not for Himſelf, but for his People.—Therefore the Prophet cries out, with holy Exultation; *To Us a Child is born*; *To Us a Son is given* ‡! His incarnate State and human Nature, together with all that He did and ſuffered in both, were for Us: *thoſe* aſſumed on our Account, *theſe* referred to our Advantage.

Let Us conſider this, and be amazed! and be charmed!—The great univerſal LORD vouchſafes to pay univerſal Obedience! What *Condeſcen-*

2 *ſion*

* Acts xv. 10. † Gal. iv. 5.

‡ *Iſai.* ix. 6. *Eſt præterea Emphaſis ſingularis in Voce* nobis. *Significat id, quod omnes ſentiunt*, noſtro Bono & Commodo *natum eſſe hunc Puerum Imperatorem.* VITRING.

The Original is, not לו *for Himſelf*, but לנו *for Us*, and our Good: for Us Men, and our Salvation.

ſon was Here!—He vouchſafes to pay it, for Us Men, and for our Redemption! What *Goodneſs* was this!

Ther. Before We indulge the devotional Strain, We ſhould take care that our Devotion is founded on *rational* Principles. Otherwiſe it may prove, not like the Fire on the Altar, which was *always burning, and never went out*; but like the Flaſh of a Sky-rocket, which glitters one Moment, and is extinguiſhed the next.—Suppoſe I ſhould ſay; All this Obedience was neceſſary in *CHRIST*, as a *qualifying Condition* for the Prieſtly Office; and in order to confer Merit, on the Sacrifice of his Death.

Aſp. This You are welcome to ſay. But I hope, You will not, like a certain Acquaintance of ours, be determined never to unſay or retract, what You have once affirmed.—You will pleaſe to remember, That there was no need of any ſuch qualifying Condition: the Dignity of our LORD's Perſon being, of itſelf, ſufficient to render his Sacrifice infinitely ſatisfactory, and infinitely meritorious.

Hence it will appear, that, for every Thing advanced upon this Subject, We have a ſolid Foundation, in Reaſon, as well as in Scripture.—Scripture teaches Us, that the Man *CHRIST JESUS*, was united to the ſecond Perſon of the eternal TRINITY.—Reaſon aſſures Us, that, by Virtue of this Union, He muſt have an unqueſtionable Right to everlaſting Life and Glory. If ſo, He could be under no Neceſſity of obeying, in order to procure either Honour or Happineſs for Himſelf. —Therefore, all that He performed, in Conformity to the preceptive Part of the Law, He performed

under

under the Character of a *public Perſon:* in the Place, and for the Benefit of his ſpiritual Seed. That they might be intereſted in it, and juſtified by it.

Ther. Be it ſo: the Believer is intereſted in *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs.—Pray, is He intereſted in all, or only in Part?—If in *all*, then every Believer is equally righteous, and equally to be rewarded. Which is contrary to an allowed Maxim, That there will be different Allotments of Happineſs in the heavenly World.—If in *Part* only, how will You aſcertain the Degree? What Proportion belongs to this Perſon, and what to the other?—Either Way, your Scheme is inextricably embarraſſed.

Aſp. The Reply to my *Theron*'s Enquiry, is eaſy; and the Embarraſſment He mentions, is but imaginary.—Every true Believer is intereſted in *all CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs; in the *whole* Merit of his ſpotleſs Nature, of his perfect Obedience, and expiatory Death. "*Is CHRIST divided?* Said "a holy Perſon in his laſt Moments. No; I have "the whole of his Righteouſneſs. *All* that *He* did, "all that He ſuffered for the Redemption of Sin-"ners, is mine."

You are a great Admirer of Anatomy, *Theron*, and muſt undoubtedly remember the very peculiar Structure of the *Ear*. Other Parts of the Body are progreſſive in their Growth. Their Bulk is proportioned to the infantile, or manly Age. But the Organs of Hearing, I have been informed, are *preciſely* of the *ſame* Size, in the feeble Infant, and the confirmed Adult.—Juſtification likewiſe, being abſolutely neceſſary to a State of Acceptance with GOD, is, in every Stage of the Chriſtian Courſe,

and even in the firſt Dawn of ſincere Faith, complete. With regard to the *Exiſtence* of the Privilege, there is no Difference * in the Babes, the young Men, the Fathers in *CHRIST*. The *Perception*, the *Aſſurance*, the comfortable *Enjoyment* of the Benefit, may increaſe. But the Benefit itſelf is incapable of Augmentation.

The various Advances in Sanctification, account for the *various Degrees* of future Glory. Not account for them only, but render them entirely reaſonable; and, according to our Apprehenſion of Things, unavoidable. Even as they ſeem perfectly agreeable, to the Repreſentations of the Goſpel †.—As to ſettling the *Proportion*, We may ſafely leave that to the Supreme ARBITRATOR. He, who *meteth out the Heavens with a Span*, and *ſetteth a Compaſs upon the Face of the Deep*, cannot be at a loſs to adjuſt this Particular.

Ther. The Organs of Hearing, though not preciſely, are *very nearly*, of the ſame Bulk, in the Babe and the Man. They acquire, from advancing Years,

* To the ſame Purpoſe ſpeaks one of our moſt celebrated Divines; as great an Adept in ſacred Literature, as Ages have produced.—" All are juſtified *alike*: the " *Truth* of Faith juſtifying, not the *Meaſure*. Juſtifica- " tion therefore is the ſame in All that believe: though " their Belief be in different Degrees. So, once in the " Wilderneſs, all gathered not Manna in the ſame Mea- " ſure; yet, when all came to meaſure, they had all " alike; none above an Omer, none under."

LIGHTFOOT, Vol. II. p. 1052.

† See *Dan.* xii. 3. 1 *Cor.* iii. 8. 2 *Cor.* ix. 6. *Luke* xix. 12, 13, *&c.* Where the Servant, that gained five Pounds, is made Ruler over five Cities; while another, who acquired double the Sum, is promoted to double Honour.

Years, ſcarce any Thing more than an Increaſe of Solidity. So that I make no Objection to your Illuſtration, but only to your Doctrine.

If *CHRIST* has done all, and we are entitled to his whole Merits only by believing; to be ſaved, muſt be the *eaſieſt* Thing in the World. Whereas, the Bible repreſents Chriſtianity, as a *Race* and a *Warfare*, a State of Conflict and a Courſe of Striveing.—In good Truth, *Aſpaſio*, You propheſy pleaſing Things. Divinity is not your Profeſſion; or elſe, I ſhould number You among "the ſmooth, emollient, "downy Doctors." For, according to the Articles of your Creed, there is no more Difficulty in acquiring Heaven and Salvation, than in riſing from our Seat.

Aſp. If We conſider the Enjoyment of Heaven, in a legal View; if We regard it, as an *Acquiſition* to be made by Ourſelves; it will then be, I ſay not extremely difficult, but abſolutely impoſſible. Whereas, if We conſider it in the Evangelical Light; if We regard it, as the *Gift* of GOD; it is then attended with no other Difficulty, than that which conſiſts in believing the Report, and receiveing the Grace of the Goſpel.—*To believe*, is certainly a moſt eaſy Thing in itſelf; and would be equally eaſy to Us, were not our Minds darkened and enfeebled by the Corruption of Nature, aſſaulted and embarraſſed by the Temptations of Satan *. On Account of theſe Impediments, We often find the Duty of Believing accompanied with Difficulties; with many and great Difficulties; ſuch as will abundantly juſtify the Language of the Apoſtle, when

* *See* Marſhall's *Goſpel-Myſtery of Sanctification.* Edit. 6. pag. 203, &c.

when He ſpeaks of *Fighting the good Fight**, *and running the Race† of Faith.*

A Sinner, ſeeking for Heaven and Salvation, I would not compare to an active Gentleman riſing from his Seat; but rather to a *ſhip-wrecked* Mariner, labouring to gain ſome Place of Safety.—He eſpies a large *Rock*, which rears its Head above the boiſterous Flood. To this He bears away, and to this He approaches: but, whirling Winds, and daſhing Waves, drive Him back to an unhappy Diſtance.—Exerting all his Strength, He advances nearer ſtill; and attempts to climb the deſirable Eminence. When, a ſweeping Surge interpoſes, and drenches Him in the rolling Deep.—By determined Efforts, He recovers the Space He had loſt. Now, He faſtens on the Cliff, and has almoſt eſcaped the Danger. But, there is ſuch a Numbneſs in his Limbs, that He cannot maintain his Hold; and ſuch an impetuous Swell in the Ocean, that He is once more diſlodged, and plunged afreſh into the raging Billows.—What can He do? His Life, his precious Life, is at ſtake. He muſt renew, ſtill renew, and never intermit his Endeavours.—Neither let Him abandon Himſelf to Deſpair. The MASTER ſees Him, amidſt all his fruitleſs Toil. Let Him cry earneſtly; *LORD, ſave me! I periſh!* And HE, who commandeth the Winds and the Waves, will put forth his beneficent Hand; will reſcue Him from the devouring Sea; and ſet his Feet upon the Rock. Enabling him *to believe, to the Salvation of his Soul.*

Such, my Friend, ſo *painful*, ſo *aſſiduous*, are frequently the Conflicts of an awakened Sinner; before it

* 1 Tim. vi. 12. † Heb. xii. 1, 2.

it is given Him * to reſt, in peaceful Security, on the *Rock of Ages*, *CHRIST JESUS*. Of this You may, ſome Time or other, be aſſured, not only from my Lips, but from your own Experience.

Ther. What may happen in ſome future Period of Time, is beyond my Power to foreſee. At preſent, I am apt to think, We muſt put a ſtop to the theological Lecture. Don't You remember our Engagement with *Altinous?* And You will own, that Punctuality in performing our Promiſes, is at leaſt a *moral* Virtue, if it be not a *chriſtian* Grace.

* Phil. i. 29.

DIALOGUE VI.

ASPASIO's Affairs called him to *London*. He ſtaid in Town a few Days. But as ſoon as Buſineſs was finiſhed, he quitted the City, and haſtened to his Friend's *Country-ſeat*. —Upon his Arrival, He found ſome agreeable Company, who came on purpoſe to ſpend an Evening with the Family. This Incident, gave a Reſpite from Controverſy, and prevented the immediate Proſecution of their Debate.—As the next Morning proved miſty, and unfit for walking abroad, *Theron* invited *Aſpaſio* to paſs an Hour in his *Study*.

It was ſituate at the Extremity of a large Gallery: which, while it conducted the Feet to a Repoſitory of Learning, interpoſed between the Ear, and all the Diſturbance of domeſtic Affairs. So that You are accommodated with every Thing, that may *regale* a ſtudious Mind; and incommoded with nothing, that may *interrupt* a ſedate Attention.—*Aſpaſio* readily conſented to the Propoſal; but deſired, firſt, to take a Turn in this beautiful *Oblong*, and divert Himſelf with the Decorations of the Place.

Asp. A very ſhort Survey, *Theron*, is ſufficient to diſcover the Correctneſs of your Judgment, and the true Delicacy of your Taſte.—Here, are no *impertinent* and *frivolous* Exhibitions, of romantic Tales, or poetic Stories. Here, are no *indecent* Pieces of Imagery, that tend to corrupt a chaſte, or inflame a wanton Fancy.—On the contrary, I am preſented with a Collection of Maps, accurately drawn by the moſt able Hands; and with ſeveral remarkable Tranſactions of Antiquity, moſt eloquently told in the Language of the Pencil.—You have happily hit that grand Point, which the Gentleman of Refinement, as well as the Author of Genius, ſhould ever keep in his View—The Union of the *Beneficial* with the *Delightful**.

Ther. Indeed, my *Aſpaſio*, I have often been diſappointed, ſometimes even ſhocked, in the Gardens, the Porticos, and the Walks of ſome modern *Virtuoſi*. Their Pourtraits and Statues are little elſe, but an Aſſemblage of elaborate Trifles. *Ixion* ſtretched upon the Wheel, or *Phaeton* precipitated from the Chariot. *Apollo* ſtringing his Lyre, or *Jupiter* (I beg his ſupreme Highneſs's Pardon, for not giving Him the Precedence in my Catalogue) beſtriding his Eagle, and balancing his Bolts.—Pray, where is the Advantage of being introduced to this *fabulous* Tribe of Gentry? What noble Idea can they awaken, or what valuable Impreſſion leave upon the Mind? The beſt We can ſay of ſuch Performances, is, That they are Limning and Sculpture expenſively thrown away.

This

* *Omne tulit Punctum, qui miſcuit Utile Dulci.* Hor.

This celebrated Trumpery, One can bear with, however. But, when the Painting and Sculpture, inſtead of cultivating Virtue, and improving our Morals, are calculated to be the very *Bane* of both—will You call *this* an elegant Entertainment? No: 'tis a Nuiſance. 'Tis a Peſt.—In the *Statues*, I grant, every Dimple ſinks, and every Muſcle ſwells, with the exacteſt Propriety. The Countenance is animated with Life, and the Limbs are ready to ſtart into Motion.—The *Picture*, I am ſenſible, is as highly finiſhed as the Effigy. The Diſtributions of Light and Shade moſt artfully adjuſted. The Diminutions of the Perſpective true to a Nicety. Nor can any Thing exceed the eaſy Flow of the Robe, unleſs it be the graceful Attitude, and almoſt ſpeaking Aſpect, of the principal Figure.—But, is this *maſterly* Execution an Equivalent for the moſt *malignant* Effects? For ſullying the Purity of my Fancy, and poiſoning the Powers of my Imagination?

Is it an Indication of the Owner's *judicious* Taſte, to prefer Regularity of Features in the hammered Block, before orderly and harmonious Affections in his own Breaſt? Does it beſpeak a *refined* Diſpoſition, or a *benevolent* Temper, to be ſo extravagantly enamoured with the Touches of a laſcivious Pencil; as to expoſe them in the moſt frequented Paſſages, and obtrude them on every unwary Gueſt?—Surely, this can create no very advantageous Opinion of a Gentleman's *intellectual* Diſcernment. Much leſs can it raiſe an amiable Idea of his *moral* Character*. On ſuch

* 'Tis Pity, but the Advice of *Cicero*, (that great Maſter of elegant Taſte, and polite Manners) was received as

ſuch Occaſions, I am ſtrongly tempted to ſuſpect, That real Honour is a Stranger, where common Decency * is wanting.

As for the Artiſt, One can hardly forbear execrating his hateful Folly, who could *proſtitute* ſuch fine Talents to ſuch infamous Purpoſes.—Deteſted be the Chizzel! that teaches, though with inimitable Dexterity, the cold obdurate Marble to enkindle diſſolute Affections.—Abhorred be the Pencil! that makes no other Uſe of the moſt lovely Colours, than to pollute the Canvaſs, and enſnare the Spectator.

It is argued, I know, that many of thoſe Pieces are the completeſt Models extant.—An *everlaſting Reproach* this to the Art: but no Apology for the Performances. Since, the more nicely they are executed, the more miſchievous † is their Influence. It ſtrikes

as a *Standard* of Regulation, by all our Connoiſſeurs in the fine Arts. *In primis provideat, ne Ornamenta* Ædium atque Hortorum *Vitium aliquod indicent ineſſe Moribus.* De Offic.

* A Gentleman, obſerving ſome groſs Indelicacies of this Kind, at the Seat of a Perſon of Diſtinction, very acutely (and, I believe, too juſtly) ſaid;

His Paintings are the Gibbet *of his Name.*

† I hope, it will not be thought improper; I wiſh, it was entirely needleſs; to animadvert upon a Practice, which is, not only a Reproach to our *Chriſtian Profeſſion*, but an Inſult upon *national Decorum.* The Practice of expoſing to public View, and offering to public Sale, ſuch ſhameful *Prints*; as are fitted only to awaken licentious Deſires, and cheriſh the moſt profligate Diſpoſitions.

Such Spectacles are a Species of the *rankeſt* Poiſon. And can the Poiſon be leſs pernicious, becauſe it is received at the Eye, inſtead of paſſing through the Lips? Becauſe it tends *more immediately* to debauch the Morals, and

ſtrikes the ſurer, and ſinks the deeper. It dreſſes Deſtruction gay, and paves with Beauty the Way to Ruin.

It is my chief Ambition, *Aſpaſio*, to have all my Decorations ſo circumſtanced, that the Beholder may learn ſome *valuable Precept* in Morality, or be reminded of ſome *important Event* in Hiſtory: may find, even in the Scenes of his Amuſement, ſomething to eſtabliſh his Virtue, or enlarge his Knowledge.

I frequently entertain my eldeſt Son, who is reading the *Greek* and *Latin* Hiſtorians, with an Explanation of my principal Drawings. That he may behold in Colouring, what He has peruſed in Nar-

 rative.

and *but remotely* to deſtroy the Conſtitution?—No Wonder, ſo many of our Youths are corrupted, and ſo many Robberies committed; while ſuch Scenes of pictured Lewdneſs are ſuffered to inflame them with Luſt, and habituate them to Impudence.

Another very indecent Cuſtom has unaccountably ſtole its way, into ſeveral Performances of Genius and Elegance. The Cuſtom, I mean, of repreſenting the *Muſes*, the *Graces*, and other romantic Perſonages, in the Form of beautiful Ladies, partly, if not entirely, naked.—'Tis true, here are no looſe Adventures; no immodeſt Geſtures; nay more, the Artiſt expreſſes *his own*, and conſults *our* Modeſty, by preſenting us with a Poſition in Profile, by the Intervention of a Foliage, or the Lappet of a Robe.—But let me aſk the ingenious Operator, If He would chooſe to introduce his Wife or his Daughter, in *ſuch* a Manner, to public Company?—Is He ſtartled at the Queſtion? Is He ſhocked at the Thought? Then, let Him reflect, and let Others conſider, Whether *that* can be graceful or allowable in a Picture, which would be brutal and unſufferable in common Life?

Socrates (who, before his Application to Philoſophy, practiſed as a ſtatuary) could not but bluſh at this Abuſe of his Art. And, being to form a Repreſentation of the *Graces*, He repreſented them properly *habited*.

rative.—At this Inſtant, the Youth happened to make his Appearance; paying his Reſpects to *Aſpaſio*, and dutifully ſaluting his Father.—It juſt recurs to my Memory, ſaid *Theron*, that ſome neceſſary Affairs of the Family, require my Attendance for a few Minutes. Will You excuſe my Abſence, good *Aſpaſio*; and permit my Son to ſupply my Place?

You will very much oblige me, by leaving me ſuch a Companion.—Come, my dear Sir, addreſſing Himſelf to *Eugenio*; as I know You are a Lover of Learning, what think You of diverting Ourſelves with theſe agreeable Books? Which give Us their inſtructive Leſſons, not in puzzling Languages, but in pleaſing Colours.—*Eugenio* ſpoke his Conſent, and expreſſed his Modeſty in a becoming Bluſh.—While *Aſpaſio* proceeded—

Aſp. This is a ſtriking Picture indeed! Hills piled on Hills form a moſt aſtoniſhing Proſpect. What *horrible Magnificence* reigns amidſt thoſe Rocks and Snows! Nature ſeems to have deſigned them for the Boundaries of the World. Yet thoſe daring Troops are attempting to burſt the prodigious Barrier. Who are they, *Eugenio*, and whom ſhall We call their Leader?

Eug. This, Sir, is the famous *Hannibal*, heading and encouraging his Army in the Paſſage of the *Alps*. The Sons of *Africa* ſeem to ſhiver with Cold, as they traverſe thoſe frozen Regions, and march among the Clouds.

Aſp. 'Tis the very ſame. Some, You obſerve, climb, with exceſſive Toil, the ſteep and craggy Cliffs. Others, with far greater Difficulty, deſcend

ſcend through dreadful Declivities of Ice; expoſed all the while, to the Arrows of the Mountaineers.—Some, endeavouring to avoid the Showers of Steel, ſlip with their Feet, and tumble headlong down the vaſt projecting Promontories. See! from what a Height they are falling! Carriages and their Drivers, the Horſe and his Rider! And at what a Diſtance ſtill, from the ſtony Abyſs below!—Some lie, with cloſed Eyelids, and ghaſtly Features, daſhed to death at the Bottom. Others, writhing with the Torture of mangled Limbs, and broken Bones, lift up an agonizing Look to their Comrades.—Their Comrades, inſenſible of a Brother's Miſery, and wholly intent upon their own Security, hang in frightful Elevation on the very Edges of the Precipice. The Precipice ſeems to totter, as they cling; and the alarmed Spectator expects, every Moment, a hideous Downfal.—Are You not ſtartled at the View, *Eugenio*, and in pain for the hardy Adventurers?

Eug. I am, Sir. And I wonder, how they will extricate themſelves from theſe perilous Circumſtances. I have read in *Livy*, that they cut their Way through the Rocks, after they had ſoftened them with *Vinegar*. But is this probable? Be the Fluid ever ſo corroding, how could they procure a ſufficient Quantity of it, amidſt thoſe deſolate Mountains?

Aſp. I believe, their *Reſolution* and their *Perſeverance*, were the Vinegar. Theſe open a Road through Rocks. Theſe, under the Conduct of Prudence, and the Favour of Heaven*, ſurmount all Obſtacles.

Influenced

* Under the *Favour of Heaven.*—I cannot but wiſh, that the Relator of *Lord Anſon's Voyage round the World*, had

Influenced by theſe, the Survivors preſs boldly on; and are determined to vanquiſh the Horrors of Nature, as a Prelude to their Victory over the Forces of *Rome*. Let theſe, Reſolution and Perſeverance I mean, be the Companions of my *Eugenio*'s youthful Studies, and they will enable Him alſo to conquer Difficulties—even all the Difficulties, which lie in his Way to Learning.

What

had anticipated *Aſpaſio*'s Remark. Had made ſome grateful Acknowledgments to an interpoſing PROVIDENCE, in that maſculine, nervous, noble Narrative.—A Narrative of ſuch ſignal Deliverances, ſo critically timed, and ſo ſurprizingly circumſtanced; as, in the Courſe of *one* Expedition, are ſcarcely to be paralleled.

I am perſuaded, it would have been no Diſparagement of the great Commander, and his gallant Officers; to have it thankfully recognized, on ſome very unexpected, yet moſt advantageous Turn of Affairs, THIS HATH GOD DONE!—Neither could it have detracted from the Merit of the brave Sailors, to have confeſſed, on many hazardous Emergencies; That all their Reſolution, all their Addreſs, and the Exertion of their utmoſt Abilities, had been only *loſt Labour*, without the remarkable Cooperation of Divine Goodneſs.—And I am apprehenſive, that it muſt conſiderably diminiſh the Delight of many Readers, to obſerve the bleſſed AUTHOR of *all* theſe Mercies, paſſed by unnoticed, unacknowledged, and without *any* Share of the Praiſe.

The Sarcaſm on Pope *Adrian* the Sixth, would, I fear, be too applicable on this Occaſion. Being advanced to the Pontifical Chair, He built a College at *Louvain*; and cauſed the following Account of his Riſe and Preferments, to be inſcribed over the Gate; *Trajectum plantavit, Louvanium rigavit, Cæſar Incrementum dedit. Utrecht* planted; *Louvain* watered; the *Emperor* gave the Increaſe. Under which, ſome impartial Hand, to rebuke the Ungodlineſs and Vanity of the Pontiff, added; *Hic DEUS nihil fecit. In all this, GOD and his Providence had nothing to do!*

What is our next Draught? At each End We have a Group of living Figures. All the intermediate Space is an extenſive Tract of Land, diverſified only by rapid Rivers, horrid Deſarts, and mountainous Ridges; with here and there a few ſavage Natives, in uncouth Dreſſes, and formidable Arms.—It is more like a *Map*, than a *Picture*. And the moſt remarkable Beauty is, the *aerial Perſpective*. Which puts a very agreeable Cheat upon our Eyes; cauſing Us to behold, on an Ell of Canvaſs, the Space of many Hundreds of Miles.

Eug. This repreſents *The Retreat of the Ten Thouſand* Greeks. Firſt We behold them in the Plains of *Media*; at an immenſe Diſtance from their native Country; without Guides; without Proviſion; and, what is the moſt deſperate Calamity of all, deprived of their ableſt Officers by Treachery and Murder.—Well may they look dejected. How have I pitied their Caſe, as I read their Story! Abhorred the Perfidy of their Enemies, and wiſhed them all Succeſs in their hazardous Enterprize!

Aſp. Don't you perceive, their drooping Spirits begin to revive, and ſome Gleam of Hope diffuſes itſelf through their Countenances, while they liſten to the eloquent *Xenophon?* Who ſtands conſpicuous in the Midſt, haranguing his Soldiers, and rouſing their Courage. But, Ah! what a vaſt Extent of unknown Climes muſt they traverſe, with a numerous and victorious Army, haraſſing them in Flank, or hanging upon their Rear! What Fatigues muſt they ſuſtain, what Hardſhips endure, before they arrive at their wiſhed-for Home!—*Home!* Fired by the enchanting Name, and animated by their brave philoſophic Leader, they reſolve to puſh

their Way through all the Extremes of Peril and of Pain. To ſcatter, with their little Band, the incircling Millions of *Barbarians*, is the ſmalleſt of their Achievements. They croſs Rivers, they ſcale Rocks, whoſe ſlippery Banks, and craggy Summits, are lined with oppoſing Nations. They wade through Deſarts of Snow; and paſs over inhoſpitable Mountains, the far more dreaded Abodes of *Deſolation*, *Drought*, and *Famine*. They encounter the Keenneſs of the northern Storm, and all the Rigour of the moſt malignant Seaſons.—As ſome of theſe Articles are incapable of being expreſſed by the Pencil, the Artiſt remits Us to the Hiſtorian; and has contented Himſelf, with marking out the moſt diſtinguiſhed Stages of this memorable Expedition. Only We view the courageous Itinerants, once again, on a pretty lofty Eminence. There they appear, not with their former Dejection, but in all the Tranſports of Joy.

Eug. This, Sir, is the Mountain *Tecqua*. From whence they had the firſt View of the Sea, and the firſt Dawn of Safety. There they embrace one another, and extol their Commanders, eſpecially the noble *Xenophon*. Whoſe Hiſtory, filled with great Exploits and extraordinary Events, turns my Taſk into a Pleaſure; and his manly yet benign Aſpect, ſtrangely attracts my Eſteem. Methinks, under ſuch a General, I could have been willing to take my Share, in all the Toil, and all the Hazards of the Expedition.

Aſp. Would my *Eugenio*? Then I will liſt Him under a Captain, unſpeakably more accompliſhed and beneficent. Young as You are, You ſhall, from this Hour, commence a Soldier and a Traveler.

A *Soldier*, to fight againſt Sin, and every Temptation. A *Traveler*, to paſs through the Wilderneſs of this World, unto the Land of everlaſting Reſt.—Though your Enemies may be numerous, and your Journey tedious, yet faint not, neither be diſcouraged. The LORD of Heaven is your Protector and Guide; Heaven itſelf ſhall be your exceeding great Reward. When You arrive at thoſe happy Abodes, your Delight will infinitely ſurpaſs, all that the *Grecians* felt on *Tecqua*; when their raviſhed Eyes beheld, and their Tongues with Extaſy ſhouted, *The Sea! The Sea!*

The Scene of yonder Picture, I would venture to affirm, lies among the antient *Jews*.

Eug. How can You tell this, Sir, at ſuch a Diſtance?

Aſp. By *the Fringes in the Borders of their Garments, and on each Fringe a Ribband of Blue* *.—GOD Almighty commanded all the *Jews*, to obſerve

* One would wonder, how the *Jews* can ſo *tenaciouſly* adhere to their Law, and yet ſo *apparently* neglect its Precepts. Where are the Sons of *Abraham*, who obſerve this expreſs and poſitive Command of JEHOVAH? Though this indeed *might* be obeyed, yet many of the *Moſaical* Injunctions are rendered, and by nothing leſs than the Diſpenſations of Providence, abſolutely impracticable. Is not this therefore a moſt inconteſtable Proof—a Proof, not invented by the Arts of Sophiſtry, but written by the Finger of the ALMIGHTY himſelf—that the *legal* Ordinances are aboliſhed, in order to make way for a *better* Diſpenſation? When the Avenues are become inacceſſible, the Houſe untenantable, and the principal Apartments *irreparably* decayed; is not this the moſt cogent Admonition to the Inhabitants, that they betake themſelves to ſome new and more commodious Reſidence?—See *Numb.* xv. 38.

ſerve this Peculiarity in their Habit. That, their very Clothes, being different from the Apparel of the *Heathen* Neighbours, might admoniſh both the Wearers and the Beholders, not to be conformed to idolatrous Worſhip, and licentious Manners.—This, as well as every other divine Command, our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* moſt exactly obeyed. Therefore, We are told by the evangelical Hiſtorian, That the diſeaſed Woman, *who touched but the Hem of his Garment, was reſtored to Health. Hem* it is, in our *Engliſh* Bibles. But, if You conſult that moſt excellent of all Books, the *Greek* Teſtament; You will find, that the original Word might more properly be rendered *Fringe* *.—However, let Us paſs from the Drapery to the Deſign.

Eug. Here, we ſee *David* in one of the moſt threatening Exigencies of his whole Life. *Saul*, more like a Blood-hound than a King, purſues the beſt of Sons, and the moſt valuable of Subjects. He has extended the Wings of his very ſuperior Army, in order to ſurround † the injured Hero, and his Handful of Aſſociates.

Aſp.

* Matt. ix. 20. Κρασπεδον.

† To this, or ſome ſuch Incident, may be applied a Paſſage of the *Pſalms*, which, in our Tranſlation, is very obſcure; has ſcarce any Senſe, or, if any, a very unjuſtifiable one. *Wherefore ſhould I fear in the Days of Evil, when the Wickedneſs of my Heels compaſſeth me round about?* Pſalm xlix. 5.—*Wherefore?* The Reaſon is very *apparent*. When Wickedneſs cleaves to a Perſon's Heels, or habitually attends his Goings, it raiſes an Army of Terrors. It unſheaths the Sword of divine Vengeance, and levels at his guilty Head every Threatening in the Book of GOD.

Surely then another Tranſlation ſhould be given to the Words, and a different Turn to the Senſe! And another

Aſp. This is the moſt animated, and, I think, the moſt *maſterly* Performance, that has hitherto come under our Notice.—Conſternation and Doubt agitate their Looks. Shall they ſurrender themſelves, as ſo many tame Victims, to a Tyrant's Fury? Or, ſhall they cut their Way to Safety, through the Hearts of Countrymen, Friends, and Brothers? Dreadful Dilemma!—While they are debating, the Purſuers are cloſing upon them. A few, a few Minutes more, muſt decide their Fate.

Eug. I have ſometimes wondered, that the good and gracious GOD, ſhould ſuffer his choſen Servant, to be brought into ſuch imminent Peril. Eſpecially, as infinite Wiſdom, and almighty Power, could ſo eaſily have prevented it.

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According to this Interpretation, either the Prefix ב, or the Prepoſition על, is, before the Word עקבי, to be underſtood. See *Iſai.* xviii. 3. Where both theſe Particles, omitted in the Original, are ſupplied in our Tranſlation.

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this I cannot but commend you; becauſe, in this you follow the moſt illuſtrious Example. You imitate the bleſſed *JESUS*. Who, about your Time of Life, *was found among the Doctors*; *both hearing them*, with diligent Attention, while they expounded the Scripture; *and*, when the Point was not fully illuſtrated, *aſking them Queſtions* * for his farther Information.—Go on, Sir, to examine what You peruſe; to enquire, where you do not underſtand; and, if you think proper to make me your Caſuiſt, when any Difficulty occurs, you will do me an Honour, and give me a Pleaſure.

As to the Caſe before Us—GOD almighty may ſuffer his choſen Servants to be brought into the moſt imminent Peril, for theſe, among other, Reaſons. That the Bleſſing of Deliverance may be doubly *welcome*, and the Power of delivering more ſignally

* *Luke* ii. 46. *CHRIST diſputing with the Doctors*, is a very common Expreſſion. People have been confirmed in this Notion, by ſome injudicious Pictures.—But this is, certainly, a Miſrepreſentation of the Fact; and, I think, an Injury to our LORD's Character.

A Miſrepreſentation of the Fact.—For We have not a Word ſaid by the Evangeliſts, concerning any ſuch Thing as Diſputation. Neither are We told, that *JESUS* was in the Profeſſor's Chair, but in the Place of a Learner; or, *in the Midſt* of the *Jewiſh* Teachers. Who ſat on Benches, ranged in a ſemicircular Figure, and raiſed above their Hearers. For which Reaſon, their Hearers or Scholars are ſaid, to be in the Midſt of them, or to *ſit at their Feet*. Acts xxii. 3.

An Injury to our LORD's Character—He was, in his tender, as well as in his riper Age, a Pattern for Mankind. He practiſed, in each Period of Life, what was becoming and amiable, in that particular State. Now, as *Modeſty*, and a teachable Temper, are eſſential to the Decorum of a youthful Conduct; theſe, we may be aſſured, were the diſtinguiſhing Characteriſtics of his early Years; were the inſeparable Concomitants of the holy Child *JESUS*.

ſignally *conſpicuous*.—It is, I acknowledge, a Maxim with Men, to cruſh the Cockatrice in the Egg. Becauſe, when grown into a Serpent, it may not be eaſy, perhaps not be poſſible, to deſtroy or controul the venomous Beaſt. But the omnipotent RULER often takes the contrary Method. He permits Danger to arrive at the very Height. Matters are reduced even to a hopeleſs Extremity. *Then* He makes bare his holy Arm. *Then* He ſends Help from his Sanctuary. To let all Men ſee; That Salvation, both temporal and eternal, is of the LORD; That no Caſe is irremediable, and nothing impoſſible with GOD.

The Ruin of theſe People ſeems indeed to be inevitable.—But who is the Perſon that intervenes, juſt at *this* critical Juncture?

Eug. It is a Meſſenger from the principal Inhabitants of *Judea*. He comes breathleſs and trembling. Amazement in his Face, and Duſt upon his Head. "An Invaſion!" He cries—"An Invaſion!—"The *Philiſtines* have poured themſelves upon our "Frontiers!—The *Philiſtines* are over-running the "Land *!"

Aſp. Upon the Receipt of this News, See! what Vexation reddens in the diſappointed Monarch's Aſpect! What Anger lightens in his Eye! At the ſame Time, what pale Reflections on his Country's Danger, mingle themſelves with the fiery Paſſions, and almoſt quench the Flame inkindling in his Cheeks.—Shall the Vulture relinquiſh his Prey, even when it lies fluttering under his Talons? Gall-

ing

* This Event is related, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 25, &c. And it is one of the moſt extraordinary Inſtances of a divine Interpoſition, at the very Criſis of Need, that any Hiſtory has recorded.

ing Thought! But his Kingdom is at ſtake. If He does not immediately advance to repel the Enemy, his All, his All is loſt. Burning therefore with Indignation, yet chilled with Fear, He turns, haſty though reluctant, away.—Are You not charmed, *Eugenio*, with this Diſplay of *tumultuous* and *contrary* Paſſions? Which afford the fineſt Subject for hiſtoric Painting, and are ſo happily expreſſed in this Piece.

Eug. Indeed, Sir, I am *ſhocked*, rather than charmed. The very Looks of that revengeful Monarch fill me with Horror. What muſt He ſuffer in his Mind, who diſcovers ſuch Rage and Anguiſh in his Features! I would not have his furious Temper, for all his royal Power.

Aſp. Then, my dear *Eugenio*, You muſt endeavour to ſuppreſs every Emotion of Envy and Malevolence. You muſt cheriſh a cordial Good-will to all Men; and learn to rejoice in *their* Excellencies and Happineſs, as well as in *your own*. Envy is the Worm that gnaws, Envy is the Fury that embroils, his wretched Heart. And an Author, with whom You will ere long be acquainted, has aſſured Us;

Invidiâ Siculi non invenere Tyranni
Tormentum majus. HOR.

The next is a kind of *Night-piece*. Stars are in the Sky, and the new Moon rides on the Skirts of the Hemiſphere. Which affords juſt Light enough to diſtinguiſh Objects.—This is a perfect Contraſt to the foregoing. We ſee no Conflict of jarring Paſſions; no fierce Geſture, or mad Demeanour. But the principal Perſon appears *ſedate* and *compoſed*, as the Night that ſurrounds Him. He ſtands on the Bank of a River, thoughtful and attentive; as

though

though he was pondering, or executing, ſome important Project.

Eug. This is *Cyrus the Great.* He ſtands upon the Banks of the *Euphrates*; not far from *Babylon.* He points with his Sceptre, and is giving Directions to his Army. The Directions are, to paſs through the Channel of the River (which is drained* of its Water) in order to ſurpriſe the City.

Aſp. This is a Prince of very ſuperior Dignity. The honoured Inſtrument of accompliſhing JEHOVAH's Counſels. He was foretold by the Prophet *Iſaiah.* He was even mentioned by Name†, more than two hundred Years before his Birth. Let Us wiſh Him Proſperity. For He goes to humble the Pride of *Babylon*, and releaſe the Captivity of *Iſrael.*—See! The *Euphrates*, turned aſide into the Drains, diſcovers its immenſe Bed. With what regular Movements, and what calm Alacity, the Troops advance. Silence ſeems to eſcort them; while, under Covert of the Shades, and with Providence at their Head, they march along a Road, never before trodden by the Foot of Man‡.—The Sol-

* *I will dry up thy Rivers.* Iſai. xliv. 27. † Iſai. xliv. 28. xlv. 1.

‡ May not the Prophet (*Iſai.* xli. 2, 3) allude to this memorable March, when, foretelling the Victories of *Cyrus*, he ſays? *Who raiſed Him up from the Eaſt, called Him to his Foot, gave the Nations before Him, and made Him rule over Kings? He purſued them, and paſſed ſafely,* ארח ברגלין לא יבוא *by the Way*, ſays our Tranſlation, *that He had not gone with his Feet.* But this reads flat, and appears inexpreſſive. *Nil ſonat magnum aut memorabile.* Might not the Sentence be rendered? He paſſed ſafely, *by a Way which no Man had ever gone with his Feet.*

——————— *Nullius ante*
Trita Pede.

This was real Fact; and this is truly wonderful.

Soldiers of the Garriſon, have abandoned their Station on the Wall, to join in the diſſolute Indulgence of this fatal Night. The Inhabitants, like many a heedleſs Sinner, are lulled in Indolence, and dreaming of Pleaſures, even on the very Brink of Ruin.

Eug. Why are thoſe *brazen Gates*, which lead to the River, placed in ſuch a diſtinguiſhed Point of View? They ſtrike my Eye more, I think, than all the Monuments of Art and Grandeur, which adorn that ſuperb City.—And let me farther aſk; Whether the Painter has not offended againſt Probability, in ſuffering them to ſtand wide open? On the Approach of ſo formidable an Adverſary, I ſhould expect to have found them ſhut with all poſſible Security.

Aſp. In this Particular, the Painter has ſhewed his Judgment, and not forgotten his Piety. GOD had devoted that haughty and oppreſſive Metropolis to Deſtruction. You will perceive, from this Circumſtance, how wonderfully He *over-rules* all Events, for the Accompliſhment of his ſacred Purpoſes. Had thoſe ponderous Gates been ſhut*, the City

* See this very momentous, though ſeemingly inconſiderable Circumſtance, finely illuſtrated by Mr. *Rollin*, and compared with a remarkable Prophecy in *Iſaiah*. *Antient Hiſt.* Vol. II. p. 144, 153.—A Work, in which the moſt *entertaining* and *inſtructive* Events of Antiquity, are regularly digeſted; elegantly related; and ſtripped of thoſe minuter Incidents which make the Story move ſlow, and are apt to fatigue the Attention.—Conciſe, but judicious Obſervations are interſperſed. Which may teach young Minds, to form a right Judgment of Things: and not be miſled, by the *Plauſibility* of popular Notions, or the *Partiality* of prejudiced Hiſtorians.—Many very diſtinguiſhed Predictions of Scripture, are explained and confirmed by correſpondent Facts, from the moſt authentic Memoirs of claſſical Literature. Indeed, a perpetual Regard to the Elucidation and Honour of the *ſacred Oracles*,

City had continued impregnable, and the whole Enterprize been defeated. But, through ſome accidental Forgetfulneſs, occaſioned by the Diſorders of this riotous Solemnity, or rather by a very *ſignal Interpoſition* of divine Vengeance; they are left open *, and afford an eaſy Entrance to Slaughter and Death. Which ruſh upon the unhappy Creatures, all ſunk in Sleep, or overcharged with Wine; as a concealed Snare, in ſome dreadful unexpected Moment, ſprings up, and inextricably entangles the unwary Bird †. Was I to inſcribe this Picture with a Motto, I would chooſe the Apoſtle's Admonition; BE SOBER: BE VIGILANT.

Who is this, with his Length of Hair ‡ flowing upon his Shoulders; with ſuch Amplitude of Perſonage,

cles, runs through and ennobles the whole Performance.—Which Method, if not ſtrictly conformable to the Rules of Hiſtorical Compoſition, is a Tranſgreſſion of them greatly to their Advantage. It may be ſaid to reſemble the *golden Branch*, celebrated by *Virgil*, and plucked by his Hero. Whoſe Growth, though a Departure from the uſual Laws of Vegetation, was far from depreciating the Value of the Tree.

I admire the Whole, but cannot enough admire the *Concluſion*. It is peculiarly pertinent, and inimitably grand. Has a Dignity, an Elevation, a Majeſty, which, ſomewhat like the Kingdom deſcribed, are quite unequaled, and little leſs, than ſtupendous.

Παντοθεν αργυρεοι, χρυσεην δ' επεθηκε κορωνην.

* *The Gates ſhall not be ſhut.* Iſai. xlv. 1.

† How exactly does this Cataſtrophe agree with the Prophecy! *I have laid a Snare for Thee, and Thou art alſo taken*, O Babylon, *and Thou waſt not aware.* Jer. i. 24.

‡ I believe, it was not cuſtomary with the *Romans*, eſpecially their Warriors, to have long flowing Hair. This therefore might ſeem an Offence againſt what the

ſonage, ſuch Magnificence of Mien, and noble Plainneſs of Habit?

Eug. This is my favourite Piece.—My Father ſometimes ſhews me the Heads of the Philoſophers. But there is ſomething ſo gloomy and ſevere, in *Diogenes* and *Epictetus*, that I could never much admire them.—But this, Sir, is *Scipio*; the Thunderbolt of War, as *Virgil* calls Him. Here is ſomething ſo ſprightly and engaging, as well as grand and majeſtic, that I am never weary of looking on Him.

Aſp. He appears with a Lady of diſtinguiſhed Beauty in his Hand.

Eug. This is the captive Princeſs; who had been taken in War; who was ſet apart for the General's Prize; but whom he is now reſtoring to her eſpouſed Huſband.

Aſp. You are right, *Eugenio*.—He has juſt led in his lovely Captive, attended by her Huſband and Parents, amidſt a full Aſſembly of *Romans* and *Celtiberians*; the Victors and the Vanquiſhed. His modeſt Eyes, You obſerve, are rather turned from, than gazing upon, the blooming Virgin.—Cannot You ſuppoſe, how the Spectators muſt be affected, upon the Opening of this extraordinary Scene? Every One beholds, the Hero with Admiration, the Lady with Delight. Every Boſom is big with Expectation, or in pain for the Event. After a ſhort Pauſe, He addreſſes Himſelf to the Lover, in Words to this

Effect

Italians call *il Coſtume*, if the Painter was not ſupported by the Authority of *Livy*. Who, in his deſcriptive Picture of *Scipio*, gives Us the following Touches; *Species Corporis ampla ac magnifica. Præterquam quod ſuapte Natura multa Majeſtas inerat, adornabat* promiſſa Cæſaries, *Habituſque Corporis, non cultus Munditiis, ſed virilis verè ac militaris.* Lib. XXVIII. c. 35.

Effect—" I am no ſtranger to your Intereſt in this " fine Woman. The Fortune of War has put her " entirely into my Power. The Circumſtances of " my Youth cannot render me inſenſible to ſo en- " gaging a Perſon. But with Us *Romans*, Honour " and Generoſity have a more prevailing Influence, " than tranſitory Gratifications. Take your Bride; " be happy in each Other; and when you look up- " on this Gift, admire the *Romans*, be a Friend to " *Rome*."—Upon this He delivers Her (as the Action is here repreſented) to the enamoured Prince.

See! how the Crouds, that cluſter and hang around, are ſtruck with the beneficent Deed!—In the *Celtiberians*, We behold a Mixture of Veneration and Surpriſe. Their Looks are full of Meaning. Methinks they are going to cry out; *Excellent Man!* —In the *Romans*, We diſcern a conſcious Superiority, and Exultation of Mind. Triumph is in their Features. They ſay, or ſeem to ſay; *This wondrous Man is ours!*—In the *Lady*, We admire the accompliſhed and modeſt Fair; uniting all the Dignity of her Birth with all the Delicacy of her Sex. What ſoft Confuſion, and what tender Joy, appear in her Countenance! She is loſt in Wonder, and at a loſs for Words. She ſpeaks the Acknowledgements of her Heart, by the ſilent Eloquence of a Tear; which ſteals down her glowing Cheek, to bedew the kind Hand, that has protected her Innocence, and is reſigning her to her Lord.—*Her Lord* is under an apparent, and a graceful Struggle, of Love and Gratitude. He dotes upon his charming Princeſs, and He almoſt adores his generous Benefactor. We can hardly tell, whether He is going to claſp the former in his Arms, or throw himſelf at the

Feet of the latter.—The *aged Parents* expreſs their Tranſport in a different Manner. Their Knees are bent to the Earth; their Eyes are lifted up to Heaven; they implore, for their honoured Guardian, every Bleſſing which the Gods can beſtow.—*Scipio* Himſelf diſplays all the Magnanimity of the Conqueror, tempered with the Sedateneſs of the Philoſopher, and ſoftened with the Gentleneſs of the Friend. He gives Happineſs, but He enjoys a greater. His Eyes ſparkle with a ſublime Delight; and He ſeems to anticipate the Applauſe, which this truly heroic Act will gain, in all Countries and in all Ages.

Eug. Is not this a greater Victory, than any that he had won, in the Field of Battle? And a nobler Triumph, than any that could be voted Him, by the applauding Senate? Amiable *Scipio!* Might I be a *Roman*, I would be no other than *Scipio*.

Aſp. I wiſh You, my dear Sir, the Temperance and Generoſity of *Scipio*. May You exerciſe them both; but from a better Motive than his. *He*, I fear, was too much ſwayed by a Spirit of Ambition; which *You* muſt, not cheriſh, but endeavour to ſuppreſs.—A Spirit of *Ambition*, which pants after Diſtinction, and thirſts for Applauſe, is diametrically oppoſite to the Genius of the Goſpel *.—It is a Leſſon, which muſt infallibly be unlearned, if ever We become Poſſeſſors of Faith, or Partakers of *CHRIST* †.—It is a Root of Bitterneſs, which naturally produces Envy ‡; that moſt odious, and (as You have juſt now ſeen) moſt ſelf-tormenting of all Tempers.—It is a Habit of Mind, which gene-

rally

* Gal. v. 26. John vii. 18. † John v. 44.
‡ Gal. v. 26.

rally renders Men Incendiaries in the Church, and Diſturbers of its Tranquility *.—It is therefore more like an inchanted Potion which inebriates, than a genuine Cordial which animates.

Eug. From what Motive then would You encourage me to be diligent in the Purſuit of Learning, and in the Cultivation of every Virtue?

Aſp. Not, that You may acquire the poor, contemptible, periſhing Honour, which cometh from Men—but, that You may *pleaſe* GOD, your Almighty CREATOR—that You may *glorify CHRIST*, your infinitely condeſcending REDEEMER—and may be qualified to promote the *beſt Intereſts* of your Fellow-creatures—even their preſent Holineſs, and their eternal Happineſs.

Theſe are the grand and endearing Encouragements, which our holy Religion propoſes. Theſe will operate, I am bold to aver, with a much ſweeter and a far more ſovereign Efficacy, than all the glittering Enticements which *Ambition* can deviſe; or all the deluſory Attractives, which *Emulation*, the Siſter Syren, can ſuggeſt. And, what is above every other Conſideration weighty, theſe Motives will be more likely, or rather theſe will be very certain, to receive the *divine* Bleſſing.

You told me, You was never weary of contemplating *Scipio*. For which Reaſon, I promiſe Myſelf, You will not be fatigued or diſpleaſed, though I have ſo long confined your Attention to this Pourtrait.—But have We no Hero of *Britain*, fit to join this illuſtrious Triumvirate from *Rome*, *Perſia*, and *Judea*?

* 3 John 9, 10.

Eug. The very next We meet, is one of our *Engliſh* Kings. But I cannot ſay, that I remember either his Name, or his Story.

Aſp. How, my young Gentleman! Do You read the Annals of *other* Nations, and not acquaint Yourſelf with the Affairs of *your own* Country?—If I was in your Place, I would apply myſelf to the claſſical Writers by way of Study, and to ſome valuable *Engliſh* Hiſtorian by way of Amuſement. Such an Amuſement is infinitely preferable to *Novels* or *Romances*; and will not only relax your Attention, but enrich your Mind.

Eug. I thank You, good Sir, for your Admonition. If You pleaſe, I will now begin the Study, You recommend. Your Explanation of theſe Drawings, ſhall be the Rudiments of my Knowledge. And I ſhall think it a Happineſs, to receive my firſt Inſtructions, from ſo able a Maſter.

Aſp. It is Honour enough for *me*, *Eugenio*, to have given You the Hint. I pretend to nothing more, than to point out your Game, or to ſpring the Covey. You ſhall be taught, by a more expert Proficient, to make it your own. Yet, though Others may direct You with greater Skill, None will rejoice in your ſucceſsful Purſuit, more ſincerely than myſelf.

This is our renowned *Henry the Fifth*; as He appeared after the Victory of *Agincourt*. You ſee the gallant Conqueror clad in Steel, and recent from the Slaughter of the inſulting Foe. He ſeems to breathe an heroic Ardour, which is irradiated and exalted by a lively Devotion. If *Courage* can be expreſſed by the Pencil, this is the genuine Likeneſs: keen, yet compoſed; graſping the Sword, yet looking

ing up to Heaven.—He that, a little while ago, drove the Battle, like a Whirlwind *, on the Legions of *France*; now, bends a ſuppliant Knee, and offers the euchariſtic Hymn, to the LORD GOD of Hoſts. No turbulent or diſorderly Joy riots among the Soldiery. They expreſs not the Triumph of their Hearts, in frantic Exultations, or drunken Revels; but in Acts of Thankſgiving to JEHOVAH. In an Attitude, which ſpeaks the devout Acknowledgment of the Prophet, *Thou art our Battle-Ax and Weapons of War* †; or the grateful Declaration of the Pſalmiſt, *Not unto Us, O LORD, not unto Us, but unto* THY *Name be the Glory* ‡.

This laſt Inſtance informs my *Eugenio*, That *Prayer* and *Praiſe* are an honourable Employ—have been practiſed by Perſons of the moſt admired Endowments—are the ſureſt Method of *obtaining Succeſs*, in whatever Buſineſs We undertake; and of *enjoying Proſperity*, in whatever Circumſtances We are placed.

The next Piece is different from all the preceding. In *thoſe*, Armies with their Enſigns floating to the Winds, Ships of War riding at Anchor, battering Engines and Inſtruments of Death, form the Perſpective. In *this*, We have, all around, a lovely rural Landſcape; expreſſive of Peace, and enriched with Plenty. Corn and Cattle in the Valleys; fruitful Vineyards on the Hills; and beautiful Gardens ſurrounding the Houſes.—But who is that

* For this bold and beautiful Image, We are obliged to the Prophet. יסערו להפיצני *They came out as a Whirlwind to ſcatter me.* Habak. iii. 14.

† Jer. li. 20. ‡ Pſal. cxv. 1.

graceful and *auguſt* Perſonage, ſeated on a Throne of Ivory and Gold?

Eug. This is *Solomon*, having an Interview with the Queen of *Sheba*. A large Train of her Attendants throng the Avenues of the Palace. Some leading foreign Animals: Some, bearing Vaſes and Caſkets: All, arrayed in ſtrange Apparel. The *Iſraelites* wonder at their outlandiſh Viſitants, their coſtly Preſents, and peculiar Habits. Their Viſitants are as much ſurpriſed at the Walls the Towers, and eſpecially the Temple of *Jeruſalem*. But You, Sir, I apprehend, are moſt pleaſed with the venerable Perſon, who fills the Throne.

Aſp. Indeed I am, and ſo is his royal Gueſt.—You obſerve, in her Robe, her Retinue, her Deportment, an unpoliſhed Kind of Grandeur. But all in *Solomon* is ſo ſplendid, and at the ſame Time ſo elegant; diſplays ſuch a Delicacy of Taſte, and ſuch a Magnificence of Spirit; that the *Sabæan* Princeſs is perfectly in Raptures. See! How She ſtands fixed and gazing with ſpeechleſs Admiration *; like One loſt in Aſtoniſhment, and tranſported with Delight! Her Looks ſpeak, what, when She recovers the Power of Utterance, her Tongue expreſſes; *It was a true Report, that I heard in my own Land, of thy Acts, and of thy Wiſdom. Howbeit, I believed not the Words, until I came, and mine Eyes had ſeen: and behold! the Haif was not told*

* This, I apprehend, is the Meaning of that remarkably ſtrong Expreſſion, uſed by the ſacred Hiſtorian; *There was no more Spirit in Her*, 1 Kings x. 5. It ſeems to have been a well known and cuſtomary Phraſe among the *Hebrews*, to denote the *Extremes*, either of Surpriſe, or Terror. See *Joſh.* v. 1.

told me: thy Wiſdom and Proſperity exceed the Fame which I heard *.

Eug. This is a high Compliment. Is it right, Sir, to praiſe a Man, in ſuch plain Terms and ſuch high Strains, to his very Face? I think, I have heard *Philenor* blame ſuch a Practice, as inconſiſtent with refined Manners. And I have heard my Father ſay; No One is a better Judge of fine Breeding, than *Philenor*. If the moſt agreeable Behaviour, added to the moſt winning Converſation, are what You call *fine Breeding*, I am ſure, *Philenor* is Maſter of it to a very great Degree. I love to be in his Company, and am never better pleaſed, than to hear Him talk.

Aſp. The Compliment, though high, is juſt. It is ſtrictly conformable to Truth, and proceeds from the moſt unaffected *Sincerity*. If We conſider what follows, We ſhall have a Pattern of true Politeneſs; a Propriety and a Refinement of Addreſs, far ſurpaſſing all her Majeſty's external State.—*Happy are thy Men; happy are theſe thy Servants; which ſtand continually before Thee, and that hear thy Wiſdom.* Inſtead of envying, She congratulates the Domeſtics of *Solomon*, and rejoices in their ſuperior Felicity. This is *Benevolence.*—*Bleſſed be the LORD thy GOD, which delighted in Thee, to ſet Thee on the Throne*

* This is ſomewhat like the fine Compliment, which *Cicero* pays to his learned Client *Archias*. *In cæteris Aſiæ Partibus, cunctæque Græciæ, ſic ejus Adventus celebrabatur, ut Famam Ingenii Exſpectatio Hominis; Exſpectationem, ipſius Adventus Admiratioque ſuperaret.* Though I think her Majeſty's Sentiments, as they are more ſimple and artleſs than the Orator's; are alſo, like the Spices and Fruits of her Clime, more richly ſcented, and more highly flavoured.

Throne of Iſrael. Becauſe the LORD loved Iſrael for ever, therefore made He Thee King, to do Judgment and Juſtice. Here She aſcribes all his royal Virtues, and ſublime Accompliſhments, to the Bounty of Heaven. Though they are applauded in the Perſon of *Solomon*, they are recognized as the free Gift of GOD. This is *Piety*.—When the Endowments We celebrate, lead Us to magnify, not their Poſſeſſor, but their Author; then the Poiſon is corrected, and turned into Medicine. Praiſe, thus circumſtanced, loſes its Malignity, and is rendered ſalubrious.

It pleaſes me to perceive, that You take ſo much Notice of the Converſation, which paſſes between your worthy Father, and his ingenious Friends. I promiſe myſelf, You will alſo remember the Maxim, which We have now learned from a Queen. A Queen, whom not only the ſacred Hiſtorian, but our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* Himſelf vouchſafes to mention, and with Marks of Approbation. Whoſe Name therefore will be had in Honour, when *Semiramis* and *Cleopatra*, the Heroines and the Beauties, are conſigned over to Oblivion. The Maxim, which I mean, is this—There muſt be an Union of Sincerity, of Benevolence, and of Piety, in order to conſtitute *true Politeneſs*. Whoever pretends to fine Breeding, and is deſtitute of theſe Qualities, is nothing more than a Pretender. He bears juſt the ſame Proportion to this ornamental Character, as the Ape and the Monkey bear to the Man.

But We have not ſufficiently examined our Picture. The Dome is of Cedar; ſupported by Pillars of Marble; on which are ſuſpended Curtains of Silk and Embroidery.—The Pillars ſhine with the

moſt

moſt gloſſy Poliſh, and ſwell upon the Eye with the boldeſt Projections. The Curtains, pendent in large and eaſy Folds, ſeem not adheſive to the Canvaſs, but waving in the Air.—The Throne is exquiſitely contrived, richly ornamented, and highly finiſhed. It is evident, the Painter had in his Eye that memorable Obſervation of Scripture, *There was not the like made in any Kingdom*; and He has really done all, which Art could deviſe, or Colours execute, in order to exemplify the great Encomium.

If the Monarch was abſent, We ſhould deſire no better Entertainment, than to view the Beauties of the Apartment: but can hardly allow any Attention to the Edifice, when ſo graceful and ſo grand a Preſence beſpeaks our Regard. For I muſt own, there appears to me ſomething peculiarly excellent in this Figure: a *Serenity* and *Dignity*, without any of that martial Air, which adds a Tincture of Ferocity to the Warrior: a *Sagacity* and *Penetration*, not to be equaled by the Wrinkles of Age, yet tranſparent through all the Bloom of Youth. Piety and Wiſdom, the Love of GOD and the Grace of his SPIRIT, give an Elevation to the Mind; give a ſecret Charm to the Countenance; and ſomething more than mortal to the whole Man.—I am apt to ſuſpect, *Eugenio*, that You yourſelf are ready to adopt a new Favourite. That You now prefer *Solomon* even to *Scipio*; and had rather be like the *Beloved of the* LORD*, than the Darling of *Rome*.

Eug.

* *Beloved of the* LORD—This is the Meaning of *Jedediah*; the Name, which *Solomon* received, by the expreſs Order of JEHOVAH. 2 *Sam.* xii. 25.

Eug. Every Thing in *Solomon* is ſo venerable and heavenly, that I am filled with Awe, rather than incited to Imitation. It is not for a Boy, to think of imitating ſuch high Perfection!

Aſp. Why not, my dear Sir? It was GOD who gave *Solomon* his ſuperior Wiſdom, and exalted Accompliſhments. And GOD is *the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for ever:* as willing to hear, and as able to help *You*, as He was to hear and bleſs his Servant *Solomon.*—Neither let your Youth be a Diſcouragement. *Out of the Mouth of very Babes and Sucklings, HE ordaineth Strength**. *Samuel* miniſtered in the Temple, when He was but a Child†. *Joſiah*, while He was yet young, began to ſeek after the GOD of his Fathers‡. *Timothy* was acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, from his earlieſt Years‖. And *Solomon* himſelf was none of the oldeſt, when He was favoured with that extraordinary Viſion, and made that admirable Choice at *Gibeon*§. A Paſſage of Scripture, which I dare ſay, You have read; which I would recommend to your attentive Conſideration; and which, I hope, You will take for the Model of your Conduct.—And if You, like that illuſtrious young Prince, deſire a wiſe and underſtanding Heart, more than the Affluence of Wealth, or the Diſtinctions of Honour: if You *ſeek Wiſdom as Silver, and ſearch for Her as for hid Treaſure: then ſhall* You *alſo underſtand the Fear of the LORD, and find the Knowledge of GOD*¶.

The next that occurs, preſents Us with a View of the *Sea*; and a moſt tremendous View it is.

Eug.

* Pſal. viii. 2. † 1 Sam. ii. 18. ‡ 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. ‖ 2 Tim. iii. 15. § 1 Kings iii. 5, 6, &c. ¶ Prov. ii. 4, 5.

Eug. This is the Voyage related by the Evangeliſt; when our LORD, ſailing with his Diſciples, bid the Storm be ſtill, and made the Ocean calm.

Aſp. Then We may truly ſay; *A Greater than Solomon is here*!* — Though *Solomon* was wiſe, *CHRIST* is Wiſdom itſelf.—Give me Leave to hint, upon this Occaſion, that every Picture of *CHRIST* muſt neceſſarily *depreciate* his glorious Perſon. Therefore You will never think, that a few Rays beaming round his ſacred Head, can properly diſtinguiſh the SON of GOD; can expreſs either the Grace of his Offices, or the Divinity of his Nature. It is not to diſplay the Perfections of our *LORD JESUS Himſelf*, but only to give Us an Idea of one of his *Works*, that the Pencil has been employed on this grand Subject.

You will alſo remember; That it was not the main Ocean, but the Lake of *Tiberias*, on which they ſailed. However, the Painter is at Liberty, to make his Sea as large as He pleaſes, and his *Storm* as terrible as He can. Accordingly, He has collected all the Horrors of a Tempeſt.—Lightnings fire the Arch above; and Thunders, could Thunders have been painted, would have rocked the Ground below.

* *A greater than* Solomon—This is what our bleſſed LORD affirms concerning Himſelf. In which, We may obſerve the utmoſt Dignity, tempered with the utmoſt Decorum. He will avoid the very Appearance of Oſtentation, even when He thinks it neceſſary to aſſert his native Honour. Therefore, He ſays not, *I am greater than* Solomon; but, *a greater than* Solomon *is here.* Leaving every One, who has Eyes to ſee his mighty Works, and a Heart to underſtand his tranſcendent Excellencies—leaving every ſuch Perſon, to make the Application. *Matt.* xii. 41. See another Inſtance of this amiable *αφιλοτιμια*, Ver. 6.

low. Thoſe flaming Bolts have ſmitten a huge Promontory, and tore its rugged Brow. See! how the rocky Fragment is tumbling, with impetuous Bound, from Cliff to Cliff.—The Waters, laſhed by furious Winds, heave and toſs their tumultuous Billows. Here, they riſe in rolling Ridges; there, they rage in devouring Whirls.—Amidſt theſe horrible Commotions, You behold a *Veſſel* in all the Extremity of *Diſtreſs*. Straining under the Blaſt; battered and half overwhelmed by the Surge; ſhe can no longer maintain the unequal Conflict. She yields to the reſiſtleſs Flood; and begins, evidently begins to ſink.—Perplexed, amazed, and at their Wit's End, the Diſciples run to and fro. They ſhift the Tackling; lighten the Stowage; try every Expedient; and find, to their unſpeakable Affliction, every Expedient ineffectual.

We caſt our Eye forward, and their divine MASTER appears, ſedately riſing from a gentle Slumber. He ſees the Perplexity and Horror of his Companions, without the leaſt Emotion of Alarm. He ſees Deſtruction approaching, Heaven and Earth mingling, and, inſtead of being diſmayed, *enjoys* the elemental War.—What Compoſure in his Mien! What Dignity in his Attitude! What Majeſty, ſweetened with Compaſſion, in his Aſpect! Such as could ariſe from no other Cauſe, but a conſcious and undoubted Certainty, that not one of the Company ſhould periſh; that not a Hair of their Head ſhould be injured; and that all this mighty Uproar of Nature, ſhould end in a Demonſtration of his *mightier* Power, and a Confirmation of his Diſciples *Faith*.—He looks abroad into the mutinous Sky, and the turbulent Deep. He waves, with an authoritative

thoritative Air, his ſacred Hand; and adds the great commanding Word, PEACE: BE STILL.—Do You enquire after the Effect? Let *Milton* declare it;

Confuſion heard his Voice, and wild Uproar
Stood rul'd.

This is expreſſed in another Draught. Where all is huſhed: the tremendous Agitations ceaſe, and the moſt profound Tranquility takes place. The Water is ſmooth as Glaſs; We have the Picture of a perfect *Calm*; and view thoſe very Perſons, who, a little while ago, were in the wildeſt Diſtraction, and in the Jaws of Ruin, ſurrounding their LORD as Men alive from the Dead*. Their Conſternation is turned

* The Circumſtances of this Miracle, as related by the Evangeliſts, are truly wonderful, and to the laſt Degree pictureſque.

Maſter! Maſter! We periſh! How conciſe, how abrupt, and how ardent is this Exclamation! Therefore how ſtrongly ſignificant of imminent Danger, and of the utmoſt Diſtreſs! They have not Time to be explicit. A Moment's Delay may be fatal. What they utter is Vehemence itſelf, and all Rapidity, *Luke* viii. 24.—This is Nature: this is the *genuine* Language of the Heart: this is true hiſtoric Painting. Every impartial Reader muſt admire this exquiſitely fine Stroke, far beyond the diffuſe and (I had almoſt ſaid, *impertinently*) florid Speech, which *Virgil* puts into the Mouth of his Hero on a like Occaſion. *Æn.* I. 98.

Σιωπα, πεφιμωσο. What a Majeſty in this Command! 'Tis admirable: 'tis inimitable: 'tis worthy of GOD.—I think, We may obſerve a peculiarly proper Word, addreſſed and adapted to each Element: the firſt injoining a *Ceſſation* of the *Winds*, the ſecond a *Quieſcence* of the *Waves*: Silence in all that roared, Compoſure in all that raged. As though (to give a ſhort Paraphraſe of the grand

turned into Wonder, and their Pangs of Fear into Extaſies of Joy. They acknowledge the Omnipotence, and adore the Goodneſs of *JESUS*.

Eug. Well may they acknowledge his *Omnipotence*; ſince *Winds and Waves obey Him*. Great Reaſon have they to adore his *Goodneſs*, ſince He reſcued them from the very Jaws of Death; that worſt of Deaths, periſhing in the ſtormy Deep.

Aſp. If *JESUS CHRIST* had vouchſafed ſuch a Deliverance to my *Eugenio*; What would He have thought, or how would He have been affected?

Eug. I ſhould have thought myſelf *inexpreſſibly* obliged; and that I could never ſhew *ſufficient* Gratitude to ſo great a Benefactor.

Aſp. Aſſure yourſelf then, my dear Sir, that He has done infinitely more for You.—That He has delivered You, not indeed from being ſwallowed up by the raging Billows, but from ſinking into the Pit of everlaſting Perdition.—That He has not only reſcued You from endleſs Deſtruction, but obtained eternal Life and heavenly Happineſs for You.—Done all this, not by ſpeaking a Word, or iſſuing a Command; but by bearing your Guilt, and ſuffering your Puniſhment; even by dying the moſt igno-

grand Injunction) it had been ſaid; Winds, *be huſhed*; Waves, *be calm*. Mark iv. 39.

The *Effect*, which this Miracle has on the Diſciples, is deſcribed, with all the Force of Imagination, and all the Energy of Diction. To repreſent in Colours, what the evangelical Hiſtorian has left upon Record, would be a Subject fit for the immortal *Raphael*; and perhaps not to be equaled even by his maſterly Pencil. Λιαν εκ περισσε εν εαυτοις εξιστανλο και εθαυμαζον—εθαυμαζον, *they were amazed*—εξιστανο, *they were tranſported with Amazement*—λιαν *to the very greateſt Degree*—εκ περισσε, *exceeding all* that Language can expreſs. *Mark* vi. 51.

ignominious and tormenting Death, in your Stead.—Should You not then *unfeignedly* love HIM? *Study* to pleaſe HIM? And make it the *reigning* Endeavour of your Life to glorify HIM?

Here, *Theron* returned, and the young Student withdrew; after receiving ſome affectionate and encouraging Compliments from *Aſpaſio*. Who was going to enlarge upon the excellent Taſte of his Friend; the inſtructive Style of his Pictures; the good Senſe and great Proficiency of his Son. But *Theron*, far from coveting Praiſe; and fully ſatisfied with the Conſciouſneſs, of acting the becoming Part, prevented his Diſcourſe, by ſtepping to a Pair of Glaſs Folding-doors. Which, thrown open, admitted them into the *Study*.

A Chimney-piece of grey Marble, with plain but grand Mouldings, formed a very handſome Appearance.—In various little Niches, were fixed elegant *Buſts*; and on the ſeveral Interſtices, hung beautiful *Prints*; repreſenting many of thoſe eminently learned Men, who were the Ornaments and Bleſſings, both of antient and modern Times. The Shelves, all around, were accommodated, not incumbered, with Books. *Aſpaſio*, running over the lettered Backs, obſerved a Collection of the moſt valuable Authors, in Hiſtory and Natural Philoſophy, in Poetry and Divinity.

You will eaſily perceive, ſaid *Theron*, that I am ſomewhat ſingular in furniſhing my Study, as well as in ornamenting the Avenue. My Books are not for Shew, but Uſe; and claim a Regard, rather on account of their Worth, than their Number.—An immenſe Multitude of Volumes, I have always

thought, is more likely to embarraſs the Attention, than to improve the Underſtanding. A *huge* Library ſeems to reſemble a perplexing *Labyrinth*; and often bewilders the Mind in its Purſuits, inſtead of leading it expeditiouſly to the Acquiſition of Truth,

When People are eager to peruſe a Multiplicity of Writings, it frequently happens, that in reading all, they digeſt none*. They taſte ſome empty and tranſient Amuſement, but collect no ſolid or laſting Advantage. Their Minds are ſomewhat like thoſe capacious Looking-glaſſes, which We have ſeen expoſed in the moſt frequented and populous Streets of *London*. They receive all Manner of ſhadowy Images, but no ſubſtantial Impreſſion. A thouſand Figures *paſs through* them, not one *abides* in them.

Our Books, replied *Aſpaſio*, as well as our Friends, ſhould rather be *ſelect*, than *numerous*. For my Part, I would deſire no more than two or three of the moſt correct and maſterly Writers in any Science. Theſe, a Perſon of moderate Capacity may be able to comprehend; and not comprehend only, but enrich his Memory with the choiceſt Sentiments, and make the Subſtance of their Works his own.—He will, by Repetition and familiar Converſe, enter into their *Spirit*, and acquire their *Manner*. While a Rambler in

* The Author of *Night-Thoughts* has touched this Subject, with great Judgment, and equal Sprightlineſs.

Voracious Learning, often overfed,
Digeſts not into Senſe the motley Meal.
This Forager on Other's Wiſdom, leaves
Her native Farm, her Reaſon quite untill'd:
With mixt Manure She ſurfeits the rank Soil,
Dung'd but not arez'd; *and* rich to Beggary.

in reading, does little more than gratify his Fancy, without refining his Taſte, or amending his Heart.

Upon this *Aſpaſio* turned Himſelf; and eſpied, in one Corner of the Apartment, the celeſtial and terreſtrial *Globes*; in another, a large reflecting *Teleſcope*; and on the Top of a Buroe, one or two of the beſt *Microſcopes*.

Theſe Inſtruments, reſumed *Theron*, have opened an inexhauſtible Fund of the fineſt Entertainments*. They have furniſhed Us with *new Eyes*; and brought up, I will venture to ſay, a *new World* into our View. They give Us a Sight of Wonders, which may ſeem incredible to the incurious Vulgar; and which were utterly unknown, to the moſt inquiſitive Sages of Antiquity. They charm the Eye with a Diſplay of Beauties, of inimitable Beauties, even where no-

* Gentlemen of Taſte and Serioufneſs cannot, I think, have a nobler Piece of Furniture for their Studies, than the *Microſcope* and the *Teleſcope*, the *Orrery* and the *Air-pump*. This Apparatus would afford them a moſt delightful and improving Amuſement in a ſolitary Hour.—It would alſo give them an Opportunity of entertaining their Company, in a truly elegant and very inſtructive Manner. It would open a fine and ample Field, for diſplaying the Glories of GOD the CREATOR, and of GOD the REDEEMER.—As the Diſcoveries made by theſe Inſtruments, are ſo *ſurpriſing* in themſelves, and *new* to the Generality of Mankind, every edifying Hint deduced from *ſuch* Obſervations, would come with a peculiar Recommendation.—This, I am ſure, would be a Method of reducing to Practice, what the polite Hiſtorian has recorded of the politer *Scipio*; *Elegantiſſimo Intervalla Negotiorum Otio diſpunxit.* VELL. PATERC.—And, I believe, it might be a happy Means of turning the Soul, to bear a Part in that immortal Hymn, *Worthy art Thou, O LORD, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for Thou haſt created all Things; and for thy Pleaſure they* now *exiſt, and were* at firſt *created.* Rev. iv. 11.

thing worthy of Notice was expected. They throw the Mind into a pleasing Transport of Admiration; and from the meanest, lowest Objects, raise the most *amiable* and *exalted* Ideas of the All-glorious CREATOR.

I have often regretted, that such rational and manly Gratifications should be almost universally supplanted, by the *fantastical* and *childish* Amusements in Vogue. Why should not the Contemplation of Nature's surprising Novelties, be as acceptable an Entertainment, as the stale Diversion of *Quadrille*; be as refined an Employ for a leisure Hour, as to count the Spots on a Pack of Cards? —The Ladies, I am very sure, might find brighter Colours, and more delicate Ornaments, in the Robes and Head-dress of a common *Fly*; than ever they found amidst the Trinkets of a *Toy-shop*. And was the fair Circle of Females once acquainted with the radiant Varnish and rich Studs, which enamel the Cover of a *Beetle*'s Wing; I am apt to think, they would view with less Rapture, with more Indifference, perhaps, with a becoming Disdain, all the petty Fancies of a *Beau*'s Wardrobe.

A few Days ago, when the accomplished *Manilia* favoured Us with a Visit, I shewed Her, through a magnifying Glass, the Sting of a Bee, the Scale of a Soal, the Wing of a Gnat, and some other *beautiful Minims* of Nature; together with the Powder, which adheres to our Finger, when we touch the Body of a Moth.—"Amazing! cried the young "Lady. What elegant Figures! What inchant-"ing Finery!"

——————*Smalleſt Lineaments exact,*
In all the Liveries deck'd of Summer's Pride,
With Spots of Gold and Purple, Azure and Green.*

" How perfect the Poliſh, and how high the Fi-
" niſhing, of that little *Weapon?*—This Piece of
" *defenſive* Armour, how ſkilfully contrived, and
" how curiouſly wrought! Here, riſing into little
" Ridges, like the Boſſes of a Buckler; fitted to
" repel Injuries. There, ſcooped into little Cavi-
" ties, deſigned, I ſuppoſe, to diminiſh its Weight;
" that the Coat of Mail may not incumber, even
" while it defends, the puny Wearer.—What I
" took to be a whitiſh deſpicable Rag, is the *neateſt*
" *Fan*, I ever beheld. Mounted on Sticks † in-
" imitably tapering and ſlender. Tinged with all
" the ſoft and lovely Colours of the moſt gloſſy
" Mother of Pearl.—But, what aſtoniſhes me more
" than all, is the View of that coloured Duſt;
" which your Inſtrument has turned into a *Cluſter*
" of *Feathers*. Every one wrought off with a Re-
" gularity and a Delicacy, that are beyond the
" Power of Deſcription. The fineſt Stroke drawn
" by the *Italian* Pen, compared with the extreme
" Minuteneſs of the Shaft, is broad and bulky as
" an Admiral's Maſt. A Speck of Leaf-gold, could
" it be weighed againſt the exquiſite Attenuations
" of the Vane ‡, would ſeem more ſubſtantial and
" ponderous than yonder Marble Slab.

* MILTON, Book VII.

† Theſe *Sticks*, are the little *Ribs*, which ſupport, at proper Intervals, the fine tranſparent Membrane of the Wing.

‡ *Vane* is the *feathery* Part of a Quill.

" How nice, even to a Prodigy, muſt be the Me-
" chaniſm of the *animalcule* Race! I ſee Globules, I
" ſee Tides of Blood, rolling through Mæanders in-
" expreſſibly finer, than the fineſt Hair.—Stranger
" ſtill! I ſee Sholes of active Creatures, expatiating
" in a ſingle Drop of Water*: taking their Paſtime
" amidſt ſuch a ſcanty Canal, as unſtraitened and
" as much at large, as *Leviathan* in the Abyſſes of
" the Ocean.—A whole Kingdom of theſe Crea-
" tures, though collected into a Body, are quite un-
" diſcernible by the naked Eye. What then muſt
" be the Size of every *Individual?* Yet in every In-
" dividual there is a complete Syſtem of Limbs;
" each Limb muſt have Muſcles and Nerves; each
" Nerve muſt have Senſe and Strength; and all
" theſe are aſſembled, though not crouded, in a
" living *Atom*.—To reflect upon the Texture of
" Veſſels, and the Operation of Organs, ſo com-
" plex, ſo numerous, yet ſo inconceivably minute;
" how it awakens Admiration! Fills me with Re-
" verence of the Almighty MAKER! and yields
" a Pleaſure, infinitely ſuperior to all the modiſh
" Amuſe-

* In a ſingle Drop of Water, Dr. *Hook* is ſaid to have diſcovered, with his *Microſcope*, eight Millions two hundred and eighty thouſand *Animalcules*.—This is mentioned, becauſe it is the prevailing Philoſophy of the Age. Though I muſt confeſs, that Mr. *Gautier* ſeems to have gone a conſiderable Way, towards giving it another Turn. As He has proved, before a learned Aſſembly at *Paris*, That the *Vermiculares* of *Leuwenhoek*, and the living *Molecul*æ of Mr. *de Buffon*, were only Balls of Air agitated by the fermenting of the Seed. If ſo, it is not impoſſible, but Dr. *Hook*'s *Animalcula* may be nothing more than *Balls of Air*, agitated by the Fermentation of the Pepper.

Be this as it will, the young Lady's Remarks on the Wonders of *Mechaniſm* on the animalcule Creation, I believe, will never be controverted.

" Amuſements of our Sex!—Your Diſcoveries of
" *Life in Miniature*, have given me a Diſguſt of,
" what is called, *High Life*, and its ſolemn Fop-
" peries. You have ſpoiled me, *Theron*, for a fa-
" ſhionable Trifler. I ſhall no longer reliſh the
" dull Oeconomy of the Fan, or the poor Parade
" of the Snuff-box."

Aſp. Have You nothing to ſay of the *Teleſcope?*—I believe, it muſt be my Province to celebrate this admirable Invention; and I wiſh I could do it, with *Manilia*'s brilliant Imagination.—If the *Microſcope* leads Us downward, to the curious Secrets of the animalcule Creation; the *Teleſcope* bears Us upward, to the grand Peculiarities of the ſtarry Regions. The Eye, conducted by this wonderful Guide, viſits a Variety of majeſtic Orbs, which would otherwiſe be loſt in unmeaſurable Tracts of Æther.—This, far more ſurpriſing than the Diſcoveries of *Columbus*, has found out new Colonies of Worlds, in every Quarter of the nocturnal Skies. This has placed a glittering Creſcent, on the Brow of one* of the Planets; and has given others a moſt ſtately Train of Attendants†.

Tell me, *Theron*; could You diſcern the full Choir of the Conſtellations, or diſtinguiſh the variegated Face of the Moon, without the Aid of your *Teleſcopic* Tube? Could You, with your unaſſiſted Eye, get a Sight of *Jupiter*'s Satellites, or procure a Glimpſe of *Saturn*'s Ring?—Without that ſupplementary Aid to our Sight, they are quite imperceptible; though the Satellites of the former, are incomparably more magnificent, than the *Retinue* of all the Monarchs in the

* The Planet *Venus*. † The Satellites of *Jupiter* and *Saturn*.

World; and compared with the Ring of the latter, all the *Bridges* on ten thouſand Rivers, are leſs than the Ferule of your Cane.

As the *Teleſcope* to the Eye, ſo is *Revelation* to the Underſtanding. It diſcovers Truths, which excluſive of ſuch a Diſcovery, had been for ever hid from the moſt ſagacious Minds.—'Tis ſtrange to the unlearned Obſerver, that this ponderous Globe of Earth and Seas, ſhould wheel its rapid Circuit round the Sun. But the *Teleſcope* has rendered this Fact clear to a Demonſtration.—'Tis ſtrange likewiſe to our natural Apprehenſions, that We ſhould die in *Adam*, and be undone by our firſt Parents Diſobedience. Nor leſs ſo, that We ſhould be made alive in *CHRIST*, and derive our Recovery from his *imputed* Righteouſneſs. But Revelation makes this Doctrine as certain, as it is comfortable.

Ther. Does Revelation make it certain?—This is a Point not yet eſtabliſhed, but taken for granted. I rather apprehend, that Revelation, in no Place maintains it, in many Places diſavows it.—During your Abſence, *Aſpaſio*, I have ſpent ſome Time in ſearching the Scriptures, with a particular View to this Tenet. I can find no ſuch Expreſſion in the whole Bible, as the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs. If it was ſo *leading* an Article, as You repreſent; ſurely, it could not have been entirely forgotten by the inſpired Writers, nor utterly excluded from *their* Body of Divinity.

Aſp. The very identical Expreſſion may not occur, and yet the Doctrine be abundantly taught. I believe, You never met with the Word *Reſurrection*, in any Part of the Pentateuch; nor ever read the Phraſe *Satisfaction*, in all the New Teſtament. Yet our LORD

LORD fully proved the Truth of the former, from the Writings of *Moſes*; and You Yourſelf have acknowledged the latter, to be the unanimous Senſe of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts.

In the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, We have expreſs and repeated Mention of a Righteouſneſs imputed. *What* or *whoſe* Righteouſneſs, can be the Subject of this Aſſertion?—Not the Righteouſneſs of *Angels*. They are a ſuperior Claſs of Beings, and have no ſuch intimate Connection with our Nature.—Not the Righteouſneſs of eminent *Saints*. This is the exploded Error of Popery; and furniſhes the *Romiſh* Zealots with that Chimera of Arrogance and Folly, Works of Supererogation.—Not any Righteouſneſs of our own: for, it is poſitively declared, to be *without Works* *; in which no Works of our own have any Concurrence, or the leaſt Share.—What other Righteouſneſs then can be meant, but the Righteouſneſs of our great SUBSTITUTE, SURETY, and SAVIOUR? Who took our Nature; diſcharged our Debt; and is therefore ſtyled, *JEHOVAH our Righteouſneſs* †.

Ther. This ſeems contrary to the whole Tenour of the ſacred Inſtructions. What ſays the Prophet? *When the wicked Man turneth away from his Wickedneſs that He hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, He ſhall ſave his Soul alive* ‡.—Here, that greateſt of Bleſſings, the Salvation of the Soul, is aſcribed to a *Departure from Evil*, and a *Perſeverance in Good*: to a real Alteration in a Man's *own* Temper and Conduct, not to any fanciful Application of ſome tranſmiſſive Righteouſneſs from Another.

Aſp.

* Rom. iv. 6. † Jer. xxiii. 6. ‡ Ezek. xviii. 27.

Asp. Let me ask my *Theron*; Is there no Wickedneſs, but Riot and Debauchery, Profaneneſs and Injuſtice?—*Unbelief*, though it may paſs without Cenſure or Notice in a Syſtem of Morality, is, in the Volume of Revelation, declared a *capital* Crime. Our LORD, ſpeaking of the HOLY SPIRIT, mentions it as a ſignal Part of his Office, That *He ſhall convince the World of Sin.*—Of what Sin? Scandalous Violations of moral Rectitude? This were a needleſs Employ. The Light of Reaſon is ſufficient, to evince ſuch a Charge; and the Court of Conſcience is erected, to paſs the deſerved Sentence.—Of Sin, adds the heavenly TEACHER, *becauſe they believe not on me* *: on my Death, as the Cauſe of their Forgiveneſs; on my Righteouſneſs, as the Ground of their Acceptance; on my SPIRIT, as the powerful Principle of their Holineſs.

Unbelief treats GOD as a Liar †; becauſe it rejects the Teſtimony, which He has bore concerning his beloved SON.—Unbelief tramples on the Blood of *CHRIST*, and is a moſt contemptuous Affront to all his ſaving Offices.—Unbelief would counteract the Operations of the HOLY GHOST; whoſe peculiar Work it is, to teſtify of *CHRIST*, and make manifeſt his Righteouſneſs.—To ſay all in a Word; Unbelief is that *great*, that *comprehenſive* Sin, which ſcornfully rejects, or impiouſly renounces, the moſt glorious Method of Salvation, which Omniſcience itſelf could deviſe ‡.

The

* John xvi. 9. † 1 John v. 10.

‡ *Bengelius* makes no Scruple to affirm, *Pejus eſt non credere Evangelio, quam Sodomitas imitari.* That is; Not to believe the Goſpel, not to receive the glad Tidings of Grace in *CHRIST*, is more provoking, and will prove

The wicked Man, therefore, never turns from his Wickedneſs; till He turns, by a true Faith, to *JESUS CHRIST*. Till then, He is a Rebel againſt the *Goſpel*, howevêr He may pay ſome ſpecious and partial Regard to the Law. So flagrant a Rebel, that he ſtands particularly excepted, even in the Act of Evangelical Indemnity. For, as *He that believeth on the SON, hath everlaſting Life*; ſo, *He that believeth not, is condemned already, and the Wrath of GOD abideth on him* *.

Ther. What are the *Pſalmiſt*'s Sentiments on this Subject? Does not He repreſent the Matter in a very different Light? *Thou, LORD, art merciful; for Thou rewardeſt every Man according to his*, not Another's, *Works* †.

Aſp. Weighty Saying! May it impreſs our very Hearts!—GOD is merciful, and *therefore* rewardeth. From whence it appears, that what We call a Reward, is really an Act of Mercy, rather than of Juſtice. The *Wages* of Sin is Death; but the *Gift* (ſays prove more deſtructive, than the Sin of *Sodom*. This He grounds, not on the Reaſons aſſigned by *Aſpaſio*, but on that which includes them all, and ſurpaſſes them all, even our LORD's own Declaration, *Matt.* x. 15.

* *John* iii. 18, 36. The Words are exceedingly emphatical, and no leſs awful.—Not barely He *ſhall* come into Condemnation, but He (that believeth not) *is* condemned already. Though ever ſo civilized or refined in his outward Converſation, He lies under a Sentence of Death, and is the Object of divine Wrath.—Which not only will *viſit* Him, but *abideth* on Him. So that, where-ever He may be, whatever He may do, the Diſpleaſure of the tremendous JEHOVAH hangs over Him, like a moſt dreadful Sword. Which, if He dies in ſuch a Condition, will inevitably fall upon him, and cut him in Pieces eternally.

† Pſal. lxii. 12.

(ſays the Apoſtle, altering his Style, and making a very obſervable Diſtinction) the Gift of GOD is eternal Life *.

The inſpired Writer ſubjoins, not *for*, but *according to* †, every Man's Works. A Man's Works are the Meaſure, not the meritorious Cauſe. To merit, is the ſole Prerogative of the SAVIOUR's Blood and Obedience. To theſe it is owing, that our imperfect Services are honoured with any Acceptance; much more that they are recompenſed with any Reward.—Though, after a Sinner is juſtified, his own Deeds find Favour in the Sight of the LORD: yet in the Juſtification of Sinners, GOD has no Reſpect to any human Performances. He has no Reſpect to one Man as better than another, but to the Righteouſneſs of his bleſſed SON alone.

Ther. Does not this Expoſition of yours, claſh with that truly generous Acknowledgement of St. *Peter? In every Nation, He that feareth GOD, and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted with Him* ‡. Here, it is undeniably evident, that Acceptance with our CREATOR, is founded on a Man's own Piety, and perſonal Integrity; upon his *fearing GOD*, and *working Righteouſneſs*.

Aſp. Rightly to underſtand this Text, We ſhould enquire into the Circumſtances of the Hiſtory.—The Apoſtle had been ſtrongly and moſt unreaſonably prejudiced in favour of the *Jews*; imagining, that the Salvation

* Rom. vi. 23.

† כמעשהו, not על מעשהו. So the Apoſtle ſpeaks. Every Man ſhall receive his own Reward, κατὰ, not διὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον. 1 Cor. iii. 8.

‡ Acts x. 35.

Salvation of *CHRIST*, like the Diſpenſation of *Moſes*, muſt be confined to his Countrymen.—But now, having conſidered the Purport of his late heavenly Viſion; having compared it with the angelic Meſſage, delivered to *Cornelius*; and being made acquainted with the Character of that valuable Man; He breaks out into this truly catholic Declaration.—

" My Prejudices are vaniſhed. My Sentiments are
" enlarged. From the Inſtance before me, it is *de-*
" *monſtrably* certain; that the HOLY ONE of
" *Iſrael*, does no longer appropriate the Bleſſings
" of his Covenant, to any particular Perſon, Fa-
" mily, or People. *But, in every Nation, He that*
" *feareth GOD; and*, from a Principle of Religion
" in the Heart, *worketh Righteouſneſs* in the Life,
" *is accepted with Him.* So accepted, as to be an
" Object of the Divine Favour, and an Inheritor
" of the Kingdom of Heaven."

This, I think, is the exact Meaning of the Place. And let it be recollected, that no One truly fears, or can poſſibly pleaſe GOD, without Faith *. That no Prayers can be ſet forth as the Incenſe; no Alms can go up as a Memorial before GOD; nor any Sacrifices be acceptable in his Sight, but only through *JESUS CHRIST*. For which Reaſons, it ſeems neceſſary to ſuppoſe, that *Cornelius*, though a Heathen by Birth, had believed through Grace.—Nay; it is evident from the Context, that he had heard of *CHRIST*; had ſome Acquaintance with the Deſign of his Coming, and the Execution of his Office †; enough to be the Ground of

* Heb. xi. 6.

† See *Ver.* 36, 37. Indeed it could hardly be otherwiſe; ſince *Cornelius* was ſtationed at *Cæſarea*; the Reſidence

of a *real*, though perhaps an *infantile* Faith. The Buſineſs of the Apoſtle was, to lead this Convert into the *clear* Light, and *full* Privileges of the Goſpel; to ratify and confirm his Title to them, by the ſacred *Seal* of Baptiſm; and introduce Him, as the *Firſt-fruits* of the Gentiles, into the Chriſtian Church.

Nothing therefore can be concluded from this Paſſage, but that the glad Tidings of *Chriſtianity* are for *Jews*, for *Gentiles*, for all People—that, by Faith, even the Gentiles obtain a good Report, and are enabled to bring forth the Fruits of Righteouſneſs—and Faith, though weak, yet if ſincerely improved, will certainly be increaſed; will "go "from Strength to Strength."

Ther. Does not our SAVIOUR, in deſcribing the Proceſs, and foretelling the Iſſue of the laſt deciſive Tryal, aſſign a Kingdom to the Righteous? Aſſign it in this preciſe View, as a proper Remuneration of *their own* good Works; ſaying, in the moſt expreſs Terms; *Come, ye Bleſſed of My FATHER, inherit the Kingdom prepared for You, from the Foundation of the World:* FOR, *I was an hungred, and Ye gave me Meat*; FOR, *&c.* FOR, *&c.* *

Aſp. Be pleaſed to take notice of the Expreſſion. They are bidden to *inherit*: and what is freer than an Inheritance? Was your Patrimony the Reward of

dence of the *Lord Lieutenant*; and Seat of the *Civil*, as *Jeruſalem* was of the *Eccleſiaſtical* Government. In a Place of ſuch general Reſort, ſo very remarkable an Event could not be unknown. Eſpecially, as *Philip* the Evangeliſt had fixed his Abode in that City. See *Acts* viii. 40.

* Matt. xxv. 30.

of your own Services?—Obſerve alſo the *Reaſon* alledged, and compare it with the Rule of Judicature. *He that believeth*, ſaith the ſupréme JUDGE, *ſhall be ſaved*. This is the avowed, the invariable Standard, by which He proceeds, in adminiſtering everlaſting Judgment. Accordingly, He confers eternal Life on the Righteous, as Perſons intitled to this great Felicity, on the Foot of his own gracious Appointment.

FOR denotes, not the *Foundation*, but the *Evidence*, of their Right. "I acquit ſuch a Perſon," ſays the Arbitrator in a judicial Claim; "*for* the "Witneſſes depoſe, that the Debt is paid." The Depoſition, which anſwers to theſe righteous Acts, is the *Proof*; Payment of the Debt, which correſponds with *CHRIST*'s perfect Obedience, is the *Cauſe* * of the Diſcharge.—*For Ye have given*; Ye have abounded in all Inſtances of Duty to ME, and Love to your Brethren; and thereby have manifeſted Yourſelves true Believers.

It may be farther obſerved, That our LORD ſays not, Ye have done it to your Fellow-creatures, but *to theſe my Brethren* †. He commends not every random Act of Good-nature or Generoſity, but ſuch Kinds of Beneficence only, as carry the *Chriſtian* Stamp; were exerciſed to a Diſciple, "in the "Name of a Diſciple." And *theſe* moſt evidently ſpring

* The Spring is come, ſays the Countryman; *for* the Orchard blooms, and the Black-bird ſings. The Blooming of the Trees, and the Melody of the Birds, were never ſuppoſed to *create*, only to *characterize*, the delightful Seaſon. They are, not its Cauſe, but the Proof of its taking place.

† Matt. xxv. 40.

ſpring from Faith; *theſe* undeniably atteſt its Sincerity.

Ther. Are not theſe Diſtinctions more *ſubtle*, than ſolid?

Aſp. To me they appear in no ſuch Light. If You think otherwiſe, let Us appeal to thoſe excellent Perſons themſelves. The Turn, the very remarkable Turn of their Sentiments, will fully decide our Queſtion.—Do they lay *any Streſs* upon their own religious Duties, and beneficent Deeds? Far from relying on them, farther ſtill from pleading them, they beſtow not a *ſingle Thought* upon them. Having fixed their Hopes on the ROCK of Ages, they forget theſe tranſient Bubbles *. Nay, they *wonder* to hear their exalted MASTER, making any honourable Mention of ſuch defective Services.

O! that We may be enabled, through the whole Courſe of our Lives, to follow the Example of their Piety; and, when We appear before the tremendous Tribunal, to imitate their Humility and Wiſdom! *Their Humility*; in renouncing themſelves, and diſclaiming all Deſert of their own. *Their Wiſdom*; in repoſing their whole Confidence, on the Righteouſneſs of their GOD and SAVIOUR.

Ther. Our LORD makes no Mention of this Doctrine, in his Sermon on the Mount. Whereas, if it had been ſo *very material*, He would at leaſt have touched

* *Bubbles* they are, compared with the all-glorious Obedience of *CHRIST*; or conſidered in reference to the grand Affair of Juſtification before GOD.—But as Bubbles, or watery Veſicles inflated with Air, are the Means of exhibiting the beautiful Colours of the *Rainbow*; ſo theſe Services, though poor and imperfect, *bear Teſtimony* to the Exiſtence of that precious Grace —*Faith*.

touched upon it, in that comprehenſive Summary of true Religion.

Aſp. Our LORD ſays not a Word, concerning the Sacrifice of his Death. Neither is there a Syllable, relating to his Interceſſion for Tranſgreſſors. But are theſe Articles of our *Faith* to be deemed fictitious or ſuperfluous? Becauſe, they are not expreſly inculcated, in that admirable Treatiſe of *practical* Divinity?

However, upon a more attentive Examination, perhaps, We ſhall find the Point moſt ſtrongly *implied*, though not diſtinctly *ſpecified*; its Neceſſity demonſtrated, though its Nature be not explained. —The illuſtrious TEACHER opened his Mouth, and with a peculiar Solemnity ſaid; *Bleſſed are the Poor in Spirit**.—But *Who* are they? Not the Perſons, who ſoothe themſelves with the flattering Conceit of the *Laodicean* Church; *I am rich in* Obedience, *and increaſed in* ſpiritual *Goods* †. Thoſe rather, who ſee their Indigence; bewail their Guilt; and hunger and thirſt after the juſtifying Merit of a REDEEMER. Who, from the very Bottom of an humbled Heart, confeſs; "LORD, I am no "more able to keep every Jot and Tittle of thy "holy Law, than I am capable of atoning for my "innumerable Sins. *CHRIST* muſt be my Righ-"teouſneſs, as well as my Propitiation, or elſe I am "irrecoverably undone."

The inimitable PREACHER farther informs his Hearers; That, *unleſs their Righteouſneſs exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, they ſhall in no wiſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven* ‡.—How muſt Chriſtians exceed the Phariſees? Not only in being

* Matt. v. 3. † Rev. iii. 17. ‡ Matt. v. 20.

being *ſincere*; in having Reſpect unto *all* GOD's Commandments; but alſo in poſſeſſing a *complete* Righteouſneſs. He ſpeaks of that Righteouſneſs, by which Men enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. He ſpeaks of ſuch a Righteouſneſs, as is deſcribed in the following Parts of the Sermon, and exactly correſponds with the Demands of the Law. He ſpeaks of ſuch a Righteouſneſs, as admits of no Failure, but ariſes to the very Summit of Perfection. And where, where will You *find* this Righteouſneſs, unleſs You have Recourſe to the conſummate Obedience of the great MEDIATOR?

Ther. The ORACLE of Heaven, You know, was once conſulted upon that moſt momentous of all Queſtions; How a Perſon may aſcertain his Title to Life and Immortality? And what is the Tenour of the ſacred Reſcript?—We are referred to the Ten Commandments; and, in the moſt explicit Terms, with the moſt peremptory Air, told; *This* DO, *and thou ſhalt live* *.

Aſp. *That* particular Perſon, if You pleaſe, was referred to the Ten Commandments; not *We*, and Mankind in general.—Our LORD, in the preceding Verſes, had informed his Diſciples; That they muſt *receive the Kingdom of GOD*, or the Grace of the Goſpel, and the Bleſſings it propoſes, *as a little Child*. And this can hardly ſignify, as the Reſult or Conſequence of their own Doings.

Ther. "That particular Perſon referred! Not "We and Mankind in general!"—I don't underſtand your Meaning, *Aſpaſio*.

Aſp. You will obſerve then, that our LORD's Reply was not an univerſal Direction, but an Anſwer

* Matt. xix. 17. Luke x. 28.

ſwer *ad Hominem*; peculiarly adapted * to the young Gentleman's Application. Which, however it may be admired, was none of the wiſeſt.—Inſtead of aſking; "How ſhall a *poor guilty* Mortal, who is every "Day offending, obtain Forgiveneſs from the righ-"teous GOD?" Inſtead of ſaying; "How ſhall "I, who am not able to think a *good Thought*, make "ſure my Title to an eternal Weight of Glory?" Our Queriſt demands; *What good Thing ſhall I* DO, *that I may inherit eternal Life?* The Reply proceeds upon the Enquirer's own Principles.—"*If* You "expect Life and Immortality, upon ſuch *legal* "Terms; know, that your Obedience muſt be "nothing leſs, than a *perfect* Conformity to the "divine Law. Perform all its Precepts, in their "utmoſt Extent, and with an unremitted Perſeve-"rance, then"—But alas! ſuch Perfection is too high for fallen Creatures; they cannot attain unto it. Neceſſarily, therefore, muſt they drop all ſuch Pretenſions, and have Recourſe to ſome other Method of Juſtification.

Ther. Why did that "Wonderful COUN-"SELLOR," if ſuch was the Purport of his

* It is delightful to obſerve the πολυποικιλος σοφια, the *curious Variety*, yet the *conſummate Propriety*, of our LORD's Conduct; how exactly this divine Caſuiſt ſuits his Counſel, to the different States, and various Characters of Mankind.—The Secure and Preſumptuous He ſends to the *Law*, that they may be *humbled*. To the Afflicted and Contrite He preaches the *Goſpel*, that they may be *comforted*.—When the *Phariſee*, full of Self-conceit, ſtands up and ſays, *What ſhall I do?* The Anſwer is, *Do all that is commanded*. When the ſinful Woman falls at the REDEEMER's Feet, and ſpeaks in Tears the Guilt of her Life; *Thy Sins are forgiven*, is the gracious Reply.

Anſwer, expreſs Himſelf ſo obſcurely? Why did He not divert his promiſing Scholar from this fruitleſs Attempt; and put Him in the right, the practicable Way of obtaining Salvation?

Aſp. This He did, with the fineſt Addreſs, and in the moſt ſkilful Manner.—Had our LORD affirmed, "You are worldly; You are covetous; "your Riches are your GOD:" ſuch a Charge would, in all Probability, have been as confidently denied, as it was plainly urged. Therefore He brings this ſpecious Hypocrite to *a Teſt**, which could not be evaded, and which was ſure to diſcover the Truth. A Teſt, which laid open the palpable and enormous Defects of his ſo much boaſted Obedience. Which made it appear, that, inſtead of keeping *all* the Commandments, this vain Self-juſticiary had not obeyed the very *firſt*. But, amidſt all his towering Imaginations of Himſelf, had been, and at that very Inſtant was, a ſordid groveling Idolater: who preferred his tranſitory Poſſeſſions on Earth, to an everlaſting Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven.—Could any Expedient be more ſuitable to the Caſe? Or better calculated to reduce Him, intoxicated as He was with Pride, to a ſober humble Mind? To beat Him off from his falſe Foundation, *the Righteouſneſs which is of the Law*; and lead Him to a Reliance on the promiſed, the expected, the preſent MESSIAH?

It

* *Matt.* xix. 21. *If Thou wilt be perfect, ſell all that Thou haſt, and give to the Poor.* This Direction ſeems to be much of the ſame Nature, with that other Part of our LORD's Reply, *If Thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.* Both were perſonal; both occaſional; both adapted to particular Circumſtances. The latter is no more the ſtated evangelical Way to Heaven, than the former is the common indiſpenſable Duty of all Chriſtians.

It puts me in mind of my Friend *Sagacio*'s Conduct. Which ſeems to have ſome Conformity with our LORD's Procedure; and may, poſſibly, tend to illuſtrate its Propriety.—Viſiting one of his unlearned Neighbours, He found Him in Company with a certain talkative Stranger; who was haranguing, at an *extravagant* Rate, on the Wonders of Aſtronomy.—*Sagacio* ſoon perceived, that the chief Furniture of this extraordinary Adept, lay in a little Acquaintance with the technical Terms, and ſomewhat more than a little Share of Aſſurance. How ſhould He bring the ſelf-plumed Sciolift to a little *Modeſty* of Sentiment, and *Decorum* of Converſation? He took leave to aſk, "What the Word *Aſtronomy* might "ſignify?" The Orator was ſtruck dumb in a Moment. He had never informed Himſelf, it ſeems, that Aſtronomy related to the Order and Regulation of the Stars. This ſingle Queſtion taught our minute Philoſopher, more effectually than twenty Lectures on the Subject. It taught Him his *own Ignorance*; and that He had the very Rudiments of his ſo much admired Science ſtill to learn.

Ther. What will You ſay to thoſe famous Paſſages in the Epiſtle of St. *James? By Works a Man is juſtified. Was not Abraham our Father juſtified by Works*?* Can any Words be plainer in their Meaning? Or, can any Meaning be more directly oppoſite to the whole Scope of your Argumentation?

Aſp. This I would ſay, *Theron.*—The Paſſages You quote, when detached from the Context, may *ſeem* inconſiſtent with the Declarations of another Apoſtle. As a Limb, when *wrenched* from its natural Situation,

* Jam. ii. 21, 24.

appears with an Air of Diſproportion. Whereas, reduce the diſlocated Part, and it will recover the Symmetry of its Shape; it will harmonize exactly with the animal Syſtem.—Replace likewiſe theſe Aſſertions; conſider them in *Connection* with the whole Paragraph; and they will be found, if not Uniſons, yet perfect Concords, with the Strain of St. *Paul*'s Teaching.

What is the Drift and Aim of St. *James?* To diſtinguiſh a genuine from an inſincere Faith. Obſerve, how He ſtates the Caſe. It is not, *Though a Man* have *Faith*; but *Though a Man* ſay, *He hath Faith**. This is mentioned, as the Boaſt of ſome hypocritical Profeſſor. So that the Apoſtle is evidently dealing with a *Pretender* to the precious Gift. Accordingly He demands, with great Propriety and Spirit; *Shew* me thy Faith. Prove the Reality of thy Claim. Prove it to *me*, and to the Church; to thy Fellow-creatures, and Fellow-chriſtians. What Thou calleſt thy Faith, if it be not productive of righteous Diſpoſitions and godly Works, We muſt pronounce ſpurious, worthleſs, dead.

Having detected the *Counterfeit*, He proceeds to deſcribe the *Sterling*. The grand Characteriſtic of which is, A Frame of Mind and a Courſe of Action, correſponding with the Doctrine believed. By this Touchſtone the Faith of our renowned Progenitor was tried; and, being tried, was "found unto Praiſe, "and Honour, and Glory." *Was not* Abraham *our Father juſtified by Works, when He had offered* Iſaac *his Son upon the Altar?*—Juſtified! How? As to Acceptance with the Supreme JUDGE? No: this was effected long before *Iſaac* was offered, was born,

* Jam. ii. 14.

born, or conceived in the Womb. But when the believing and juſtified Patriarch, exerciſed that Heroic Act of Self-denial, Reſignation, and Obedience; then He demonſtrated Himſelf, to be a real unfeigned Believer; then his Juſtification was evidenced, to all his Cotemporaries, and to all Generations. *By* this, and ſuch other Works, his *Faith was made perfect* *; anſwered its proper End; appeared to be of the true, the triumphant, the ſcriptural Kind; ſince it overcame the World, overcame Self, and regarded GOD as All in All.

Upon the whole; St. *Paul* ſpeaks concerning the Juſtification of our *Perſons*; St. *James* concerning the Juſtification of our *Faith* †.—St. *Paul* deſcribes the *Manner* of being juſtified, before the all-ſeeing GOD; St. *James* points out the *Proof* ‡ of a juſtified

* Ετελειωθη. In this Senſe, I ſuppoſe, We are to underſtand St. *John*'s Aphoriſm. *He that doeth Righteouſneſs, is righteous*; is undoubtedly juſtified; is righteous before GOD, the Searcher of Hearts. This his holy Life demonſtrates, that He has indeed *believed unto Righteouſneſs.* It juſtifies his Profeſſion of Faith, both from the Charge, and from the Suſpicion of Inſincerity. 1 *John* iii. 7.

† That the Expreſſion uſed by St *James*, ſignifies this *declarative* Juſtification, is plain from 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. Where the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, ſays; εδικαιωθη, *He was juſtified in* or by *the SPIRIT:* that is, He was *declared* to be the true SON of GOD; *manifeſted* on Earth, and *recognized* from Heaven, as the undoubted SAVIOUR of the World.

‡ A very little Reflection, I ſhould imagine, muſt convince every unprejudiced Reader; That St. *James* cannot poſſibly be ſtating the Method of Juſtification, before the infinitely righteous GOD. Becauſe, He never ſo much as mentions the Death of *CHRIST*—*Who made his Soul an Offering for Sin*—*to whom give all the Prophets witneſs, that whoſoever believeth in Him, ſhall receive Re-*

tified State, as it is visible to Men; *Seest Thou.*—The former proceeds from the immaculate Righteousness of *CHRIST*, placed to our Account; the latter consists in the Fruits of Righteousness, adorning our Life.—Rightly understood, therefore, these Passages are not in the least contradictory to the Epistles of St. *Paul*, or to the Scope of my Argumentation. But are a seasonable Caveat and a proper Preservative, against misunderstanding *those*, or perverting *this*.

Ther. I wish, you would read that concise, but judicious Abridgment of true Religion, comprised in the fifteenth *Psalm*. The sacred Penman, for his own and for the Information of all Mankind, asks; *LORD, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle, or who shall rest upon thy holy Hill?* To this most interesting Enquiry, the following Verses are a full and satisfactory Answer. The whole of which turns upon the Discharge of moral Duties; *walking uprightly, and working Righteousness*. Without a Syllable, or a single Hint, concerning the very superior Excellence of Faith, or the extreme Necessity of a vicarious Obedience.

Asp. I have often read, and I well remember, that instructive *Psalm*. And I beg leave to observe, once for all, with relation to such Passages of the Old Testament; That they suppose the Persons, whom they describe, to be convinced of their *natural Corruption*; to be humbled under a Sense of their

mission of Sins—and besides whom, there is no other Name given under Heaven, whereby We can be saved.—Could an Apostle so *absolutely* forget his LORD; and in a Case, where every other inspired Writer acknowledges Him; nay, acknowledges Him to be ALL IN ALL?

their *actual Guilt*; and to live in a conſcientious Obſervance of the *expiatory Sacrifices*. All which had an invariable Reference to *CHRIST*, and derived their whole Virtue from his Mediation.

Would any of the *Jewiſh* Saints, have dared to advance a Plea for eternal Bleſſedneſs, upon the Foot of their own Conformity to ſuch *moral* Directions? Neglecting, at the ſame Time, the Sacrifices of the three great Feſtivals, or a believing Improvement of the daily Oblation.—By no means. They were, and they would acknowledge themſelves, deplorably defective. They would plead the Promiſe of free Grace, and fly to the Blood, which GOD himſelf had appointed *to make an Atonement for their Souls*. —By ſuch Sentiments and ſuch a Conduct, they reduced to Practice the very Eſſence of our Doctrine: diſavowing their own Deeds, however virtuous or religious; and truſting in the Strength of *Iſrael, the LORD our Righteouſneſs*. Who alone fulfilled all the Precepts, contained in this excellent Formulary of Duty. Who was alſo the *Subſtance* of every purifying and of every propitiatory Rite. Whom, therefore, thoſe holy People regarded, as the only Cauſe of Juſtification and Salvation.

Ther. Has not the ſacred Writer expreſly ſaid, at the Cloſe of the *Pſalm? Whoſo* DOETH *theſe Things, ſhall never fall.*

Aſp. He has: And this, I apprehend, is his Meaning.—"Perſons of ſuch a Temper, and ſuch a Prac-
" tice, bear the Marks of GOD's Children, and
" are meet for his Glory. Accordingly, they ſhall
" never fall, either into total Apoſtacy here, or
" final Condemnation hereafter. They are now

" Heirs, and in due Time ſhall be Poſſeſſors, of " his eternal Kingdom."

But you will take notice, that all theſe Duties and Qualifications, only *characterize*, not *conſtitute*, the Inheritor of Heaven.—You will likewiſe advert to another very remarkable Circumſtance in the Deſcription; *He ſetteth not by Himſelf, but is lowly in his own Eyes* *. Or, as the more expreſſive Original ſpeaks, He is *deſpicable* and *vile* in his own Sight. So far from aſpiring to Self-juſtification, that He even condemns and abhors Himſelf. He falls down, as a moſt unworthy Wretch, at the Foot of infinitely free Grace.

Ther. I cannot but think, it is the *current Doctrine* of Scripture, and I am ſure, it is one of the *firſt Principles* which the Light of Nature teaches—That the moſt high GOD muſt neceſſarily love Righteouſneſs, and take pleaſure in the Righteous.

Aſp. If, what is called, the Light of Nature was to publiſh a Goſpel, I believe, it would be formed upon your Plan. It would beſtow Favour only on

* *Pſal.* xv. 4. נבזה בעיניו נמאס. I cannot ſay, that I admire the Bible Tranſlation of this Clauſe: *In whoſe Eyes the vile Perſon is contemptible.* Methinks, it does not favour of the tender and benign Spirit of our Religion, which teaches Us to *honour all Men*; to deſpiſe no one's *Perſon*, but only to deteſt the *Wickedneſs* of the Wicked.

Should the Senſe I have oppoſed, have its Weight; the Senſe I have preferred, is incomparably *weightier*. If, to deſpiſe the Vile, is a religious Act; to think meanly of Ourſelves, is a much more advanced, and a far more difficult Inſtance of true Religion. This is to copy one of the higheſt Patterns of human Excellence; who, notwithſtanding his very ſuperior Attainments, accounted *Himſelf leſs than the leaſt of all Saints*; nay, *the very chiefeſt of Sinners.*

on the *Innocent*, the *Virtuous*, and the *Holy*.—But the Goſpel of *CHRIST* runs in a very different Strain. This brings Pardon for the Condemned, and Bleſſings for the Accurſed. This is Health to the Sick, and Recovery to the Ruined. *The LORD hath anointed me*, ſaith its divine AUTHOR, *to preach good Tidings to the Meek*; to the Poor, the Afflicted, the Miſerable.—*He hath ſent me to bind up the Broken-hearted*; whoſe Miſery is ſo great, that it ſeems to admit of no Relief; but is plunging them in Deſpair, and even breaking their Hearts—*to proclaim Liberty to the Captives*, the wretched Captives of Sin, and Death, and Hell—*and the Opening of the Priſon to them that are bound*; bound in the Chains of Ignorance, Impotence, and Miſery *.

As

* *Iſai.* lxi. 1. Upon this Paſſage of *Iſaiah* I would beg Leave to obſerve; That the Word *Meek* ſeems not to anſwer or convey the Prophet's Idea. By *the Meek*, We are inclined to think of Perſons, endued with that placid and quiet Spirit; which is, in the Sight of GOD, of great Price. This might *diſcourage* many People, who know themſelves to be deſtitute of ſuch a gracious Habit. This might lead Others to ſuſpect, that ſome amiable Diſpoſition is *previouſly* neceſſary, in order to receive the Benefits of redeeming Grace. Which is a very miſtaken, and will prove a moſt forbidding Notion.

The Original עניים ſignifies, in this Place, *The Afflicted*; not thoſe who are beautified with Meekneſs, but thoſe who are oppreſſed with Miſery; ſpiritual Miſery eſpecially; not excepting even thoſe, who are Slaves to their own unruly Paſſions.—The Word עני, from which עניים is derived, expreſſes that bitter Bondage and grievous Oppreſſion, under which the *Iſraelites* groaned in *Egypt*. See *Exod.* iii. 7.

The whole Paragraph is a Deſcription of extreme Wretchedneſs. What can be more diſtreſſed than the Man,

As I am myſelf a moſt unworthy Sinner, You muſt not be diſpleaſed, if I eſpouſe the Cauſe of ſuch unhappy Creatures. Yet, though a Friend of Sinners, I am no Enemy to the Righteous. I entirely agree with my *Theron*, that the moſt High GOD neceſſarily loves Righteouſneſs. Only I want to be informed, *Where* this excellent and lovely Quality is to be found?—Not among the *Gentiles*. They have ſwerved from the Dictates of natural Conſcience.—Not among the *Jews*. They have broke the holy Commandment delivered on Mount *Sinai*.—Not among *Chriſtians*. For, if GOD ſhould enter into Judgment with Us, We could not anſwer Him one of a Thouſand.—In the Kingdom of *Æthiopia*, or in the Country of the *Moors*, where will You find the *native* Whites?

The SAVIOUR of the World, who overlooked nothing valuable, not ſo much as the Widow's Mite, ſaw none among the Race of *Adam*, that were entitled to the Character of *Righteous*. He who gave Himſelf a Ranſom for all, makes no Application to ſuch Perſons *. They lay quite beyond the Line of his Commiſſion.—Why? Becauſe He had a Quarrel with real Godlineſs? Becauſe He ſullenly *diſeſteemed* perſonal Goodneſs? Or was unable to *diſtinguiſh* the Excellency of inherent

Man, whoſe outward Circumſtances are impoveriſhed and *ruined*; whoſe Spirit is *broken* under the Weight of his Calamities; who is taken *Captive* by the Enemy, is thrown into a *Dungeon*, and loaded with *Irons?*—This is the Prophet's Repreſentation; this is the Picture of unconverted Sinners; and to theſe, *to theſe CHRIST JESUS* is a Ranſom, a Deliverer, a Portion.

* *Matt.* ix. 13. *I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

herent Virtue?—No verily. But becauſe He knew, that, amiable as theſe Qualifications are, they have no Exiſtence in the human Heart; till the Sinner, reconciled by his Death, be ſanctified alſo by his SPIRIT.

You remember, perhaps, that remarkable Anſwer, which the *Spartans* returned to a threatening Embaſſy, ſent by *Philip* the formidable King of *Macedon*. Nothing could be more conciſe; and, I think, nothing was ever more ſpirited and ſignificant.

Ther. *Philip* gave them to underſtand by his Ambaſſadors; "That, if He entered their Territories, "He would burn their Towns; put the Inhabi-"tants to the Sword; and ſpread Deſtruction, "where-ever He advanced."—To which inſolent and cruel Menace, the brave *Lacedæmonians* made no other Reply, than—IF.

Is this the Story, to which You refer?

Aſp. The very ſame.—And when you are ſpeaking of human Righteouſneſs, as the Cauſe of our Acceptance with the eternal GOD, I would borrow the Language of a *Spartan*. IF, ſhall be my Reply.—*If*, ſecluſive of the Obedience, and independent on the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, You can furniſh Yourſelf with this Endowment: Or, *if* You can carry your Righteouſneſs to that Perfection, which may equal the Purity of the Law, and comport with the Majeſty of the LAWGIVER: *then* truſt in it; let it be the Ground of your Confidence; and ſeek no better Foundation.

But whoever ſhall, in this Manner, ſeek for his Recommendation to the Favour of GOD; will act like the miſtaken Countryman in *Horace*. Who, being

being unable to ford the River, took up a Reſolution to wait, till the Stream was all run by:

——————————— *At ille*

Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis Ævum *.

Ther. Here, I fanſy, We muſt take leave of your Countryman. If He adheres to his Reſolution, We ſhall find Him in the very ſame Situation, when Breakfaſt is over; and may reſume our Subject, juſt where it is diſcontinued.

* *Vain Man, deſiſt: Such flatt'ring Hopes forego;*
It flows, and flows, and will for ever flow.

DIALOGUE VII.

THERON.

TO me, who have ſpent the greateſt Part of the Winter in *Town*, theſe Scenes of the *Country* are inexpreſſibly pleaſing. Take, who will, the gilded Saloon, and the ſilken Settee; ſo long as I can ſhelter myſelf under the Canopy of ſuch a ſpreading Beech, and uſe one of its coarſe, miſ-ſhapen Roots for my Seat.

'Tis true, We ſee no longer thoſe ſplendid Brocades, and elegant Toupees, which diſtinguiſh the *Park* and the *Mall*.—But we have, full in our View, a Multitude of honeſt Ruſtics; purſuing their chearful Labours in yonder *Meadow*. Some, mowing the luxuriant Herbage. Some, ſpreading it to the Sun, or raiſing it into regular Cocks. Others, loading their Waggons with the Hay, or clearing the Ground with their Rakes. The Ground, cleared of its ſoft Incumbrance, appears freſh and green, like another Spring. While the Exhalations of the tedded Graſs, floating in the Air, give a rural Per-

fume to the Gale.—And which, my *Aſpaſio*, which are the moſt valuable Objects? The *little Labourers* of the Hive, that enrich themſelves and regale their Maſters? Or the *gay Flutterers* of the Garden, whoſe whole Life is nothing but Sport; and their higheſt Character is, to be inſignificantly pretty?

Aſp. I underſtand you, *Theron*, and have the Satisfaction to agree with You.—In this Retirement, We hear none of the wanton and corrupting Airs of the *Opera*; no, nor the majeſtic and ennobling Melody of the *Oratorio* *.—But We have a Band of Muſic, ſtationed in the Grove; and a Concert of native Harmony, warbling from the Boughs. We are entertained with the Muſic, which charmed the human Ear, long before † *Jubal* found out his Inſtruments; and Thouſands of Years before *Handel* compoſed his Notes.—The Bulfinch, and a Multitude of little tuneful Throats, ſtrike the Key. The Thruſh below, and the Sky-lark reſponſive from above, *diverſify* and *exalt* the Strain. The Blackbird, ſomewhat like the ſolemn Organ, with Notes perfectly mellow, and gracefully ſonorous, crowns the Choir. While the Turtle's melancholy Voice, and the murmuring Water's plaintive Tone, *deepen* and *complete* the univerſal Symphony.

This

* *Majeſtic* and *ennobling*.—This, I think, is the true Character, and expreſſes the real Tendency, of the *Oratorio*. Nevertheleſs, it may not be improper to obſerve; that if We carry a trifling or irreligious Spirit to the Entertainment; if We attend to the muſical Airs, but diſregard thoſe ſacred Truths, which enter into the Compoſition; ſuch a Behaviour will be little better than a *Profanation* of holy Things. I fear, it will be one Species of *taking* GOD's adorable and glorious Name *in vain*.

† Gen. iv. 21.

This Muſic conſtituted the firſt Song of Thankſgiving, and formed the firſt vocal Praiſe, which the All-gracious CREATOR received, from his new-made World. This is neither the Parent of Effeminacy, nor a Pander for Vice; but refines the Affections, even while it amuſes the Imagination.

Ther. Yes; all the Entertainments of Nature, are calculated to ſecure our Innocence, as well as to gratify our Fancy. And what is another very agreeable Circumſtance, theſe Gratifications which afford the ſublimeſt Pleaſure, are exhibited *gratis*. While thoſe, which enervate the Mind, and debauch the Affections, muſt be *dearly purchaſed*.—Every one cannot gain Admittance into the Boxes or the Pit, when ſome celebrated *Tragedy* is brought upon the Stage. But every one may behold the beauteous Exhibitions of *Spring*, and the finiſhed Productions of *Autumn*. All may contemplate the Machinery of Nature, and the Wonders of Creation. Thereby enjoying a far more exquiſite Amuſement, without any of the Guilt, or any of the Danger.

The Inhabitants of yonder Villages, have never beheld the ſplendid Proceſſion, which ſolemnizes the Coronation of a Monarch; nor the *gaudy Illuminations*, which diſtinguiſh the Anniverſary of his Birth. But they ſee, almoſt every Morning, a much nobler Spectacle diſplayed in the Eaſt. They ſee the great *Ruler* of the *Day*, or rather the Envoy from Day's eternal SOVEREIGN, making his Entry amidſt the Spaces of the Sky.—The Heavens are ſtrewed with Colours, which outvie the Pinks and Carnations. The Graſs is decked with Dew-drops, and every Plant is ſtrung, as it were, with Pearls. All

around the Darkneſs retires, and ſweet refreſhing Gales ariſe.—At length the magnificent Luminary appears. And what is all the oſtentatious Pomp of Kings? What is all the Glitter of the moſt brilliant Courts? Compared with his tranſcendent Luſtre? —This Spectacle we may behold, without Loſs of Time, or Prejudice to Health. Nay, We cannot behold it, without *improving* one, and *redeeming* the other. So beneficial are even the Pleaſures, which Nature yields! So ſerviceable the very Diverſions, to which ſhe invites!

Aſp. Thus gracious is the Almighty MAKER, in the Conſtitution of *material* Things. The Subſtantial and the Valuable, are open to every One; are acceſſible by all. Only the Tinſel and the Trappings, are the Property of a Few; the poor Prerogative of Wealth.

No leſs gracious is GOD, in the Diſpoſal of *ſpiritual* Favours. Theſe, though infinitely more excellent, yet are equally free. We are invited to *buy them, without Money, and without Price* *.—What do you give for the Benefits of the riſing Sun, or the Delights of this rural Melody? The Caſe is much the ſame, with regard to the Righteouſneſs, by which We are juſtified, and all the Bleſſings of Salvation.

Ther. This brings to our Remembrance the Countryman, whom we left on the Banks of the River. And, for aught I can ſee, *Theron* and the Ruſtic are pretty much upon a footing. The firſt, as far from acceding to your Notions; as the laſt, is from gaining his Point.

Aſp.

* Iſai. lv. 1.

Asp. Have you any Objection, *Theron*, to these Gifts of Nature; because, they are neither purchased by your Money, nor produced by your own Toil?

Ther. But who can ever expect to obtain Pardon, and Peace, and eternal Salvation, at so cheap a Rate? It seems to be all Delusion, *Aspasio*.

Asp. So cheap! Then You would pay somewhat, I perceive, by way of Price.—But give me leave to ask; What Price did you pay to GOD your MAKER, for fashioning You in your Mother's Womb? What Price have you paid to GOD your PRESERVER, for upholding You ever since You was born? Or what Price do You think of paying to GOD the supreme PROPRIETOR, for the Ground, on which You tread; for the Air, in which You breathe; for the Light, by which You see? Just the *same* Price must You advance to GOD your SAVIOUR, for all his justifying Merits.

Both *these* and *those* proceed from the same BENEFACTOR. They are all absolutely necessary, either for the Welfare of the Body, or the Happiness of the Soul. And they are all vouchsafed on the same Terms; or rather, in the same Way of Sovereign Bounty. For thus saith the Prophet; *His Going-forth*, in the Dispensation of the Gospel, *is prepared as the Morning*. *CHRIST*, with all his precious Privileges, *shall come unto Us as the Rain**.—As freely, as the Light shines, or the Showers fall. However, if You are acquainted with a different, or a better Way, be so good as to communicate your Knowledge.

Ther. Some, You may observe, expect Salvation, on account of their *inoffensive* Behaviour. They live peaceably. They do no Harm to their Neighbours.

* Hos. vi. 3.

They are guilty of no groſs Offence againſt GOD. And why ſhould they not hope to obtain his Favour?—They apprehend, the Prophet *Samuel* eſtabliſhes their Hope, when He makes this ſolemn Appeal; *Whoſe Aſs have I taken? Whoſe Ox have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded*?*—Nay, they imagine, that our LORD himſelf has authorized their Expectation, by giving this Character of *Nathaniel*; *An Iſraelite indeed, in whom is no Guile†.*—A Freedom from outward Injuſtice and inward Hypocriſy, is all the Qualification applauded in the one Caſe, avowed in the other.

Aſp. This negative Goodneſs (if it deſerves to be called Goodneſs) was a Plea for the empty *Phariſee.* But None, I preſume, would chooſe to be aſſociated with *ſuch* a Companion, either in Character Here, or in Condition Hereafter.

Samuel, in the Place You mention, is vindicating Himſelf, only to his *Fellow-creatures*, and only in the Capacity of a *Magiſtrate.* He ſpeaks not of his Juſtification before the JUDGE of Quick and Dead. This, He well knew, muſt be derived from another Source, and muſt reſt upon a firmer Bottom.

The Iſraelite without Guile, was a Perſon, who not only abſtained from every Sin, but performed every Duty; and without any *wilful Neglect* of the One, or any *allowed Indulgence* of the Other. This Inſtance, therefore, will by no means prove the Sufficiency of your negative Righteouſneſs. Which ſeems to have juſt the ſame Degree of Excellency, as a Fountain that never iſſues in Water, or as a Cloud that never deſcends in Rain‡.

Ther.

* 1 Sam. xii. 3. † John i. 47.

‡ *Vel Lyra quæ refticet, vel qui non tenditur Arcus.*
CLAUDIAN.

Ther. In this Particular, *Aſpaſio*, your Sentiments are mine.—But I would add *Morality* to Civility; the virtuous to the inoffenſive Converſation. And if We not only ceaſe to do Evil, but learn to do well: if we uſe Temperance, exerciſe Charity, and keep all the Commandments to the *beſt of our Power*, is not this a ſufficient Foundation for our Hope?

Aſp. Yes, *Theron*; if, as you add Morality to your Civility, you add *Perfection* to both. Otherwiſe you muſt be ranked, not among the Claimants, but among the Delinquents. You have no Title to a Reward, but ſtand in need of Pardon.

It is a Principle of Juſtice, founded on the unalterable Conſtitution of Things, That the Debtor be acquitted, when He has paid the Debt. But ſuppoſing Him, inſtead of Gold to bring Iron; inſtead of Talents to return Pence; inſtead of defraying, to increaſe the Score daily; can He *then* reaſonably expect, or legally claim a Diſcharge?

With reſpect to ſuch an Obedience, We may paſs our Verdict in the figurative, but very expreſſive Language of *Iſaiah*: *The Bed is ſhorter, than that a Man can ſtretch Himſelf on it; and the Covering narrower, than that He can wrap Himſelf in it* *. It can neither give Reſt to the alarmed Conſcience, nor afford Protection to the guilty Soul. If We have nothing better to plead, We ſhall not be able to lift up our Heads, in the laſt deciſive Judgment; but *muſt enter into the Rock, and hide Ourſelves in the Duſt, for Fear of the* LORD, *and for the Glory of his Majeſty* †.

Ther. We will go a Step farther, and take in the Exerciſe of *Devotion*. We will read GOD's Word;

* Iſai. xxviii. 20. † Iſai. ii. 10.

pray to his Divine MAJESTY; and regularly attend on his public Worſhip.—Here now, are ſocial Accompliſhments and moral Virtues, completed by the Performance of religious Duties.

Aſp. *Completed!*—I fear, that Expreſſion will ſcarcely abide the Teſt of a ſingle Query. Have You then performed all your Duties, with that ardent Love of GOD, and undivided View to his Glory? With that adoring Gratitude to the bleſſed *JESUS*, and that child-like Dependence on his SPIRIT? Which the Nature of Things requires, and the Scriptures of Truth enjoin?—If not; your Duties, be they moral, or religious, or both, are far from being complete. Nay; they are utterly defective; and, for that Reaſon, abſolutely inſufficient for your Juſtification. They are clipped or ſophiſticated Coin. And will that be *current* in the World of Glory?

Ther. Allowing them to be defective, they are at leaſt *ſincere*. And though not free from all Alloy, yet if they bear the Image and Superſcription of Integrity, why ſhould they be rejected, as "reprobate "Silver *?" Why ſhould they not obtain the Currency, You mention?

Aſp. "Alas!"—ſays a judicious and admired Writer—"The Imperfections of our beſt Services "daily *forfeit* the Bleſſings of *Time*. How impoſ-"ſible then is it, that the Sincerity of them, amidſt "ſo many Frailties and Defects, ſhould *purchaſe* "the Glories of *Eternity!*"

Ther. Be your Writer ever ſo judicious, I can confront Him with Others, equally capable of judging, and diametrically oppoſite in Opinion.—What ſays that wiſe and brave Man, the Succeſſor of *Moſes*, and Generaliſſimo

* Jer. vi. 30.

Generaliſſimo of the Armies of *Iſrael? Joſhua*, I am ſure, declares Himſelf on my Side. *Fear the LORD, and ſerve Him in Sincerity* *, is his laſt ſolemn Charge to the People.—Even the great Apoſtle, on a Review of his Miniſtry, makes it Matter of Self-gratulation, That He *had his Converſation in godly Sincerity* †.

Aſp. You have quoted the Charge, delivered by the Servant, be pleaſed to recollect the Proteſtation, made by the Maſter: *Not for thy Righteouſneſs*, ſays *Moſes, or for the Uprightneſs of thy Heart, doſt Thou go to poſſeſs their Land* ‡. Even an earthly *Canaan* was not given to the *Iſraelites*, as the Reward of their own, either outward Obedience, or inward Sincerity. Much leſs can We expect the Kingdom of Immortality, on Account of any Uprightneſs of our Intentions, or Piety of our Actions.

However, as the Doctrine of Sincerity is the favourite and the faſhionable Tenet, I will conform a little to the Taſte in Vogue. You ſhall have no Reaſon to complain, That I am either a *Cynic* or a *Stoic* ‖.—Let it ſuffice Us to be ſincere. Only let Us refer Ourſelves to the Apoſtle, for a Deſcription of this darling Qualification. *That Ye may be ſincere, being filled with the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by JESUS CHRIST, unto the Praiſe and Glory of GOD* §.

Here are three Properties of acceptable Sincerity.—It muſt bear Fruits, *the Fruits of Righteouſneſs*; and bear them abundantly, ſo that We may be *filled* with them.—The Branch and the Fruits muſt derive,

* Joſh. xxiv. 14. † 2 Cor. i. 12. ‡ Deut. ix. 5.

‖ The *Cynic* had no Complaiſance, the *Stoic* was quite inflexible.

§ Phil. i. 10, 11.

that its Vigour, *theſe* their Flavour, and both of them their very Being, from the all-ſupporting, all-ſupplying Root *CHRIST JESUS*.—Then, inſtead of terminating in Self-juſtification, they muſt redound to the Honour of GOD. It is not ſaid, Theſe ſhall *juſtify* You, but theſe ſhall *glorify* your FATHER which is in Heaven.

This Kind of Sincerity, can never be too highly eſteemed, nor too zealouſly encouraged. But this, You will obſerve, flows from the Grace of *CHRIST*, and iſſues in the Glory of GOD. Therefore does but very poorly atteſt, either the Sufficiency of *human Ability*, to perform good Works; or the Sufficiency of *human Works*, to win the Prize of our High Calling.

Ther. Do you then exclude all Works? Will You make a mere Nothing, both of *our* moral Endowments, and of *your* evangelical Obedience?

Aſp. They are excluded, both the one and the other, from all Share in juſtifying Us. Yet not by me, but by an Authority, to which there can be no Objection, from which there lies no Appeal. Speaking of Salvation, thus ſaith the Wiſdom of GOD; *Not of Works*—

Ther. Works of the *ceremonial* Law, I ſuppoſe. Theſe, we all acknowledge, are, under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, as a Bond canceled, or as an Act repealed. But ſure You will aſſign a better Office, ſure You will allow a nobler Character, to that Courſe of Obedience, which proceeds upon the Obligations of Morality; nay more, is regulated by the Commands of *CHRIST*.

Aſp.

Asp. St. *Paul* will allow it no such Office, as that for which my *Theron* is pleading. *Ye are saved*, says the Apostle. Ye are delivered from Wrath, reconciled to GOD, and made Heirs of his Kingdom.—How? *By Grace, through Faith**. *Grace*, like a magnificent Sovereign, from the Riches of his own Bounty, and without any Respect to human Worthiness, *confers* the glorious Gift. *Faith*, like an indigent Petitioner, with an empty Hand, and without any Pretence to personal Desert, *receives* the heavenly Blessing.

Both Grace and Faith stand in direct Opposition to Works; *all* Works whatever. Whether they be Works of the Law, or Works of the Gospel: Exercises of the Heart, or Actions of the Life; done in a State of Nature, or done under the Influences of the SPIRIT; they are all, and every of them, *equally* set aside in this great Affair.

Ther. Whence does it appear, that the Bill of Exclusion is thus extensive, or rather quite *unlimited?*

Asp. From the Reason assigned, and from the Caution suggested.

From the Reason assigned—*For We are his Workmanship.* We Believers. Of *such* Persons, and of *their* Obedience, the Apostle is speaking.—*Created in CHRIST JESUS unto good Works.* We are regenerated, and spiritually enlivened, not because We *have* performed them, but that We *may* perform them.—Not with any View of being justified by them, but only *that We may walk in them*; till We receive the End of our Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls.

From

* Eph. ii. 8.

From the Caution ſuggeſted—*Leſt any Man ſhould boaſt*. That all Pretence of Glorying may be cut off from Man. Cut off from *Gentile*, from *Jew*, from *Chriſtian*; without any Exception, or any Difference. Which could not be effected, if either moral Virtues, or *Moſaic* Ceremonies, or evangelical Duties, were admitted to bear a Part in juſtifying Sinners.—*Leſt any Man ſhould boaſt*: that the whole Honour of obtaining Salvation, may be appropriated to HIM, who *hid not his Face from Shame and Spitting*. And is He not worthy, infinitely worthy, to receive this unrivaled Honour, as a Recompence for his unparalleled Humiliation?

Ther. All our good Works, we allow, are recommended by *CHRIST*. They prevail for our Juſtification, only through his Merits. So that We ſtill depend upon the REDEEMER. And, by this means, pay Him the higheſt Honour.

Aſp. Depend upon the REDEEMER! No, my dear Friend. You act like the Perſons, deſcribed by *Iſaiah*; *We will eat our own Bread, and wear our own Apparel, only let Us be called by thy Name* *. Whereas, Faith addreſſes itſelf to *CHRIST*, in the very Reverſe of this Language; *Thou haſt Cloathing, be Thou our Ruler, and let this Ruin be under thy Hand* †. 'Tis thine, 'tis thine alone, to retrieve our deſperate Affairs, and conſtitute Us righteous before GOD.

In Te tota Domûs Spes inclinata recumbit.

Depend upon the REDEEMER! No, You rely upon your own pious Acts, and moral Qualifications. They, *they* are your grand Recommendation.

* Iſai. iv. 1. † Iſai. iii. 6.

dation. While the Office, consigned over to the Divine *JESUS*, is nothing more than to be (as it were) *Master of the Ceremonies*. He has the Credit of introducing your fine Accomplishments, with a kind of graceful Air.—But is *this* an Office suited to his incomparable Dignity? Was it for *this*, that He bowed the Heavens, and partook of our Nature? Was it for *this*, that He became subject to the Law, and obedient unto Death? *Only* for *this*, that He might usher in our own Endowments, with a Plume and a Scarf?—Surely, *Theron*, You can never entertain such low Thoughts of the incarnate GOD, and his mediatorial Undertaking.

Ther. Neither can I entertain such *low* and *vilifying* Thoughts of our own virtuous Attainments. They distinguish Persons of Eminence and Worth, from the sordid Wretch and execrable Villain; just as the noble Faculty of Reason, distinguishes the Man from the Brute.

Asp. To deny good Works the Merit of justifying Us, is very different from vilifying them.—You are going to build a new House, *Theron*. Pray, do You intend to hew your Timber, from the flimsy Tendrils of the Vine?

Ther. No, certainly *.

Asp. Because You don't think those feeble Shoots proper, to form the Beams, and support the Roof, of your intended Edifice; do You, therefore, slight them, depreciate them, or disallow their Usefulness?—By no means.—They may *beautify* your Walls, with

* *No, certainly.*—Perhaps, it may be worth our while to observe; That this is the Meaning of a very *obsolete* Expression, which occurs in our Translation of (ουκ οἶδα) *Luke* xvii. 9. *I trow not.*

with their ornamental Spread; and *enrich* your Deſert, with their delicious Fruit. This is an Office, ſuitable to the Nature of the Plant: and from this it receives ſufficient Eſtimation, without pretending to the Honours of the Oak.

Virtuous Attainments, I own, are a conſiderable Diſtinction, in the preſent State of Things. And, what is a higher Encomium (I ſhall now out-ſhoot You, in your own Bow) they will diſtinguiſh the true Believer from the hypocritical Profeſſor, even at the great Tribunal.—But let them be content with their Province, and not intrude upon the SAVIOUR's Prerogative. To *effect* Juſtification, be *his*: to *diſcriminate* the Juſtified, *theirs*.—Neither let them chuſe their Poſſeſſors, with a vain Conceit of themſelves. Who, though they were meek as *Moſes*, holy as *Samuel*, and wiſe as *Daniel*, muſt confide in nothing, but the boundleſs Mercies of the LORD; and plead nothing, but the infinite Merits of his *CHRIST*.

This is the Theology, both of the *Pſalmiſt*, and of St. *Paul*. They derive the Bleſſedneſs promiſed in Scripture, not from the ſhallow Stream of human Accompliſhments, but from the inexhauſtible Ocean of divine Grace. *Bleſſed is He*, who worketh Righteouſneſs, and abſtaineth from Sin, that He may be juſtified? No ſuch Thing is affirmed. But—bleſſed is He *whoſe Unrighteouſneſſes are forgiven, and whoſe Sins are covered**.

Ter. Will *Aſpaſio* then, like many of our modern Diſputants, *mutilate* the holy Word? Induſtriouſly diſplay, what ſeems to ſtrengthen his Argument; but artfully ſecrete, what tends to overthrow his Scheme?

How

* Pſal. xxxii. 1. Rom. iv. 7.

How could You forget, or why ſhould You ſuppreſs, the following Clauſe? *And in whoſe Spirit there is no Guile.*—Was You afraid, it would demoliſh your Opinion; and point out an *upright, honeſt* Mind, as the Cauſe of this Bleſſedneſs?

Aſp. Far was I, my dear *Theron*, from any ſuch groundleſs Apprehenſions; and equally far from all ſuch deluſory Deſigns. *Shall I talk deceitfully for GOD*?* His ſacred Cauſe can never need it; and his exalted Majeſty infinitely diſdains it. No: I would condemn my Tongue to eternal Silence, rather than ſpeak a Syllable, either to conceal, or diſguiſe the Truth.

Moſt readily We will admit the Sentence You mention: *In whoſe Spirit there is no Guile.* It is evident from the *Context*, That theſe Words are not deſcriptive of an unblameable Perſon, in whoſe Heart and Converſation there *is* no Iniquity; but of a penitent Sinner, whoſe Mouth freely *confeſſes* the Iniquity of them both. Confeſſes, without any Reſerve, or the leaſt Attempt to paliiate.—Which, inſtead of invalidating, corroborates my Argument. Since, according to your own Allegation, the higheſt Merit conſiſts, in a free Acknowledgment of Sin, or a total Renunciation of all Worthineſs.

Ther. When We add Confeſſion, and join *Repentance*, to all our other Works. When We lament our Deficiencies, and implore Forgiveneſs. Surely, this muſt be available with a merciful GOD, and cannot but entitle Us to the Happineſs of Heaven.

Aſp. How ſtrange does it ſound, at leaſt in my Ears, for poor, miſerable, guilty Creatures, to talk of entitling themſelves to the Happineſs of Heaven, by

* Job xiii. 7.

by any Deeds of their own! When it is owing wholly to GOD's rich *forbearing Mercy*, that they have not, long ago, been tranſmitted to Hell: owing wholly to GOD's free *preventing Grace*; that they are, at any Time, enabled to think a good Thought.

But not to enlarge upon this Conſideration.—I would aſk, Whether thoſe penitential Exerciſes were attended with a hearty Deteſtation of Sin, and an utter Abhorrence of the Sinner?—If they *were*; You would then renounce Yourſelf univerſally. You would never think of placing the leaſt Dependence on any Thing of your own; nay, You would even *lothe Yourſelf in your own Sight**.—If they *were not*; then your very Repentance falls ſhort, and is to be repented of. It is as if *One came to the Preſſat, to draw out fifty Veſſels, and there were but twenty* †. It is, if I may continue the Prophet's Metaphor, *the ſcant Meaſure*; *which*, in this your ſpiritual Traffic, as well as in the Affairs of ſecular Commerce, *is abominable* ‡.

Or, ſhould your Repentance be without a Failure, and without a Flaw; I muſt ſtill ſay to my Friend, as our LORD replied to the young Ruler; *One Thing thou lackeſt*. In all theſe Acts of Humiliation, You have only taken Shame to Yourſelf. Whereas, a Righteouſneſs is wanting, which may magnify the Law, and make it honourable.—Should GOD, without inſiſting upon this, pardon and reward, He would not act according to his glorious Character; nor be, at once, *a juſt GOD, and a SAVIOUR* ‖.—And if You can find this Righteouſneſs, *either in the*

* Ezek. xxxvi. 31. † Hag. ii. 16. ‡ Mic. vi. 10. ‖ Iſai. xlv. 21.

the Depth, or in the Height above; in any Perſon or any Object, ſave only in the Obedience and Death of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, I retract whatever I have advanced.

Ther. A Preacher, and an Author, have lately aſſured Us; That We are to be "accepted of GOD, "and ſaved by our own Obedience."—Another has told Us; "That a Chriſtian may ſecure to Himſelf "everlaſting Happineſs by his own Obedience."—If theſe Things are true, I need not ſcruple to repeat my Aſſertion, and adhere to my Opinion; That our own Duties, eſpecially when accompanied with Repentance, are a *real* and *proper* Foundation for Life eternal.

Aſp. If theſe Things are true, the Apoſtle *Paul* was under a great Miſtake; when, treating of *CHRIST* and his Merits, He ventured to aſſert; *Other Foundation can no Man lay, ſave that which is laid, even JESUS CHRIST**. And the Apoſtle *Peter* (to ſpeak in the ſofteſt Terms) forgot what He was about, when He ſo confidently averred; *There is no other Name under Heaven, given among Men, whereby We muſt be ſaved.*—But the real Truth is, ſuch Preachers and ſuch Authors darken, if not extinguiſh, the Grace of *CHRIST*. And we are as much obliged to them, for their Service; as if they had attempted to ſow up the *Veil*, that was rent in twain; and to ſhut the *Holy of Holies*, which was opened by our REDEEMER's Death.

Ther. If You will not credit either of our modern Preachers, I can produce a Deciſion, made by one of the moſt antient and authoritative *Synods*; *Then hath GOD alſo to the Gentiles granted Repentance unto Life.*

* 1 Cor. iii. 11.

*Life**.—Repentance unto Life, is *their* unanimous Voice, and *my* unexceptionable Voucher.

Asp. I can eaſily gueſs the Aſſembly, to which You refer. But I can hardly grant it the venerable Name of a *Synod*. It conſiſted of ſome *Judaizing* Converts, *They that were of the Circumciſion*. Who adhered, with a tenacious and bigotted Zeal, to the *Moſaic* Rites.—However, though I might ſcruple my *Theron*'s Appellation, I readily acquieſce in *their* Determination.

It is not ſaid, Thoſe *Gentiles* were penitent, and *therefore* GOD granted them Life. This ſhould have been the Language of the Aſſembly, in order to eſtabliſh my Friend's Way of Thinking.—On the contrary, they were *dead* in Sin. GOD, of his free Goodneſs, granted them Repentance. Which is both the Beginning, and a ſubſtantial Part of *true* Life: even of that Life, which is founded on Juſtification, is carried on by Sanctification, and completed in Glory.

I would farther obſerve; That Repentance is a *Turning of the Heart*. And, when it is Repentance unto Life, it is a Turning of the Heart from every other Object, to the great and ſole Fountain of Good, *CHRIST JESUS*†.—Were Men Slaves to Senſuality? When they repent, they are turned to *CHRIST*, for refined Deſires and heavenly Affections. Were they wont to confide in themſelves, and their own Works? As ſoon as they truly repent, they turn to *CHRIST* for a better Righteouſneſs; and, thereby, for everlaſting Acceptance with GOD.—In ſhort; they turn from every falſe Confidence, as well as from every evil Way. Aſhur *ſhall*

* Acts xi. 18. † Acts xix. 4.

ſhall not ſave us, is their fixed Reſolution. They look, not to their own Tears or Humiliation; not to their own Duties or Graces; but they *look for the Mercy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, unto eternal Life* *.

Ther. Suppoſe, it ſhould be wrong, to expect ſuch a vaſt Reward, as the inconceivable Glories of Heaven, on Account of our own Duties: Yet, to ſet them wholly aſide; to allow them *no* Influence at all; not ſo much as the *leaſt* Co-operation, in turning the Scale; this is an Exceſs on the other Hand. If the former is *Preſumption*, the latter is *Fanaticiſm*.

Aſp. When Lord *B——n* was ſhewn a famous Quadrangle in *Oxford*, viewing one Side, He cried out with Rapture; "Surely, I am in *Italy*. All "is ſo graceful and delicate!" Viewing the other Side, He acknowledged with Regret; "I am cer-"tainly in *England*. All is ſo coarſe and heavy!" —When I ſee the New Teſtament in every one's Hand, and read the Articles of our public Faith, I am ready to fanſy myſelf in one of the pure *reformed* Churches. But when I hear the Diſcourſe of ſerious People, and examine their Sentiments, I am forced to confeſs my Miſtake. I cannot but imagine, that I am among the backſliding Churches of *Galatia*.

Ther. Why among the Churches of *Galatia?*

Aſp. Becauſe they, like the Generality of modern Chriſtians, conſidered the Work and Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, as too weak or ſcanty a Bottom, whereon to ſtand before GOD. They ſuſpected it, as a Man would ſuſpect the Propoſal, to venture Himſelf on the Waves of the Ocean, in a Baſket of

* Jude 21.

Rushes. They could not bear to think, that all their Duties, Services, and Performances of the Law, should be utterly set at nought. Should have no Influence at all, in turning the Scale—But does the Apostle *approve their Saying?* No; He declares, *this their Way was their Folly.*

You are pleased to mention *Fanaticism.* A Word, which I do not thoroughly understand. Neither is it of much Significancy, to enter upon the Disquisition of an obnoxious Term. I would only maintain; That, on Us unworthy Sinners, whatever is bestowed by the righteous GOD; is bestowed, not as a Debt * to our Works, but as the Donation of pure *Grace.* And if this be Fanaticism, I plead guilty to the Charge. I glory in my Shame.

Ther. I think, it is sufficiently of Grace; if We acknowledge good Works, to be wrought by the Assistance of the Divine SPIRIT; and then admitted, together with our SAVIOUR's Merits, as a Recommendation to the divine Favour.

Sip. The *Pharisee* could make his Acknowledgements, for the divine Assistance. *GOD, I thank Thee,* was his Language. Yet, this did not exempt Him from the Charge of *Pride*, nor secure Him from the Sin of *Boasting.*—Besides; if good Works are wrought by the Operation of the Divine SPIRIT, they draw a Bill upon our Gratitude, not upon the Bank of Heaven. They render Us the *obliged*, not the *deserving* Party. To think or teach otherwise, is errant

* *Bestowed* as a *Debt*, is, I must allow, somewhat like Jargon. But, perhaps, *Jargon* and *Inconsistency*, may not be without their *Propriety* in this Place. As they tend to shew the Genius of *that* Doctrine which would connect such contradictory Ideas.

errant *Popery* *, however it may lurk under a Veil of *Proteſtantiſm*.

You bring to my Mind a memorable Story.—Two Perſons were traveling together, in the Deſarts of *Arabia*. The one utterly unarmed; the Other wore a Sword, and carried a Muſket. As the Place was exceedingly dangerous, the latter, ſolicitous for the Safety of his Companion, makes Him a Preſent of his Fire-arms.—Which was no ſooner done, than a Lion eſpies them, and advances fiercely towards them. The foremoſt diſcharges his Piece, and wounds their horrid Aggreſſor. The Wound, neither killing, nor diſabling, only enrages the Monſter. He ſeizes the unfortunate Markſman, and is upon the Point to tear Him Limb from Limb. His Fellow-traveler flies to his Succour; ſnatches up the Carbine, which dropt from the other's Hand; and fells the ravenous Beaſt to the Ground. Then, drawing his Sword, ſtabs him to the Heart, and reſcues his Friend.

The Lion thus ſlain, they take off the Skin. Which, He who ſlew the lordly Savage, claims as his own. "No, ſays his *grateful* Friend, as You "did Part of the Execution with *my* Weapon, I "inſiſt upon Half of the ſhaggy Spoil. I expect "Satisfaction likewiſe for the Loſs of my Piece, "which You broke in the Encounter."—To ob-

* *Good Works*, ſays a Champion for the Church of *Rome*, *are* Mercatura Regni cœleſtis, *the Price We pay*, or *the Commodity We barter, for the Kingdom of Heaven.*—Another Zealot of the ſame Communion declares; Cœlum gratis non accipiam, *It ſhall never be ſaid, that I receive Eternal Life, merely as a Matter of Alms.*—So ſpeaks *He!* But, bleſſed be GOD, *We* have not ſo learned *CHRIST.*

tain both, He commences a Law-ſuit againſt that generous Aſſociate, who not only *gave* Him the Weapon, but *ſaved* the Proſecutor from the very Jaws of Deſtruction.

Ther. Truly, if I had been Judge, I ſhould, without any Heſitation, have determined ſuch a Cauſe. Inſtead of *Coſts* and *Damages* for my Plaintiff, I ſhould have tranſmitted the diſingenuous, ſhameleſs Wretch to the Pillory.

Aſp. I believe, all the World would applaud your Sentence.—Only be pleaſed to remember, that the Procedure, on which You ſo juſtly animadvert, is the *very Picture* of our exceſſive Unreaſonableneſs; If We preſume to write ourſelves Creditors, and the Divine BEING Debtor; becauſe, He has delivered Us from the Bondage of Corruption, and enabled Us to perform the Duties of Godlineſs *.

Theron pauſed; as ſomewhat ſtruck by the Repreſentation. After a ſhort Interval, *Aſpaſio* reſumed the Diſcourſe.

Believe me, my dear Friend, Salvation, both in the Root and all its Branches, is *entirely* of Grace. Or elſe believe me, for the many cogent Teſtimonies of Scripture; which moſt circumſtantially aſcertain this fundamental Truth.

Ther. Pray, let me aſk, What is the exact Meaning of *Grace?*

Aſp. The firſt and principal Meaning, that which I have all along had my Eye upon, in our preſent Conference, is, The *Favour* and *Kindneſs* of GOD; infinitely rich, and infinitely free; entirely detached from all Suppoſition of human Worth, and abſolutely

* Εχομεν τοδη τας αιτιας, καθ' αξιωθεντες απαλλαγηναι της αποδειξεως. Chryſoſt.

lutely independent on any ſuch Thing, as human Goodneſs.—This is the great Origin and Baſis of our Salvation. Not like a Fringe of Gold, bordering the Garment; not like an Embroidery of Gold, decorating the Robe; but like the Mercy-Seat of the ancient Tabernacle, which was *Gold—pure Gold—all Gold throughout.*

Election is of Grace: *Having predeſtinated Us unto the Adoption of Children*, not on Account of human Worthineſs, but *according to the good Pleaſure of his Will* *.—Equally gratuitous is our effectual *Vocation: GOD hath called Us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his Purpoſe and Grace* †.—*Faith*, with all its precious Fruits, is owing to the ſame Cauſe: *He helped them much, who believed through Grace* ‡.—From hence ſprings *Juſtification*, together with all its attendant Privileges: *Being juſtified freely by his Grace* ‖.—This is the Origin of *Regeneration*, and every living Principle of Godlineſs: *Of his own Will begat He Us by the Word of Truth* §.—The *Conſummation* of Bliſs

* Eph. i. 5. † 2 Tim. i. 9. ‡ Acts xviii. 27.

‖ *Rom.* iii. 24. Δωρεαν τη αυτε χαριτι. *One* of theſe Words might have ſerved, to convey the Apoſtle's Meaning. But, He *doubles* his Aſſertion; in order to give Us the fulleſt Conviction of the Truth, and to impreſs Us with a Senſe of its *peculiar Importance*: FREELY, BY HIS GRACE.—Is it poſſible to find out a Form of Speech, that ſhould more *abſolutely* exclude all Conſideration of our own Works and Obedience? Or that ſhould more *emphatically* aſcribe the Whole of our Juſtification to free, uninfluenced, ſovereign Goodneſs?—To find an Expreſſion, *more* forcible for the Purpoſe, will puzzle Invention itſelf. But *this* Expreſſion We find uſed, again and again, by the ſacred Writer, Η δωρεα εν χαριτι, Rom. v. 15. Της χαριτος και της δωρεας, Rom. v. 17.

§ Jam. i. 18.

flows from the ſame all-ſupplying Source: *The Gift of GOD is eternal Life* *: It is, in every Reſpect, a Gift; not only without, but contrary to, all Deſert of ours.—So that the Foundation is laid in the Riches of Grace: the Superſtructure is reared by the Hand of Grace: and when the Top-ſtone is brought forth, when our Felicity is completed in the Kingdom of Heaven, the everlaſting Acclamation will be, *Grace, Grace unto it* †!

This is that glorious Goſpel, which human Learning could never have diſcovered; which carnal Reaſon cannot underſtand; which the Envy of the Devil, and the Pride of Man, will always oppoſe. But which, to the poor convinced Sinner, is the very Perfection of Wiſdom. Eſteemed, as the Joy of his Heart; embraced, as the Rock of his Hopes.

Ther. What ſay You to the Opinion, which *Ouranius* ſo ſtrenuouſly maintains? That We are juſtified not by the Merits of *CHRIST imputed* to Us, but by *CHRIST* himſelf *formed* in our Hearts. And *Ouranius* is none of your proud or carnal People. His Writings are remarkable for their ſtrict Piety, and his Life is as exemplary as his Principles.

Aſp. You know, *Theron*, I have nothing to do with the Perſons of Men, but with the Truths of the Goſpel. *Ouranius*, though eminently devout, may be miſtaken. And, if this is his Way of Thinking, He quite miſapprehends the Doctrine of Grace.

What is written in the Oracles of Scripture? *The LORD juſtifieth the Ungodly* ‡. What is implied in

* *Rom.* vi. 23. Χαρισμα. Which is a more expreſſive Word than δωρημα, and conveys the Idea of *freeſt* Favour.

† Zech. iv. 7. ‡ Rom. iv. 5.

in the Maxim of *Ouranius?* HE juſtifieth the Holy, the Heavenly, the Chriſt-like.—*A Man is juſtified by Faith* *, ſays the Secretary of Heaven. He is juſtified by Works, ſays the Pen of *Ouranius*: only let them be Works of a ſuperior Order; ſuch as are internal, ſpiritual, and wrought by the Operation of *CHRIST* on the Soul.—According to this Notion, every One is juſtified by his own Love, his own Purity, his own Zeal. Whereas, an unerring Writer has moſt ſolemnly declared, That *by* ONE *Man's Obedience Many*, many Myriads of Sinners, even all the redeemed World, *ſhall be made righteous* †.

This Notion, I think, is *Legaliſm* in its greateſt Subtilty, or higheſt Refinement. It diſannuls the *Merit* of *CHRIST*; it vacates all *Imputation*; and makes our Salvation to conſiſt *wholly* in the Work of Sanctification. Againſt which, if You remember, I entered my Proteſt, in one of our ‡ firſt Conferences. And now having ventered to animad'vert on the Tenets of Others, it may reaſonably be expected, that I ſhould give an Account of my own Faith.—" I " am pardoned; I am accepted before GOD; or " in other Words, I am juſtified; not becauſe " *CHRIST* has put his Laws into my Mind, but " ſhed his Blood for my Sins: not becauſe I *myſelf* " am enabled to walk in all godly Converſation, but " becauſe the *LORD JESUS* has fulfilled all " Righteouſneſs as my *Surety*."

Ther. I am for neither of the Extremes. The middle Way is moſt eligible. This is what ſound

* Rom. v. 1. † Rom. v. 19. ‡ *See* Dialogue II, *pag.* 63.

Senſe approves, and the ſacred Syſtem authorizes, *Whoſo believeth on me*, ſays our LORD in one Place, *ſhall not periſh, but ſhall have everlaſting Life* *. *Bleſſed*, adds HE in another, *are they, who do his Commandments; that they may have a Right to the Tree of Life; and may enter in, through the Gates, into the City* †.

Conformably to theſe Texts of Scripture, I would neither reject our REDEEMER's Merits, nor repudiate good Works. As this ſhady Tree, and theſe cooling Breezes, unite their Properties, to render our Situation agreeable; ſo thoſe two Cauſes, acting in Conjunction, exalt Us to the Favour of GOD, and conſtitute Us Heirs of Heaven.—GOD himſelf has joined them. And I muſt urge my Remonſtrance in our LORD's own Words, *What GOD hath joined together, let not Man put aſunder.*

Aſp. Would You then make Impotence itſelf a *Coadjutor* with Omnipotence?—Does this humble the Sinner? Does this exalt the SAVIOUR?—No: it is a moſt injurious Infringement of his mediatorial Dignity. Inſtead of excluding, it evidently introduces Boaſting. In conſequence of ſuch a Scheme, it would be ſaid by the Inhabitants of the heavenly World; "Thanks to our bleſſed REDEEMER "for this Happineſs! Yet not to Him *only*, but to "our own Righteouſneſs alſo."

Can You imagine, that the Obedience of *CHRIST*, is *inſufficient* to accompliſh our Juſtification? Muſt its Efficacy be reinforced by the Acceſſion of our Works? —And what are theſe Works of curs? That *they* ſhould enhance the Value, the immenſe Value, of our REDEEMER's!—*Maimed, tarniſhed, worm-eaten*

* John iii. 15. † Rev. xxii. 14.

eaten Things. Eaten by the Worms of Self-ſeeking, Self-admiring, Self-love: Tarniſhed by a thouſand Vanities: Maimed by ten thouſand Negligences.—To join *theſe* in Commiſſion, with our Divine MASTER's Righteouſneſs; would be infinitely more *diſgraceful*, than to tack the Beggar's Rag on the Monarch's Robe. Would be altogether as *needleſs*, as to dream of augmenting the Sea, by the Drops of our Bucket.

Ther. Worm-eaten! What Reaſon have You to repreſent our Acts of Obedience under this ſordid and ſhameful Image?

Aſp. I thought, You could hardly brook this diſparaging Expreſſion. It is ſomewhat like *petty Treaſon* againſt the Dignity of Man. My Reaſons I muſt beg Leave to poſtpone, till ſome other Opportunity offers. Then, if You pleaſe, We will give the Cauſe a full Hearing.

At preſent, to make amends for this vile Slander, I will ſuppoſe your Works to have *no* Defect; nay, to have *all* the Perfection, which You yourſelf could wiſh.—Will You *glory*, on this Account?—You are too modeſt, I am ſure, to avow or patronize ſuch a Practice. Yet, if we ſay or think, concerning any Attainments of our own, "This is the Ground, on "which I expect to eſcape Condemnation, and in-"herit Life;" We do, in the moſt *offenſive*, though not in the moſt *explicit* Manner, glory *.

Or,

* *Omnis Cauſa Juſtitiæ & Salutis eſt Materia & Objectum* καυχησιως. *Unde Apoſtolus: Nam ſi Abraham ex Operibus juſtificatus eſt,* εχει καυχημα. VITRING. i. e. Whatever is the Cauſe of Righteouſneſs and Salvation, is a real and proper Foundation for Glorying. Therefore the Apoſtle acknowledges, *If Abraham were juſtified by Works, He hath whereof to glory*, Rom. iv. 2.

Or, will You reckon, that theſe Services, becauſe faultleſs, are, in any Degree, meritorious? Let us hear our LORD's Deciſion in the Caſe. *When ye have done* not ſome only, but *all thoſe Things which are commanded You*—And where is the Man, or what is his Name, who, in any Nation or in any Age, has done all that is commanded?

Where ſhall I find Him? Angels tell me where?
Shall I ſee Glories beaming from his Brow?
Or trace his Footſteps by the riſing Flow'rs?

Yet even in ſuch a Caſe, if all this were performed, what ſhall We *ſay? We are* no better than *unprofitable Servants: We have done* nothing more, than *what was our* indiſpenſible *Duty to do* *. And have, on this Footing, juſt the ſame Claim to Honours and Rewards, as the *Negro* Slave, after the Diſpatch of his Daily Buſineſs, has upon the Eſtate or the Wealth of an *American* Planter.

Ther. But what ſay You to thoſe Paſſages of Scripture, which I have quoted. You have given them a Hearing, but no Anſwer. They, I do inſiſt upon it, expreſly *aſſert* a Co-operation of *CHRIST*'s Merit, and of our own Works, in the Buſineſs of Salvation. By which Co-operation, the Law and the Goſpel are preſerved diſtinct. Each has its proper Office allotted, and to each its proper Honour is aſſigned.

Aſp. I ſhould rather ſay; By this your Co-operation, the Law and the Goſpel are confounded. Each is diſhonoured; nay more, each is deſtroyed. When You mingle a White with a Black Liquid, what

* Luke xvii. 10.

what is the Reſult? Is either of the Colours heightened, or either of them preſerved?—If my Compariſon ſeems low or inadequate, let me borrow an Illuſtration from our great Philoſopher, *Newton*. He ſomewhere mentions a fine Red, and a beautiful Azure; which, when mixed, produce no Colour at all. The Tranſparency and the Glow, which each, in a State of Separation, poſſeſſed; are, upon their Coalition, loſt. Such would be the Effect of my Friend's unſcriptural Connection.

Unſcriptural! No, replies *Theron*. It is the very Language of Scripture. It is aſſerted in the Book of Revelation; *Bleſſed are they, that do his Commandments*.—True. But wherefore are they bleſſed?—Becauſe, the Obedience of Faith is attended with a real Bleſſedneſs on Earth. *This Man ſhall be bleſſed, in his Doing* *: not *for*, but *in* † his Performance of religious and moral Duties.—Becauſe, the Obedience of Faith demonſtrates our Title, to eternal Bleſſedneſs in Heaven. It is, though not the *Purchaſe*, yet the *Evidence* of our Right to the Tree of Life.

All

* Jam. i. 26.

† ΕΝ τη ποιησει αυτου. *IN his Doing.* How exact is the Language of Scripture! Perfectly exact, amidſt the greateſt Simplicity. It has all the Accuracy of Logic, without any of its Subtilty.—See another Inſtance of the ſame Diſtinctneſs, on the very ſame Subject, *Pſal.* xix. 11. *IN keeping of them there IS* (not, *for* keeping the divine Commandments, there *ſhall be*) *great Reward.*—Let us ſtudy and examine the ſacred Language; ſift its Expreſſions, and weigh their Import. So ſhall We be, as one of its inſpired Authors moſt emphatically ſpeaks, Πεπαιδευμενοι προς ακριβειαν; *Inſtructed*, not in the Groſs only, but *with the utmoſt* Preciſion and *Accuracy*.

All this I acknowledge. But where, I beſeech You, does the Scripture join the Obedience of *CHRIST* and the Obedience of Man, as mutually conducive to the Juſtification of a Sinner?—The Scripture utterly *diſavows* ſuch a Copartnerſhip. It aſſerts, what our Homily expreſſes; "Surely, there "can be no Work of any mortal Man (be He never "ſo holy) that ſhall be coupled in Merit with "*CHRIST*'s moſt holy Act *."—The Scripture ſteadily and invariably declares; that, in this greateſt of Tranſactions, *CHRIST* is not an Acceſſary, but the Principal; nay, that He is ALL. *Be it known unto You, Men and Brethren, that through this* illuſtrious and exalted *PERSON* †, *is preached unto You the Forgiveneſs of Sins: and by Him all that believe are juſtified from all Things.—Through this PERSON*; who, without any Partner or Co-adjutor, purged our Sins.—*By Him*; not by Him, and our Works jointly; but by Him ſolely. No other Action, no other Agent, concurring in any Degree. This was typefied by the High-Prieſt; when, on the ſolemn Day of Expiation, He went into

* Homily on *Good-Friday*.

† *Acts* xiii. 38. *Through this Man.*—I think, the Word *Man* flattens the Period, and diminiſhes the Dignity of the Sentiment. It ſhould rather be left in the native and noble Ambiguity of the Original; δια τουτε, *through this Perſon*. That the Reader's Imagination may be permitted to work; and have Room to add, This more than mortal, this *divine* Perſon.

There is the ſame improper Preciſion in our Tranſlation, when the Diſciples are repreſented as crying out; *What Manner of* Man *is this!* The *Greek* is beautifully indeterminate, ποταπος ουτος; *What Manner of Perſon?* Is He a Man? Or more than a Man? The Turn of Thought, ſeems to be like that fine Compliment in *Virgil*;

" ——*Nec Vox Hominem ſonat; O Dea certè!*

into the Tabernacle *alone*; and made the figurative Atonement, without any Aſſociate *.—*From all Things*; by HIM they are *wholly*, as well as *ſolely*, juſtified. Freed from every Charge, whether of Omiſſion or Commiſſion; and rendered, not in part only, but completely acceptable.

——————————*To HIM We owe*
ALL our Deliverance, and to None *but HIM* †.

I hope, therefore, You will no longer conſider the ſupremely excellent *JESUS*, as a *partial* Cauſe of our Juſtification.—What would be the Conſequence, if the Perſon, who is walking by yonder River, ſhould fix one Foot on the ſolid Bank, and place another on the fluid Stream?

Ther. He muſt unavoidably fall.

Aſp. And what ſays our unerring Inſtructor, to thoſe double-minded *Galatians*; who could not believe themſelves ſafe and complete, in the Merits of *CHRIST* alone: but muſt be ſeeking ſome other Foundation, on which to repoſe *a Share* at leaſt of their Confidence? He ſays; and they are awful Words; they call for my *Theron*'s moſt ſerious Regard; *Ye are fallen from Grace* ‡, from the Truth and Purity of free Juſtification.

Let me entreat my Friend, to beware of this Error. I think, it is the prevailing Error of our Times; and ſo much the more *dangerous*, becauſe it is ſomewhat ſpecious.—To pour Contempt upon the bleſſed *JESUS*, with the *Libertines* and *Deiſts*, would be ſhocking to a Mind, that retains the leaſt Reverence for

* Levit. xvi. 17.
† MILTON, Book III.
‡ Gal. v. 4.

for ſacred Things. Entirely to ſet aſide the meritorious Efficacy of his Undertaking, with the *Arians* and *Sccinians*, would be afflictive to a Conſcience, that is impreſſed with the leaſt Senſe of Sin. Whereas, to erect our Merits on the Foundation of *CHRIST*'s; to be found in *his*, yet not renounce *our own* Righteouſneſs; this is both plauſible to our Reaſon, and pleaſing to our Vanity. This ſeems to honour the Divine SAVIOUR, even while it gratifies human Pride.—But this is an egregious Falſhood, and cannot ſtand. This is an abominable Idol, and muſt be laid in the Duſt. *CHRIST*, like the *real* Mother of the Child, will have the whole, or none *; the whole—*unſhared*—*unrivaled*—*undiminiſhed* Glory of our Salvation.

Let me once again entreat my dear *Theron*, to beware of this Error. It is the main Pillar in the *Roman* Hereſy, and the Maſter-policy of the *Popiſh* Machiavilians †. "*CHRIST* hath merited, that "We may merit," is their grand Maxim, and their grand Deluſion. Hence come their Penances and their Pilgrimages: hence the hypocritical Mortifications of Some, and the extravagant Auſterities of Others: this enriches their Shrines, and fills their Cloyſters. And to thoſe Seminaries of Superſtition, let it be baniſhed, let it be confined.—*There* let them raiſe their Scaffolding, and try to enlarge the Dimenſion of the Skies. *There* let them kindle their Flambeaus, and attempt to increaſe the Luſtre of the Sun. When they have effected this *eaſier* Taſk, then

* 1 Kings iii. 26.

† Man cannot make Himſelf righteous, neither in Part, nor in the Whole. To affirm this, is the greateſt Arrogancy and Preſumption, that *Antichriſt* could ſet up againſt GOD. *Homily on Salvation*, Part II.

then will We *Proteſtants* follow their Example, and adopt their Syſtem. Then will We alſo think of adding our own Righteouſneſs, by way of Supplement to the Dignity and Efficacy—the tranſcendent Dignity and infinite Efficacy — of our LORD's.

Ther. If We are juſtified wholly by our LORD's Righteouſneſs; if nothing *need* be added, if nothing *can* be added to its all-comprehending Fulneſs; what will become of the generally received Opinion—That *CHRIST* obtained for Us only a *Poſſibility* of being ſaved; or put Us into a *Capacity* of acquiring Salvation?

Aſp. It will be diſcountenanced and overthrown; as extremely diſhonourable to the REDEEMER, and no leſs uncomfortable to the Redeemed. When *CHRIST* procured our Pardon, and recovered our Title to Life; it was all his own Doing; all his own Acquiſition. *Of the People there was none with Him* *; none of their Works, none of their Endeavours, to co-operate as a ſubordinate Cauſe, under any Shape, or in any Degree whatever.

Hear his own Teſtimony: *I have finiſhed the Work, which Thou gaveſt me to do* †. Should You want an Explication of theſe Words, I refer You to the Comment of an Apoſtle. *He*, that is *JESUS CHRIST*, *has obtained eternal Redemption for Us* ‡. This was his Work, and it is fully executed. *He has*, HE HAS, obtained eternal Redemption. So that nothing remains for Sinners, but to receive the purchaſed Bleſſedneſs, and to live as becomes the Redeemed of the LORD.

This

* Iſai. lxiii. 6. † John xvii. 4. ‡ Heb. ix. 12.

This Truth is written, as with a Sun-beam, in the Pages of the Goſpel; and ſounds as with a Voice of Thunder, in the Songs of Heaven. *Salvation to our* GOD, they cry, *that ſitteth upon the Throne, and to the* LAMB *. Thoſe Saints in Glory, aſcribe the Whole—*the Whole* of their Salvation they aſcribe, to the Grace of GOD, and to the Blood of the LAMB.

Ther. Have not many of our moſt learned Divines repreſented Faith, Obedience, and Repentance, as the *Terms of Acceptance?* CHRIST, according to this Account, procured not the Bleſſing itſelf, but only the Grant of *eaſier Conditions*, on which it may be enjoyed.

Aſp. What ſays that ſublime BEING, who gives the moſt learned Divines all their Wiſdom? *My righteous Servant ſhall juſtify many* †. Not pave the Way, or adjuſt the Preliminaries, but diſpatch *the very* Buſineſs; *ſhall juſtify*.—What ſays that infallible Author, from whoſe Writings all Divines ought to derive their Doctrines? *CHRIST hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified* ‡. He has done all that was neceſſary for their Pardon, their Peace with GOD, and their everlaſting Felicity. Otherwiſe, He were not a complete SAVIOUR. He would not *ſave to the uttermoſt* ‖, if, executing ſome Part only of the grand Undertaking, He left other Parts to be performed by his People.

The Terms of Acceptance, for fallen and rebellious Man, were, A full Satisfaction § to the divine Juſtice,

* Rev. vii. 10. † Iſai. liii. 11. ‡ Heb. x. 14.
‖ Heb. vii. 8.
§ *A full Satisfaction*; for a Proof of this Point, ſee *Dial.* III. IV.

Juſtice, and a complete Conformity * to the divine Law. Theſe, impracticable by Us, were conſigned over to *CHRIST*. By Him they were thoroughly accompliſhed; and by this Accompliſhment of them, He merited for us all Bleſſings. Among others, He merited the Gift of Faith, the Grace of Repentance, and Ability to yield thankful, dutiful, evangelical Obedience. Theſe therefore are but improperly called the Terms, which are really conſtituent *Parts* of our Salvation.

To ſum up all in a Word—The whole Tenour of Revelation ſhews, that there are but two Methods, whereby any of the human Race can be juſtified.—Either by a perfect Obedience to the Law, in *their own* Perſons; and then the Reward is of Debt †.—Or elſe, becauſe the *Surety* of a better Covenant has ſatisfied all Demands in their Stead; and then the Reward is of Grace.—There is no trimming or reconciling Expedient.—You may chooſe either of the two; but no third is propoſed or allowed.

Ther. Was there not a different Method of Salvation, for the *antient* People of GOD?

Aſp. None, *Theron.* In the State of primitive Innocency, a *perfect* and *perſevering* Obſervance of the divine Command, was the Condition of Salvation; or rather, of Life and Immortality ‡. When, by the

* *A complete Conformity*; for the Illuſtration of this Truth, ſee *Dial.* VIII, IX.

† *Rom.* iv. 4. *Pactional* Debt; founded on the Obligation of the Covenant, not ſpringing from any Worth in the Obedience.

‡ *Aſpaſio* makes a Diſtinction in this Place, between *Salvation* and *Life eternal*. The former is, ſtrictly ſpeak-

the firſt grand Apoſtacy, this Condition became impoſſible; a *free* Pardon, and *gracious* Acceptance, through the bleſſed *JESUS*, were ſubſtituted in its Stead. Which Oeconomy, like a Fountain of Life, was opened; when GOD promiſed *the Seed of the Woman, to bruiſe the Serpent's Head* *.—It ran, like a ſalutary Rivulet, through the *Antediluvian* World —Continued its Progreſs, and diſpenſed its Bleſſings, along the *Patriarchal* Age—Flowed, in broader and more numerous Streams, under the *Moſaic* Diſpenſation—Is derived down to Us, enlarged by the Coming of *CHRIST*, and completed by the Miniſtry of his *Apoſtles*—Will be tranſmitted, without any farther Improvements, to the lateſt Poſterity. Henceforward increaſing and extending, not its Perfection, but its Influence only. Which it will never ceaſe to do, till, as the Fountain is become a River, the River is augmented into an Ocean; and *the Knowledge of the LORD* our Righteouſneſs *fill the Earth, as the Waters cover the* Abyſſes of the *Sea* †.

There was, I confeſs, a Diverſity in the Adminiſtration, but no Difference in the Nature, of the Bleſſing. *JESUS CHRIST*, however variouſly manifeſted, was the *ſame Yeſterday*, is the ſame *to Day*, will be the ſame *for ever* ‡. As it is the very ſame

ing, a Language ſuited to the Goſpel. The latter is preciſely proper to the Law. The Covenant of Grace ſays; Believe, and thou ſhalt be *ſaved*. The Covenant of Works ſaid; He that doeth them, *ſhall live* by them. Salvation implies a Deliverance from ſome Penalty or Miſery incurred, and a Reinſtatement in ſome Bleſſing or Happineſs forfeited. Which are evidently peculiar to the evangelical Diſpenſation, and not applicable to the State of Integrity.

* Gen. iii. 15. † Iſai. xi. 9. ‡ Heb. xiii. 8.

ſame Sun, which *gleams* at early Dawn; which *ſhines* in the advancing Day; and *glows* at Height of Noon.

My Simile reminds Us of the Time, and leaves a moſt important Doctrine upon our Memories. Supposse We take the Admonition, and begin to move homeward.

Ther. We need be in no Hurry, *Aſpaſio*. My Watch tells me, that We have half an Hour good. Beſides, I have ſomething farther to alledge, and from a very great Authority, which ſeems directly contrary to your Notion.

Aſp. Juſt as You pleaſe, *Theron*. If You chooſe to ſtay, I am all Compliance with your Inclination. And, would Truth permit, I ſhould be all Conformity to your Opinion.

Ther. You know, who it is that aſks; *What doth the LORD require of Thee?* And neither of Us need be informed, What it is, that the Prophet replies; *Do Juſtice, love Mercy, and walk humbly with thy GOD* *. But I want to know, what *You think* of this Paſſage?

Aſp. I think, it is abſolutely inconſiſtent with *your* Scheme. This Paſſage inculcates *Humility*. But your Scheme is the very Reverſe of that amiable Virtue. A Self-juſticiary walking humbly with GOD, is little better than a Contradiction in Terms.

The LORD has ſaid; *Ye ſhall be ſaved by Grace* †. Your Syſtem replies; "No, but by our "own

* Mich. vi. 8.

† *Eph.* ii. 5. The Solicitude of the bleſſed Apoſtle, to preſerve inviolate the Honours of divine Grace, is, in this Place, very conſpicuous.—He had told the *Epheſians*, that they were, *by Nature, the Children of Wrath.*

" own Sincerity, and our own Works."—It is declared in Scripture; That *the Gift of GOD is eternal Life*. It is implied in my Friend's Doctrine; That this Happineſs is the Wages of our own Repentance and Reformation.—" My SON ſhall " have all the Glory of a Sinner's Salvation," is the unalterable Decree of the MOST HIGH. " *We* will have a Share in the Honour," is the Language of your Opinion.—Look, how wide therefore the Eaſt is from the Weſt! So remote is ſuch a Strain of Teaching, from the Practice of walking humbly with our GOD.

Ther. But conſider, good *Aſpaſio*; have I not the Prophet's Authority for my Opinion? Are not his Words expreſly on my Side? Does He not mention thoſe Duties of Morality and Piety, as the appointed Method of obtaining the divine Favour?

Aſp. He mentions, I apprehend, a ſolicitous *Enquiry*. To which He gives a ſatisfactory *Anſwer*. Then ſubjoins a practical *Improvement* of the Whole.—The Enquiry is expreſſed in theſe Words; *Wherewithal ſhall I come before the LORD, and bow myſelf before*

Worthy of nothing but Indignation and Vengeance.—That all their Privileges and Bleſſings came, not from any Goodneſs of their own, but from a GOD *who is rich in Mercy*.—That they were originally *dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins*. And what can dead Men do, either to obtain or deſerve, heavenly and immortal Happineſs?—Sufficient this, One would imagine, to guard againſt the Encroachments of ſpiritual Pride, and all Self-glorying whatever. But the zealous Writer, to cut off both the Root and Branch of this abominable Principle, adds in Verſe the fifth; *By Grace*, through infinitely free Favour, *ye are ſaved*. To give the utmoſt Force to his Blow, He again inculcates the ſame Truth, in the very ſame Words; *By Grace*, purely, entirely, excluſive of all Works, *are Ye ſaved*, Ver. 8.

before the High GOD? Shall I come before Him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of a Year old? Will the LORD be pleased with Thousands of Rams; with ten Thousands of Rivers of Oil? Shall I give my First-born for my Trangression, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul * ? Justification is the Point in View. How shall I obtain Remission of *Sin?* In what Manner shall my *Transgression* be expiated? So that I may appear with Acceptance before the righteous GOD?

To which it is replied; *He hath shewed Thee, O Man, what is good* for this important Purpose; namely, the *MESSIAH*; pointed out by all thy Sacrifices †, and described in the preceding Chapter. Atonement for Sin, and Peace with GOD, are to be made by a better Hand, and in a better Way, than thou proposest. HE, *whose Outgoings have been from of old, from everlasting* ‡; HE, who is the Son of the HIGHEST, and yet the Seed of *Her that travaileth* ‖; HE hath undertaken, and will fully execute, this great Office.

And what doth the LORD thy GOD require of Thee? What Temper, what Conduct, what Expressions of Gratitude, from his People? Who are reconciled through the Blood of *CHRIST*, and admitted to the Blessings of the New Covenant §.—They

* Mic. vi. 7, 8.

† The ceremonial Law was to the *Jews* a real Gospel; which held *Blood*, *Death*, and *Translation* of Guilt, before their Eyes continually, as the *only* Way of Salvation. BOSTON's *Fourfold State.*

‡ Mic. v. 2. ‖ Mic. v. 3.

§ *Thy* GOD, is the Phrase. Which denotes an Interest; implies an Appropriation; and is the peculiar Language of the Covenant.—Thy GOD; not made so by thy

They are to teſtify their Thankfulneſs for this unſpeakable Gift, by the Alacrity, Uniformity, and Conſtancy of their Obedience. By the conſcientious Diſcharge of every *moral*, *ſocial*, and *religious* Duty. Or, by doing Juſtice, loving Mercy, and walking humbly with their GOD.

If this be a true Interpretation of the Text, inſtead of eſtabliſhing, it overturns your Cauſe.—But I have another Objection to your Method, perhaps, more weighty than the foregoing.

Ther. Pray, let me hear it.—I am not ſo enamoured with my Notions, but I can bear to have them cenſured; nor ſo attached to my Scheme, but I can relinquiſh it for a better.

Aſp. I would illuſtrate my Meaning, by a common Experiment in Optics. When Objects are viewed in a *concave Speculum*, or in the Hollow of a poliſhed Spoon, how do they appear?

Ther. Inverted.

Aſp. Such is my Friend's Syſtem of Religion. He inverts the Order of the Goſpel. He turns the beautiful Building upſide down; and lays that for the *Foundation*, which ſhould only be Part of the *Superſtructure*.—Not ſo the Apoſtle *Paul*. He, like a wiſe Maſter-builder, places *CHRIST* as the Foundation-ſtone; and rears his Edifice of practical Godlineſs, on that all-ſupporting Baſis.—Examine his Epiſtle to the *Romans*. Which is unqueſtionably the completeſt Model of Doctrine, and the nobleſt Body of Divinity, extant in the World.

He

thy humble Walking, but by an Act of *his own* Grace, previous to any Obedience of thine.—According to *Theron*'s Principles, the Prophet ſhould rather have ſaid, walk humbly (not *with thy* GOD, but) that He *may be* thy GOD.

He firſt diſcovers the *Depravity* of our Nature, and the Miſery of our Condition.—He, then, diſplays the Method of our *Recovery* by *CHRIST*, and the Bleſſings freely vouchſafed in his Goſpel.—After which, He delineates the Offices of Morality, and enforces them by the moſt engaging Motives. Motives, drawn from the free unbounded Loving-kindneſs of GOD our SAVIOUR, and from the rich invaluable Benefits of his Grace *.—*CHRIST* and his Privileges are the Root. From which, Gratitude blooms, as the Flower; Godlineſs grows, as the Fruit.

The ſame Order is obſerved by St. *Peter*, in his very conciſe, but very accurate Map, of the Way to Heaven. *Elect, according to the Foreknowledge of GOD the FATHER, through Sanctification of the SPIRIT, unto Obedience, and Sprinkling of the Blood of CHRIST* †.—Firſt, the everlaſting Love and electing Grace of the FATHER. Who chooſes Us, not becauſe of, but *unto* Obedience.—Then, the enlightening Influence, and renewing Agency

* This, I think, is the beſt Platform for an *evangelical* Catechiſm. The *Ruin* of Man, occaſioned by Sin—His *Recovery*, effected by *CHRIST*—His *Gratitude*, to be expreſſed by way of Obedience.—This Plan is carried into Execution by the *Palatinate* Divines. Who have formed upon it, a Summary of catechetical Inſtruction. Than which, I have met with nothing of the Kind, more clear and ſatisfactory; more edifying and animating; more exactly conſonant to the benign Spirit of the Goſpel, or better calculated to transform the Mind into Holineſs, and the Life into Happineſs.—This Piece the Reader may ſee, together with a judicious, and very valuable Expoſition of it, in the *Latin* Works of *Henricus Altingius*, 1 Vol. Quarto. Which, I believe, may be bought for a Trifle, yet are more precious than Gold.

† 1 Pet. i. 2.

of the SPIRIT. Who teſtifies of *CHRIST*, and applies his Death to the Soul; purifying the Heart by Faith.—From whence, as from a Fountain of living Waters, flow true *Sanctification*, and every Act of filial *Obedience*, every Kind of real Holineſs.—All which, being partly defective, and partly polluted, muſt be ſprinkled with the Blood of *JESUS*, and made acceptable by his dying Oblation.

Ther. Is this the conſtant Method, in which the ſacred Writers repreſent the Goſpel Salvation? Do they always obſerve this particular Order, in arranging its Doctrines and its Duties? Or, is it not an inſignificant Circumſtance, which goes *firſt*, provided We take in *both*?

Aſp. To obſerve this Order, I am perſuaded, is no inſignificant Circumſtance. It is of great Conſequence, both to our Eſtabliſhment and to our Growth in Grace. Is it a Matter of Indifference to the Archer, whether He ſend the Point, or the Feather of his Arrow foremoſt? Can He, in either Caſe, hit the Mark with equal Eaſe, and equal Certainty?

I believe, You will find, that the ſacred Writers, in all their *evangelical* Diſcourſes, invariably adhere to this Order. Nay; it took place even under the *legal* Diſpenſation.—When the LORD GOD publiſhed his Law from Mount *Sinai*; when He wrote it, with his own Finger, on Tables of Stone; how did He introduce the Precepts? How enforce their Obſervance?—Let Us attend to the Preamble; which is the Language of Love, and the very Spirit of the Goſpel: *I am the LORD thy GOD; who brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the Houſe*

of

of Bondage *. "I have already delivered Thee, "with a mighty Hand, from the moſt ſordid and "inſupportable Slavery. I have promiſed Thee, "for thy Poſſeſſion, the delightful Country of "*Canaan*; *a goodly Heritage of the Hoſts of Nations* †. "Nay, I *myſelf* am thy Portion; a GOD in Co-"venant with Thee; engaged, by an inviolable "Contract, and with the Exertion of all my At-"tributes, to do Thee Good. *Therefore*, keep the "Statutes, the Judgments, and Ordinances, which "I am now going to eſtabliſh."—Could there be a more winning Inducement, or a more endearing Obligation, to Obedience?

I might point out the ſame Strain, running through the Exhortations of *Moſes*, and the Songs of *David*; the Sermons of the Prophets, and the Writings of the Apoſtles. But this I wave, not through an Apprehenſion of its Difficulty, only from a Fear of Prolixity.—However, You will not think me tedious, if I produce one more Inſtance, from the great Maſter of our Schools. *For We Ourſelves were ſome time fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers Luſts and Pleaſures, living in Malice and Envy, hateful and hating one another* ‡. Here, He ſets before Us a diſmal, but exact Picture, of our depraved and undone Condition.—Then He preſents Us with a delightful View of our Redemption, both in its gracious Cauſe, and precious Effects. *But, after that the Kindneſs and Love of GOD our SAVIOUR toward Man appeared; not by Works of Righteouſneſs, which We have done, but according to his Mercy, He ſaved Us, by the Waſhing of Regeneration, and Renewing*

* Exod. xx. 2. † Jer. iii. 19. ‡ Tit. iii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

newing of the HOLY GHOST; which He hath ſhed on Us abundantly, through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR; that being juſtified by his Grace, We ſhould be made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life.—Having thus provided for our Happineſs; He then promotes our Holineſs. *This is a faithful Saying, and theſe Things I will that Thou affirm conſtantly, that they who have believed in GOD, be careful to maintain good Works: theſe Things are good and profitable unto Men.*

I make no Comment * upon the Paſſage: becauſe I hope, You will commit it, as a noble Depoſitum, to

* Perhaps the Reader will give me Leave, though *Aſpaſio* has declined the Office, to add a ſhort *expoſitory* Stricture, upon the moſt diſtinguiſhed Parts of this very important Paragraph.—I. We have the *Cauſe* of our Redemption; *not Works of Righteouſneſs, which We have done*, but the *Kindneſs*, the *Love*, the *Mercy* of GOD our SAVIOUR. To theſe, to theſe alone, every Child of Man muſt aſcribe, both his Fruition of preſent, and his Expectation of future Bleſſedneſs.

II. The *Effects*; which are—*Juſtification*; *being juſtified*, having our Sins forgiven, and our Perſons accepted, through the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* imputed. All this, without any the leaſt deſerving Quality in Us; ſolely *by his Grace*, and moſt unmerited Goodneſs.—*Sanctification*; expreſſed by *The Waſhing of Regeneration.* That Waſhing in the REDEEMER's Blood, which cleanſes the Soul from Guilt, as the Waſhing of Water cleanſes the Body from Filth. Which reconciles to GOD, gives Peace of Conſcience, and thereby lays the Foundation of an univerſal ſpiritual Change. *The Renewing of the HOLY GHOST*; whoſe Influences, teſtifying of *CHRIST*, and applying his Merits, introduce an Improvement into all the Faculties of the Mind; ſomewhat like that annual Renovation, and general Smile, which the Return of Spring diffuſes over the Face of Nature.

III.

to your Memory. Your own diligent Meditation, accompanied with humble Prayer, will furniſh out the beſt Expoſition.—Only I would juſt remark, that the Apoſtle, always conſiſtent, always uniform, marſhals his Thoughts with his uſual Exactneſs. Good Works are not *diſbanded*; nor yet ſuffered to lead the *Van*; but made to bring up the *Rear* *.—When he mentions theſe Fruits of the SPIRIT, He mentions them, not ſlightly, as Matters of ſmall Moment; but earneſtly, as Affairs of great Importance. It is his Deſire and his Charge, that all Believers ſhould

III. The *End* and *Conſummation* of all: that We ſhould be made *Heirs* of the heavenly Kingdom; and live, now in the aſſured Hope, hereafter in the full Enjoyment, of *eternal Life*.

* The ſame Order is obſerved by St. *John*, Rev. xiv. 13. *Bleſſed are the Dead, which die in the LORD; for they reſt from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.* Not *go before*, to open the everlaſting Doors, and give them Admittance into the Manſions of Joy. But they *follow* them, when admitted. As the Robe, which, on a King's Coronation-day, flows from his Shoulders, cannot but accompany Him, whereſoever He goes.—It may be pertinent, on the Mention of this Illuſtration, juſt to hint; That, as it is not the Robe of State, which *makes* the King; ſo neither is it the Practice of Holineſs, which *makes* the Chriſtian. An Union with *CHRIST*, an Intereſt in his Merits, and the in-dwelling Preſence of his SPIRIT; *theſe*, and nothing ſhort of theſe, conſtitute the true Chriſtian. Yet, as the royal Robe is an Attendant on Majeſty, and diſtinguiſhes the Monarch; ſo, practical Godlineſs is inſeparable from Faith, and adorns the Believer.—Agreeably to this Doctrine, *Clemens*, the apoſtolic Father, ſays; Εν εργοις αγαθοις πανλες εκοσμηθησαν και δικαιοι. They were made δικαιοι *righteous*, by Faith in *CHRIST*. They were *adorned* εκοσμηθησαν, they and their Faith appeared like themſelves, by abounding in every good Work. *Clem. Epiſt.* 1. *ad Corinth.*

ſhould *be careful* * ; have their Hearts upon the Buſineſs ; ſhould uſe their beſt Contrivance, and exert their utmoſt Endeavours—not barely to practiſe, but to *maintain* † ; to be exemplary, diſtinguiſhed, and pre-eminent in the Exerciſe of every Virtue.—Becauſe, this Virtue, and theſe Works, though not the Ground of a Reconciliation with GOD, are amiable in the Eyes of all, and *honourable* ‡ to the chriſtian Profeſſion. They are alſo a neceſſary Ingredient in perſonal Happineſs, and the apparent Means of ſocial *Uſefulneſs* ‖.

Ther. This View of the evangelical Plan is, I muſt confeſs, new to me ; and particularly your Ordonnance of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*.

Aſp. If this be new, perhaps, what I am going to advance, may be ſtrange.—We have been talking about Acceptance with GOD ; and debating, whether our own good Works, are the Cauſe of this ineſtimable Bleſſing. What will You ſay ; if We can perform *no* good Work, *till* We are intereſted in *CHRIST*, and accepted by GOD ?

Ther. Say !—That this is razing Foundations.

Aſp. It is razing the wrong, the Foundation falſely ſo called. Which will certainly deceive as Many, as make it their Truſt.—And is it not *prudent*, when We are building for Eternity, carefully to examine the Ground ? Is it not *friendly*, to divert a Man from the

* Φροντίζειν. This is ſomewhat like that emphatical Expreſſion, which ſo often occurs in the Old Teſtament, תשמרון לעשות *Ye ſhall obſerve to do :* Ye ſhall be very *diligent* to fulfil ; Ye ſhall be very *exact* in performing.

† Προϊσταϑαι. If the Reader pleaſes, He may ſee this Word more *critically* explained, *pag.* 227. in the Note.

‡ Καλα. ‖ Ωφελιμα.

the treacherous Sand, and lead Him to the unſhaken Rock?—For this Cauſe I ſaid it once, and for this Cauſe I ſay it again; That We can perform *no* good Work, *till* We are intereſted in *CHRIST*, and accepted of GOD.

Ther. Produce your Reaſons, *Aſpaſio*. And ſtrong Reaſons they muſt be, which are forcible enough to ſupport ſuch an Opinion.

Aſp. The Caſe ſeems to ſpeak for itſelf. How *can* a Man that is evil, do Works that are good? Would You expect to *gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thiſtles?* And is not this the Character of every Child of *Adam*, till He is engrafted into the true Olive-tree?—But let Us hear, what our *unerring* TEACHER ſays: *As the Branch cannot bear Fruit of itſelf, except it abide in the Vine; no more can Ye*, perform true Obedience, or be endued with true Sincerity, *except Ye abide in me* *. Nothing can be more expreſs and full to our Purpoſe. But that which follows, is far more alarming and awful to our Conſciences. *If a Man abide not in Me, He is caſt forth as a Branch, and is withered; and Men gather them, and caſt them into the Fire, and they are burned* †.—From which it appears, that the human Heart is never actuated by *good Tempers*; that the human Life can never be productive of *good Works*; until a Man is united to *CHRIST*. No more than a Branch can bear valuable Fruit, while it continues in a State of Separation from the Tree ‡.—

It

* John xv. 4. † John xv. 6.

‡ This diſcovers an Error, which is often committed, in our Attempts to inſtruct little Children. What is more common, than to tell them? "If they will be good, "GOD Almighty will love and bleſs them."—Whereas, they ſhould rather be informed, "That they are Sin-

"ners;

It appears alſo, that Perſons alienated from *CHRIST*, are, and all their Performances too, like *broken*, *withered*, *rotten* Boughs: fit for nothing, but to be committed to the Flames, and conſumed from the Earth. Both they and their Actions, far from being meritorious, are, in the Eſtimate of Heaven, worthleſs and deſpicably mean.

Ther. What! Are all the noble Actions, performed by the Advocates for Morality, and Lovers of Virtue, worthleſs in themſelves, and deſpicable before the Supreme BEING? Worthleſs and deſpicable (grating Words!) *only* becauſe they are not attended with the Peculiarities of your Faith? Can the Want of this *little* Circumſtance, change their Nature, and turn their Gold into Droſs?

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, call not the Circumſtance little. It is ſufficient, were your Works more ſplendid than Gold, to debaſe them into Tin, into Lead, into Droſs.—When the poor Shepherd brought You, yeſterday Morning, a Preſent of ſome Wood-ſtrawberries; bringing them, as an humble Expreſſion of his *Gratitude*, they were kindly received. But, if He had offered them, as a *Price* for your Houſe, or as the *Purchaſe* of your Eſtate; how ſhould You have regarded them, in ſuch a Connection? No Words can expreſs the Diſdain, You would have conceived. —When *Barnabas* preſented a Sum of Money to the Apoſtles, for the Supply of their Neceſſities, and the Relief of indigent Believers *; it was welcome to the

" ners: but, that GOD Almighty has given his SON
" to die for Sinners: and, if they pray to Him, He will
" forgive their Sins; will make them holy; make them
" happy; and bleſs them with all ſpiritual Bleſſings in
" *CHRIST*."

* Acts iv. 37.

the Saints, and pleaſing to their GOD. But, when *Simon* the Sorcerer, offered his Gold to *Peter* and John; offering it, not from a Principle of Faith, but as an Equivalent for the HOLY SPIRIT; not in order to teſtify his Thankfulneſs, but rather to play the Huckſter with Heaven; it was rejected with the utmoſt Indignation *.

I

* *Acts* viii. 20. We have much Talk about *Simony* and *Simoniacal* Practices. The Caſe, I think, is miſunderſtood, and the Expreſſion miſapplied.

The more *refined* Species of Simony, is, the Attempt mentioned by *Aſpaſio*. An Expectation and Endeavour to procure Union with *CHRIST*, the Communication of the SPIRIT, and all heavenly Bleſſings, by any Works or any Righteouſneſs of our own. Which, conſidered in this View, are called by the Prophets, *Money and Price*.

The *groſſer* Kind of Simony, ſeems to be practiſed by a certain Court, ſtyled *Spiritual*, or *Eccleſiaſtical*. Which thunders out Excommunications and Curſes; debars poor Creatures from religious Privileges; and cauſes them to be "buried with the Burial of an Aſs;" unleſs they pacify their pious Indignation, by a little filthy Lucre.—This is the Language of that ſame ſpiritual Judicature. "If Thou wilt lug out a few Crowns or Guineas from "thy Purſe, all ſhall be well. Heaven ſhall ſmile, and "the Church opens her Arms. Whereas, if Thou art "refractory in this Particular; and unwilling, or un-"able, to comply with our pecuniary Demands; Thou "art cut off from the Means of Grace. Thou ſhalt no "longer hear that Word of the Goſpel, by which the "Spirit of Faith cometh. Nor any more be Partaker "of that Sacramental Ordinance, which is a Sign and "Seal of *ſpiritual* Benefits."—Is not this a moſt infamous Traffic, whereby ſacred Things are bought and ſold? In the preſent State of Affairs, what can be a nearer Approach to the Sin of the *mercenary* Magician? What can be a more indelible Blot on the Purity and Diſcipline of any Church?

Pudet hæc Opprobria Nobis
Et dici potuiſſe, et non potuiſſe refelli.

I leave my Friend to apply the preceding Inſtances. Only let me beg of Him to believe; that, if my Words are *grating*, they are extorted by the Force of Truth. If I am obliged to blame, what He calls good Works; it is, as a great Critic blames Eloquence, "with the "Tenderneſs of a Lover."—But my Cenſure falls only on their faulty *Origin*, and unbecoming *Aim*. Let them ſpring from the Grace of *CHRIST*, as their Source; let them propoſe the Glory of *CHRIST*, as their End; then, inſtead of putting a Slight upon them, or giving them a Bill of Divorce, I would court, careſs, and wed them.—Whereas, if neither *this* End be kept in the View, nor that Principle operate in the Heart; I muſt perſiſt, in queſtioning the Genuineneſs of their Character; nay, in denying the very Poſſibility of their Exiſtence. There may be a *Mimickry* of holy Actions. But it is Mimickry only; empty, as the Combs * made by thoſe Waſps; and unreal, as the Flame that is painted.

I have an Authority for this Doctrine, which I think, You will not offer to controvert.

Ther. What Authority?

Aſp. That of our Church. Who declares, in her XIIIth Article; "Works done before the Grace "of *CHRIST*, and Inſpiration of his SPIRIT, "are not pleaſing to GOD; foraſmuch as they "ſpring not out of Faith in *CHRIST*."—Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*, *purifies the Heart*. Till this be done, the Heart is polluted; the Mind and Conſcience are defiled †; nothing, that We have or do, is pure.—It is written; *The LORD had Reſpect*

* *Facient & Veſpæ Favos.* † Tit. i. 15.

Reſpect unto Abel, *and to his Offering* *. Firſt, unto *Abel*; then, unto his Offering. The Man muſt be reſtored to Favour, before his Duties can be received with Complacency.

Such a One, You ſay, is honeſt in his Dealings, temperate in his Enjoyments, charitable to the Poor. Be it ſo. Yet, unleſs theſe ſhowy Deeds are referred to the *Glory* of the Supreme JEHOVAH; unleſs they flow from *Faith* in the crucified *JESUS*; they are but the Carcaſs of Virtue †. They may be Acts

* Gen. iv. 4.

† This great evangelical Truth, will, probably, be reckoned *a hard Saying*, by the carnal Mind; and may ſeem a *fooliſh Notion*, to vain Philoſophy. I beg Leave therefore, for its better Reception and firmer Eſtabliſhment, to produce ſome of the greateſt Teſtimonies in the World.—Let Us hear, what the pious Biſhop of *St. Aſaph* ſays, upon the Subject; what the famous Archbiſhop of *Conſtantinople* ſaid, long before Him; and what a whole Synod, or a whole Nation of Eccleſiaſtics, are continually ſaying, in the Homilies of the *Church* of *England*.

" I can do no good Works at all, before I be firſt " juſtified. My Works cannot be accepted as good, till " my Perſon be ſo. Nor can my Perſon be accepted by " GOD, till firſt engrafted into *CHRIST*; before " which engrafting into the true Vine, 'tis impoſſible I " ſhould bring forth good Fruit." *Beveridge's Private Thoughts*, Artic. 8.

Ευρησεις γουν πολλους κ᾽ εκ᾽ος τ᾽ λογ᾽ της αληθειας εργοις αγαθοις κ᾽αλα το φαινομενον δ᾽αλαμπονᾶς ευρησεις ανδρας συμπαθεις, ελεημονας, δικαιοσυνη προσεχονᾶς· αλλ᾽ ουδεν εστιν εξω πιστεως αγαθον. Εοικασιν οι εργοις κομωνᾶες αγαθοις, κ᾽ τον Θεον της ευσεβειας αγνοησαντες, λειψανοις νεκρων, κ᾽αλα μεν ενδεδυμενοις, αισθησιν δε των κ᾽αλων ουκ εχουσι. Chryſoſt. Tom. vi.

" Faith giveth Life to the Soul; and they be as much " dead to GOD that lack Faith, as they be to the " World, whoſe Bodies lack Souls. Without Faith, all " that is done of Us, is but dead before GOD, although

Acts of worldly Policy, of selfish Prudence, or *Pharisaical* Pride. They are no religious Service, nor any pleasing Oblation to the LORD Almighty *. —Nay; instead of being Acts of Obedience, and Objects of Approbation, they stand condemned in the Scripture, and are Breaches of the Commandment. They stand condemned in that Scripture, which declares; *Without Faith it is impossible to please GOD* †. They are Breaches of that Commandment, which requires; *Whether Ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever Ye do, do all to the Glory of GOD* ‡.

Ther. Who can believe this, that considers the intrinsic Excellency of Virtue and virtuous Actions?

Asp. Who can disbelieve it, that considers the preceding Declarations of Scripture? And observes, how GOD has confirmed by his Providence, what He has declared in his Word. Behold *Israel after the*

" the Work seem never so gay and glorious before Man."
Homily on Faith.

* Might not this Observation be made, with great Propriety, in our *infirmary* and other *charitable* Sermons? Should not the Audience be exhorted to abound in Acts of Benevolence, from a *grateful Regard* to the infinitely merciful and condescending *JESUS?* 2 Cor. viii. 9.—Should they not, before all Things, be directed to *make sure* their Interest in the REDEEMER's Merits? That their Persons may find Favour, and their Alms Acceptance, *Eph.* i. 6.—Should they not be admonished, that, without this *believing Application* to *CHRIST*, whatever they do, whatever they give, is worthless in the Eye of their MAKER, and will be fruitless to their own Souls? *Heb.* xi. 6.—In this Respect our SAVIOUR was eminently typified by the *Jewish* Altar. On which *every* Sacrifice, by whomsoever brought, was to be offered. And separate from which *no* Sacrifice, however costly, could be accepted, *Exod.* xx. 24. *Levit.* xvii. 3, 4.

† Heb. xi. 6. ‡ 1 Cor. x. 31.

the Fleſh. They had, what You will reckon greater than Sincerity, *a Zeal for GOD* *. Yet, *not being according to Knowledge*, the Knowledge of Juſtification by the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*; it was as if they offered Swine's Fleſh, or cut off a Dog's Neck; affronting and offenſive to the HOLY ONE.—Nay; they *ſerved GOD intenſely* † and aſſiduouſly; ſerved Him, the Apoſtle affirms, *Night and Day.* Yet, not ſerving Him as Sinners, redeemed by *CHRIST*; but rather as Righteous Perſons, who would be their own Redeemers; all their Toil was unacceptable and unprofitable. With all this Parade of Services, they were rejected by JEHOVAH, and caſt out from his Preſence, "like an abominable Branch."

Upon the Whole: Shall We ſubmit to the Determination of our eſtabliſhed Church? Shall We acquieſce in the Deciſion of our Divine MASTER? Then We muſt acknowledge; That there is no ſuch Thing as a good Work, till We are reconciled to GOD; till our Perſons are accepted through *CHRIST*.—Therefore, to repreſent our own Works, as the Means of Reconciliation and Acceptance, is both chimerical and abſurd. *Chimerical*, becauſe it builds upon a Phantom; and takes for a Reality, what has no Exiſtence. *Abſurd*, becauſe it inverts the natural Order of Things; and would make the Effect, antecedent to the Cauſe. I might add, *idolatrous* alſo; becauſe it pays to the Performances of a Creature, what is reſerved wholly for the Righteouſneſs of our incarnate GOD.

* Rom. x. 2. † Acts xxvi. 7. Εν εκτενειᾳ.

Ther. Before We quit this agreeable Retreat, let me aſk my *Aſpaſio*; What He propoſes, by running down all thoſe Works, which are the Produce of inward Religion, and eſſential to true Holineſs? Whoſe Excellency is diſplayed in the *cleareſt*, and whoſe Neceſſity is urged in the *ſtrongeſt* Terms, throughout the whole Bible.

Aſp. I am far from running down ſuch Works, as are the Produce of inward Religion; and therefore may be juſtly ityled, *Works of Faith, and Labours of Love* *.—But I would caution my *Theron*, and I would myſelf take care, that our Works be accompanied with thoſe Circumſtances, which alone can render them *truly* good. Let them ariſe from *Faith*, and bear witneſs to *Love*, or elſe We ſhall have *Thiſtles inſtead of Wheat, and Cockle inſtead of Barley* †.

Perform them, in Obedience to a reconciled GOD, and out of Gratitude to a reconciling SAVIOUR, then they are genuine, they are valuable. Attempt them, in order to be accepted by your MAKER, and obtain eternal Life, then they are ſpurious, they are pernicious. In the former

* *Works of Faith, and Labours of Love*, 1 Theſſ. i. 3. How finely are good Works characterized, in this Place! Though it be only *en paſſant*, tranſiently, or by the by. And how judiciouſly are the *true* diſtinguiſhed from the *counterfeit!* Works, which are done in Faith; Works, which proceed from Love; theſe, and theſe only, the Apoſtle ſignifies, are *really* good.—As a ſpacious River, though preſſing forward to the Ocean, nouriſhes many a fair Plant; and ſuckles many a ſweet Flower, by the Way. So the ſacred Writers, though principally intent (as here) upon ſome different Point; yet drop *incidentally* ſuch valuable Truths, as chear the Believer's Heart, and make glad the City of our GOD.

† Job xxxi. 40.

mer Caſe, they are like a Candle ſet on a Candleſtick; in the latter, they are like a Torch placed in the Thatch.

Ther. In what Reſpects can they be pernicious?

Aſp. I will mention two.—We ſhall never be like the Church, *who comes up from the Wilderneſs, leaning upon her Beloved* *; ſo long as We bolſter up Ourſelves, with a Conceit of perſonal Righteouſneſs. This was the Error, the fatal Error of the *Phariſees*. This the Film, which blinded the Eyes of their Mind; and ſealed them up, under the Darkneſs of final Unbelief.

Beſides, my dear *Theron*: If You expect to be ſaved by your own Duties, You will be loth to ſee the worſt of your Condition. To ſee the worſt of your Condition, will be a Dagger to your Hopes, and as Death to your Soul. You will therefore be inclined to *daub with untempered Mortar* †. Inſtead of acknowledging the deep Depravity of your Nature, and the numberleſs Iniquities of your Life, You will invent a thouſand Excuſes, to palliate your Guilt. And, by this Means, erect a *Wall* of *Partition*, between your Soul and the Merits of your REDEEMER. Which will be a greater Inconvenience, a more deſtructive Evil, than to cut off all Supply of Proviſion from an Army encamped, or even to intercept the Sun-beams from viſiting the Earth.

Ther. Now you talk of Armies, I muſt obſerve; That, though I have ſcarce been able to keep my Ground, in this argumentative Action, I cannot allow You the Honour of a Victory. As a *Retreat* is very different from a *Rout*.

* Cant. viii. 5. † Ezek. xiii. 10.

Asp. I would alſo remark, that my Friend has changed the intended Plan of our Operations. Has almoſt continually acted upon the *Offenſive*. While my Part has been only to ſuſtain the Shock. At our next Encounter, You may expect to have the Order of Battle reverſed. I ſhall direct my Forces to begin the Charge. Put Yourſelf therefore in Readineſs for a *briſk Attack.*

Ther. You act the fair Enemy, *Aſpaſio*, I muſt confeſs; in thus giving the Alarm, before You make the Aſſault.

Asp. This Hoſtility may appear *fairer ſtill*, when I aſſure You, that my Weapons aim not at the Deſtruction of your Comfort, or the Demolition of any valuable Intereſt. Only they would be *mighty, through GOD, to pull down the Strong-holds of* Unbelief; and *bring every* ſelf-exalting, every rebellious *Thought, captive unto CHRIST* *. Captive, in a profeſſed Submiſſion to his Righteouſneſs, as well as a dutiful Subjection to his Commands.—And, when *ſuch* is the Tendency of the Campaign, it will be your greateſt Advantage, to loſe the Victory †. It will be better than a Triumph, to acknowledge Yourſelf vanquiſhed.

* Cor. x. 4, 5.

† Εστιν οπου νικη μεν φερει βλαβην, κερδος δε ωφελειαν.

DIALOGUE VIII.

THERON.

OUR laſt Converſation ended with a *Challenge*. To decline or delay the Acceptance of it, would look like Cowardice in me, and be a Piece of Injuſtice to You, *Aſpaſio*. Therefore, I am now ready to give You all the Satisfaction, which a Gentleman can demand.—Only as the Weather continues hazy, I believe, my *Study* muſt be the Place of Action.

Aſp. A Challenge! *Theron*—

Ther. What, Sir! Do You boggle? Would You eat your Words, and play the Poltroon?

Aſp. Perhaps, I may have an Inclination to follow the Example of a *Brother Hero*; who ran away from the Field of Battle, juſt as his Comrades were advancing to charge the Enemy. And when called to an Account for his Behaviour, right worthily alledged; That his Retreat * proceeded, not from any

* *Retreat*—*Bengelius* thinks, there is ſuch an Air of Self-adulation, and vain Pretence, in the Word uſed by the

any Timidity of Mind; no, but from a Concern for the public Good. "For, quoth He, if they "had knocked my Brains out to-day, how ſhould "I have been able to fight for my Country to-"morrow?"

You ſmile, *Theron*, at my doughty Warrior, and his ſage Maxim.—But, ſince You have glanced at a certain *modiſh* Cuſtom, give me Leave very ſeriouſly to aſſure You; That, if the Affair was to be determined by Sword and Piſtol, I ſhould reckon ſuch a Conduct, a reſolute Refuſal at leaſt, not at all unmanly, but the *truly* wiſe and gallant Behaviour. For ſurely, it can never be an Inſtance of Wiſdom, to hazard my Life, at the mere Caprice of a turbulent Ruffian; who is a ſtranger to all the Principles of Humanity and Generoſity, but a Slave, an abandoned Slave, to his own ungovernable Paſſions.—Surely, it can never be an Act of real Bravery, to expoſe *my* Perſon; becauſe ſome fool-hardy Practitioner in the Fencing-ſchool, is deſperate enough to riſk *his*. —The Gentleman, the true Gentleman, ſhould exert a becoming Dignity of Spirit; and ſcorn to ſet his Welfare on a Level, with that of an inconſiderate and barbarous Bully *.

Ther.

the unclean Spirit, *Matt.* xii. 44. Ἐξῆλθον, *exivi*. *Sic loquitur, quaſi non* ejectum. *Vide Superbiam!* He ſays not, I was *caſt out*, but I *came out*. He could not brook the former Expreſſion. His Pride was too great to confeſs the Truth, or to "declare the Thing as it is."

* *Aſtaſio* calls the Perſon who gives the Challenge, a *Bully*. And ſuch, notwithſtanding all the Maxims of fantaſtical and falſe Honour, He will certainly be found, when tried at the Bar of Reaſon or Juſtice. For, if the moſt impetuous, irrational, and brutal Barbarity is allowed to conſtitute a Bully, *He* has an indiſputable Title

to

Ther. But Honour, my *Aſpaſio*, Honour is at ſtake. Better to loſe our Life, than forfeit our Reputation. Better to be in a Grave, than to be the Jeſt of every Coffee-houſe; and perhaps pointed at, as We paſs the Streets, for mean-ſpirited, ſneaking, or, as the Gentlemen of the Sword ſo *elegantly* ſpeak, white livered Animals.

Aſp. Forfeit our Reputation! Amongſt whom, I beſeech You?—A few raſh and precipitate Creatures: The Pupils of *La Mancha*'s Knight: The Sons of *Chimera* * and Cruelty. Who, by aſſociating the Notion of Cowardice, with the Practice of forgiving Injuries; have attempted to bring into Diſrepute, the *moſt generous* Act of the human Mind. Whoſe Principles are, I ſay not, a Departure from the Precepts of Religion, but a Diſgrace to Reaſon, and the Reproach of common Senſe. Whoſe Applauſe, therefore, is Infamy; and their Detraction the higheſt Praiſe they can beſtow.

From every judicious and worthy Perſon, your Conduct will be ſure to gain Approbation, and your Character Eſteem. When *Cæſar* received a Challenge from *Anthony*, to engage Him in ſingle Combat, He very calmly anſwered the Bearer of the Meſſage; *If* Anthony *is weary of Life*, tell Him, *there are other Ways to Death, beſides the Point of my Sword.*

to the Character; who, on account of a mere Punctilio, or ſome ſlight Affront, would deſtroy a Life, which might be of Service to *Society*—might be a Bleſſing to various *Relatives*—and is intimately connected with a bliſsful or miſerable *Immortality*.

* This Kind of Gentry are ſtyled—in a Book, with which they have little or no Acquaintance; but whoſe Maxims will be had in Reverence, when their Names are loſt in Oblivion — בני שאון *The Sons of Bluſter*, or *The Children of Noiſe*, Jer. xlviii. 45.

Sword.—Who ever deemed this, a mean-ſpirited or ſneaking Behaviour? All Ages have admired it, as the Reſolution of a *diſcreet* and *gallant* Man: who was ſenſible of his own Importance, and knew how to treat the petulant and revengeful Humour of a diſcontented Adverſary with its deſerved Contempt.

Barely to loſe our Life, is the ſmalleſt of thoſe Evils, which attend this miſchievous Practice.—It is pregnant with a long, an almoſt endleſs Train of diſaſtrous Conſequences to Parents, Wives, Children, Friends, Aſſociates, and the Community.—It is an infallible Expedient, to be deprived of the Favour of the infinite GOD, and to be excluded from the Joys of his eternal Kingdom.—It is the ready Way, to become an Object of Abhorrence to the Angels of Light; and be made the Laughing-ſtock of Devils, in their Dungeons of Darkneſs *. *Shame*, everlaſting Shame, *ſhall be* the Reward of ſuch Gallantry, *the Promotion of* ſuch *Fools* †.

Ther.

* "Let me tell You with Confidence," (ſays an excellent Perſon, addreſſing Himſelf to one of theſe unhappy *Deſperados*) "that all Duels, or ſingle Combats, "are murderous; blanch them over (how You liſt) with "Names of Honour, and honeſt Pretences, their Uſe is "ſinful, and their Nature deviliſh." See the ſelect Works of Biſhop *Hall*, in one Volume, Fol. pag. 526. Where the Reader will find a happy Mixture of true *Oratory*, and ſound *Divinity*; a rich Vein of *Fancy*, and a ſweet Spirit of *Piety*; Contemplations upon the Hiſtories of Scripture (which, I think, are our Prelate's Maſter-piece) almoſt as *entertaining* and *inſtructive*, as the Subjects illuſtrated are important and wonderful.—Notwithſtanding a few ſtiff or antique Phraſes, I cannot but eſteem the Works of this Author, among the moſt valuable Compoſitions extant in our Language.

† Prov. iii. 35.

Ther. With regard to this Point, I am entirely of your Opinion, *Aſpaſio*; however I may differ in other Particulars.

Aſp. Say You ſo, *Theron!* Would *You* then tamely ſubmit to Affronts, Inſults, and Aſſaults?

Ther. As to the trifling Affronts of a peeviſh incontinent Tongue, I would treat them with a ſuperior Scorn. When thus treated, they are ſure to recoil, with the keeneſt Edge, and ſevereſt Weight, upon the impotent Malice which offers them. The Wretch ſhould ſee, that I could pity his Miſery, and ſmile at his Folly.—But with regard to Aſſaults, eſpecially thoſe of a capital Nature, the Caſe is otherwiſe. Should any one offer Violence to my Perſon, it is at his Peril. He would find, and perhaps to his Smart,

Et Nos Tela Manu, Ferrumque haud debile Dextrâ
Spargimus, & noſtro ſequitur de Vulnere Sanguis *.

Here, the fundamental and everlaſting Law of *Self-preſervation* calls upon Us to play the Man. And I am ſure, *Chriſtianity* does not require Us, to yield our Throats to the Knife, or open our Breaſts to the Dagger.

But to retire—to deliberate—to ſit down—and indite a *formal* Challenge—ſeems to me altogether as ſavage and iniquitous, as to aſſault on the Highway. —He that demands my Money on the Road, or extorts it by an incendiary Letter, or decoys me into the Snare by a forged and counterfeit Note; is ſtigmatized for a Villain; is abhorred by every Perſon of Integrity; and, when detected, is rewarded with a Halter. Why ſhould We reckon the Head-ſtrong Bravo

* VIRG.

Bravo *less injurious?* Who makes his Attempt upon my very Life; and thirsts, with insatiable Fury, for my Blood?

Asp. He allows You a fair *Chance*; it is said.

Ther. A Chance! Of what?—Either of falling a Sacrifice to his Rage, or of imbruing my Hands in his Blood. Which is neither more nor less, than reducing me to a Necessity, of launching into Damnation myself, or of transmitting a Fellow-creature to eternal Vengeance.—And is *this* an Extenuation? *This* a mitigating Circumstance? It really proves the Practice so inexcusably wicked, that nothing can be pleaded in its Defence. The very Argument, used to justify the horrid Deed, inflames its Guilt and aggravates its Malignity.

'Tis Pity, but the legislative Authority would interpose, for the Suppression of such a flagrant Wrong to Society, and such a notorious Violation of our benign Religion. Why should not the Laws declare it *Felony*, to make the first Overture for a Duel? Since it is always more heinous, and frequently more pernicious. Is always Murder in the Intention, and frequently issues in *double* Destruction: the One, inflicted by the Stab of Violence; the Other, executed by the Sword of Justice.

Might it not, at least be branded with some Mark of public Infamy, or subjected to a severe *pecuniary Mulct?* So that a Gentleman of Spirit and Temper might have it in his Power to return the Compliment of a challenging Letter with some such Answer;

" *SIR*,

" However meanly You may think of *Your* Life,
" I set too high a Value upon *mine*, to expose it as

" a Mark for undiſciplined and outrageous Paſſions.
" —Neither have I ſo totally renounced all that is
" humane, benevolent, or amiable, as to draw my
" Sword for your Deſtruction, becauſe You have
" FIRST been overcome by precipitate and unrea-
" ſonable Reſentment.—You have given me an
" Opportunity of acting the Gentleman and the
" Chriſtian. And this Challenge I accept, as a
" Note under your Hand for five hundred Pounds *;
" which will very ſoon be demanded, according to
" Law, by

SIR,

Your, &c."

Aſp. But to reſume the proper Subject—the Nature of *our* Engagement. Which I now recollect, and which was explained, when I ventured to give, what You call the Challenge.—As it is not my *Theron*, but the Obſtacles of his Faith, and the Enemies of his Felicity, which I am to encounter; perhaps, I ſhall have Courage to ſtand my Ground. And,

* Might not the Refuſer of a Challenge be dignified with ſome honorary Diſtinction, reſembling the *Civic Crown* among the antient *Romans?* Since, by his cool and temperate Bravery, He ſaves one Life from the Sword, another from the Halter.—Was ſome honorary Diſtinction on the one hand, united to a pecuniary Forfeiture on the other, I cannot but think, they would prove an effectual Method to *check* the *Progreſs* of this deſtructive Evil. It would break the Teeth of Malice with her own Weapons, and turn the Artillery of Revenge upon Herſelf. Thoſe deteſtable Paſſions would be loth to indulge themſelves in this horrid Manner, if it was made the ſure Way to *ennoble* and *enrich* the Object of their Rage.—*N. B.* The *Civic Crown* was an Ornament aſſigned to thoſe Soldiers, who had in Battle reſcued a Fellow-citizen from impending Death.

And, inſtead of *violating* all the Obligations of Equity, Honeſty, and Conſcience, I ſhall certainly evidence my Love to my Friend; nay poſſibly promote his trueſt Good.

Ther. I don't ſee, how this can be effected, by your late Attempt. You attempted to *run down* all Works of Righteouſneſs, as abſolutely unable to find Acceptance with GOD, and equally inſufficient to recommend Us to his Favour.—It is for the Credit of theſe, which *Aſpaſio* has depreciated, that I enter the Liſts.

Aſp. I attempted to prove, That no human Works ſhould pretend to the Honour of juſtifying Us, either in Whole, or in Part. Becauſe—this would be an Uſurpation of the REDEEMER's Office—this would overthrow the Goſpel-method of Juſtification, which is by *imputing Righteouſneſs without Works* * —this, inſtead of excluding, would introduce Boaſting. And oppoſe, if not defeat, the grand Deſign of JEHOVAH, in the Salvation of Sinners; which is, to diſplay the infinite Riches of his Grace.

When any Works are attended with *ſuch* Circumſtances, I cannot but wonder, to hear them called Works of Righteouſneſs. I am at a Loſs to conceive, how they can themſelves be acceptable; much more, how they can recommend a Tranſgreſſor to the Favour of GOD.—Nay, I hear our divine MASTER poſitively and peremptorily declaring, that they are, not good, but evil. *The World hateth me, becauſe I teſtify of it, that the Works thereof are evil* †.

Ther.

* Rom. iv. 6. † John vii. 7.

Ther. The World—that is, the Gentile World, or the wicked World; which was abandoned to Licentiouſneſs and groſs Immorality. Making no Scruple to indulge Luſt or Revenge; committing Adultery or Injuſtice, or whatever gratified a vicious Inclination.

Aſp. And can You think, that the SON of the moſt high GOD, ſhould be ſent from the Heaven of Heavens, only to tell People that Revenge and Adultery are evil? Or does the World hate a Perſon, for inveighing againſt Licentiouſneſs and groſs Immorality? No, *Theron:* the Works, againſt which our LORD teſtified; the Works, which He cenſured as evil; were the *very beſt* Deeds both of *Jews* and *Gentiles.* Thoſe, for which they approved and valued themſelves; in which they gloried, and on which they truſted. This Teſtimony, bearing ſo hard upon all human Excellency, affronted their Pride, and inflamed their Reſentment; as it ſeems to have enkindled a little Warmth in my Friend's Temper.

However, as You apprehend ſome Injury done to the Credit of human Works, let Us, as We lately promiſed, give the Matter a fair Hearing.—What is the Standard, to which theſe Works of Righteouſneſs muſt be conformed; and by which their Sufficiency may be determined?

Ther. The *moral Law,* doubtleſs; I know no other Standard of Righteouſneſs, nor any other Way of becoming righteous.

Aſp. You will, I hope, ere long, be acquainted with another Way. You will know, what that meaneth, which is ſpoken by the Apoſtle; *With the Heart Man* BELIEVETH UNTO RIGHTEOUS-

NESS *.—At preſent, I agree to your Propoſal. We will join iſſue on this Footing; and try the Merits of our Cauſe, before the *Tribunal* of the Law. Yourſelf ſhall be the Judge. I will only aſk your Opinion, and refer myſelf to your Deciſion. —You ſee, I am ſoon weary of the military Style. I had obtruded myſelf on a Part, which I was not qualified to act; and now reſume a more becoming Character.

Ther. If You place me on the Bench, I ſhall allow of no ſuch Digreſſions; but ſhall keep You cloſe to the Subject.

Aſp. Has your Lordſhip then conſidered the Nature of the divine Law, and the Extent of its Obligations?

Ther. It obliges *all* Perſons, and comprizes the *Whole* Duty of Mankind. It forbids all Immorality, and enjoins every Virtue.—Are not theſe your Sentiments?

Aſp. They are, when ſomewhat enlarged.—The Empire of the Law, as *prohibitory* of Evil, extends both to the outward and inward Man. It takes cognizance of the Actions. It judges every Word. All the Operations, and all the Diſpoſitions of the Soul, come under its ſacred Juriſdiction.—It is indeed a Diſcerner, not only of the working Thoughts, but alſo of the dawning Intentions; and arraigns them both at its awful Bar. *It pierces even to the dividing aſunder of the Soul and Spirit* †. Not the inmoſt Receſſes of the Breaſt, are too deep for its Penetration; nor all the Artifices of the deceitful Heart, too ſubtle for its Detection.—Other Laws forbid the unclean Act; *this* condemns the wanton Eye, and irregular Deſire.

* Rom. x. 10. † Heb. iv. 12.

Deſire. Other Laws puniſh the injurious Deed; *this* paſſes Sentence on the unguarded Sallies of Paſſion, and the moſt ſecret Emotions of Reſentment. So eminently true is that Remark of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Thy Commandments are exceeding broad* * *!*—Tell me now, *Theron*, has your Obedience been commenſurate with this extenſive Platform of Duty?

Ther. If the Law be ſo *very extenſive*—

Aſp. Nay, my Friend, You cannot ſuſpect, that I have ſtretched, to an undue Extent, the Obligations of the divine Law. Since this Interpretation is eſtabliſhed by an Authority, *too great* to be controverted; *too clear* to be miſunderſtood; even by the Authority of *CHRIST* Himſelf. Whoſe Sermon upon the Mount, is a profeſſed Expoſition of the Commandments; and maintains, in the moſt explicit Manner, all that I have advanced.—So that, if our LORD's Expoſition is juſt, it will be neither raſh, nor uncharitable to ſay; There is not a Man upon Earth, but has broke them *all*.

Ther. Are We all Idolaters then? All Adulterers? All Murderers? Shocking to imagine!

Aſp. It is ſhocking, I confeſs.—But how much more ſhocking to true Religion, and to common Senſe, if *ſuch* Delinquents expect Juſtification by their own Deeds?

Ther. This is no Proof of your Aſſertion, my good Friend.

Aſp. To be fond of Gold; to be enamoured with the World; to love any Creature more than the ever-bleſſed CREATOR; are Inſtances of Idolatry †, not quite ſo groſs, but altogether as real, as to ſet up Idols in our Temples, or pay Acts of Ado-

* Pſal. cxix. 96. † Col. iii. 5. Phil. iii. 19.

ration to ſenſeleſs Images. Have You always been free from this *Apoſtacy* of the *Affections?*

Our infallible TEACHER has informed Us, That unreaſonable Anger, contemptuous Language, and malevolent Wiſhes *, are each a Species of Murder; and not many Removes from the Aſſaſſin's deadly Stab. Have You been always meek, always benevolent, and never chargeable with this *mental Homicide?*

We are farther aſſured, That the Indulgence of inordinate Deſire is, in the impartial Eſtimate of Heaven, as the Commiſſion of the impure Deed †. And evil Concupiſcence, of every Kind, violates that ſacred Precept, *Thou ſhalt not covet* ‡. Has your Will

* Matt. v. 22. † Matt. v. 28.

‡ *Rom.* vii. 7. *Aſpaſio*'s Obſervation brings to my Remembrance a *remarkable Incident*; which, as it is quite pertinent to our Purpoſe, the Reader will allow me to relate. It paſſed between a Friend of mine, and a certain ingenious Stranger, into whoſe Company He happened to fall.—The Gentleman was extolling, at a laviſh Rate, the Virtue of *Honeſty*: what a Dignity it imparted to our Nature! How it recommended Us to the Supreme BEING! He confirmed all by a celebrated Line from Mr. *Pope*,

An honeſt Man's the nobleſt Work of GOD.

Sir, replied my Friend, however excellent the Virtue of Honeſty may be, I fear, there are very few Men in the World, that really poſſeſs it.—You ſurpriſe me! ſaid the Stranger.—Ignorant as I am of your Character, Sir, I fanſy, it would be no difficult Matter, to prove even *You* a diſhoneſt Man.—I defy You.—Will You give me leave then, to aſk You a Queſtion or two; and promiſe not to be offended?—Aſk your Queſtions, and welcome. —Have you never met with an Opportunity of getting Gain by ſome *unfair* Means?—The Gentleman pauſed. —I don't aſk, Whether You made *uſe of*, but whether

Will been invariably upright, and warped with no irregular Inclination? Are You wholly unpolluted with this *Adultery* of the *Heart?*

I wait not for a Reply. I have often heard You *plead Guilty* to all—yes, to all and every of theſe Charges reſpectively.

Ther. Where, and when, *Aſpaſio?*

Aſp. In the moſt venerable Place, and on the moſt ſolemn Occaſion. And not You only, but a whole Multitude of ſelf-condemned Criminals. — Our Church, You know, has engrafted the Decalogue into her public Service; and taught all her Members to anſwer, after the Repetition of each Commandment; *LORD, have Mercy upon Us, and incline our Hearts to keep this Law.* Is there any Senſe in theſe Words? Or have We any Meaning, when We utter them? If We have, ſurely they muſt imply an Acknowledgement of Diſobedience in *every* Particular.—The Criminal arraigned at the Bar, never falls on his Knees and craves Forgiveneſs,

You have *met* with, ſuch Opportunity? I, for my Part, have; and, I believe, every Body elſe has.—Very probably I may.—How did You feel Your Mind affected, on ſuch an Occaſion? Had You *no* ſecret Deſire, not the *leaſt* Inclination, to ſeize the Advantage which offered? Tell me, without any Evaſion, and conſiſtently with the Character You admire?—I muſt acknowledge, I have not always been abſolutely free from every irregular *Inclination*, but—Hold, Sir; none of your Salvos. You have confeſſed enough. If You had the Deſire, though You never proceeded to the Action, this ſhews You was diſhoneſt in *Heart*. This is what the Scripture calls *Concupiſcence*. It defiles the Soul. It is a Breach of that Law, which requireth *Truth in the inner Parts*. And, unleſs You are pardoned through the Blood of *CHRIST*, will be a juſt Ground of your Condemnation, *when GOD ſhall judge the Secrets of Men*.

till He either confeſſes or is convicted. This then muſt be the Purport of our Reſponſe. "We are "verily guilty concerning this thing. And we "humbly implore both pardoning Mercy for the "paſt, and ſtrengthening Grace for the future."

Give me leave to urge my Queſtion a little farther.—Is there a *ſingle Day*, in which You have not tranſgreſſed, ſome Way or other, this ſacred Rule?

Ther. If the Law of GOD will diſpenſe with no Deviation, not even in the firſt Starts of Thought —But ſurely to affirm this, is to extend the Law beyond all reaſonable Bounds. The Motions of evil Deſire, *if indulged*, are undoubtedly criminal. But are they alſo, *when reſtrained*, Breaches of Duty? I ſhould rather imagine, that ſuch Temptations are thrown in our Way, for the Trial of our Obedience. Which, had they no Power over our Affections, would not be Trials; and, when they are reſolutely withſtood, cannot be Faults.

Aſp. What was the Judgment of our Reformers? And what is the Voice of our Church? We may find both in the Ninth Article. "Although there "is no Condemnation for them that believe and are "baptiſed, yet the Apoſtle doth confeſs, That Con-"cupiſcence and Luſt hath of itſelf the Nature of "Sin." It is not ſaid, Concupiſcence hath *then only* the Nature of Sin, when it is ripened into Action; but *of itſelf*, and before it breaks out into the Commiſſion of Iniquity. *Of itſelf* it is contrary to the pure Nature, and therefore cannot but be condemned by the perfect Law of GOD.

Ther. This I can truly plead in my own Behalf; That it has not been cuſtomary with me to offend; at

at leaſt not *preſumptuouſly*, or of deliberate Wickedneſs.

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, do not offer to *palliate* your Guilt. Such an Opiate may ſtupify, but will not cure: or rather, like Opiates ill prepared, it will intoxicate the Mind, and counteract the Operation of every healing Medicine.—Beſides, it is not only pernicious, but falſe and unreaſonable. You know the Uſe of that *ſolar Microſcope*, and are able to inform me of its Effects.

Ther. I ought to be pretty well acquainted with theſe Experiments; ſince it has long been my favourite Diverſion, to employ a few ſpare Hours in ſuch agreeable Speculations.

Aſp. You have ſeen the Body of an Inſect, accommodated to the ſurpriſing Inſtrument. When, in this Situation, the Animal was pricked by a very fine Needle; your Eye, your naked Eye, juſt perceived the *Puncture*; and diſcovered, perhaps, a *Speck* of Moiſture oozing from the Orifice. But, in what Manner were they repreſented, by the magnifying Inſtrument?

Ther. The Puncture was widened into a frightful *Gaſh*. The Speck of Moiſture ſwelled into a copious Stream; and flowed, like a *Torrent* from the gaping Wound. An Ox, under the ſacrificing Knife, ſcarce looks more bulky, or bleeds more largely.

Aſp. Don't You apprehend my Deſign?—If *We*, ſhort-ſighted Mortals, and almoſt blinded with Self-love; if *We* cannot but be ſenſible of our Faults; how flagrant muſt they appear, in what enormous Magnitudes, and with what aggravating Circumſtances, to an Eye perfectly pure, and infinitely penetrating?

Inſtead of attempting to extenuate our Offences, let Us make ſome ſuch improving Reflections.—"If this holy Law, which prohibits the minuteſt "Failure, form the Indictment; if this all-diſcern-"ing GOD, who ſifts our Conduct even to the "ſmalleſt Defect, be the Judge; and our perſonal "Goodneſs, which abounds with Imperfections, "the Plea; what can We expect, at that deciſive "Hour, when the LORD ſhall *lay Judgment to* "*the Line, and Righteouſneſs to the Plummet* * ?— "Surely, this Conſideration ſhould incline Us, to "adopt the wiſe and ardent Wiſh of the Apoſtle; "*That We may* now, in this our Day, *win CHRIST*; "*and*, at the laſt tremendous Audit, *be found in* "*Him*; *not having our own Righteouſneſs, which is of* "*the Law*, for the Foundation of our Hopes, *but* "*the Righteouſneſs which is of GOD, by Faith in* "*JESUS CHRIST* †."

Conſider the Law in its nobler Capacity, as *enjoining* whatever is excellent.—Can You hope, *Theron*, to be juſtified by it, if You fall ſhort of its Demands, not barely in a few Inſtances, but in *every* Action of your Life, and *every* Temper of your Heart?

Ther. Such a Hope, cheriſhed amidſt ſuch Circumſtances, would be fallacious and abſurd.—But I truſt, I am not ſo very faulty, or rather ſo entirely abandoned, as your Interrogatory ſuppoſes.

Aſp. Have You duly examined the *Spirituality* of the divine Law?—It is ſtyled, an incorruptible Picture of the High and Holy ONE, that inhabiteth Eternity. It is, doubtleſs, a Copy of his abſolute Rectitude and ſupreme Perfection. It is a bright Repre-

* Iſai. xxviii. 17. † Phil. iii. 8, 9.

Repreſentation of his *moſt pure* Nature, and a beautiful Delineation of his *moſt holy* Will.—It not only preſcribes the external Duties of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, but calls for the moſt upright Imaginations and devout Affections.—Nay, it inſiſts upon the Exerciſe of every Virtue, and that in the *higheſt* Degree. Love to GOD, without the leaſt Lukewarmneſs; and Love to our Neighbour, without any Unkindneſs; a Sanctity of Deſire, that knows no Stain; and an Integrity of Behaviour, that includes whatever is *holy*, *juſt*, and *good*.—In ſhort; it requires Us to be perfect, *even as our FATHER which is in Heaven is perfect* *.

Do any of your Actions come up to this exalted Standard? Are any of your Graces thus refined?

Ther. Am I then abſolutely *an Inſolvent*, before the great LORD of the Univerſe? Have I no Lamb in my Fold, that is without a Blemiſh? Nothing in my Life, nothing in my Heart, but what is defective and defiled?

* *Matt.* v. 48. Our LORD, having explained ſeveral Commandments of the Law, ſums up the Whole, and gives Us the Spirit of all, in this moſt refined Precept; *Be Ye perfect even*, &c. If the Reader pleaſes to take this Paſſage into Conſideration, He will have a more ſatisfactory Anſwer to *Theron*'s Objection, concerning the *firſt Motions* of evil Deſire; more ſatisfactory I mean, than was ſuggeſted in the preceding Pages. There, the Reply turned upon human Teſtimony; Here, it reſts upon divine Authority.

I hope, the candid Reader will, on other Occaſions, remember this Obſervation. And if, at any Time, the *ſtrongeſt* Reaſons are not immediately aſſigned; let Him ſuppoſe it poſſible, that they are omitted in one Place, only to be introduced and urged, perhaps with greater Advantage, in another.

Pleraque differet, & præſens in Tempus omittet. HOR.

Aſp. Indeed, my Friend, this is not *your* Condition alone, but the Condition of the moſt irreproachable Perſon on Earth. There is *None* perfect, in any Character, or in any Work, no not One. None that obeys the divine Law, invariably and completely. And, before the Tribunal of GOD, nothing paſſes for Righteouſneſs, but a complete and abſolute Obedience.

Caſt your Eye upon the Names, which are ſubjoined to thoſe beautiful *Prints*. How elegant is the Engraving! How accurate are the Letters! The Strokes moſt delicately fine! Their Shape moſt exactly true!—Let me aſk You to tranſcribe them with Your Pen; and make the Copy equal to the Original. Preſerve all the noble Boldneſs of the *Roman* Stamp, and all the graceful Softneſs of the *Italian* Touch.—What? Could You not execute this Taſk, even in your preſent unimpaired Health, and with the Exertion of all your Skill? How miſerably then muſt You fall ſhort, if your Eyes were *dim* with Age; if your Hands ſhook with a *paralytic* Diſorder; and your Underſtanding was oppreſſed with a *lethargic* Dulneſs?—Such is really the Caſe with regard to all the Children of Men. Our Nature is depraved; our moral Abilities are enervated; and our intellectual Faculties clouded. And can We, in ſuch a State of Impotence, tranſcribe that ſacred Syſtem, which is the very Image of GOD—tranſcribe it into our Tempers, and render it legible in our Lives, without diminiſhing one Jot or Tittle of its perfect Purity?

Ther. Though I fall ſhort, there are Chriſtians of a much higher Claſs. Chriſtians, I don't doubt, who have theſe Laws written on their Hearts; all whoſe

whoſe Tempers are caſt into this heavenly Mould. Nor am I myſelf without Hopes of making *more conſiderable* Advances in Holineſs.

Aſp. May your Hopes be quickened into vigorous Endeavours! And your Endeavours be crowned with abundant Succeſs!—What You ſuppoſe, concerning very eminent Chriſtians, I cannot wholly admit, neither do I wholly deny. They may have all their Tempers caſt into the heavenly Mould: but then, they are conformed to the ſacred Pattern, only *in Part*. There is a Reſemblance; yet not ſuch as that clear and ſteady Mirror (pointing to a fine Glaſs over the Chimney-piece) exhibits; but ſuch as ſome turbulent and muddy Stream reflects.—If the Breaſts of theſe eminent Chriſtians were formed on the Model of *Druſus*'s * Houſe; I verily think, You would have a lower Opinion of their Acquiſitions in Virtue.

David, Whom GOD himſelf dignifies with the moſt exalted of all Characters, and ſtyles *a Man after his own Heart* †; who, to a moſt inflamed Love, added a moſt accurate Knowledge, of the divine Teſtimonies; was deeply ſenſible of the Truth, I would inculcate. After an attentive Contemplation of the Sublimity, the Extent, the Sanctity of thoſe heavenly Inſtitutes, He breaks out into this humbling Exclamation;

* When *Druſus*, a noble *Roman*, was deliberating upon a Model for his new Houſe; the Architect offered to build it in ſuch a Taſte, that no Eye ſhould overlook any of his Rooms.—"You quite miſtake my Inclination, "ſaid *Druſus*. I am for the very Reverſe of your Plan. "I would have my Houſe ſo contrived, that every Paſ- "ſenger may ſee, whatever is tranſacted within."

† For the Propriety of this Character, and its Correſpondence with the Perſon, let me refer the Reader to "a *Note*, in *Dialogue* I. *p.* 27.

mation; "*Who can tell, how oft He offendeth* *?
"Was the moſt vigilant Conduct, or the moſt pu-
"rified Soul, examined by this conſummate Rule;
"innumerable would be found the Slips of the for-
"mer, and glaring would the Failures of the latter
"appear."

Ther. I cannot ſee the Reaſon, for *degrading* human Nature, to ſuch an extravagant Degree; and ranking human Works among the Refuſe of Things.

Aſp. Do You aſk the Reaſon of this Remonſtrance? —It is to preſerve Us from the miſchievous Error of the *Phariſee*. Who, meaſuring Himſelf, not by the *true*, *ſublime*, and *extenſive* Senſe of the Law; but by a falſe, debaſed, and mutilated Interpretation; became haughty in his own Conceit, and therefore abominable in the Sight of GOD.—Hear Him trumpeting his own Praiſe; *I am no Extortioner, no Adulterer* †. This, the poor vain Creature fanſied, was a ſufficient Obedience, paid to the *ſecond* Table. See Him ſtill ſtrutting in his own imaginary Plumes ‡.

I

* Pſal. xix. 12. † Luke xviii. 11.

‡ This ſeems to give the genuine Signification of τὸ ὑψηλὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποις, Luke xvi. 15. Not *that which is highly eſteemed*, εὔκριτον, εὔδοξον. The Propoſition, taken in this Senſe, is neither neceſſarily nor univerſally true. The Meekneſs of *Moſes*, the Fortitude of *Joſhua*, the Wiſdom of *Solomon*, were highly eſteemed among thoſe very Men, to whom our LORD addreſſed his Diſcourſe. Yet none can ſuppoſe, that the Endowments of thoſe illuſtrious Perſonages, were *an Abomination in the Sight of GOD.*—Whereas, whatever is *high and lifted up*, haughty and conceited; every Sentiment of Self-admiration, and all the Fruits which ſpring from that bitter Root; theſe are *certainly* and *invariably* Objects of the divine Abhorrence.

I think, therefore, the Sentence ſhould be tranſlated, *That which is vain and aſſuming*; not among, but *in Men*, in their Spirit and Temper. This Interpretation is moſt ſuitable,

I faſt twice in the Week; I give Tythes of all that I poſſeſs *. This, He fooliſhly imagined, was a due Compliance with the Injunctions of the *firſt* Table. —The young Ruler, was evidently under the ſame Deluſion, when He had the Aſſurance to declare: *All theſe Things*, which are preſcribed by the divine Law, *have I kept from my Youth up* †.

A more peſtilent Opinion, it is ſcarce poſſible for the Mind of Man to entertain. Nor can any Thing appear more egregiouſly miſtaken, if We conſider the *vaſt comprehenſive* Scope of the ſacred Precepts. That they require an *exact* Conformity, in every Particular, and every Punctilio. That they require the utmoſt Perfection of every Duty, and forbid the leaſt Degree of every Sin.

Ther. Remember, *Aſpaſio*, what the Apoſtle has declared; *Not the Hearers, but the Doers of the Law, ſhall be juſtified. The Doers of the Law*; this ſhews the Poſſibility of performing its Precepts. *Shall be juſtified*; this proves, that Juſtification is by Obedience. This one Sentence ſeems to demoliſh, whatever You have been building on the Subject.

Aſp. It is ſtrange to obſerve, that ſome eminent Commentators have agreed with *Theron*, in giving the ſame inconſiſtent and uncomfortable Turn to the Apoſtle's Expreſſion. Gravely telling Us, that "the

ſuitable, not only to Fact in general, but to the Import of this Word in particular. See *Rom.* xi. 20. Where it occurs in a ſimilar Acceptation, μη υψηλοφρονει. *Be not high-minded.*—It ſeems alſo beſt to quadrate with the Tenour of our SAVIOUR's Reproof; *Ye are they that juſtify Yourſelves before Men*, but all ſuch arrogant Attempts, and every ſuch elated Air (which conſtitute the το υψηλον) the moſt holy GOD beholds with Deteſtation.

* Luke xviii. 12. † Matt. xix. 20.

" the Doers of the Law, who ſteadily and uniformly, " in the Tenour of their Lives, act agreeably to " its Precepts, they, and they only, ſhall be juſti- " fied in the Day of final Audit and Account."

This I call *inconſiſtent*. Becauſe, it is diametrically oppoſite to St. *Paul*'s Aſſertion; *By the Works of the Law, ſhall no Man living be juſtified. Uncomfortable*; becauſe, if this was the Method of Juſtification, it would ſhut the Door of Hope on all Mankind.—Whereas, the Scope of the Apoſtle is, not ſimply to ſhew, in what Manner Sinners are juſtified before GOD; but what is requiſite to their Juſtification, according to the Tenour of the divine Law. Which demands, not any Performance, but a complete Obedience. Diſcharged with all the Heart, and all the Strength; without any Deficiency in Action, or any Irregularity of Inclination. *Such* Obedience if any Man produces, He ſhall be accounted juſt, even by the Sentence of the Law.—But when did the Sun behold ſuch a Perſon? Or what Annals have recorded ſuch a Character?

Ther. Is there nothing valuable then in Regularity of Conduct, and Integrity of Heart? Nothing valuable, in our Acts of Charity, and Habits of Virtue?

Aſp. From our *Fellow-creatures* they ſtand intitled to Reſpect, Imitation, and Gratitude. But before *infinite* Perfection, they muſt drop their Claim, and lie proſtrate in the Duſt; imploring Forgiveneſs, not challenging a Reward. We all diſcern a Beauty and a twinkling Luſtre in the Stars, when viewed under the Shades of Night. But, when the magnificent Source of Day ariſes, their Beauty vaniſhes, their Luſtre is Darkneſs. *Such* are human Accompliſhments,

pliſhments, when compared with the perfect Law, or beheld by the piercing Eye, of the ſupremely glorious GOD.

Ther. Methinks, this Notion confounds the Difference of Good and Evil; and, by rendering all our Actions *blameable*, would render them all *alike*. This is levelling with a Witneſs!

Aſp. It renders them all equally incapable of recommending Us to our MAKER. It ſays, and ſo does the Tenour of the Law, and ſo does the Wiſdom of GOD, *I will declare thy Righteouſneſs and thy Works*; *that*, in the grand Article of Juſtification, *they ſhall not profit Thee* *. For this Purpoſe, nothing is good, nothing effectual, but the Actions of one Man, that is *CHRIST*.

All that We perform, however *ſpecious* it may ſeem, is very *far ſhort* of our elevated Rule. Therefore, cannot procure the divine Favour, or intitle Us to the Kingdom of Heaven.—Nay, if GOD ſhould enter into Judgment with Us, on the Foot of our own Performances; He would diſcover ſuch Defects, even in the *choiceſt* Inſtances of our Obedience, as muſt render them Matter of Condemnation †, not meritorious of Applauſe.

Be pleaſed to obſerve this Penknife—What can be more exquiſitely keen, than the Edge; or more nicely poliſhed, than the Blade? But, how do they appear, when beheld through one of thoſe Microſcopes?

Ther.

* Iſai. lvii. 12.

† To this Aſſertion St. *Cyril*, in Concert with ſeveral other Fathers, bears a very expreſs Teſtimony: Αυτο ημων ϗ το ορθως εργασθαι δοκουν, μομφης ϗ αιτιας αμοιρησειεν αν ου τι που περιεργαζομενου τε ϗ βασανιζοντος Θεου. *Even thoſe of our Actions, which ſeem to be performed in a right Manner, could not eſcape Cenſure and Blame, if GOD ſhould but ſlightly examine, and bring them to the Teſt.*

Ther. The Edge leſs ſharp than the Woodman's Ax, or rather more blunt than his Iron Wedge. The Poliſh reſembles a Maſs of *coarſe* Metal, rudely hammered on the Anvil.

Aſp. How very delicate is the Cambrick, which forms your Ruffles; and gives ſuch an ornamental Air to your whole Dreſs! Nothing can be finer, than the Threads; or more exact, than the Texture. But what is their Appearance in a microſcopic View?

Ther. You would take the fine Threads for hempen *Cords*; and would almoſt be poſitive, that they had been *wattled* together, by the clumſy Hands of the Hurdle-maker; rather than curiouſly wove, in the Artiſt's Loom.

Aſp. That lovely Piece of Enamel, which makes a Part of your Lady's penſile Equipage, quite charms the Spectator, with the Juſtneſs of its Figure, and the Radiancy of its Colours. But—

Ther. Under the Scrutiny of this ſearching Inſtrument, it loſes all its Elegance; and inſtead of winning our Admiration, provokes our Contempt. It looks like a Heap of Mortar, *plaiſtered* on by the Maſon's Trowel.

Aſp. You ſee then, *Theron*, what groſs Indelicacies, what bungling Inequalities, this ſupplementary Aid to our Sight diſcovers, even in the *moſt finiſhed* Works of human Art. So, and abundantly more, does the immaculate Purity of GOD, diſcern Imperfections in our moſt upright Deeds, and moſt guarded Hours.

Therefore, though the Apoſtle could confidently declare, *I know nothing by myſelf*; I am not conſcious of any Remiſſneſs, or any Unfaithfulneſs, in the Diſcharge of my Office. *Yet I am not*, he adds, *thereby juſti-*

juſtified *; for the LORD is greater than my Conſcience, and may eſpy many a Failure, where I myſelf can ſee nothing faulty.

I ſaid *immaculate*; and I ought to have ſaid more. Angels, and the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, are endowed with immaculate, but the LORD JEHOVAH is poſſeſſed of *infinite* Purity.—Have You conſidered this Attribute of the GODHEAD, *Theron?*

Ther. I have; and not without Amazement at the charming, the awful Deſcriptions of it, which occur in the ſacred Writings.—GOD is not only holy, but, as the Lawgiver of the *Jews* very ſublimely expreſſes Himſelf, *glorious in Holineſs* †. The ſacred Penmen, treating of this illuſtrious Perfection, ſeem to labour the important Point. They indulge the loftieſt Flights of Imagination; they employ the boldeſt Figures of Speech; and add the moſt glowing Colours of Eloquence; not without frequent Acknowledgments, that all the force of Language, is abundantly too *feeble*, for the unutterable Subject.

One of the Prophets, addreſſing the KING eternal, immortal, inviſible, breaks out into this extatic Exclamation; *O LORD, my GOD, my HOLY ONE, Thou art of purer Eyes, than* (to *allow*, ſhall I ſay? This is an Aſcription of Praiſe, unſpeakably too mean for thy ſurpaſſing Excellency. Thou art of purer Eyes, than) *to look upon Evil, and canſt not behold Iniquity* ‡.—Another, wrapt into a prophetic Viſion, ſees the *Seraphim* veiling their Faces, in Token of profound Humiliation; hears thoſe Sons of Ardour and Love, crying, in loud reſponſive Strains; *Holy, Holy,*

* 1 Cor. iv. 4. † Exod. xv. 11. ‡ Hab. i. 13.

Holy, Holy is the LORD GOD of Sabbaoth *. So tranſcendently holy, ſays another devout Worſhiper, is

* *Iſai.* vi. 3. The Poets, and Writers of a bold Imagination, are particularly fond of *Machinery*; of introducing celeſtial Beings, in order to give ſome peculiar Dignity to their Plan, or ſome additional Strength to their Sentiments. With inimitable Propriety and Emphaſis, is this Species of fine Writing uſed in Scripture. Eſpecially in the Paſſage quoted above.

Let us conſider—The *principal* Object. *I ſaw the LORD*; the ſupreme Judge, and the everlaſting King. Manifeſting Himſelf to the Eye of my Mind, in a Form conſummately venerable, yet emblematical of his future Incarnation.—*Sitting upon a Throne*; expreſſive of that Sovereign Power, which ruleth over all; and prefigurative of that auguſt Tribunal, from which He will pronounce the irreverſible Sentence.—The Throne was *high and lifted up*; like thoſe divine Perfections, which are too high for human Comprehenſion, and are exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe.—*His Train*, or the Skirts of his Robe, *filled the Temple*. They extended themſelves through all the ſacred Edifice; repreſenting thoſe Diſpenſations of Mercy and Judgment, of Truth and Equity, which pervade Heaven and Earth. Which take their Courſe through time; and will be prolonged to Eternity.

Let Us obſerve the *inferior Perſonages*. Theſe are the *Seraphim*; pure and active Spirits. Likened, by the Pſalmiſt, to Flames of Fire; ſtyled, by the Apoſtle, Dominions and Principalities of Heaven. Who excel in Strength and Wiſdom, in every great and ſhining Accompliſhment.—Their *Attitude*. They wait around the KING immortal, ſeated on his Throne: they are in the higheſt Elevations of Honour, yet at the Footſtool of JEHOVAH. They *ſtand*; are in a Poſture of Service: with their Wings outſtretched, ready to fly at the firſt Signal. It is not ſaid, with their Eyes reverently caſt down; but with their *Faces covered*; to denote the *deepeſt* Self-abaſement. Like Creatures, that are conſcious and aſhamed of their own Meanneſs; or elſe overcome with the inſupportable Glories, which beam from uncreated Majeſty.—Their *Action*. They celebrate, not in cold Con-

is the everlaſting GOD, that all-created Glory is totally eclipſed in his Preſence. *He looketh to the Moon,*

Converſation, but with rapturous Songs; not with ſingle Voices, but in a grand Choir (יהוה אל, ſee *Pſal.* lxxxvii. 5, 6.) the moſt amiable yet tremendous Sanctity of the LORD Almighty.—Their *Speech.* Though impreſſed and penetrated with the prodigious Theme, they attempt not to deſcribe it. Impracticable that, even by the Tongues of Angels! They expreſs themſelves, therefore, in the Language of profound Adoration; in repeated, in reiterated Acclamations to the ineffable Attribute; *Holy! Holy! Holy!*—The *Effects* of the Viſion. The Poſts of the Door, ſhake at the Voice: the ponderous and magnificent Pillars of Braſs (ſee 2 *Chron.* iii. 17.) tremble like a Leaf.

——— *While Clouds begin*
To darken all the Dome, and Smoke to roll
In duſky Wreaths, the Sign of Wrath awak'd.

The ſpacious and beautiful Houſe; mourning, as it were, under the Marks of divine Indignation; joins with the trembling Columns, and adoring Seraphs, to tell the thoughtleſs World; *What a fearful Thing it is, to fall into the Hands of the living GOD!*—The Prophet himſelf is ſtruck with Aſtoniſhment: is overwhelmed with Awe; and cries out, "as a Woman in her Pangs."—Can any Thing be more enlivened and alarming? More delicately or more ſublimely imaged?

If I ſhall not treſpaſs upon the Reader's Patience, I would beg Leave to add a Remark, concerning the Word *Sabaoth.* Which, though a *Hebrew* Expreſſion, is retained in that admirable Hymn, intitled *Te Deum*; and which ſome People, I am inclined to believe, inadvertently confound with *Sabbath.*—The latter ſignifies the *Reſt* of the ſeventh Day; and, in this Connection, yields a Senſe, not very appoſite, and comparatively mean. Whereas, the former denotes *Armies* or *Hoſts*; and furniſhes Us with an Image, truly grand and majeſtic; worthy to be admitted into the Songs of Seraphs.—It glorifies GOD, as the great, univerſal, uncontroulable SOVEREIGN:

Moon, and it ſhineth not; yea, the Stars are not pure in his Sight *. And *his very Angels*, thoſe refined and exalted Intelligences, *He chargeth with Folly* †.

Aſp. Very majeſtic Deſcriptions!—And pray let Us obſerve the Impreſſions, which ſuch Beamings of the divine Effulgence made upon the Saints of old.—*Moſes*, drawing near the cloudy Pavilion, the Preſence-chamber of the HOLY ONE of *Iſrael*, ſays, with Emotions of uncommon Dread; *I exceedingly fear and quake* ‡!—When *Job* is favoured with ſome peculiar Manifeſtations of the omnipotent GOD, ſee his Poſture! Hear his Words! *I abhor myſelf, and repent in Duſt and Aſhes* ‖. How ſtrong is the Language! How deep the Abaſement! When *Iſaiah* ſaw the incomprehenſible JEHOVAH, ſitting upon his Throne; and the Princes of Heaven, adoring at his Footſtool; ſeized with a Pang of reverential Fear, He cried out; *Woe is me! I am undone! For I am a Man of unclean Lips* §!—When *Ezekiel* beheld an emblematical Repreſentation of HIM, who dwelleth in Light inacceſſible: when the ANTIENT of Days, veiled under a human Shape, appeared to *Daniel:* though One was a devout Prieſt, and each was an eminent Prophet; yet, overwhelmed with a Mixture of Veneration and Terror, they both *fell down at his Feet as dead* ¶. And this, not before

who exerciſes a *ſupreme Dominion* over all the Orders of Being, from the loftieſt Archangel that ſhines in Heaven, to the loweſt Reptile that crawls in Duſt. Who ſays to a Legion of Cherubs, *Go*; and they go:—to a Swarm of Inſects, *Come*; and they come:—to any, to every Creature, *Do this*; and they do it. *See* Matt. viii. 9.

* Job xxv. 5. † Job iv. 18. ‡ Heb. xii. 21.
‖ Job xlii. 6. § Iſai. vi. 5. ¶ Ezek. i. 28. Dan. x. 8, 9.

before a full Diſplay, but only before a *Glimpſe* of the GODHEAD. Which, though partial and tranſient, was too dazzlingly bright, for an Eye of Fleſh to bear.

O my Friend! my *Theron!* what Figure muſt *our* mean Performances, *our* low Attainments make, before this immenſely glorious GOD?—Let Us examine the Behaviour and Spirit of *Job*, a little more particularly. He is one of your favourite Examples; and indeed very deſervedly. For, in Piety, He had no Superior, and no Equal: *there was none like Him in the Earth.* Yet, when He has to do with the MAKER of all Things, and the JUDGE of all Men, He pours out his abaſhed Soul in theſe very remarkable Profeſſions: *If I juſtify myſelf, my own Mouth ſhall condemn me: if I ſay, I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe* *.—He declares yet farther; *If I waſh myſelf in Snow-water, and make my Hands never ſo clean, yet ſhalt Thou,* O righteous and eternal GOD, *plunge me in the Ditch*; manifeſt me, notwithſtanding all this Care and Circumſpection, to be a guilty and a filthy Creature; yea, ſo very guilty and filthy, that *my own Clothes*, were they ſenſible of the Pollution, *could not but abhor me.*

This He confeſſes, not becauſe He was conſcious to Himſelf of any Immorality; but becauſe his Mind was filled with the moſt affecting Senſe, of GOD's inconceivable Holineſs, and infinite Glory. *For*, adds the venerable Sufferer, *He is not a Man as I am*; but a BEING of ſuch extenſive Knowledge, that no individual Thing can eſcape his Diſcernment; of ſuch exalted Purity, that every Spot of Defilement is loathſome in his Sight. For which

* *See* Job ix. 20, 21.—30, 31, 32.

Reaſon, it is abſolutely impoſſible, *that I ſhould anſwer Him*, with reference to my own perſonal Righteouſneſs: *or that We ſhould come together in Judgment*, on any ſuch Footing, without Confuſion to myſelf, and Ruin to my Cauſe.

To all this He ſubjoins, what is ſtill more memorable and exemplary: *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my Soul, I would deſpiſe my Life.*—He ſuppoſes Himſelf in a higher State, than your moſt advanced Chriſtian; though I were *perfect*. Yet, even in ſuch a State, were it attainable and attained, *I would not know my Soul*; not dwell upon, not plead, no, not ſo much as cheriſh a Thought of, my own Accompliſhments and Acquirements. In the important Buſineſs of Juſtification, they ſhould ſtand for Cyphers; they ſhould be thrown into Shades; they ſhould entirely diſappear.—Nay more; *I would deſpiſe my Life*; my Life, with all its moſt ſhining Actions and moſt diſtinguiſhed Virtues, ſhould be reckoned inſignificant and deſpicable. Juſt as *inſignificant* and *deſpicable*, with reſpect to this great Tranſaction, as a wandering Spark would be, if appointed to diffuſe Day amidſt the Darkneſs of Night, or to produce Spring amidſt the Depths of Winter.

Theo. Theſe are alarming Hints, *Aſpaſio*; I muſt confeſs.—A Law, which condemns all vain Imaginations, and every irregular Deſire! Which requires an *exact* and *univerſal* Obedience, both in Heart and Life!—A GOD of ſuch Majeſty, Purity, and Glory; that Men of the moſt approved Integrity, are overwhelmed with *Confuſion*, in his Preſence!—I ſhall conſider them, at my Leiſure, with the Attention they deſerve.—At preſent, I believe,

believe, Opportunity is giving Us the Slip. Yonder Coach ſeems to be moving this Way, and the Livery looks like *Philander*'s.

Aſpaſio, deſirous to fix theſe Convictions—which are of the utmoſt Conſequence to our Faith and Salvation—very deſirous to fix them on his Friend's Mind, replied.

Aſp. As your Viſitants are at a Diſtance, give me leave to obſerve; That the wiſeſt of Men, attending to the *firſt* of theſe Particulars *, has poured Contempt upon all human Excellency; *There is not a juſt Man upon Earth, that doeth Good, and ſinneth not* †. The Apoſtle of *CHRIST* takes Shame to Himſelf, on the ſame Account; and teaches all Mankind to ſtrike the Sail of Self-conceit; *In many Things We offend all* ‡.—*David*, conſidering the *latter* of theſe Points ||, prays with the utmoſt Earneſtneſs; *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O LORD!* and aſſigns this humbling Reaſon for his Petition; *For, in thy Sight, ſhall no Man living be juſtified* §. This induced *Nehemiah*, who had been ſo nobly zealous for the Honour of his GOD, not to confide in his own valuable Services, but make Application to forgiving Goodneſs. *Spare me, O LORD, according to thy great Mercy* ¶.

Had I ſet before You the Example of the poor *Publican*, who ſmote upon his Breaſt; durſt not lift up his Eyes to Heaven; but cried from the Bottom of a polluted Heart, *GOD be merciful to me a Sinner* **! *Self-love*, might poſſibly have whiſpered; "Surely,

* The Perfection of the divine Law. † Eccleſ. vii. 20. ‡ Jam. iii. 2. || The Purity of the divine Majeſty. § Pſal. cxliii. 2. ¶ Neh. xiii. 22. ** Luke xviii. 13.

" Surely, I am not to be ranked with that abomi-
" nable Wretch. I ſtand upon ſome better Foot-
" ing, than ſuch an infamous Offender."—With reſpect to the Enjoyment of eternal Life, We ſtand upon no better, upon no other. And when *low* as that obnoxious deſpiſed Creature, We are upon the very ſame Ground with the moſt *exalted* Saints. They all appear before the MAJESTY of HEAVEN, in the ſame Attitude of unfeigned Humiliation, and with the ſame Acknowledgments of utter Unworthineſs.—For, it is a certain Truth, and admits of *no* Exception; That, to juſtify Sinners, is not the Privilege of human Obedience, but the *ſole* Prerogative of *the LORD our Righteouſneſs*.

Ther. Is not the Practice of *Hezekiah* an Exception to your Rule? Theſe, if I recollect aright, are the Words of that holy King; *I beſeech Thee, O LORD, remember how I have walked before Thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is good in thy Sight* *. You ſee, He puts the Iſſue of his Tryal before the everlaſting GOD, upon his own Integrity and his own Obedience.

Aſp. Theſe are his Words, but they are not uſed with *this* View. He humbly repreſents before the great SOVEREIGN of the World, how beneficial his former Life *had been*, and how ſerviceable his prolonged Life *might be*, to the beſt Intereſts of the *Jewiſh* Nation. He appeals to his Obedience, not that He may eſtabliſh his Hope of eternal Happineſs in Heaven; but that He may obtain a Reprieve from the Grave, and a Lengthening of his Tranquility on Earth.—Neither is this Obedience gloried in, by way of Merit; but only pleaded, by

* 2 Kings xx. 3.

by way of Argument: As though He had ſaid; "*Remember*, gracious GOD, how I have exerted "my royal Authority, to ſuppreſs Idolatry, to ex- "tirpate Vice, and to promote thy true Religion. "*Conſider*, how greatly thy People ſtand in need "of ſuch a vigilant and zealous Governor; and "to what a miſerable Condition both Church and "State may be reduced, if Thou takeſt away thy "Servant by this threatened but untimely Stroke. "And, for the Welfare of *Judah*, for the Honour "of thy Name, for the Support of thy own Wor- "ſhip, *O ſpare me a little!*"

Aſpaſio pauſed; expecting a Reply.—As *Theron* continued ſilent and muſing, *Aſpaſio*, with a Smile of Benevolence, proceeded.—Come, my *Theron*; why ſo deep in Thought? Have You any Objection to the Evidences I have produced?—They are ſome of the moſt *dignified* Characters, and *illuſtrious* Perſonages, that could be ſelected from all Ages. Kings, Princes, and Patriots! Prieſts, Saints, and Martyrs! Should theſe be deemed inſufficient, I can exhibit a larger and nobler Cloud of Witneſſes—*larger*, for they are a great Multitude, which no Man can number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues—*nobler*, for they ſtand before the Throne, and before the LAMB, clothed with white Robes, and Palms in their Hands.—Aſk thoſe ſhining Armies, Who they are, and Whence they came? Their Anſwer is compriſed in one of my favourite Portions of Scripture: one of thoſe delightful Texts, from which I hope to derive Conſolation even in my laſt Moments. For which Reaſon, You will allow me to repeat it, though it may perhaps be mentioned in a former

Converſation. *We are they, who came out of great Tribulation; and have waſhed our Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the LAMB: therefore are We before the Throne* *.

Some of them laid down their Lives for the Sake of *CHRIST*; many of them were eminent for Works of Righteouſneſs; all of them were endued with real Holineſs. Yet, none of theſe Qualifications conſtituted their *Paſſport*, into the Regions of endleſs Felicity. They had *waſhed their Robes*; had fled to the Atonement, and pleaded the Merits of *JESUS* their SAVIOUR—Hereby they had *made them white*; this was the Cauſe of their Acquittance from Guilt, and their complete Juſtification—And *therefore*, on this Account, their Perſons were accepted; they were preſented without Spot before the Throne; and admitted to that Fulneſs of Joy, which is at GOD's Right-hand for evermore.

Ther. I have no Objection to your Witneſſes. But, methinks, your Doctrine is ſtrangely *debaſing* to human Nature.

Aſp. A Sign, *Theron*, that it is agreeable to the Spirit and Intention of the *Goſpel*. Which is calculated, as the eloquent *Iſaiah* foretold, to humble the Sinner, and exalt the SAVIOUR †; *The Lofti-*

* Rev. vii. 14, 15.

† This correſponds with a very valuable Maxim, which an eminent Divine once recommended to his People, as a Touch-ſtone to diſtinguiſh *evangelical* Truth.—That Doctrine, he ſaid, which tends

To humble the Sinner;
To exalt the SAVIOUR;
To promote Holineſs;

That

Loftineſs of Man ſhall be bowed down, and the Haughtineſs of Men ſhall be made low, and the LORD alone ſhall be exalted in that Day *: "Man, though "naturally vain, ſhall be made ſenſible of his "numberleſs Offences; ſhall acknowledge the De-"fects, which attend his higheſt Attainments; ſhall "confeſs the Impoſſibility of being juſtified by the "Deeds of the Law; and place all his Hope upon "the propitiatory Death, and meritorious Obedi-"ence, of the *LORD JESUS CHRIST.*"

That Doctrine, which tends to accompliſh *all* theſe Deſigns, You may embrace as ſound. That which is defective in its Influence on *any one* of them, You ſhould reject as corrupt.

* Iſai. ii. 11.

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