

THE
DOCTRINE of GRACE:
OR, THE
OFFICE and OPERATIONS
OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT

Vindicated from
The Insults of INFIDELITY,
AND
The Abuses of FANATICISM:
With some Thoughts
(humbly offered to the consideration of the
ESTABLISHED CLERGY)

REGARDING
The right method of defending Religion
against the attacks of either Party.

IN THREE BOOKS.

BY
WILLIAM Lord Bishop of GLOUCESTER.

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

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Advertisement

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

WHILE I was composing these sheets to vindicate the honour of Religion, it was given out that I was writing in defence of a late Minister of State.

I have a Master above, and I have one below ; I mean, God and the KING. To them my services are bound.

The most sacred of all private ties are *Friendship* and *Gratitude*. The duties arising from these, tho' not altogether so extensive as the other, are subservient only to them.

iv ADVERTISEMENT.

With respect to the great Minister here understood, His vindication, had he wanted any, could come, with proper dignity, only from himself. And He, tho' for the first time, would be here but a Copier : I mean, of the example of that First of Romans* ; who being calumniated before the People by one Nævius, an obscure Plebeian, when he came to make his Defence, which happened to be on the anniversary of the battle of Zama, addressed the Assembly in this manner : “ It was on this day, Romans, “ that I subdued your mighty Rival “ for Empire, the Carthaginian. Ill “ would it become the friends of “ Rome to waste such a day in “ wrangling and contention. We “ should now be returning thanks

* Scipio Africanus ; who restored his Country by carrying the War from Rome to Carthage.

ADVERTISEMENT. v

“ to the immortal Gods for the fig-
“ nal protection they afforded us in
“ that glorious Conflict. Let us
“ leave then this Fellow with him-
“ self, and ascend together to the
“ Capitol, to offer to Jupiter the
“ Deliverer ; Who, on all occasions
“ as well as this, hath, from my
“ early youth, vouchsafed to bestow
“ upon me the growing power and
“ the constant disposition to support
“ the honour of my Country. And
“ let no God, auspicious to Rome,
“ be left unsolicited, that the State
“ in it's distresses, may never want
“ such Servants as I have still endea-
“ voured to approve myself.” When
he had said this, he stepped from the
Rostrum and left the Forum empty ;
all the People following him to the
Capitol.

vi ADVERTISEMENT.

That *the People followed him* is not surely the marvellous part of the story. The thing to be admired is, that a Statesman should lead the People to prayers.

This indeed is the last service a Patriot-Minister can render to his Country. And I am well persuaded (so exactly does the example fit the occasion) that our illustrious Modern would have deemed it the crown of his labours to have animated his Fellow-Citizens with a spirit of true piety towards God, as successfully as he inflamed them with a spirit of Zeal and Fortitude for the KING and Constitution.

P R E-

P R E F A C E.

THE CONTEMPT soon followed the ABUSE of *Religion*, and both of them have existed almost ever since the first institution of the thing itself. For, that corruption of heart, whose disorder, *Religion* was ordained to cure, has been ever struggling against its Remedy.

I. In the days of Solomon, when *Wisdom* was at its height, *Folly*, as we learn from many passages in the writings of that Sacred Sage, kept equal paces with it. Hence it is that, after he has given many lively paintings of the deformed features of irreligion and bigotry, he subjoins directions to the sober Advocate of Piety and Virtue how best to repress their insolence and vanity. ANSWER NOT *a Fool* (says he) *according to his Folly, lest thou also be like unto him.* AN-

SWER *a Fool according to his Folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit* *.

Short, isolated Sentences were the mode in which Ancient wisdom delighted to convey its precepts for the regulation of human conduct. But when this natural method had lost the grace of novelty; and a growing refinement had new-coloured the candid simplicity of ancient manners, these instructive Sages found a necessity of giving to their moral maxims the seasoning and poignancy of *Paradoxes*. In these lively and useful sports of fancy, the Son of David, we are told, most excelled. We find them to abound in the writings which bear his name; and we meet with frequent allusions to them in all the parts of sacred Writ, under the names of *Riddles, Parables, and Dark-sayings*.

Now of all the examples of this species of instruction, there is none more illustrious, or fuller of moral Wisdom, than the *Paradox* just now quoted; or which, in the happiness of the expression, has so artfully conveyed the Key for opening the treasures of it. But as a *dark* conceit and a *dull* one

*. Prov. xxvi. ver. 4, 5.

have a great proximity in modern wit; and a nice *difference* is not distinguished from a *contradiction* in modern reasoning; this Paradox of the Sage has been mistaken by his Critics for an absurdity of some of his Transcribers, who forgot the negative in the latter member of the Sentence: And so, to be set right at an easier expence than unfolding *dark sentences of old*; that is to say, by exchanging them for *clearer*, of a *modern* date: which *Time* can make *ancient readings*; and which a careful collation of its blunders may hereafter make the *true*.

II. But they who chuse to receive Antiquity in its antique Garb, will, perhaps, venture with me to try, if the apparent contradiction in the received Text cannot be fairly unriddled without any other aid than of the words themselves, in which the *dark saying* is conveyed.

Had the *Folly* of these *Feols* been only of one condition or denomination, then the advice *to answer*, and *not to answer*, had been repugnant to itself. But as their *Folly* was of various kinds, in some of which, *to answer* might offend the dignity, and in others, *not to answer* might hurt the interests of Truth;

Truth; *To answer*, and *not to answer*, is a consistent, and may, for ought these Critics know, be a very wise direction.

Had the Advice been given simply and without circumstance, *to answer the Fool*, and *not to answer him*, a Critic, who had a reverence for the Text, would satisfy himself in supposing, that the different directions referred to the doing a thing *in and out of season*. But when, to the general advice about *answering*, this circumstance is added, —*according to his folly*, that interpretation is excluded; and a difficulty indeed arises; a difficulty, which has made those who have no reverence for the Text, to accuse it of absurdity and contradiction.

But now, to each Direction, reasons are subjoined, *Why a Fool should*, and *why he should not, be answered*: reasons, which, when set together and compared, are, at first sight, sufficient to make the Critic suspect, that all the contradiction lies in his own incumbered ideas.

1. The reason given, why *a Fool should not be answered according to his folly*, is, *lest he [the Answerer] be like unto him*:

2. The

2. The reason given, why *he should be answered according to his folly*, is, *lest he [the Fool] be wise in his own conceit*.

The cause assigned, of *forbidding to answer*, therefore, plainly insinuates, that the Defender of Religion should not imitate the Insulter of it in his *modes of disputation*; which may be comprised in *sophistry, buffoonry, and scurrility*. For what could so much *liken* the Answer to his idiot-Adversary as the putting on his Fool's-coat in order to captivate and confound the Rabble?

The cause assigned, of *directing to answer*, as plainly intimates, that the Sage should address himself to confute the Fool upon *the Fool's own false Principles*, by shewing that they lead to Conclusions very wide from the impieties he would deduce from them. And if any thing will prevent the *Fool* from being *wise in his own conceit*, it must be the dishonour and the ridicule of having his own Principles turned against him; while they are shewn to make for the very contrary purpose to that, for which he had employed them.

The supreme wisdom conveyed in the two precepts of this unravelled *Paradox*,
will

will be best understood by explaining the advantages arising from the observance of each of them.

III. We are *not to answer a fool according to his folly, lest we also be like unto him*—This is the reason given ; and a good one it is ; sufficient to make any sober man decline a Combat, where even Victory would bring dishonour with it. Now, if our *answer* be of such a nature that we also (tho' with contrary intentions) do injury to Truth, we become *like unto him* in the essential part of his Character. And surely Truth is never more grossly abused, nor its Advocates more dishonoured, than when they employ the foolish arts of *Sophistry*, *Buffoonry*, and *Scurrility* in its defence.

1. To use *fallacious* and inconclusive arguments in support of Truth, is doing it infinite discredit. The practice tends to make men suspect that the questioned Truth is indeed an imposture, when it finds support in the common tricks of imposture : The least unfavourable inference will be, that the Truth is defended not for its own sake, but for the sake of the Defender : This will make the serious Enquirer less attentive to
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the issue, and more jealous of the good faith of the Advocate; which cannot but lessen our reverence to the one, and increase unfavourable prejudices towards the other. It tends to reduce the two Parties of *Wisdom* and *Folly* to a level; when they stand on the same uncertain and deceitful Ground. It tends to confound the distinction between *true* and *false*, and to make all terminate in that most malignant species of *folly*, Pyrronic doubt and uncertainty.

2. To employ *Buffoonry* in this service, is to violate the Majesty of Truth, which can inforce its influence amongst men no longer than while its Sanctity of Character is kept safe from insult.

Buffoonry deprives Truth of the only thing she wants, in order to come off victorious; I mean, a *fair hearing*. To *examine*, Men must be serious; and to *judge*, they must be attentive to the argument. *Buffoonry* gives a levity to the mind, which makes it seek entertainment rather than instruction, in all that is offered to its inspection. But let this poor talent be taken at its utmost worth, the use of it will still raise a suspicion, that the Advocate has his cause little at heart, while, in
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the very heat of an important controversy, he can allow himself to be amused and diverted by the levity of false wit ; since, in matters that are understood to concern us most, we are wont to appear, as well as to be, most in earnest : and this scandal given by the Advocate, will always do prejudice to the Cause.

3. Again, *personal abuse*, the favorite colour that glares most in the Fool's *Rhetoric*, is carefully to be avoided. For nothing can so assimilate the Answerer to the Fool he is confuting as a want of *Charity*, which this mode of defence so openly betrays. To *Charity*, the Fool makes no pretensions: His very attempt is an avowed violation of it. He would deprive the world of what he himself confesses to be most useful to Society, and most pleasing to the natural sentiments of Man ; that is to say, *Religion*. He would break down this barrier against Evil, he would rob us of this consolation of Humanity ; and in such a Service he follows but his nature and his office, when he vilifies and calumniates all who set themselves to oppose his impious projects. But the *end of the Commandment is Charity*.

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These are the various modes of *answering* which are to be avoided, lest the Advocate of Religion become *like* the impious Caviller whom he addresses himself to confute.

IV. But then, *lest the Fool should be wise in his own conceit*, we are, at the same time, bid, *to give him an answer*. But how can this be done, in the manner here directed, namely, *according to his folly*, and yet the Answerer not become *like unto him*, but, on the contrary, be able to produce the effect here intimated, the cure of the Fool's vain conceit of his superior Wisdom, is a difficulty indeed; a difficulty worthy the Advocate of truth to undertake: and which a Master of his Subject may hope to overcome, in contriving to confute the Fool on his own *false Principles*, by shewing that they lead to a Conclusion very opposite to those free Consequences he has laboured to deduce from them. And if any thing will allay the *Fool's vain conceit* of himself, it must be the *sense* of such a dishonour. For what can be more shameful than to have his own Principles shewn to be destructive of his own Conclusions? What more mortifying, than to have those

those Principles, in whose invention he so much gloried, or in whose use he so much confided, fairly turned, by all the rules of good Logic, to his own confusion? Nor is the Partisan of falsehood more humbled than the Cause of truth advanced, by thus answering a Fool *according to his folly*. For that Victory where the Adversary is thus made to contribute to his own overthrow is, in common estimation, always held to be most compleat: that System being naturally deemed contemptible, whose most plausible support draws after it the ruin of what it was raised to uphold.

And thus, as the *Wise man* directs, is this forward Fool to be treated; whether it be by *silence* or *confutation*.

V. That, in general, his folly is to be repressed *according to the dictates of true Wisdom*, the nature of the thing sufficiently informs us: There was no need of a particular direction to enforce the expediency and necessity of such a conduct. But then, besides, it may sometimes happen, that the interests of Truth require his being *answered even according to his folly*: And, as our duty here

here is very liable to *abuse*, it was expedient to obviate the danger. This, we may observe, the sacred Writer hath done; and with much art and elegance of address.

It may indeed be said, Why this practised obliquity in defence of Truth? Is not the purity of her nature rather defiled, than her real interests advanced by this indirection? And does not Wisdom seem to tell us, that it becomes her dignity to repress Folly by those arms only which Wisdom herself hath edged and tempered; that Truth, by the information of her own light, points out the straight road to her abode; and forbids us to riggle into her sacred presence thro' by-paths, and the cloudy Medium of falsehood?

But they who talk thus do not sufficiently reflect on the condition of our weak and purblind Nature, which can ill bear the bright and unshaded light of Truth. On which account, it is so contrived, in the beautiful Order of things, that *Folly*, by thus administering to her own defeat, should bring us back again into the ways of Wisdom, from which she hath seduced us.

The REDEEMER of Mankind, in condescension to the infirmities of those he came to save, hath taken this very advantage of that established Order: For, more effectually

ally to silence those *Fools* who questioned his Mission and his Office, he *answers them according to their folly*; that is, he demonstrates to them, on their own erroneous ideas of the nature and end of the LAW, (formed on rabbinical traditions and the reveries of Greek Philosophers) he demonstrates to them, I say, the truth and reasonableness of the GOSPEL. The pure and unabated splendor of Truth, ushered in by Wisdom, would have only added to their judicial blindness: for to bear it undazzled, they had need of the presence of that SPIRIT OF TRUTH, which was not yet come, but only promised to be sent. When He came, indeed, and while he continued in an *extraordinary* manner, to enlighten the understandings of the Faithful, there was no occasion for this enforced ministry of *Folly*, to contribute to her own destruction. And therefore the *first* Propagators of the Gospel proceeded more directly to the establishment of the Truth, and on the solid principles of *Wisdom* only. Yet now again, in the *ordinary* communications of GRACE, this direction of the *Wise man* will be as useful as ever, to the interests of Virtue and Religion, ANSWER A FOOL ACCORDING TO HIS FOLLY, LEST HE BE WISE IN HIS OWN CONCEIT.

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CHAP. I.

But as the REDEMPTION, so procured, could only operate on each Individual, under certain conditions of FAITH and OBEDIENCE, very repugnant to our corrupt nature, the blessed Redeemer,

deemer, on leaving the world, promised to his followers his intercession with the Father, to send amongst them another divine Person ON THE PART OF MAN, namely the HOLY GHOST, called the *Spirit of Truth*, and the *Comforter*; who, agreeably to the import of these attributes, should co-operate with Man in establishing his FAITH, and in perfecting his OBEDIENCE; or, in other words, should *sanctify him to Redemption*.

This is a succinct account of the Œconomy of Grace; entirely consonant to our most approved conceptions of the Divine nature and of the Human condition. For if man was to be reinstated in a FREE-GIFT, which had been justly forfeited, we cannot but confess, that as, on the one hand, the restoration might be made on what conditions best pleased the Giver; so, on the other, that God would graciously provide that it should not be made in vain.

An Atonement, therefore, for the offended Majesty of the FATHER, was first to be procured; and this was the Work of the SON: And then a remedy was to be provided for that helpless condition of Man, which hindered the Atonement from producing its effect; and this was the office of the HOLY GHOST: So that both were joint-workers in the great business of reconciling God to man.

What therefore I propose to consider is, the *Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit*, as they are delivered to us in sacred Scripture.

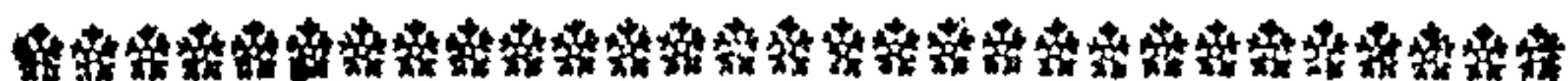
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C. II. *of the HOLY SPIRIT:* 3

His Office in general is, as hath been observed, to establish our *Faith*, and to perfect our *Obedience*: and this he doth by ENLIGHTENING THE UNDERSTANDING, and by RECTIFYING THE WILL. All this is necessarily collected from the words of Jesus, which contain this important PROMISE. *I will pray the Father, (says he) and he shall give you another COMFORTER, that he may abide with you for ever; even the SPIRIT OF TRUTH—He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you—which is the HOLY GHOST, whom the Father shall send in my name. He shall TEACH YOU ALL THINGS (1).*

By *teaching us all things* under the joint characters of the *Spirit of Truth* and of the *Comforter*, we are necessarily to understand *all things* which concern FAITH and OBEDIENCE.

These two distinct branches of his office I shall consider in their order.



C H A P. II.

FIRST of all, let us observe the method employed by divine wisdom in manifesting the operations of the HOLY GHOST, as the SPIRIT AND GUIDE OF TRUTH. (2)

The first extraordinary attestation of his Descent was at the day of Pentecost, in the GIFT OF TONGUES.

(1) John xiv. 16, & seq.

(2) John xvi. 13.

Besides the great and almost indispensable use of this endowment on the first Disciples of Christ, who were to convey the glad tidings of the Gospel throughout the whole earth; the elegance and propriety in the choice of this miracle, to attest the real descent of that *Spirit* who was to *teach us all things*, can never be enough admired: for Words being the human vehicle of our Knowledge, this Gift was the fittest precursor of the *Spirit of Truth*.

But this first opening scene of wonders, which was to prepare and influence all the subsequent labours for man's Redemption, a late eminent writer would, from a SIGN, reduce to a *Shadow*; in which he seems to think, Fancy set itself on work, to produce a Prodigy. “ The Gift of
“ Tongues upon the day of Pentecost (says the
“ learned person) *was not lasting, but instantaneous*
“ *and transitory*; not bestowed upon them for the
“ constant work of the ministry, but as an *occasional Sign only*, that the person endowed with
“ it was a chosen minister of the gospel: which
“ Sign, as soon as it had served that particular
“ purpose, seems to have ceased, and totally to
“ have vanished (3).”

Let us examine now, the grounds of this new interpretation, so apparently derogatory to the operation of the Holy Spirit.

(3) Dr. Middleton's Essay on the Gift of Tongues, Vol. II. of his Works, p. 79.

The learned Writer proceeds in order; first, to *reduce* the Type or visible Sign of the Gift, the FIERY TONGUES: for having declared the Gift itself to be instantaneous and transitory, he has, very consistently, endeavoured to shew that the *Sign* of it was merely fanciful. He explains it to be no more than a sudden flash of lightening, “ which, he says, like all other Phænomena of “ that sort, no sooner appeared, than vanish- “ ed (4).”

His reason for this opinion is, “ because when “ the Disciples spoke in strange tongues to the “ Multitude, the conclusion they drew from that “ circumstance seems to shew, that the celestial “ Fire did not, at that Time, sit upon their “ Heads (5).”

But the learned Person has omitted to bring this other circumstance into his account, that when the *cloven Tongues appeared upon each of them*, they were assembled together in a private room, sequestered and apart: and that it was not till the thing was *noised abroad*, and the *Multitude come together*, to inquire into the truth of it, that the Apostles *spoke with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance*. Now between this visible Descent of the Holy Spirit, and their speaking to the Multitude, a considerable time must have intervened; sufficient to convince every one from the steady duration of the appearance, that it was not natural but miraculous. And this the original words

(4) P. 81.

(5) P. 82.

well express : ἐκάθισέ τε ἐφ' ἓνα ἕκαστον αὐτῶν, well rendered by the Phrase of *SITTING upon each* of them : Words so inconsistent with a momentary appearance, that it would be trifling with common sense to deduce such an interpretation from oblique circumstances and collateral reasoning. It is true the learned Writer concedes, even from the Sign's being only *a sudden Flash, which vanished almost as soon as it appeared*, that “ it indicated something miraculous and supernatural (6).” But I am afraid, that those who are the readiest to embrace his Physiology, will not be the first to admit his theological inference ; especially as it is so gratuitously deduced. It may therefore not be improper to scrutinize the evangelical account of this visible Descent, with a little more exactness. In this place (we see) the *fiery Tongues* are said, *to sit upon each of them* : and in other places of Scripture, which mention the like descent of the Holy Spirit in visible Form, it is described in such terms as denote a very different appearance from a *sudden Flash of Lightning*. St. *Matthew* tells us, that *the Spirit of God descended like a Dove*, ὡσεὶ περισερᾶν ; that is, with a Dove-like motion ; as birds, when about to settle upon any thing, first hover over it with quivering wings : It then *lighted upon Jesus*, ἐρχόμενον ἐπ' αὐτόν. So, in the place in question, the same Spirit is said to descend under the appearance of *glowing Tongues, like as of Fire*, ὡσεὶ πυρός. In the

former instance, only the *motion* of the descent is described: in this, both the *motion*, *figure*, and *colour*. And the term of *cloven Tongues*, which the sacred Historian employs to describe the *motion*, and which the learned Writer takes up, to prove his hypothesis of a momentary existence of the phænomenon, proves it, in truth, to be of some continuance. “ We cannot (says he) think
 “ it strange that fire flashing from Heaven, and
 “ and suddenly vanishing, should yield some re-
 “ semblance of *Tongues* to the eyes of the MUL-
 “ TITUDE; for this is no more than what is *na-*
 “ *tural*, and what we may observe, in some mea-
 “ sure, from every flame that flashes from the
 “ clouds, and breaks itself, *of course*, in a num-
 “ ber of small pointed particles not remote from
 “ that shape (7).”

To this, let us, in the first place, observe, that the thing seen, ὡς ἐν πυρὸς, on the heads of the Apostles, was no more an elementary *fire*, than the thing seen ὡς ἐν περισεργάνῳ, on the head of Jesus, was a real *dove*: for, as only a *dove-like motion* is intimated in this latter expression, so only a *flame-like motion* is intimated in the former; and what this was, the Historian tells us in its effect, the *appearance of cloven Tongues*. The learned Person is certainly mistaken in supposing *a sudden flash of lightening* has *naturally* the appearance of cloven Tongues. Such a phænomenon exhibits to the eye of the beholder only a line of light an-

(7) P. 82.

gularly broken into several directions ; very different from the form of *Tongues*, whether whole or *cloven*. Whenever a flame assumes this appearance, it is become *stationary*, as this was, which, the Historian says, SAT *upon each of them*, ἐκάθισε : and then its *natural* motion being upwards, it represents, when divided lengthwise, a pyramidal or *tongue-like* figure, *cloven*. A demonstration that the Appearance in question was not *momentary*, but of some continuance.

The learned Writer having thus accounted for the Precursor of the gift, comes to consider the Gift itself ; and attempts to shew that “ the chief :
 “ OR SOLE END RATHER of the *gift of Tongues*
 “ was to serve as a sensible sign in that *infirm State*
 “ of the first Christians, that those to whom it was
 “ vouchsafed were under a divine influence, and
 “ acted by a divine commission.—So that it is
 “ not reasonable to think that this *diversity of*
 “ *Tongues* was given to the Apostles for the sake
 “ of converting those people before whom they
 “ then spoke (8).” Hence (says he) “ it appears
 “ that the gift was not of a stable or permanent
 “ nature (9).”—That is, it was no lasting endowment, to enable the Apostles to perform their Ministry amongst those whose language they had never learnt ; but, a momentary power, which served that day for a *sign* to the Multitude : and consequently, they had these languages to learn anew when they wanted the use of them. This,

(8) P. 87.

(9) P. 89.

I say, appears to be his Inference; for the arguments he brings to support his principle, will lead us to no other. At the same time it must be observed he has laid down the proposition so loosely, and ambiguously, that, when considered alone, it may either mean, "That the power of speaking strange languages was only infused occasionally, like the power of working miracles;" or else, "That the knowledge of the language, when infused, was not lasting, but momentary, like the cloven Tongues; the inspired Linguist presently falling back into his natural state of idiotism."

In the first sense, the Assertion seems to be well founded: and from its sobriety, and more especially from the extravagance of the other meaning, which leaves but little distinction between the power of speaking strange Tongues at the day of Pentecost, and the extatick ravings of modern Fanatics, one would wish to find was the sense we could fairly ascribe to it.

But then all the arguments employed by the learned Person, for the support of his proposition, confine us, as we shall now see, to the other meaning.

1. His first argument is the *authority* of some modern Critics (1). But I may be excused, if I suffer these to have no more weight with me when they contradict a received interpretation,

(1) P. 89.

than

than they usually have with him when they confirm it.

2. His second argument is an inference from Scripture it self. “It appears (he thinks) from the Stories of Cornelius’s family, and the Disciples at Ephesus (both of whom spoke with tongues on the Holy Ghost’s descending on them, while Peter preached to one, and Paul baptised the other) that the gift was not lasting but instantaneous ; and given only for a sign of their real admission into the Church of Christ :” for, as he truly observes, “here was no room to suppose another use, the several Assemblies being all of the same speech and language (2).”

But here the learned person from particular cases draws a general inference: because, in this case, he *sees no other use* than for a *sign*, he concludes the gift to be momentary in all other. By a better way of reasoning therefore, he will suffer us to conclude, that where we do *see another use*, as in the gift at Pentecost, that there it was as lasting as the use to which it served: And an equitable Judge will conclude for us both, that the same endowment which in one instance was transitory, might, in another, last for life.

The Converts of the family of Cornelius, and the Disciples at Ephesus were in a private station in the Church: so that an instantaneous exercise of the power fully answered its end: It was a *sign* that these converts were indeed become

members of Christ's mystical body, the Church, as well by the baptism of the Spirit as of Water. But the case was different with respect to the Apostles: They were the appointed preachers of the Gospel to remote and barbarous nations: an office not to be discharged without a competent knowledge of the various languages of the Earth. We find them, on the day of Pentecost, miraculously endowed with this knowledge. What are we to think, but that the PRINCIPAL end of the Gift was to qualify them for their Mission?

3. The learned writer's third argument in support of his opinion, is taken from the stile of Scripture, and is to this purpose: "That were the gift of tongues lasting, it would have been employed in the composition of their *Gospels* and *Epistles*: But that it was not there employed, appears from the barbarity of the stile; since whatever comes from God must be perfect in its kind; so that, in this case, we should be sure to find the purity of Plato, and the eloquence of Cicero:" But the consideration of this argument coming more properly under another head of this Discourse, to that we shall reserve it; and might here take leave of this subject, *the duration of the gift of tongues*; as the common opinion remains unimpaired by his attack, and is still in possession of all the circumstances of credit in which he found it.

C H A P. III.

YET since this new interpretation, (which makes the gift so transitory, and the power conferred by it so momentary) may be applied by licentious men to purposes the learned person might never intend, it cannot be too carefully considered.

Who hath not heard of the wondrous powers of the imagination, when raised and inflamed by fanaticism? And tho' we be ignorant of its utmost force, yet we know enough of it to convince us, that this faculty of the mind, the Nurse and Parent of enthusiasm, is able to work like magic in its deceits. There are many well attested cases in modern History, (altho' we should agree that they have lost nothing of the marvellous in the telling) where Enthusiasts, in their extasies, have talked very fluently in the learned languages, of which they had a very imperfect knowledge in their sober intervals. “ When I saw (says the “ noble Author of the *Characteristics*) the Gentle- “ man, who has writ lately in defence of revived “ prophecy, (and has since fallen himself into the “ prophetic extasies) lately under an *agitation* “ (as they call it) uttering prophecy in a pompous latin stile, of which out of his extasy, it “ seems, he is wholly incapable, it brought into “ my mind the latin poet's description of the “ Sibyl,

“ Sibyl, &c. (3)” And it is remarkable, that instances of this kind have occurred so frequently, that Thyræus, a famous popish Exorcist, as blinded as he was by the superstitious impiety of demoniacal possessions, has, in his *Directory*, expressly declared it to be the common opinion of his brotherhood, that the *speaking strange languages* is no certain sign of a *possession*, and warns the Exorcist against this illusion (4).

Now were it generally believed that the *speaking with strange tongues* in the first ages of Christianity, was a mere fleeting, transitory power, the bold licence of our times would be ready to conclude that it was much of the same kind with these feats of modern Fanatics. For let us consider how the matter would be thought to stand, on the representation of this learned writer : A sudden flash of lightening, under the fancied figure of *cloven-tongues*, kindles the fiery imaginations of a number of enthusiastic men, met together in a tumultuary assembly, and heating one another's fanaticism by mutual collision; and in this temper, *they began to speak with tongues as the spirit gave them utterance.*

I shall therefore endeavour to shew, in the last place, that this new interpretation contradicts what SCRIPTURE itself expressly delivers of the USE and, by necessary inference, of the *duration* of this *gift of tongues* on the day of Pentecost.

(3) *Letter concerning Enthusiasm*, § 6.

(4) *De Dæmoniacis*, c. xxii.

The learned writer affirms, “that this knowledge was transitory, serving only for an occasional sign, and not intended for the use of the apostolic mission.” Now Jesus himself tells us, that it was intended for this use: Who, on his leaving the world, comforts his disciples with this promise:—*But ye shall receive POWER, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be WITNESSES unto me, unto the uttermost part of the EARTH* (5), recorded by the Evangelic writer, as an introduction to his narrative of the miraculous gift of tongues; which he considers as the completion of this promise; and that the *power to be received*, was the power then given: the use of which, as we see, was to enable the disciples to become *witnesses unto him, unto the uttermost part of the Earth*. We find St. Paul had this gift, not only in the fullest measure, but with a proportionable duration; for, endeavouring to moderate the excessive value which the Corinthians set upon *spiritual gifts*, he observes, that, with regard to the most splendid of them all, the *gift of tongues*, he himself had the advantage of them all—I thank my God (says he) *that I speak with tongues more than you all* (6). The occasion shews that he considered this his acquirement as a *spiritual gift*: and his using the *present time* shews that he boasted of it as then in his possession. But why did he speak with more tongues than all of them?

(5) Acts i. 8.

(6) 1 Cor. xiv. ver. 18—*μᾶλλον γλώσσας λαλῶν.*

For a good reason ; he was the peculiar Apostle of the Gentiles ; and was to preach the Gospel amongst remote and barbarous nations. Whom then shall we believe ? Shall we take his word who promised the gift ; shall we take his, on whom it was bestowed ; or shall we prefer to both, the conjectures of this learned and ingenious Modern ?

Would reason or the truth of things suffer us to be so compliant, we might concede to Unbelievers all which they fancy the learned writer hath procured for them, “that the power of tongues was temporary, and, like the power of healing, possessed occasionally,” without being alarmed at any consequence they will be able to deduce from it. For let it but be granted (and they must grant it, or else prevaricate) that the gift of tongues returned as often as they had occasion for it, and it is no great matter where it resided in the mean time.

But neither reason nor the truth of things will suffer us to be thus compliant. The power of healing or of working miracles (to which the learned writer compares the gift of tongues) is, during the whole course of its operation, one continued arrest or diversion of the general laws of matter and motion : it was therefore fitting that this power should be given occasionally. But the *speaking with tongues*, when once the gift was conferred, became from thenceforth, a natural power ; just as the free and perfect use of
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the members of the body, after they have been restored, by miracles, to the exercise of their natural functions. Indeed, to have *lost* the gift of tongues after this temporary use of it, would imply another miracle; for it must have been by actual deprivation, unless we suppose the Apostles mere irrational organs thro' which divine sounds were conveyed. In a word, it was as much in the course of nature for an Apostle, whom the holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, had enabled to speak a strange language, ever afterwards to have the use of that language, as it was for the Cripple, whom Jesus had restored to the use of his limbs on the Sabbath-day, ever afterwards to walk, run, and perform all the functions of a man perfectly sound and whole. In one thing, indeed, the power of healing, and of speaking with strange tongues coincided; as the Disciples could not heal at all times, so neither could they speak at all times in what unknown dialect they should chuse to converse: Yet when once, by the holy Spirit, they had been enabled to speak and understand a language, they could not but retain the use of it, with the same facility as if they had acquired it in the ordinary way of instruction. But the confusion in this affair, and the learned person's embarrass when he states the question, arise from not distinguishing, in these two cases, between the *active power* and the *passive gift*. In healing, the Apostles are to be considered

sidered as the workers of a miracle; in speaking strange tongues, as the persons on whom a miracle is performed.



C H A P. IV.

THUS far with regard to this extraordinary descent of the Holy Ghost, as the GUIDE OF TRUTH. And this being as well the FIRST FRUITS as the TYPE and SEAL of all *inspired knowledge*, the sacred Historian thought proper to give us a circumstantial relation of so important an adventure.

The other endowments from the *spirit of truth* he hath mentioned only occasionally. So that had not the Subject of one of St. Paul's Epistles led the writer to enumerate those various Gifts, as they were afterwards distributed amongst the Faithful, we should have had a very imperfect knowledge of their whole extent. The Church of Corinth was foolishly elated by spiritual pride; which St. Paul endeavoured to mortify and humble: And in applying his remedy, he begins with reckoning up those various graces, the credit of which they had abused in the indulgence of this unhappy temper.—*Concerning spiritual gifts* (says he) *I would not have you ignorant. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. To one is given by the spirit the WORD OF WISDOM; to*

another,

C

another, the WORD OF KNOWLEDGE by the same spirit; to another, the GIFTS OF HEALING by the same spirit; to another, WORKING OF MIRACLES; to another, PROPHECY; to another, DISCERNING OF SPIRITS (7). And when he comes to apply his premisses, and to shew the inferiority of all these gifts to Charity, he recapitulates the most distinguished of them in the following manner:—
tho' I have the gift of PROPHECY, and understand all MYSTERIES, and all KNOWLEDGE; and tho' I have all FAITH so that I could remove mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing (8).

In explaining the nature of these gifts, the two passages will afford light to one another.

The first he mentions, is the WORD OF WISDOM (9). By which, I think, we must understand, *all the great principles of natural religion* (1). The ancients used the term in this sense: and we can hardly give it another, in the place before us, where we see it distinguished from the WORD OF KNOWLEDGE (2), which follows, and evidently means *all the great principles of the revealed*; the term γνῶσις being as peculiarly applied by Christian writers to *revealed Religion* (3), as σοφία is by the Pagan,

(7) 1 Cor. xii. 1. & seq. (8) c. xiii. 2. (9) Λόγος σοφίας.

(1) In this sense St. Paul uses the word, Col. iv. 5. Ἐν σοφίᾳ περιπατεῖτε πρὸς τοὺς ἔξω.

(2) Λόγος γνώσεως.

(3) St. Paul uses it in this sense, 2 Cor. xi. 6. Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἰδιώτης τῷ λόγῳ, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς ΓΝΩΣΕΩΣ. And St. Peter 1 Ep. iii. 7. Οἱ ἀδελφοί ὁμοίως, συνιοικῆτε κατὰ ΓΝΩΣΙΝ. From this term, those
 early

Pagan, to *natural*: and it is no less a generic term than the other, being mentioned in the next chapter, with one of its species,—*all MYSTERY and all knowlege*: for *mystery* is that part of *knowlege* which regards the interpretation of such Jewish prophecies as concern the *new Dispensation*. In a word, our Apostle speaking, in another place, of Christ, who perfected *Revelation*, built (from its first delivery and rudiments) on *natural Religion*, uses the two terms in these assigned significations.—*In whom* (says he) *are hid all the treasures of WISDOM and KNOWLEGE* (4).

In the recapitulation, FAITH, we see, is reckoned amongst the gifts of the Spirit: and in the following chapter, where these graces are again mentioned, he explains its nature to us, in calling it a *faith which could remove mountains*, or such a one as was attended with the power of controlling Nature; alluding to that want of Faith, with which Jesus upbraids his Disciples, where he says,

early Heretics, who so much deformed the simplicity and purity of the Christian Faith by visionary pretences to a superior *knowlege* of Revelation, took their name.

(4) Ἐν ᾧ εἰσὶ πάντες οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς ΣΟΦΙΑΣ καὶ τῆς ΓΝΩΣΕΩΣ ἀπόκρυφοι. Coloss. ii. 3. He uses the word ἀπόκρυφοι, as having in the foregoing verse called this *wisdom and knowlege* τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ. That the word σοφία is used in the sense here contended for, is plain from his immediately subjoining a warning against vain philosophy, βλέπετε μή τις ὑμᾶς ἔσται ὁ συλασγῶν διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας, &c. As much as to say, I present you with the treasures of *true* wisdom—οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας—take care that no body deceive you with the *false*.

—*had ye Faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye should say unto this mountain, Remove hence into yonder place, and it shall remove* (5).

The two next other gifts, of HEALING and WORKING MIRACLES, are two specieses of the foregoing genus. By *healing* is meant that salutary assistance administered to the sick, in a solemn office of the Church, as directed by St. James (6): and by *working miracles*, a more private and extemporaneous exercise of the same power, tho' less confined in its objects (7).

PROPHECY, which follows, plainly signifies, foretelling the future fortunes of the Church, to the comfort and edification (as St. Paul expresses it) of the Assembly. *He that PROPHESIETH speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort* (8). And these effects, generally attending the act of *prophecy*, in a little time assumed its name (9). But the proper sense of *prophecy*, and

(5) Matth. xvii. 20.

(6) *Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of Faith [i. e. the faith mentioned just before] shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.* Gen. Ep. v. 14.

(7) The *χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων* properly expresses gifts belonging to the Church as such, and *ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων* implies virtue residing in the individual or particular Agent. Besides we may observe, *χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων* was a less degree of miraculous power than the *ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων*, and is expressly intimated so to be v. 28.—*ἔπειτα δυνάμεις, εἶτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων.*

(8) 1 Cor. xiv. 3.

(9) As Rom. xii. 6.—1 Cor. xiii. 9.—xiv. 1, & 24.

that

that in which it is to be understood in this place, is the *foretelling things to come*; which Jesus himself declares to be one essential part of the office of the Holy Spirit. *Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth---and he will* SHEW YOU THINGS TO COME (1).

The last of these gifts, in the order of things, as well as in the Apostle's enumeration of them, is the DISCERNING OF SPIRITS. The reputation attending the exercise of these extraordinary endowments would be a strong temptation to Impostors to mimic and belye their powers; as we see it was in the case of Simon the Magician. It graciously pleased the Holy Spirit, therefore, amidst the bounty of these gifts, to bestow one, whose property it was to bring all the others to the test (2), by the Virtue which the possessor of it had, of distinguishing between true and false inspiration, where accidental ambiguity or designed imposture had made the matter doubtful or suspected.

These gifts, St. Paul tells us, were severally distributed amongst the Faithful. But the Apostles themselves, as Scripture leads us to conclude, had them all in conjunction; exercised them in fuller

(1) John xvi. 13.—*καὶ τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν.*

(2) διακρίσεις πνευμάτων—διάκρισις is used in other places in this signification—*μὴ εἰς διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν*, Rom. xiv. 1.—*πρὸς διάκρισιν καλοῦ τε καὶ κακοῦ*, Heb. v. 14.—*πνευμάτων*, of *Spirits* or divine afflations. And so the Author uses it, a little after, *πνεύματα προφητῶν*, c. xiv. 32.

measure ; supported them by additional revelations (3) ; and (as hath been proved of one of them at least) possessed them by a more lasting title.

But, for a fuller account of their *nature* and their *use*, we must have recourse to SCRIPTURE itself, which contains the history of their various fruits. And as the richest of these fruits is the INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE itself, I shall select this for the subject of what I have further to say of the primitive operations of the Holy Spirit ; especially as this hath, in these *latter times*, been called in question.



C H A P. V.

WE may observe that the Ministry of the first preachers of the Gospel consisted of these two parts ; (1.) The temporary and occasional instructions of those Christians whom they had brought to the knowlege of, and faith in, Jesus, the Messiah ; (2.) and the care of composing a WRITTEN RULE for the direction of the

(3) *Now, Brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak unto you either by REVELATION, or by knowlege, or by prophesying, or by doctrine.* 1 Cor. xiv. 6. And this additional gift of *Revelation*, which conveyed the further knowlege of God's will in the Gospel, seems properly to have been appropriated to the Apostles, with design to dignify their office.

Church

Church throughout all ages. Now it being granted, because, by the history of *the acts of the Apostles*, it may be proved, that they were divinely inspired in the discharge of the temporary part; it must be very strong evidence indeed which can induce an unprejudiced man to suspect, that they were left to themselves in the execution of the other. Their preaching could only profit their Contemporaries: For instructions conveyed to future ages by Tradition are soon lost and forgotten; or, what is worse, polluted and corrupted with fables. It is reasonable therefore to think, that the Church was provided with a WRITTEN RULE. The good providence of God hath indeed made this provision. And the Scriptures of the New Testament have been received by all the Faithful, as divine Oracles, as the inspired dictates of the Holy Spirit, till Superstition extending the notion of inspiration to an extravagant height, over-cautious Believers joined with Libertines, (who had taken advantage of that folly) to deny or bring in question all inspiration whatsoever. For extremes beget each other; and when thus begotten, they are suffered, in order to preserve the ballance of the *moral system*, as frequently to support as to destroy one another; that, while they subsist, each may defeat the mischiefs which the other threatens; and when they fall, both of them may fall together.

I shall therefore take upon me to expose the extravagance of either folly ; and then endeavour to settle the TRUE NOTION OF SCRIPTURE INSPIRATION.

1. We have seen how fully gifted the Apostles were for the business of their Mission. They worked Miracles, they spake with Tongues, they explained Mysteries, they interpreted Prophecies, they discerned the true from the false pretences to the Spirit : And all this for the temporary and occasional discharge of their Ministry. Is it possible, then, to suppose them to be deserted by this divine Inlightener when they sat down to the other part of their work ; to frame a rule for the lasting service of the Church ? Can we believe that that Spirit, which so bountifully assisted them in their Assemblies, had withdrawn himself when they retired to their private Oratories : or that when their *speech* was *with all power*, their *writings* should convey no more than the fallible dictates of human knowledge ? To suppose the endowments of the Spirit to be so capriciously bestowed, would make it look more like a mockery than a gift. And to believe all this would be a harder task than what (the Deist tells us) our credulity imposes on us. No candid man therefore will be backward to conclude, that what the Apostles had for the temporary use of their Ministry, they had, at least in as large a measure, for the perpetual service of the Church.

2. St. Paul, where he recommends the study of the Scriptures of the Old Testament to Timothy, expressly declares them to be inspired, in that general proposition, *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God* (4). Now if in the Mosaic Dispensation, the written Rule was *given by inspiration of God*, where the Church was conducted in every step, at first by Oracular responses, and afterwards by a long series and continued succession of Prophets; and all this under an *extraordinary* administration of Providence, such as might well seem to supersede the necessity of a scriptural inspiration; how confidently may we conclude, that the same divine Goodness would give the INFALLIBLE GUIDE of an inspired Scripture to the Christian Church, where the miraculous influence of the Holy Spirit is supposed to have ceased with the Apostolic ages, and where the administration of Providence is only *ordinary*? Nor can it be said, that what St. Paul predicates of *Scripture* must be confined to the Law, (whose very name indeed implies inspiration) and what is prefatory to it; since the largeness of his terms, *all Scripture*, extends to the whole Canon of the Old Testament, as then received by the two Churches. And this general expression was the more expedient, as the *historic* writings did not either by their nature, like the *prophetic*, or by their name, like the *legal*, necessarily imply their coming immediately from

(4) 2 Tim. iii. 16.

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God. The Canonical books of the OLD Testament, therefore, being inspired, Reason directs us to expect the same quality in the NEW. And, as in the *Old*, amongst several occasional writings, there was the fundamental record, or the GREAT CHARTER of the Pentateuch; and in the Volumes of the Prophets, the Oracular predictions of the future fortunes of the Church, to the FIRST coming of the Messiah; so, in the *New*, there is, besides the occasional Epistles, the authentic Record or GREAT CHARTER of the Gospel-Covenant; and in the Revelations of St. John, the same divine predictions continued to the SECOND coming of the Saviour of the World.

3. The reason of the thing likewise supports us in concluding for this inspiration. An universal Rule of human conduct implies as unlimited an obedience: the nature of such a Rule requiring it to be received entire; and to be observed in every article. But when once it is supposed to come to us, tho' from Heaven, yet not immediately, but thro' the canal of an uninspired instrument, liable to error both in the receiving and in the dispensing of it, men would be perpetually tempted to own just as much as, and no more than, they liked to believe, or were disposed to practise; and to reject the rest as a mere human imposition. Nay the very reasons which the writers against this inspiration give us, why it is not afforded, seem to shew the necessity

why it should: such as the imperfect knowledge that the Apostles had of the genius of Christianity; their disputes and differences with one another; their mistakes in matters of easy prevention, tho' of little consequence, &c. for if the Composers of a *Rule of Faith* for the universal Church were thus naturally defective in historic and religious knowledge, What security could we have for their not misleading us in things of moment, unless prevented by the guard and guidance of the Holy Spirit, while they engaged themselves in this important task?

I am enough sensible of the weakness and folly of that kind of reasoning which concludes from *right* to *fact*; and assumes, that because a thing is imagined to be expedient, useful, or necessary, in God's moral Government, that therefore he hath indeed made provision for it. Thus the Papal Doctors, in their arguments for the *standing power of Miracles* and the appointment of an *infallible Guide*, having endeavoured to shew that the first is necessary for those *without*, and the second for those *within*, would draw us to conclude with them, that the *true Church* hath, in fact, the exercise and use of MIRACLES and INFALLIBILITY.

But the cases are widely different. It is by no means agreed, that the Church, after the Apostolic ages, was in the possession of so large a portion of the holy Spirit as to enable either this pretended HEAD, or its MEMBERS, to exert
the

the powers in question: Whereas it is confessed by all, that at the time these Scriptures were written, the Composers of them were divinely inspired for the occasional work of the Ministry: And the only question in dispute is, Whether that Spirit which aided them in defending the Gospel before the tribunals of Kings and Magistrates (5)—in working miracles before the multitude of Unbelievers—and in prophesying and explaining Mysteries to the assemblies of the Faithful, whether this Spirit, I say, did accompany, or desert them, when they retired within themselves, to compose a RULE OF FAITH for the perpetual service of the Church?

4. But lastly, we have the clear testimony of Scripture for this inspiration. And tho' the *bearing witness to it self* (6) might be reasonably objected in an argument addressed to Unbelievers, yet being here enforced against such of the Faithful who doubt or hesitate concerning the inspiration of the New Testament, it hath all the propriety we can desire.

I venture therefore to say, that St. Paul, in the general proposition quoted above, which affirms that *all Scripture is given by inspiration*

(5) *And when they bring you unto the Synagogues, and unto the Magistrates and Powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.* Luke xii. 11, 12.

(6) *If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.* John v. 31.

of

of God, (7) necessarily includes the Scriptures in question ; what it predicates of *all Scripture* taking in the *new* as well as *old* ; as well that which was to be written, as that which was already collected into a Canon. For the term, *Scripture*, as the context leads us to understand it, is general, and means, a religious Rule, perfect in its direction, for the conduct of human life, in belief and practice : it being under this idea that he recommends the *Scriptures* to Timothy. The assertion therefore is universal, and amounts to this, “ That *divine Inspiration* is an essential quality of every *Scripture*, which constitutes the LAW OR RULE of a Religion coming from God.”

On the whole then, we conclude, that *all the Scriptures of the New Testament were given by inspiration of God*. And thus the prophetic promise of our blessed Master, that the *Comforter should abide with us for ever*, was eminently fulfilled. For tho', according to the promise, his ordinary influence occasionally assists the Faithful of all ages, yet his constant abode and supreme illumination is in the sacred Scriptures of the New Testament (8).

C H A P.

(7) Πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος &c.

(8) The late Mr. William Law, who obscured a good understanding by the fumes of the rankest enthusiasm, and depraved a sound judgment, still further, by the prejudices he took up against all Sobriety in Religion, seized the above paragraph, as he found it detached from the discourse in a quotation

C H A P. VI.

IT remains only to be considered, In what sense we are to understand this *inspiration*?

A spurious opinion, begotten in the Jewish Church by Superstition, and nursed up by mistaken piety in the Christian, hath almost passed into an article of Faith, “ That the language of Scripture was dictated by the holy Spirit in such

tation made of it, by an ingenious writer; and thus descants upon it: “ Dr. Warburton’s doctrine is this, that the inspired “ books of the New Testament is the Comforter or *spirit of* “ *truth and illuminator*, which is meant by Christ’s being al- “ ways with the Church. Let us therefore put the Doctor’s “ doctrine into the letter of the text, which will best shew “ how true or false it is. Christ saith, *If any man love me,* “ *my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and* “ *make our abode with him.* That is, according to the Doc- “ tor’s theology, certain books of Scripture will come to “ him, and make their abode with him; for he expressly con- “ fineth the *constant abode* and *supreme illumination* of God to “ the holy Scriptures. Therefore (horrible to say) God’s in- “ ward presence, his OPERATING POWER OF LIFE and light “ in our souls, his dwelling in us, and we in him, is some- “ thing of a lower nature, that only may occasionally hap- “ pen, and has less of God in it than the dead letter of Scrip- “ ture, which alone is the *constant abode* and *supreme illumina-* “ *tion.* Miserable fruits of a paradoxical genius!”—*A hum-*
ble, earnest, and affectionate address to the Clergy, p. 69-70.

This poor man, whether misled by his fanaticism or his spleen, has here fallen into a trap which his folly laid for his malice. In the discourse, from whence the paragraph so severely handled is taken, I treated distinctly of these two branches

such a manner that the Writers were but the passive organs thro' which every word and letter were conveyed." And as Superstition seldom knows where to stop, the Mahometans improved upon this fancy, and represent their Scriptures as sent them down from Heaven ready written. Having got into so fair a train, the next theological question in honour of the Alcoran was, whether it was *created* or *uncreated*; and the orthodox determination, we may be sure, was in favour of the latter. But it was a rabbinical hyperbole, concerning the unvariable reading of the copies of the Law, which seems to have given the Mahometan Doctors a hint for this last conceit, concerning the physical nature of the Alcoran (9).

But

branches of the Holy Spirit; 1. As he *illuminates the Understanding* under the title of the *Spirit of truth*. 2. As he *rectifies the Will* under the title of the *Comforter*: by the first of which, he *establishes our faith*; and by the second, he *perfects our obedience*.

Now it is under the first branch in which this obnoxious paragraph is found. So that common sense and common honesty require, that when I say, the *constant abode and supreme illumination of the Holy Spirit is in the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament*, I should be understood to mean, that he is there only as the *illuminator of the understanding*, the *establisher of our faith*. But Mr. Law applies my words to the other branch of his office, as the *rectifier of the Will*, the *perfecter of obedience*; and so makes my observation nonsense in order to arraign it of impiety.

(9) Orobio, speaking the language of the Rabbins, says,—
Liber Moïsis est ita perfectus et purus, atque ab erroribus alienus,

But there are many objections to that idea of organic inspiration, which mistaken piety hath adopted.

1. It would be putting the holy Spirit on an unnecessary employment ; for much of these sacred Volumes being historical, and of facts and discourses which had fallen under the observation of the Writers, they did not need his immediate assistance to do this part of their business for them.

2. Had the Scriptures been written under this organic inspiration, there must have been the most perfect agreement amongst the four Evangelists, in every circumstance of the smallest fact. But we see there is not this perfect agreement. In some minute particulars, which regard neither faith nor manners ; neither the truth nor certainty of the history in general, the several Writers vary from one another. A variation, which, tho' it discredits the notion of an organic inspiration, yet (which is of much more importance) supports the fidelity of the Historians ; as it shews that they did not write in concert, or copy from one another ; but that each described the proper impressions which the same facts had made upon himself.

nus, ab ejus conditore per tot secula variis in nationibus servatus, ut *cætera naturalia* quæ Deus non corruptioni exposita *creavit* ; ut Cœli, Sol et Altra, quæ a sua formatione non majore Providentia incorrupta, servantur et subsistunt, quam divini legis libri, qui nunquam aliquam mutationem experti fuerunt. *Apud Limb. p. 147.*

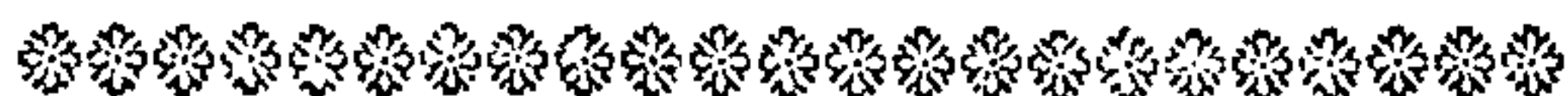
3. Were

3. Were this the true idea of Scripture-inspiration, that the several Writers were but the mere organs of the Spirit, the phraseology or turn of expression had been one and the same throughout all the sacred books written in the same language: whereas we find it to be very different and various; always corresponding to the conditions, tempers, and capacities of the Writers.

4. Lastly, the very words of Scripture must, in this case, have been preserved, throughout all ages, perfectly pure and free from the corruptions and mistakes of transcribers. For if it were expedient; useful and fortifying with the views of divine wisdom, that every word and letter should be inspired, it was equally expedient that every word and letter should be preserved uncorrupt; otherwise the holy Spirit would appear to have laboured in vain. Now general experience assures us that this is not the case: frequent transcribing hath occasioned numerous variations in words and phrases throughout all the Scriptures of the New Testament. But tho' this opposes the notion of organic inspiration, yet the harmless nature of the variations, which never disturb the sense, nor obscure a single proposition of Faith, or precept of good manners, affords us a noble instance of the gracious providence of God, in bringing down to us those Scriptures, destined for an *infallible rule*, incorrupt and entire, in all essential and even material points; tho' after escaping the impure hands of so many outrageous Bigots, schismatic Visionaries, and he-

retical Seducers, they had a long journey still to run, through the dark cloisters of dreaming Superstition, and of ignorance but half awake.

From all this we conclude, that the notion of organic Inspiration must needs be false: and yet we have proved it to be an undoubted truth, that the Scriptures of the New Testament were *given by the inspiration of God.*



C H A P. VII.

LET us consider then, in what sense this inspiration is to be understood.—From the premises we can deduce no other notion of it but this, “That the Holy Spirit so directed the pens of these Writers that no considerable error should fall from them:—by enlightening them with his immediate influence in all such matters as were necessary for the instruction of the Church, and which, either thro’ ignorance or prejudice, they would otherwise have represented imperfectly, partially, or falsely; and by preserving them, in the more ordinary ways of providence, from any mistakes of consequence, concerning those things whereof they had acquired a competent knowledge by the common way of information. In a word, by watching over them incessantly; but with so suspended a hand, as permitted the use, and left them to the guidance, of their own faculties, while they kept clear

clear of error ; and then only interposing when, without this divine assistance, they would have been in danger of falling."

This seems to be the true idea of the inspiration in question. This only doth agree with all appearances ; and will fully answer the purpose of an inspired writing, which is to afford an INFALLIBLE RULE for the direction of the Catholic Church.

But it is not only the nature and genius, the state and condition of Holy Scripture, which support this idea of inspiration : The express words of its composers lead to the same conclusion. St. Peter, speaking of the Epistles of his fellow-labourer St. Paul, uses this temperate expression concerning their inspiration ; he hath written to you, says he, *according to the wisdom given unto him* (1) : now, as on the one hand, by the character of this *wisdom*, which is said to be GIVEN, we must conclude it to be *that wisdom coming immediately from above* ; so, from this account of the Apostle's free use of it, who employed it as the regulator of his thoughts and conceptions, we must conclude on the other, that there was no organic inspiration, ruling irresistibly, further than in securing the writer from error and mistake. And the diffidence with which the Apostle himself speaks, on a certain occasion (2), concerning his inspiration, shews that it could not be organic,

(1) ΚΑΤΑ τὴν αὐτῷ ΔΟΘΕΙΣΑΝ σοφίαν—2 Pet. iii. 15.

(2) δεῖκα δὲ καὶ γὰρ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἔχειν. 1 Cor. xii. 40.

which species excludes all doubt and uncertainty concerning its presence.

But it may be said, that, on this moderated idea of inspiration, we shall never be able to distinguish which parts were written under the immediate influence of the Spirit, and which were the product of human knowledge only. What if we shall not? Where is the mischief or inconvenience? while all we want to know is, that every sentence of Scripture, which but remotely concerns either faith or practice, is infallibly true. It is of little consequence to us to be instructed how or in what manner that truth came to be secured: whether by direct inspiration; or by that virtual superintendence of the Spirit, which preserved the writers of it from error. Scripture is the rule of Christian conduct; and if the rule be known to be unerring, this is all that is wanting to effectuate its end.

And yet I am persuaded, licentious men have been the forwarder to contend for this moderated inspiration, under the idea of a partial one, on the pleasing fancy that it would support them in believing no more than suited with their principles or their practice. But, what hath been observed on this head sufficiently exposes the vanity of all such idle contrivances to let men loose from any part of their faith or duty. For, be it admitted that this or that particular doctrine or precept was not delivered under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit, but was conveyed to posterity,
in

in the common way of history, as the writer received it from his master, yet this takes nothing at all from that certainty of truth which attends directer inspiration ; since the rational idea of a partial influence implies, that the Spirit so watched over the Authors of the New Testament, and so guided their pens, as to admit no mixture of material error, in those parts where they discharged no more than the ordinary function of common Historians.

In a word, it imports us little to be solicitous about the Scriptural DELIVERY of Gospel truths ; whether they be conveyed to us by means merely human, or by the more powerful workings of the Holy Spirit, so long as we are assured that divine Providence guarded that delivery from all approach of error. But then let us observe that this is a very different thing from the ORIGINE of the Truths themselves : for on this latter, the reality of our Religion, indeed, depends ; the very essence of it consisting in this, that the doctrines which it teacheth be not only Truths SIMPLY, but Truths REVEALED from Heaven. And indeed, even with regard to the *delivery*, when the Writers propose any thing of *faith* or *practice*, explanatory of what their master taught, and not explicitly contained in his words, we must needs conclude, that so far forth they were under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, who was *to teach them all things* : and this

influence, the Apostle calls, *speaking by revelation* (3).

Thus we see the advantages resulting from a PARTIAL INSPIRATION as here contended for and explained. It answers all the ends of a Scripture universally and organically inspired, by producing an UNERRING RULE of Faith and Manners; and besides, *obviates* all those objections to *inspiration* which arise from the too high notion of it: Such as trifling errors in circumstances of small importance; for the least error is inconsistent with organic inspiration, but may well stand with a virtual and cooperating influence: Such again, as the various readings in the several transcripts; and the various styles amongst the several Authors of Scripture; inconsistencies which would never have been permitted, and contrarieties which could never have happened, under universal inspiration; but which are the natural and harmless consequences of the PARTIAL.

In a word, by admitting no more than this lower kind of inspiration, so warmly contended for (and in terms as vague and indeterminate as the Scepticism of the users) by men who were in hopes that the admission of it would end in no inspiration at all, we secure and establish the infallible word of Scripture; and free it from all those embarrassing circumstances which have been so artfully and disingenuously thrown out to its discredit.

(3) *ἐὰν μὴ ὑμεῖς λαλήσω ἐν ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΕΙ.* 1 Cor. xiv. 6.

C H A P. VIII.

BUT there is no idea of an inspired Scripture which libertine men have not perverted to serve their evil purposes. Thus, when their own idea of a *partial inspiration* hath failed in this service, they have tried what mischief that other of our invention, an *organic inspiration*, was likely to produce. In order to this they have laid it down as a proposition not likely to be contested, “ that, on this idea, the work inspired could be no other than a perfect model of eloquence, *pure, clear, noble and affecting beyond the force of common speech.* To this, it was thought enough to shew, that their Principle was false; that, in the composition of sacred Scripture, there was *no organic inspiration*: and this, I presume, I have sufficiently performed.

But, luckily for their purpose, there is another circumstance in the dispensation of Grace, which restores their objection, concerning *a perfect model of eloquence*, to its native force. This circumstance therefore is now to be considered; the use made of it fairly represented; and the proper reasoning applied to enervate its new recovered force.

The circumstance is this: Several books of the New Testament are written by persons who acquired the knowledge of the Greek tongue by miraculous infusion, as at the day of Pentecost.

“ Now the holy Ghost, say they, could not but inspire the purest Greek, and the most perfect eloquence in the use of it; whatever they wrote therefore in any future time, in this language, must needs bear these marks of its celestial birth, whether they were assisted in the composition by the holy Spirit; or whether they wrote upon the fund of their formerly acquired knowlege. But the language of all the books of the New Testament is utterly rude and barbarous, and favours nothing of so high an original.”

The learned Person, (whose reasoning against the duration of the inspired knowlege of language, on the day of Pentecost, hath been considered above) lends the Libertine these arms, in his concluding argument, in support of that notion; which argument I have reserved to be considered in this place.

“ If we allow, (says he) the gift to be lasting,
 “ we must conclude that some at least of the
 “ books of Scripture were in this inspired Greek.
 “ But (says he) we should naturally expect to
 “ find an inspired language to be such as is wor-
 “ thy of God; that is, pure, clear, noble, and
 “ affecting, even beyond the force of common
 “ speech; since nothing can come from God but
 “ what is perfect in its kind. In short, the pu-
 “ rity of Plato, and the eloquence of Cicero.
 “ Now (continues he) if we try the apostolic
 “ language by this rule, we shall be so far from
 “ ascribing it to God, that we shall scarce think
 “ it

“ it worthy of Man, that is, of the liberal and
“ polite ; it being utterly rude and barbarous, and
“ abounding with every fault that can possibly
“ deform a language. And tho’ some writers,
“ prompted by a false zeal, have attempted to
“ defend the purity of the Scripture-Greek, their
“ labour has been idly employed (1).”

These triumphant observations are founded on two propositions, both of which he takes for granted, and yet neither of them is true.

1. The one, That an inspired language must needs be a language of perfect eloquence.

2. The other, That eloquence is something congenial and essential to human speech. I shall shew the falsehood of both.

With regard to the first proposition, I will be bold to affirm, that were the *STYLE* of the New Testament exactly such as his very exaggerated account of it would persuade us to believe, namely, that it is *utterly rude and barbarous, and abounding with every fault that can possibly deform a language*, this is so far from proving such language not divinely inspired, that it is one certain mark of this original.

I will not pretend to point out which books of the New Testament were or were not composed by those who had the Greek tongue thus miraculously infused into them ; but this I will venture to say, that the style of a writer so inspired, who had not (as these writers had not)

(1) Dr. Middleton’s *essay on the gift of tongues*. Works, Vol. II. p. 91.

afterwards cultivated his knowlege of the language on the principles of Grecian eloquence, would be precisely such as we find it in the books of the New Testament.

For, if this only be allowed, which no one, I think, will contest with me, that a strange language acquired by illiterate men, in the ordinary way, would be full of the idioms of their native tongue, just as the Scripture-Greek is observed to be full of Syriaisms and Hebraisms; how can it be pretended, by those who reflect upon the nature of language, that a strange tongue divinely infused into illiterate men, like that at the day of Pentecost, could have any other properties or conditions?

Let us weigh these cases impartially. Every language consists of two distinct parts; the single terms, and the phrases and idioms. The first, as far as concerns appellatives especially, is of mere arbitrary imposition, tho' on artificial principles common to all men: The second arises insensibly, but constantly, from the manners, customs, and tempers of those to whom the language is vernacular; and so becomes, tho' much less arbitrary, (as what the Grammarians call *congruity* is more concerned in this part than in the other) yet various and different as the several tribes and nations of mankind. The first therefore is unrelated to every thing but to the genius of language in general; the second hath an intimate connexion with the fashions,

fashions, notions, and opinions of, that people only, to whom the language is native.

Let us consider then the constant way which illiterate men take to acquire the knowlege of a foreign tongue. Do they not make it their principal, and, at first, their only study, to treasure up in their memory the signification of the terms? Hence, when they come to talk or write in the speech thus acquired, their language is found to be full of their own native idioms. And thus it will continue, till by long use of the strange tongue, and especially by long acquaintance with the owners of it, they have imbibed the particular genius of the language.

Suppose then this foreign tongue, instead of being thus gradually introduced into the minds of these illiterate men, was instantaneously infused into them; the operation (tho' not the very mode of operating) being the same, must not the effect be the same, let the cause be never so different? Without question. The divine impression must be made either by fixing the terms or single words only and their signification in the memory; as for instance, Greek terms corresponding to the Syriac or Hebrew; or else, together with that simple impression, another must be made, to enrich the mind with all the ideas which go towards the composing the phrases and idioms of the language so inspired: But this latter impression seems to require, or rather indeed implies, a previous one, of the tempers, fashions, and

and opinions of the people to whom the language is native, upon the minds of them to whom the language is thus imparted ; because the phrase and idiom arises from and is dependent on those manners : and therefore the force of expression can be understood only in proportion to the knowledge of the manners : and understood they were to be ; the Recipients of this spiritual gift being not organical canals, but rational Dispensers. So that this would be a waste of miracles without a sufficient cause ; the Syriac or Hebrew idiom, to which the Disciples were enabled of themselves to adapt the words of the Greek or any other language, abundantly serving every useful purpose, all which centered in the giving CLEAR INTELLIGENCE. We conclude, therefore, that what was thus inspired was the TERMS, together with that grammatic congruity in the use of them, which is dependant thereon. In a word, to suppose such kind of inspired knowledge of *strange tongues* as includes all the native peculiarities, which, if you will, you may call their *elegancies* ; (for the more a language is coloured by the character and manners of the native users, the more elegant it is esteemed) to suppose this, is, as I have said, an ignorant fancy, and repugnant to reason and experience.

Now, from what hath been observed, it follows, that if the style of the New Testament were indeed derived from a language divinely infused as on the day of Pentecost, it must be just such,
with

with regard to its style, which, in fact, we find it to be ; that is to say, Greek words very frequently delivered in Syriac and Hebrew idiom.

The conclusion from the whole is this, that a *nominal* or *local* barbarity of style, (for that this attribute, when applied to style, is no more than nominal or local, will be clearly shewn under our next head) is so far from being an objection to its miraculous acquisition, that it is one mark of such extraordinary original.

But the learned writer is so perfectly satisfied that this *barbarity* of style, which claims the title of inspired, is a sure mark of imposture, that he almost ventures to foretell, it will prove the destruction of those pretensions, as it did to the *Delphic Oracles*. The parallel, he thinks, is a *curiosity* ; and so do I ; therefore the reader shall have it just as he himself has dressed it up. “ It
 “ is somewhat *curious* to observe, that there was
 “ a controversy of the same kind amongst the
 “ Ancient Heathens concerning the style and composition of the *Delphic Oracles*. For as those
 “ Oracles were delivered in verse, and the verses
 “ generally rude and harsh, and offending frequently both in the exactness of meter and
 “ propriety of language, so men of sense easily
 “ saw that *they could not be inspired by the Deity* :
 “ others, on the contrary, blinded by their prejudices, or urged by their zeal, to support the
 “ credit of the popular superstition, constantly
 “ maintained, that the verses were really beautiful
 “ and

“ and noble, and worthy of God ; and that the
 “ contrary opinion flowed from a false delicacy
 “ and sickly taste, which relished no poetry, but
 “ what was soft and sweet ; and breathing no-
 “ thing, as it were, but spices and perfumes.
 “ The dispute however seems to have been com-
 “ pounded, and a distinction found, in which all
 “ parties acquiesced, by allowing *some sort of*
 “ *inspiration, and divine authority to the matter*
 “ *of the Oracle*, but leaving all the rest *to the*
 “ *proper talents and faculties of the Prophetess :*
 “ who being tired at last with the continual la-
 “ bour of versifying, began to utter her Oracles in
 “ prose, till the whole imposture fell by degrees
 “ into an universal contempt, and so finally ex-
 “ pired (2).”

A sad story ! But, happily, the essential dif-
 ferences between these *oracular* pretensions, and
 those of the Christian Evangelists, (all of which
 the learned Writer has thought proper to over-
 look) will ease us of our fears ; for any one of
 these differences is sufficient to shew, that tho’
 the objection may hold good against the heathen
 Oracles, yet it has not the least force against
 Scripture inspiration.

1. First then the *Delphic Oracles* were supposed
 to proceed from the fabled *God of verse*, who
 having, according to the popular opinion, inspired
 his *Poets* as well as *Prophets*, there was, in the

(2) *Essay on the gift of tongues*, Vol. II. of Middleton’s
 Works, p. 91—2.

writings of the most authentic of the *former*, a model of divine eloquence, on which the pretensions of the *latter* might be estimated. But Scripture inspiration came professedly from a Deity who had declared that *his thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are our ways his ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, &c.* (3)

2. The Delphic Oracles were delivered in *verse* or *measure*; for the composition of which, there were established rules, formed on the writings of the ancient Poets: when therefore this species of eloquence was employed by the Delphic Prophetess, if she conformed not to the established rules, but *offended against the meter*, which her own God originally inspired, she might be fairly adjudged an impostor. But the inspired Penmen disclaimed all models of human eloquence, and *the enticing words of man's wisdom.*

3. The Delphic Prophetess was a *mere organ*, her Prophecies being delivered in a fit of extacy, when the *presence* of the God was supposed to obliterate all the impressions of human ideas; so that every iota was to be placed to the account of the inspiring God. But it was just otherwise with such as were actuated by the holy Spirit: These, in the very moments of inspiration, still retained the free use of themselves, and continued masters of their rational and persuasive faculties; *the Spirits of the Prophets* (as St. Paul informs us, who spoke from his own experience) *were*

(3) Isaiah, lv, 8, 9.

subject to the Prophets (4)! The Pagan Zealots therefore grossly prevaricated, when, to cover the imposture of the *Delphic Oracle*, they compromised the matter with their adversaries, *by allowing some sort of inspiration, and divine authority, but leaving all the rest to the proper talents and faculties of the Prophetess*. But the Defenders of our holy Religion, when they say the same thing in defence of sacred Scripture, do neither prevaricate nor compromise; they advance, and they adhere to, a reasonable and consistent hypothesis; which, in an examination of the present state of the books of the New Testament as transmitted down to us from the earliest antiquity, I have shewn to be actually supported by fact.

On the whole then, we need not be too much alarmed at the hint which the learned writer hath here given us, in the fate of the *Delphic Oracles*; tho' never so tragically related;—*The Prophetess tired at last with the continual labour of versifying, began to utter her oracles in PROSE, till the whole imposture fell by degrees into an universal contempt, and so finally expired*; I say we need not be much alarmed at this catastrophe, because our Oracles hold nothing in common with the *Delphic*; and because the disgrace brought upon these was derived neither from their *bad verse* nor *barbarous prose*; but from very different causes, which the learned person either did not know, or at least did not care that his Reader should.

(4) 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

In a word, there is but one single mark of resemblance in all this ostentatious parallel; and that does not lie between the Pagan and Christian Oracles, but between their Defenders; who, with equal indiscretion, contended for purity, elegance, and beauty of style, where in one case it was not to be found, tho' pretended to; and in the other, neither pretended to, nor found. The defenders of the *Delphic Oracles*, the learned person thus describes, *that, blinded by their prejudices, or urged by their zeal to support the credit of their popular superstition, they constantly maintained, that the verses were really beautiful and noble, and worthy of God; and that the contrary opinion flowed from a false delicacy, and sickly taste, which relished no poetry, but what was soft and sweet, and breathing nothing but spices and perfumes.* The Defenders of Scripture eloquence he had before represented in the same light.—*And tho' some Writers, prompted by a false Zeal, have attempted to defend the purity of Scripture-Greek, their labours have been idly employed.*

Nothing, indeed, is more certain. Their labours have been very idly employed. One common delusion has misled the zealous defenders of all Religions on this head, not only the *Pagan* and the *Christian*, but, as we have seen, the *Mahometan* likewise. And here let me observe, what is well worth our notice, that that common imbecillity of our nature, which leads the professors of all Religions into the same specific ab-

furdities of the *marvelous*, tho' without imitating one another, has (when blundering on, in the obscure of Superstition, or the blind blaze of Fanaticism) generally been more successful in the support of false Religion than of the true. Of this I have occasionally given divers instances elsewhere. One of them, which I just now chanced to mention, will deserve to be explained. The Mahometan Doctors were (with their Master) under this common delusion, that an inspired writing must needs be a perfect model of eloquence. And they succeeded better than the Christian; for they had advantages which our zealots had not. For first, Mahomet himself delivered the Alcoran to his followers under this character; and defied the Masters of human eloquence to equal it; whereas the writers of holy Scripture disclaim all these fantastic advantages. Secondly, when Mahomet retailed his Alcoran, there was no acknowledged model of Arabic eloquence; but when the books of the New Testament were composed, there were many, and of the highest authority; so that those bold pretensions easily obtained, and soon smoothed the way for it's actually becoming such a model. Lastly, Enthusiasm, which had just done much greater things, easily induced the Saracens to believe, that they saw what their Prophet so confidently objected to their admiration, an all-perfect model of eloquence in the Chapters of the Alcoran. And they believed so long till the book became in fact, what at first they had only

only

only fancied it, as real and substantial a pattern of eloquence as any whatsoever ; a paradox, which, like many others that I have had the odd fortune to advance, will presently be seen to be only another name for Truth. But here in the North-west, our enthusiasm is neither so exalted, nor our habits so constant. We have neither the knack of persuading ourselves so readily, nor the humour of sticking to a fashion, so obstinately.

However foolish then our *false Zealots have shewn themselves in attempting to defend the purity of the Scripture Greek*, it little became the learned writer, of all men, to make them the subject of his derision ; since the *same false principle*, which betrayed them into one extreme, hath misled him into another. The principle, I mean, (and it has misled many besides) is that which lays it down for truth, *That an inspired Scripture must be a model of perfect eloquence.*



C H A P. IX.

THIS brings us to the learned Writer's *second* proposition, which I promised to examine ; and on which the principle, here delivered, is founded. It is this,

2. That eloquence is something congenial and essential to human speech ; and inherent in the constitution of things.

This supposes, that there is some certain ARCHETYPE in nature, to which that quality refers, and on which it is to be formed and modeled. And, indeed, admitting this to be the case, one should be apt enough to conclude, that when the Author of Nature condescended to inspire one of these plastic performances of human art, he would make it by the exactest pattern of the *Archetype*.

But the proposition is fanciful and false. Eloquence is not congenial or essential to human speech, nor is there any Archetype in nature to which that quality refers. It is accidental and arbitrary, and depends on custom and fashion: It is a mode of human communication which changes with the changing climates of the Earth; and is as various and unstable as the genius, temper, and manners of its diversified inhabitants. For what is PURITY but the use of such terms, with their multiplied combinations, as the interest, the complexion, or the caprice of a Writer or Speaker of Authority hath preferred to its equals? What is ELEGANCE but such a turn of idiom as a fashionable fancy hath brought into repute? And what is SUBLIMITY but the application of such images, as arbitrary or casual connexions, rather than their own native grandeur, have dignified and ennobled? Now ELOQUENCE is a compound of these three qualities of Speech, and consequently must be as nominal and unsubstantial as its Constituent parts. So that, that mode of composition, which is a model of *perfect*
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eloquence

eloquence to one nation or people, - must appear extravagant or mean to another. And thus in fact it was. Indian and Asiatic Eloquence were esteemed hyperbolic, unnatural, abrupt and puerile to the more phlegmatic inhabitants of Rome and Athens. And the Western Eloquence in its turn, appeared nerveless and effeminate, frigid or insipid to the hardy and inflamed imaginations of the East. Nay, what is more, each species, even of the most approved genus, chang'd its nature with the change of clime and language ; and the same expression, which, in one place, had the utmost *simplicity*, had, in another, the utmost *sublime*.

Longinus reading these words in the Septuagint, *God said, Let there be light : and there was light*, and regulating his ideas on the genius of his own language, very acutely gave them as an example of the *sublime*. We may be sure the judgment of so accomplished a Critic, would be eagerly laid hold on by our Doctor's *zealous Divines*, to exalt the credit of Moses's elocution. Indeed, the sublime introduction to the book of Genesis passed, for a long time, unquestioned. At length Huetius and Le Clerc, more carefully attending to the original text, discovered that the words were so far from being *sublime*, that they were of the utmost *simplicity* ; and each of these Critics composed a long dissertation to support his opinion. So far was well ; but not content with what they had done, they would needs prove that Longinus was mistaken in his criticism of the

Greek. This provoked the Poet Boileau, who had just translated that celebrated work, to support his Author's judgment; and (as he was in the same delusion with his adversaries) he did it by endeavouring to prove the sublime of the original expression. This furnished matter for answers and replies in abundance: Whereas, had the disputants but reflected, that the same expression, which in one language was highly *sublime*, might, in another, be extremely *simple*, the judgment of the Greek critic would have been confessed by Huetius and Le Clerc, and the biblical knowledge of these two learned Interpreters allowed of by Boileau. As the reason of all this serves to illustrate what is here advanced concerning *the nature of eloquence*, I shall endeavour to explain it. The ideas arising from the knowledge of the true God, and his attributes, were familiar to Moses; and whenever ideas are familiar they raise no emotion; consequently the expression of such ideas will naturally be cold and simple. There is the utmost simplicity in the words—*God said, Let there be light, and there was light*: And nothing but their simplicity would be seen or felt by a Jewish Reader, to whom the same religious ideas were equally familiar. But let a Greek, brought up and educated in the groveling and puerile notions which his national Theology produced and supported, let such a one, I say, raise himself with pain, by the strong effort of a superior genius,

“ To the first Good, first Perfect, and first Fair,” the new ideas, with which his mind is warmed and enlarged by the knowlege of the true God and his Attributes naturally produce admiration; and admiration in a Genius, is the parent of *sublime* expression. So that when the subject is Creation, his point will be to convey the highest idea of Omnipotence: but the effect of divine power, immediately following its volition, gives that highest idea: therefore, in the midst of his sublime conceptions, he will hardly think of any other words to convey them than—*God said, Let there be Light, and there was Light.* And every Greek Reader, to whom the ideas of true Theology were as novel and unfamiliar as they were to the Writer, would naturally esteem that expression, which so graphically describes the instantaneous production of Omnipotence, to be infinitely *SUBLIME*.

Apply all this to the Books of the *NEW TESTAMENT*, an authoris'd collection, professedly designed for the rule and direction of mankind. Now such a rule demanded that it should be inspired of God. But inspired writing, the Objectors say, implies the most *perfect eloquence*. What human model then was the Holy Ghost to follow? And a human model, of arbitrary construction, it must needs be, because there was no other: Or if there were another, it would never suit the purpose, which was to make an impression on the minds and affections; and this impression, such an eloquence only as that which

had gained the popular ear, could effect. Should therefore the *eastern* eloquence be employed? But this would be too inflated and gigantic for the *West*. Should it be the *Western*? But this would be too cold and torpid for the *East*. Or suppose the *generic* eloquence of the more polished Nations was to be preferred, Which *species* of it was to be employed? The rich exuberance of the Asiatic Greeks, or the dry conciseness of the Spartans? The pure and poignant ease and flowing sweetness of the Attic modulation, or the strength and grave severity of the Roman tone? Or should all give way to that African torrent, which arose from the fermented mixture of the dregs of Greece and Italy, and soon after overflowed the Church with theological conceits in a sparkling luxuriancy of thought, and a sombrous rankness of expression? Thus various were the species's! all as much decried by a different Genus, and each as much disliked by a different Species, as the eloquence of the remotest East and West, by one another.

But it will be said, Are there not some more substantial principles of eloquence, common to all?—Without doubt, there are.—Why then should not these have been employed, to do credit to the Apostolic inspiration? For good reasons: respecting both the Speaker and the Hearers. For what is eloquence but a persuasive turn given to the elocution to supply that inward, that conscious persuasion of the Speaker,

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so necessary to gain a fair hearing? But the first preachers of the Gospel did not need a succedaneum to that inward conscious persuasion! And what is the *end* of eloquence, even when it extends no further than to those more general principles, but to stifle reason, and inflame the passions? But the propagation of Christian Truths indispensably requires the aid of Reason, and requires no other human aid. And Reason can never be fairly and vigorously exerted but in that favourable interval which precedes the appeal to the passions. These were the causes which forced the Masters of eloquence to confess, that the utmost perfection of their art consists in keeping it concealed; for that the ostentation of it seemed to indicate the absence of Truth,—*Ubiunque ars ostendatur*, says the most candid and able of them all, *veritas abesse videatur* (1). Hence so many various precepts to make their most artificial periods appear artless. Now surely that was a very suspicious instrument for Heaven-directed Men, which, to preserve its credit, must pretend absence, and labour to keep out of sight.

What, therefore, do our ideas of fit and right tell us is required in the *Style* of an universal Law? Certainly no more than this—To employ those aids which are common to *all* Language as such; and to reject what is peculiar to *each*, as they are casually circumstanced. And what are these aids but CLEARNESS and PRECISION? By these,

(1) Quint. l. ix, c. 3.

the mind and sentiments of the Composer are intelligibly conveyed to the Reader. These qualities are essential to language, as it is distinguished from jargon : they are eternally the same, and independent on custom or fashion. To give a language *clearness* was the office of Philosophy ; to give it *precision* was the office of Grammar. Definition performs the first service by a resolution of the ideas which make up the terms ; Syntaxis performs the second by a combination of the several parts of speech into a systematic congruity : these are the very things in language which are least positive, as being conducted on the principles of Metaphysics and Logic. Whereas, all besides, from the very power of the elements, and signification of the terms, to the tropes and figures of Composition, are arbitrary ; and, what is more, as these are a deviation from those principles of Metaphysics and Logic, they are frequently vicious. This, the great Master, quoted above, freely confesseth, where speaking of that ornamented speech, which he calls *σχήματα λέξεως*, he makes the following confession and apology—

“ *esset enim omne Schema vitium, si non peteretur, sed accideret. Verum auctoritate, vetustate, consuetudine, plerumque defenditur,*

“ *sæpe etiam RATIONE QUADAM. Ideoque cum*

“ *sit a simplici rectoque loquendi genere de-*

“ *flexa, virtus est, si habet PROBABILE ALIQUID*

“ *quod sequatur (2).”*

(2) Quint. l. ix. c. 3.

Now

Now these qualities of *clearness* and *precision*, so necessary to the communication of our ideas, eminently distinguish the Writers of the New Testament; insomuch that it might be easily shewn, that whatever difficulties occur in the sacred Volumes, they do not arise from any imperfection in the mode of conveying their ideas, occasioned by this local or nominal *barbarity of Style*; but either from the sublime or obscure nature of the things conveyed to the Reader by words; or from the purposed conciseness of the Writer; who, in the occasional mention of any matter unrelated, or not essential, to the Dispensation, always affects a studied brevity.

But further; Suppose that, in some cases, an authentic Scripture, designed for a religious rule, demanded this quality of local eloquence; (for that, in general, it is not required, I have fully shewn above) let this, I say, be supposed, yet still it would not affect the case in hand, since it would be altogether unsuitable to the peculiar genius of the GOSPEL. It might easily be known to have been the purpose of Providence, (tho' such purpose had not been expressly declared) that the Gospel should bear all the substantial marks of it's divine Original; as well in the circumstances of it's promulgation, as in the course of it's progress. To this end, the appointed Ministers of it's conveyance were persons, mean and illiterate, and chosen from amongst the lowest of the people; that when Sceptics
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and Unbelievers saw the world converted by the *foolishness of preaching*, as the learned Apostle, in great humility, thinks fit to call it, they might have no pretence to ascribe the success, to the parts, the station, or the authority of the Preachers. Now had the language, infused into these illiterate men, been the sublime of Plato or the eloquence of Tully, Providence would have appeared to counteract it's own measures, and defeat the purpose best calculated to advance it's glory. But *God is wise, tho' man's a fool*. And the course of his Wisdom was here, as every where else, uniform and constant. It not only chose the weakest Ministers of his Will, but kept out of their hands that powerful weapon of *contorted* words, which their Adversaries might so easily have wrested to the dishonour of the Gospel. So much was Dr. Middleton mistaken, when besides *clearness*, (which he might be allowed to expect) he supposes *purity, nobleness*, and pathetic *affection* to be qualities inseparable from an inspired writing. St. Paul, who, amongst these simple Instruments, was, for the same wise purposes, made an exception to the general choice, yet industriously prosecuted that sublime view, for the sake of which the choice was made ; by rejecting all other weapons but those of the Spirit, to spread abroad the Conquests of the Son of God. *My speech* (says he) *and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of Power*. As much as to say, “My success

success was not owing to the sophistical eloquence of Rhetoricians, but to the supernatural powers, with which I was endowed, of interpreting Prophecies and working Miracles." He subjoins the reason of his use of these means—*that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* i. e. Be converted not by force of Philosophy and Eloquence, but of the supernatural gifts of the Spirit: *Therefore* (saith he again) *God hath chosen the foolish things of the World to confound the wise; and the weak things of the World to confound the mighty* (3). And lest it should be said, that this was an affectation of despising advantages which they themselves could not reach, it pleased Providence that this declaration should be made, not by one of the more sordid and idiotic of the number; but by Him, to whom both nature and discipline had given powers to equal even the heights of Greek and Roman elocution. For we see, by what now and then accidentally flames out in the fervor of his reasoning, that he had a strong and clear discernment, a quick and lively imagination, and an extensive and intimate acquaintance with those Masters in moral painting, the Greek Sophists and Philosophers: all which he proudly sacrificed to the glory of the *everlasting Gospel*. Nor does he appear to have been conscious of any inconsistency between an *inspired language* and its *local barbarity of style*: For

(3) 1 Cor. ii. 4.

having had occasion, in this very Epistle, to remind the Corinthians of the abundance of spiritual grace bestowed upon him, he says, *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all* (4); and yet he tells them that he is *rude in speech* (5). Which apparent inconsistency the reader may accept, if he pleases, for a further proof of the truth of what has been above delivered, concerning the natural condition of an inspired language.

Thus we see, how unsuitable this quality of *local* eloquence would be to the peculiar genius of the Gospel. Yet as there is, in the Old Testament, much of this ornament of style, and more imagined, it may not be improper to explain the reason of this diversity, and shew how consistent the use of it is, in those places, with the principles already laid down.

1. First, then, we may observe that Judaism was not an *universal* Religion, but instituted for the use of a single people; so that none of the inconveniencies mentioned above of a *local eloquence*, could arise from the use of it, in that Religion.

2. The Jewish Religion had a *publick part* (6); and consequently abounded in such Rites and Ceremonies, to which, an ornamented style was well adapted.

(4) 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

(5) 2 Cor. xi. 6.

(6) See Div. Leg. B. V.

3. The subjects of several of the Books of the Old Testament are in their nature *poetical*, several *rhetorical*, and so seem to have demanded a Style suitable to their genius.



C H A P. X.

AN D now enough hath been said to make a just estimate of the value of those objections which two celebrated Writers (1) have enforced, with all their art and address, against the inspiration of the New Testament, from it's local barbarity of style. Dr. Middleton's objection hath been considered already. I shall chuse to close this first part of my discourse with an examination of that still more ingenious objection of the noble Author of the CHARACTERISTICS; who hath employed all the powers of his wit and eloquence to expose the want of these qualities in the sacred Volumes.

——“It is NO OTHERWISE (says his Lordship)
 “in the grammatical art of Characters and
 “PAINTED SPEECH than in the art of painting
 “itself. I have seen, in certain Christian
 “Churches, an ancient piece or two, affirmed,
 “on the solemn faith of priestly tradition, to
 “have been *angelically* and divinely wrought by
 “a supernatural hand and sacred pencil. Had

(1) Dr. Middleton and Lord Shaftsbury.

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“ the piece happened to be of a hand like Ra-
 “ phael’s I could have found nothing certain
 “ to oppose to the tradition. But having ob-
 “ served the whole *STYLE* and manner of the
 “ pretended heavenly workmanship, to be so in-
 “ different as to vary, in many particulars, from
 “ the *truth of art*, I presumed, within myself,
 “ to beg pardon of the tradition, and assert *confi-*
 “ *dently*, that *if the pencil had been heaven-guided*
 “ *it could never have been so lame in it’s perform-*
 “ *ance* : it being a mere contradiction to all
 “ divine and moral truth, that a *celestial hand*,
 “ submitting itself to the rudiments of a human
 “ art, should sin against the art itself, and express
 “ falsehood and error instead of justness and pro-
 “ portion (2).”

This tale of *St. Luke’s painting*, like the story
 of the DELPHIC ORACLES, needs no application.
 Every one sees that it is given to discredit the
 inspiration of holy Scripture. But as *confidently*
 as his Lordship says, he draws his conclusions
 from it, he gives them no other support than
 this mistaken conceit, which he erects into an
 axiom : *That it is no otherwise in the grammatical art of characters and painted speech than in the art of painting itself* : or, in other words, that the *painted speech of Characters* which represent ideas, and the *painted images of things* are performances of the same kind. Now, in examining their natures by the principles of human

(2) *Charact.* viii. p. 230.

speech, before laid down and explained, it appears that they are of very different kinds, having nothing in common but the office of giving information, *truly* and *clearly*; one of them by representing the images of corporeal things; the other by representing the incorporeal ideas of the speaker's or writer's mind. And what thing is there, in art or nature, which does not hold something in common with another? But the difference between *these* is indeed no less than between things NATURAL and things POSITIVE, between constitutional and arbitrary; *painting* being IMITATION, and WORDS only SYMBOLS. The subject of the *first*, constant, unvariable, necessary; as having its archetype in nature: the other unstable, shifting and capricious, as depending for its existence on the human will, under the direction of fancy and caprice. In PAINTING there is, properly speaking, but *one true style*, and that is an exact imitation of nature. In SPEECH there are as many true styles as there are tempers and humours, customs and fashions amongst men. Eloquence, *or truth of style*, in speaking or writing, being nothing else but the adapting the terms of human speech to the various conceptions, fancies, and affections of the hearers; so that, as in *painting* there is but one true style, and that REAL, because an imitation of nature; in *speech* there are many true styles, but all FAN-

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TASTIC,

TASTIC, because all are the creatures of arbitrary fashion.

The noble Author himself seemed to suspect that these two things had but a slender connexion in *nature*, and therefore endeavoured to strengthen the tie by *art*. Hence his figurative expressions of PAINTED SPEECH, for *writing*, in order to clap up a forced *alliance* between writing and painting; and, on the contrary, STYLE, for manner of painting, to bring painting and writing *related*. A favourable Critic may possibly say, that the noble Writer had no other purpose, in the use of these elegant figures, than to ornament his language. Perhaps not. It is then only a remarkable example of the truth of an observation made above: “that the principal end of eloquence, as it is employed in human affairs, is to mislead reason, and to cajole the fancy and affections.”

On the whole then, All the conclusion we can reasonably draw from this noble Author’s remarks ON HEAVENLY WORKMANSHIP in *painting* and in *speech*, is only this, That if an inspired Painter were to give us a Picture, it would indeed equal or excell the pencil of Raphael; because here was a *real Archetype* to work by, that is to say, NATURE: But, if we may credit Reason, whose dictates, I am sorry to say, are not always those of his Lordship, an inspired Writer would receive no more assistance from Heaven in his expression, than what was necessary to give his speech the
essential

essential qualities of all language, namely, CLEARNESS and PRECISION; because here was no *real archetype* to follow; the various modes of eloquence being mostly fantastic, as existing only in capricious custom; and therefore unworthy the notice of a divine Inspirer.

I have now gone thro' the first part of my Discourse; which proposed to consider the Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit as THE GUIDE OF TRUTH, who clears and enlightens the Understanding. In this part, I have endeavoured to vindicate his first Descent and his inspiration of holy Scripture; I have distinguished the mode of that inspiration; I have explained the character of an inspired language; I have inquired into the nature of human eloquence, and have carefully examined the force of our free Reasoners, on every one of these distinct heads.

B O O K II.

C H A P. I.

INOW proceed to the second branch of my Discourse, which is, to consider the Holy Spirit under the idea of THE COMFORTER, who purifies and supports the Will.

And here, his divine power manifested itself in the same miraculous Operations. Sacred Antiquity is very large and full in its accounts of the sudden and entire change made by the Holy Spirit, in the dispositions and manners of those whom it had enlightned; instantaneously effacing all their evil habits, and familiarizing their practice to the performance of every virtuous and pious action.

To this illustrious and triumphant conviction of the truth of Christianity, the very enemies and persecutors of our holy Faith have been forced to bear witness: not only in the serious accounts which some (1) of them have given of the innocence and virtue of PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY; but even in the mockery and ridicule of others (2), on the subject of the boasted virtue of water-baptism; which was then commonly accom-

(1) Pliny the younger, Suetonius, Tacitus, &c.

(2) Celsus, Julian, &c.

panied with, and sometimes preceded by, these extraordinary effusions of grace from the *Comforter*. “Come hère (say these unhappy Libertines) and see the amazing efficacy of Christian-baptism! whoever is immersed in this water, tho’ before, he were an adulterer, a practised thief or murderer, rises cleansed and purified from all his crimes; and commences, on the instant, a life of temperance, of justice, and of charity.” Thus did these impious scorers endeavour to disguise their chagrin at the triumphs of the Spirit, over Vice and Paganism, by a sarcastic parody of the grateful exultations of the Christian Pastors. In truth, it was all they had to say; for, after this, they were reduced to seek a forced consolation, in the possibility that some NATURAL CAUSE had produced so extraordinary a phænomenon.

It may be worth while, therefore, to enquire whether any such cause can be reasonably assigned.

The enemies of our Faith hope to find it in FANATICISM, and SUPERSTITION, the two Passions which the strong impression of a *new* Religion begets, by it’s HOPES and FEARS, on the mind of man.

Let us see, whether either, or both of these, will account for so *sudden* and *lasting* a conversion, from vice and corruption, to a life of sanctity and virtue.

SUPERSTITION, which only depraves the Reason without making any impresson on those faculties of the mind that most incline the Will to a new bias, never effects any considerable change in the MANNERS. It's utmost force is but just enough to persuade us, that an exact attention to the officious ceremonies of Religion will be of force to secure us from the evils denounced against vice and immorality ; or, at least, that some transient acts of penitence, as the approaches of Death alarm us, will be sufficient to intitle us to the reward of a pure and well-spent Life.

FANATICISM, indeed, shakes and agitates the mind with greater violence : and by instigating those faculties which most influence the Will, frequently forces the Manners from their bent ; and sometimes effaces, or obscures, the strongest impressions of custom and nature. But this extraordinary fervour, tho' always violent, is rarely lasting : never so long as to turn the new System into a habit. So that when its rage subsides, as it very soon does, but where it drives the unhappy victim into downright madness, the late impressed bias on the Will keeps abating, till all the former habitudes recover their relaxed tone.

This is confirmed, not only by the general History of past Fanaticism, but likewise of the present, where we commonly see the final issue of a sudden conversion to be, either a return to an
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open profligacy of manners, or a deep hypocritical dissimulation of them.

But now if we look into the history of those early Converts, we shall find that their Virtue, from the very first impression of it; had all the ease, sobriety, and moderation of a settled habit: in this they persevered; and adding *grace to grace*, they went on, thro' life, in one constant tenor, from the first baptismal profession of their Faith by water, to the last awful confirmation of it in their blood. A dreadful period! when Nature, by the very shock, and in the struggle, it then suffers, becomes enabled to dissipate all the fumes of *mental*, as it is frequently observed to do, of *corporeal* intoxication. This it did, in the famous case of the virtuous SAVANAROLA of Florence; whose story is so finely told by Guicciardini in the second and third books of his History. This Man, a genuine Fanatic, if ever there were any, had assumed the personage of a Prophet and inspired Preacher. A Character which he had long and successfully sustained; taken up amidst the distresses and distractions of his Country, and, without doubt, occasioned by them. But losing his credit in the new Revolutions of Italy, and being brought by his enemies to the stake, he died, after having disavowed his pretensions, on the rack; he died, I say, fullen and silent, without any remaining symptom of his former Enthusiasm.

Nor could this sudden conversion of the first Christians be the effect of MERE rational conviction. We know it to be morally impossible for Reason, however refined and strengthened by true Philosophy, to root out, on the instant, the inveterate habits of Vice. All that this magisterial Faculty can do is, by constantly repeating her dictates, and enforcing her conclusions, gradually to win over the Will; till, by little and little, the mind accustoms itself to another set of ideas, productive of other practices and other habits. A work of time and labour! as those good men have sufficiently experienced, who on a mere rational conviction, have attempted and perfected a change in their lives and manners. When therefore we see the deepest impressions of evil custom, and the darkest stains of corrupted nature thus suddenly wiped out and effaced, To what must we ascribe so total a reform but to the all-powerful operation of Grace?

But it may be objected, “That there are instances where Enthusiasm alone hath kept men steady in the practice of that virtue which a certain fanatic turn of mind first recommended.” Doubtleſs there have been many good people, who either thro’ the weakness of their reason, or the force of their more refined passions, have been hurried into fanatic fervours, which have supported and confirmed them in their previous innocence of manners. But even here we have sufficient

ficient marks to distinguish these better sorts of Enthusiasts, from such of the first christian Confessors, who were in the happy circumstance of being *found* innocent, when they were led into the practice of all virtue by the holy Spirit: whose office, as we have said, consisted in this gracious combination, To enlighten the understanding, and to rectify the will. Now, that genial splendour which conducted the first Christians into the knowlege of *all truth*, sufficiently disclosed the divine Inspirer of *all righteousness*. But we see none of that *shining light* ordained and employed to gild the *good works* of Grace, in the morals of innocent Enthusiasts. On the contrary, we often find a more than ordinary ignorance; and sometimes, even an incapacity of making rational conclusions.

Thus was the first part of the promise to *send the COMFORTER*, fulfilled.

C H A P. II.

THE other part, that HE SHOULD ABIDE WITH US FOR EVER, comes next to be considered. We have observed how this likewise hath been verified by the sure deposit of the *Spirit of Truth* in sacred Scripture. Yet this is not the whole of the completion. His present influence,

influence, together with the fruits of the past, make the entire subject of the promise. Hence we conclude that he abides with *the Church for ever* as well PERSONALLY in his office of *Comforter*, in supporting the Will, as VIRTUALLY in his office of *Enlightener*, in directing the Understanding.

The only question will be, Whether, from the primitive ages down to these latter times, he hath continued to exercise either part of his office in the same extraordinary manner in which he entered upon it, when his descent on the Apostles was accompanied with all the sensible marks of the Divinity.

And this, as it tends to the decision of more than one important question (not only the superstitious claim of CHURCH-MIRACLES, but the fanatic pretences to DIVINE INFLUENCES) should be considered more at large.

But here, I shall venture to invert the method of those Divines, who, in their inquiries concerning God's Dispensations, endeavour to prove those supposed facts, which they have preconceived, from the *fitness* which they pretend to have discovered; that is, having determined of what is *fit* for God to do; they, on the credit of this, maintain that he hath done it. On the contrary, I deem it more rational, as well as modest, first to enquire of Scripture what God hath done: and,

when that is known, it will be then time enough to explain the *fitness* of his doings.

Let us see now, what holy Scripture hath delivered concerning the DURATION of the extraordinary endowments of the holy Spirit: Which, whether they rested in the Recipient, and manifested themselves in *Grace and Knowledge* transcending the powers of humanity; or whether they extended outwards, in the *gifts of healing*, to the relief of others's infirmities, may, with equal propriety, be called and be accounted MIRACULOUS. In the one case, the *gifted* person was passive; in the other, active.

Now the holy Spirit, by the mouth of Paul, has, I presume, determined this question for us, where, in the passage quoted before, on another occasion, he recapitulates the various prerogatives of the Apostolic age. This decisive passage is in these words, — *Charity never faileth: but whether there be PROPHECIES, they shall fail; whether there be TONGUES, they shall cease; whether there be KNOWLEDGE, it shall vanish away* (3).

It was the Apostle's purpose, in this place, to exalt CHARITY above all other Christian Graces; and therefore, having, in the preceding words, shewn its superiority to the rest, from its QUALITIES and attributes; he proceeds to urge the advantage still further, from the consideration of its DURABILITY. — *Charity never faileth, &c.*

(3) 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

The question is, Whether the superior *duration*, here ascribed to *Charity* over *Prophecies*, *Tongues*, and *Knowledge*, respects only the progress of the Gospel *HERE*; or whether it extends to the completion of it in it's triumphant state, *HEREAFTER*? The common opinion is, that it respects another life; supported, as should seem, by the Apostle's enforcing his argument on this observation, that *now we see thro' a glass darkly; but then face to face: now we know in part; but then shall we know even as we are known* (4); where the different condition of the *two states* are plainly set in opposition to one another.

But the other sense appears to me to be the true; and gives us the Apostle's meaning to this effect: "The virtue of *Charity* is to accompany the Christian Church throughout all its stages here on earth; whereas the gifts of *prophecy*, of *strange tongues*, of *supernatural knowledge*, are only transitory graces, bestowed upon the Church during it's infirm and infant state, to manifest it's divine birth, and to support it against the delusions and the powers of darkness."

As the words, considered in this sense, convey a most important Doctrine, viz. *the cessation of the miraculous operations of the holy Spirit after the establishment of the Christian faith*, and as this perhaps is the only express declaration of it, recorded in sacred Scripture, I shall endeavour to

(4) 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

support my interpretation by considerations drawn from it's coherence, in this sense, and in this sense only, with what precedes and follows in the course of the Apostle's argument.

The Church of Corinth, tho' abundantly enriched with all divine Graces, would not yet suffer the holy Ghost to do his *perfect work*, in the enlargement of the heart by universal benevolence; but, elated with SPIRITUAL PRIDE, (whose property is not to bear with those who differ from us, and to despise those who are beneath us in sublime attainments) split and divided themselves into opposite Sects and Factions: And this unhappy situation, not only rendering all their endowments vain and fruitless, but reflecting dishonour on the *Giver of all good things*, the Apostle addresses himself to expose their folly with the utmost of his force and vigour of reasoning.

He proves the superior excellence of *Charity* above all other spiritual graces whatsoever, both in it's QUALITIES and it's DURATION. The *first three verses* (5) of his argument declare that the other graces without Charity, are neither of use nor ornament in the Christian life: The *next four* (6) specify the superior qualities of Charity: and the *remaining six* (7) (of which, the words in question make the *first*) (8) consider

(5) Ver. 1, 2, 3.
9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

(6) Ver. 4, 5, 6, 7.
(8) Ver. 8.

(7) Ver. 8,

Charity under the single advantage of it's continuance, when all those other graces, with which they were so foolishly elated, should be withdrawn. *Charity never faileth: but whether there be Prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be Tongues, they shall cease; whether there be Knowledge, it shall vanish away.* In the next two verses (9) he gives the reason, *For we know in part, and we prophecy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* As much as to say: When that CHRISTIAN LIFE, the lines of which are marked out by the Gospel, shall by the vital powers of CHARITY on which it is erected, arrive to it's full vigour and maturity, then those temporary aids of the holy Spirit (such as *Tongues, Prophecy, and Knowledge*, bestowed with a purpose to subdue the prejudices and scepticism of those without, and to support the weakness and infirmities of those within; and given too, but imperfectly, in proportion to the defects of the human Recipients) shall, like the scaffolding of a Palace now compleated, be taken down and removed. And to shew, that the loss of these things will be no longer regretted, when the Church hath advanced from a state of Infancy to Manhood, in the steady exercise of the CHRISTIAN LIFE OF CHARITY, he illustrates this truth by an elegant similitude.—*When I was a Child, I spake as a Child, I understood as a Child:*

(9) Ver. 9, 10.

but

but when I became a man, I put away Childish things (1). Yet no one will be so absurd to suppose that it was the Apostle's intention to disgrace these spiritual Gifts by so low a comparison? It was the ABUSE of them only, (to which these Corinthians were so prone) that was designed to be corrected by it.

But the Apostle, having represented these extraordinary gifts to be as defective in themselves as they are contemptible in their abuse, thought fit to add, that this defect did not proceed from any penurious effluence of the holy Spirit, but from the narrowness of the human recipient; the passages to the Soul being so clogged up with corporeal obstructions, as to be unable to convey to the Sensory any more than an oblique glimpse of the SOVEREIGN GOOD: But that, when we have shaken off this mortal incumbrance, and regained the regions of light and liberty, we shall then intuitively comprehend the whole Oeconomy both of NATURE and of GRACE. *For now* (says he) *we see thro' a glass darkly* (2), *but then*

(1) Ver. 11.

(2) Βλέπομεν γὰρ ὡς ἐν ὀφθαλμῷ—*the seeing thro', or in a glass, by an Enigma*, seems, at first view, an odd and incongruous expression, since information by a speculum, of what kind soever, conveys the natural or real image of the reflected object, tho' that image be seen only faintly and obscurely. But an *Enigma* is not the natural image of the object conveyed, but an arbitrary mark which, under very foreign ideas, is mysteriously made to stand for the natural image.

then face to face: Now I know in part, even as also I am known. And this observation, which evidently respects a *future state*, led men to understand the Apostle as taking in another life, on which to found that superior *duration* which he gives to *Charity*, the subject of his general argument. But they seem to have mistaken the drift of his remark concerning the defects in human knowlege, which was not made (as they suppose) for a *direct* inforcement of the argument in the eighth verse, *charity never faileth, &c*; but was an *occasional* answer to an objection, which naturally arose from his management of one of the topics in the eleventh, *when I was a Child, &c.* For it might have been objected to the Apostle, “By this similitude, you seem to represent the Gospel as first springing up in an infant-state, and needing time and culture to bring it to

image. Yet, if we attend carefully to the subject, we shall find the expression to be very elegant. The Apostle is comparing the knowlege of spiritual things, gained *here*, with that knowlege which we shall acquire *hereafter*. Now all our present knowlege being conveyed thro’ the Organs of Sense, the Apostle, by his ἐν αἰσθηματι, would insinuate, that our most correct and sublime ideas of spiritual things are no more the real images of spiritual things, than Enigmas, or mysteriously contrived marks, are the natural or real images of those things to which they are put as Signs. A *glass*, or *speculum*, is therefore used by the Apostle, in this place, to signify the *corporeal organs*; and an *Enigma* to signify the *representative knowlege*, which the corporeal organs are only capable of producing, when employed about spiritual things.

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perfection." "No, replies the Apostle; this last law of God, like the first man, came perfect from the hands of its almighty framer. But man, to whom it was given, by reason of the imperfections of his present state, arrived only by degrees to the more perfect knowlege and practice of it: and to this gradual advance, from obscure to intuitive science, does the similitude refer." This, I say, seems to have been the source of the error: And yet the Apostle's concluding observation, was sufficient to have set these critics right, and to have shewn them, that the superior duration of Charity referred to the present life only.—*And now abideth FAITH, HOPE, and CHARITY, these three; but the greatest of these is Charity.* Which is in effect to say, "You may now perhaps object, that this quality of *superior duration* is not peculiar or confined to *Charity*, but belongs equally to those two other Christian graces, *Faith* and *Hope*, which travel thro' with the Church of God, and continue to support and adorn it, in all its revolutions here on earth, when *Prophecy, Tongues, and Knowlege* shall long have *failed and ceased, and vanished away*: So that, with regard to DURATION, *Faith* and *Hope* share with *Charity*, in this advantage over the other transient endowments of the 'Spirit.'" "I agree, replies the Apostle, thus far to the Objection, that they are all three joint sharers in this prerogative; but still, I say, THE GREATEST OF

THESE IS CHARITY: And in the beginning of my argument (says he) I have given the reason, in the observation, that *Tho' I have all FAITH so that I could remove mountains, and tho' I give my body to be burned* [in sure and certain HOPE of a resurrection] *and have no Charity, it profiteth me nothing.* The reason is on account of the superior qualities of *Charity*: it hath those which *Faith* and *Hope* have not, *she seeketh not her own, &c.* as well as those which *Faith* and *Hope* have, and are most essential to them, for *she BELIEVETH all things, she HOPETH all things.*" It is thus the Apostle answers concealed objections; and at the same time instructs the unwary reader with what caution and application he should come to the study of that profound reasoning with which all his Epistles abound.

But now, suppose the *superior duration* of *Charity* to take in the consideration of another life, and the Apostle never could have said, that *Faith* and *Hope* had the prerogative of *remaining*, or of having an equal *abiding* with *Charity*, when both *faith* and *hope* will be swallowed up in fruition.

From the whole, then, of this account of *Charity*, it evidently appears, that THE MIRACULOUS POWERS OF THE CHURCH WERE TO CEASE ON ITS PERFECT ESTABLISHMENT; as well those which relieved corporeal, as those which administered aid to spiritual, distresses: and consequently,

quently, that SUPERSTITION and FANATICISM equally laboured under the wound inflicted on them by the hand of the Apostle, when he made this virtual Declaration of the total withdrawing of those *Powers*.

Here especially, all the *superstitious* and *fana-*
tical pretences of the Church of Rome, to super-
natural powers, are detected and exposed; not
only the gift of INFALLIBILITY, which compre-
hends *all Mysteries and all Knowledge*; and the
work of TRANSUBSTANTIATION, which com-
prehends *all Faith*, not to remove, but to make,
mountains; but likewise all the LEGENDARY MI-
RACLES of their Hierarchy in general, and of
their canonized Saints in particular. In which
pretences, to observe it by the way, the blunder
seems to be as glaring as the imposture: St.
Paul reckons the STATE OF CHRISTIAN PER-
FECTION not to be the STATE OF MIRACLES,
but that of CHARITY. *For we know in part*
(says he) and we prophecy in part: but when THAT
WHICH IS PERFECT is come, then that which is
in part shall be done away (3). What is *that*
perfect thing *which was to come*; and which the
Corinthians of this time so much wanted? What
but that which he had so highly extolled, the
State of CHARITY? So that as this advanced,
the imperfect state of MIRACLES was to recede,
and *be done away*. Yet in the Church of Rome,

(3) Ver. 9, 10.

the state of SAINTSHIP, which is *their state of perfection*, is supported by MIRACLES; while *St. Paul's state of perfection*, that of CHARITY, was so little acknowledged or understood, that one of their greatest Saints, and most abounding in *miraculous* endowments, was St. Dominic, the founder of the INQUISITION. Indeed if the Apostle's reasoning would bear this inference, that *Miracles* were not only to remain till *Charity* had done *its perfect work*, but till it had perfectly done its work, I know of no Church that has a better claim to the continued exercise of those Powers than the CHURCH OF ROME. But whatsoever need she may have, she blunders so wretchedly in her most pompous exhibitions of them, that we may well regard ROMISH MIRACLES in the lowest rank of those *childish things*, which, the Apostle says, men and churches should be ashamed of, and *put away*, when they come to years of discretion.



C H A P. III.

HAVING now established the FACT, that *miraculous gifts* were to pass away with the first ages of the Church, we may safely and reasonably inquire into the FITNEES OF THE THING.

There appears to have been two causes of the *extraordinary* operations of the Holy Spirit: The
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manifestation of his Mission as it was predicted; and the comfort and instruction of a suffering Church, as it was promised.

To the first, we have observed, that in the early propagation of our holy Faith, it was fit the SANCTIFIER, as well as the REDEEMER, should support his presence by Miracles. But the same considerations which shew this *fitness* to be no more, in the one case, shew it likewise in the other. For the DIVINE ORIGINAL of our *Faith* being once established, it supports itself ever after on the same credibility of human testimony, which all other truths do, that are founded on facts.

1. As to his extraordinary operations for the comfort and instruction of the Church, we may observe that, on his first descent upon the Apostles, he found their minds rude and uninformed; strangers to all celestial knowledge; prejudiced in favour of a *carnal Law*, and utterly averse to the dictates of the *everlasting Gospel*. The minds of these he illuminated; and, by degrees, led into all the truths necessary for the Professors of the Faith to know, or for the Propagators of it, to teach. For *a rule of Faith* not being yet composed, some extraordinary infusion of his Virtue was still necessary, both to regulate the Faith of him who received it, and to constitute the Authority of him who was to communicate, of what he had received, to others.

But when now the *rule of faith* was perfected in an authentic collection of the Apostolic Writings, part of this office was transferred upon the Sacred Canon (4); and his enlightening grace was not to be expected in so abundant an effusion as would make the Recipients *infallible Guides* to others, but only in a measure adequate to the direction of themselves.

These reasons for the change of Oeconomy, in the dispensations of the Holy Spirit, are sufficient to discredit the false confidence of modern FANATICS, who pretend to as high a degree of divine communications as if no such *Rule of Faith* was in being; or at least, as if that Rule was so obscure as to need the further assistance of the Holy Spirit to explain his own meaning; or so imperfect as to need a new inspiration to supply its wants.—But these men read the History of the dispensations to the first Propagators of our holy Faith: They look with admiration on the privileges and powers conferred on those chosen Instruments: their imagination grows heated: they forget the difference between the *present* and the *past* Oeconomy of things: they seem to feel the impressions they read of; and they assume the airs, and mimic the Authority of Prophets and Apostles,

2. Again, the nature and genius of the Gospel were so averse to all the religious Institutions

(4) See p. 29.

of the world, that the whole strength of human prejudices was set in opposition to it. To overcome the obstinacy and violence of these prejudices, nothing less than the power of the *Holy One* was sufficient. He did the work of Man's Conversion; and reconciled an unbelieving world to God. At present, whatever there may be remaining of the bias of prejudice, (as such will mix it self even with our best conclusions) it draws the other way. So much then of his task was finished; and the Faith, from thenceforth, had a favourable hearing. Indeed, were we to make our estimate of the present State of the religious World from the Journals of modern Fanatics, we should be tempted still to think ourselves in a land of Pagans, with all their prejudices full blown upon them. For the account they give us of their provincial Missions always runs on in such strains as these—*The name of Jesus* is preached up in this City; the *glad tidings of the Gospel* conveyed to that Hamlet; a *new light springs up* in a land of darkness; and *life and immortality* is now first offered to those who *sit in the shadow of death*.

3. A further reason for the abatement of the influences of the supporting spirit of Grace is the peace and security of the CHURCH. There was a time when the Powers of this world were combined together for its destruction. At such a period, nothing but superior aid from Above

could support humanity in sustaining so great a conflict as that which the holy Martyrs encountered with joy and rapture; the horrors of death in torment. But now the profession of the Christian Faith is attended with ease and honour; and the conviction, which the weight of human testimony, and the conclusions of human reason afford us, of its truth, is abundantly sufficient to support us in our religious perseverance.

But the obstinate and continued claims of FANATICS in all Ages, to this primitive abundance of the Spirit, may make it expedient to examine their pretensions yet more minutely and exactly. And to this inquiry, Scripture itself, which foresaw and foretold the evil, directs us to the remedy, where it exhorts us to TRY THE SPIRITS. *Beloved, believe not every spirit, (says St. John) but try the Spirits whether they be of God; because many false Prophets are gone out into the World (5).* At the time this precept was given there was a more than ordinary attention requisite to guard against the delusions of false Prophets: For, the abundant effusion of the holy Spirit on the rising Religion gave encouragement to Impostors to counterfeit, and a handle to Enthusiasts to mimic, all that was equivocal in its operations.

Hence we find that, amongst the various endowments of the primitive Church, some of which were to correct Gainfayers, and others to edify

(5) 1 John iv. 6.

Believers, there was one of the mixed kind, of special use to support the dignity, and to vindicate the divine original of all the rest ; by detecting Impostors, who crept in amongst the truly inspired : and this, we have seen, the Apostle called, the DISCERNING OF SPIRITS. With this Gift, Peter detected Simon the Magician ; and with this, Paul confounded Elymas the Sorcerer.

But when *extraordinary inspiration* itself had ceased, the false pretence to it, for some wise ends of Providence, to us unknown, still continued to infect the Church with its impious Mummeries ; And while that Virtue, (*the discerning of Spirits*) whose office was to detect them, was withdrawn with the rest of the inspired graces, the Command *to try the Spirits whether they were of God* still remained in force. But to *try* without the faculty of *discerning* would be a dangerous, or at best, an impertinent employment.

Now from this unreasonable task we are delivered by the gracious providence of the holy Spirit, who provided that those whom he had endowed with the gift of *discerning of Spirits* should leave behind them some Rules whereby the Faithful of all Ages might be qualified to *try the Spirits*, and be thereby enabled to defend themselves from the seduction of error and imposture : because, says the advice, *many false Prophets are gone out into the World.*

If

If the *false Prophet* pretend to a *character foretold*, then we are bid to *search the Scriptures* (6), to see if they *testify* of such a Character. Thus the *Bereans* are esteemed of more *noble* and generous sentiments than their Neighbours, for this very point of wisdom, *the searching the Scriptures daily to find whether those things were so* (7).

But if the *false Prophet* pretend only to some extraordinary measure of the Spirit, then we are directed to *try that Spirit* by applying to it the following Characters of real inspiration.—THE WISDOM THAT IS FROM ABOVE IS FIRST PURE; THEN PEACEABLE, GENTLE AND EASY TO BE INTREATED, FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS, WITHOUT PARTIALITY, AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY (8).

It is worthy our notice, that, in this rule or direction for the *trial of Spirits*, the marks of real inspiration are to be applied only **NEGATIVELY**: That is, we may safely pronounce, that the man in whom they are not found, hath not the Spirit of God, or *the wisdom which is from above*: while on the other hand, we are not to conclude; that he in whom any or all of them are found, is, from this circumstance alone, endowed with any *extraordinary* measure of the holy Spirit; since they may be no other than those ordinary graces which arise from the knowlege of, and

(6) John v. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for they testify of me.*

(7) Acts xvii. 11. (8) James iii. 17.

obedience to, God's Will as contained in sacred Scripture. So that altho' such a one may be truly said to be possessed of *the wisdom which is from above*, it is not that which comes to him by way of inspiration, the thing here in question.

Thus we see, the Apostle's Rule carries, in its very nature, the evidence of its divine original: for the assistance wanted in the *trial of Spirits*, since these extraordinary powers were withdrawn, was only such a set of Marks as was rather fitted to detect Impostors, than to assure the truth of a Character not now to be expected.

This the Reader should have in mind, when we bring him to apply these marks to the features of modern Fanaticism; especially as they are seen in the famed Leader of the METHODISTS, Mr. JOHN WESLEY; and not *seen* neither, as Sancho Pancho *saw* his mistress, *by hearsay*, (which indeed has been too much the custom, in the representations of this transcendant man) but as he appears in person in his own JOURNALS: For by those indelible marks alone, there traced out, and by his own pen, I purpose to TRY, in him, chiefly, THE SPIRITS of all modern Pretenders to supernatural Powers.

C H A P. IV.

AND that I may not be suspected of combating a Fantom, it will be proper first of all to shew that this extraordinary man hath, in fact, laid claim to almost every Apostolic gift and grace; and in as full and ample a measure as they were possessed of old.

But as a good Actor will first prepare his Scene, he hath carried us back, by the magic of his dramatic powers, into all the wonders of the primitive Times; where we meet the Devil unchained and let loose, to exert his last efforts against the *new* Religion: As, on the other hand, to oppose to his infernal rage, we see, with the same evidence, an abundant effusion of the holy Spirit poured out upon this *rising* Church. And now, every thing being well prepared, Both these Powers stand ready to act their parts, by the time our Apostle thinks fit to appear upon the Stage.

His JOURNALS are full of the Alarms which he gave the Devil, and of the mortifications which the Devil gave him.—“The Devil, says
 “ he, knew his kingdom shook, and therefore
 “ stirred up his servants to ring bells, and make
 “ all the noise they could (1).”—“The Devil’s
 “ *Children* fought valiantly for their Master, that

(1) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741, p. 37.

“ his kingdom should not be destroyed: And
 “ many stones fell on my right hand and on my
 “ left (2).” “ Some or other of the *Children*
 “ of *Belial* had laboured to disturb us several
 “ nights before (3).” Nay, so accustomed was
 he to these conflicts with the *Evil One*, that
 it was even matter of surprise to him, to find
 the Enemy, once upon a time, reserved and *still*;
 till he reflected, that it was because *his Goods*
were in peace. “ I preached—as yet I have found
 “ only one person amongst them, who knew the
 “ love of God, before my Brother came. No
 “ wonder the Devil was so still: for *his Goods*
 “ *were in peace* (4).” Another instance which
 he gives us, of this peaceable convention
 between his Congregation and the Devil, is in
 one of his northern excursions. “ Wed. 29,
 “ I preached at Durham to a QUIET, STUPID
 “ Congregation (5).” But this never lasted long
 wherever he came; for he had always the skill of
 curing this spiritual lethargy by a frenzy.

When the Devil had set the mob on work, he
 then, like other Politicians, retired to better Com-
 pany; such as the two Mr. Wesleys and the
 Saints. But, as this sad and solemn meeting was
 not to his taste, he tried to *buffet* them into a
 better humour. “ I was a little surpris'd at some

(2) Do. p. 82. (3) Do. 31.

(4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746. to July 20, 1750. p. 29.

(5) Journ. from July 20, 1750. to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 16.

“ who were *buffeted* of Satan in an unusual man-
 “ ner by such a *spirit of laughter*—I knew the
 “ same thing ten or eleven years ago. Part of
 “ Sunday my Brother and I then used to spend in
 “ walking in the meadows and singing Psalms.
 “ But one day, just as we were beginning to sing,
 “ he burst out into a *loud laughter*. I began to
 “ be very angry, and presently after to laugh as
 “ loud as he.—We were ready to tear ourselves
 “ in pieces, but were forced to go home with-
 “ out singing another line(6).” From the Head,
 these *buffetings* (which, not to overload the Devil,
 I will, for once, venture to call *hysterical*) de-
 scended, and were plentifully bestowed, upon the
 Members. And, “ one evening (says he) such
 “ a *Spirit of laughter* was amongst us, that many
 “ were much offended. But the attention of all
 “ was soon fixed upon poor L——a S——; one
 “ so violently and variously torn of the EVIL
 “ ONE did I never see before. Sometimes she
 “ *laughed*, then broke out into cursing and blas-
 “ pheming, &c. (7)” On this occasion, he re-
 lates a fact, which, tho’ He seems not to have
 turned to a proper use, the sober and attentive
 Reader may.—“ Our outward trials indeed were
 “ now removed, and peace was in all our borders.
 “ But so much the more did inward trials abound,
 “ *and if one member suffered, all the members suf-*

(6) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741, p. 37.

(7) Ibid. p. 38.

“ *ferred with it.* So strange a *sympathy* did I
 “ never observe before : Whatever considerable
 “ temptation fell on any one, unaccountably
 “ spreading itself to the rest. So that exceeding
 “ few were able to escape it (8).” In these various struggles, the Devil was at length tired out ; and Mr. Wesley forces him into close quarters ; to betake himself to the bodies of friend or foe indifferently, just as he could find opportunity or entertainment. And now comes on the shining part of our Apostle’s exploits, the driving him out, in the face of the whole Congregation, by EXORCISMS and spiritual Ejectments.

But if Evil thus abounded, Grace did much more abound in this memorable Æra, when Mr. John Wesley first went out upon his Mission. The Spirit overcame all resistance, broke down all the strong-holds of *Sin*, and, what Mr. Wesley was much more set against, of INSENSIBILITY.—
 “ So many living Witnesses (says he) hath God
 “ given, that *his hand is STILL stretched out to*
 “ *heal*, and that *signs and wonders are even NOW*
 “ *wrought by his holy Child, Jesus (9).*” For, out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, it once again, as of old, *perfected praise* ; the young men *saw visions*, and the old men *dreamed dreams*.

“ Amongst the poor Colliers at Placey, John
 “ Lane, then *nine or ten years old*, was one of the

(8) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739. to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 37.

(9) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738. to Nov. 1, 1739.

“ first who found peace with God. From that
 “ hour he continued to walk day and night in
 “ the light of his countenance. I saw him last
 “ year longing to be with Christ, &c. (1)—
 “ I enquired more particularly of Mrs. N. con-
 “ cerning her little Son. She said, He appear-
 “ ed to have a continual fear of God, and an
 “ awful sense of his presence; that he frequently
 “ went to prayers by himself: that he had an ex-
 “ ceeding great tenderness of Conscience, being
 “ sensible of the least sin.—A few days since he
 “ broke out into prayers aloud, and then said,
 “ Mamma, I shall go to Heaven soon—and you
 “ will go there too, and my Pappa; but you
 “ will not go so soon.” On which Mr. Wesley
 very judiciously observes, “ When the Holy
 “ Ghost teaches, is there any delay in learning?
 “ This Child was then just *three years old*. A
 “ year or two after he died in peace (2).”

—“ I heard (says he) a surprising account
 “ of a young woman of Manchester, which I re-
 “ ceived from her own mouth. She said, I was
 “ sitting in the house while one read the passion
 “ hymn. I had always gone to Church, and had
 “ never heard any of the methodist preachers.
 “ On a sudden I saw our Saviour on the Cross,
 “ as plain as if it had been with my bodily eyes.
 “ —Then I saw as it were Heaven open, and

(1) Journ. from July 20, 1750. to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 18.

(2) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1734. to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 133.

“ God sitting upon his Throne. And I saw a
 “ large book, in which all my sins were written,
 “ &c. (3)” But this was nothing to the vision
 of S—— T——, (a girl of *ten years and three
 quarters old*) which takes up between three and
 four pages in the telling; so that partly for the
 length, but principally because I suspect Mr. J.
 Wesley intended it only for the solace of *babes and
 sucklings*, for whose use this discourse is not in-
 tended, I shall only point to the Journal where
 the wonderful adventure is related (4). For the
 same reason I shall pass over many of the *Dreams
 and Visions*.

All these wonders were not worked for nothing.
 The spirit of the Lord was gone out, and it did
 not stop till it had manifested itself, in the last
 effort of its power, THE NEW BIRTH: But it
 went not out, as of old, in the *still, small voice*,
 but in storms and tempests, in cries and extacies,
 in tumults and confusion; and when nature was
 exhausted, then grace had done its work. But
 he tells us, his correspondents hearing of *this
 strange* affair, enquired of him *how can these things
 be?* They cautioned him *not to regard visions or
 dreams, or to fancy people had remission of sins be-
 cause of their cries or tears, &c.* To this, he tells
 us, he answered, “ You deny that God does now
 “ work these effects: at least that he works them

(3) Jour. from Novemb. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 94.

(4) Journ. from October 27, 1743, to November 17, 1746.
 p. 141. & seq.

“ in this manner. I affirm both. I have seen
 “ very many persons changed in a moment from
 “ the spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the spirit
 “ of love, joy, and peace.—What I have to say
 “ touching *visions* or *dreams* is this: I know fe-
 “ veral persons in whom this great change was
 “ wrought in a dream, or during a strong repre-
 “ sentation to the eye of their mind, of Christ
 “ either on the Cross or in glory (5).”

But here unhappily, as is usual in these mat-
 ters, the symptoms of *Grace* and of *Perdition* were
 so interwoven and confounded with one another,
 that our Apostle himself is sometimes at a loss
 to distinguish the hand; and to determine, with
 certainty, who had the largest share in the WORK,
 GOD or the DEVIL; insomuch that a Manichean
 might have greatly availed himself of this unto-
 ward circumstance. Mr. J. Wesley had been
 grieved, and the Spirit of God had been grieved
 likewise, at the scandal given by some of his own
 flock who “ blasphemed the work, and imputed
 “ it either to Nature or the force of Imagination
 “ and Animal-spirits, or even to the delusion of
 “ the Devil (6).”—“ Many (says he) were deep-
 “ ly convinced; but none were delivered from
 “ that painful conviction. *The Children came*
 “ *to the BIRTH, but there was not strength to*
 “ *BRING FORTH.* I fear we have grieved the

(5) Journ. from August 12, 1738, to November 1, 1739.
 p. 48, 49. (6) Ibid. p. 59.

“ Spirit of the jealous God by questioning his
 “ work (7).” Yet these pangs of the NEW BIRTH
 becoming, on certain occasions, more violent,
 and more general than ordinary, and even found
 to be taking and infectious, — the Apostle him-
 self was staggered and seemed ready to recant.
 “ These symptoms I can no more impute to any
 “ natural cause than to the Spirit of God. I
 “ make no doubt it was SATAN tearing them as
 “ they were coming to Christ. And hence pro-
 “ ceeded those grievous cries, whereby he might
 “ design both to discredit the work of God, and
 “ to affright fearful people from hearing that
 “ word whereby their Souls might be saved (8).”
 But since these Symptoms were universal and
 inseparable from the *new birth*, I rather think,
 and I will venture to say, as it is only raising the
 Catachresis one step higher, that the Devil was
 here only in the office of *Man-Midwife* to the
new birth. And Mr. Wesley himself, on second
 thoughts, seems not much averse to this conceit,
 as appears from the following relation. — “ I visited
 “ (says he) a poor old woman a mile or two from
 “ the Town. Her trials had been uncommon;
 “ inexpressible agonies of mind joined with all
 “ sorts of bodily pain, not (it seemed) from any
 “ natural cause, but the *direct operation of Satan*:
 “ Her joys were now as uncommon; she had

(7) Ibid. p. 68.

(8) Journ. from September 3, 1741, to October 27, 1743.

“ little time to sleep, having for several months
 “ last past seen, as it were, the *unclouded face of*
 “ *God*, and praised him day and night (9).”



C H A P. V.

SUCH was the EVANGELIC STATE of things when Mr. J. Wesley first entered on this Ministry: who, seeing himself surrounded with subjects so harmoniously disposed to obey the touch of a master, thus triumphantly exults:—
 “ Full as I was, I knew not where to begin,
 “ till my Testament opened on these words, *I*
 “ *came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners, to*
 “ *repentance*; In applying which, my soul was
 “ so enlarged, that methought I could have
 “ cried out (in another sense than poor, vain
 “ Archimedes) *Give me where to stand, and I*
 “ *will SHAKE THE EARTH* (1).” A bravado that would have suited Ignatius Loiola, while in his first slippery extacies in the mire, as the world has sufficiently experienced. How it became our adventurer, on his first setting out, the world in good time may be brought to understand.

(9) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to October 30, 1751. p. 60.

(1) Journ. from August 12, 1738, to November 1, 1739.

Here then was a Scene well prepared for a good Actor, and excellently fitted up for the part he was disposed to play, which, as we have said, was that of an APOSTLE. And, to do him justice, he hath exhibited it with such splendor, that, of all the Apostolic gifts and graces, there is but one with which he is not adorned, viz. the *gift of tongues*; and as to this, the learned Mr. J. Wesley may reply with the learned Paul, *he already spoke with tongues more than they all*. For the rest, whether they were *prophecy*,—*supernatural aids in his ministry*,—*healing the sick*,—*casting out Devils*,—or *inflicting divine vengeance on his opposers*, he had them all, as we find by his *journals*, in abundant measure.

We will begin (as is fitting) where he himself began, with declaring his MISSION. “A multitude of people got together in the house, yard, and street, far more than my voice could reach. I cryed aloud to as many of them as could hear, *All things are ready: come ye to the marriage*. I then DELIVERED MY MESSAGE. So before ten we took boat, &c. (2)” Yet, like Moses, he was at first a little mutinous.—“From the directions I received from God this day touching an affair of the greatest importance, I could not but observe the mistake of those who assert, ‘God will not answer your prayer unless your heart be wholly resigned to

(2) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 29.

“ his will ” “ *My heart was not entirely resigned*
 “ *to his will.* Yet I know and am assured, he
 “ heard my voice, and sent forth his light and
 “ his truth (3).”

PROPHESY or *Speaking by the Spirit*, the first
 and most essential quality of a divine Messenger,
 he had at will. “ We had (says he) a watch night
 “ at the Chapel : being weak in body, I was
 “ afraid I could not go thro’ it. But the longer
 “ I spoke, the more strength I had. Infomuch
 “ that at twelve a clock all my weariness and
 “ weakness was gone ; and I was as one refresh-
 “ ed with wine (4).”—Several of the Gentry
 “ desired to stay at the meeting of the Society,
 “ to whom I explained the nature of inward Re-
 “ ligion, *words flowing upon me faster than I could*
 “ *speak* (5).”—“ I intended to have given an
 “ exhortation to the Society. But as soon as
 “ we met, the *Spirit of Supplication fell upon us*,
 “ so that I could hardly do any thing but pray
 “ and give thanks, till it was time for us to part
 “ (6).” But the Spirit soon came down in a tor-
 rent that took away all utterance.—“ In the
 “ evening the word of God was indeed quick
 “ and powerful. Afterwards, I desired the men

(3) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia to his return to London, p. 37.

(4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 32.

(5) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 87.

(6) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 84-5.

“ as well as women to meet. But I could not
 “ speak to them. *The Spirit of prayer was so*
 “ *poured upon us all*, that we could only speak
 “ to God (7).”

The *exterior* assistances in his Ministry were no
 less signal than the *interior*.——Many were “ feat-
 “ ed on a large Wall adjoining, which being
 “ built of loose stones, in the middle of the Ser-
 “ mon all fell down at once. I never saw, heard,
 “ nor read of such a thing before. The whole wall
 “ and the persons sitting upon it sunk down toge-
 “ ther, none of them screaming out, and very few
 “ altering their posture. And not one was hurt at
 “ all; but they appeared sitting at the bottom, just
 “ as they sat at the top. Nor was there any inter-
 “ ruption either of my speaking, or of the atten-
 “ tion of the hearers (8).” The next rises in due
 gradation. An unruly *mob* became of a sudden as
 harmless as the *stones*. Tho’, had they met, and
 opposed the ministry, *together*, one does not know
 what might have happened.——“ The mob had
 “ just broke open the door, when we came into
 “ the lower room; and exactly while they burst
 “ in at one door, we walked out at the other.
 “ *Nor did one man take any notice of us*, tho’
 “ we were within five yards of each other (9).”
 Without doubt they were struck *blind*; tho’,

(7) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 104.

(8) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 23.

(9) Ibid. p. 57.

in imitation of the modest silence of the Evangelist, who relates the like adventure of the blessed Jesus, he forbears the express mention of that miracle. — The next and more powerful operation was on his female friends; and these he as fairly struck *dumb*. — “The whole multitude were silent, while I was speaking. Not a whisper was heard. But the moment I had done, the *Chain fell off their tongues*. I was really surprized. Surely never was such a cackling made on the banks of Cayster, or the Common of Sedgmoor (1).” And to *chain up the tongues* of five hundred cackling gossips he held, and with great reason, an exploit worth recording. Indeed he appears to have taken the most effectual method with them, that is, to *out-clamour* them: For thus he measures out his own Stentoronic voice. — “Observing that several sat on the side of the opposite hill, I afterwards desired one to measure the ground; and we found it was seven score yards from the place where I had stood. Yet the people there heard perfectly well. I did not think any human voice could have reached so far (2).” And as, on proper occasions, every courteous Knight-Errant has condescended to let his *kerse* into a share of the adventure, so our Spiritual Martialist, unwilling to break so good a custom, has

(1) Ibid. p. 96.

(2) Journ. from July 20, 1753, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 10.

divided (as St. Martin did his cloak with the Beggar) the next exploit of price with his Beast.
 “ My horse was exceeding lame—we could not
 “ discern what it was that was amiss, and yet he
 “ could scarce set his foot on the ground.—My
 “ head ached more than it had done for some
 “ months (what I here aver is the naked fact;
 “ let every man *account for it* as he sees good).
 “ I then thought, “ Cannot God heal either
 “ man or beast, by any means, or *without any!*
 “ Immediately my weariness and head-ache ceased,
 “ and my Horse’s lameness *in the same instant*. Nor did he halt any more either that
 “ day or the next. *A very odd accident this*
 “ *also (3).*”

Come we next to his GIFT OF HEALING. One of his miracles of this kind, had, it seems, been brought in question; on which occasion, he thus explains himself—“ Miracle or no Miracle, the
 “ fact is plain. W. Kirkman is, I apprehend,
 “ still alive and able to certify for himself, that
 “ he had that cough threescore years, and since
 “ that time [viz. the miraculous aid afforded him]
 “ it had not returned (4).” In the pamphlet where this extraordinary case was first recorded; Mr. Wesley asks, Whether any one could suppose, that if he had performed it by his skill in physic, he should not have been ready to do

(3) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746.

(4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 10, 1750. p. 123.

honour to himself rather than transfer that honour to another? If Mr. Wesley be serious in this question, he is the dupe of his spiritual ambition. The Character of a great Saint is infinitely more flattering to the head of a sect than that of a great Physician.—But to proceed.—

“ I administered the Sacrament to R. A. Some
 “ years ago he found peace with God, and was
 “ freed at once without any human means from
 “ a distemper *naturally incurable* (5).” But acute
 as well as chronical disorders fly his sacred presence.—“ I found (says he) Mr. Lunell in so
 “ violent a fever that there was little hope of
 “ his life. *He revived the moment he saw me,*
 “ and fell into a breathing sweat. He began to
 “ recover from that time. *Perhaps for this also*
 “ *was I sent* (6).”—“ In the evening I called upon
 “ Anne Calcut. She had been speechless for
 “ some time. But almost as soon as we began
 “ to pray, God restored her speech. She then
 “ witnessed a good confession indeed. I expected
 “ to see her no more. *But, FROM THAT HOUR,*
 “ *THE FEVER LEFT HER,* and in a few days
 “ she arose and walked, glorifying God (7).”—
 “ I visited several of the Sick. Most of them
 “ were ill of the spotted Fever. Which, they
 “ informed me, had been extremely mortal, few

(5) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 34.

(6) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 34.

(7) Ibid.

“ persons

“ persons recovering from it. But God had
 “ said, HITHERTO SHALT THOU COME. I be-
 “ lieve there was NOT ONE *with whom we were,*
 “ *but he recovered* (8).”—“They told me the
 “ Physician said, he did not expect Mr. Meyrick
 “ would live till the morning. I went to him,
 “ but his pulse was gone. He had been speech-
 “ less and senseless for some time. A few of us
 “ immediately joined in prayer (I relate *the na-*
 “ *ked fact.*) Before we had done, his sense and
 “ his speech returned. Now he that will account
 “ for this by *natural causes*, has my *free leave*.
 “ I chuse to say, THIS IS THE POWER OF
 “ GOD (9).” However, gracious as this *free*
leave is, I would not, Reader! be the man to
 advise you to trust to it. Saints are vindictive:
 He has fairly told you what he *chuses* to call it.
 And after this, who can tell how far he may think
 the honour of God concerned in making so free
 with his Messenger as to take him at his word,
 having before solemnly assured you, of “many
 “ living witnesses which God hath given, that
 “ *His hand is STILL stretched out to heal; and*
 “ *that signs and wonders are even NOW, wrought*
 “ by his holy Child JESUS (1)?”

From the cure of *natural* diseases, proceed
 we to the *supernatural*, or, saving your presence,

(8) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 61.

(9) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 81.

(1) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 40.

to the CASTING OUT OF DEVILS. Having related, by way of prelude, the extravagances of a furious female Demoniac of nineteen or twenty years of age, whom he set to rights without much ceremony; he proceeds immediately to another of the same Sex, but her, he exorcises in form, and according to the true Roman fashion.——

“ I was sent for to one in Bristol——She lay on
 “ the ground furiously gnashing her teeth, and
 “ after a while roared aloud. It was not easy
 “ for three or four persons to hold her, espec-
 “ ally when the name of Jesus was named. We
 “ prayed; the violence of her symptoms ceased,
 “ *tho’, without a compleat deliverance.* In the
 “ evening being sent for to her again, I was
 “ unwilling, indeed afraid to go; thinking it
 “ would not avail, unless some, who were *strong*
 “ *in faith*, were to wrestle with God for her. I
 “ opened my Testament on these words—*I was*
 “ *afraid, and went and hid my talent in the earth.*
 “ I stood reproved, and went immediately. She
 “ began screaming before I came into the room,
 “ then broke out into a horrid laughter mixt
 “ with blasphemy, grievous to hear. One who,
 “ from many circumstances, apprehended a pre-
 “ ternatural Agent to be concerned in this, ask-
 “ ing, How didst thou dare to enter into a Chris-
 “ tian? was answered, *She is no Christian. She*
 “ *is mine.* Q. Dost thou not tremble at the
 “ name of Jesus? No words followed, but *she*

“ *shrank back and trembled exceedingly.* Q. Art
 “ thou not encreasing thy own damnation? It
 “ was faintly answered, *Ay, ay:* which was
 “ followed by fresh cursing and blaspheming.
 “ My Brother coming in, she cried out, *Preach-*
 “ *er! Field-Preacher. I do not love field-preach-*
 “ *ing.* This was repeated two hours together,
 “ with spittings and all the expressions of strong
 “ averfion. And now it was that God shewed
 “ he heareth the Prayer—She was filled with
 “ peace, and knew that the *Son of Wickedness*
 “ *was departed from her.*”—This is very well:
 The next is not inferior—“I was sent for to
 “ Kingwood again” [namely to the young woman
 with whom he preludes these atchievements.]
 “ A violent rain began just as I fet out, so that
 “ I was thoroughly wet in a few minutes. Just
 “ at that time the woman (then three miles off)
 “ cried out, *Yonder comes Wesley galloping as fast*
 “ *as he can.* When I was come, I was quite
 “ cold and dead, and fitter for sleep than prayer.
 “ She burft out into a horrid laughter, and faid,
 “ *No power, no power; no faith, no faith; She*
 “ *is mine. Her Soul is mine, I have her, and will*
 “ *not let go.* We begged of God to increafe our
 “ faith—One, who was clearly convinced this
 “ was no natural diforder, faid, *I think Satan is*
 “ *let loose.* I FEAR HE WILL NOT STOP HERE;
 “ and added, I command thee in the name of the
 “ Lord Jesus, to tell if thou haft commiffion

“ to

“ to torment any other Soul. It was imme-
 “ diately answered, *I have*; *L—y C—r and*
 “ *S—b J—s*, two who lived at some distance,
 “ and were *then* in perfect health (2).” In
 which, I dare say, they did not long continue,
 after the Exorcist had thus consigned them over
 to Satan, now *let loose* to do him honour. But
 what is most material (if we may believe Mr.
 Wesley or his spiritual Coadjutor) is, that Mr.
 Wesley’s *new birth only* makes the *Christian*;
 and that the Devil hates *field-preaching*. To
 evince these great Truths seems to have been the
 end both of the Possessions and of the Exorcisms.
 POPERY and PURITANISM, it is to be observed,
 have, at times, for the like righteous ends, re-
 ceived equal credit from the same reverend Testi-
 monies, the Devil and the Priest: as the curious
 may read with pleasure in the *Detection* of two
 famous impostures carried on in each of those
 Quarters, and recorded by the elegant pen of
 Dr. Samuel HARSNET, (3) bishop of Norwich,
 and afterwards Archbishop of York. By which
 we may gather, that the Inhabitants below are
 divided into Sects as well as those above; and
 that there are *Popish*, *Puritan*, and *Methodist*,
 DEVILS; who have all, in their turns, been

(2) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 92,
 93, & seq. (3) *A declaration of egregious Popish impos-*
tures, &c. Lond. 1603. Q. *Declaration of Puritan impostures,*
in the case of Darrel, &c. Lond. 1599. Q.

forced to answer to Interrogatories ; and to depose in honour of the Sect they persecuted, at the expence of that to which they belonged.

Such were the blessings which Mr. Wesley showered down upon his Friends : for his Enemies he had other things in store ; and those no small ones, the exterminating JUDGMENTS OF HEAVEN. Yet still the treatment was strictly Apostolical. “ I preached (says he) at Dar-
 “ laston, late a den of Lions : But most of the
 “ fiercest of them *God had called away by a*
 “ TRAIN OF AMAZING STROKES ; and those that
 “ remain are now as lambs (4).” The cor-
 rections, we see, as those of Heaven should, had
 their proper effect.—“ I preached at R——, once
 “ a place of furious riot and persecution ; but
 “ quiet and calm, since the *bitter Rector is*
 “ *gone to give* AN ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF TO
 “ GOD (5).”—“ Hence we rode to T—— where
 “ the Minister was slowly recovering from a vio-
 “ lent fit of the Palsy, with which he was
 “ struck *immediately* after he had been preaching
 “ a virulent Sermon against the *Methodists* (6).”
 “ The Rev. Mr.—— preached—and inveighed
 “ very much against the novel sect, the upstart
 “ *Methodists*—Shortly after, he was to preach
 “ [the same sermon again]. He had named

(4) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 81.

(5) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 11.

(6) Journ. *ibid.* p. 23.

“ the text twice, when he was suddenly seized
 “ with a rattling in his throat, attended with
 “ a hideous groaning. He fell backward against
 “ the door of the pulpet;—was carried away, as
 “ it seemed, dead into the vestry. In two or
 “ three days he recovered his senses, and the Sun-
 “ day following, DIED (7).”

“ One of the chief of those who came to make
 “ the disturbance on the first instant, had HANG-
 “ ED HIMSELF.—A second of them had been
 “ for some days in strong pain, and had many
 “ times sent to desire our prayers. A third came
 “ to me himself and confessed, he was hired that
 “ night and made drunk on purpose : But when
 “ he came to the door, *he knew not what*
 “ *was the matter*, he could not *stir* nor *open his*
 “ *mouth* (8).” Here, by ill luck, the miracle
 suffers ; for drunkenness alone is mighty apt to
 deprive a man of his faculties of speech and local
 motion. “ I was quite surprized when I heard
 “ Mr. R— preach. That soft, smooth, tune-
 “ ful voice, which he so often employed to
 “ *blaspheme the Work of God*, was lost without
 “ hope of recovery. All means had been tried,
 “ but none took place. He now spoke in a
 “ manner SHOCKING TO HEAR, &c (9).”—“ Mr.
 “ C. spoke so much in favour of the Rioters,

(7) Journ. from Sept. 3. 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 103-4.

(8) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741.

(9) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 79.

“ that they were all discharged—a few days
 “ after Mr. C. walking over the same field *dropt*
 “ down and spoke no more. Surely the MERCY
 “ of God would not suffer a well-meaning man
 “ to be any longer a tool to *Persecutors* (1).”—
 “ Calling at Newgate [in Bristol] I was in-
 “ formed that the poor wretches under sentence
 “ of death were earnestly desiring to speak with
 “ me ; but that it could not be : Alderman
 “ Beecher having just then sent an express order,
 “ that they should not. I CITE *Alderman*
 “ *Beecher to answer for these Souls at the judgment*
 “ *seat of Christ* (2).”

In reviewing these JUDGMENTS (tho’ fulminat-
 ed with the air of one who had the divine Ven-
 geance at his disposal) I find some difference be-
 tween his and those inflicted by the Apostles.

1. Their terrors fall upon Cheats and Impos-
 tors, such as *Ananias* and *Sapphira* ; *Elymas* the
 Sorcerer, and *Simon* the Magician : Whereas the
 judgments of this new Apostle strike only the
 members of his own Church, for opposing the
 tumults of *field preaching*, and the freaks of,
 what he calls, THE NEW BIRTH. 2. The Ene-
 mies, of the infant Church were the jewish Lead-
 ers ; and they persecuted in good earnest ; yet
 all these, the Apostles left untouched, and re-
 served them for a future reckoning. Mr.
 Wesley’s Enemies are his own fellow-members ;

(1) Journ. *ibid.* p. 108.

(2) Journ. *ibid.* p. 31.

and they persecute in jest ; that is, they beat drums, they ring bells, and roar with the Rabble ; yet these, with unrelenting rage, he *cuts off for troubling him* : while the anger of the holy Apostle, on the like occasion, never rose higher than a passionate wish (3). These differences, I leave Mr. Wesley to reconcile. There is another, which, I think, I may be able to account for myself. 3. When the Apostles punished publicly, they as publicly pronounced sentence. Thus to Sapphira, *Behold the feet of them which buried thy husband are at the Door and shall carry thee out* ; to Simon, *Thy money perish with thee* ; and to Elymas—*Now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind*—But, in this very important affair, Mr. Wesley appears to have followed a better model, the practice of the INQUISITION ; where, tho' the *Execution* be with all the open pomp of bitter and uncharitable piety, the *Sentence*, it is well known, is ever pronounced *in secret*. In one instance indeed, he varies from his model ; and, at Bristol, commences, as we have seen, a regular process against Mr. *Alderman Beecher* ; whom he summoneth, to give an account for *lost Souls, at the judgment seat of Christ* : But whether the Alderman demurred ; or whether he excepted to the jurisdiction ; or indeed what became of him, after he had been so fairly *cited*, we no where learn.

(3) *I would they were even cut off which trouble you.* Gal. v. 12.

These are some of the extraordinary Graces of which Mr. J. Wesley assumes the Privileges. But let not this faithful view of them, delivered in his own words, be mistaken for a confutation. My purpose, here, is only to shew that he lays claim to them, and so becomes a proper Subject of the APOSTOLIC TEST, by which we are enabled to discriminate all sublunary *Wisdom* from that which is *from above*. And if, on the application now to be made, he cannot bear the *touch*, it will be our fault not to see him for the future, in his genuine FORM of Deluder and Fanatic; which he has been long suspected to have covered with another, namely, the FORM OF GODLYNESS.



C H A P. VI.

WE COME now to the application of this Sovereign Test, the Scourge and Confusion of Imposture.

This WISDOM FROM ABOVE, of which the Apostle so highly predicates, is, we see, the same as *Wisdom revealed immediately from Heaven*; but, descending to Man, is adapted to the capacity of his Powers. So that *heavenly* and *earthly* wisdom have this in common, to be COMMUNICABLE that is, TO BE UNDERSTOOD. For to communicate nonsense, which is a nothing, is no communication. When therefore we find a pre-

tender to inspiration, such as JACOB BEHMEN, delivering to us, under this Character, a heap of unmeaning, or, what amounts to the same thing, unintelligible words, we reasonably conclude, that if indeed, this *Wisdom* did come from above, it hath so degenerated in its way down, as to be ever unfit to return; but must be content, with the other lapsed Entities of celestial original, to seek employment amongst fools and knaves, here below. Nor will the Apology of his illuminated Disciple (4), in his book called *The Way to divine Knowledge*, at all mend the matter. “When
 “ Jacob, (says he) like Elijah, in his FIREY
 “ CHARIOT, is caught up into such heights, and
 “ sees and relates such things as I cannot yet
 “ comprehend, I love and reverence him for be-
 “ ing where I never was, and seeing such things
 “ as he cannot make me see; just as I love and
 “ reverence St. Paul, &c. (5)” The comparison,
 we

(4) Mr. William Law.

(5) *The way to DIVINE KNOWLEDGE*, &c. p. 88.—Mr. John Wesley indeed, tho’ no enemy to these superb Vehicles, speaks very disrespectfully of Jacob’s *firey Chariot*, “I can
 “ and must say thus much [of his *Mysterium magnum*] and
 “ that with as full evidence, as I can say that two and two
 “ make four, it is most sublime nonsense, inimitable bombast,
 “ fustian not to be paralleled. *Journal from Sept. 3, 1741,*
 “ *to Oct. 27, 1743.*”—Another writer, who had the best
 means of being well informed, assures us, that this *firey Cha-*
riot was not of Jewish but of German construction. “Jac.
 “ Böhmius Sutor Gericensis—Hic cum natura ipsa proclivis
 “ esset

we see, is honourable; tho' less apposite than one could wish: For here lies the difference between *Jacob* and *Paul*; The *Rosacruzian* talks largely of what he knew his reader could not understand; and the *Apostle*, as Master of himself, tho' not of his Subject, more sagely observes a religious silence (6).

But so will not Mr. *William Law*, who is Master of neither. And who, without the *blessed Jacob's firey Chariot*, can soar like him to the lunar region of lost intellects; from whence he brings us these curiosities,—a hungry, wrathful, material fire—spiritual materiality—a mirrour of sound—wrath turned into Sun and Stars—darkness into Earth—and mobility into Air: And informs us of these secrets, that *life is desire*; that *rage is the cause of hardness in a flint*; *meekness, of fluidity in water*; that *earthly serpents are but transitory out-births of covetousness, envy, pride and wrath*; and lastly, that *body is only coagulated or curdled spirit*: with much more to the same purpose, that would disgrace even *Bedlam* at full moon.

“ effect ad res abditas pervestigandas, et Rob. Fluddii ac
 “ Rosæcrucianorum scita cognovisset, Theologiam, igne duce,
 “ imaginatione comite invenit, ipsis Pythagoricis numeris et
 “ Heracliti notis obscuriorem—ita enim Chymicis imagina-
 “ tionibus et tanta verborum confusione et caligine omnia
 “ miscet, ut ipse sibi obstrepere videatur.” *J. L. Mosheim;*
Inst. Hist. Eccl. ant. & recent.

(6) ἀλλήλα ῥήματα ὃ ἐκ ἐξόν ἀνθρώπῳ λαλῆσαι. 1 Cor. xii. 4.

C H A P. VII.

HAVING shewn this *Wisdom* to be, in its nature, COMMUNICABLE, and so, cut off all the bold pretensions of these MYSTICS, we come to what St. James makes its first and essential quality; *The wisdom from above*, says he, is FIRST, PURE. *πρῶτον μὲν ἀγνή ἐστίν*—i. e. *pure*, both from *carnal* and *spiritual* pollution. Now as Mr. *Wm. Law* begot METHODISM (7), and Count *Zinzendorf* rocked the Cradle, it may not be improper, first of all, to examine *their* pretensions to this essential quality of heavenly wisdom, *purity*.

As *purity* respects *practice*, those followers of the Count, the *Moravians*, give us little trouble. For to pass by their open *Hymn-book*, a heap of blasphemous and beastly nonsense; if we may give credit to the yet unconfuted relations both in Print and in MS, (composed by their own Members, the Participants of their most sacred mysteries) their practices in the consummation of marriage, or as their Ritual calls it, the *Marriage Oeconomy*, are so horribly, so unspeakably flagitious (8), that
this

(7) “ Meeting with Mr. *Law’s* *Christian Perfection and serious Call*—the light flowed in so mightily on my soul, that “ every thing appeared in a new View, &c. &c.” *Journ. from Feb. 1, 1737-8, to his return from Germany*, p. 29.

(8) Mr. J. Wesley, in a *melancholy account*, which, he says, he received of these Wretches at *Bedford*, inserts the following

this People seems to have no more pretence to be put into the number of Christian Sects than the TURLUPINS of the thirteenth Century; a vagabond crew of miscreants, who rambled over Italy, France, and Germany, under the title of *Brothers and Sisters of the free Spirit*; Who, in speculation, professed that species of Atheism, called *Pantheism*; and, in practice, claimed an *exemption* from all the obligations of morality and religion.

The BEHMENISTS, indeed, have not extended the FREEDOM of their *Spirit* to this length; yet the Leader of the sect, amongst us, tho' manifesting an exemplary abhorrence of all *carnal impurity*, has fallen into the lowest dregs of the *Spiritual*; and hath written a large discourse to recommend PANTHEISM, a Doctrine so much enobled by the *Turlupins*, of the thirteenth Century; so learnedly explained by the Cartesian, Spinofists, and so politicly concealed by the Chinese Virtuosi: Which teaches, that there is but one universal Substance existing, of which, the Creature and Creator (if, after this, they are to be distinguished) participate in common. The

ing particular—"Mr. Rimini has said nothing to what might have been said concerning their MARRIAGE OECONOMY. I know [saith the informer] a hundred times more than he has written. But the particulars are too shocking to relate. I believe no such things were ever practised before, no not amongst the most barbarous Heathens." *Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 74.*

general principles of this unhappy Philosophy, the Reader may find in the note below (9).

But

(9) “ It is the same impossibility for a thing to be created
 “ *out of* nothing, as to be created *by* nothing. It is no more
 “ a part or prerogative of God’s omnipotence to create a
 “ Being out of nothing, than to make a thing to be with-
 “ out any one quality of Being, in it.—Every creature is no-
 “ thing else than NATURE put into a certain form of exis-
 “ tence.” *An appeal to all that doubt or disbelieve the truths*
of the Gospel, by W. Law, M. A. 1742. p. 8.

“ That which thinks and wills in the soul, is that VERY
 “ SAME unbeginning breath which thought and willed in
 “ God, before it was breathed into the form of a human soul;
 “ and therefore it is, that Will and Thought cannot be
 “ bounded.—The essences of the soul were a breath in God
 “ before they became a living soul, they lived in God before
 “ they lived in the created soul; and therefore the soul is
 “ a partaker of the eternity of God, and can never cease to
 “ be.” P. 10.

“ The creation of a soul is the bringing the powers of
 “ thinking and willing out of their eternal state in the one
 “ God, into a beginning state of self-conscious life, distinct
 “ from God. And this is God’s omnipotent creating ability,
 “ that he can make the powers of his own nature become
 “ creatural, living personal images of what he is in himself,
 “ in a state of DISTINCT PERSONALITY from him.” P. 12.

“ It is no more a property of the divine omnipotence to
 “ be able to annihilate a soul, than to be able to make
 “ an eternal truth become a fiction of yesterday. And to
 “ think it a lessening of the power of God, to say, that he
 “ cannot annihilate the soul, is as absurd as to say, that it
 “ is a lessening of the light of the Sun, if it cannot destroy
 “ or darken its own rays of light.” P. 17.

“ To suppose this or any other MATERIAL world to be
 “ made out of nothing, has all the same absurdities in it as
 “ the

But next to this *impurity* of fanatic *Wisdom* which sets NATURE in the throne of GOD, is that other, which separates REASON from GRACE. It is
 “ a point we CHIEFLY INSIST UPON, (says Mr.
 “ J. Wesley, the pillar and ground of *Methodism*)
 “ that orthodoxy or RIGHT OPINION is, at best,
 “ but a very slender part of Religion, IF ANY
 “ PART OF IT AT ALL (1).” Here we see

“ the supposing angels and spirits to be created out of no-
 “ thing. All the qualities of all Beings are eternal.—All
 “ qualities, properties, or whatever can be affirmed of God,
 “ are self-existent and necessarily-existent. Self and neces-
 “ sary existence is not a particular attribute of God, but is
 “ the general nature of every thing that can be affirmed of
 “ God. All qualities and properties are self-existent in God.
 “ —It follows undeniably that EVERY CREATED THING
 “ MUST HAVE ITS WHOLE NATURE FROM, AND OUT OF,
 “ THE DIVINE NATURE.” P. 23. 24.

“ Properly and strictly speaking nothing CAN BEGIN to
 “ be. The beginning of every thing is nothing more than
 “ its beginning to be in a *new state*.—No quality or power
 “ of nature then began to be ; but such qualities and powers
 “ as had been from all eternity began then to be in a *new*
 “ *state*. Ask what fire, light, darkness, air, water, and earth
 “ are ; They are and can be nothing else but some ETERNAL
 “ THINGS, BECOME gross, finite, measurable, divisible, and
 “ transitory : For if there could be a temporal fire that did
 “ not spring out of eternal fire, then there might be time
 “ that did not come out of eternity.” P. 114, 115.

“ Will any one now call these thing *whimsical speculations*?
 “ Can any thing be thought of, more WORTHY of God,
 “ more CONFORMABLE to Nature, or more CONSONANT
 “ to all revealed Religion?” P. 118.

(1) Mr. J. Wesley's *Plain account*, &c. p. 4.

REASON is, as it were, discarded from the service of RELIGION, and from its attendance on GRACE: tho' one part of the office of the Holy Spirit be *to lead us into all truth*. For when Reason is no longer employed to distinguish between *right* and *wrong* in *Opinions*, Religion hath no further connexion with it. And what occasion for its service when the distinction, we are told, is of so little consequence? And yet if we once agree to *separate* Reason from Religion, *Piety* will soon degenerate into Superstition or Fanaticism. But the *Piety* of the first ages was of a different form: It was then the glory of the Gospel to be a *reasonable Service*. By this quality it was distinguished from the various modes of Gentile Worship, which entirely consisted in the fanatic Raptures of their Prophets, and the Superstitious Rites of their Priests. Articles of belief or a formula of Faith, they left to those Innovators who had now-pretended to bring in *Reason* for the regulation of Religion; *orthodox or right Opinion* being (on the principles of these antient Masters of the mob, the supporters of Paganism) *at best but a very slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all*. On the other hand, St. PAUL considered *right Opinion* as a full third part at least, of Religion; where speaking of the three great supports which the Master-builder, the HOLY SPIRIT, had provided for the Christian-Church, he makes this, of *right opinion*, to be one. *The fruit*

fruit of the Spirit (says he) *is in all* GOODNESS and RIGHTEOUSNESS *and* TRUTH (2). For by *Goodness* (3) is meant the conduct of Particulars to the whole; and consists in the exemplary habits of *social* virtue: And this refers to CHRISTIAN PRACTICE. By *righteousness* (4) is meant the conduct of the Whole to Particulars; and consists in that equal gentleness of Government, where Church-Authority is made to coincide with the private rights of Conscience; and this refers to CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE. And by *Truth* (5) is meant the conduct of the Whole and of Particulars to one another, mutually; and consists in *Orthodoxy* or *right Opinion*; and this refers to CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. So different an Idea had St. Paul of CHRISTIAN RELIGION from what this over-zealous man hath been led to entertain of it. No less was the difference, which the first *Reformers* from the errors of Popery, entertained of the FAITH; who for the sake of *right opinion*, occasioned so many revolutions in *Civil* as well as in *religious* Systems; the perversity of men turning, as it had before done, the message of *peace* into a *sword* (6). How much then had all these to answer for, if *right opinion* be at best a slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all. Without doubt, Mr. Wesley has, by

(2) Eph. v. 9.

(3) Ἀγαθωσύνη.

(4) Δικαιοσύνη.

(5) Ἀλήθεια.

(6) Matt. x. 34. *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace, but a sword.*

this declaration, provided well for the fortune of his own Sect, amongst all denominations of Christians. But what obligations the Church of England (of which he professes himself a member) has unto him for thus shortening the labours of the Popish Missionaries, he would do well to consider. Such escapes as these, I suppose, they were, which occasioned the reports of his preaching *Popery* to his Followers; a calumny of which he bitterly complains: And not without reason: For to do him justice, I believe he has as little regard to the interests of *Popery* as any of his hearers; and as much to his Own: The truth seems to be this. He could not find a better mean of securing the honour of his own pretensions than by this extraordinary declaration. He saw the exact resemblance there is between his Saints and those of the Church of Rome, at the time of the NEW BIRTH. This might lead reflecting men to conclude, that the Original of both was the same. Yet as the Popish and Protestant-opinions, or Articles of faith, are very opposite to one another, the God of Truth, (while *Truth* was supposed to constitute a principal part of Religion) could never be believed to have any thing to do with the *new birth*, whether popish or protestant. Nothing then was left for those who had deserted *Nature*, but to ascribe both to *Enthusiasm* or *Demonianism*. To avoid this disgrace, Mr. Wesley rather chuses to let *Popery* share

share with him in the glory of divine communications, and expressly vouches for the Miracles wrought at the tomb of *Abbé Paris* (7). Now this concession could be no otherwise supported than by inculcating the notion, That errors in Faith have so little to do with Religion, that they are no barr or impediment to the highest favours of the Holy Spirit. *It is the point* (says he) *we chiefly insist upon, that Orthodoxy or right opinion is at best but a very slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all.* Great reason likewise had he to INSIST ON THIS POINT, on another account, namely the Character he hath given of his own Saints. “The more, says he, I converse with this People, the more I am amazed. That God hath wrought a great work is manifest. And yet the main of them—are not able to give a *rational account of the plainest principles of Religion.*” Nor is this observation confined to the People. He had made a profelyte of Mr. D. vicar of B. And to shew he was no discredit to his Master, he delivers him to us under this Character—“He seemed to stagger at nothing ; tho’ as yet his understanding is not opened (8).” He then attempts at the cause of this strange Phenomenon. “It is plain, God begins his work at the *Heart* ; Then the inspiration of the Highest giveth *understanding* (9).” But this solution, tho’ it be in

(7) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 23.

(8) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 11.

(9) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 121.

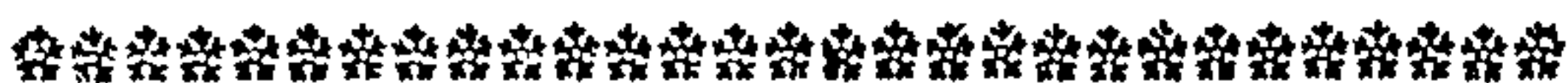
Scripture language, it is neither Scripture doctrine nor history. In the first propagation of Religion, God began with the *understanding*; and rational conviction won the *heart*. When the Holy Ghost fell on the Disciples at the day of Pentecost, *the devout men of every nation under heaven* heard them speak in their own tongues.— But what? Not the jargon of fanaticism; but the *wonderful works of God*, i. e. they heard them give a rational account of the various parts of God's religious Dispensations to Mankind. It was just the same on all other occasions: When the Spirit first fell upon believers, they *prophefied*; that is, they explained the Scriptures of the Prophets. But the dissensions amongst the Corinthians sets this matter in the clearest light, and shews that the *first* effect of inspiration is to *give understanding*. Their understanding was so enlarged by all spiritual gifts, that the work not having been begun at the *heart*, they abused these advantages to the violation of Charity. But, for this discordancy, between *his* Mission and St. Paul's, he has a salvo: He observes occasionally, in several places of his journal, “that God *now* “not only does a *new work*, but by *new ways*.” This solution of our spiritual Empiric, puts one in mind of the Quack in Moliere, who having placed the *liver* on the left side, and the *heart* on the right, and being told that the structure of the parts was certainly otherwise, replied, *Oui*,

Oui, cela étoit autre fois ainfi ; mais nous avons changé tout cela, & nous faisons maintenant la médecine d'une methode toute nouvelle.—But tho' he talks of the *understanding* coming after, this is only to put off his *babes of grace*, to *latter lammas*. Which he has plainly enough insinuated in a parallel between the work carried on in England and in America. “ I now (says he) looked
 “ over Mr. Prince's *Christian History*. What an
 “ amazing difference is there in the manner
 “ wherein God has carried on his *work* in Eng-
 “ land and in America ! *There*, above an hun-
 “ dred of the established Clergy, men of age
 “ and experience, and of the greatest note for
 “ sense and learning in those parts, are zealously
 “ engaged in the *work*. *Here*, almost the whole
 “ Body of the aged, experienced and learned
 “ clergy are zealously engaged against it : A
 “ few, but a handful of raw young men, enga-
 “ ged in it ; without name, learning, or EMI-
 “ NENT SENSE ! And yet by that large num-
 “ ber of honourable men the *work* seldom flou-
 “ rished above six months at a time ; and then
 “ followed a lamentable and general decay, be-
 “ fore the next revival of it : Whereas that
 “ which God hath wrought by these despised
 “ instruments hath continually increased for fif-
 “ teen years together (1).” Now, what is this

(1) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754, p. 43.

but to tell us, that the *understanding* hath nothing, and *will have* nothing, to do in the work ?

On the whole, therefore, we conclude, That that *Wisdom* which divests the Christian Faith of its *Truth*, and the test of this Truth, *Reason*, and resolves all into internal feelings, into mystic spiritualism, and extatic raptures, instead of giving it the manly support of moral demonstration, That this, I say, can never be *the wisdom which is from above*, whose characteristic attribute is *Purity*. Thus, on a fair trial, these illuminated Doctors have, at their very first entrance, excluded themselves from their high pretensions : Principles like these always coming from *Spiritual impurity* : and often leading, as we have seen, into the very sink of *moral impurity*.



C H A P. VIII.

BUT now, had it been our good fortune to find the matter otherwise ; and that the *Wisdom* enquired after, had rested upon that foundation on which *celestial Wisdom* must necessarily stand, (and this is might well do, tho' it came not immediately from the Fountain-head of Purity ; as the *unbroken Cisterns* of Holy Writ were amply sufficient to supply these *living waters*) our next business would be to prosecute the inquiry,

quiry, and to apply the other apostolic marks to these pretending Sectaries.

Of these marks, the first only (which has been so amply discuss'd) namely *purity*, respects the NATURE of the *Wisdom* from above ; or, in other words, *the Doctrines* taught. All the rest, which follow, concern the MANNER of teaching, or the Conduct of the Teachers. We are not therefore to stop short in our enquiry, because we may have found that the mark of *purity* has answered to the touch ; tho' Mr. J. Wesley (who assures us that he preaches nothing but the doctrine of the Church of England) thinks this sufficient to satisfy all reasonable men concerning his conduct. " I simply described (says he) the
 " *plain old Religion of the Church of England,*
 " which is now almost every where spoken a-
 " gainst, under the name of METHODISM (2)."
 If *Methodism* be *spoken against*, those who censure it, could mean neither an *old* nor a *new* Religion, since the word signifies only the *manner of propagating* either one or the other. And, of all men, Mr. Wesley should best know the meaning of the term ; since it was not a nickname imposed on the Sect by its enemies, but an appellation of honour assumed by, and bestowed upon, themselves. If therefore they preach only *the plain old Religion of the Church of England*, they could mean nothing, by *Methodism*, but the

(2) Journ. from August 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 90.

manner of preaching it. Why then will Mr. J. Wesley so grossly misrepresent his Adversaries as to say, that when they *speak against Methodism* they *speaking against the plain old doctrine of the Church of England?* since he himself has taught them to call *methodism* (and they might well have called it by a harder name) the *manner*, in which he and his followers attempt to propagate this *plain old Religion*.

However, strip him of his prevarication and his sophistry, and we find him plainly enough declaring, “That the *manner* of preaching, so it be *truth* which is preached, ought to give no offence.” And, to this purpose, he relates the following conversation: “A serious Clergyman
“ desired to know, In what point we differed
“ from the Church of England? I answered, To
“ to the best of my knowledge, in none. The
“ Doctrines we preach are the Doctrines of the
“ Church of England. Indeed, the funda-
“ mental doctrines of the Church, clearly laid
“ down both in her Prayers, Articles, and Ho-
“ milies (3).”

Be this never so true, yet it will still be as true that the most holy things may be depraved, in passing thro’ impure hands: and that, *right opinion*, which inspires wisdom and promotes peace, may then serve for nothing but to turn the heads and hearts of men, otherwise naturally disposed

(3) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 81.

towards wisdom and peace. Indeed, a FANATIC MANNER of preaching, tho' it were the doctrine of an Apostle, may do more harm, to Society at least, than a modest revival of *old* speculative heresies, or, than the invention of *new*; since it tends to bewilder the imaginations of some, to inflame the passions of others; and, in that state of things, to spread disorder and disturbance throughout the whole Community. And in subjection to the civil Community was the Gospel first preached; and under the protection of it was it, at length, every where established. What, for instance, does FIELD-PREACHING imply, but a *famine of the Word*, occasioned by a total neglect in the spiritual Pastors appointed by Law? And what can it produce, but strong ferments in behalf of the Ministers of Religion, thus injuriously treated? What can be the issue of the NEW BIRTH, attended with those infernal throws and frightful agitations so graphically described in the Journals of Mr. J. Wesley, but high resentments in behalf of Religion itself, thus scandalously dishonoured and traduced.

The sacred Writer himself, who delivered this TEST for the trial of these Mens pretensions, was unquestionably in these sentiments, “that a fanatic Spirit did more mischief in the *mode* of teaching, than in the *matter* taught;” since, of half a dozen marks recommended for this purpose, *one*

only is applicable to the *doctrine* ; all the rest concern the *manners* of the Teacher.

Nay, what is more, we have Mr. J. Wesley himself, for once, on the side of the Apostle, where he says, that *it is a point he chiefly insists upon, that ORTHODOXY or RIGHT OPINION is, at best, but a very slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all.* The Operation of Religion on the heart therefore, (which with him is the same as on the fancy, and manifests itself in corporeal agitations) is the principal point. But *this* altogether resolves itself into the *manner* of propagating the Faith.

Yet still it may be disputed, Who it is that becomes answerable for the disorders occasioned by this *new mode* of propagating Religion ? Is it Mr. J. Wesley, or is it his Adversaries ? He, I make no question, will exculpate himself by the direction of St. Paul to Timothy—to *preach the word in season, and out of season.* Which implies, he thinks, that the *manner* can never be amiss, or made chargeable with blame.

But he would infer more from the Text than it will bear ; and misapply it, into the bargain. This direction relates to *time* only, which is but one of the many circumstances attending the *manner of preaching* ; and that one, in which the abuse is least material. The application (as we say) would be no less faulty. The direction is confined to the state of things *then* existing ; when

the suffering Church had so few opportunities to preach the word, that all, whether *seasonable* or *unseasonable*, were with reason to be laid hold on. When the Church was once established; and *fixed*, and *seasonable* times were appointed for holy offices, then (as every one may see) to fly to the *unseasonable* would be factious, and a breach of the discipline of that Church, of which the transgressor professed himself a member. To judge, therefore, of the integrity of Mr. J. Wesley's conduct, we must turn from the directions which St. Paul gives *for his own times*, to those which St. James gives *for all times*.



C H A P. IX.

AND this leads us on, in our Enquiry. The Wisdom from above (says this Apostle) is *first pure, then PEACEABLE*.—To be PEACEABLE is a leading quality in its general Character. A Choir of Angels ushered in the Advent of the Son of God; with *peace, good-will towards men* (1). And He himself, on his departure from us, bequeathed it to us, as his dearest legacy: *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you* (2). Now that which the FATHER proclaimed, which the SON bestowed, must needs be the office of the

(1) Luke ii. 14.

(2) John xiv. 27.

HOLY GHOST to maintain. Whatever *form of godliness*, therefore, hath not this Characteristic mark, can never reasonably be deemed of heavenly extraction.

That the propagation of *Methodism* hath occasioned many and great violations of *peace*, Mr. Wesley hath amply shewn in the journalary history of his Adventures.

But as in all contests between party and party, the blame is reciprocally thrown upon one another; before we come more directly to adjust the share which may be fairly cast upon *Methodism*, it may be useful previously to inquire into that *temper which makes for peace*; for we may be reasonably well assured, that the fault lieth not in that quarter where such a temper is found. Now our blessed Redeemer, who so earnestly recommends *his peace* to us, hath given us directions how to preserve it—*Be ye therefore wise* [φρόνιμοι, PRUDENT] *as Serpents and harmless as Doves* (3).

And he, who gave his Followers no precept, regarding life and manners, which he did not eminently recommend by his own example, was the most perfect pattern of innocence, under the direction of PRUDENCE; as appears in his dextrous evasions to captious questions of the Jewish Leaders, who wanted matter to inflame the people

(3) Matt. x. 16. So again, *Who is that faithful and wise* [φρόνιμος, prudent] *Servant?* Matt. xxiv. 45.

against him (4); in his avoiding the People when thus inflamed; and above all, in his declining an untimely promulgation of his *Messiah-Character*; which would either have occasioned civil commotions, or have endangered his life before he had compleated his Ministry. And this *prudence* it was, which so forcibly struck St. Paul, where he

(4) An instance of this consummate *prudence*, managed with divine address, we have in the following adventure recorded by St. Mark.—“There came to him the chief priests and
 “Scribes, and the Elders, and say unto him, By what authority dost thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you
 “by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from Heaven, or of Men? answer me. And
 “they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?
 “But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the People: For all men counted John that he was a Prophet indeed. And
 “they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Neither do I tell you, by
 “what authority I do these things.” Ch. xi. 27, & seq.

A direct answer to this question, apparently reasonable, and urged by those who had authority to exact it, must have immaturely revealed what the destined Ministry of Jesus made necessary to be kept secret. And yet, to evade the question, in such a manner as was sufficient to satisfy Authority, needed all that divine prudence with which the Author of our Salvation was endowed. He therefore replies, “First, answer me
 “this question concerning John.” The question was reasonable, considered in the view of an argument *ad hominem*; it was reasonable, from the force it had in itself: For if it should appear, that that question had not been determined in

he says, that the blessed Jesus *abounded towards us in all wisdom and PRUDENCE* (5), σοφία καὶ φρονήσει. Which, as appears by what follows, the Apostle makes to consist in his Master's suiting and adapting the various Revelations of his Will to the peculiar seasons and occasions when the knowledge of it was become useful to the furtherance of the Faith. *Having* (says St. Paul) *made known unto us the Mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of time he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, &c.* By which the Apostle seems principally to have

the case of John, it was evident from their own conduct, that the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrim was not violated by any man's declining to answer one of the same import. Further, the question was reasonable and proper in itself. John publicly professed himself the forerunner of Jesus: So that if it were necessary for the Sanhedrim to come at the true knowledge of the general Case, they should have begun with John. This, the natural order of a judicial proceeding required. Nor would the Chief Priests have been backward to answer it, in either view. But here lay the difficulty; the People were of one opinion concerning John, and the Sanhedrim of another. This embarras silenced them. And in our Saviour's taking advantage of that circumstance consists the divine dexterity of his exemplary prudence. *Neither do I tell you* (says he) *by what authority I do these things.* As much as to say, "Both on my principles and on your own, a previous question is first to be resolved, namely, concerning *the baptism of John*. When you have answered this, then comes my time to answer yours: But till then, you have no right to insist upon an answer." (5) Eph. i. 8.

in mind that obscure and backward intimation, which, for some time, kept hid from his Disciples this *mystery of his will*; the usual title given by the sacred Writers to the calling in of the Gentiles into the Church of Christ. The *prudence* of which conduct is obvious. The Gospel was to be first offered to the Jews. But their reception of it was so unkind, that, had the Apostles been then acquainted with this *Mystery*, they had been tempted to turn to the Gentiles, before the mission to the Jews had been fairly completed. When that was accomplished, the *mystery* was revealed, in all its splendor, to St. Peter.

On the whole, therefore, we see, that THE PEACEFUL CHARACTER IS THAT, WHERE INNOCENCE IS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF PRUDENCE. Emancipated from this direction, *Innocence* becomes a prey both to itself and to others; and is, either actively or passively, the perpetual source of Discord.

Let us see, now, the regard our new Missionaries *profess to pay* to this precept and example of their Master. HUMAN PRUDENCE has, somehow or other, so highly offended Mr. J. Wesley, that he scruples not to call it, the MYSTERY OF INIQUITY and the OFFSPRING OF HELL.—“ I
 “ believe (says he) it pleased God to bless the
 “ first Sermon most, because it gave most of-
 “ fence, being indeed an open defiance of that
 “ *mystery of Iniquity* which the world calls PRU-
 “ DENCE,

“ DENCE (6).” As he here informs us, Who gave it that Name, one might be apt to suppose he meant, the *Prudence* of the *unjust Steward*, which is indeed the *mystery of Iniquity*, did not he himself forbid us to understand it in this sense, by fairly telling us that he meant, what the *World* calls *CHRISTIAN Prudence*. And as bad as the *World* is, I think it never qualified the *prudence* of the *unjust Steward* with that attribute.—“ God
 “ deliver me, and all that seek him in sincerity,
 “ from what the World calls *CHRISTIAN PRU-*
 “ DENCE (7).” And again, to a friend who approved not of his *field-preaching*, “ ———I fear
 “ that *offspring of Hell*, worldly or mystic *PRU-*
 “ DENCE, hath drawn you away from the sim-
 “ plicity of the Gospel (8).” If his aversion to *Prudence* be thus great, his enmity to those, amongst whom it is usually found, can scarce be thought less, from the hard words he gives whenever he speaks of them.—“ Mrs. Baddiley
 “ (says he) desired me to go up to her Son,
 “ who had been out of order for some days.
 “ For a year or two he was a pattern to all the
 “ family, till he began to converse more with
 “ GOOD SORT OF MEN. He then grew cooler
 “ and cooler in the ways of God, and in a few

(6) Journ. from Feb. 1, 1737-8, to his return from Germany, p. 12.

(7) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 13.

(8) Ibid. p. 56, 57.

“ months quitted the Society (9).”—“ It is abso-
 “ lutely needful for such a one as me to follow
 “ the wise advise of Mr. Herbert—And this, I
 “ bless God, I can, in some measure, do, while
 “ I avoid that BANE OF ALL RELIGION, the
 “ Company of GOOD SORT OF MEN, as they are
 “ called, Persons who have a liking to, but
 “ no SENSE of, Religion.” [i. e. no extatic
 feelings or the pains of the *new birth*, &c.]
 “ But these insensibly undermine all my resolu-
 “ tion, and steal away what little ZEAL I
 “ have (1).” i. e. persuade him to be peaceable.

And again, speaking of one of his backsliders,
 he says—“ but indulging himself in HARMLESS
 COMPANY he first made shipwreck of his ZEAL,
 and then of his FAITH (2).” In this I think he
 is right. The *Zeal* and the *Faith* of a FANATIC
 are such exact tallies to one another that I have
 no conception how either can exist alone. They
 came into the world together to disturb Society
 and dishonour Christianity; and they must go
 out together before the one can regain its peace,
 or the other its dignity.

On the whole, we find that Mr. J. Wesley
 is, by his own confession, entirely destitute of
 that temper *which makes for peace*: If therefore

(9) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 31.

(1) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739, p. 31.

(2) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia, to his return
 to London, p. 41.

his preaching be attended with tumults and disorders, we cannot but ascribe it to the want of that quality, which the Founders of our holy Religion made essential to the successful propagation of the *Gospel of Peace*, namely, PRUDENCE. It is true, Mr. Wesley, as we have seen, throws the whole fault of these tumults on the DEVIL; and this may be allowed him in the sense that every poultry Pilferer and Sabbath-breaker is used to do. But if we seek for the more immediate cause, we shall find it much nearer hand. The Roman Satirist pretended,

—Nullum Numen abest, si sit PRUDENTIA,

Where PRUDENCE governs, no God is wanting to keep the world in order. We may say, with more sobriety and truth, that where IMPRUDENCE takes the lead, there needs no *Dévil* to throw it into confusion. What, for instance, more strongly tends to tumult and disorder than for one who professes to propagate only the *plain old Religion of the Church of England*, to set at nought its established Discipline, by invading the province of the parochial Minister; by assembling in undue places and at unfit times; by *speaking evil of Dignities*, in scurrilous invectives against the Governors and Pastors of the national Church? Insolencies of this nature provoke warm and ill-instructed men to demand justice on the offenders: Which not being at hand, (as the interests
of

of Society will not, always, permit the Magistrate to enforce it, where the insults on his office are covered with the pretences of Religion) Particulars are but too apt to seek that in a tumultuary and criminal way, which all the providence of Government, and all the equity of Law, are but barely sufficient to adjust, with such discretion, as, that while the dignity of the State is vindicated, the rights of Religion are not infringed.

Nor will that fanatic Apology, which is ever at hand, be any excuse for them in the commission of their disorders; namely, “That the violation of *peace amongst men* serves to advance the *peace of God*; our blessed Master having himself declared, that *he was not come to send Peace on earth, but a sword.*” Now the same Spirit which disposes them to apply to their own case all those declarations concerning the first extraordinary state of the Gospel, hinders them from seeing, that these words of Jesus respect only the accidental and transient struggle of the then expiring Powers of darkness; but that the heavenly Proclamation of *peace towards men*, declares the genuine and constant fruits of *God’s good-will to his Creatures*: that the *first* only predicted the early fortunes of a suffering Church; and that the *other* described the essential nature, the eternal genius, of an all-beneficent Religion. But Enthusiasts, hurried on by the fervours of an inflamed

flamed fancy, lose sight of a Christian land, and a believing Magistrate ; and have nothing before their eyes but a Country of Pagans and Idolaters, with the Princes of this world risen up to suppress and persecute the *Word of life*. Under these delusions, it is no wonder that they despise order, insult Government, and set their Rulers at defiance.

But PEACE is the cure of FANATICISM, as *Fanaticism* is the bane of *Peace*. Sectaries must either kick or be kicked. They must either persecute, or they must provoke persecution. To live in this turbulent state is being in their proper element.

As every *Libertine* aspires to be on the *laughing* side, so every *Zealot* would fain be on the *persecuting*. But Zealots, as well as other Adventurers, must take their chance in this world, whatsoever security they have made for the other. We see METHODISM, at present, under a well established, watchful Government, where it is obliged to wear a less audacious look. To know its true character, and native disposition, we should see it in all its fortunes. And this our own Country, productive of every strange thing, hath given us ample means to contemplate. For They, who now go under the name of METHODISTS, were, in the days of our Fore-fathers, called PRECISIANS ; terms of their own devising, and, as the fruits of the same spirit, nearly synonymous,

nimous, importing that the bearers of them had carefully squared out their Religion by line and level. The *elder Methodism*, on its first appearance, put on the same suffering exterior, which we see the younger Brother wear at present. During the firm administration of Elizabeth it disguised, and but barely disguised, its native ferocity, in a feigned submission; after having invited persecution with the air of a persecutor. Those times, we may be sure, would not suffer it to wait long for what it wanted. And then, as a precious Metal, which had undergone its trial in the fire, and left all its dross behind, the Sect, with great propriety, changed its name, from PRECISIAN to PURITAN. But in the weak and distracted times of Charles the 1st, it ventured to throw off the mask; and, under the new name of INDEPENDENT, became the chief Agent of all the dreadful disorders which terminated that unhappy reign. For INDEPENDENCY was a name as well suited to the weakness of that Government, which it defied and overturned, as METHODISM is to the strength of This, of which it stands in awe. Nor is this Pedigree, which makes *Methodism* of the younger House to *Independency*, invented, like heraldic fictions, to enoble my Subject. Whoever reads the large accounts of the *Spiritual State of the Regicides* while under condemnation, (written and published, at that time, by their friends, to make them

pass,

pass, with the People, for Saints and Martyrs) and compares them with the circumstantial Journals of the *Methodists*, will find so exact a conformity in the frenzy of sentiment, and even in the cant of expression, upon the subjects of Faith, Grace, Redemption, Regeneration, Justification, &c. as may fully satisfy him, that they are both of the same Stock; and ready, on a return of the like season, to produce the same fruits. All the difference, which distance of times and variety of circumstances have effected, being only this: The *Methodist* is now, an *Apostolic Independent*; and the Independent was then, a *Mahometan Methodist*.

Indeed, it has been Mr. J. Wesley's mishap, with every other requisite of a skilful Leader, to fall upon times very unpropitious to the fortunes of a new Sect.

He found himself in a Government whose equity adhorred Persecution for Religion; and whose firmness, on the other hand, would not suffer its principles of Toleration to be abused, to the disturbance of Society. Here was little room for the exertion of that quality by which a Sectary may be properly said to exist, namely, ZEAL active or passive. He wanted to be persecuted; but Persecution would not come at his call. Yet, it must be owned, he used every extraordinary method to provoke it: The time was now past, when it could be said of this *De-*

mon, as of the less mischievous ones of old, “Vo-
 “ catus, aut non vocatus, audit.” The advan-
 tages of *persecution* to a new Sect, Mr. J. Wesley
 is not at all shy in confessing.—“About one,
 “ I preached at Holton, where likewise all is
 “ now calm, after a violent storm of several
 “ weeks, wherein many were beaten and wound-
 “ ed, and outraged various ways; *but* NONE
 “ MOVED *from their steadfastness*. In the even-
 “ ing I preached at Armley, *to many who want a*
 “ *storm, being quite UNNERVED by constant Sun-*
 “ *shine* (3).” It is the same conscious want which
 makes him complain of ill treatment; and yet
 be dissatisfied with good —“We came to St.
 “ Ives before morning prayers, and walked to
 “ Church without so much as one huzza. How
 “ strangely has one year changed the scene in
 “ Cornwall! This is now a peaceable, nay ho-
 “ nourable station. They give us good words in
 “ almost every place. *What have we done, that*
 “ *the world should be so civil to us* (4) ?”

Is not this the language of a man whom no-
 thing can please, when he is defeated in a secret
 purpose, which he is ashamed to own? He lan-
 guished, we see, for good WHOLESOME SEVERI-
 TIES. Many (as he well expresses it) *wanted a*
storm, being quite UNNERVED by constant Sunshine.
 To supply this want, which the Magistrate so

(3) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 88.

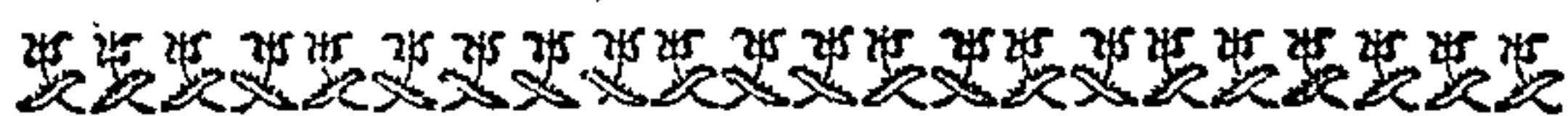
(4) Journ. *ibid.* p. 31.

cruelly denied, he is forced to make the best of those mock persecutions, the *Drums* and *Huzzas* of the Mob. And so bloody always are his ideas, by a constant meditation on this subject, that, speaking of the misnomers of the Grand Jury of Cork, in their presentment of his Brother, and half a score more itinerant Preachers, as vagrants and persons of ill fame, &c. he thus expresses himself——“The names (only most of them *miserably mangled and murdered*) were designed for the names of eight Preachers, &c. (5)” The future Martyrologist whom favouring Destiny has appointed to collect together the Saints and Martyrs of this afflicted Church, will, if he be wise, never suffer himself to be misled into a belief that this *mangling and murdering* can refer to *names*; or indeed to any thing less than to an *Irish Massacre*, charitably disguised by our meek Apostle, under a figure, not to say a deformity of Speech. To give these *Persecutions* all the *relief* in his power, he expatiates on every adventure with such circumstance, that there is hardly a turnip-top thus sacrilegiously employed, which has not had the honour of being recorded. But this is for Posterity: Something more was to be done for the sake of the Brethren. This small pittance of *persecution*, poor as it is, must be turned to use while time served, lest, like a flame of straw, it should go out as soon as it was

(5) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 4.

put into a blaze. He therefore contrives to keep *persecution* alive by *prosecuting his Persecutors*: And, to make his revenge the sweeter, he does it on the *toleration act*; the *Law* which does him so much mischief, in depriving him of a real persecution. This he notably turns against itself, and makes an Instrument to support and keep up a shadowy Persecution, in the Shouts and Revels of the Rabble.

Of this contrivance, and of the success of this contrivance, he has given us many curious examples in his Journals. Abundantly sufficient to evince, that tho' he who prosecutes, breaks the Peace, yet as he is but the tool and Instrument of him who invites and provokes *persecution*, the crime at length comes home to him who set the Rioter on work.



C H A P. X.

THE next mark of celestial Wisdom is, its being GENTLE AND EASY TO BE INTREATED. That is, neither a rigid reprover of the indifferent manners of others, nor obstinately tenacious of its own: but, as far as Truth and Honesty will permit, compliant and even obsequious to all men. The great Apostle of the Gentiles fully approves his pretensions to this *Wisdom*, in

the account he gives of his conduct, *in becoming all things to all Men; that he might gain some* (6). For the truth of which, he appeals to those who were best acquainted with his life and conversation. But amongst our modern Apostles the Scene is shifted. We find them severe condemners of those innocent manners of their fellow citizens, which they themselves have abstained from, on pretence of their being less profitable and edifying, or, perhaps, obstructive of that perfection which they pretend to aim at. Nor are they less severe exactors of conformity to their own observances.

They tell us what we are to think of them, in the very appellation they assume. For METHODISM (as we have said) implies a set of manners, marked out by the rule and compass; and, when made a name or distinction, it declares those manners are to be religiously and invariably observed, as the sacred badge of the Brotherhood. Hence Mr. J. Wesley in a letter *to the Church of God at Hernhuth in Upper Lusatia*, having reprimanded them for teaching, “that it does imply
“ *Liberty* to conform to the world, by talking
“ on useless, if not trifling subjects, and by joining
“ in worldly diversions, *in order to do good*,” They justify themselves by saying, “We believe it much better to discourse out of the
“ news-papers, than to chatter about holy things.

(6) 1 Cor. ix. 22.

“to no purpose.” To which he replies, “Perhaps so. But what is this to the point? I believe both one and the other to be useless, and therefore AN ABOMINATION TO THE LORD (7).” Nay, he pushed this matter so far, as to come to a solemn resolution, NEVER TO LAUGH: and, to guard himself against the approaches of this paltry infirmity, *never to speak a tittle of worldly things*. And certainly, he who carries his diffociability to this extreme, is in no danger of being EASILY INTREATED. He was now fit company only for the Devil; (with whom, as we have seen, he had a great deal to transact) indeed, not for him neither, till the more sociable Fiend had a little relaxed his muscles: For the first trick Satan played him, after they grew acquainted, was, as he himself tells us, to make him burst out into an *immoderate fit of Laughter* (8). But he was ready *to tear himself to pieces* for his frailty.

Our Apostle's GENTLENESS may, by this time, be easily guess'd at. But he saves us the trouble. We understand it fully, by the language, in which he paints his Opposers. He met with one of these in a violent storm at Sea. Yet the common danger of this dreadful hour, could not abate the more violent tempest in his mind—
“For who should be there (says he) but the

(7) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 103.

(8) See p. 94 of this Discourse.

“ famous Mr. Gr—— of Carnarvonshire. A
 “ clumsy, overgrown, hardfaced man; whose
 “ countenance I could only compare to that
 “ (which I saw in Drury Lane, thirty years
 “ ago) of one of the *Russians in Macbeth* (9)——
 “ I walked over (says he) to Egham, where Mr.
 “ —— preached one of the most miserable ser-
 “ mons I ever heard: Stuff’d so full of dull,
 “ senseless, improbable lies of those he compli-
 “ mented with the title of false Prophets (1).”
 —“ At St. Ives we were saluted, as usual, with
 “ a Huzza, and a few stones *or* pieces of dirt:”
 Yet, for want of a better, he has dignified even
 this with the name of a *Persecution*. “ The *Per-*
 “ *secution* here (says he) was owing in great mea-
 “ sure to the indefatigable labours of Mr. *Höblin*
 “ and Mr. *Simmons*; Gentlemen worthy to be had
 “ in everlasting remembrance for their unwea-
 “ ried endeavours to destroy Heresy.

“ Fortunati ambo! Siquid mea pagina possit,
 “ Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet
 “ ævo (2).”

Here he tells us, without disguise, that it is his
 holy purpose, to gibbet up the *Names* of his
 two Persecutors, to everlasting Infamy: While,
 by the most unregenerate malice in the world,
 he dips his curses in the gall of irony; and, that

(9) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 31.

(1) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 88.

(2) Journ. from Oct. 17, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 22.

they may strike the deeper, flecthes them with a prophane classical Parody.

Yet this is the man who says,—“God forbid
 “that I should RAIL, at a Turk, Infidel, or
 “Heretic. I would point out their Errors, and
 “I trust, in the SPIRIT OF MEEKNESS (3).”
 Yea, *this* SPIRIT was so strong in him, that he
 blesses God for his goodness, in directing all
 temptations to fall on this *side*; which, tho’
 it may be called his *blind side*, (as he always
 winks at his injuries; sometimes, indeed, to take
 the better aim) he assures us, is not his *weak*
side—“I cannot but stand amazed at the good-
 “ness of God. Others are most assaulted on
 “the *weak side* of their Soul. But with me it
 “is quite otherwise. If I have any strength at
 “all, IT IS IN FORGIVING INJURIES. And
 “on this very side am I assaulted more fre-
 “quently than any other (4).” By which, with
 uncommon modesty, he would insinuate that
 tho’ his *persecutions* abound, yet his *forgiveness*,
in the Spirit of meekness, does much more abound.

St. Paul and St. James may be reconciled.
 But he is a bold man who will undertake to re-
 concile St. Paul and Mr. Wesley. The Reader,
 perhaps, will be better employed in turning his
 attention upon *ancient* and *modern* SAINTSHIP, at
 large: Where, in one general view, he will see

(3) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1730, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 112.

(4) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 39.

God's grace in the First, and, in the Second, *Man's nature* severally asserting their Rights throughout the whole progress. The genial Spirit of God could breathe nothing but the balm of *gentleness and ease*. The pestilent heat of Fanaticism raises an inflammation and a tumour in the mind, whose Symptoms are an obdurate rigour, and impatience under the probe. The Heaven-struck Heart is affected like the purer metals, which easily soften, and run speedily at the touch of the ethereal Ray. But the Fanatic Spirit, self-heated by its own fiery nature, retains the property of its congenial Earth, which grows harder and more intractable as it burns.



C H A P. XI.

TO proceed. St. James, in his account of celestial *Wisdom*, advances from grace to grace. It is *peaceable*: This is its lowest quality. It is *Gentle and easy to be intreated*: This is a further advance in its Character. The first only implies the not giving umbrage or offence to our Brother; but the second declares a readiness to consult his pleasure and convenience. The Apostle's next recommendation of this wisdom rises still higher: It is, he says, FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS. It would have been a poor account
of

of the *Wisdom from above*, that it amounted only to an obsequious ease and gentleness of Manners: A disposition of heart little more than the shadow or out-line of *Benevolence*, that harmony of the affections, which the Christian Faith calls CHARITY; and which the Apostle, by a beautiful periphrasis, terms, the being *full of mercy and good fruits*.

Let us enquire then into the MERCY and GOOD FRUITS of modern Saintship. The *mercy* of the Sufferer is *forgiveness*; The *mercy* of the Inflicter is *forbearance*.

Of Mr. Wesley's *forgiveness* under sufferings, we have seen many examples in the Language he gives his Opposers; who pass with him under no other title than that of the *Devil's Servants* and the *Devil's Children*. Of his *forbearance*, when compleatly armed with the Vengeance of Heaven, we have seen many more, in his dispatching the Principal of these *Children of the Devil*, without mercy, to their *Father*. For one sure mark of the hypocondriac spirit under a Fanatic ferment, is the readiness to dispense, and the rashness to fling about, the exterminating Judgments of God: And when an Enthusiast *calls down fire from Heaven*, the least of his concern is, his being heard. So that every disaster, befalling his Opposers, is considered by him as God's *owning the cause*, and he would esteem it ingratitude to his Master to give it any other name than that of
a JUDGE.

a JUDGMENT ; just as *Witches*, when a mischief happens to those whom they have often cursed, ascribe it to the Avenger of their quarrels, their trusty Coadjutor the Devil. For under the agitations of *wrath* and *revenge*, the *fruits of this Spirit* are much the same, whether Heaven or Hell be called to their assistance. Do I wrong these Men ? See what has been said above of this matter : and if that does not suffice, turn again to Mr. J. Wesley's *Journals*. “ Wednesday 15. “ I went to Bedlam at the repeated request of “ Mr. S. who had been confined there above “ two years. This was the Person, who, while “ he was speaking against my Brother and me, “ to the Society at Kingwood, was in a *moment* “ *struck raving mad*. But, it seems, *God is at* “ *length intreated* for him, and has restored him “ to a sound mind (1).” Again “ One J—n “ H—n a weaver——zealous for the Church “ and against Dissenters of every denomination “ —He laboured much to convince his acquaint- “ ance that the *strange fits, into which people at the* “ *Societies fell* was a delusion of the Devil. We “ were going home when one met us in the street, “ and informed us, That J—n H—n was fallen “ *raving mad*.——Between one and two, I came “ in and found him on the floor, the room being “ full of people, whom his wife would have kept “ out, but he cried aloud, No, let the world

(1) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 33.

“ see the *just Judgment of God*. Two or three
 “ men were holding him as well as they could.
 “ He immediately fixed his eyes upon me, and
 “ stretching out his hands, cried, Oh ! this is he
 “ who, I said, was a deceiver of the People.
 “ But *God has overtaken me* (2).”—And again,—
 “ I was informed of an *awful providence*. A poor
 “ wretch who was here the last week, cursing,
 “ blaspheming, and labouring with all his might
 “ to hinder the *word of God*, had afterwards
 “ boasted to many, that he would come again on
 “ *Sunday*, and no man should stop his mouth
 “ then. But on Friday *God laid his hand* upon
 “ him, and on Sunday he was buried (3).—I
 “ saw a poor man, (*once joined with us*) who
 “ wanted nothing in this world, but the peace
 “ the world cannot give. A day or two before,
 “ *he hanged himself*, but was cut down before
 “ he was dead. He has been crying out ever
 “ since, *God had left him, because he had left the*
 “ *Children of God* (4).” But he is inexorable to
 all who apostatize.—“ I buried the body of Lucy
 “ Godshall——after pressing toward the mark
 “ for more than two years —— *She became weary*
 “ *and faint — I put her out of the band*,—God
 “ blessed this to her soul.”—But how —“ She
 “ fell down on her knees, and delivered up her

(2) Journ. from August 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 44.

(3) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 59, 60.

(4) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 91.

“ soul and body into the hands of God. In the
 “ instant the use of all her limbs was taken
 “ away, and she was in a burning fever.—She
 “ cried out on *Satan*—was in *darkness*—was in
 “ *light*—closed her eyes and died (5).”—“ I was
 “ pressed to visit Nicholas Palmer, one who had
 “ *separated from us*, and behaved with a great
 “ *bitterness*, till God laid his hand upon him. He
 “ had sent for me several times, saying he could
 “ not die in peace till he had seen me.—We
 “ wrestled with God in his behalf—his soul was
 “ comforted ; and a few hours after quietly fell
 “ asleep(6).”

Their GOOD FRUITS come next to be considered. Mr. J. Wesley’s idea of *true Religion* doth not promise much. He saith, “ It doth not
 “ consist in any or all these three things, *the liv-*
 “ *ing harmless,—using the means of Grace—and*
 “ *doing much good*. A man, he says, may do all
 “ this, and yet have *no true Religion at all* (7).”

Yet St. JAMES talks another language. *Pure Religion* (and, I suppose, *pure* and *true* differ only in sound) *and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World* (8).

(5) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 71.

(6) Journ. *ibid.* p. 5.

(7) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741, p. 11, 12.

(8) St. James, c. i. ver. 27.

Now,

Now, what is *visiting the fatherless and widows*, but *the doing much good*? And what is *keeping one's self unspotted from the world*, but *using the means of Grace*? In what a fearful taking then, must Mr. Wesley's Zealots be, who, misled by the Bible, have so long mistaken *true Religion*? The least it will do is to drive them to *despair*. But this is the very state in which their master delights to take them up. And his assurance, that *true Religion* consists in *God's dwelling and reigning in the Soul* (9), soon makes way for a happier madness: The Jaws of Hell begin to close, the Gates of Heaven to open. But what the overlaboured imagination suffered, during the course of this operation, requires the hand of a Master to describe. I shall give it therefore in Mr. J. Wesley's own words: and as these his spiritual cures, (which he reports with the exactness of an Hippocrates or a Sidenham) are all the GOOD FRUITS he pretends to boast of, he will not be displeased to have a few of the choicest of them set in a fair light.

The condition of his Audience, on his first operation upon them, is thus graphically described—" I preached in an open place, two or
 " three miles from Newcastle. The wind was
 " high and extremely sharp: but I saw none go
 " away till I went. Yet I observed none seemed
 " to be much convinced: only STUNN'D, AS IF

(9) P. 11. ut sup.

“ CUT IN THE HEAD (1).” This was in order. They were first to be *stunn’d*; Reason was to be extinguished before he could set fire to their Imaginations. But he brings them to their senses with a vengeance. “ I felt the fire of Hell already kindled in my breast, (says one) and all my body was in as much pain as if I had been in a burning firey furnace (2).”—“ I was interrupted (says he) by the cries of one who was *pricked at the heart*.” One of those, I suppose, who had before been *cut in the head*: And having now got possession both of the *head* and *heart*, the game begins.—“ Another person drop’d down—a little boy near him was seized in the same manner. A young man who stood behind, fixed his eyes on him, and sunk down himself as one dead. But soon began to roar out and beat himself on the ground, so that six men could scarcely hold him.—Mean while many others began to cry out to the Saviour of all, that he would come and help them; infomuch that all the house, and indeed all the street for some space, was in an uproar.—I was called after supper to one who feeling in herself such a Conviction as she had never known before, had run out of the Society in all haste, *that she might not expose herself*. But

(1) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 82.

(2) Ibid. p. 83.

“ the hand of God followed her still, &c. (3)”
 The fear of *exposing herself* Mr. J. Wesley, we see, takes much amiss. He expresses himself with some resentment, but more contempt, of her delicacy. Yet it seems hard that he would not suffer the young Woman to understand the nature of *her own feelings*, and consequently to be the best judge of the danger she was in, of *exposing herself*.—“ Forty or Fifty of those who were
 “ seeking salvation, desired leave to spend the
 “ night together in the society room. Before
 “ ten, I left them, and laid down.”—For our Engineer had so amply provided them with combustibles, and so fitly laid his train, that he knew they would take fire of themselves. He was not disappointed.—“ Between two and three in the
 “ morning he was awaked, and desired to
 “ come down stairs. I immediately (says he)
 “ heard such a confused noise, as if a number of
 “ men were all putting to the Sword. It increased, when I came into the room, and began to pray, &c. (4)”—“ Thence I went to a
 “ poor woman who had been long in *despair*. I
 “ was glad to meet with Mrs. R. there; the person mentioned in Mr. Whitefield’s Journal,
 “ who after *three years madness* (SO CALLED) was
 “ so deeply convinced of Sin, &c. (5)”—“ Ano-

(3) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 50, 51.

(4) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 51, 52.

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 80.

“ ther

“ther of Dr. Monro’s patients came to desire
 “my advice; I found no reason to believe she
 “had been otherwise *mad* than every one is who
 “is deeply convinced of Sin (6).”—“A middle-
 “aged woman desired me to return thanks for
 “her to God; who, as many witnesses then pre-
 “sented testified, was, a day or two before, really
 “*distracted*, and, as such, *tied down in her bed*.
 “But upon prayer made for her, she was in-
 “stantly relieved and restored to a sound
 “mind (7).”—“*I could not but be under some*
 “*concern* with regard to one or two persons, who
 “were tormented in an unaccountable manner,
 “and seemed to be indeed *Lunatics*, as well as
 “fore vexed (8).” Here, for the first time, Hu-
 manity seems to have recovered a little of its
 rights, amidst these scenes of horror. Mr. J.
 WESLEY himself confesses, *he could not but be*
under some concern. But invigorated by the *new*
birth, he soon shakes off the *human pity* of the *old*,
 and makes a joke even of the very *Lunacy*, he
 had pretended to lament. “Two or three who
 “were at the Devanden (a high hill two or three
 “miles from Chepstow) *are gone quite distracted*,
 “i. e. they mourn and refuse to be comforted till
 “they have Redemption, &c (9).”—“I desired
 “one who had seen affliction herself to go and
 “visit Mrs. G—— in *Bedlam* (put there by her

(6) Ibid. p. 83.

(7) Ibid. p. 4.

(8) Ibid. p. 88.

(9) Ibid. p. 90.

“ husband

“ husband as a *mad woman*) where it pleased
 “ God greatly to knit their hearts together, and
 “ with his comforts to refresh their souls (1).”—
 “ Amongst the hearers was one, who sometime
 “ before had been deeply convinced of her un-
 “ godliness, insomuch that she cried out day and
 “ night, *Lord save or I perish*. All the neighbours
 “ agreeing that she was *stark mad*, her husband
 “ put her into a Physician’s hands, who blooded
 “ her largely, and laid on several blisters. But
 “ all this proving without success, she was in a
 “ short time judged to be *incurable*. When Mrs.
 “ Johnson came, she soon saw the nature of the
 “ disease, having herself *gone thro’* the same. She
 “ ordered all the medicines to be thrown away,
 “ and exhorted the Patient to *look unto Jesus* (2).”

And with this spiritual *madness* he is so ena-
 moured, that he calls it, when at its height, A GLO-
 RIOUS TIME. “ I preached at Weaver’s Hall.
 “ IT WAS A GLORIOUS TIME. Several drop’d
 “ to the ground, as if struck with lightening, &c.
 “ &c. (3)” And where this is wanting, tho’
 every other thing be to his wish, he is so dissatis-
 fied, that it is as much as ever his submission to the
 divine Will can obtain of him, *to let God do as*
seemeth him good.—“ I saw none of that *triumph*
 “ *of Faith*, which has been so COMMON in other

(1) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 54.

(2) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 53.

(3) Journ. *ibid.* p. 27.

“ places. But the Believers go on *calm and steady*.——LET GOD DO AS SEEMETH HIM GOOD (4).”

But though Mr. J. Wesley does so ably, in this new Trade of *turning fools into mad-men*, yet his Craft’s-master is certainly one Mr. Wh—y, of whom Mr. Wesley tells this extraordinary tale. “ A poor woman gave an account of what I think ought never to be forgotten.” Truly, I think so too —“ It was four years, she said, since her Son, Peter Shaw, then nineteen or twenty years old, by hearing a Sermon of Mr. Wh—y, fell into great uneasiness. She thought he was ill, and would have sent for a Physician. But he said, No, no, send for Mr. Wh—y. He was sent for, and came; and, after asking a few questions, told her, *The Boy is mad*, get a Coach and carry him to Dr. M——, *use my name, I have sent several such to him* (5).”—Who this Mr. W—y is, or what he is, I know not. But, we see, he sends his People to Monro, with the same unconcern in search of lost brains, that one would enquire of Sir J. Fielding for a lost portmanteau.

Such are the exploits which Mr. J. Wesley calls, in the place last quoted, BLESSINGS FROM GOD : and which therefore we may well call the GOOD FRUITS of his Ministry ; those by which

(4) Journ. *ibid.* p. 78.

(5) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 56.

St. James directs us to judge of his *Mission*. For what the Apostle calls *good fruits*, namely, *doing much good*, Mr. J. Wesley plainly tells us belong not to *true Religion*: What belongs not to true Religion he rightly deems superfluous: And whatever is superfluous he makes solemn resolutions to avoid (6).”



C H A P. XII.

HITHERTO the Marks delivered by St. James, to judge of a pretended Missionary from Heaven, consider him as urging his pretensions fairly and with good faith; tho' possibly in a fanatic or enthusiastic way: But what follows, — WITHOUT PARTIALITY AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY,—represents the pretender to such a character as capable of acting in a mask, and using the mere worldly arts, of fraud and deceit. And this supposition is made with admirable judgment and knowledge of human Nature.

ENTHUSIASM, so indispensable a requisite in the successful leading of a Sect, must always be accompanied with craft and knavery. There is a necessity for this odd combination; and the

(6) Journ. from Feb. 1, 1737-8, to his return from Germany, p. 13.

thing it self, as strange as it may seem, is very naturally to be accounted for.

A mere cool-headed Projector, without any tincture of innate enthusiasm, can never succeed in his Designs, because such a one can never exhibit those surprizing freaks, which a heated imagination, working on a *disordered*, tho', for this purpose, *fitly framed* temper of body, so speciously produces. For the spirits of the People, who are to be taken in, can never be allured but by raising their *admiration*, and keeping up their confidence in an inspired Leader. Besides, new doctrines and new ideas are never so readily received as when the teacher of them is in earnest, and believes *Himself*: For then there is something so natural in his conduct as easily to conciliate belief; there is something so alluring that it acts even like a Charm.

On the other hand, a *mere Enthusiast*, who by virtue of this faculty hath gone so far in his purpose as to raise the admiration, and to captivate the spirits, of the People, must here begin to fail, if he want the other quality, *sectarian craft*: For his *fanaticism* not being under the controul of his *judgment*, he will need the proper dexterity to apply the different views, tempers, and pursuits of the People, now enflamed and ready to become his Instruments, to the advancement of his Projects.

But

But when these two talents of *Fraud* and *Fanaticism* unite to furnish out the Leader of a Sect, great will be the success of his undertakings. And when such a one feels the strength of this union, it is no wonder he should be ready to cry out with Mr. J. Wesley, *Give me whereon to stand, and I will shake the whole earth* (1). For now the fallies of his Enthusiasm will be so corrected by his Cunning, as to strengthen and confirm his supernatural pretences ; and the cold and slow advances of a too cautious policy will be warmed and pushed forward by the force of his *Fanaticism*. *His craft* will enable him to elude the enquiries and objections of the more Rational ; and his Visions will irrecoverably subdue all the warmer Noddles. In a word, they will mutually support and strengthen each other's force, and cover and repair each other's defects. St. Jerom seems to have had a true idea of this extraordinary combination, when he said, “ Nullus potest Hæresin struere, nisi qui
 “ ARDENTIS INGENII est, et habet DONA NA-
 “ TURAE (2).” *No Heretic will ever be able to raise a Sect, but he, in whose constitution, Nature has enabled Fraud and Fanaticism to act in concert.*

Several things concur to facilitate this happy conjunction. An Enthusiast considers himself

(1) See p. 100 of this Discourse.

(2) See Div. L. B. iii. Sect. 6.

as an Instrument employed by Providence to attain some great End, for the sake of which he was sent out. This makes him diligent in his work ; impatient under any let or obstruction ; and attentive to every method for removing it. Persuaded of the necessity of the End, and of the divine Commission intrusted to the Instrument, he begins to fancy that such a one, for the obtaining so great a purpose, is dispensed with, in breaking, nay is authorized to break, the common Laws of Morality ; which, in the cant of those times, when Fanaticism had its full play, was called the BEING ABOVE ORDINANCES. In the first application of these *means*, the People are the Dupes of their Leader : But the success being frequently far beyond even his own conception, he becomes, in his turn, the Dupe of himself ; and begins in good earnest to believe that the trick which he plaid them, was indeed not of his own contrivance, but the inspired instigation of Heaven (3). This will explain an obscure passage of Tacitus, where

(3) That great observer of Nature, CERVANTES, having made Sancho (to save himself from the vexation of a sleeveless errand) palm upon his Master a supposititious Dulcinea ; When the Squire comes to relate this adventure to the Dutchess, she extolls his ingenuity so highly, that he begins to suspect himself to be tricked into his own contrivance ; and that the Inchanters had presented him with a *true* Dulcinea in masquerade, when he thought he was imposing a *false one* personated on his Master.

speaking

speaking of this sort of Character, in his oracular way, he says, *FINGUNT SIMUL CREDUNTQUE.* Let me add, that this seems to have been much the case of *OLIVER CROMWELL* from his first mounting into the Saddle and the Pulpit, to his last reveries on his death-bed.

Again, *Enthusiasm* is a kind of ebullition or critical ferment of the mind, which a vigorous nature sometimes works thro', and by slow degrees, is able to surmount. Hence the most successful Impostors, who have set out in all the blaze of Fanaticism, have compleated their Schemes amidst the cool depths and stillness of Politics. Tho' this, in some degree, be common to them all, yet I know of none who exemplifies the case so fully as the famous *IGNATIUS LOIOLA.* This wonderful Person began his *extasies* in the mire, and finished his course in the direction and execution of Councils, which even in his own life-time, were ready to give Law to Christendom. Mr. J. Wesley appears to have studied this great Master well : tho', by a common practice of those who set up for themselves, he kicks away the steps by which he mounted. " I rode (says " he) to Oxford — in riding I read over that " surprising book, the life of *IGNATIUS LOIOLA.* " Surely one of the greatest men that ever was " engaged in the support of a *bad cause.* I won- " der any man should judge him to be an *Enthusiast.* " No : but he knew the people with whom he

“ had to do. And setting out like Count Z. with
 “ a FULL PERSUASION *that he might* USE GUILE
 “ *to promote the glory of God* (4).” Now I desire
 to know, how any, but an ENTHUSIAST, could
 have a *full persuasion*, i. e. be persuaded, bono
 fide, *that he might use guile to promote the glory of*
God? Or how any, but a KNAVE, could succeed in
 this *persuasion*?—Cicero observes that the *Eye*,
 which sees all other things, sees not it self: This in-
 stance will shew it to be equally true, that the *Mind*,
 which plays such strange tricks, is often very in-
 attentive to it’s own frame and operations.

Modern Saintship then being so subject to these
 odd traverses, it is well for BOTH SOCIETIES,
 that we have an unerring Rule whereon to esti-
 mate its Claim. For the Apostle having de-
 clared that *the wisdom from above is without* PAR-
 TIALITY *and without* HYPOCRISY, if such qua-
 lities be found in those who pretend to derive
 all, immediately, from *above*, we need no further
 evidence of the imposture. And, now, having
 hitherto used this famed Head of his Sect for
 an Example, it would be unkind to drop him
 here, and not suffer him to finish, as he began,
 his apostolical career.

PARTIALITY consists in dispensing an *un-*
equal measure, in our transactions with Others:

And HYPOCRISY in attempting to cover that
unequal measure by prevarication and false colours.

(4) Journ. from Sept 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 67.

The Reader must have been very inattentive to what hath been produced from Mr. J. Wesley's JOURNALS, not to have observed the many convincing marks of the writer's *partiality* and *hypocrisy*. The passages have indeed been given to convict him of other *fanatic* qualities, equally inconsistent with the *wisdom which is from above*; but many of them will, at the same time, serve to shew how ably he availed himself of these two political Accomplishments.

We have seen in general, that his Followers are always the *Children of God*; and his Opposers, the *Children of the Devil*. But the first being directed by inward feelings and the impulse of an inflamed fancy, and the other by the outward testimony of Scripture, interpreted by human reason, it is no great wonder that Mr. J. Wesley, who saw them so much unlike, should marshal them under two different Banners. But what shall we think, when we find him saying the worst of his friends that his enemies have said of him, so soon as ever he sees them presume to play over his own pranks in any other Name? If they follow not him, they are *Fanatics* and *Enthusiasts*, how like soever they be in all other things to their ghostly Patern?—"I was with
" two persons (says Mr. J. Wesley) who, I
" doubt, are properly *Enthusiasts*. For first
" they think to attain the end without the
" means, which is *enthusiasm*, properly so called:
" again they think themselves inspired by God,
" and

“ *and are not.* But false imaginary inspiration is *enthusiasm*. That theirs is only imaginary inspiration appears hence, it contradicts *the Law and the Testimony*’ 5).” These are wise words: but what do they amount to? Only to this, That these two persons would not take out their patents of Inspiration from his Office; and, therefore, he has advertised them, for Counterfeits. However, thus much we gain by them, that all modern pretences to Inspiration are, by the acknowledgement of Mr. J. Wesley himself, to be tried by the *Law and the Testimony*. He cannot then, surely refuse to have his own pretensions tried before that Judicature to which we have appealed him.

Miss Gr——, one of the inspired, had told another Miss, that Mr. J. Wesley was a *Papist*, perhaps on account of the honour he does to *auricular confession*, he recommending one kind of it to his BANDS. Upon this, Miss Gr—— is anathematized. And we are told, that, in consequence, “ she had lately been *raving mad*; that “ as such, she was tied down in her bed (6).” Yet all these circumstances of *madness* have, in the opinion of the ablest Physicians, befallen Mr. J. Wesley’s favourite Saints, whom he has vindicated from that Opprobrium; he has laughed at the ignorance of the faculty; and de

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 23.

(6) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 73-4
clared

clared those equivocal marks to be the constant Symptoms of the NEW BIRTH.

He pronounces Sentence of *Enthusiasm* upon another: And tells us wherefore, without any disguise.—“ Here (says he) I *took leave* of a poor, “ mad, *original Enthusiast*, who had been scat- “ tering abroad LIES in every quarter (7).” By which we find, that, even in Mr. J. Wesley’s own opinion, *Fanaticism* and *Knavery* are very near neighbours.

“ I had much conversation with Mr. Simpson “ an *original Enthusiast*.—I desired him in the “ evening to give an exhortation—He did so, and “ spoke *many good things, in a manner peculiar to “ himself*. When he had done, I summ’d up “ what he had said, methodizing and explain- “ ing it. O what pity is it that this well mean- “ ing man should ever speak without an In- “ terpreter ! (8)”—and that Mr. J. Wesley should not be he !

In these two last passages, we are presented with two ORIGINAL ENTHUSIASTS. But how differently do we find them treated ! The first is accused of doing the work of the devil, of spreading *lies* of his Master ; on which account his Master *takes his leave of him* : a gentle expression, to signify, the thrusting him out, head and shoulders, from the Society of Saints : The

(7) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 71.

(8) Journ. *ibid.* p. 91.

other likewise, whose *original enthusiasm* is made to consist only in want of *Method*, or, to speak more properly, want of *Methodism*, is only lamented, as having the ill luck to *speak without an Interpreter*. That is, without having his doctrine regulated on the dictates of his Master. But the First set his Master at defiance: the Second *spoke many good things*, that is, he professed a doctrine agreeable to Mr. Wesley; indeed, *in a manner peculiar to himself*, that is, not on Mr. Wesley's Authority, but his own. Now, there were some hopes of Him; but none at all of the other. Therefore tho' they are pronounced ORIGINAL ENTHUSIASTS alike, yet we must interpret their Titles very differently. The first *Original* was of his original the Devil, *a scatterer abroad of lies in every quarter*: The second was worth recovering. His *Original enthusiasm* was a foundation, like *Original Sin*, to erect upon it a monument of Grace.

But the most *genuine instance of enthusiasm*, which, he tells us, he will give, and which, without doubt, he does give, with the utmost reluctance, is the following. He preached at *Tanfield-Leigh*.—"But so dead, *senseless*, un-
 "affected a congregation (says he) have I scarce
 "seen, except at *Wickham*. Whether Gospel
 "or Law, or English or Greek, seemed all one
 "to them." Yet he *spoke*, he tells us, *strong rough words*. But why is *want of sense* put into
 this

this *rough* description of their unregenerate State? He owns, that numbers of the Godly were without any. And why would he elicit *sense* from these Gentiles, when, upon their conversion, they were finally to be deprived of it, in *extacies* and *new births*. However, as ungrateful as the soil appeared,—“ Yet the seed sown even there
 “ was not quite lost. For on Thursday morn-
 “ ing, between four and five, *John Brown*, then
 “ of *Tanfield-Leigh*, was *waked out of sleep*
 “ by the voice that raiseth the dead; and ever
 “ since he has been full of love and peace and
 “ joy in the Holy Ghost.” But now see what comes of *waking these sleepers*. This same J—B— who had received the Holy Ghost but at the latter end of November, became so *freakish* by the beginning of December, that he even forced Mr. J. Wesley (for the honour of Methodism itself) to pronounce *him* likewise a *genuine Enthusiast*, and to throw aside this precious Saint, as flawed by over-bakeing, amongst the useless rubbish of his Shop.

“ I was both surprised and grieved”— Here, Reader, thou mayest safely believe him—“ at
 “ a *genuine* instance of *Enthusiasm*. J— B— of
 “ Tanfield Leigh, who had received a *SENSE*
 “ of the love of God a few days before, came
 “ riding thro’ the town, *hollowing* and *shouting*”
 [the inseparable symptoms of the *new birth*]
 “ and driving all the People before him, tell-
 “ ing

“ing them, God had told him he should be ^a
 “KING, and should tread all his enemies under
 “his feet (9).”

Now this being the only fruit of the *seed sown* in this place, had it not been better to have let these honest people alone? who appear amiable, even thro’ the sarcastic abuse he so liberally pours over them.—“At Wickham, I spoke strong
 “rough words: but I did not perceive that any
 “regarded what was spoken. The People in-
 “deed were exceeding quiet, and *the cold kept*
 “*them from falling asleep*; till, before two, I left
 “them very *well satisfied with the Preacher and*
 “*with themselves* (1).” And why should they not! Why is this poor satisfaction in themselves, which they had so liberally expressed towards him, begrudged them? A reasonable Man desires no more, than that his friends be satisfied with him; he does not expect, nay, he would be sorry, to find them dissatisfied with themselves. But such an equality of mind and measure, as in the good people of Wickham, is destructive of all the schemes of a Fanatic Leader: Who must find, or *make*, a People desperate, and ready to hang themselves, before they can be prepared and rightly tempered for the sacred Mold of Methodism.

(9) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 79.

(1) *Ibid.* p. 78.

We shall end, where every Fanatic Leader ends,—with his HYPOCRISY. And if *evasion* and *prevarication*, in the most essential points of his Ministry, may be called by that name, I cannot see how Mr. J. Wesley will escape from having this concluding mark of imposture fixed upon him.

I. We have wearied ourselves and Readers, in recounting the numberless MIRACLES by which He, and his affairs have been supported, amidst a *cloud of Witnesses* well disposed to magnify the scene. Yet, after all this, with a WORLDLY PRUDENCE which one would not expect in a man who calls this quality *the mystery of Iniquity*, he thinks fit to secure himself a retreat, in case all these wonders should become problematical. For after having heaped them upon one another, Olympus-high, throughout nine copious Journals, he sneaks away under the cover of a puny Wonder, and leaves the defence of all his Giant-miracles in the lurch! “About five (says he) I
 “began, near the Keel-man’s Hospital; many
 “thousands standing round, or sitting on the
 “Grass. The wind was high just before; but
 “scarce a breath was felt, all the time we assem-
 “bled before God. I praise God for this also.”
 IS IT ENTHUSIASM TO SEE GOD IN EVERY BENEFIT *which we receive* (2)? Certainly, it is not. The *Enthusiasm* consists in believing those bene-

(2) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754, p. 18.

fits to be miraculously conferred by a change in the established order of Nature. This is the *Enthusiasm* with which he is charged; and this Charge, almost every page of his journals will support. But here, by the neatest address, he covertly insinuates, (as a Word to the Wise) that he meant no more by his *Miracles*, than the *seeing of God in every benefit we receive*. A certain Philosopher of great name fancied he had explained the nature of vision well, on the principle of *seeing all things in God*. And if the World be content to be paid in this coin, our Divine will not be long in its debt. He can explain *Miracles*, as well as the other explained *Nature*, by the knack he has of *seeing God in all things*. This then goes a great way towards ridding his hands of miracles when the Inquisitive become troublesome. But as he well knew it might be said of him, “If you part with your Miracles, you strip yourself of the credentials of your Mission,” he has a fetch for this also, a Friend to help him at a dead lift; whose opinion, “he wishes all calm and impartial men would consider—Not to establish the power of *working Miracles* as the great Criterion of a divine Mission; when Scripture teaches us that the agreement of doctrines with truth as taught in those Scriptures, is the only infallible Rule (3).” Suppose now any sense could be drawn out of this gallimatias of *Scrip-*

(3) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 72.

ture's teaching that the agreement of doctrines with truth as taught in those Scriptures, is the only infallible rule : And that it may mean, “that Scripture teaches us, that the conformity of its doctrines with the truths discoverable by natural light, is the only Criterion.” I then ask, Where Scripture teacheth this ? I ask it, I say, Because Reason teacheth another thing : for, from the Premises, of the *conformity of Scripture doctrines with truth*, her Conclusion is only this, That Scripture doctrines are true ; not that they were immediately derived from Heaven. I am *afraid* therefore, that *Scripture* is here much scandalized, by making it talk a language so dissonant to *Reason*. And I am the more confirmed in this opinion, since Scripture, from the mouth of Jesus himself, expressly says, that the *power of working miracles*, and not *the conformity of Scripture doctrines to truth*, is the great criterion of a divine Mission. The words of Jesus are these : “ If I
 “ had not done amongst them the works which
 “ no other man did, they had not had Sin : But
 “ now have they both seen and hated me and my
 “ Father (4).” But why, in case *no miracles had been worked* amongst them, *had they not had Sin ?* For this reason, and only for this, that, without *Miracles*, there was *no sufficient criterion* of a divine Mission. And *Sin* could not be imputed to them for rejecting a Character which did not bring its

(4) John ch. xv. ver. 24.

full credentials with it. From what I can see then, Mr. J. Wesley must either stick to his *Miracles*, or give up his *Mission*.

II. But he shifts and doubles no less with regard to the *Extacies*, and the *New-birth* of his Saints. Sometimes they are undoubtedly of *God*; sometimes again as certainly of the *Devil*: but he is constant in this, that *Natural causes* have no hand in them. The reason is plain: He could make both *GOD* and the *DEVIL* conducive to his purposes; but *NATURE* is the sure destruction of every fanatic frolic.—The Saints met in Fetter-lane to humble themselves before God for *grieving the holy Spirit*.—To the several offences assigned, Mr. J. Wesley adds—“ But above all, by *BLASPHEMING HIS*
“ *WORKS* amongst us, imputing it either to *NA-*
“ *TURE*, to the force of imagination and animal
“ *Spirits*, or even the *delusion of the DEVIL*.—At
“ that hour we found *GOD* with us as at the first.
“ *Some fell prostrate upon the ground. Others*
“ *burst out, as with one consent, into a loud praise*
“ *and thanksgiving.* And many openly testified,
“ There had been *no such day as this*, since Ja-
“ *nuary the first, preceding (5).*”—“ On Friday
“ many were deeply convinced; but none were
“ delivered from that painful conviction. The
“ Children came to the *birth*; but there was not
“ strength to bring forth. *I fear we have*

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739, p. 59.

“ *grieved*

“grieved the Spirit of the jealous God by question-
 “ing his work (6).”

—“Innumerable cautions were given me not
 “to regard *Visions* or *Dreams*, or to fancy peo-
 “ple had remission of Sins, because of their
 “*Cries*, or tears, or outward professions.— The
 “Sum of my answer was as follows: You deny
 “that God does now work these effects: at least
 “that he works them in this manner. I AFFIRM
 “BOTH: Because I have heard these things with
 “my own ears, and seen them with my own eyes.
 “I have seen very many persons changed in a
 “moment from the Spirit of fear, horror, de-
 “spair, to the Spirit of love, joy, and peace.—
 “What I have to say touching *Visions* or *Dreams*
 “is this: I know several persons in whom this
 “great change was wrought in a *dream*, or du-
 “ring a *strong representation to the eye of the mind*,
 “of Christ, either on the Cross or in Glory.
 “This is the fact (7).”——Nay, he is so con-
 “vinced of its being the *work* of God, that the
 “horrid *blasphemies* which ensued, he ascribes to
 “the abundance of joy, which God had given to a
 “poor mad woman of his flock. “I met with
 “one, who having been lifted up with the abun-
 “dance of joy which God had given her, had
 “fallen into blasphemies and vain imaginations
 “as are not common to men. In the afternoon
 “I found another instance, nearly, I fear, of the

(6) Journ. Ibid. p. 16.

(7) Journ. Ibid. p. 49.

“ same kind—She had her *private revelations*
 “ so called, &c. (8)” But now, on a sudden, he
 gives us the reverse of the Medal, and directly
 revokes all he had advanced.—“ I told them they
 “ were not to judge of the Spirit whereby any
 “ one spoke, either by *appearances* or by *common*
 “ *report*, or by their own *inward feelings*. No,
 “ nor by any *Dreams, Visions*, or *Revelations* sup-
 “ posed to be made to their soul, any more than
 “ by their tears, or any *involuntary effects wrought*
 “ *upon their bodies*. I warned them, all these
 “ were in themselves of a DOUBTFUL DISPU-
 “ TABLE NATURE. They *might* be from GOD,
 “ or they *might* not (9).” The Reader cannot
 but be much surprized to find so formal a re-
 cantation of what he had said (1) just above con-
 cerning *inward feelings, dreams, visions* and *extacies*;
 and of his own *confidence* in affirming these to
 be the work of God, from his *having both heard*
these things with his own ears, and from his having
seen them with his own eyes; for here he denies
common report, (and are not other people’s *ears* and
eyes as good as his?) or *appearances* or even *feel-*
ings, to be a sufficient ground of assurance: Of
 this, I can give no better account, and perhaps
 the Reader will desire no better, than this, that
 when our Apostle thought fit thus to unsay, what

(8) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 54.

(9) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 60, 61.

(1) See p. 179.

he had so confidently affirmed before, it was in a desponding hour, when he *was in much doubt whether God would not lay him aside and send other Labourers into his harvest* (2). Under these fears he seemed resolved, at least, that these new *Labourers* should not reap what he had sown; and therefore, at all adventures, thought proper to cut the ground from under their feet.

At length, finding his Cause sufficiently disgraced by the unruliness of these *divine Agitations*; and knowing (as we shall see presently) how to make a better use of them, he fairly gives them all to the DEVIL. “ I enquired (says he) into the case of
 “ those who had almost every night the last week,
 “ *cried out aloud*, during the preaching. I found
 “ that all of them were persons in perfect health,
 “ and had not been subject to Fits of any kind
 “ till they were thus affected: That this had
 “ come upon every one of them in a moment,
 “ without any previous notice, while they were
 “ either hearing the word of God, or thinking
 “ on what they had heard: That in that mo-
 “ ment they dropt down, lost all their strength,
 “ and were seized with violent pain. This they
 “ expressed in different manners. Some said
 “ they felt just as if a sword was running thro’
 “ them: others, that they thought, a great
 “ weight lay upon them, as if it would squeeze
 “ them into the Earth. Some said they were

(2) Journ. Ibid. p. 60.

“ quite choak’d so that they could not breathe ;
 “ others, that their hearts swelled ready to burst :
 “ and others, that it was as if their Heart, as
 “ if all their Inside, as if their whole Body
 “ was tearing all to peices. These *Symptoms* I
 “ can no more impute to any NATURAL CAUSE
 “ than to the SPIRIT OF GOD. I can make no
 “ doubt but it was SATAN TEARING THEM as
 “ they were coming to Christ. And hence pro-
 “ ceeded those *grievous cries* whereby he might
 “ design both to DISCREDIT the Work of God,
 “ and to affright fearful People from hearing that
 “ Word, whereby their souls might be saved (3).”

Now, the Reader ought to take notice, that
 these were the very *Symptoms* which Mr. J. Wesley
 had before ascribed to the *spirit of God*.— But,
 by this time he was sensible, and so he confesses,
 in this very place, that they had DISCREDITED
 the *Work*. They were therefore, to be sent to
 the DEVIL, from whence they came ; yet still
 upon Mr. J. Wesley’s Errand. For there is
 nothing, except NATURE, as we observed above,
 which he can not put to some good use or other.
 And this new Donation of the *extacies of the*
Saints was a noble foundation for what he was
 now projecting, the Farce of DIABOLISMS and
 EXORCISMS. Well, therefore, might he exult
 over this Old Mischief-maker, *as not having wit*
enough to discern that he was over-matched ; and

(3) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 91.

that Mr. John Wesley was too hard for him. *I wonder* (says he) *the Devil has not wisdom enough to discern that he is destroying his own Kingdom* (4). Indeed, he has fairly turned the tables upon SATAN; and shewn us, that he can make full as good an use of a POSSESSION from below (5), as of an INSPIRATION from above.

III. The Reader remembers how contemptuously Mr. Wesley has spoken of *Orthodoxy*, or *true belief*; even to the questioning whether it makes *any part of Religion at all*; certain is he, that, at best, it makes *but a very slender part*. “It is a point, says he, we chiefly insist upon, “that *Orthodoxy*, or right Opinion, is at best “but a very slender part of Religion, if any “part of it at all (6).” This was done to *take in* as many as he could, from amongst the *Señaries*; but when he wants to *take off* as many as he can, from amongst the *Churchmen*, then *Orthodoxy*, or true belief, is like *Methodism*, the *Unum Necessarium*: or, to speak more properly, *Orthodoxy* and *Methodism* are but two words for the same thing. “About a thousand people stood patiently while I simply “described the *plain old Religion of the Church “of England*, which is now almost every where “spoken against, under the new name of *Methodism* (7).”

(4) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 56.

(5) See p. 108.

(6) Mr. Wesley's plain account, &c. p. 4.

(7) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739 p. 90.

IV. We have seen him (in the true Spirit of a Sectary) inviting and even provoking *Persecution*, as the only means of making the *good seed take root*: For, after having sown it in the mud and slime of *field-preaching*, he then, by a kind of *Ægyptian Husbandry* (8), draws together whole droves of obscene Animals, who rush furiously in, and trample it about; but this, as that Mother-feat of ARTS may have informed him, only made it spring up the better——“ The
 “ Mob, says he, gathered in great numbers
 “ about my door, and quite closed me in. I
 “ rejoiced and blessed God, knowing this was the
 “ time I had long been looking for (9).” But, mistake him not. A *Persecution* he certainly wished, and as diligently fought. But it was for his beloved Saints, who, as he says, wanted it (1), who hungred after it; not for himself, who had no stomach to it, especially when it grew serious, as once upon a time it did.

In his ramble to *Georgia*, he got acquainted with one Mrs. Williamfon, (so he himself tells the story) to whom he refused the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. She had done some *wrong*, it seems, *to her neighbour*. What it was, he does not tell us. The Uncle (he says) desired he

(8) —in faum quisque rus jacto femine, Sues immittit, et satis conculcato a Suibus femine, messum deinde expectat. *Herod.* l. ij. c. 14.

(9) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 56.

(1) See p. 145.

would declare in the Court-house, why he expelled Mrs. Williamson from the holy Communion. But he declined it, as apprehending *many ill consequences* might arise from so doing. What He would not declare, the Uncle did; and said, that it was *in revenge for rejecting his, Mr. Wesley's, proposals of marriage, and marrying Mr. Williamson.* The Husband prosecuted him for *defamation*: And the Wife, says Mr. Wesley, “swore and signed an affidavit, “*insinuating much more than it asserted*, but asserting, that he, Mr. Wesley, had many times proposed marriage to her, all which proposals she had rejected.”

In consequence of this, “He is presented by “the *Grand Jury*, upon oath, as having broken the Laws of the Realm by speaking and writing to Mrs. Williamson against her husband’s consent; by repelling her from the holy Communion, &c.” The matter was now growing serious; the Georgians, he found, did not understand raillery, in the affair of spiritual Gallantry. It was time for him to look about him. In this distress, he began to have recourse, as usual, to his *revelations*—“I consulted my friends, *whether God did not call me* to return to England. The reason for which I left it had now no force, there being no possibility, as yet, of instructing the Indians: Neither had I, as yet, found or heard of any Indians on the “continent

“ continent of America, who had the least desire
 “ of being instructed.—After deeply considering
 “ these things ; *they were unanimous that I ought*
 “ *to go ; but not yet.*” However, the Magi-
 strate quickened his pace. He was declared *an*
Enemy to, and Hinderer of, the public peace.—“ I
 “ again (says he) consulted my friends, who
 “ agreed with me, *that the time we looked for was*
 “ *now come.*” The Reader, who has seen him
 so long *languish for persecution*, will conclude, he
 was now preparing to meet it with the constancy
 of a Martyr. No such matter. He was pre-
 paring for his flight. But to hide his poltrony
 in a bravado, he give public notice of his Apo-
 stolical intention. On which the Magistrates
 ordered that he should first find security to ap-
 pear, when summoned, to answer the Charge
 brought against him. But he refusing, they pub-
 lished a Placart, “ requiring all the Officers and
 “ Centinels to prevent his going out of the Pro-
 “ vince ; and forbidding any persons to assist
 “ him in so doing.” Things were now come
 to a Crisis : and Mr. J. Wesley, on the whole,
 thought it best to retreat without beat of drum ;
 and to steal a march upon the Enemy.—“ I saw
 “ clearly, (says he) the hour was come for leav-
 “ ing this place. And as soon as *Evening prayer*
 “ was over [for Prayer must always make
 “ a part in his Stratagems] about *eight o’clock*,
 “ the tide then serving, *I shook off the dust of my*
 “ *feet*

“*feet* (2).” A very pleasant way, truly, of acting the *Apostle*. But if he made the path easy for himself, he took care to render it doubly perplexed for his Followers. He left, we see, his *little Flock* in the lurch, to answer, as they could, for the crimes objected to their runaway Pastor.

But had his *longings for persecution* been without *Hypocrisy*, he had here the fairest occasion of honestly indulging himself to the full. He had gone as far as *Georgia* for it. The truth of his Mission was brought in question by the Magistrate, and decried by the People; not so much for his false doctrines, as his *false morals*. The honour of the Gospel was wounded through the Sides of its pretended Missionary. There was but one way to support its credit, the way the first Christian Preachers always took, the offering up themselves for the Truth they preached, and for the Integrity they professed. Instead of this, our paltry Mimic thinks he had discharged an Apostolic office, when he applied to himself an Apostolic phrase,—*I shook off the dust of my feet*, says he; much easier done than shaking off his infamy. Jesus, indeed, orders his Followers to *shake off the dust of their feet*, where the inhabitants would not receive their Doctrine, that they might not throw away their time in vain: But he never

(2) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia, to his return to London, p. 46 to 56.

directed

directed it as a Trial-ordeal of innocence when they were accused of immoralities, and the honour of the Mission concerned. When Paul and Silas had been imprisoned, and otherwise evil intreated at Philippi, neither the *Miracle* nor the *Magistrate*, (when each, in their turn, had set open the Prison doors) could persuade them to stir a step till they had procured all honourable satisfaction to their Characters (3). But what do I speak of the cases, in which the *prudence*, recommended by our great Master, directs his Disciples to *avoid*, or the *courage*, with which he inspires and enables them to *dare*, the rage of PERSECUTION. We are now on the detection of a HYPOCRITE, who expressed his longings for *persecution*; who invited it, who provoked it, in a Country* where the Magistrate restrained and forbid it; and yet ran away from it when his own honour, as well as that of his *little flock*, should have induced him to oppose himself to it; and where the Magistrate, by his own account, was forward enough and ready to oblige him. But he ran away, like a Coward, on the wings of *Prayer* and the *Tide*: Henceforth, the hatred of this unhospitable Shore, and the horror of the entertainment there prepared for him, made such an impression on his temper and his fancy, that he lets slip no occasion of revenge. For when the good man was got back to Europe,

(3) Acts xvi.

and even forced to beat it on the hoof as far as Hernhuth, in Germany, before he could get into a *Land of Christians* (4), he overtook, as he tells us, in a little village on the road, “A
 “ large number of *Switzers*, Men, Women,
 “ and Children, singing, dancing, and mak-
 “ ing merry, being all going to make their
 “ fortunes in GEORGIA. *Looking upon them*
 “ (says he) AS BEING DELIVERED INTO MY
 “ HANDS BY GOD, I plainly told them, what
 “ manner of place it was. If they now leap
 “ into the Fire with open eyes, their *blood is on*
 “ *their own head* (5).” It would be hard to
 guess how he came to *look upon these Switzers*
as delivered into his hands by God, unless he be-
 lieved, God was bound to revenge all his squab-
 bles with the young Wenches of his *Bands*,
 (which, by his Journals, we find were not a
 few) and that therefore *God prepared these Swit-*
zers for the Instruments of his Vengeance. He
 made a proper use of them; he *opened their eyes*;
 and so, in all likelihood, deprived a British Co-
 lony of many useful hands.

(4) “ At Weymar, we came before, I know not what
 “ great man (I believe the Duke) who, after many questions,
 “ asked, what we were going so far as *Hernhuth* for? I an-
 “ swered, To SEE THE PLACE WHERE THE CHRISTIANS
 “ LIVE. He looked hard, and let us go.” Journ. from
 Feb. 1, 1737-8, to his return from Germany, p. 45.

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739, p. 6.

V. We

V. We have seen above, how he set *worldly prudence*, *Christian prudence*, and in, a word, every thing which bears the name of PRUDENCE, at defiance; denouncing it to be the *bane of Religion*, and the *Instrument of the Devil*. This was but necessary, to inflame the *madness* of his Followers. But a very different language is required, when the *ambition* of his RIVALS is to be restrained. Then PRUDENCE is the very balm of Gilead, the assuager of hurt Minds, and great restorative of sickening Peace.

But we should take the affair from its beginning. So early as in the year thirty-nine, he began to suspect, that he should have RIVALS in his Apostolic office.—“I came into my old Room
“at Oxford, from which I went to Georgia.
“Here, musing on the things that were past, *and*
“remembering how many that came after me were
“preferred before me, I opened my Testament,
“&c. (6)” For you must know; Reader, that, of all the *Superstitions* (and they were not a few) which struggled for Dominion with *fanaticism* in the Microcosm of this holy Man, the SORTES SANCTORUM were the Chief. A species of Divination to which, St. Austin tells us, the good Christians of his time had recourse, rather than consult the Devil, like their pagan Neighbours. To this favorite folly, our Missionary refers all his doubts. It is his Urim and

(6) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 14, 15.

Thummim ; and he applies it as freely and irreverently to his occasions, as a Village Conjuror does his *Sive and Sheers*. At this time, indeed, it afforded him but small relief. He sunk so far in his despondency, *as to doubt whether God would not lay him aside, and send other labourers into his harvest* (7). We soon see what it was that gave him these dreadful twitches : A *Rival*, and he no less formidable than the famed Mr. WHITEFIELD, who now began to set up for himself ; and, indeed, as much the madder of the two, to ingross the favour of the Rabble. While the Rivalship continued on a tolerable footing, Mr. J. Wesley contented himself with, now and then, giving his *beloved brother in Christ* a sly wipe of contempt, as occasion presented ; and under the faintly symbol of *praising God for him*.—" I read prayers, " and Mr. *Whitefield* preached. How wise is " God in giving *different talents* to different " Preachers! even the *little improprieties both of* " *his language and manner*, were a means of profiting many who would not have been touched " by a *more correct discourse*, or a *more calm and* " *regular manner of speaking* (8)." This, we see, was full in his teeth ; and by a side wind came up to that *Master-Preacher*, who is insinuated to be more correct, and calm, and graceful, in his Pulpit-Manners. Notwithstanding this,

(7) Journ. from August 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 60.

(8) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 24.

Mr. *Whitefield* went on triumphantly ; and being ambitious to advance himself on the necks of his Fellows, taught FAITH ALONE ; and offered FREE GRACE to a People little disposed to purchase it. Mr. J. Wesley was an Advocate for WORKS : but he must do them himself, if he expected any good from them, in this Contention. For an equivalent, therefore, to Mr. Whitefield's *spiritual Graces*, He, like another Moses, dispensed his *temporal Blessings*. Particularly, in the ART of Healing ; for he would trust no longer to the GIFT, full as his Journals are of his *miraculous Cures*. It was now, he found, high time to set up a *regular Practice*. Accordingly, he told his People how deeply read he was in Medicine, which he had studied at Oxford. And to prove himself no Quack, he published a whole book of Receipts or Remedies for all the common Distempers of life. At the same time, he let the better Sort understand, he was well skilled in the *medicina Mentis*. He had given innumerable flirts of contempt, in his Journals, against HUMAN *Learning* : and, indeed, of what use could Learning be in a Religion like that which he propagated ? In which, as he assures us, *Orthodoxy or right belief made a very slender part, if any part at all*. Yet when now he had to struggle with a Rival *pro aris & focis*, no means were to be left untried to secure his Dominion. He therefore plainly enough informs them, that he was
ready

ready to teach, in a better and more expeditious way than was hitherto known, even to the UNIVERSITIES, two eminent parts of this decried *Learning*, namely, *Rhetoric* and *Ethics*. “ This
 “ week (says he) I read over with some young
 “ men a Compendium of *Rhetoric*, and a Syf-
 “ tem of *Ethics*. I see not why a man of tole-
 “ rable understanding may not learn, in six
 “ months time, more of *solid Philosophy* than is
 “ learned at Oxford in four (perhaps seven)
 “ years (9).” Did ever JESUIT play his part better? Yet even this would not do. FREE GRACE bore down all before it; and Mr. Wesley was at last forced, as in a desperate case, to have recourse to that paltry quack remedy, which he had so much scorned and execrated, I mean PRUDENCE.—“ I believed (says he) both love and
 “ justice required that I should speak my senti-
 “ ments freely to Mr. Wh—— concerning the
 “ Letter he had published, said to be *in answer*
 “ *to my sermon on free Grace*. The sum of what
 “ I observed to him was this : 1. That it was
 “ quite IMPRUDENT to publish it at all, as being
 “ only *the putting of weapons into their hands,*
 “ *who loved neither the one nor the other*. 2. That
 “ if he was constrained *to bear his testimony*, as
 “ he termed it, against the error I was in, he
 “ might have done it by publishing a treatise on
 “ this head without ever calling my name in

(9) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 14.

“question.”—Here our Journalist can treat with scorn that very cant in which himself so much abounds, the applying Scripture phrases to the impertinence of modern occurrences.—“How-
 “ever (adds Mr. Wesley) he had said enough—
 “to make an open (and probably irreparable)
 “breach between him and me: seeing, *for a*
 “*treacherous Wound, and for the BEWRAYING*
 “*OF SECRETS every friend will depart* (1).”

Without doubt, the Reader will be curious to know what these *Secrets* were, which had been so ill kept between these two *Free Masons*. But the purpose of this Discourse is not to prejudice the Readers against this extraordinary Man, from anecdotes or tradition, or from *secrets bewrayed*; but to enable them to form a judgment of his pretences, from what he himself has openly recorded of himself, and frequently repeated, to the World. What I would have them observe, on the last quoted passage, is only this, That Mr. J. Wesley, after so long estrangement from WORLDLY PRUDENCE, has, at length, in his distresses, been forced to take up with her. And for his first essay, it must be owned, he acquits himself very well after so long an absence.—
 “The Letter Mr. Whitefield had written should
 “not have been published, as *it was putting*
 “*Weapons into the hands of the common Enemy.*”—
 It should not have been published, as it tended

(1) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741, p. 78.

to a *Schism* in the Society.—“If he must needs
 “ publish it, *he should not have called Mr. Wesley’s*
 “ *name in question,*” as this tended to a breach
 between these two fast friends.—And if he (Mr.
 Wesley) should never consent to have this breach
 closed, he was justified in PRUDENCE, since the
Wise man says, *from a treacherous wound and be-*
wraying secrets every friend will depart; which he
 understands to signify, *every friend ought to de-*
part. Indeed, the Reader may object, that there
 was one expedient of PRUDENCE left untried,
 which was, the *meeting his quondam friend half*
way. Mr. Wesley was no enemy to this pacific
 measure, as we shall see presently. But Mr.
 Whitefield was too formidable a Rival with
 whom to compromise, or even to yield an inch.
 A less considerable Opposer might be managed
 this way, without danger; and then his PRU-
 DENCE directs him to pursue it.—“I laboured
 “ (says he) to convince Mr. G—— that he had
 “ *not done well in confuting* (as he termed it) the
 “ Sermon I had preached the Sunday before.
 “ But he was absolutely above conviction (2).”—
 Would not *prudence* now have justified him in
 leaving a man *above conviction*, to the error of
 his own ways? Surely a less consummate *pru-*
dence than Mr. J. Wesley’s would have done so.
 But he will not leave Mr. G—— so unkindly.
 “I then asked (says he) *Will you meet me half*

(2) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 81.

“ *way* ? I will never *preach publicly* against you.
 “ Will not you against me ? But he disclaimed
 “ any such agreement.”—When *prudence* would
 have advised him not to *preach publicly* against
 the Body of that Clergy to which he says he be-
 longs, then is PRUDENCE the *bane of Religion*,
 the *mystery of Iniquity*, and the whore of Baby-
 lon herself. But when she prompts him to tempt
 a Brother of the same trade to *meet half way*, and
 not to *preach publicly* against him, then is PRU-
 DENCE of heavenly birth, and sent for the assis-
 tance of the Saints : at present, indeed, honestly
 employed in the charitable errand of inviting Mr.
 G—— to play the *Hypocrite* with him : For he
 declares Mr. G—— to be *absolutely above con-
 viction* ; that is, in conscience unable to stir a
 step ; which, too, was his own case : Yet, in the
 same breath, he proposes *to meet him half way*.
 But Mr. G—— approved himself the honestest
 man. From all this we have reason to conclude,
 that Mr. J. Wesley, amidst his warmest excla-
 mations against *Worldly* PRUDENCE, against *Chri-
 stian* PRUDENCE, and against PRUDENCE of every
 denomination, had it still in petto to employ a
 succedaneum, on a pressing occasion ; which he,
 indeed, calls PRUDENCE ; but which, to save the
 credit of his consistency, he had better have let
 go under its true name of CRAFT.

Thus have I endeavoured to tear off the Mask
 from the furious and deformed visage of Fana-
 ticism

ticism and Seduction. The power of Religion hath enabled me : and the interests of Religion have excited me to this attempt ; nothing so much discrediting the *Doctrine of GRACE* as these counterfeit impressions of the Spirit of God. For, since the descent of the holy Ghost was no longer in *the rushing mighty wind*, but in *the still small voice*, licentious men have been but too apt to conclude, either that GRACE was an imaginary Power ; or at most, that it was no other than that assistance which the divine attribute of *Goodness*, as discoverable by natural light, was always ready to impart to distressed and helpless man ; just as they would persuade themselves that REDEMPTION is nothing else than that restoration to God's favour, which his mercy, discoverable too by the same light, prepares and lays open to repentant Sinners.

The Reader, in the last place, will take notice, that the order I have here followed, is that which is best adapted to shorten the controversy, and cut off all chicane and evasion.

1. I have singled out the Founder and Leader of the Sect, that no one may have pretence to say, that what, He is here shewn to teach and practise, is not true and genuine METHODISM.

2. I have confined my remarks to his own adventures, recorded by his own pen, and here fairly quoted in his own words ; that no one may have pretence to say, I have foolishly confided in

false or uncertain reports ; or unjustly made the Sect answerable for the indiscretions and absurdities of every obscure FIELD-PREACHER.

3. I have taken the Methodists at their word, when they call themselves members of the Church of England, that I might not run the hazard of confounding both the Reader and myself with blind scholastic disputations on *original Sin, irresistible Grace, and justifying Faith* ; on *Regeneration, Election, Reprobation, and the immerit of good Works*. To their MODE of teaching, and not to the *things* taught, I confine my discourse. Of *that*, every reader can judge ; and of *that*, he has a sure rule to judge by, the MARKS delivered by the holy Apostle St. James of the *Wisdom which is from above* : MARKS, which (for weighty reasons already explained) refer mostly to the *mode* of teaching ; and which, if not found in this new *mode* of methodist-teaching, are sufficient to convict it of imposture.

B O O K III.

C H A P. I.

I Now turn, for what remains of this Discourse, to those sober Ministers of the Established Church, who hold themselves bound to obey its DISCIPLINE as well as to profess its DOCTRINES.

If any good use can be made of what has been already said, it will be chiefly promoted by these Reverend Men, who, in honour of the Church which they serve, and in gratitude to the State by which they are protected, will make it their first care to support that most just of all Public Laws, the Law of TOLERATION: Which, how long soever obstructed in its passage to us, and how late soever arrived amongst us, is certainly of DIVINE ORIGINAL. Nor will such Men ever venture to *refine* upon it (which will always be to *weaken* it) by idle distinctions between the *letter* and the *spirit* of the Law. For between these, in well composed Laws, there is no difference; the *letter* being no other than the language and expression of the *spirit*. Indeed, one would wonder, they should ever have been opposed, did we not know how ready *Superstition* has always been to support the interests of bad Policy, in vitiating both the intellects and the morals of Mankind. God once gave a *prepara-*

tery Religion to a select People, under the name of Law, by which the future dispensation was half-revealed and half-hidden. In such a *Law* the *letter* and the *spirit* were necessarily different. A difference, which the Ministers to whom the propagation of this future Religion has been intrusted have been much accustomed to inculcate. Hence Superstition, in this, as in many other cases of the Jewish Law ill understood, very absurdly applied that distinction, to Civil Laws; where the full meaning was instant, and should be obvious; and where, as far as there was any real difference, so far were these Laws of defective Composition.

The friend of *Toleration* therefore will not, I say, make any distinction, or contend for any difference, between the *letter* and the *spirit* of this Sovereign Law, which does so much honour to human Nature. This mischievous employment will be the task of him who regards it but as a temporary expedient, forced upon us, to prevent greater evils. And as, amongst the friends of *Toleration*, the English Clergy, seduced by a common error, were not the first to give it a cordial reception, it seems incumbent on their Successors, (who were however amongst the first to detect that *common error*) to obliterate the memory of the old prejudices of their Order, by the warmest patronage and support of what their reason now so much approves.

Their friendly attachment to this Law will be best seen by their regarding it, first, in a *spiritual view* as doing honour to a CHRISTIAN CHURCH; implying confidence in the truth of its constitution, and that it will receive no detriment by a comparison with any other, how near or close soever they may be set together.

And secondly, in an *ecclesiastical view* as bestowing benefit on the NATIONAL CHURCH; it being a certain Maxim in politics that an *established Religion*, under a *Toleration* and a *Test*, must always go on enlarging its bounds; since the restraint which this latter Law imposes, is so little, that it is considered rather as a small inconvenience than an injury; a burthen so light as not to exasperate, but barely to excite in men a disposition to remove it.

In a word, the CHURCH in which religious liberty is cordially entertained and zealously supported, may be truly called CHRISTIAN: for if *the mark of the beast* (3) be PERSECUTION, as the sacred volumes decypher it to us; well may we put TOLERATION as the *seal of the living God* (4). This then is our present boast.

True philosophy, so lately cultivated, and now happily made subservient to the Truths of Religion, hath rectified many of those Doctrines which the still misapplied aid of the *false* had deformed. Nor should the HIERARCHY, much honoured of

(3) Revel. xvi. 2.

(4) Revel. vii. 2.

late in the happy recovery of its ancient Ornaments, the Prelates of high birth and noble lineage, be denied the praise, so justly due, for its share in this reform. To men of Family, we are taught, by experience, to ascribe an innate generosity of mind, which inclines them to whatever is polite and decent in *private* life; and, in the *public*, disposes them to support the rights of humanity and society. They are reckoned to be the low and Cell-bred *number*, in whose minds Bigotry and bitter Zeal are apt to get root and overspread. So that the Church may promise to itself great advantages from the genial lustre which this fair Accession to the sacred College is now deriving to it. DECUS ET TUTAMEN, is the motto inscribed on every Prelate's mitre; most certainly, in every Prelate's breast. The *first* shines naturally out in the birth and manners of every noble Dignitary; the *latter*, his solemn obligations will make him studious to discharge.

But this great Work will not be done by Talents at large, but by that sort of Talents only, which is suited to its sacred nature. Every Order and Station in Society hath its appropriated and proper *tone*; where a consent in one common key makes that harmony which gives perfection to the Whole. It should be the care therefore of every Member of that Whole, to fit his manners and accomplishments to the natural *tone* of the Body which he honours, or by which he may think

think himself honoured. This is so true, that manners and accomplishments, foreign to the Profession, nay, tho' in general estimation, of a superior kind, yet, when thus preposterously introduced, destroy all that concord which maintains its *dignity* and *use*.

On this occasion, an old grecian Tale, may not be beside the purpose. A musician at Athens became famous by a sacred Lyre, descending to him, thro' a long race of Ancestors, from the first Heroes and Demy-gods of Attica. Its Tone was so ravishing, and the skill of the Master, in calling it out, so delicate and profound, that the Artist and his Lyre were always called upon to bear a principal part in the high Solemnities of that religious City. It happened, that in the midst of one of these Celebrations, a chord of the Lyre broke. It was strung in the ordinary manner with nerves, or what our musical neighbours call, *corde de boyau*. But the enamoured Owner, to do all honour to so rare a wonder, unadvisedly supplied the broken string, with one of SILVER. The consequence proved fatal. The Lyre lost all its harmony and sweetness: it grew harsh and discordant. The People abhorred what before they had dwelt upon with raptures; and the unhappy Lyre, now the public execration, was hung up, a neglected thing, a silent monument of the folly of the too-fond Possessor.

Nor

Nor should the great Body of the *Clergy* be forgotten on this occasion, They who have approved themselves no way *inferior* in an honest zeal for the support of Christian Liberty. If any stale particles of the *old leaven* still remain, they lie perfectly inactive. A new Start-up Sect, indeed, will be apt to put them into a momentary ferment : and, on such an occasion, they will be eager to expose their evil nature.

Thus, the first appearance of METHODISM began to heat and irritate the mistaken Zeal of some ill instructed men, against a new species of Fanaticism, which pretended to be of the Church, and yet insolently affronted its *Discipline*; disdaining to shelter itself under the peaceable cover of a legal Toleration : For these men, in their hearts, were enemies to this Law, as fanatic Sects generally are ; who contend for religious Liberty, not because they would obey conscience, but because they, an' please you, are the Advocates of Truth ; *Liberty*, as well as *Dominion*, being, in their opinion, founded in GRACE. This, indeed, was a trying occasion. But had those good men considered that the *Methodists* provoked the Public patience merely to procure to themselves a *mock persecution* ; for to more, (as they very well knew) it could never amount in a State where the *honour* of the national Religion was secured by a *Toleration*, and the *safety* of it, by a *Test* ; had they considered this, I say, they

they would have left these factious men to their own inventions.

Besides, a fairer opportunity never offered itself, to do the Clergy credit. Had we appeared easy only with those who had qualified themselves to claim a legal Toleration, our acquiescence might have been imputed to our impotency in contending with it. But by bearing patiently with *Methodism*, the Clergy might have shewn the World, that the *Toleration-Act* had their hearts, as well as their outward obedience; for this Sect professed to be of the Church, and yet, at the same time, dared to insult its Discipline, and set its Governors at defiance; practices which no equitable indulgence would screen from punishment. This was the time for the Clergy to vindicate their character from the calumnies of their enemies; and in general they wisely laid hold on it: So that now they can be no longer suspected of malevolence to the *Law of Toleration*, when, in a case where they were free from its influence, they yet bore with temper, and though provoked by insolent defiance, overlooked the behaviour of a Sect of Fanatics, over whom all Laws, divine and human, had given them jurisdiction.

But then, if we shew ourselves thus rightly disposed in favour of this divine principle of Toleration, where the Law hath left offenders against Church Government to the justice of its Rulers,

Rulers, much more disposed shall we be to suffer the honest Sectary, who hath legally qualified himself for the enjoyment of his religious liberty to possess it without trouble or controul.

When the Law of *Toleration* had once recognized this universal Right, it soon became apparent, that that other Law of prior date, the TEST (for the formation of *civil* Systems do not always, like the *natural*, begin at the right end) was now, by securing the Rights of the national Church, become more necessary than ever for the peace of the State. For, by this Law, Sectaries were restrained from the exercise of certain *civil Offices*, which some men have been pleased to call *natural Rights*: and we will not dispute with them about a word, for to no more does it amount, since it is confessed that Society could never have been formed without men's giving up some of their *natural rights*, in order to secure the peaceable enjoyment of the rest.

But it may so happen, by the Custom or Constitution of *Corporate Bodies*, that the conditional restraint which the *Test* imposeth, shall, by accident, become a benefit or advantage; as when a Sectarian member of a Corporation is appointed by his Body to discharge a very important though very onerous Office; and yet not permitted by the State to enter on it, but on conditions which his religious principles will not suffer him to comply with. For it having been, a long time,

time, the custom for the Member, when nominated to this Office, to purchase, of the Body, an exemption, at a large price, called a *Fine*; when this came to be demanded of a dissenting Member, he naturally replied, that it could not equitably regard any but Such who *willingly* declined a permitted Office; certainly, not Those whom the *Law* had forbidden, by severe penalties, to discharge it. But to this so plausible a plea, it was thought a sufficient answer, “That the Law of whose restraint the dissenting Member would thus avail himself, was never intended for his advantage or emolument.”

The question therefore to be decided was this, “Whether he who *cannot* serve is equally obnoxious to the Fine, with him who *will not*?” and, to this day, it remains undetermined (5).

Now I humbly conceive, this question can never be rightly resolved, till the *true nature* of the TEST LAW be previously settled; and when that is done, it will, I suppose, be no longer disputable.

Were this Law enacted to draw, or to drive, Dissenters into the National Church, the prohibition, of serving Civil Offices, was certainly intended for a PUNISHMENT. If the Law were enacted only to keep Dissenters out of those Stations, in which, by hurting the Church, they would violate the peace of the State, it was as

(5) In the Spring of 1762.

certainly intended for a RESTRAINT, only ; and becomes a *punishment* but by accident.

Now were it intended for a PUNISHMENT, the *Fine* is most just and equitable : And then the reasoning of the Body against the Member, “ That the Legislature, by this Law, never intended, the Dissenter should receive Civil benefit and advantage,” will not be without its force : For a *benefit* defeats the end of the Law.

But if the Test impose a RESTRAINT only, and it become a *punishment* but by *accident*, it may, without the least evil influence on the Law, become a *benefit* likewise by *accident*. Nay, to hinder this fair Chance would be highly unjust. For if, from the inevitable condition of human things, Particulars receive *damage* by a Law which respects the General, and which never had such damage in its intention, it is but fit they should have the same chance of a *benefit*, tho’ equally without the intention of the Legislature.

Indeed, where the unprovided-for, or unthought-of, Consequence tends naturally to defeat the purpose of the Law, there the Interpreters of it will interpose, and declare the advantage taken to be against the Law ; or, which amounts to the same thing, to be unsupported by it. But an accidental *benefit*, which arises from the *restraint* imposed, seems better calculated to effect the end of the *Test law*, (which is to keep the enemies

mies of the Church from office in the State) than a *damage*, which might tempt them to violate their conscience : The *benefit* is, indeed liable to abuse (and what is there in civil matters which is not ?) but this abuse does not affect the purpose of the Law, which is to keep Sectaries out of Office. But let me not be misunderstood, as if any thing here said, in favour of the sectarian Member, was meant to include the *Occasional Conformist*. For if such a one think that he may, with his conscience unhurt, *conform*, for the sake of *lucrative* employments, he can never be permitted, on pretence of Conscience, to plead the restrictive law, in order to evade those which are *onerous*. And here let me further observe, that the Dissenters will not seem to be in the properest circumstances to claim the advantage of the distinction here laid down in their favour, till they have a little reformed their ideas of a *Test-law*. For, they have I think, in order to throw the greater odium upon it, generally represented the prohibition, which it imposes, as inflicted for a *Punishment*. Now we have shewn, that if our Law-givers intended a *Punishment*, it defeats their purpose, to connive at its becoming an *accidental benefit*. I only remark this for the sake of a general observation, That when Bodies of men, whether civil or ecclesiastical, suffer themselves to be misled by their passions and prejudices, their interests or resentments, the errors, they

fall into, will always, sooner or latter, turn upon themselves.

Now it appears, both from Reason and Fact, that the TEST is a *restrictive*, and not a *penal* Law, in the proper meaning of these terms.

1. If a Law may be understood in two senses, one of which, supports its equity, while the other betrays its injustice, Reason directs us to adopt the first. To *punish* Sectaries, in order to bring them over to the national Religion is plainly wrong: But to *restrain* Sectaries from hurting the national Religion is as plainly right. Therefore, though the intention of the Legislature had in this particular instance been doubtful, yet a general Law of a free People would admit of no other interpretation.

2. But the intention of the Legislature was not doubtful: and the reason of the thing is supported by fact. When this Law was made, the *national Church* was deemed, in the public Opinion, to be in much danger both from Protestant and Popish Sectaries. In the early days of its establishment indeed, the Government had endeavoured to bring Both into it; and many *penal Laws* were enacted for that purpose: But, at the time the *Test* became a Law, that visionary and unjust project had been long dropt; and Government was content to confine its care to the *protection*, rather than *extension* of the national Church. Had this latter point been their aim, it was to be

be effected only by the vigorous execution of the old *penal* Laws then in being. The *Test* added no force to those ; but, on the contrary, greatly relaxed their efficacy, by disposing Government to repose their chief confidence, and seek their only remedy for disorders, in this new-made law.

And now may be seen the strength of that Objection made to the *Test*, as it is legally enforced, to affect the interests of Protestant Dissenters, viz. “that its original and direct intention (a fact no one will deny) was to oppose to the machinations of Popery ; and that therefore, they being included only by accident, may very reasonably be overlooked.” But if the idea here given of the *Test-law* be the true, it is apparent, that the general, tho’ not immediate purpose of the Legislature, in this Law, was to provide for the safety of the national Church, and that, for the sake of the state, from what quarter soever the danger might arise. At one season it might spring from *Popery* ; at another from *Puritanism* ; but the various civil mischiefs, consequent on religious quarrels, were to be repelled, as they sprung up, with equal vigilance and vigour. But let no one by this imagine, that a comparison is here insinuated between Popery and Puritanism. As Religions, they can no more be compared together, than a body irrecoverably corrupted, with one but slightly tainted. Yet, with regard to the civil mischiefs which religious differences occa-

sion, we have experienced, that the lightest matters often produce as great, as the most momentous : And the surplice and cross in baptism have alienated fellow Citizens against one another as fiercely as the tyrannic claim of a Supremacy, or the superstitious worship of dead men deified.

However, the nature and genius of the two Sects is sufficiently discriminated by *tolerating* the one, and *conniving* only (under suspended penal laws) with the other : But still on the same *civil principles* ; these laws not being directed against the religious errors of the *Church*, but the political perversities of the *Court of Rome* ; which will not suffer its subjects to give any reasonable security for their allegiance to the supreme magistrate : For with religious errors as such, the state hath nothing to do, nor any right to attempt to repell or suppress them. They are the *civil mischiefs* with which civil Society is concerned, the mischiefs arising from religious quarrels when the two Parties are near equal in power, (as I suppose they would soon be under a Toleration without a Test-law) and are set upon repressing one anothers *errors*.

And now, since so much hath been urged in behalf of the Dissenters, their Civil and Religious rights, they will bear to be reminded of one thing, in their turn ; neither to abuse the *Toleration* themselves, nor to screen others in abusing it. And the case I am about to give of One, who,

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it is pretended, was thus skreened, will, I hope, excuse this freedom. It is indeed the case of One who, without doing much injury to our dissenting Brethren, can never be reckoned in their number. This miserable Buffoon, of whom I would be understood to speak, was suffered for near thirty years together to turn all RELIGION and MORALITY into ridicule; once, and, for some time, twice a week, in a licensed place of Devotion in the Capital of the Kingdom. A matter so much to the disgrace of Society, that They, on whom the scandal fell, thought proper to give out, that a vigorous prosecution of this Offender was ordered to be commenced; but that when it was known, the Dissenters took the alarm, as if the *Law of Toleration* was in danger, since this impostor acted under the common protection of a Licence from *Hicks's Hall*.

Yet, whoever hindered the prosecution, could not but confess, that this was a very vile *abuse* of a most sacred Law: They could not but apprehend that for an abused Law to screen the Abuser from punishment, was making Law to EXECUTE itself, in a very different sense from what crafty Politicians have sometimes projected.

But from all that has been here said in behalf of the *Law of Toleration*, let me not be understood as if I could suppose, or would insinuate, that this Law has altered the nature of the crime going under the name of SCHISM, which is an

unnecessary separation from the national Church ; or, because it hath taken all civil punishment from the offender, that therefore *Schism* is become harmless, and an empty name : and that, the Law in favour of *Schismatics*, like the Law in favour of WITCHES, had dissipated only a frightful Fantom. It is true, that, in both Cases, the Legislature acted for the same end, the restraint of injustice ; but it was on very different principles : In the first case, they took off civil punishment from a *real crime*, not cognizable by a human Judiciary : and, in the latter, they removed an opprobrium from the Statute Book, which expressed a sanguinary resentment against an *imaginary one*.

Schism, or a causeless separation from the national Church, is a crime, which, on all the principles of Law and Reason, deserves condign punishment. But, of this separation, whether with or without cause, there is no adequate Judge, but that power who can distinguish between a well and an ill informed Conscience. Very justly therefore did this Free Government remit the question to a wiser Tribunal. But in so doing it did not mitigate, but, by its indulgence, rather aggravate the Guilt, wherever it shall be found, hereafter, to exist. And how wisely so doubtful a point was remitted thither, we may, in part, see from the answer of the *foreign Divines*, to whose judgment, at the beginning of our Reformation, (when the quarrel between the Puritans and the Churchmen

about

about Ceremonies and Discipline ran high) both Parties agreed to submit. Those prudent and honest men, when thus appealed unto, gave it as their opinion, that “the Puritans ought to conform, rather than make a schism; and that the Churchmen ought to indulge the other’s scruple, rather than hazard one.” A wise decision, and reaching much further, in religious matters, than to the single case, to which it was applied.

Schism therefore is no less a Crime now, that the Law consigns over its punishment to a proper judicature, than it was when Civil Authority, blindly and ineffectually; interfered to vindicate the honour of Religion from this unhappy Scandal.

Thus have we seen what *reputation* accrues to the Church of England, from the establishment of this inestimable Law; and what *benefits* may further accrue to it by the prudent conduct of our Clergy, in its support.



C H A P. II.

WHAT remains of my Subject, will be more particularly addressed to the Ministers of Religion: who are surrounded with Enemies from various quarters; and insulted both by the attacks of INFIDELITY and FANATICISM.

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Their defence therefore, is indeed of necessity to be as much diversified ; but it should still be under the safe-conduct, and with the simple Armour of TRUTH only. For it is not the honour of a fantastic *Sect of Philosophy* which We are intrusted to support ; better committed to the care of those who exercise the talents of its old Patrons, the SOPHISTS ; neither is it the credit of a *Traditional Orthodoxy*, which, some of those who are called FATHERS of the Church, have, of old, defended with the like arts and arms : But it is the simple GOSPEL of JESUS, equally abhorrent of *refinement* and *deceit*.

I cannot, nor indeed have I any just reason to suspect, that the English Clergy will dishonour so noble a Cause by any premeditated deceit. Yet the most Upright, in the heat of controversy, (provoked, and perhaps alarmed at the extravagant powers which Libertines and Fanatics reciprocally ascribe to REASON and to GRACE) have been but too apt to run into destructive extremes, depreciating, and even annihilating, sometimes the One, and sometimes the Other, as best served the purpose they were then pursuing. Of which egregious folly, their adversaries have never failed to take advantage, by turning their own ill-fashioned and worse fabricated Arms against them. And this was easily done ; since *Revealed Religion* derives its whole support from the joint operation of these two Principles, *Reason* and
Grace,

Grace, acting on the human mind with equal and unremitted vigour.

But to understand more sensibly the mischiefs arising from such ill-judged defences of Religion, I shall set before the Reader a capital Example of each of these EXTREMES, of which we are now speaking. From whence we may learn the use and necessity of keeping within that equal MEAN, which most effectually serves to detect and to expose the errors of either Adversary.

It hath ever been amongst the principal arts of Infidelity to make the most extravagant encomiums on HUMAN REASON; and, consequently, to profess the utmost regard and reverence for, what Unbelievers are pleased to call, NATURAL RELIGION. Under this cover, by the poorest sophistry and hypocrisy imaginable, they have accustomed themselves to undermine REVELATION. But now, What expedient think you, did some warm defenders of Revelation employ to uphold its credit? You will naturally say, They took care to moderate the extravagant representations of these false friends of *Reason* and *natural Religion*; by marking out the just bounds of the human Faculties, and shewing, how far Reason extends her jurisdiction, and in what, she herself prescribes Submission: by explaining how necessary a foundation *natural Religion* is to the *Revealed*; how it coincides with it, is compleated by it, and so inseparably annexed to it,

as the foundation to its superstructure, that nothing can hurt the One which does not injuriously affect the Other; there being no objection, which the Logic of misapplied *Reason* can bring against *Revealed Religion*, which does not hold at least equally strong against the *Natural*.

This they did, you say, because This they ought to have done. Alas! they took a very different course. They declaimed against *human Reason*; they depressed it as extravagantly as their Adversaries had advanced it.—“Should you be so foolish, they told you, as to take it for your Guide, it would lead you to nothing but to sin and misery: that the Gospel disclaimed it, and went entirely on the Surer ground of FAITH: that its confessed impotency in defence of *truths revealed*, may shew the absurdity of relying on it to discover *truths unrevealed*.” Hence, they assured you, “that the Deists boasted System of *natural Religion* was a Chimera; and that what (under this name) they recommended to the adoration of their followers, was an Impostor, made up of just so much of the *revealed* as was of use to them in combating the rest:” Finally, they said, “that all religious knowledge of the Deity, and of man’s relation to him, was *revealed*; and had descended traditionally down, (though broken and disjointed in so long a passage) from the *first Man*; who received it as he came out fresh from the forming hands of his Creator.”

When

When our Enemies had gotten these indiscreet friends of Revelation at this advantage, they changed the attack; (for all Arms are indifferent to *them*, but in proportion to their present power of doing mischief) and now tried, how *Revelation* was to be further shaken, on these new and extravagant principles of its Defenders.

I. Accordingly a certain masked Buffoon undertook to turn *one part* of this Paradox against them, in a Discourse to prove that REVELATION WAS NOT FOUNDED ON ARGUMENT; and tempered his irony with so grave and solemn a tone, that many good men mistook this arch-enemy of all godliness to be, at worst, but an over-warm promoter of it. He had two ends in this worthy attempt; the one, to discredit Religion; the other, to excite and encourage Fanatics to discredit it still more.

A fairer Writer against Religion, because a more open, took up the *other part* of the Paradox, with the same righteous design. And as the Buffoon had undertaken to shew that *Revealed Religion was not founded in argument*, so the philosophic Declaimer sets himself to prove that *natural Religion was not founded in common Sense*: for, its existence depending on the moral attributes of the Deity, his *justice* and *goodness*, this broacher of the last runnings of the FIRST PHILOSOPHY labours to shew that *justice* and *goodness* belong not to him; his whole and entire essence consist-

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ing in the *natural attributes* of *wisdom* and *power* only. Hence, under the name of *natural Religion*, he slurs in upon us, an *irreligious NATURALISM*. And now *Revelation*, deprived of its foundation, *natural Religion*, and of its best defence and ornament, *human Reason*, lies a scorn to Unbelievers, and a prey to Fanatics and Enthusiasts.

But all this hath not yet taught these wayward Divines, wisdom. We have lately seen them, even at the Fountain of Science, the University, attempting to support in good earnest the wretched paradox which Mr. — had so mischievously advanced in jest. And yet one should be utterly at a loss to guess in what the wit or wisdom of it lay, whether advanced in earnest or in jest. But a mischievous Heart will at any time risque the reputation of its head-piece to give the alarm to sober piety ; and a warm Head discloses, without fear or wit, the rancour of its bosom, to vilify and bespatter superior Reason. Otherwise, to ask, *Whether Christianity was founded in Reason or in Faith*, would be deemed just as wise a question, as *Whether St. Paul's Clock was founded in Mechanism or in Motion* ? Since, if it be found to have *motion*, we necessarily conclude that *motion* to be regulated by *mechanism* : So, if the vital principle of Christianity be *Faith*, we necessarily conclude it to be such a *Faith*, as was formed, and may be supported, on the rules and principles of *human Reason*. A wild Indian, perhaps,
might

might imagine that the *Clock* was animated by a Spirit; and an Enthusiast, still wilder than he, may, for ought I know, conclude that *Christianity* rises only out of internal impulse. But surely none but a Buffoon or a Fanatic would, for his credit in jest, or for his interest in good earnest, discard the use of Reason in consulting for his *future* happiness, when he has already found it so useful in procuring his *present*. Both the future and the present are acquired by the right adaption of *means* to *ends*: and this adaption, I suppose, will be confessed by all to be in the sole province of REASON. Nor has this heaven-appointed Guide ever given any just cause of complaint or jealousy. When men see themselves bewildered, they ought to suspect themselves: and, I believe, on enquiry, they will always find, that they had been directing *Reason* when they should have been directed by her. But the Passions and Affections, which have occasioned her discredit, go on, in their illusions, to excite our distrust.

II. Again, these indiscreet friends of Religion, while they were thus pushing the common Adversary, with these imaginary advantages gained by the depression of *human reason*, did not advert to the mischiefs they were letting in, at the opposite quarters of *Superstition* and *Fanaticism*. *POPERY* can only stand and flourish on the foundation of *implicite faith*; and the fervours of *ENTHUSIASM* soon rise into madness, when unchequed by *Rea-*

son. The *Papist* expects of you to renounce your Understanding before he will undertake to reconcile you to the Church of Rome; but, indeed, when that is over, he permits you to take up as much of it again, as will serve you to justify your Apostasy. The quarrel, which the *Fanatic* has to it, is more serious. He is ever feeling its ill effects; and therefore his aversion to it is immortal. When IGNATIUS LOYOLA was in the Meridian of his Fervours, some of the writings of ERASMUS chanced to fall into his hands. He was at first seduced, by the charms of the composition, to look into them; but finding they had, before he was aware, insensibly abated the inflammation of his Zeal; he cast them from him with abhorrence and execration. The very same disaster, Mr. J. WESLEY informs us, once befell himself, in his converse with the *sober* followers of *Erasmus*; infomuch that he was soon forced, he tells us, to avoid them, as the *bane of all Religion*. “I avoid that BANE OF ALL RELIGION, the *company of good sort of men, as they are called. These insensibly undermine all my resolution, and steal away what little ZEAL I have* (5).” If this be true, though they *steal* but *Trash*, yet they leave him *poor indeed*; as his quondam Master has lately observed. “Your strictures upon
 “ Messieurs of the Foundery, and the Taber-
 “ nacle, &c. (says he to a friend) are very just.

(5) Journ. from August 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 31.

“ These gentlemen seem to have no other bottom to stand upon but that of ZEAL (6).” Indeed, against so dangerous an Enemy as SOBER SENSE, the *Fanatic* cannot be too carefully guarded. And therefore, he never thinks himself secure from the mischiefs of *Reason*, till he has, with the same hoarse clamours that the metamorphosed Clowns in the Fable, pursued Latona and her godlike Issue; driven away from the neighbourhood of the Saints, both *Reason*, and her fair and celestial Offspring, NATURAL RELIGION and HUMAN LEARNING.

Mr. J. WESLEY, who is ready to exhibit to us every feature of Fanaticism in its turn, has, I fear, been kept so long upon the Scene, as to tire out his Audience; he shall therefore be only once again exhibited, to testify, in a word or two, his civilities to *natural Reason* and *natural Religion*; and then dismissed for good. As to the first, he frankly tells us, The Father of *lies* was the Father of *reasonings* also: “ I observed, (says he) every day more and more, the advantage *Satan* had gained over us. Many were thrown into idle *reasonings*”—And again—“ Many of our Sisters are shaken. Betty and Esther H. are grievously torn by *reasonings* (7).”—His civilities to NATURAL RELIGION, and to that eminent Writer who has so well explained the nature of

(6) Mr. W. Law's Collection of Letters, &c. p. 189.

(7) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 8 and 17.
this

this first great gift of God to Man, follow next :
 “ Meeting with a French man of New Orleans
 “ (says Mr. Wesley) he gave us a full and par-
 “ ticular account of the *Chicasaws* :—And hence
 “ we could not but remark, What is THE RELI-
 “ GION OF NATURE, *properly so called, or that*
 “ *Religion which flows from natural Reason, un-*
 “ *assisted by Revelation.*” He then speaks of their
 manners in War. Their way of living in Peace
 follows in these words ; “ They do nothing but
 “ eat and drink and smoke from Morning till
 “ Night, and in a manner from Night till
 “ Morning. For they rise at any hour of the
 “ night when they wake, and after eating and
 “ drinking as much as they can, go to sleep
 “ again. See THE RELIGION OF NATURE *truly*
 “ *DELINEATED* (8).” What is chiefly curious in
 this account is, that Mr. Wesley professes to shew
 us what that Religion is which is *properly called*
natural, or that which flows from NATURAL REA-
SON unassisted by REVELATION, and yet he gives
 us, in its stead, only man’s *natural manners*, which
 flow not from his *reason*, but solely from his
passions and appetites only ; in an example, where
Reason may be rather said to have a capacity of
 existence than actually to exist, as being alike
 inert and void of power whether the *Chicasaw* be
 waking or asleep.

(8) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia, to his return
 to London, p 44-5.

AS to HUMAN LEARNING, if the zealous Mr. W. Law does not assault this more rudely than his forward Pupil has insulted NATURAL RELIGION, yet he returns much oftener to the Charge. The last Legacies, which this bountiful Gentleman hath bestowed upon the Public, are *A collection of Letters, &c.* and *An Address to the Clergy, &c.* In these two Works the hapless Author of the *Divine Legation, &c.* is pointed at on every occasion of *abuse*, and held up as the grand Apostate from *Grace* to *Human Reason*; and this chiefly, for denying (what indeed, I neither deny nor affirm, for I take it to be nonsense) That “*Divine Inspiration is ESSENTIAL to Man’s*
“*first created state, and vainly thinking to find out*
“*a middle way, between this and no inspiration*
“*at all, namely, that the Spirit’s ordinary influ-*
“*ence occasionally assists the faithful (9).*” For this, and for some few things besides, such as a charge of Spinozism on his beloved Behmenism, I have the honour to be plentifully, though *spiritually* railed at, whenever he fancies he sees me in the Retinue of HUMAN LEARNING.

He lays it down as a Postulatum “That
“whatever comes not IMMEDIATELY from God
“can have nothing *godly* in it. Therefore what
“comes IMMEDIATELY from SELF, such as NA-
“TURAL REASON, however outwardly coloured,

(9) See p. 12 and 25 of the *Address to the Clergy*.

“ can have no better a nature within than the
 “ very Works of the DEVIL (1).”

Now the fruit of *natural reason* being HUMAN LEARNING ; (indeed, according to this account, more properly than men were aware of, called *prophane Learning*) he thus descants upon it.

First of all, he assures us, it has nothing to do with Religion. “ Where can God’s *Kingdom*
 “ *be come*, but where every other power, but
 “ his, is at an end, and driven out? — What
 “ now have Parts and Literature and the natural
 “ Abilities of man to do here? just as much
 “ as they can do at the Resurrection of the dead ;
 “ for all that is to be done here is nothing else but
 “ *Resurrection and Life*.——Yet vain man would
 “ be thought to do *something* in this *kingdom of*
 “ *Grace* — because he has happened to be made
 “ a Scholar, has run through all the Languages
 “ and Histories, has been long exercised in con-
 “ jectures and criticisms, and has his head full
 “ of all notions, theological, poetical, and philo-
 “ sophical, as a Dictionary is full of all sort
 “ of words. Now let this simple question decide
 “ the whole matter here : Has this great Scholar
 “ any more power of saying to this mountain,
 “ *Be thou removed hence and cast into the Sea*,
 “ than the illiterate Christian hath (2).” To
 this reasoning against *human Learning*, in its use
 to Religion, little can be opposed. For it is very

(1) Address, p. 57.

(2) Ibid. p. 96-7.

certain *human Learning* can neither *raise the dead*, nor *remove Mountains*.

But it is not only useless in *Religion*, but is of infinite mischief.

For 1. It nourisheth PRIDE. “The piercing
“ Critic may, and naturally will, grow in *pride*,
“ as fast as his skill in words discovers itself.
“ And *every kind of knowlege* that shews the
“ Orator, the Disputer, the Commentator, the
“ Historian, his own powers and abilities, are
“ the same temptation to him that Eve had from
“ the serpent,” &c. (3)

2. It nourisheth *Contention*.—“*Grammar, Logic,*
“ and *Criticism*, each knoweth nothing of Scrip-
“ ture but its words; bringeth forth nothing but
“ its *own wisdom* of words, and a Religion of
“ wrangle, hatred, and contention about the
“ meaning of them (4).”

3. It turneth Religion to a *trade*.——“Where
“ *self*, or the *natural man* is become great in
“ *religious Learning*, there, the greater the Scholar,
“ the more firmly will he be fixed in their
“ Religion, *whose God is their belly* (5).”

4. It is *the abomination of desolation*.—“*Genius*
“ and *Learning* entered into the pale of the
“ Church ——— Behold, if ever, *the abomination*
“ *of desolation* standing in the holy place. ———
“ Christ has no where spoken one single word,

(3) *Letters*, p. 187.

(4) *Address*, p. 122.

(5) *Ibid.* p. 59.

“ or given the least power to *Logic, Learning,*
 “ or the *natural powers of man* IN HIS KING-
 “ DOM (6).” By this, we find, that *Christ’s*
Kingdom may be usurped as well by *classic*
Learning as by *Church Discipline*. It is certain,
 our modern ideas of *religious Liberty* can consist
 with neither of them, for this *Liberty* claims an
 exemption both from REASON and OBEDIENCE.

5. It chuseth *darkness rather than light*.—
 “ But now, Who can more reject this divine
 “ light” [i. e. the *light of the world*, reilluminated
 by the *blessed Jacob*, as he calls him] “ or more
 “ plainly choose darkness instead of it, than he
 “ who seeks to have his mind enriched, the fa-
 “ culties of his fallen soul cultivated, by the lite-
 “ rature of Poets, Orators, Philosophers, So-
 “ phists, Sceptics and Critics, born and bred up
 “ in the worship and praises of Idol-Gods and
 “ Goddeffes.”

6. Finally it is a total *Apostacy* from God and
 Goodness.—“ The practice of all Churches for
 “ many ages, has had recourse to *Learning, Art,*
 “ and *Science*, to qualify Ministers for the preach-
 “ ing of the Gospel—To this more than to any
 “ other cause, is the *great Apostacy* of all Chris-
 “ tendom to be attributed.—The death of all that
 “ is good in the Soul, have now and always had
 “ their chief nourishment and support from the
 “ sense of the merit and sufficiency of literal ac-

(6) Ibid. p. 114.

“ accomplishments—And the very *life of Jesus in*
 “ *the Soul* is by few people less earnestly desired,
 “ or more hard to be practised than by great
 “ *Wits, Classical-Critics, Linguists, Historians, and*
 “ *Orators* in holy orders (7).”—And again—
 “ This empty *letter-learned knowledge*, which the
 “ natural man can as easily have of the Sacred
 “ Scripture and human matters, as of any other
 “ books or human affairs, this being taken for
 “ *divine knowledge* has spread such darkness and
 “ delusion all over Christendom, as may be reck-
 “ oned no less than a GENERAL APOSTASY from
 “ the Gospel-state of *divine illumination* (8).”

We see by this, that the grand mistake of Scholars has hitherto been, in supposing, that the true sense of Scripture is to be discovered by the application of those Principles which enable us to find out the meaning contained in other ancient Books.

And now the good man having worked up his *enthusiasm* into a poetical ferment, (for, as it has been said, that a Poet is an Enthusiast in jest, so, he shews us, that an Enthusiast may be a Poet in good earnest) he adorns these powerful reasonings with a string of as beauteous Similes, in discredit of *human Learning*.

I. It is compared to the *fall of man*.—“ Look
 “ (says he) at the present state of Christendom,
 “ glorying in the light of *Greek and Roman Learn-*

(7) *Letters*, p. 37.(8) *Address*, p. 94.

“ *ing*, and you will see the *fall* of the present
 “ Church from its *first Gospel-state*, to have much
 “ likeness to the *fall of the first divine man*, from
 “ the glory of paradisiacal innocence, and hea-
 “ venly purity, into an earthly state and bestial
 “ life of worldly craft and serpentine subtilty (9).”

2. It is directly compared to the *old Serpent*—
 “ What a poverty of sense in such, to set them-
 “ selves down at the feet of a *Master Tully*, and a
 “ *Master Aristotle*! who only differ from the
 “ meanest of all other corrupt men, as the *teach-*
 “ *ing Serpent* differed from his fellow-animals,
 “ by being *more subtle than all the beasts of the*
 “ *field* (1).”

3. It is compared to the *Tower of Babel*—“ A
 “ *Tower of Babel* may, to its builder’s eyes, seem
 “ to hide its head in the clouds; but as to its
 “ *reaching of Heaven*, it is no nearer to that than
 “ the Earth on which it stands. It is thus with
 “ all the buildings of Man’s wisdom—He may
 “ take the *logic* of Aristotle, add to that the *rhe-*
 “ *toric* of Tully, and then ascend as high as he
 “ can on the ladder of *Poetic* imagination, yet no
 “ more is done to the reviving the lost life of
 “ God in his Soul, than by a Tower of Brick and
 “ Mortar, to reach Heaven (2).”

4. Again it is compared to *Idolatry*—“ What
 “ that most of all hinders the *death of the old*
 “ *man*!—it is the fancied riches of *Parts*, the

(1) Ibid. p. 139-40. (2) Ibid. p. 104.

“ glitter

“ glitter of *genius*, the flights of *imagination*, the
 “ glory of *Learning*, and the self-conceited strength
 “ of *natural Reason*: These are the *strong-holds*
 “ of fallen Nature, the Master-builders of *Pride’s*
 “ *Temple*, and which, as so many *Priests*, keep
 “ up the *daily worship* of IDOL SELF (3).”

But, now his poetical Enthusiasm has blazed itself out; and he comes again to himself.—We know how the lucid intervals of Fanaticism are wont to be employed; generally in covering the madness of the *Hot* fit with the most deliberate and unblushing falsehoods of the *Cold*.

From what hath past, rash Divines might be apt to charge this holy man, so meek of Spirit, with *Enthusiasm*,—with a brutal spite to *Reason*,—and with more than Vandalic rage against *human Learning*. But they wrong him greatly.

I. As to *Enthusiasm*, he says,—“ What an argument would this be; *Enthusiasts* have made a bad use of the doctrine of being *led by the spirit of God*; ergo, He is *Enthusiastical* who preaches up the doctrine of being *led by the spirit of God*. Now absurd as this is, was any of my Accusers, as high in *genius*, as bulky in *Learning*, as *Colossus* was in Stature, he would be at a loss to bring a stronger argument than this to prove me an *Enthusiast*, or an abetter of them (4).” This is plainly unanswerable, unless you read, as his Accuser wrote it, for—*who*

(3) Ibid. p. 110.

(4) Ibid. p. 51.

preaches up the doctrine—who abusively preaches up the doctrine.

2. “ Another Charge (says he) upon me,
 “ equally false, and, I may say, more senseless,
 “ is, that I am a declared Enemy to the *use of*
 “ *Reason in Religion*. And, why? Because in
 “ all my writings I teach that Reason *is to be de-*
 “ *nied*. I own it, and this, because Christ has
 “ said, *Whoever will come after me, let him deny*
 “ *himself*. For how can a man *deny himself* with-
 “ out denying *his reason*, unless *reason* be no part
 “ of himself (5)?” Now I am at a loss to know,
 How any one can become an enemy to another
 more declared, than by *denying* or *renouncing* that
 other. Were I to *deny* my Sovereign, I should
 be soon taught to know, that he considered me
 as his enemy, and would probably treat me ac-
 cordingly. But Sovereign-Reason has no *Attor-*
ney-General, unless perhaps, it be that *Colossus* he
 speaks of, and so loudly defies.—However, if
 human *Reason* can argue no better than Mr. Law,
 I am ready to *deny* her too.—For, a Man’s *self*,
 I have been taught, has a two-fold acceptation;
 his *Reason* may be called, *himself*, and so may his
Passions. If therefore he be commanded to *deny*
himself, I should conclude, it was not his *better*
self, his *Reason*, but the *worse*, his *Passions*, to
 which the divine Command refers.

3. 8. 11.

(5) Ibid. p. 52.

3. Then

3. Then, as to *human Learning*, the Charge, he tells us, is as *false and senseless* as the rest:—
“ Shew me a Scholar as full of *learning* as the
“ Vatican is of Books, and he will be just as like-
“ ly to give all that he hath for the *Gospel-Pearl*,
“ as he would be, if he was as rich as Croesus.
“ LET NO ONE HERE IMAGINE I AM WRITING
“ AGAINST ALL HUMAN LITERATURE, *arts*,
“ *and sciences*; or that I wish, the World to be
“ without them. *I am no more an Enemy to them*,
“ than to the common useful labours of life. *It*
“ *is literal Learning, verbal contention, and criti-*
“ *cal strife* about the things of God that I charge
“ with folly, and mischief to Religion. And,
“ in this, I have all learned Christendom, both
“ Popish and Protestant, on my side; for they
“ both agree in charging each other, with a bad
“ and false Gospel-state, because of that, which
“ their Learning, Logic, and Criticism do for
“ them (6).” There are no such proficient in
sophistry as the declared enemies of *Reason*; nor
any so dextrous in legerdemain as the meekest
bunglers in Mechanics.—He is not an Enemy,
he tells us, to *human literature*, but to *literal learn-*
ing only: That is, he approves of Learning
contained in Letters, but not of Letters contained
in Learning. The truth is, he would willingly
in this distress take shelter, did he know how,
even in the *graceless* company of *Men of Taste*;

(6) Ibid. p. 152.

who,

who, like him, to hide their ignorance, are always scoffing at the Pedantry of *literal learning and verbal criticism*, with the same good sense that an Artificer would abuse those Tools of his trade which he knows not how to work with.——

Again, do *Popish* and *Protestant* Disputers ever say to one another,—*You support a bad and false Gospel by Learning, Logic, and Criticism?* Do not their reciprocal accusations of one another's errors turn upon the WANT of *Learning, Logic, and Criticism?* Or was Mr. Law, indeed, so ignorant as he pretends, when he supposes there are now *two* Kinds of *Learning, Logic, and Criticism*, a *Popish* and a *Protestant*; instead of *one*, founded and perfected on Principles, held by both Parties in common?—All that they charge on one another is the *abuse* of these Principles.

But to draw towards an end with this furious Behmenist——In all this ribaldry, the only chance he has of misleading illiterate and weak Mortals, is by the repeated insinuations, that all religious dissensions are owing to these mischief-makers, *Reason* and *Human Learning*; and that, in their absence, there is a perfect accord in Religion. But this is the fancy of none but Bards or Enthusiasts; who never saw, but in poetic, or extatic Visions, that time when

“ Christians and Jews one heavy Sabbath kept;

“ And all the western World believ'd and slept.

Before

Before *mortals either writ or read*, the quarrels of Dunces were as fierce as those of Wits. In Religion, the dissensions amongst the *irrational Sects* have ever been as implacable as those amongst the *Rational*. And if, in those miserable conflicts, the wounds of the latter went deeper, it was because their force was greater and their weapons better.

To conclude, When I reflect on the wonderful infatuation of this ingenious man, who has spent a long life in hunting after, and, with an incredible appetite, devouring, the trash dropt from every species of Mysticism, it puts me in mind of what Travellers (7) tell us of a horrid Fanaticism in the East, where the Devotee makes a solemn vow never to taste of other food than what has passed through the entrails of some impure or Savage Animal. Hence their whole lives are passed (like Mr. Law's amongst his Ascetics) in Woods and Forests, far removed from the converse of mankind.

And now, to turn back again to our FREE-THINKER. As professed an Adorer as he would be thought of his Sovereign Mistress, REASON, we shall see, that, like the Pagans of old, when their Gods proved unkind, he can himself, on occasion, treat his favourite IDOL with the utmost ignominy and contempt; for as one of the most ingenuous of this holy-Brotherhood has freely

(7) Tavernier.

confessed, *When Reason is against a Man, a Man will always be against Reason.*

THEY had so long boasted of the Power of this their favorite Idol, They had so loudly trumpeted the virtue of her Orient beam in driving away those Fantoms conjured up by *Revelation*, in the dark Regions of *Superstition*, that the able and sober Divine thought it high time to check their impertinent triumphs; and shew the World, On which side REASON had declared herself. In order to this, they inforced and illustrated, (defecated from the dross of the Schools) the invincible arguments of their Predecessors in support of *Révelation*; to which they added large and noble accessions of their own. What was now to be done? The Deist could not directly degrade that *Reason* which he had already enthroned. Yet finding Her in this service, he thought he had a right to insinuate that she was no better than she should be; and had, like other common Prostitutes, changed her name, and affected to be called, POLEMIC DIVINITY.

It must be confessed, that the unguarded manner in carrying on Theologic controversy had subjected it to much deserved censure. This, joined to the sort of Learning employed in diverse of the more early defences of Religion, where, both the fashion and standard smelt strongly of the barbarous form and base alloy of the SCHOOLS, gave them a large handle to run down
all

all the defences that followed. Some parts of POLEMIC DIVINITY, appeared, on their Principles, to be trifling ; other parts bore hard upon their Conclusions ; so they took advantage of what was faulty in itself, and fought advantage of what appeared impertinent to them, to ridicule the whole. Hence *Polemic Divinity* became the whetstone of their wit, and the constant Butt of their malice. As the credit of Deism advanced, this cant grew familiar, and spread itself into the fashionable World. Nor could the divine Genius of those Masters of Reason, a GROTIUS, or an EPISCOPIUS, a HOOKER, or a CHILLINGWORTH, when once nick-named *Polemic Divines*, hinder them from being enrolled amongst *Scotists* and *Thomists*, and the veriest rabble of the Schoolmen, by some of the more ignorant or indiscreet of all Parties. But the thing most to be lamented is, to see any well-meaning Clergyman of affected taste and real ignorance, go out of his depth, as well as out of his Profession, to exert his small talents of ridicule on the same subject, merely for the sake of being in the fashion ; and, free from all malice as well as wit, treat *Polemical Divinity* (which, for all the hard name, is indeed nothing but a critical examination of the doctrines of our Faith) as cavalierly as ever did Collins or Tindal, Lords Shaftsbury or Bolingbroke. Yet had these small-dealers in second-hand Ridicule but the least adverted on their doings,

doings, they must have seen the absurdity as well as mischief of so unweighed and wanton a conduct.

Their ADVERSARIES had *sufficient provocation*, and were not without a *plausible pretence* for their quarrel with POLEMIC DIVINITY, whether it were employed in supporting Revelation in general against the common Enemy, or in defending the Gospel-truths against the errors of Sectaries.

The PROVOCATION they had received was not small. The Friends of *Revelation* having a Religion to defend which was founded on the Authority of a Divine Messenger, who appealed to *Miracles* performed, and to *Prophecies* fulfilled, They supposed the most simple and natural method was to prove the truth of this Religion, as all other human transactions are proved, by FACTS. This was at length so invincibly performed, that their Enemies were forced to have recourse to their favourite Deity, REASON, to undo the knot, and free them from their Embarras. Her power, they had long objected to believers, as the only barrier against *Superstition*; and now was the time to press it home. “ You urge us with *facts*, say they, and the *testimony of Antiquity*; Supports too slender to bear the unnatural load of *Revelation*. A thing impossible in itself, as it contradicts the established order of Providence: a thing impossible under the Bible-representation of it, as several passages in that Book directly oppose

pose our common notices of God's Attributes. Would you have us give credit to your fond notions of Revelation, let us see you support it on our common-principles of Philosophy, natural, dialectic, and metaphysical. When you have done this, we shall be satisfied, for on these principles only will REASON allow us to submit." This was what they pretended to expect; and Divines took them at their word; and immediately entered upon, and soon compleated a defence of Revelation, on this new prescribed method of Proof. How effectually, their prevarication, of which I am going to speak, amply evinces. For no sooner was that done which they had so vainly represented as impossible, than they changed their tone, and now attempted to ridicule it as a very impertinent atchievement. "It is astonishing (says the Goliath of their party) how Divines could take so much silly pains to establish mystery on metaphysics, revelation on philosophy, and matters of fact on abstract Reasoning. Religion, such as the Christian, which appeals to facts, must be proved as all other facts that pass for authentic are proved. If they are thus proved, the Religion will prevail without the assistance of so much profound Reasoning (8)." This was what the learned Divine got for his

(8) L. Bollingbroke's *Letters concerning the Study and Use of History.*

pains ! not only to have his Compliance laughed at, but, what is the common attendant on Ridicule, to have it falsified. *Divines*, we see, are represented as *applying their metaphysics, philosophy, and profound reasoning, to Prophecies, and Miracles*. How gross the misrepresentation ! They had more wit, they had more honesty, than to take that *silly pains*. They employed their Philosophy as became such Masters of Reason, not to matters of *fact*, but of *right*. It was pretended that God could not give a *Revelation* ; that he could not select a *Chosen People* ; that he could not accept a *vicarious Attonement* : And against these bold assertions, the Christian Divine directed all the force and evidence of TRUE PHILOSOPHY. With what success, a better posterity shall tell with gratitude. This is the *spite*, I meant, which Unbelievers bear to that part of *Polemic Divinity*, which concerns the Being and Nature of Revelation.

The PLAUSIBLE PRETENCE they had to ridicule and condemn the rest, which is employed in settling and adjusting the various *MODES* of Religion, comes next to be considered. These men holding *Religion* itself to be visionary and fantastic, laughed, and naturally enough, to see such a bustle made about its *modes* ; which, on their ideas was a dispute, about a Nothing once removed.

But now, to see the *Friends* of Revelation disposed to laugh with them, and to ridicule either

one or other of these parts of *Polemic Divinity*, is not amongst the least of those absurd perversities, in which common life, at present, so much abounds. For is that which makes *our Hope not ashamed*, and supports the *Faith which is counted for righteousness*, is that, I say, the natural, the reasonable object of a *Christian man's* contempt? But as this latter part is more generally known by the name of *Polemic Divinity*, and is the more usual topic of fashionable ridicule, it may be proper to add a word or two on the extreme folly of imitating the airs of our Adversaries, on this occasion. We have observed that the Freethinker was not without some excuse in laughing at this part of *religious Controversy*, since, on his ideas, it was disputing about the *modes* of a *non-entity*. But the Christian Divine takes his FAITH for a Reality; and therefore can never deem the *modes* of it to be indifferent; but must hold, that, of the various opinions arising from thence, some may be useful and some hurtful to Society: So that when, about these *modes*, Churches differ, they become as reasonably the subject of serious enquiry, as any other real entities whatsoever; and have their importance in proportion to their good or bad influence on Truth and Virtue. In a word, POLEMIC DIVINITY is, in the fancy of a Libertine, a squabble for preference between two Falsehoods; in which, there is room enough for

R ridicule:

ridicule : But on the Principles of a Believer, it is a contest between Truth and Falsehood ; in which, there is nothing to be laughed at, though much to be lamented.



C H A P. III.

BUT there was never yet *extravagance*, either of UNBELIEVER or FANATIC, which the over zealous Advocate of Religion and sober Piety hath not unhappily opposed by a *contrary*, and frequently by as mischievous an *extreme*.

We have seen how unwarily some of them have been drawn in to depreciate and to degrade HUMAN REASON, when their Adversaries had too extravagantly advanced it. They have, at other times, advanced it as extravagantly, when their Adversaries were in an humour to vilify and disgrace it.

To understand what I mean, we must go a little back in the History of *Fanaticism* : And They, whom this matter most concerns, will need no other proof of the folly of such a conduct than what arises from the historical detection of it.

The REDEMPTION OF MANKIND by the death of Christ, and the SACRIFICE of himself upon the Cross, together with its consequent Doctrine
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OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE, were the great Gospel-principles on which PROTESTANTISM was founded, on the first general Separation from the *Church of Rome*: by some, perhaps, carried too far, in their zeal for setting it at a mortal distance from the Popish Doctrine of *Merits*; the Puritanic schism amongst us being made on a pretence that the Church of England had not receded far enough from *Rome*. However, being Gospel-Principles, they were held to be the badge of true Protestantism by all: When the Puritans, first driven by Persecution from religious into civil Faction, and by these Factions heated, on both sides, into Enthusiasm, carried the doctrine of *Justification by Faith alone* into a dangerous and impure *Antinicianism*: For it is of the very nature of Enthusiasm to run all its notions to extremities. The speculation was soon after reduced to practice, by means of that Roguery which always mixes itself with Enthusiasm, when once the *Fanatic* becomes engaged in Politics. The confusions which ensued are well known: And no small share of them has been ascribed to this impious abuse of the doctrine of *justification by Faith alone*; first, by depreciating MORALITY, and then by *dispensing* with it.

When the CONSTITUTION was restored, and had brought into credit those few learned Divines whom the madness of the preceding times had driven into obscurity, the Church of England,

still smarting with the wounds it had received from the *abuse* of the great Gospel-principle of FAITH, very wisely laboured to restore MORALITY, the other essential part of the Christian System, to its Rights, in the joint direction of the Faithful. Hence, the encouragement the Church gave to those noble Discourses, which did such credit to Religion, in the licentious times of Charles the Second, composed by these learned and pious men, whom Zealots abused by the nick-name of LATITUDINARIAN Divines. But the reputation they acquired by so effectually suppressing these rank Seeds of Fanaticism, made their Successors ambitious of sharing with them in the same honours: a laudable ambition: but men have ever a vain passion for improving upon those who went before. The Church was now triumphant; The Sectaries were humbled; sometimes oppressed; always regarded with an eye of jealousy and aversion; till at length this Gospel-principle of FAITH came to be esteemed by many as *Fanatical*: And those, who understood its true Original, found so much difficulty in adjusting the distinct Rights of GRACE and MORALITY, that, by the time this Century commenced, things were come to such a pass, (MORALITY was advanced so high and FAITH so frittered into nonsense) that a new definition of our Religion, in opposition to its Founder's, and unknown to its early Followers, was grown to be the fashionable tenet of the times:

times: and *Christianity*, which till now had been understood as but coeval with REDEMPTION, was henceforth to be esteemed *as old as the CREATION*: an eminent Divine having, in a public Discourse, asserted, without circumstance or restriction, that *Christianity was a republication of the Religion of Nature*. Thus, between the two opposite Parties of Divines, we were, at the same time, left without either *natural* or *revealed* Religion. The one, we see, denied the very being of the *natural*; and the other assured us that the *revealed* was nothing else than that exploded non-entity.

This REPUBLICATION had, in effect, been talked of before, by many others of equal reputation: but being now explained, and ready to be received as the established System, our Adversaries began to think it time to check so ridiculous a triumph; and to *discredit Religion*, which they have always done with much success, *on the Principles of its Defenders*. For, with the wanton Libertine,

——“ It is the sport, to see
“ The Engineer hoist with his own Petar.”

And one of the Party, an Enemy, equally determined, to *Grace* and *Morality*, composed that famous Book, intituled, *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, to decry all *Revelation* whatsoever, on this very principle of a REPUBLICATION; so

unhappily conceived by modern Orthodoxy, as the surest way of evincing the *reasonableness* of the GOSPEL.

The like Advantage (to put things of a sort together, for the better illustration of the Subject) had, about the same time, been taken of our indiscretions by another of these men; and as the reasoning of Tyndal was directed to depreciate the Work of REDEMPTION, so the argument of Collins was enforced to insult the Character of the REDEEMER. The general body of the PROPHECIES which relate to Jesus, were, for certain great ends of Providence, so contrived as to have a *primary* accomplishment in the events of the Mosaic Dispensation, and a *secondary* and final completion in the birth and ministry and sufferings of *Jesus the Messiah*. But the admirable contrivance of divine Wisdom, in giving to those Predictions a *primary* and a *secondary* accomplishment, being either soon forgotten, or generally over-looked, it produced large swarms of fanciful and fanatic Allegorists, who filled the Church with extravagant whimsies equally dishonourable to *Reason* and *Religion*. Amidst so thick a cloud of nonsense, the *logical propriety* as well as *moral fitness* of a *secondary sense* in the Prophecies relating to Jesus, being swallowed up and lost, some bold and hasty men, ever least qualified to distinguish between the use and the abuse of a positive institution, ventured to condemn *all secondary*

dary senses, as irrational and fanatical ; and finding but few Prophecies which relate to the MESSIAH, in the *primary*, they were forced upon the desperate expedient of holding, that the Jews, or other Enemies of Christianity, had adulterated and corrupted the whole body of these Prophecies, as they stand at present in our Bibles. But no sooner had Mr. Collins got these rash Men at this advantage, than he insulted them with his Discourse on the *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* : In which, he attempts to overthrow the Gospel on these two principles. 1st. That (by the confession of his Adversaries) a *secondary* sense of Prophecies is irrational and fanatical. And 2dly. That (by the confession of all sober men) the Jews had not corrupted or adulterated their Bible. His conclusion is, that *Christian Religion* stands on no solid *grounds or reasons* ; Jesus not having, as he pretended, been foretold under the Character of the MESSIAH of the Jews.—And here, let it be observed, that these Works of *Tyndal* and *Collins*, both rising on the advantage taken of our follies, are the two most artful and desperate attacks on Revelation, that were ever made since the times of *Celsus* and *Porphyry*.

I have attempted to give a good Account of Mr. Collins's *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* elsewhere (1), by confuting his first Pro-

(1) Div. Legat. B. vi. § 5, 6.

position, on which the whole attack stands, and by shewing the *logical propriety* and *moral fitness* of SECONDARY senses of Prophecy. I shall hereafter have occasion to do equal justice to Mr. Tyndal's *Christianity as Old as the Creation*. For the only effectual way of answering these, as indeed all others of the like kind, is to renounce all fanciful Systems, and to preserve inviolate the great Principles of the *Mosaic Law* and the *Gospel of Jesus*; Principles which discover themselves, and indeed obtrude themselves upon us, on a careful study of those two connected Dispensations. When these Principles are once forsaken, there is no hurtful indiscretion to which the ablest Divines are not subject; and of which Unbelievers have not taken advantage. I shall, from amongst many, select an instance or two, least likely to give offence. The Advocates of the Church of *Rome*, to evade the charge of Idolatry, with which they are urged by the *Reformed*, pretend that this crime consists in giving the worship due to the supreme God, to inferior Beings. The excellent Bishop Stillingfleet, in opposing this subterfuge, attempted to prove, that the most civilized Pagans, who are confessed to be Idolaters, did not give the honours due to the *first Cause* to their inferior Gods; the *first Cause*, as he pretends, being worshiped by them, as such: An assertion, which, if true, would confute all that the Prophets and the Apostles say concern-

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ing the state and condition of the Pagan World. Again, The very learned Dr. Prideaux, to do honour to his Exiled Jews, adopts, from Hyde and a rabble of lying Orientalists, the idle fable of a Philosophic Zoroaster, the subverter of Idolatry in Persia : Little attentive the while to the more plausible conclusion of Unbelievers, from the same fact ; who pretend, that these Jews, so prone to Idolatry before their *Captivity*, were instructed during its continuance, by this Zoroaster, in a better Theology, which gave them juster notions of the Divine Nature, and consequently, of a Crime that, ever afterwards, they held in utter abhorrence. A conclusion pushed with great advantage by *Collins* and *Morgan*, on the ground thus prepared by Hyde, and further smoothed for them by Dr. Prideaux.

But to go on with our subject, Tyndal's *Christianity as old as the Creation*.

This terrible advantage taken of a Principle become fashionably orthodox, greatly alarmed all serious men ; and the feeble Answers given to it, on that Principle, were so little satisfactory, that a commendable effort was made, by some whose Stations supported them in the attempt, to bring back the slighted Doctrine of REDEMPTION, and to reinstate it in its ancient Credit. And a worthy Bishop of London was amongst the first to repair the mischief, which the mistaken labours of his no less worthy Successor, had unwittingly occa-

occasioned. So that, in a little time, we had regained much of the ground that had been lost, and were ready to replace the national *Faith* once again on its old Gospel-foundation; in spite of the silly pains of a very equivocal Divine, who published a Book, in opposition to the returning Current, intituled *The Scripture doctrine of Redemption*, which was to prove that in reality there was no such thing: When the old puritan Fanaticism revived, under the new name of *Methodism*; and, as it spread, carried once more (as far as the difference of times would allow) those Gospel-principles to their old abusive extremes.

This soon put a stop to the recovery of that middle way, in which *Grace* and *Morality* are preserved in their respective rights: an unhappy disposition now appearing in several Opposers of this late revived fanaticism, to return back to the old *latitudinarian* excesses.

And now comes in (I hope, not improperly) the Caution, for the sake of which I have given this long detail of our former miscarriages, to warn men against a repetition of them.

For these opposed doctrines of a REDEMPTION and a REPUBLICATION are not matters of so slight moment that either of them may be taken up, or laid down at pleasure, just as we are pressed, on the one hand, by *Infidelity*, or, on the other, by *Fanaticism*,

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THE DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION, is the primum mobile of the Gospel-System. To this the Church must steadily adhere, let the storm, against it, beat from what quarter it may. It is the first duty of the Ministers of Religion, to secure this great Foundation: They may then, with safety, and not with the less success, push the Enemies of the Church, the Enemies of their Order, nay, even the Enemies of their own peculiar opinions, with all the force they are able; but ever, as we say, in subserviency to the EVER-LASTING GOSPEL, whose main Pillar is this *Doctrine of Redemption*.——How essential a part it is of the Gospel-Œconomy, (interpreted by God's general Dispensation, revealed to mankind, of which the Gospel Œconomy is the completion) and how agreeable it is to what the best and most received Philosophy teacheth us, concerning the relations between the Creature and the Creator, shall be considered at large in its proper place (2).

I. What better suits the melancholy subject we are now upon, namely, the advantages given to the common Enemy by those who, to get rid of some urgent difficulty, are apt to forsake their Foundations, will be to shew the various and unthought of mischiefs which arise from the folly of attempting to change the nature of the Gospel-Œconomy from a *Redemption of Mankind* to

(2) Divine Legation, Book IX.

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a *Republication of the Religion of Nature*. A folly, by which the great Author of our Salvation becomes dishonoured, and the Christian Faith exposed to the perpetual insults of Libertines and Unbelievers.

1. For he who considers Jesus only in the light of a *Republiſher* of the Law of Nature, can hardly entertain a higher opinion of the *Saviour of the world* than ſome have done of SOCRATES, whom Erasmus eſteemed an object of devotion, and many a better Proteſtant hath thought to be divinely inſpired. For was not Socrates, by his preaching up *moral virtue*, and by his dying to bear witneſs to the *unity* of the Godhead, *made*, to the Grecian People, (and, by means of their extended commerce of politeneſs) to the reſt of mankind, *Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs*? And what more was Jeſus, tho' the Apoſtle adds to thoſe two attributes, theſe two other, of *Sanctification and Redemption*? for, according to the principles of this paganized Chriſtianity, his titles of MESSIAH and REDEEMER are reduced to mere figurative and *accommodated* terms.

2. As this Theology degrades Jeſus to the low condition of a Grecian Sophiſt; ſo it renders his Religion obnoxious to the insults of every daring Impoſtor.

He was ſent, ſay theſe new Doctors of the Church, to teach mankind the worſhip of the
true

true God, and the practice of moral righteousness (3).

“ This will be readily allowed, replies an understanding MAHOMETAN : And on this very principle, WE hold, that when Jesus had done his office ; and mankind had again relapsed, into *antichristian* Idolatry and Polytheism, as before into *Pagan*, God sent OUR PROPHET, who worked the like sudden and sensible reformation in the NORTH-EAST, that your Prophet did in the NORTH-WEST.”

And this reply, he makes on the very principles of his ALCORAN ; which (with professions of the highest veneration for the character of JESUS) denies his proper Divinity, and at the same time, his death on the cross. But why, it may be asked, was this aversion to the PASSION of One whom the Alcoran makes a Mortal ? For this plain reason, *Mahomet*, who wanted the refinement of our modern *Accommodators*, plainly saw that the doctrine of REDEMPTION followed the *passion* ; compleated the *Scheme of Revelation* ; and shut out all his bold pretences.

(3) A celebrated Frenchman, who writes on all subjects, and, on all, with equal judgment and capacity, knew better, perhaps, what he was about than these Divines, when he went further, and affirmed That Christianity is not only no more than the Religion of nature perfected, but that *it could not possibly be any more.*—“ Nôtre Religion révélée
“ n’est même, et ne pouvoit être, que cette Loi naturelle perfectionnée.” *Discours sur le Théisme*, par M. de Voltaire.

Mr. Otter, an intelligent Frenchman of the Academy Royal of Inscriptions, &c. tells us of a conference he had with a learned Persian. The Mussulman said, They revered all our sacred writings except those of St. PAUL—*qu'ils respectent tous, excepté Saint Paul* (4). Why this exception? I answer, On the Mahometan Principle that *Christianity is only a republication of the Religion of Nature*: for St. PAUL is full of the doctrine of REDEMPTION; explains the Christian System by it, and makes the whole Faith depend upon it.

What now has our rational *Republisser* to oppose to this modest Apology for Ismaelism?

All he has to say is this, “That Jesus and his Apostles have every where intimated, that the *Gospel* is the last of God’s Dispensations: on the terms of which our final doom is to be decided: so that all future Pretenders to the like Office and Character must needs be deemed Impostors.”

But here a DEIST would come in, to take advantage of our distress; for (as we have said more than once) it may be observed alike of all these shifting defences, on fanciful, and unscriptural Systems, that they only supply new arms to the various Adversaries of our Faith; a *Deist*, I say, would be ready to reply, “That it is indeed true that Jesus hath declared his own Mission

(4) *Voïage en Turquie et en Perse*, vol. i. p. 22.

to be the LAST: but that this is a sly contrivance, put in use by every pretended Messenger from Heaven, in order to perpetuate his own Scheme, and to obviate the danger of an antiquated authority. The Impostor, MAHOMET himself hath done it. He, who here obtrudes his *armed* pretensions upon us, hath secured the duration of his sensual Religion by the very same expedient: A thing, in his ideas, so much of course, that he did not even object to JESUS's use of it, who employed it before Him; and for no other purpose than to cut off all following pretensions to the like Character. On the contrary, He avowed and maintained the general truth of the Nazarene's Commission. Now (pursues the Deist) a method employed by a confessed Impostor is taken up with an ill grace by the defender of true Religion. But I draw a further consequence (says he) against the GOSPEL, from this representation of Christianity. For if the preaching of moral truth and righteousness were the whole of JESUS's Character and Office, then his Mission did not answer its end, the lasting reformation of mankind, in the *knowledge of God*, and in the *practice of Virtue*: since the world soon fell back again into the state from which JESUS had delivered it; as appears from the history of the times in which MAHOMET appeared, and the advantages he made of that degeneracy."

II. Thus

II. Thus subjected to the insults and injuries of all sorts of Impostors, who set themselves to delude the credulous, either by inventing NEW Revelations or by decrying the OLD, do these *Re-publishers* expose the holy faith of JESUS: That *Faith*, which, we are told, was *founded on a rock*, impregnable to Men and Demons; to the sophisms of Infidelity, and the prestiges of Imposture! And so, indeed, it is, if we will take it as we find it; if we will receive it as it came from above; if we will preserve it pure and entire as it was delivered to the Saints, under the idea of THE REDEMPTION OF THE WORLD, BY THE SON OF GOD, IN THE VOLUNTARY SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF UPON THE CROSS.

This secures the Character of JESUS from the insults of false Pretenders; and his GOSPEL from the injuries of false Reasoners.

I. For, first of all, if JESUS did, indeed, *redeem* Mankind, and restore them to their lost Inheritance; the scheme and progress of Revelation is compleated: which beginning at the LAPSE, naturally and necessarily ends in the restoration and recovery of LIFE AND IMMORTALITY by the death and passion of our Lord. CHRISTIANITY considered in this view (and in this view only, does SCRIPTURE give it us to consider) soon detects all the artful pretences of imposture; and secures its own honour by virtue of its very *Essence*: the great scene of Providence being now closed,

closed, in a full completion of its One, regular, entire, and eternal purpose.

2. Secondly, if JESUS did indeed *redeem* mankind, then did he neither preach nor die in vain : it not being in man's power, with all his malice and perverseness, to defeat or make void the great purpose of his Coming. For though one part of his Mission (according to Paul) was to instruct the world in *Wisdom* (5) and *Righteousness*, which it was in man's power to forget and neglect ; yet, what (Paul tells us) is chiefly essential in his Character, and peculiar to his Office, the *Sanctification* and *Redemption* of the World, Man could not frustrate nor render ineffectual : For it is not in man's power to make that to be undone which is once done and perfected.

The fastidious Caviller (6) therefore hath employed his pains to little purpose in attempting to discredit Revelation from this topic, *The moral state of the world, before and since the coming of Christ*. For, besides what one might venture to affirm, that, when the comparison is fully and impartially scrutinized, the advantage will be found to lie on the side of our Religion ; yet, supposing the Truths preached by JESUS, and the Assistance given by the holy SPIRIT, have not much improved the general morals of mankind ; How does this tend to the discredit of the Gospel ? unless it can be shewn that the Gospel hath no na-

(5) 1 Cor. i. 30.

(6) Lord Bolingbroke.

tural tendency to make men better. But this is so desperate an undertaking, that, I believe, Infidelity will hardly be persuaded to engage in it. Indeed the contrary is so true, that, (as I have shewn elsewhere) when you lay together the state of PAGAN and CHRISTIAN Morals, one manifest and essential difference is found between them ; which is this, That in the Gentile world, men often acted wrong UPON PRINCIPLE ; in the Christian, always AGAINST PRINCIPLE (7). Now, not to insist upon the necessary restraint this must needs be upon Vice ; it plainly demonstrates the NATURAL TENDENCY of the *Gospel* to make men virtuous ; And, to draw them by a *stronger* attraction, did not suit the genius of a rational Religion, whose objects were free Agents.

But the proper answer to this idle cavil arises from the explanation given above. To Instruct the world in *Wisdom* and *Righteousness* was but the *secondary* end of Christ's Mission. The FIRST and primary, was to become its SANCTIFICATION and REDEMPTION ; *That* must needs be common to every Revelation coming from God ; *This* is peculiar to the Christian : and *this*, as we have shewn, cannot possibly be frustrated, or rendered ineffectual.

To conclude from what hath been said : As we should not affect to pry into the nature of those things which God hath been pleased to withhold

(7) Div. Leg. B. iv. § 2.

from our search, and to cover with the sacred veil of Mystery; so neither should we reject a Truth, expressly delivered, because we may not fully comprehend the whole reason on which it stands. In a word, as we should not venture to go on where the silence of Scripture directs us to stop; so neither should we presume to stop where, with so loud a voice, it commandeth us to go on.

The sum of all then is this: REASON biddeth us to keep a MEAN: The great Philosopher informeth us that NATURE is not able to keep a MEAN (8). What remains but that we fly to GRACE, which, the greater Apostle assures us, is able: for, *the Spirit helpeth our infirmities* (9). Nor will there be any danger (when, in such a disposition, we apply to this *Guide of truth*) of abusing its credit by fanatical extremes; for, to *establisb the heart with Grace*, the same Apostle informs us, is the only way to prevent our being *carried about with the divers and strange Doctrines of Deceivers* (1).

(8) *Natura modum tenere nescia est.* BAC.

(9) Rom. viii. 26. (1) Heb. xiii. 9.