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A. Walker inv. del. et sculp.

A Description

of the Frontispiece .

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J. Walker inv. del. et sculp.
A Description of the Frontispiece.
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THE
FAMILY EXPOSITOR:

OR, A
PARAPHRASE and VERSION
OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT:

WITH
CRITICAL NOTES;
AND
Practical IMPROVEMENT of each SECTION.

VOLUME THE FIRST:

Containing the FORMER PART of

The History of our Lord JESUS CHRIST

As recorded by the FOUR EVANGELISTS,

Disposed in the

ORDER OF AN HARMONY.

Philips
By P. DODDRIDGE, D. D.

THE FOURTH EDITION,

Published from a COPY corrected by the AUTHOR; and adorned with
COPPER-PLATES.

Εἰ δὲ τις ὑποτάξῃ μὴ πάσχει τῶν λόγων, ὑπομονὴν αὐτῶν ἐν αὐτῇ δικαιοσύνῃ κτεθυσθεῖσιν.
SIMPLIC. in EPICET. Proem.

L O N D O N:

Printed by Assignment from the Author's Widow,
For J. BUCKLAND, J. RIVINGTON, R. BALDWIN, L. HAWES and W. CLARKE
and R. COLLINS, W. JOHNSTON, J. RICHARDSON, S. CROWDER, T. LONG-
MAN, B. LAW, T. FIELD, and H. PAYNE and W. CROPLEY.

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*Society for propagating
the Gospel in New England.*

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To Her ROYAL HIGHNESS
The Princess of WALES.

M A D A M,



MOST thankfully acknowledge the Condescension of Your Royal Highness, in allowing me the Honour of laying this Work at Your Feet, and committing it to so August a Protection; and humbly beg Your favourable Acceptance of it, as a most sincere, tho' inconsiderable Expression of the profoundest Duty, and most cordial Esteem.

COULD I lay open to Your Royal Highness all the secret Sentiments of my Heart, You would read there the most affectionate Sense of that gracious Providence, which conducted You hither, to instruct and adorn *Great-Britain* by so amiable an Example, as well as to bless it with a Race of Princes, descended from the Illustrious Houses of BRUNSWICK and SAXE-GOTHA in so happy an Union! Joyfully have I, long since, taken my Part with Thousands, in congratulating my Country and Your Royal Highness on this Occasion, and acknowledging that wise and paternal Care HIS MAJESTY hath therein expressed for the Happiness of succeeding Generations: But permit me, MADAM, freely to add, that with Regard to Yourself, I rejoice not so much in this Accession to Your Grandeur, as in the Persuasion I have, that You are possessed of a Mind so superior to it, as to render it in
all

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all its remotest Consequences, what Greatness is not always to its Possessors, safe, honourable, and advantageous. Universal Report leaves me no Room to doubt, that even in this blooming Age, You are tenderly sensible of the shining Dangers inseparable from so high a Rank; and that it appears to Your Princely Wisdom chiefly desirable, on Account of those distinguished Advantages, which it may give, of approving Yourself the faithful Servant of God, and the generous Friend of the Publick.

AMONG the principal of these Advantages, Your Royal Highness will undoubtedly number the Opportunity, which this exalted Station of Life affords You, of forming to early Sentiments of Religion and Virtue, the opening Minds of Your Royal Offspring; those dear Pledges of the Liberty and Happiness of Ages yet to come, on whose Temper and Character, so much of publick Glory to our Nation, so much of private Felicity to yet unformed Families, will depend. We adore the great Disposer of all Events, who hath lodged this important Trust in so wise, and so pious a Hand; and it must argue a very irreligious, or a very careless Temper, if Any neglect earnestly to pray, that He who hath so graciously assigned it to You, may direct and prosper You in it. While You, MADAM, during the tender Years, which most naturally fall under the Care of a Mother, are endeavouring to bless these lovely Infants with an Education, like that which You received from the excellent Princes Your Parents, may Your Royal Highness, in a Success like Theirs, receive the Joys You have given! May they arise and shine on the whole Protestant World, in the Lustre of every Royal Virtue and every Christian Grace, which can render them

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them dear to God, and to their Country, and, to say all in a Word, worthy their Relation to the PRINCE and PRINCESS of WALBS, and to all the glorious Line of remoter Ancestors from which they spring!

I SHOULD esteem it one of the greatest Blessings of my Life, and should be able to relish the Thought in the nearest Views of Death itself, if this humble Present, which I here offer to Your Royal Highness, might give you any Assistance in these pious Cares. If the Kings of *Israel* were required, not only to *read the Law of Moses all the Days of their Lives*, but to *write out a Copy of it* with their own Hand; it may reasonably be expected, that *Christian* Princes should make the far more glorious *Gospel of the Son of GOD* their daily Study, that it may be their constant Guide. And I persuade myself MADAM, that none of the fashionable Amusements of the Age will seem to You in any Degree comparable to that rational and elevated Pleasure, which You will find in pointing out to your happy Charge, as they grow capable of such Instructions, the resplendent Example of JESUS, the Prince of Heaven, and the King of Glory; in tracing the marvellous and edifying Circumstances of his Life, as here described; and in urging their humble and dutiful Regards to that Divine, yet condescending Redeemer; to whom Your Royal Highness, with all those amiable Virtues which render You the Delight and Boast of our Nation, will thankfully ascribe Your own Hopes of being finally accepted by God, and sharing the Joys of his eternal Presence

THESE Hopes, MADAM, are the grand Supports of the Human Mind in those Views, from which Royalty and Empire cannot shelter it. An awful Providence, which we must all long lament, did early write these

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these Admonitions to Your Royal Highness in the Dust of one of the best of Queens. The Attention with which her late Majesty studied the sacred Oracles, and the Evidences of our holy Religion, for which even in her departing Moments She expressed so firm a Regard, will I hope never be forgotten by any allied to her, or descended from her. Nor am I able, in all the Overflowings of the most affectionate Gratitude and Duty, which I now feel, to form a more important Wish for that condescending Patroness to whom I am addressing, than (to borrow the Words of the *Hebrew Monarch*,) that *the Testimonies of GOD may be her Delight and her Counsellors!* And I trust, MADAM, that they are so; I trust that, conscious of a Heart devoted to GOD, and supported by a well grounded Confidence in his Favour, You are fixing Your Eyes on a Celestial Diadem, which shall sparkle with immortal Glories, when the Kingdoms of this Earth shall be known no more, and all its Pageantry shall be passed away like a Dream. May You at length, in a very distant Moment, have a happy Accession to that never-fading Crown; and after having long adorned the highest Stations here with that amiable PRINCE, whose constant and indearing Friendship is so much more to Your Royal Highness, than all the Grandeur which can result from Your Relation to him, may you be Both exalted to the superior Glories of the Heavenly Kingdom!

I HOPE Your Royal Highness will please to pardon me, that I have expressed myself with so much Warmth and Freedom, in a Presence I so highly revere: But I should be most unworthy of the Name and Honour of a Christian Minister, if I were ever ashamed of Sentiments like these; and the Assiduity with which I have lately been sitting

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sitting at the Feet of my Divine Master, while commenting on these authentick Memoirs of his Life and History, hath inspired me with a Veneration and Ardor which it is not easy to repress. I am sensible, MADAM, these are unfashionable Strains on such an Occasion; and it would have been easy to have filled many more Pages than these with Panegyrick, on what I have read of Your Illustrious Ancestors, and what I have heard from Multitudes, of the Charms of your Royal Highness's Person and Character: But I imagined that such Hints as these were more suitable to that Plainness and Simplicity, which at all Times become a Servant of CHRIST; and I flatter myself, that to a Person of Your Royal Highness's Penetration, they will not seem less expressive, of that undissembled Esteem, and affectionate Zeal, with which I am,

M A D A M,

Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's,

Most Faithful,

Most Dutiful,

and Most Obedient

Humble Servant,

Philip Doddridge.

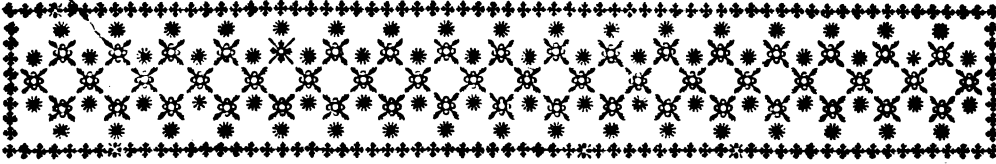
Directions for reading the FAMILY EXPOSITOR.

AS to the Manner of Reading this Book in Families, I would advise, as follows. First, Let the Passage of Scripture be read from the *common Translation* in the inner Column, unless the Family have their Bibles before them: Then read the *new Version* by itself, which is interwoven with the *Paraphrase*, but distinguished by the *Italick Character*: and then the *Paraphrase*, and *Improvement*.

As for the *Notes*, I should advise the Person who officiates, to select such as are of most general Concern, and read them after the Paragraph to which they belong; for it is not so agreeable to interrupt the Sense, by introducing them before it is completed. Other *Notes* may perhaps be more fitly made Matter of Conversation afterwards: But this is referred to the Prudence of particular Persons, who will judge with a Regard to the State and Character of the Families in Question.

In reading the *compound Text*, it may be observed, that the Words of the several *Evangelists* are distinguished by *Crotchets*, thus []; and the *Clauses* included within them, are always marked with the Name of the *Evangelist* from whom they are taken, unless a *single Text* only be added at the End of the Verse, to which they must of Course belong; or where *more Texts than one* are added, the *Crotchets* which have nothing to distinguish them belong to the first.

I am pleased to think with how much Ease any attentive Reader will distinguish the Text itself, from the *Paraphrase*, in Consequence of the extraordinary Care which hath been taken, to keep the Work in that Particular remarkably correct; for which I am obliged to pay my publick and most thankful Acknowledgments to my worthy Brother and Friend the Reverend *Mr. Godwin*, who generously undertook the great Trouble, not only of revising each *Sheet* as it came from the Press, but also of inspecting the *Manuscript* before it went thither, and of making several important Alterations in it, very much for the better, of which I should have been ready to have given a more particular Account, if his Modesty and Goodness would have permitted it.



T H E
P R E F A C E.



H A V E long been convinced, that if any Thing can stop that Progress of Infidelity and Vice, which every wise Man beholds with Sorrow and Fear; that if any Thing can allay those Animosities, which (unnatural as they are,) have so long inflamed us, and pained the Heart of every generous Christian; in a Word, that if any Thing can establish the Purity and Order, the Peace and Glory of the Church, or spread the Triumphs of Personal, and Domestick Religion among us, it must be an attentive Study of the Word of GOD, and especially of the New Testament; that best of Books, which, if read with Impartiality and Seriousness, under the Influences of that Blessed Spirit by whom it was inspired, would have the noblest Tendency to enlighten and adorn the Mind, and not only to touch, but to animate and transform the Heart.

The Station of Life, in which Divine Providence has placed me, rendered it peculiarly necessary for me to make these Sacred Oracles my principal Study; and having, to my unspeakable Delight and Advantage, felt much of their Energy, I long since determined, that it should be the main Business of my Life as an Author, to illustrate them, and to lead my Fellow-Christians into a due Regard for them, by endeavouring in as plain and popular a Manner as I could, to display their Beauty, their Spirit, and their Use, And I thankfully acknowledge the Goodness of GOD to me, in giving me Health and Spirits to finish so considerable a Part of my Design, tho' I have so much other Business daily on my Hands, and have been obliged to execute this in a much more laborious Manner, than I at first apprehended would have been requisite.

The Title I have given to the Work sufficiently explains its original Design, which was chiefly to promote Family Religion, and to render the reading of the New Testament more pleasant and improving, to those

that wanted the Benefit of a learned Education, and had not Opportunity or Inclination to consult a Variety of Commentators. And I thought it proper still to retain the Title of The Family Expositor, even when I had made some Alteration in the Plan; because that is still the leading View of the greater Part of the Work. In Pursuit of this I have given a large Paraphrase on the Sacred Text, well knowing, that this is the most agreeable and useful Manner of explaining it to common Readers, who hardly know how to manage Annotations, especially when they are to be read to others. The chief Objection against this Way is, that when a whole Verse, and much more, when several Verses are taken together, (as they frequently are,) it requires a great Attention, and in some Places some considerable Penetration, to trace the exact Correspondence between the respective Clauses of the Text, and the Paraphrase. There are some Performances of this Kind in our own Language, as well as in others, in which such Liberties are taken, that I freely confess, that were it not for the initial References, or opposite Column, I should not be able to guess from the Paraphrase itself, what the Scripture was, which it pretended to explain. This must undoubtedly give the greatest Advantage for Disguise and Misrepresentation; and where those Glosses are read by themselves without the Scriptures, (which I know has been the Case in some Families,) it is really exchanging the Prophets and Apostles for modern Divines. To prevent this intolerable Evil, I have formed my Paraphrase so, that it is impossible to read it without the Text, having every where interwoven the Words of Scripture with it, and carefully distinguished them from the rest by the Italick Character. So that every one may immediately see, not only the particular Clause to which any Explication answers, but also what are the Words of the Sacred Original, and what merely the Sense of a fallible Man; who is liable, tho' in the Integrity of his Heart, to mislead his Readers, and dares not attribute to himself the singular Glory of having put off every Prejudice, even while he would deliberately and knowingly allow none.

I thought it might be some additional Improvement of this Work, and some Entertainment to the more accurate Reader, to give the Text in a New Version, which I have accordingly done from the Original with all the Care I could. There are so few Places, in which the general Sense will appear different from our received Translation, that some will perhaps think this an unnecessary Trouble: But I can by no means repent it, as it has given me an Opportunity, of searching more accurately into several Beauties of Expression, which had before escaped me; and of making some Alteration, which tho' they may not be very material to the Edification of Men's Souls, may yet in some Degree do a farther Honour to Scripture; raising some of those Ornaments, which were before depressed; and

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and sufficiently proving, that several Objections urged against it were entirely of an English Growth: Ends, which might yet more abundantly be answered by a new Version of the Old Testament, which has suffered much more in our Translation, as it is natural to suppose it must.

I thought it might also conduce to the Usefulness of this Exposition, to digest the History of the Four Evangelists into one continued Series, or in other Words, to throw it into the Order of an Harmony. By this Means each Story and Discourse is exhibited with all its concurrent Circumstances, as recorded by the sacred Penmen; frequent Repetitions are prevented; and a Multitude of seeming Oppositions are so evidently reconciled, as to supersede many Objections, and render the very Mention of them unnecessary. My Reader will hardly imagine the Pains, that this Part of the Work has cost me, both in examining the Order of the several Texts, and collating the different Accounts in each, in such a Manner, that no one Clause in any of the Evangelists might be omitted; and yet the several Passages to be inserted might make one connected Sense, and, without any large Addition, stand in a due Grammatical Order. I was the more sensible of this Labour, as I laid it down for a Maxim to myself, when I entered on this Work, that I would study as much as possible to make it an Original in all its Parts. Accordingly the first Copy of it was drawn up with hardly any other Assistance, than that of the Greek Testament, which I endeavoured to harmonize, to translate, to paraphrase, and to improve, just as if none had ever attempted any thing of that Nature before me. Afterwards I was obliged to compare it with what others had done; and, as may easily be supposed, I found in many Instances an Agreement, and in many others a Difference, betwixt them and myself. Where we differed, I endeavoured impartially to examine the Reasons on both Sides; and where I have perceived myself indebted to any, for leading me into a more just and beautiful Version, Explication, or Disposition, than I had before chosen, I have generally, and so far as I can recollect, universally, acknowledged it; unless where the Hint came from some living Friend, where such Acknowledgment would not have been agreeable. There are, no doubt, many other Instances, in which the Thoughts, that seemed originally my own, might be suggested by Memory, tho' I knew not from whence they came; and a thousand more are so obvious, that one would suppose they must occur to every attentive Reader, who has any Genius and Furniture for Criticism. To have multiplied References and Quotations in such a Case, would have been, I think, a very useless and burthensome Piece of Pedantry, and might, (as I fear has been the Case with Pfeiffer, and Wolfius,) have discouraged the Reader from consulting any, in so great a Crowd. I could not well brook the Drudgery of transcribing the Works of others, and should scorn the Meanness of dressing myself up in borrowed Plumes;

Plumes; but if any imagine me a mere Compiler, I shall not be greatly concerned at their Mistake, but say, with the modest and excellent Monf. Rollin, "If the Things themselves are good, it signifies very little " whose they are *."

The Notes are, at the Desire of many Friends, entirely added to my first Scheme; and when I saw so many Persons of Learning and Rank were pleased to encourage my Undertaking, I thought it would be no unacceptable Expression of my Gratitude to them, to insert several, which I should otherwise have omitted. Some of them seemed absolutely necessary, to justify the Version, and Paraphrase, in what might seem most peculiar in it: Several more refer to the Order, and give my Reasons, for leaving the general Track, where I have left it; and for not leaving it much oftner, where some very learned and ingenious Authors have taken a great deal of Pains, (tho' I persuade myself with a very good Intent,) to lead us out of the Way: And as several of these are modern Writers, the Remarks are such, as do not commonly occur. The rest of the Notes consist, either of some Observations on the Beauty and Force of various Passages, which I don't remember to have seen elsewhere; or of References to, and Observations upon, considerable Writers, whether they be, or be not professed Expositors of Scripture, who seem in the most Masterly Manner to examine or to illustrate and confirm the Sense I have given. These are generally but very short; because it would have been quite foreign to my Purpose, and utterly inconsistent with my Scheme, to have formed them into large Critical Essays: But I hope they may be some Guide to young Students, who if they have Libraries at Hand, are in great Danger of being lost in a Wood, where, I am sorry to say it, they will find a multitude of prickly and knotty Shrubs, and in Comparison but few pleasant and fruitful Trees. It has appeared to me an Office of real and important Friendship to Gentlemen in this Station of Life, to endeavour to select for them the most valuable Passages which occur in reading, and to remit them thither, not only for the Illustration of Scripture, but also for their Direction in studying the Evidences and Contents, both of Natural and Revealed Religion. This I have done with great Care and Labour in a pretty large Work, which perhaps may be published after my Death, if surviving Friends should judge it proper. To that I have generally referred those Citations, which relate to Polemical Divinity; and at present only add, that with regard to these Notes, I have endeavoured to render them easy and entertaining, even to an English Reader; and for that Purpose have cautiously excluded Quotations from the learned Languages, even where

* Que m'importe d'ou il soit, pourvu qu'il se trouve utile.—Roll. Man. d'enseign. vol. i. pag. 75.

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where they might have served to illustrate Customs referred to, or Words to be explained. That Deficiency may be abundantly made up by the Perusal of Elſner, Albert, Bos, Wolfius, Raphelius, Fortuita Sacra, &c. † Books, which I cannot but recommend to my young Friends, as proper not only to ascertain the Sense of a Variety of Words and Phrases, which occur in the Apostolick Writings, but also to form them to the most useful Method of studying the Greek Classics; those great Masters of solid Sense, elegant Expression, just lively Painting, and masculine Eloquence, to the Neglect of which I cannot but ascribe that enervate, dissolute, and puerile Manner of Writing, which is growing so much on the present Age, and will probably consign so many of its Productions to speedy Oblivion.

The Improvement of each Section is entirely of a practical Nature, and generally consists of pressing Exhortations, and devout Meditations, grounded on the general Design, or on some particular Passages, of the Section to which they are annexed. They are all in an Evangelical Strain, and they could not with any Propriety have been otherwise. I am well aware, that this Manner is not much in the present Taste, and I think it at once, a sad Instance, and Cause, of our Degeneracy, that it is not. If it be necessary, that I should offer any Apology, it must in short be this: I have with all possible Attention, and Impartiality, considered first the general Evidences of the Truth of Christianity, and then those of the Inspiration of the New Testament, which seems to me inseparably connected with the former; and on the whole, am in my Conscience persuaded of both, and have been confirmed in that Conviction by the most laboured Attempts to overthrow them. It seems a necessary Consequence of this Conviction, (and I am astonished it should not be more generally attended to,) that we are with the humblest Submission of Mind to form our Religious Notions on this Plan, and to give up the most darling Maxims, which will not bear the Test of it.

I should think any impartial Reader must immediately see, and every judicious Critick be daily more confirmed in it, that the New Testament teaches us to conceive of Christ, not as a generous Benefactor only, who having performed some Actions of heroic Virtue and Benevolence, is now retired

† As some of the Books mentioned above are not very common among us, it may not be improper to insert their Titles; viz.

Jacobi Elſner. *Observat. Sacrae*, 2 Vol. 8vo. Trajecti. ad Rben. 1720.

Alberti *Observ. Philolog. Lugd. Bat.* 1725.

Lamberti Bos *Exercit. Philolog. Franek.* 1700.

————— *Animadvers. Franek.* 1715.

————— *Observat. Miscell. Leovard.* 1731.

Raphelii *Annotat. Philol. in Nov. Test. ex Xenophonte, Polybio, & Herodoto collectae*, 3 Tom. Lunden. 1731.

Wolfii *Curæ Philolog. & Criticæ*, 4to. Hamb. 1725.

retired from all Intercourse with our World, so that we have no more to do with him, than to preserve a grateful Remembrance of his Character and Favours; but that he is to be considered as an ever-living and ever-present Friend, with whom we are to maintain a daily Commerce by Faith and Prayer, and from whom we are to derive those Supplies of Divine Grace, whereby we may be strengthened for the Duties of Life, and ripened for a State of perfect Holiness and Felicity. This is evident, not only from particular Passages of Scripture, in which he is described as always with his Church, (Mat. xxviii. 20.) as present where-ever Two or Three are assembled in his Name, (Mat. xviii. 20.) as upholding all Things by the Word of his Power, (Heb. i. 3.) and as Head over all to his Church; (Eph. i. 22.) but indeed from the whole Scope and Tenor of the New Testament. These Views are therefore continually to be kept up; and for any to pretend, that this is a round-about Method, (as some have presumed to call it,) and that Men may be led to Virtue, the great End of all, by a much plainer and more direct Way, seems to me only a vain and arrogant Attempt to be wiser than GOD himself, which therefore must in the End appear to be Folly, with whatever Subtlety of Argument it may be defended, or with whatever Pomp of Rhetorick it be adorned.

The New Testament is a Book written with the most consummate Knowledge of Human Nature; and tho' there are a thousand latent Beauties in it, which it is the Business and Glory of true Criticism to place in a strong Point of Light, the general Sense and Design of it is plain to every honest Reader, even at the very first Perusal. It is evidently intended, to bring us to GOD thro' Christ, in an humble Dependance on the Communications of his sanctifying and quickening Spirit; and to engage us to a Course of faithful and universal Obedience, chiefly from a grateful Sense of the Riches of Divine Grace manifested to us in the Gospel. And tho' this Scheme is indeed liable to Abuse, as every Thing else is, it appears to me plain in Fact, that it has been, and still is, the grand Instrument of reforming a very degenerate World; and according to the best Observations I have been able to make on what has passed about me, or within my own Breast, I have found that in Proportion to the Degree, in which this Evangelical Scheme is received and relished, the Interest of true Virtue and Holiness flourishes, and the Mind is formed to manly Devotion, diffusive Benevolence, steady Fortitude, and in short, made ready to every good Word and Work. To this therefore I am determined at all Adventures to adhere; nor am I at all ashamed or afraid of any Scorn, which I may encounter in such a Cause; and I would earnestly exhort, and intreat, all my Brethren in the Christian Ministry to join with me, as well knowing, to whom we have committed our Souls; and cheerfully hoping, that he, by whom we have hitherto, if faithful in our Calling, been

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supported and animated, will at length confess us before the Presence of his Father, and the holy Angels, in that Day, when it will be found no Dishonour to the greatest and wisest of the Children of Men, to have listed themselves under the Banner of the Cross, and constantly and affectionately to have kept their Divine Leader in View.

I cannot flatter myself so far, as to imagine that I have fallen into no Mistakes, in a Work of so great Compass and Difficulty; but my own Conscience acquits me of having designedly misrepresented any single Passage of Scripture, or of having written one Line with a Purpose of inflaming the Hearts of Christians against each other. I should esteem it one of the most aggravated Crimes, to make the Life of the gentle and benevolent Jesus, a Vehicle to convey such Poison. Would to GOD, that all the Party Names, and unscriptural Phrases and Forms, which have divided the Christian World, were forgot; and that we might agree to sit down together, as humble loving Disciples, at the Feet of our common Master, to bear his Word, to imbibe his Spirit, and to transcribe his Life in our own!

I hope it is some Token of such growing Candor on one Side, as I am sure it should be an Engagement to cultivate it on the other, that so many of the Reverend Clergy of the Establishment, as well as other Persons of Distinction in it, have favoured this Undertaking with their Encouragement. To them, and all my other Friends, I return my most hearty Thanks; and shall remember, that the Regard they have been pleased to express to it, obliges me to pursue the Remainder of the Work with the utmost Care and Application; and earnestly intreat the farther Assistance of their Prayers, that it may be conducted in a Manner subservient to the Honour of the Gospel, and the Edification of the Church.

In these Volumes I have been desirous to express my Gratitude to the Subscribers, by sparing nothing in my Power, which might render the Work acceptable to them, both with respect to its Contents, and its Form. The Consequence of this is, that it hath swelled to a Number of Sheets, which by more than a third Part exceeds what I promised in the Proposals; which, tho' at a great Expence, I chose to permit, rather than I would either sink the Paper and Character beneath the Specimen, or omit some Remarks in the Notes, which appeared to me of Moment, and rose in my Mind while I was transcribing them. But I hope this large Addition to what was at first expected, will excuse my not complying with the Importunity of some of my Friends, who have requested, that I would introduce this Work with a Dissertation on such Points of Jewish Antiquity, as might be serviceable for the fuller understanding the New Testament, or with a Discourse on its Genuineness, Credibility, Inspiration, and Use.

As

As to the first of these, (a compendious View of such Articles of Jewish Antiquity, as may be a proper Introduction to the critical Study of Scripture,) I do with great Pleasure refer the Generality of Readers, and young Students, to the general Preface to the Prussian Testament, published by Mess. L'Enfant and Beaufobre; which Preface was some Years since translated into English, and suits the Purpose, better than any Thing I have seen within so small a Compass. As to the latter, I purpose, if GOD permit, when I have finished the Second Volume, to publish with another Edition of my Three Sermons on the Evidences of Christianity, two or three Discourses more on the Inspiration of the New Testament, and on its Usefulness, especially that of the Evangelical History; to which I may perhaps add some farther Directions for the most profitable Manner of reading it. At present I shall only add, that daily Experience convinces me more and more, that as a thousand Charms discover themselves in the Works of Nature, when attentively viewed with Glasses, which had escaped the naked Eye; so our Admiration of the Holy Scriptures will rise, in Proportion to the Accuracy, with which they are studied.

*As for these Histories and Discourses of CHRIST, I may say of them, with far greater Justice, what Simplicius doth of Epictetus, in the Passage, of which my Motto is a Part, and with which I shall conclude my Preface: "The Words themselves are generally plain and intelligible; but I have endeavoured thus to unfold them, that my own Heart might be more deeply impressed with the Spirit and Certainty of them, and that others, who have not themselves equal Advantage for entering into it, might be guided into their, true Interpretation. But if, on the whole, any Reader continue intirely unaffected with them, there is little Prospect that any Thing will reclaim him till he come to the Tribunal of the invisible World."**

* Και πιστι μιν οι λογοι σαφεις· η χειρον δε ισως, καλα το δυνατον διαπλοσσειν αιτες. Ο τε γαρ γραφων, συμπαιθετε· τε αμα σι· αιτες γενησιναι, και της αληθειας αυτων κατανοησικωτες· και των φιλομαθων οι προς λογος ασυνηθιστοι, ισως εξησι τινα χειραγωγιαν εκ της εμυνησιας αυτων. — Ει δε τις υπο τελων μη πασχη των λογων, υπο μοιων αν των εν αδη δικαστηριω υπειθουθη. Simplic. in Epictet. Proem.

Northampton,
Nov. 27. 1738.

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A D V E R-

T H E

FAMILY EXPOSITOR.

The former Part of the History of CHRIST,
as recorded by the EVANGELISTS.

S E C T. I.

St. LUKE's Preface to his History, dedicated to Theophilus, a Christian Friend, for whose Comfort and Establishment he was particularly concerned. Luke I.

VER. I,—4.

LUKE I. VER. I.

LUKE I. VER. I.

FORasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a Declaration of those Things, which are most surely believed among us,

WHEREAS many have undertaken (a) to compose the History (b) of those important Facts, which have been confirmed among us Christians with the fullest

SECT. I.
Luke I. 1.

(a) *Whereas many have undertaken.*] This must refer to some Histories of the Life of Christ, which are now lost; for Matthew and Mark, the only Evangelists which can be supposed to have written before Luke, could not with any Propriety be called many; and of these two, Matthew at least wrote from personal Knowledge, not the Testimony of others. One must readily conclude, the Books referred to are lost, as none of the Apocryphal Gospels now extant, published particularly by Fabricius, (in his *Codex Apoc. Nov. Test.*) or Mr. Jones, (in his *History of the Canon*;) can with any Shadow of Reason pretend to equal Antiquity with this of St. Luke. But I cannot, with Ambrose and Epiphanius, suppose, that the Evangelist here intends the Gospels of Basilides, Cerinthus, and some other early Hereticks; since he seems to allow these Histories, whatever they were, to have been at least honestly written, according to Information received from the most capable Judges. And it is strange, that Eusebius should imagine, the Words are intended as a severe Censure on the now unknown Compilers of these Histories, whoever they were. *Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 24.*

(b) *To compose the History.*] To set forth in order a Declaration, is so antiquated a Phrase, that it would hardly be understood any where, but here; at least I am sure, none could

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SECT. I. *left* and most satisfactory Evidence (c), as the great Foundation of our common Faith;

Luke I. 2. And since some of these Historians have written, not on their own personal Knowledge, but *as They*, (whether Apostles or others,) *have transmitted them to us, who were themselves, from the Beginning of Christ's Ministry, Eye-Witnesses of what passed, and in Proof of the Sincerity of their Testimony, courageously became Ministers of the Word (d)*, that is, of the Gospel, amidst the greatest Opposition; *I also having accurately traced all these Things (e) from their first Rise (f)*, even from the very Conception of John the Baptist, who was the Fore-runner of our Lord, *have thought it proper to write an orderly Account of them (g)*: And

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the Beginning were Eye-Witnesses, and Ministers of the Word:

3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect Understanding of all Things from the very first, to write unto thee in Order, most excellent Theophilus,

could, by reading it, so much as guess at the Elegance and Propriety of St. Luke's Words, *αὐτάχασθαι διηγήσασθαι*, which may more literally, and I think far more justly, be rendered, *to compose a History*: And I doubt not but our *English Word compose*, may express as much Regularity in the Order of Facts, as the Evangelist meant to intimate.

(c) *Confirmed among us with the fullest Evidence.*] I think *συνεπιβεβαιωμένων* is rather to be understood, as referring to the *Fulness of that Evidence* with which the Facts were attended, than to the *Confidence* with which they were believed. This seems most honourable to the Gospel; but as I know the Word is ambiguous, and often used in the latter Sense, I have chose to express that also in the *Paraphrase*. Compare 2 Tim. iv. 5, 17. Gr.

(d) *Of the Word.*] Some have conjectured, that *λογος*, the *Word*, here signifies *Christ*, as in the Beginning of St. John's Gospel: Perhaps it may; but I did not think it so evident, as to venture fixing it to that Sense.

(e) *Having accurately traced all these Things.*] The Original, *συνκριθεὶς*, plainly signifies that *Accuracy of Investigation*, on which the *perfect understanding* of his Subject was built.

(f) *From their first Rise.*] Some very pious and learned Writers have pleaded this Text, as an Argument for the Inspiration of St. Luke's Gospel, and consequently of the rest; because the Word *αὐθεν* sometimes signifies *from Above*, or *from Heaven*; as it plainly doth, John iii. 31. Jam. i. 17. iii. 15, 17. But Luke so evidently uses it in the Sense here given, Acts xxvi. 5. and that Sense is so common elsewhere, and seems so absolutely necessary in this Connection with *συνκριθεὶς*, that I cannot think this Text at all to the Purpose. The Argument I mention, is one of those, which, like Pieces of superfluous Armour, encumber rather than defend; and the more I am concerned about the Conclusion, here or elsewhere, the more cautious shall I always be, that I may not draw it from such Premises.

(g) *To write an orderly Account of them, καθεξῆς οὐ παραλείπων.*] It is chiefly on the Authority of this Clause, that M. Le Clerc, and many other modern Harmonizers have thought,

4 That thou mightest know the Certainty of those Things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

I chuse to inscribe it to thee, O most noble *Theophilus* (b); Because, though thou art already in the general acquainted with them, yet I cannot but be concerned, that thou mayst more fully, and circumstantially, know the exact and certain Truth of those Things, in which thou hast formerly been instructed (i) by those who were the happy Instruments of initiating thee into the Christian Faith; and I am persuaded, thou wilt be greatly confirmed in it, by the attentive Perusal of that History, with which I here present thee.

SECT. I.
Luke I. 4.

thought, (as *Beza* also did,) that all the other Gospels are to be reduced to the Order of *Luke*, wherever they differ from it: A Conclusion, which I apprehend, for Reasons that shall afterwards be given at large, to be an Occasion of many Errors, and particularly injurious to the Character of *St. Matthew*. I would only here observe, that the Foundation of it is very precarious; since it is evident, this Evangelist might, with great Propriety, be said to have given an orderly Account of the History of Christ, as the leading Facts are in their due Series, tho' some Particulars are transposed.

(b) O most noble *Theophilus*.] That *Theophilus* is the Name of a particular Person, eminent in the Church in those early Days, and not, (as *Sabvian* thought it,) a general Title applicable to every Christian as a Lover of God, *Dr. Whitby*, after many others, hath abundantly proved. What his Rank in Life was, we do not indeed certainly know; but it seems, that it was pretty considerable; for *Κρατις* was then, as *Excellency* among us is, a Title of Honour and Respect usual in addressing noble Personages: (See *Acts* xxiii. 26. xxiv. 3. xxvi. 25.) And it might with some peculiar Propriety be applied here, as *Theophilus* was so worthy the Name he bore, which signifies a true Lover of GOD.

(i) Hast been instructed, *ως εν σχολη*.] The Word doth with great Accuracy express the Instructions given to those, who were training up for an Admission to the Christian Church; whose Name of *Catechumens* was, as it is well known, derived from hence, and applied, without any particular Regard to the Age of the Persons concerned. Compare *Acts* xviii. 25. *Rom.* ii. 18. I endeavour to express this in the *Paraphrase*, but it would be very improper to use the *English* Word which most literally answers to the *Greek*, because that is now almost wholly appropriated to Children.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

LET us humbly adore the Divine Goodness, that Facts of so great Importance, as these now to be laid before us, were not left to the Uncertainty of oral Tradition; but delivered to the Church in Writing, by Persons who had so many Opportunities of learning the Truth, and have given such full Proof of their Integrity in relating it.—Let us be thankful, that we have not only one such History,

Ver. 2

SECT. I. History, but that several undertook this excellent and necessary
 Ver. 1. Work, by whose united Testimony the whole is confirmed; while it is also illustrated by the Variety of their Narrations, each inserting some considerable Circumstance which the rest have omitted. Let us rejoice in that providential Care, which hath preserved this invaluable Treasure through so many succeeding Ages, and some of them Periods of the grossest Darkneſs, and the hottest Persecution.

Ver. 4. While we study this *orderly Series* of Sacred Story, let us be concerned, that our Faith may be established by it, and our other Graces proportionably advanced; maintaining a continual Dependance on that blessed Spirit, by whose Instruction it was written, to lead us into wise and pious Reflections upon it.

Ver. 5. To conclude; from the Care which this holy Evangelist expresseth, for the Edification and Comfort of his Friend *Theophilus*, let us learn to regard it as one of the most important Offices of Friendship, to labour for the spiritual Advantage of each other; by endeavouring, not only to awaken and instruct those that are entirely unacquainted or unaffected with Divine Things, but also, as we have Opportunity, to confirm the Faith, and quicken the Zeal, of the most established Christians with whom we converse. Happy the Men, whose Tongues, and whose Pens, are employed in so good a Work: May they never, in the remotest Ages, fail of some *excellent Theophilus*, to welcome and encourage their pious Attempts!

S E C T. II.

St. JOHN begins his Gospel, with a very sublime and emphatical Account of the Deity, and Incarnation of CHRIST; and of those glorious and important Purposes, for which he condescended to appear among us in the Human Nature. John I. 1,—14.

JOHN I. 1.

SECT. 2. *I*N the Beginning, before the Foundation
 John I. 1. of the World, or the first Production of any created Being, a glorious Person *existed*, who (on Account of the Perfections of his Nature, and his being in Time the Medium of

JOHN I. 1.

*I*N the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was

was with God, and the Word was God.

of Divine Manifestations to us,) may properly be called *the Word of GOD* (a). And *the Word was originally with GOD* the Father of all; so that to him the Words of Solomon might justly be applied, Prov. viii. 30. "He was by him, as one brought up with him, and was daily his Delight." Nay, by a Generation which none can declare, and an Union which none can fully conceive, *the Word was himself GOD* (b), that is, possessed of

SECT. 2.
John I. 1.

(a) *The Word of GOD.*] The Greek *Logos* is now become so familiar to an English Ear, that I doubt not, but most of my Readers would have understood me, had I retained it in my *Translation*; which, on Account of the Singularity of the Idea here signified by it, I should have done, had I not feared, it might have been unintelligible to a few at least, and so have impaired the Pleasure they might find in so excellent a Passage. I know, that some of the *Fathers* render *Logos*, *Reason*, as *M. Le Clerc* doth; who I apprehend they mean it in a very different Sense from him, who seems to understand it only as a strong Eastern Phrase, to signify the consummate Wisdom of the Gospel Scheme. See his *Harmony*, p. 44. But this will entirely enervate, and destroy the Sense of *ver. 14.* as well as of those Texts, which speak of *Christ's coming out from GOD, enjoying Glory with him before the World was, &c.*

(b) *The Word was GOD.*] I know how eagerly many have contended, that the Word GOD is used here in an inferior Sense; the necessary Consequence of which is, (as indeed some have expressly avowed it,) that this Clause should be rendered *The Word was a God*, that is, a kind of inferior Deity, as *Governours* are called *Gods*. See *John x. 34.* and *1 Cor. viii. 5.* But it is impossible, he should here be so called merely as a *Governour*, because he is spoken of as existing before the Production of any Creatures whom he could govern: And it is to me most incredible, that when the *Jews* were so exceeding averse to Idolatry, and the *Gentiles* so unhappily prone to it, such a plain Writer, as this Apostle, should lay so dangerous a Stumbling-block on the very Threshold of his Work, and represent it as the Christian Doctrine, that in the Beginning of all Things there were *two Gods*, one supreme, and the other subordinate: A Difficulty, which, if possible, would be yet farther increased, by recollecting what so many ancient Writers assert, that this Gospel was written with a particular View of opposing the *Cerinthians* and *Ebionites*; (See *Iren. l. i. c. 26. l. iii. c. 11. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. vi. c. 14.*) on which Account a greater Accuracy of Expression must have been necessary. There are so many Instances in the Writings of this Apostle, and even in this Chapter, (see *ver. 6, 12, 13, 18.*) where *Θεός* without the *Article*, is used to signify God in the highest Sense of the Word, that it is something surprising, such a Stress should be laid on the Want of that *Article*, as a Proof that it is used only in a subordinate Sense.—On the other Hand, to conceive of *Christ* as a *distinct* and *co-ordinate GOD*, would be equally inconsistent with the most express Declarations of *Scripture*, and far more irreconcilable with *Reason*. Nothing I have said above, can by any means be justly interpreted in such a Sense: And I here solemnly disclaim the least Intention of insinuating one Thought of that Kind, by any thing I have ever written, here or elsewhere.—The Order of the Words in the Original, (*Θεός ην ο λογος*) is such, that some have thought, the Clause might more exactly be translated, *GOD was the Word*. But there are almost every where so many Instances of such a Construction, as our Version supposes, that I chose rather to follow it, than to vary from it unnecessarily,

SECT. 2. of a Nature truly and properly Divine. I repeat it again, that the Condescension of his Incarnation may be more attentively considered, *this* Divine [Word] was in the very Beginning with GOD, and by Virtue of his most intimate Union with him, was possessed of infinite Glory and Felicity. And when it pleased GOD to begin his Work of Creation, all Things in the whole Compass of Nature were made by him (c.), even by this Almighty Word;

John I. 2.

3

2 The same was in the Beginning with GOD.

3 All Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made, that was made.

rily, in this important Passage.—I am deeply sensible of the sublime and mysterious Nature of the Doctrine of *Christ's Deity*, as here declared: But it would be quite foreign to my Purpose to enter into a large Discussion of that great Foundation of our Faith; it has often been done by much abler Hands. It was, however, Matter of Conscience with me, on the one Hand, thus strongly to declare my Belief of it, and on the other, to leave it as far as I could in the Simplicity of Scripture Expressions. I shall only add, in the Words, or at least the Sense of Bishop Burnet, “That had not *St. John*, and the other Apostles, thought it a Doctrine of great Importance in the Gospel Scheme, they would rather have waved, than asserted and insisted upon it, considering the critical Circumstances in which they wrote.” See Burnet on the *Articles*, pag. 40.

(c) *All Things were made by him.*] It would be the Work of a Treatise, rather than a Note, to represent the *Jewish* Doctrine, of the Creation of all Things by the Divine *Logos*; to which, (rather than the *Platonick*;) there may be some Reference here. They who have no Opportunity of examining the original Authors, may see what those learned Men have said, to whom *Dr. A. Taylor* refers, in his Treatise on the *Trinity*, p. 258. to which add, *Dr. Pearson* on the *Creed*, pag. 118. *Dr. Scott's Christian Life*, vol. iii. pag. 565, &c. fol. and *Dr. Watts's Dissert.* on the *Trinity*, N^o. iv. §. 3.—There is however a remarkable Passage I shall mention to this Purpose, as a Specimen of the rest; and the rather, because it is omitted in most of the Collections I have seen on this Head, and not fully cited and explained in what I take to be its exact Sense in any. *Philo Judæus*, (*de Profug.* pag. 465.) speaking of the *Cherubims on the Mercy-Seat* as Symbolical Representations of what he calls the *creating and governing Powers*, makes this additional Reflexion: “The Divine Word (*Logos*) is above these, of whom we can have no Idea by the Sight, or any other Sense; He being himself the *Image of GOD*, the Eldest of all intelligible Beings, sitting nearest to Him who is truly THE ONLY ONE, there being no Distance between them:” (Alluding, I suppose, to the Form of those *antient Chariots*, where, as in the *Chairs* we use upon the Road, the Driver sate close to the Person driven; which was not the Case in all: Compare *Acts* viii. 38.) “And therefore He (that is, GOD) says, *I will speak unto thee from the Mercy-Seat between the Two Cherubims*; thereby representing the *Logos*, as the Charioteer by whom the Motion of these Powers is directed; and himself who speaks to him, as the Rider (or Person carried,) who commands the Charioteer how he is to manage the Reins.” Ο δε υπερανω τελων (scil. δυναμεις ποιητικης και βασιλικης) ΛΟΓΟΣ ΘΕΙΟΣ, εις ορατην ουκ ηλθεν Ιδωται, αλε μηδεν των κατ' αισθησιν εμφανης εν, αλλ' αυτου εικων υπαρχων Θεου, των νοητων απαξ απαντων ο περιεβουλασθαι, ο εγγυλασθαι, μηδεν οησθαι μεθωριε διασημασθαι, ΤΟΥ ΜΟΝΟΥ ο εστιν αφευδως αφιδρωμενθαι. Λεγεται γαρ, Λαλησω σοι αυθεν τε Πλαστηρι ανα μισοι των δυων Χερουβιμ' ωσθ ητοχοι μεν ειναι των δυναμειων του ΛΟΓΟΝ, εποχοι δε του λαλησεια, επικεινομενοι τε ητοχοι τα προσ ορατη τε παση ητοχησων. I insert this, as a Key to a great many other Passages in *Philo*; and shall only mention one more: (*De*

Agricult.

He was the Life and Light of Men.

4 In him was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men.

5 And the Light shineth in Darkneis, and the Darkneis comprehended it not.

Word; and without him was not any Thing made, not so much as one single Being (d), whether among the noblest, or the meanest of GOD's various Works. That Fulness of Power, Wisdom, and Benignity, which was in him, was the Fountain of Life (e) to the whole Creation: And it is in particular our Concern to remember, that the Life which was in him, was the Light of Men, as all the Light of Reason, and Revelation, was the Effect of his Energy on the Mind. And the Light long shone in the Heathen World, and under the Dispensation of Moses, and it still shineth in Darkneis, even on the Minds of the most ignorant and prejudiced Part of Mankind; and yet the Darkneis was so gross, that it opposed its Passage, and such was the prevailing Degeneracy of their Hearts, that they did not apprehend it (f,) or regard its Dictates, in such a Manner,

4

5

Agricult. pag. 195.) Where he represents God, as "governing the whole Course of Nature both in Heaven and Earth, as the great Shepherd and King, by wise and righteous Laws; having constituted his unerring Word, his only begotten Son, to preside as his Vice-Roy over this holy Flock:" For the Illustration of which he quotes those remarkable Words, *Exod. xxiii. 23.* tho' in a Form something different from our Reading and Version; "Behold, I am; I will send my Angel before thy Face to keep thee in the Way." Ἦν και υἱος κ. τ. λ. — τα μιν θηλα, τα δε θεα, (a remarkable Distribution,) ως ποιμην και βασιλευς ο Θεος αγιος καια δικη και νομος, προσησαμενος τον εφθρ αυτου ΛΟΓΟΝ περιλογονον υιοι, ος την επιμελειαν της ιρας ταυτης αγλης, οια τι μεγαλου βασιλευς υπαρχθ, διαδεξεται. Και γαρ ηρθαι σου, ιδου εγω εμμι, αποστειλω αγγελου μου εις πρωσωπον σου του φυλαξαι σε εν τη οδω.

(d) Not so much as one single Being.] There is an Emphasis in the Words εἰς ἓν, which I thought it proper to express in the Version, than which nothing can be more literal.

(e) That which was in him was Life.] The most antient Fathers, that quote this Text, so generally join the Words ο γηγον, with this fourth Verse, that I cannot but apprehend this to be the true Reading. (See *Dr. Mill's Proleg.*) But if any think it improbable, that γηγον should have different Senses here, and in the third Verse, they will please to observe, that the full Sense of our Version is expressed in the Paraphrase, and that the Alteration here made is of very small Importance. That the Heathens sometimes speak of their Deities, and Heroes, as the Light and Life of Mankind, *Eisner* hath shewn on this Text.

(f) Did not apprehend it, ε καταλαβεν.] It might not seem so strange, that the World did not fully comprehend the spiritual, since it certainly doth not fully comprehend the material Light, nor indeed any of the most familiar Objects it discovers: But the Word is capable of other Senses, and is sometimes used, for apprehending, or laying hold of a Thing.

8 JOHN came to testify of him, as the true Light.

SECT. 2. Manner, as to secure the Blessings to which it would have led them.

John I. 6.

As this was the Case for many Ages, the Divine Wisdom was pleased to interpose in these latter Days, by a clearer and fuller Discovery; and for this Purpose a Man, whose Name was John, afterwards called the Baptist, was sent as a Messenger from GOD; of whose miraculous Conception and important Ministry, a more particular Account is elsewhere given: But here it may be sufficient to observe in general, that tho' he was himself, in an inferior Sense, "a burning and shining Light;" (compare John v. 35.) yet he came only under the Character of a Servant, and for a Witness, that he might testify concerning Christ the true Light, that all who heard his Discourses, might by his means be engaged to believe, and follow that Divine Illumination. And accordingly he most readily confessed, that he himself was not that Light, but only [came] to bear Witness concerning it. The true Light, of which he spake, was Christ (g), even that Sun of Righteousness and Source of Truth, which coming into the World, inlighteneth every Man (h), dif-

6 There was a Man sent from GOD, whose Name was John;

7 The same came for a Witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all Men thro' him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light,

9 That was the true Light which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World.

Thing, 1 Cor. ix. 24. Phil. iii. 12, 13. and sometimes for perceiving it, Acts. iv. 13. x. 34. Compare Acts xiv. 17. xvii. 25. Rom. i. 20. which all illustrate the Evangelist's Assertion.

(g) The true Light was Christ.] The Original yet more clearly expresses the Antithesis, between this, and the former Verse: I have endeavoured to follow it in my Version, without supposing *αυτος* understood here, to answer to *αυτος* there. I cannot but think the Conjecture of the learned *Heinsius* very elegant, that the *ω* at the Beginning of this Verse, might belong to the End of the former: The exact Construction then would be, *He*, viz. John, was not that Light, but he was, (that is, he existed, and came,) that he might bear Witness to that Light: The true Light, &c. was in the World, &c. See *Heins.* in loc.

(h) Which coming into the World, inlighteneth every Man.] So I chuse to render it, tho' I acknowledge that our Version may be consistent with the Truth, and that it most exactly suits the Order of the Words in the Original; but the other is also very Grammatical, *φως προσημιον εις τον κοσμον*, and suggests an Idea more distinct from *ver.* 4. Not to urge, that the Phrase of coming into the World, is with peculiar Emphasis used of Christ, and especially under the Notion of a Light. Compare *John* xii. 46. I am come a Light into the World. *John* iii. 19. This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World.

The World was made by him, yet knew him not.

10 He was in the World, and the World was made by him, and the World knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of GOD, even to them that believe on his Name :

dispersing his Beams, as it were, from one End of the Heavens to the other, to the Gentile World, which was in Midnight Darkness, as well as to the Jews, who enjoyed but a Kind of Twilight. *He was in the World in a Human Form; and tho' the World was made by him (i), yet the World knew and acknowledged him not. Yea, he came into his own [Territories,] even to the Jewish Nation, which was under such distinguished Obligations to him, and to whom he had been so expressly promised as their great Messiah; yet his own [People] did not receive him (k) as they ought; but on the contrary, treated him in the most contemptuous and ungrateful Manner. Nevertheless the Detriment was theirs, and it was indeed unspeakably great to them; for to as many as received him, and by a firm and lively Faith believed on his Name, [even] to all of them, without any Exception, of even the poorest or the vilest, he granted*

SECT. 2.
John I. 9.

10

11

12

(i) *The World was made by him.*] Some have supposed this particularly levelled against the *Gnosticks*, who maintained that the World was made by an evil Genius; and that the God of the Old Testament, and the New, were different and contrary Persons. It is certain, that *Irenæus*, and several others of the *Fathers*, with great Propriety have urged this Text against that mad Notion.—*Eusebius* exposes these Wretches in a very just and lively Manner, and makes Use of Words, which, if he had been our Contemporary, might have seemed directly levelled at a late unhappy Writer, who strangely took it into his Head to call himself *The Moral Philosopher*. But alas, every succeeding Age has had its *Moral Philosophers*, who have attempted to remove that burthensome Stone *the Bible*, and have found it returning upon them, so as to grind them, and their Schemes, and their Confidence, to Powder. The Words in my View are these: (*Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. v. cap. 28. in fin.*) *Ἀπλῶς ἀερισσαμένοι τον τι νομον και τους προφητας, ανομον και αθιου διδασκαλιας, προφασι χαριτος, εις ισχυρον απωλειας ωλεθρον καταλιποθησαν.* “Some” (who yet it seems pretended to be *Christians*.) “absolutely rejecting the Law and the Prophets, by a licentious and atheistical Doctrine, which they introduced under a Pretence of magnifying the Divine Goodness, or the Gospel,” (for *χαρις*, *Grace*, may signify either,) “have plunged themselves into the lowest Gulf of Perdition.”

(k) *He came into his own [Territories,] yet his own [People] did not receive him.*] It is so difficult to express the Difference between *εις τα ιδια*, and *οι ιδιοι*, that few Versions have attempted it; yet,—as *Gratius* hath well observed, the Energy of the Text cannot be understood without attending to it. That the Jewish Nation was, in some peculiar Sense, under the Care and Guardianship of *Christ* before his Incarnation, this Passage seems strongly to intimate, and many learned Men have shewn it, in what appears to me a convincing Light.

10 *Such as believe are Sons of GOD, and born of him.*

SECT. 2. granted the glorious Privilege of becoming the
 Sons of GOD; that is, he adopted them into

John I. 12. GOD's Family, so that they became intitled to the present Immunities, and the future eternal Inheritance of his Children. And

13 they *who* thus believed on him *were* possessed of these Privileges, *not* in Consequence of their being *born of Blood*, of their being descended from the Loins of the holy Patriarchs, or sharing in Circumcision, and the Blood of the Sacrifices; *nor* could they ascribe it merely to *the Will of the Flesh*, or to their own superior Wisdom and Goodness, as if by the Power of corrupted Nature alone they had made themselves to differ; *nor* to *the Will of Man*, or to the wisest Advice, and most powerful Exhortations, which their Fellow-Creatures might address to them; *but* must humbly acknowledge, that they were born of GOD (1), and indebted to the efficacious Influences of his regenerating Grace, for all their Privileges, and for all their Hopes. Compare John iii. 1,—8. Tit. iii. 3,—7. and Jam. i. 18.

13 Which were born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.

14 *And* in order to raise us sinful Creatures to such illustrious Dignity and Happiness, *the* divine

14 And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among

(1) *Who were not born of Blood, &c. but of GOD.*] I am sensible, this Verse is liable to great Difficulty, and Ambiguity. It is an amazing Liberty the Author of the *New Translation*, publish'd 1727. has taken with it, in explaining it of a Birth, which they had not from Circumcision, nor from the Constitution of the Body, nor from the Institution of Man, but from GOD. I readily allow, that *et æquales, of Bloods*, may include Circumcision, but cannot confine it to that: Patriarchal Descent, and the Blood of Sacrifices, were so much depended upon by the *Jews*, that one would suppose them included. *Dr. Whitby*, with many others, takes *the Will of the Flesh*, to signify carnal Descent, and the *Will of Man*, Adoption; which I should prefer to the Opinion of *Mess. L' Enfant* and *Beausobre*, who, without any Reason assigned, understand by those born of the Will of Man, Profelytes, as opposed to native *Jews*; a Sense, in which I never could find the Phrase used. The *Paraphrase* I have given, keeps the Ideas distinct; answers the frequent Signification of *Flesh* elsewhere; (compare *John* iii. 6. *Rom.* vii. 25. viii. 3, 8, 12. and *Gal.* v. 17.) and conveys an important and edifying Sense, very agreeable to the Tenor of Scripture. But I submit it to the Reader, without pretending that it is the only Interpretation the Words will bear. I hope he will always carefully distinguish between the *Text* and the *Paraphrase*, and remember how very different a Regard is owing to the one, and the other.

(m) Was

The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.

II

mong us, (and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father,) full of Grace and Truth.

divine and eternal *Word*, that glorious Person whom we mentioned above, by a most amazing Condescension, *was made Flesh (m)*, that is, united himself to our inferior and miserable Nature with all its innocent Infirmities; and he not only made us a transient Visit, for an Hour, or a Day, but for a considerable Time pitched his *Tabernacle among us (n)* on Earth; and we who are now recording these Things, contemplated his *Glory*, (compare 1 John i. 1.) with so strict an Attention, that from our own personal Knowledge we can bear our Testimony to it, that it was in every Respect *such a Glory, as became the Only-begotten of the Father*: For it shone forth, not merely in that radiant Appearance, which invested him on the Mount of Transfiguration, and in the Splendor of his continued Miracles, but in all his Temper, Ministration, and Conduct, thro' the whole Series of his Life, in which he appeared *full of Grace and Truth (o)*; that is, as he was in himself most benevolent and upright, so he made the amplest Discoveries of Pardon to Sinners, which the Mosaic Dispensation could not possibly do, and exhibited the most important and substantial Blessings (*p*), whereas that was at best but "a Shadow of good Things to come." Compare Heb. x. 1.

SECT. 2.
John I. 14.

(m) *Was made Flesh.*] *Flesh* often signifies, Man in this infirm and calamitous State. Compare Gen. vi. 12. Numb. xvi. 22. Deut. v. 26. Psal. cxlv. 21. Isa. xlix. 26. Acts ii. 17. 1 Cor. i. 29. and many other Places.

(n) *Pitched his Tabernacle among us.*] There is so visible a Reference in the Word *σκηνωσεν*, to the dwelling of the *Shekinah* in the *Tabernacle of Moses*, that it was very proper to render it by the Word I have used.

(o) *Full of Grace and Truth.*] It is plain, that those Words, *and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father*, are to be considered as a Parenthesis; and these are to be joined with the preceding thus, *He dwelt among us—full of Grace and Truth*. But the Length of the *Paraphrase* made it inconvenient to transpose them.

(p) The most substantial Blessings.] That *Truth* is sometimes used, not so much in Opposition to Falseness, as to Hieroglyphicks, Shadows, and Types, an attentive Reader must often have observed. See Heb. viii. 2. ix. 24. and Dan. vii. 16. Compare Col. ii. 17.

B 2

IMPROVE

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- SECT. 2. **J**USTLY hath our Redeemer said, *Blessed is the Man that is not offended in me*: And we may peculiarly apply the Words, to that great and glorious Doctrine of *the Deity of Christ*, which is here before us. A thousand high and curious Thoughts will naturally arise in our corrupt Hearts, on this View of it; but may Divine Grace subdue them all to the Obedience of an humble Faith; so that, with *Thomas*, we may each of us fall down at his Feet, and cry out with sincere and unreserved Devotion, *My Lord, and my GOD!*
- Ver. 1, 2.
- Ver. 3, 4. Let us adore him as the Creator and Preserver of all, the overflowing Fountain of *Light and Life*. Let us with unutterable Pleasure hail this *Sun of Righteousness*, whose Rays, by the tender Mercies of the Father, have visited our benighted World, to *guide our Feet into the Way of Peace*: And while we lament, that *the Darkness* hath not apprehended and received him, let us earnestly pray, that he may ere long penetrate every Cloud of Ignorance and Mist of Error, and may diffuse among all the Nations Knowledge and Grace, Purity and Joy. Let us especially pray, that he may penetrate our beclouded Souls; and that they may, in holy Correspondence to the Purposes of his appearing, be *turned as Clay to the Seal* (g). Job xxxviii. 14.—*The World knew him not*; but may we know him, and give him that honourable and grateful Reception, which so great a Favour may justly demand!—Yet what Returns can be proportionable to his Condescension, in *becoming Flesh* for us, and *pitching his Tabernacle* among miserable and sinful Mortals?—Happy Apostles, that *beheld his Glory!* And surely there are in his Word such Reflections of it, as we may also *behold*, and as will oblige us to acknowledge it, to be *a Glory that became the Only-begotten of the Father*.
- Ver. 5.
- Ver. 10.
- Ver. 14.
- Ver. 12. Let us cordially receive him, as *full of Grace and Truth*, that we also may stand intitled to the Privileges of *GOD's Children*. And if we are already of that happy Number, let us not arrogate the Glory of it to ourselves; or ascribe it entirely to those, who have been the Instruments of this important Change; but remember, that *of his own Will GOD hath begotten us by the Word of his Power*, and that *of him*:
- Ver. 13.

(g) *Turned as Clay to the Seal.*] This beautiful Metaphor of the inspired Writer seems, by a very expressive Contrast, to illustrate the Meaning of *καταλάβει*, in the fifth Verse. It was for Want of this, *the Darkness did not apprehend, or receive the Light*; did not form itself into a due Correspondence to it, so as to put on its Habit, and clothe itself with the Lustre of its reflected Beams. How glorious and happy is that Soul, on which the Knowledge of *Christ* hath that genuine Influence!

The Character of Zacharias and Elizabeth.

him we are in Christ Jesus: To him then let us refer the ultimate Praise, if that Divine and Almighty Saviour be made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption. 1 Cor. i. 30. SECT. 2.

S E C T. III.

An Angel appears to Zacharias, to give him Notice of the Birth of John the Baptist; and his Mother, on her Conception, retires. Luke I. 5,—25.

LUKE I. 5.

THere was in the Days of Herod, the King of Judea, a certain Priest named Zacharias, of the Course of Abia: and his Wife was of the Daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord, blameless.

LUKE I. 5.

IN the Days of Herod the Great, whom the Romans had made King of Judea, there was a Priest named Zacharias, who belonged to that Course of Priests in the Temple, which was called the Course of Abiab; as Abiah was the Head of one of the twenty-four Courses, into which David distributed the Priests, (compare 1 Chron. xxiii. 6. and xxiv. 10.) whose Memory was still kept up, tho' none of his Line returned from the Captivity: *And his Wife, (that is, the Wife of Zacharias,) was one of the Daughters of the honourable family of Aaron, and her Name was Elizabeth.* And they were both of them Persons of a very fair Character among Men; and not only so, but sincerely and eminently righteous in the Sight of GOD, walking before him in the Simplicity of their Hearts, in a faithful Observance of all the moral Commands, as well as Ceremonial Ordinances and Institutions (a) of the Lord, in

SECT. 3.
Luke I. 5.

(a) Moral Commands, as well as ceremonial Institutions.] Some have thought this Distinction too nice: But it is certain, the Word *δικαιοσύνη* is sometimes used, to signify ceremonial Institutions; (see Heb. ix. 1, 10.) tho' it is often taken in a much more extensive Sense. It is however evident, that all expressed in the Paraphrase must be intended in the Text, since, under the Jewish Dispensation, they could not have approved themselves upright before GOD, without an obedient Regard to the ceremonial Law.

2

(b) Taking

SECT. 3. in a very blameless and exemplary Manner.
 Luke I. 7. *And they had no Child, because Elizabeth was barren; and so pious a Man, as Zacharias was, would not, on any Terms, think of taking another Wife, while she lived (b): And indeed there was no human Prospect, that their Family would ever be built up, because they were both very far advanced in Years.*

8 *And it came to pass, that when he was at Jerusalem, performing the Priest's Office before GOD, in the Order of his Course, or of the Class to which he belonged, According to the Custom of assigning the respective Offices of the Priesthood, to particular Persons then in Waiting, which was done by Lot; it so happened, that his Lot was then, to perform the most honourable Service of daily Ministration, that is, to burn Incense on the Golden Altar, which was before the Lord, contiguous to the Holy of Holies. (Exod. xxx. 7. xl. 5, 26.) This he accordingly did, when he went into the Temple of the Lord, either at the Time of Morning or Evening Sacrifice. And the whole Multitude of pious Jews assembled for Divine Worship, (according to the usual Custom of the People at that Time,) were praying without, in the Courts of the Temple at the Time of Incense (c), to declare their Concurrence with the*

7 And they had no Child, because that Elizabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in Years.

8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the Priests Office before God, in the Order of his Course, 9 According to the Custom of the Priests Office, his Lot was to burn Incense, when he went into the Temple of the Lord.

10 And the whole Multitude of the People were praying without, at the Time of Incense.

(b) Taking another Wife, while she lived.] *Polygamy*, as well as *Divorce*, were for the Hardness of their Hearts tolerated among the *Jews*; but they seem both to have been, in this Age at least, disapproved by Persons of the best Character. Compare *Mal. ii. 14,—16.* and *1 Tim. iii. 2.*

(c) *Were praying without, at the Time of Incense.*] This was the Foundation of that elegant Figure, by which *Prayer* is so often compared to *Incense*; (see *Psal. cxli. 2. Mal. i. 11. Rev. viii. 3, 4.*) and perhaps, one Reason of ordaining *Incense* might be, to intimate the Acceptableness of those pious *Prayers*, which were to accompany it. And indeed, burning fragrant Perfumes was, and in the Eastern Nations still is, so important a Part of the Entertainment of illustrious Families, that one might well expect it in the House of GOD.—It is so plain, that this was only an Office of *daily Ministration*, and that *Zacharias* was one of the *ordinary Priests*; that one cannot but be surpris'd, that any should ever conclude from this Circumstance of the Story, that *Zacharias* was *Sagan*, or Assistant to the High-Priest, and was now performing

an Angel appears, and foretells the Birth of John. 15

the Priest in that Intercession, which he was making to GOD on their Account. Compare SECT. 3.
Luke I. 10.
Rev. viii. 3, 4.

11 And there appeared unto him an Angel of the Lord, standing on the right Side of the Altar of Incense.

And while Zacharias was in the midst of his Devotions, on a sudden *there appeared to him* a Person, whom by the Form and Manner of his Appearance he immediately knew to be *an Angel of the Lord*; and he was *standing at the Right Hand of the Altar of Incense*, before which he was then ministring.

12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and Fear fell upon him.

And Zacharias seeing [*him*,] tho' he was a Man of such remarkable and experienced Piety, *was greatly discomposed, and an unusual Terror fell upon him.*

13 But the Angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy Prayer is heard; and thy Wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a Son, and thou shalt call his Name John.

But the Angel immediately scattered his Fears, and *said unto him* with great Gentleness of Aspect and Voice, *Fear not, Zacharias: for I come unto thee with no Message of Terror*; but, on the contrary, am sent to assure thee, that *thy frequently repeated Prayer for the Redemption of Israel, as well as that which thou hast formerly offered for a Blessing on thine own Family, is at length heard (d)*: And in Proof of it, I add, that *Elizabeth thy Wife shall ere long bear thee a Son*, to comfort thee in this thy declining Age; and in Token of the gracious Regard of GOD to him, *thou shalt call his Name John (e)*; that is, the Grace and Favour of
GOD;

performing his grand Office on the Day of Atonement, and so on this Foundation should calculate the Birth of *John the Baptist*, and of *Christ*, and all the other Feasts which depend upon them: Yet this is done in the Calendars, both of the *Roman* and *Greek Church*.

(d) *Thy Prayer is heard.*] No doubt he had often prayed for Children; but as he seems now to have given up all Expectations of that Kind, it is reasonable to conclude, that these Words chiefly relate to his Prayers for the Deliverance of *Israel* by the *Messiah*, whose Appearance was then expected by pious Persons, conversant in the Sacred Writings; (*Luke* ii. 25, 38. xix. 11. xxiii. 51.) and the more earnestly desired just at this Time, as they suffered for many grievous Things, by the Oppression of the *Romans*, and the Tyranny of *Herod*, which, toward the Close of his Reign, grew more and more insupportable.

(e) *Thou shalt call his Name John.*] It was the Office of the Father to name the Child; compare ver. 62. It is well known, that this Name, in *Hebrew* יוחנן, *Johannan*.

16 *The Design of John's Coming declared by the Angel,*

SECT. 3. GOD; to intimate, that the Divine Grace shall, in a very eminent Manner, be upon him. *And this Intimation shall be abundantly answered; for he shall be a Person of so distinguished a Character, that thou shalt have Joy and Transport in him (f); and many others shall also have Reason to rejoice*

Luke I. 14.

15 *with thee, on Occasion of his Birth. For he shall be great, not in Circumstances of outward Dignity and Splendor, but, what is infinitely more important, in the Sight of the Lord, even Jehovah his GOD, whose Approbation is the highest Glory: And in Token of his being in a peculiar Manner separated to his Service, (like the antient Nazarites, Num. vi. 3.) he shall drink neither Wine, nor any other sort of intoxicating Liquor; and he shall be so early remarkable for Wisdom and Piety, that he shall appear to be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his*

16 *Mother's Womb. And thus trained up, and animated for Service, he shall, when he appears under a publick Character, turn many of the Children of Israel to the Lord their God; whose Ways they have so generally forsaken, even while they are professing themselves to be his peculiar People, and boasting in such an extraordinary Relation to him.*

17 *And to prepare them to receive the Lord their GOD, appearing in the Person of the Messiah, he shall go before him, as an illustrious Harbinger, in the Spirit and Power of Elijah, that is, animated by the same Sanctity, Courage, and Zeal for Reformation, which*

14 And thou shalt have Joy and Gladness, and many shall rejoice at his Birth.

15 For he shall be great in the Sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither Wine nor Strong Drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his Mothers Womb.

16 And many of the Children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their GOD.

17 And he shall go before him in the Spirit and Power of Elias, to turn the Hearts of

nan, (which occurs near thirty Times in the *Old Testament*, tho' the *English Reader* is not aware that it is the same,) is derived from *חן* and *נן*, and properly signifies, the *Grace and Favour of the Lord*. *Elhanan*, and many of the other Proper Names among the *Hebrews*, had such a Kind of Signification, and probably were given in Token of their good Wishes to the Infant that received them.

(f) *Joy and Transport.*] *Αγαλλιασις* properly answers to the Word *Exultation*, or *leaping for Joy*, and is far more expressive than *Gladness*. Compare *1 Pet. i. 8. iv. 13.* and *Mat. v. 12.* in which last Places we render it, by being *exceeding glad*.

(g) *To*

of the Fathers to the Children, and the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just, to make ready a People prepared for the Lord.

which appeared so remarkable in that celebrated Prophet: And, according to that Prediction of Malachi, (with which the Sacred Canon concludes, Mal. iv. 6.) he shall meet with such glorious Success in his Ministry, as to convert the Hearts of the Fathers, with those of the Children (g); that is, he shall bring many, both of the rising, and the declining Age, to that real Piety towards God, which will be the surest Band of their mutual Duty towards each other: And many of those, who have hitherto been disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just, that is, insensible of the Obligations to real Religion, which is the greatest Wisdom, shall be made ready, as a People prepared for the Lord, raising in their Minds an Expectation of the Messiah, and a Disposition to welcome him when he shall appear.

SECT. 3.
Luke I. 17.

18 And Zacharias said unto the Angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old Man, and my Wife well stricken in Years.

And Zacharias then said to the Angel, By what Sign shall I know, that this desirable and wonderful Event shall be accomplished? for in the Course of Nature it seems most improbable; since I am an old Man, and my Wife is also considerably advanced in Years.

18

19 And the Angel answering, said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the Presence

And the Angel answering, said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the Presence of GOD,

19

(g) To convert the Hearts of the Fathers, with those of the Children; *μετεστρεψαι καρδιας πατερων και παιδων.*] Here is a plain Allusion to Mal. iv. 6. where it is said, (as we render it,) that *Elijah shall turn the Heart of the Fathers to the Children, and the Heart of the Children to their Fathers.*: לב אבות על בנים, which the Seventy render, *μετεστρεψαι καρδιας πατρων προς υιων*; in which Words it is quoted *Ecclus. xlviii. 10.* but *St. Luke's* Version seems as agreeable to the *Hebrew*. I thought *Sir Norton Knatchbull's* Reason sufficient to justify my rendering it as I have done; which is just as our Translators have rendered the like Phrase, *Judith ix. 10.* *δουλος επι αρχων, και αρχοντα επι δουλων*, the *Servant with the Prince, and the Prince with the Servant*. But as *Mr. L'Enfant*, and others, not without some Probability, render it, *to reconcile Fathers and Children*, supposing it may relate to domestick Dissentions, inseparable from the Variety of Religious Sects then amongst the *Jews*; I was willing to comprehend that Sense in my *Paraphrase*.—*Sir Norton Knatchbull's* Manner of Pointing the last Clause of the Verse, appeared to me so elegant, that I could not but follow it. *Elsner* would render it nearly in the same Sense, *By the Wisdom of the Just, to prepare the Disobedient as a People furnished for the Lord, or formed for him.* (Compare *Isai. xlii. 7. Septuag.*) See *Elsner. Observ. vol. i. pag. 170, —173.*

SECT. 3.
 Luke I. 19.

GOD, and near the Throne of his Majesty, as one of the chief Officers in his celestial Court; of whose Appearance to Daniel, thou hast so frequently read: (Dan. viii. 16. ix. 21.) and it is by a peculiar Favour, that *I am* now sent to speak to thee, in this Form of unusual Condescension, and to tell thee these joyful Tidings. My very Appearance ought therefore to have been owned, as a sufficient Confirmation of the Truth of my Message; especially by thee, who canst not but know, how frequently in Israel, the most illustrious Persons have been raised up from Parents, who had long been barren (*b*). And since thou dost not acquiesce in this, GOD will give thee a Sign; which, while it confirms thy Faith, shall also intimate his Displeasure against this sinful Mixture of Unbelief: For behold, thou shalt from this Moment be silent, and unable to speak any more, till the Day in which these Things shall be accomplished, even till the Day in which the Child shall be born; because thou hast not immediately believed my Words, which yet, thro' the Divine Indulgence and Favour to thee, shall be assuredly fulfilled in their Season, that is, as soon as thou canst reasonably expect, after thy Return Home.

20
 21 And the People, who stood without, were waiting for Zacharias, that he might dismiss them with his Blessing; (Numb. vi. 23.—27. and Lev. ix. 22, 23.) and they wondered that he continued so long in the Temple (*i*), beyond

Presence of GOD; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad Tidings.

20 And behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the Day that these Things shall be performed, because thou believest not my Words, which shall be fulfilled in their Season.

21 And the People waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the Temple.

(*b*) From Parents, who had long been barren.] Zacharias, being so pious a Priest, could not but often have read the Account, which the Scripture gives, of the Birth of Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Samson, Samuel, &c. who were all descended from Mothers that had been long barren. The Resemblance in Circumstances might well have produced a peculiar Regard to them; and one would have imagined, he must immediately have recollected the Story of the Angel's Appearance to Manoah in particular, when the same Scene was acted over before his own Eyes, and some of the same Expressions used by the celestial Messenger. Compare Judges xiii. 2,—14.

(*i*) So long in the Temple.] All that is here recorded, might have pass'd in a few Minutes:

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a Vision in the Temple; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

23 And it came to pass, that as soon as the Days of his Ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own House.

24 And after these Days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and hid herself five Months, saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me, in the Days wherein he looked on me, to

yond the usual Time: For he staid a while after the Angel disappeared, to present before God such Humiliations and Thanksgivings, as this extraordinary Circumstance required.

But when he came out, he was not able to speak to them; and by the Consternation, in which he appeared, they perceived, that he had seen a Vision in the Temple; and he himself by Signs intimated [it] to them: And he continued deaf and dumb (k), during the Remainder of his Stay at Jerusalem; a Circumstance wisely ordered by Providence, to awaken a greater and more general Expectation, as to the Event of so strange an Occurrence.

And after this Appearance of the Angel to him, it came to pass, that when the remaining Days of his Ministration were fulfilled, he departed to his own House.

And quickly after these Days were ended, Elizabeth his Wife conceived, according to the Prediction of the Angel; and apprehending her Condition, she concealed herself five Months in an obscure Retirement; not only that her Conception might more certainly appear, but chiefly, that she might enjoy Opportunity for those extraordinary Devotions, which this wonderful Favour of Providence demanded: Nor could she, under such a Circumstance, refrain from saying,

The most solemn Acknowledgments well become me, because the Lord himself hath thus miraculously interposed, and done this great Work for me, in his own good Time, even in the Days in which he hath graciously looked

notes: It seems probable therefore, that, since the People took Notice of his continuing so much longer than ordinary in the Holy Place, he spent some Time in secret Devotion, where, in a Mixture of holy Affections rising on so great and extraordinary an Occasion, he might easily forget how fast the Moments pass'd away.

(k) Deaf and dumb.] As *κωφ* signifies deaf, (Mat. xi. 5. Mark. vii. 32, 37. ix. 25. and Luke vii. 22.) as well as dumb, (Mat. ix. 33. xii. 22. xv. 31. and Luke xi. 14.) so it is plain from ver. 62. that Zacharias lost his Hearing, with his Speech, during this Interval.

SECT. 3. *looked down upon me, to take away my Re-*
 Luke I. 25. *proach of Barrenness among Men (1). For* among Men.
 Barrenness was accounted a peculiar Re-
 proach among the Jews, who looked upon
 it as a singular Happiness to be instrumental
 in multiplying the holy Seed, according to
 the Promises which GOD had made them
 relating to it.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Ver. 6. **H**OW amiable is the Character of this pious Pair, who were
 found *walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the*
Lord, blameless! May our Behaviour be thus unblameable, and our
 Obedience thus sincere, and universal! And let those, whose Office
 leads them nearer to GOD than others, remember their peculiar Ob-
 ligation to imitate such an Example.

Ver. 13. Let us observe with Pleasure, that the *Prayers*, which such Wor-
 shippers offer, *come up with Acceptance* before GOD; to whom no
 costly Perfume is so sweet, as the Fragrancy of a Character like this.—
An Answer of Peace was here returned, when the Case seemed to
 be most helpless. Let us learn to *wait patiently for the Lord*, and
 leave it to his own infinite Wisdom to chuse the Time, and Manner,
 in which he shall appear for us.

Ver. 12. *Zacharias*, accustomed as he was to converse with the GOD of
 Heaven, was nevertheless, as we see, thrown into great Consternation,
 at the *Appearance* of his Angelic Messenger. And may we not
 regard

(1) *My Reproach among Men.*] That *Barrenness* was so amongst the *Jews*, appears
 from *Gen.* xxx. 23. *1 Sam.* i. 11. *Isa.* iv. 1. *liv.* 1, 4. and many other Passages. That
 a Branch of the Family of *Aaron* should fail, would also be looked upon as a particular
 Calamity, and might, by ignorant and uncharitable People, be interpreted as a Judg-
 ment; and so much the rather, considering the many Promises GOD had made, to
 increase the Families of his obedient People. *Exod.* xxxii. 13. *Lev.* xxvi. 9. *Deut.* vii.
 13. and *Psal.* cxxvii. 3, 4, 5.—I will here digress so far as to observe, that considering
 how the whole *Jewish Policy* was interwoven with those *Acts of Religion* which were to
 be performed by the *Priests alone*, it might seem wonderful, that no Provision at all
 should be made for *intailing the Priesthood* on any other Family, if that of *Aaron*
 should happen to be *extinct*. Leaving this Contingency unprovided for, was in Effect
 putting the whole Credit of the *Jewish Religion* upon the perpetual Continuance of
 the Male Branches of that Family: An Issue, on which no Man of *Moses's* Pru-
 dence, nor indeed of common Sense, would have rested his *Legislation*, if he had not
 been truly conscious of its Divine Original; especially after *Two of Aaron's Four*
Sons, had been cut off in one Day, for a rash Act in the Execution of their Office,
 as soon as they were initiated into it, and died *without any Children.* *Numb.* iii. 4.

regard it therefore, as an Instance of the Goodness, as well as Wisdom of GOD, that he determines, that the Services which these Heavenly Spirits render us, should be generally invitable?—It is delightful to observe that amiable Condescension, with which *Gabriel*, Ver. 13, 19. the Courtier of Heaven, behaved on this Occasion. Let it teach us, with Pleasure to pursue the humblest Offices of Duty, and Love, which GOD may assign us, towards any of our Fellow-Servants, even in the lowest Stations.

Happy was the holy *Baptist*, in being employed in this blessed Ver. 17. Work of preparing Mens Hearts to receive a Saviour, and reducing the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the just. May we be inspired with some Degree of Zeal like his, in our proper Sphere, to pursue so noble a Design!

We see in the Instance of *Zacharias*, that some Reminders of Ver. 18, 20. Unbelief may be found, even in a faithful Heart: Let us guard against them, as remembering, they will be displeasing to GOD, and hurtful to ourselves.—And to conclude; when Providence favours us with any peculiarly gracious Interpositions, let us attentively remark the Hand of God in them; and let religious Retirement leave Ver. 24. Room, for serious Recollection, and devout Acknowledgments.

S E C T. IV.

The Angel Gabriel is sent to the Virgin Mary, to inform her of the Conception of CHRIST by her, in which she humbly acquiesces. Luke I. 26,—38.

LUKE I. 26.

AND in the sixth Month the Angel Gabriel was sent from GOD, unto a City of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a Virgin, espoused to

LUKE I. 26.

IN the sixth Month after Elizabeth had conceived, the same Angel Gabriel, who had been the Messenger of such good News to Zacharias, was sent from GOD to a small and inconsiderable City of Galilee, which was called Nazareth (a); Being charged with an important Commission to a Virgin, who was

SECT. 4.
LUKE I. 26.

27

(a) Nazareth.] A City in the Tribe of Zabulon, which was reduced to so low and contemptible a Condition, that no good Thing was expected from thence. John i. 46.

2. (b) She

The Angel appears to the Virgin Mary,

SECT. 4.
Luke I. 27.

was contracted according to the Jewish Method of Espousals, to a Man whose Name was Joseph; a Descendant of the Royal House of David, which illustrious Family was now reduced to so low a Condition, that Joseph followed the Employment of a Carpenter :
And the Virgin's Name was Mary, of the same Lineage. *And the Angel entered in to the Room,* in which she was alone; and standing before her, surrounded with an extraordinary Lustre, he addressed himself unto her, and said, *Hail, O thou distinguished Favourite of Heaven!* I congratulate thy Happiness, for *the Lord is with thee,* and is about to manifest his condescending Regard, in a Manner, which shall oblige all around thee to acknowledge, that *thou art blessed among Women,* the greatest and happiest of thy Sex.

29 Now the pious and modest Virgin, when she saw this Appearance of [the Angel,] and heard his Message, as she plainly perceived it to be something of a very extraordinary Nature, was much disturbed at his Discourse (b); and not imagining herself at all worthy of such Applause and Congratulation, she reasoned with herself for a while, what Kind of Salutation this could be (c), and from what Original it could proceed.

30 And the Angel immediately perceiving it, to disperse the Doubt she was in, said unto her again, *Fear not, Mary;* for I am a Messenger sent from Heaven to tell thee, that *thou hast found signal Favour with G O D.*

And

to a Man, whose Name was Joseph, of the House of David; and the Virgin's Name was Mary.

28 And the Angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured; the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among Women.

29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his Saying, and cast in her Mind, what manner of Salutation this should be.

30 And the Angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found Favour with God.

(b) *She was disturbed at his Discourse.*] Some would render *ἐν τῷ λόγῳ αὐτοῦ*, on Account of him; and Heinsius hath abundantly shewn, how common this Manner of speaking is, in the sacred Writings.

(c) *What Kind of Salutation.*] She seems to have suspected it might possibly proceed from the Artifice of some evil Spirit, to inspire her with Sentiments of Vanity and Pride.

(d) *How*



*And the Angel said, Hail thou that art highly favour'd, the
Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among Women.*

31 And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy Womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the Throne of his Father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no End.

34 Then said Mary unto the Angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a Man?

And behold, and observe it with due REGARD, for I assure thee in his Name, that from this very Time *thou shalt be with Child,* Luke I. 31.

and at the proper Season shalt be delivered of a Son, and shalt call his Name Jesus, the Divine Saviour; for he shall come on that important Errand, to save Men from the Tyranny of Sin, and the Displeasure of GOD. He shall be incomparably great and glorious, infomuch that he shall justly be called the Son of the most High God; and the Lord GOD shall give him the Throne of David his Father, from whom thou art descended; so that, like David, he shall be the Sovereign of GOD's chosen People, and possess that extensive Empire, which was promised to the Seed of that holy Patriarch: (2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. Psal. ii. 7, 8. and Psal. cxxxii. 11, 12.)

And he shall inherit the Kingdom, with this Circumstance of superior Glory, that whereas David is now sleeping with his Fathers, this exalted Prince shall rule over the House of Jacob, (even all the true Israel of GOD,) for ever; and tho' the most potent Monarchies of the Earth will be successively dissolved, yet of his Kingdom there shall be no End, even as long as the Sun and Moon endure. See Psal. lxxii. 5, 17. Isa. ix. 7. Dan. vii. 14.

And Mary replied to the Angel, O thou heavenly Messenger, permit me to ask, How can this possibly be from this Time, as thou hast intimated to me, since I am as yet a Virgin (d)?

And

(d) How can this be, — since I am as yet a Virgin? Some would render this, What? shall this be, if I have no Intercourse with a Man? as if she would be resolved, whether this Birth were to be produced, in a common, or a miraculous Manner. But I think it is more natural to suppose, that she understood the former Words, as an Intimation, that the Effect was immediately to take Place, to which her present Circumstance seemed, humanly speaking, an invincible Objection. Our English Version, I know not a Man, is more literal than what is here given; but I do not apprehend, that

SECT. 4.
Luke I. 35.

- And the Angel answering, said unto her, There is nothing in that Objection, great as it may seem; for this whole Affair is to be a Scene of Miracle: *The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the Power of the most High God shall thus overshadow thee by an amazing Energy, to produce an Effect, hitherto, from the Foundation of the Earth, unknown: And therefore that holy Offspring of thine shall, with Regard to this miraculous-Conception, as well as another, and yet greater Consideration, be called the Son of*
- 36 *GOD. And behold, to confirm thy Faith in a Declaration, which might seem so incredible, I farther assure thee, that thy Cousin Elizabeth also hath, by the miraculous Power of GOD, conceived a Son, tho' she be now in her old Age, and this is the sixth Month of Pregnancy with her, who hath long been called barren (e), and spoken of as one who could have no Hope of being a Mother.*
- 37 *And scruple not to believe, what I have told thee, with Regard to thyself, as well as her; for thou well knowest, that nothing is, or ever will be, impossible to GOD, whose Almighty Power operates with equal Ease, in the most miraculous, as in the most common Productions.*
- 38 *And strange as the Message was, Mary firmly believed it (f), and said with the most amiable*

35 And the Angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.

36 And behold, thy Cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a Son in her old Age: and this is the sixth Month with her, who was called barren.

37 For with GOD nothing shall be impossible.

38 And Mary said, Behold

that the strictest Fidelity requires, to render the *Hebraism* so exactly; the Sense is evidently the same.

(e) *Who hath been called barren.*] I cannot think (with some learned and judicious Persons,) that *to be called*, and *to be*, signify entirely the same Thing, so as that the former should be thought a mere *Pleonasm*, and rendered just as the latter. The Phrase seems to signify, in the Language of *Scripture*, not only that the Thing shall really be what it is called, but also that it shall be taken Notice of in that View: Which I think will appear from an attentive Consideration of the chief Texts, which have been produced to establish the opposite Opinion. Compare *Isa. i. 26. ix. 6. xxxv. 8. xlviii. 1, 5. lvi. 7. lxi. 3, 6. Mat. v. 9, 19. xxi. 13. Mark xi. 17. I John iii. 1.*

(f) *Mary firmly believed it.*] It is worthy of our Remark, that *Mary*, tho' a young Virgin, should so readily believe an Event, in itself so much more wonderful, than that which *Zacharias*, tho' an aged Priest, had found it so difficult to credit. And it may

hold the Handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy Word. And the Angel departed from her.

amiable Humility and Piety, *Behold*; I am SECT. 4.
the Handmaid of the Lord, and would improve myself faithful and obedient; *may it* Luke I. 38.
be unto me according to thy Word! I thankfully accept the Honour, of which I confess I am unworthy, and humbly resign my Reputation, and even my Life (g), to the Divine Care and Providence, while I wait the Accomplishment of thy Prediction.

Then the Angel, having executed his Commission, *departed from her*, and returned to his Abode in the Heavenly Regions.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WITH what holy Wonder and Pleasure, should we trace this Ver. 26, 27.
 Notice of an *Incaruate Redeemer*? and how thankfully should we adore his condescending Goodness, that for us Men, and for our Salvation, he did not despise the Womb of so obscure a *Virgin*?

We too are ready in our Thoughts, with *Gabriel*, to congratulate Ver. 28.
 her on so distinguished an Honour, and to say, as one did to *Christ* in the Days of his Flesh, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, O Lord, and the Breasts which thou hast sucked!* (Luke xi. 27.) But let us remember, there is yet a nobler *Blessedness* than this, attending those, in whose Hearts he is so formed by divine Grace, that they *bear his Word, and do it.*

Let us hear it with Joy, that he is *Jesus* the Saviour; but let us Ver. 31, 32.
 also consider, that he is *Christ* the anointed Sovereign, who is to rule over *God's People* for ever. Remember, O my Soul, that *of his* Ver. 33.
Kingdom there shall be no End; and esteem it thine unspeakable Honour and Happiness, to be enrolled among his faithful Subjects.

The Glories promised to such in the future State are so far beyond Experience, or even Imagination, that they might, to Sense, appear
 as

may be observed, that the Sacred Writers are particularly careful, to record Instances of this Kind, in which *God* doth, as it were, *out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings perfect his Praise.*

(g) Resign my Reputation, and even my Life.] For both these, humanly speaking, might have been in Danger; considering the Severity of the *Mosaic Law* against those, who had violated the Faith of their Espousals. (Compare *Deut.* xxii. 23, 24.) And tho' so impious a Prince, as *Herod*, who was then on the *Jewish Throne*, undoubtedly controlled many of the Laws of *God*; yet the natural Severity, and extravagant Jealousy of his Temper, would probably engage him to execute this in its full Terror.

SECT. 4. as incredible, as the Message which *Mary* received : But let us remember the eternal Truth of what *Gabriel* suggested to her, that *nothing is impossible to GOD*. He can therefore ripen our imperfect Souls, to all the Improvement and Pleasures of the Heavenly State, as easily as he produces the meanest Vegetable on the Earth.

Ver. 37. Let the Temper of the blessed *Virgin* on this great Occasion, be therefore the beautiful Model of ours : So, when the Purposes of the Divine Love are declared to us, may we resign ourselves unto the Lord; and with such calm Tranquility, firm Faith, and joyful Acquiescence, may we wait the Accomplishment of his gracious Promise, and say, *Behold the Servants of the Lord ! be it unto us according to his Word !* So do thou, O Lord, animate and support us ! and the weakest of thy Children shall not stumble at the greatest of thy Promises thro' Unbelief, but being strong in Faith, shall give Glory to GOD.

Ver. 38.

S E C T. V.

Mary visits Elizabeth ; her Faith is confirmed by it, and she breaks out into a Song of Praise. Luke I. 39,—56.

LUKE I. 39.

SECT. 5. *I*N those Days, or soon after the Time that she received the extraordinary Message mentioned above, *Mary arose* from Nazareth, where she then was, and went (a) with all the Expedition she conveniently could, to what was called *the Hill-Country*, which lay towards the South of Canaan; and came in-
to

Luke I. 39.

LUKE I. 39.

AND *Mary arose* in those Days, and went into the Hill-Country with haste into a City of Juda,

(a) *Mary arose and went, &c.*] This was a very wise Determination ; as it was very probable, that by communicating the Vision she had seen, and perhaps also describing the Form in which the Angel appeared, she might convince *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, that there was something singular in her Case ; and so might bring in the Reputation of such worthy and eminent Persons, to establish her own, in a Circumstance, which might otherwise expose her to great Suspicion and Censure.—I shall only add, that it is not improbable, the City here spoken of might be *Hebron*, a city belonging to the Priests, in the Tribe of *Judah*, and the *Hill-Country*. *Josh. xxi. 11.*

4

(b) *Happy*

Luke Ch. I. Ver. 40



Mary and Elizabeth.

The Virgin Mary's Visit to Elizabeth.

27

SECT. 5.
Luke I. 39.

40 And entered into the House of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth.

to a City of Judah, where Zacharias dwelt, with a comfortable Expectation, that this Visit might tend, both to confirm her Faith, and vindicate her Character. *And accordingly she entered into the House of her Kinsman Zacharias, and to the pleasing Surprize of her Friend saluted Elizabeth.*

40

41 And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the Salutation of Mary, the Babe leaped in her Womb: and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.

And it came to pass, that as soon as Elizabeth heard the Salutation of Mary, the Infant in her Womb did with a most unusual Emotion leap for Joy; as sensible of the Approach of him, whose Forerunner he was appointed to be. And Elizabeth was directed to consider it in this View; for she was immediately filled with an extraordinary Degree of Divine Inspiration, by the Influences of the Holy Spirit. And far from envying the superior Honour of her young Cousin, she in very exalted Language congratulated her on the Occasion; and crying out with a loud Voice, as in a sacred Kind of Transport, she said, in the very Words which Gabriel had before used to the Virgin:

41

42 And she spake out with a loud Voice, and said, Blessed art thou among Women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy Womb.

Most blessed art thou, O Mary, among all the Women in the whole World; and most blessed is the sacred and miraculous Fruit of thy Womb. And indeed, when I consider the Matter attentively, I cannot but cry out in Amazement, Whence is this Honour done to me, that she who is so highly honoured, as to be the Mother of that wonderful and Divine Child, whom I would with all Humility own as my Lord, should come unto me as a Guest under my Roof, to whom I should rather have hastened to pay my Homage? And that he, of whom thou art now pregnant, is indeed my Lord the Messiah, I certainly know by what I have now felt; for, behold, as soon as the first Voice of thy Salutation sounded in mine Ears, as thou wast entering into the House, the very Infant

42

43 And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?

43

44 For lo, as soon as the Voice of thy Salutation sounded in mine Ears, the Babe leaped in my Womb for Joy.

44

D 2.

within

SECT. 5. within me leaped in my Womb for Joy, with
 a Vigour and Sprightliness unknown before ;
 Luke I. 44. which I am taught to interpret, as a Ho-
 mage done to him, before whose Face he
 45 is to go to prepare his Way. And when
 I consider the whole Affair in all its Variety
 of Circumstances, I have Reason to say,
Happy is she, that so readily believed (b)
 what to Sense appeared so utterly incredible,
 without so much as requiring any miracu-
 lous Sign of it ; for surely there shall be a
 very faithful, and an exact Accomplishment,
 of all those Things which have been spoken
 to her from the Lord.

46 Then Mary also was filled with a Trans-
 port of holy Joy ; and under the Direction
 of the same Spirit, as well as in many of
 those Words which she had learnt from the
 Sacred Oracles, she in the Warmth of her
 Devotion said (c), “ My very Soul doth most
 affectionately magnify, and extol the Lord ;

47 “ And my Spirit, with all its most exalted
 Powers, rejoiceth in GOD as my Saviour ;
 “ who I trust is granting me my own Share
 “ in that Gospel, which by the Appearance
 “ of this his dear Son he is sending to so
 48 “ many others. For notwithstanding all
 “ the Meanness of my Circumstances, and
 “ the obscure Condition in which I live, yet
 “ be.

45 And blessed is she that
 believed : for there shall
 be a Performance of those
 Things, which were told
 her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, My
 Soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my Spirit hath
 rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath regarded
 the low Estate of his Hand-
 maiden ;

(b) *Happy is she that believed, &c.*] I doubt not but here is an oblique Reference to the Unhappiness of Zacharias, who had not immediately believed the Promise of GOD to him, and thereby had incurred so sensible a Mark of the Divine Displeasure. I have gently touched upon it in the *Paraphrase* ; but I was cautious of being too express, lest I should violate that great Decorum, which the Spirit of GOD, as well as the Rules of Modesty and Piety, taught her to observe, when the Faults of a Husband were in Question.—It may be added, that these Words shewed her Knowledge of Mary's immediate Belief of the Promise made to her : A Knowledge, which she could only gain by Divine Revelation, and which therefore would be a mutual Confirmation of the Faith of both.

(c) *Mary also said.*] It is observable, that most of these Phrases are borrowed from the *Old Testament*, with which the pious Virgin seems to have been very conversant ; especially from the Song of *Hannah*, in which there were so many Passages remarkably suitable to her own Case. Compare *1 Sam.* ii. 1,—10. *Gen.* xxx. 13. *Psal.* ciii. 17.—xcviii. 1. lxxxix. 10. cvii. 9. and *Mich.* vii. 20.

(d) *Shall*

Mary breaks out into a Song of Praise.

maiden ; for behold, from henceforth all Generations shall call me blessed.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great Things, and holy is his Name :

50 And his Mercy is on them that fear him, from Generation to Generation.

51 He hath shewed Strength with his Arm ; he hath scattered the Proud, in the Imagination of their Hearts.

“ he hath looked with a distinguishing Regard, and most surprising Condescension, upon the low Estate of his Handmaid ; for behold, he hath conferred such an Honour upon me, that I am fully persuaded, according to his Word by the Angel, that not only the present Age, but all future Generations shall call me happy (d), and shall admire the peculiar Grace and Favour that the Lord hath shewn me: For he who is powerful beyond all our Conceptions, even the Almighty God, to whom this strange Event is not only possible, but easy, hath done these great and unheard of Things for me ; and his Name, and Nature [is] so holy, that I cannot suspect the Accomplishment of any Thing that he hath promised. His Mercy also hath in every Age been the Hope and Confidence of his People ; and I well know, that it [is] from Generation to Generation, on them that fear him: He hath often wrought the most glorious Displays of Strength by his irresistible Arm : He hath often dispersed the Haughty Sinners, that exalt themselves against him, and confounded them in those Schemes which were the most laboured Imagination of their own Hearts (e).
“ He

SECT. 5.
Luke I. 48.

49;

50

51

(d) Shall call me happy, μακαρισί.] I think there are several other Texts, where μακαρισί should rather be rendered happy, than blessed, which is the proper Signification of εὐλογίη: (See 1 Tim. i. 11. vi. 15. and Rev. xx. 6.) Yet I cannot say, that the Distinction is always material, nor do I always observe it in the following Version.
(e) He hath dispersed the Haughty, &c. διασκοπῶν υπερηφάνους διαποικιστὴν καρδίας αὐτῶν.] I know this may be render'd, He hath scattered those that prided themselves in the Imagination, or Thought, of their Hearts : But I apprehended, the Words would well bear the yet more emphatical Sense, I have here given them. And thus they are peculiarly applicable to the Gospel ; in which God doth not only cast down Imaginations, and every high Thing, &c. (2 Cor. x. 5.) by the humbling Scheme of his recovering Grace ; but hath remarkably confounded his most insolent Enemies in their own most elaborate Projects, and established his sacred Cause by the violent Attempts they have made to suppress it : (Compare Psal. ii. 1,—3.) A Triumph of Divine Wisdom, of which succeeding Ages furnish out memorable and frequent Instances at home and abroad.

(f) Senz:

- SECT. 5. " *He hath often brought down mighty Potentates from their Thrones of Dignity and*
 Luke I. 52. " *Power, and by some singular Interposition of his Providence, hath exalted the Lowly from their obscurest State, as he is now*
 53 " *doing with respect to me. He hath often filled the Hungry with a Variety of good Things, and hath sent away the Rich and luxurious Sinner empty (f), having stripped him of all his Plenty, and turned him out of all those Possessions, in which*
 54 " *he was once so confident. And as a glorious Instance of his Condescension and his Power, tho' our Condition be so low, in Comparison of what it once was, he hath now succoured Israel (g), and taken him as his Child into paternal Protection: And all this he hath graciously done in*
 55 " *Remembrance of his Everlasting Mercy (h), Even as he long ago spoke to our Fathers, and promised it to Abraham, and to his Seed, throughout all Generations: And we the Heirs of those Promises, shall now behold them happily fulfilled, in all the Fulness of their Extent and Glory."*
 56 " *Then Mary abode with her Cousin Elizabeth, about three Months, till very near the Time of her Delivery; and then returned*
 to
- 52 He hath put down the Mighty from their Seats, and exalted them of low Degree:
- 53 He hath filled the Hungry with good Things, and the Rich he hath sent empty away.
- 54 He hath holpen his Servant Israel, in Remembrance of his Mercy,
- 55 As he spake to our Fathers, to Abraham, and to his Seed for ever.
- 56 And Mary abode with her about three Months, and returned to her own House.

(f) *Sent away the Rich empty.*] *Exponere* strictly signifies, *hath sent*, or *turned them out of Doors*, and very beautifully represents GOD as the great Proprietor of all, and the greatest of Men as his Tenants at Will, whom he can strip, and turn out, whenever he pleases.

(g) *He hath succoured Israel.*] That the Word *adhibere* properly signifies to interpose in Favour of a Person in great Necessity or extream Danger, *Eljner* hath abundantly proved, *Observ. vol. i. pag. 175.*

(h) *In Remembrance of his Everlasting Mercy.*] The Beginning of the 55th Verse should, I think, be included in a Parenthesis. It makes an easier and stronger Sense, to suppose that this *Remembrance of his Mercy for ever* refers to his *Everlasting Mercies* promised to the Patriarchs. Compare *Gen. xvii. 19. Isa. lv. 3. Rom. xi. 29.* Yet I acknowledge, those Blessings might be said, to be promised to *them, and their Seed, for ever*, which were intailed on their remotest Generations. Compare *Gen. xiii. 15. xviii. 8, &c.* Care is therefore taken to express both in the *Paraphrase.*

(i) Animate

to her own House, and lived privately there; SECT. 5.
concealing, but not forgetting, these extraor-
dinary Things, which had so powerful a Ten-
dency to establish and animate her Mind (i). Luke I. 56.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

HOW natural is it for those, who have themselves received Ver. 40.
Mercy of the Lord, to communicate their Joy to others, and
to seek the Society of their *Fellow-Saints*, whom he hath honoured
with the signal Manifestations of his Favour?—Happy they, whose
Friendship is confirmed, and heightened, by such indearing Ties!
And thrice happy the humble and generous Souls, who can thus, like
Elizabeth, lose the Thoughts of private Honour and Interest, in a Ver. 41, 42.
cordial Concern for the Glory of GOD, and the Good of Men; re-
joicing to see others, perhaps in some Respects their *Inferiors*, raised
to Stations of Service, more distinguished than their own!

If this pious Matron thought herself so highly honoured, in re-
ceiving a *Visit* from the *Mother* of our *Infant-Saviour*, how much Ver. 43-
more doth it become us to admire the Condescension of our glorious
Lord, that he will represent himself, as graciously *knocking at the*
Door of our Hearts, and ready not only to make us a transient *Visit*,
but to take up his stated Abode with us?

May our Faith, like that of the *blessed Virgin*, delightfully rest on Ver. 46.
all the Promises he makes, as firmly believing that *there shall be an*
Accomplishment of these Things which are spoken! And while that Ac- Ver. 45-
complishment is delayed, may the pleasing Expectation of it tune our
Voice, to a *Song of Praise* like hers!—Let our Souls also magnify the
Lord, and our Spirits rejoice in that GOD, whom we hope thro' Grace Ver. 47-
to be our *Saviour*; whose Condescension hath regarded us in such low Ver. 48.
Circumstances; and whose Almighty Power, and everlasting Love,
have done such great Things for us.—He hath provided Heavenly Ver. 49-
Food, to satisfy our *hungry Souls*; and hath raised us to enjoy the Ver. 53.
Mercies, which, in more obscure Intimations only, he *promised to the* Ver. 54, 55-
pious Patriarchs.—His Mercy is on all that *fear him*, thro' succeeding Ver. 50-
Generations.—May such distinguished Favours animate our Hearts
with

(i) Animate her Mind.] Many of the Things which had passed in this Journey, and especially that rapturous Inspiration, which she had herself experienced, and which till now was probably unknown to her, must elevate her Thoughts to a very sublime Pitch, and enkindle in her attentive reflecting Mind high Expectations, and glorious Hopes. See Luke ii. 19, 51. and compare Note (b), pag. 28.

SECT. 5. with those Sentiments of Devotion and Zeal, which they are so well qualified to excite! Otherwise the Joy of the *Old Testament Saints*, in the distant and imperfect Prospect of these Blessings, will testify against our Insensibility, in the superior Advantages with which we are favoured.

S E C T. VI.

The Birth, and Circumcision, of John the Baptist.
Luke I. 57,—66.

LUKE I. 57.

SECT. 6. **A**ND when the full Time for Elizabeth's Delivery was come, she brought forth a Son, exactly according to the Prediction of the Angel to Zacharias. And her Neighbours, and her Relations, were acquainted with it; and having heard, that the Lord in so illustrious and remarkable a Manner, had magnified and displayed his Mercy to her, they ran to testify their Joy, and sincerely congratulated her on the happy Occasion.

59 And in particular it came to pass, that on the eighth Day they came together in some considerable Numbers, to circumcise the Child according to the Law: (Gen. xvii. 12. Lev. xii. 3.) And as it was then customary to give it a Name (a), they that were present would have called him Zacharias, after the Name of his Father. But his Mother, who had been more particularly informed by her Husband,

LUKE I. 57.

NOW Elizabeth's full Time came, that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a Son.

58 And her Neighbours and her Cousins heard, how the Lord had shewed great Mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth Day they came to circumcise the Child; and they called him Zacharias, after the Name of his Father.

60 And his Mother answered

of

(a) As it was then customary to give it a Name.] The giving the Child its Name, was no more a Part of the original Intent of *Circumcision*, than of *Baptism*: It was an incidental Circumstance, which Custom had added. And I cannot forbear saying, that in administering the *Christian Ordinance*, I think Care should be taken, to order the Voice so, that it may plainly appear, we only then speak to the Child by the Name, which hath been already given it.—That the *Father* among the Antients used to name the Children, and that it was customary often to give them the Name of their immediate Ancestors, *Elfner* has shewn on this Text.

3

(b) A Wri-

Zacharias names him, and recovers his Speech.

swered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy Kindred that is called by this Name.

62 And they made Signs to his Father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a Writing-Table, and wrote, saying, His Name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his Mouth was opened immediately, and his Tongue loosed: and he spake, and praised God.

65 And Fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these Sayings were noised abroad throughout all the Hill-Country of Judea.

66 And all they that had heard them, laid them up in their Hearts, saying, What manner

of what had passed between him and the Angel in the Temple, answered and said, Nay, my Friends, it must not be so; but he shall be called John. And when they

objected to this, and said unto her, None of thy Kindred, either by Birth or Marriage, is called by this Name:

In order to determine the Question, and to be fully satisfied, they made Signs to his Father, to know what he would have him called.

And he by Signs asked for a Writing-tablet (b), and when he had received it, he wrote, saying, His Name is John; thereby declaring it a settled Point, that would admit of no farther Debate. And they were all amazed at the Determination.

But greater still was their Astonishment, to find his Tongue at Liberty, and his Speech restored; for his Mouth was immediately opened, and his Tongue [loosed]; and he spake audibly and distinctly, beginning, as it was most reasonable, with praising GOD (c), in that sublime Hymn, which we shall presently record.

And a religious awful Kind of Dread fell, not only on those that were present, but on all that dwelt near them: And all these Things, in a very particular Detail of Circumstances, were published, and became the great Topick of Conversation, over the whole Hill-Country of Judea.

And all wise and pious Persons that heard [them,] laid them up carefully in their Hearts, as Matters highly worthy

(b) A Writing-Tablet, *ωνακιδιον*.] We have so few Diminutives in our Language, that I was not willing to lose this, which much more exactly answers the Original, than Table.

(c) And his Tongue [loosed]; and he spake, praising GOD.] I entirely agree with the learned Raphaelius, (*Annot. ex Herod. pag. 219, 220.*) that Elfsner's Criticism (*Observ. Vol. 4. pag. 178, 179.*) is not to be admitted; which would render it, *And his Tongue also spake, praising GOD.* It would then have been *ωλογασα*, instead of *ωλογων*; and Raphaelius has given unanswerable Instances, in the most approved Writers, of a Verb joined with Two Nouns, when in strict Propriety it can only belong to one of them. Compare 1 Cor. iii. 2. where the Original is, *Γαλα υμας σπιτισα, η ου βρωμα. I have given you Milk to drink, and not Meat.*

SECT. 6.
Luke I. 60.

61

62

63

64

65

66

SECT. 6. worthy their future Consideration, saying, *What Kind of a Child will this be,* who is ushered into the World in so extraordinary a Way? And their Expectations were farther raised by observing, that as he grew up, *the Hand of the Lord was signally with him;* and thro' the Divine Blessing he appeared, not only a healthful and thriving, but likewise on other, and higher Accounts, a very hopeful Child.

manner of Child shall this be? And the Hand of the Lord was with him.

Luke I. 66.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- Ver. 57. SO sure are the Promises of GOD, and so certainly will the *full Accomplishment* of them another Day, shame our suspicious unbelieving Hearts, and awaken the Tongues of his Servants to *Songs of Praise!* Happy the Souls, who by a lively Faith in them are anticipating that blessed Day, and whose Minds, kept in Tune by these pleasing Views, are opening themselves to the most tender Sympathy with others, and, like the *Kindred* of this pious Pair, are making the religious Joys of others their own; so sharing, rather than envying, the superior Favours bestowed upon them!
- Ver. 58. Let us learn with them, wisely to *observe* what GOD is doing around us, and to *lay up* remarkable Occurrences in our Hearts; that, by comparing one Step of Divine Conduct with another, we may the better *understand the Loving-kindness of the Lord,* and be engaged to act with more regular Obedience in a holy Subserviency to his gracious Purposes.
- Ver. 65, 66. When, like good *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth,* we have the Pleasure to see our Infant-Offspring, growing up in Safety and Cheerfulness, with healthy Constitutions of Body, and towardly Dispositions of Mind too, let us ascribe it to *the Hand of the Lord,* which is upon them for Good. Let us remember, that we are at best, but the Instruments of the Divine Care and Favour to them; and that our Families would soon become Scenes of Desolation, did not GOD watch over them, in a thousand Circumstances of Danger and Distress, which no Prudence of ours could have foreseen, and which no Care of ours could have been able to provide against.

S E C T.

S E C T. VII.

Zacharias, on the Birth of his Son, breaks out into a sublime Anthem of Praise. Luke I. 67, to the End.

LUKE I. 67.

AND his Father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68 Blessed be the Lord GOD of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his People,

69 And hath raised up an Horn of Salvation for us, in the House of his Servant David :

70 As he spake by the Mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been since the World began ;

71 That we should be saved

LUKE I. 67.

NOW John being born, as we have before described it, *Zacharias his Father*, when he first spake after the Birth of this extraordinary Child, *was filled with the Influences of the Holy Spirit ; and in an exalted Strain of sacred Rapture he prophesied, saying,*

“ *Blessed be Jehovah, the GOD of Israel!* 68

“ *because he hath now owned the Relation*

“ *in so signal a Manner ; for he hath gra-*

“ *ciously looked down upon his People in their*

“ *Distress, and wrought out an illustrious and*

“ *complete Redemption for them : And* 69

“ *he hath raised up for us a Horn of Sal-*

“ *vation (a), even an honourable and pow-*

“ *erful Saviour, who is already conceived,*

“ *and will quickly be born, according to*

“ *our long Expectation, in the Family of*

“ *his Servant David : As he hath spo-* 70

“ *ken by the Inspiration of his Spirit, and*

“ *given frequent Intimations to us by the*

“ *Mouth of his holy Prophets, which have*

“ *been from the Beginning of Time (b).*

“ *It now appears, that none of those Pre-* 71

“ *dictions*

(a) *A Horn of Salvation.*] As a *Horn* is often used, for the most obvious Reasons, to express *Strength* and *Dignity*, it being the Ornament and Defence of the Creature that wears it ; so it is sometimes used in the *Old Testament* with a peculiar Reference to the *Messiah*. Compare *Psal.* cxxxii. 17. lxxxix. 24. 1 *Sam.* ii. 10. and 2 *Sam.* xxii. 3.

(b) *From the Beginning of Time.*] It cannot certainly be inferred from hence, as some have argued, that there was *from the Beginning of the World* a Series of Prophets, or that every individual Prophet spoke of the *Messiah* ; which can never be proved, without doing great Violence to the remaining Writings of some amongst them. The Words of *Zacharias* only amount to this, that the Generality of Prophecies, in all Ages, refer to this great Event. Compare *Acts* x. 43.

SECT. 7. " dictions are forgotten by him, since he is
 Luke I. 71: " preparing for us such a glorious Deliver-
 " ance, *that we may thus obtain Salvation*
 " *from the Power of the most formidable*
 " *of our Enemies, and may at length be*
 " *rescued by his Redeeming Grace from the*
 72 " *Hand of all that hate us (c):* And this
 " *gracious Messenger hath G O D now sent,*
 " *that he may faithfully perform the Mercy,*
 " *which he [promised] to our Fathers (d),*
 " *the blessed Effects of which extend also*
 " *to them; and by him shall G O D appear*
 " *to be mindful of his holy Covenant, which*
 " *hath passed thro' so many various Dispen-*
 " *sations, yet still in the main continues the*
 73 " *same: It being indeed no other than*
 " *the Oath which he so solemnly sware unto*
 " *Abraham (e) our Father; (Gen. xxii. 16,*
 74 " *17.) According to the Tenour of*
 " *which, he will now grant us the Favour,*
 " *of an Opportunity, and a Heart, to serve*
 " *him without Fear, being delivered out of the*
 75 " *Hands of our Enemies, [And to walk]*
 " *before him, under a religious Sense of his*
 " *Presence, all the Days of our Life, in*
 " *the Paths of the strictest Holiness and*
 " *Righteousness (f)."*

saved from our Enemies, and from the Hand of all that hate us :

72 To perform the Mercy promised to our Fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant :

73 The Oath which he sware to our Father Abraham ;

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the Hands of our Enemies, might serve him without Fear,

75 In Holiness and Righteousness before him, all the Days of our Life.

Then

(c) Be rescued by his redeeming Grace from the Hand of all that hate us.] This seems to have been the Mind of the Spirit, as appears by the whole Tenour of Scripture; but it is impossible to say, whether Zacharias fully understood his own Words, which it is certain the older Prophets in some Cases did not. See 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.

(d) Perform the Mercy promised to our Fathers.] Πιστοις ελεος μετα των πατερων ημων most literally signifies towards exercise Mercy to our Fathers, and might perhaps intimate that the Mercy extended to the pious Patriarchs was owing to Christ, who was afterwards to appear. Compare Rom. iii. 25. I cannot recollect any other Place, where ποιειν ελεος is to perform a Promise.

(e) The Oath which he sware unto Abraham.] In Vindication of our Version from any Objection which might arise to a learned Reader from the Construction of that Original, πιστοσιν ελεος ποιειν, — ορκος ον ειπωσε κ. τ. λ. see Bos, exercit. pag. 35. and Elser, in Loc.

(f) And to walk in Holiness and Righteousness.] This, as well as Deliverance from Enemies, being spoken of as the merciful Grant of God, I cannot but conclude, it refers to those Passages, in which God promised to pour out extraordinary Degrees of a pious Spirit on his People, under the Reign of the Messiah. Compare Isa. xlv. 1, — 5. Jer. xxxi. 31, — 34. and Ezek. xxxvi. 25, — 27.

(g) Tender

76 And thou, Child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the Face of the Lord, to prepare his Ways;

77 To give Knowledge of Salvation unto his People, by the Remission of their Sins,

78 Through the tender Mercies of our GOD; whereby the Day-spring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give Light to them that sit in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death, to guide

Then turning to his new-born Son, he added, " *And thou, my dear Child, shalt have the Honour to be justly called, the Prophet of the most high GOD: An illustrious Prophet indeed! for thou art he, who, according to the Prediction of Isaiah, (Isa. xl. 3.) shalt go before the Face of the Lord, even of our Divine Messiah, to give Notice of his Approach, and to prepare his Ways. It shall be thine honourable and delightful Office, not merely to bring the Tidings of some Temporal Deliverance, but to give the Knowledge of Eternal Salvation to his People; in directing them how they are to obtain the Forgiveness of their Sins; Which, how great soever they have been, may now be obtained, through the tender Compassions of our GOD (g), whose Bowels of Mercy have yearned over his backsliding Children; by Virtue of which Compassions, the Dawning of the celestial Day (h) hath visited us from on high: And the Sun of Righteousness is shortly arising, to spread sacred Knowledge and Joy over the Regions of Ignorance and Misery, to enlighten those that sit in Darkness, and as it were in the very Shadow of Death (i) itself, or*

SECT. 7.
Luke I. 76.

77

78:

79:

" in

(g) *Tender Compassions of our GOD.*] *Ἐπιδαρυχρα ἰσως*, his Bowels of Mercy; a strong *Hebraism*; which, tho' I have not literally retained it in my *Version*, I have expressed in the *Paraphrase*; and it is a Method I shall often take in like Cases. Compare *Jer. xxxi. 18,—20.*

(h) *The Dawning of the Day.*] It is true that *αναδωρ* may signify, as some here render it, *the rising Sun*: and I doubt not, but here is a Reference to such Texts, as *Mal. iv. 2.* and *Isa. lx. 1,—3.* and possibly, considering the known Ambiguity of the *Hebrew* Word *נחל*, which also signifies a *Branch*, there may be some Allusion to *Jer. xxiii. 5.* and *Zech. iii. 8.* But it is strange, that any should have thought *Zacharias*, a *Jewish* Priest, hath here referred to the *Greek Version* of those Texts. It is well known, the Word properly signifies, that Part of the Heavens where the Light begins to arise, and the first Shining of that Light. Compare *Rev. vii. 2.* *The Dawning of the Day* seemed therefore a very literal *Version*, and I apprehend, it more beautifully describes the State of Things just at this Interval, than if the Sun had been represented as actually risen.

(i) *The Shadow of Death.*] Such Phrases, as these, do with peculiar Propriety describe the ignorant and miserable State of the *Gentile* World; and perhaps this former

SECT. 7.

“ in the most gloomy and dangerous Condi-
 tion, and to direct our wandering Feet in-
 to the Way of Peace and Felicity.”

guide our Feet into the
 Way of Peace.

Luke I. 79.

80

Thus was John the Baptist usher'd into
 the World, and thus were his Infant Days
 graced with Wonders. *And the Child grew up,
 and became strong in Spirit, giving early To-
 kens, both of an heroick Genius, and a pious
 Disposition, thro' the Work of GOD'S Spirit
 upon him. (Compare Judges xiii. 24, 25.)
 And his pious Parents dying while he was
 young, or being peculiarly directed by a Di-
 vine Revelation in this Affair, he did not ap-
 pear in the Service of the Temple, even when
 he came to the Age, in which the Priests be-
 gan their Ministrations; but by Divine Dif-
 pensation, and Direction, was led to retire
 into desert Places, and to continue there till
 the Day of his being publickly manifested to
 Israel, and as it were inaugurated among
 them, under his Prophetick Character; for
 which the Austerity and Devotion of this
 Solitude was a happy Preparation (k).*

80 And the Child grew,
 and waxed strong in Spirit,
 and was in the Deserts till
 the Day of his shewing unto
 Israel.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Ver. 67.

WITH what sacred Joy should we join in this *Hymn of Praise!*
 The Blessings celebrated in it, were not peculiar to the Fami-
 ly of *Zacharias*, or to the House of *Israel*; but we, thro' the Divine
 Goodness, have our Share in them: *The Lord GOD of Israel hat he visited*
and

Ver. 68.

Part of the *Verse* may refer to them: But as *Christ's* preaching to the *Jews* in *Galilee*,
 (for it was only to *Jews* he applied, *Mat.* xv. 24. x. 5, 6. and *Rom.* xv. 8.) is said,
Mat. iv. 14,—16. to be an Accomplishment of *Isa.* ix. 1, 2. to which *Zacharias* here
 probably refers, I was not willing in the *Paraphrase* to fix it to the *Gentiles*. The sad
 Character, and Circumstances of the *Jews* at this Time, as described by *Josephus*,
 too well suit the Representation here made.

(k) This Solitude was a happy Preparation. It may further be observed, that such
 a Retirement also contributed to his Acceptance, by raising a Character for eminent
 Mortification and Sanctity; enured him to the Oppositions he was to expect in his
 Work; and naturally prevented any such Intimacy with *Christ* in their Childhood
 and Youth, as might possibly have occasioned some Suspicion, as to the Impartiality
 of the Testimony which *John* afterwards bore to him. Compare *John* i. 31.—*Ellner*
 hath shewn, as *Schmidius* had before observed, that the Word *anadike*; often signifies
 the Inauguration of a Publick Officer. *Observ.* Vol. i. pag. 183.

and redeemed us. He hath remembered his Covenant with the pious Patriarchs, in Favour of Millions, who are their Seed, only as Heirs of the Faith of Abraham.—To us hath he accomplished the Words he had spoken by his holy Prophets, and thro' his tender Mercies hath caused the Sun of Righteousness to arise upon us; upon us, who were once indeed sitting in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death; and whose Ancestors, for many succeeding Generations, were lost in Ignorance, Idolatry, and Wickedness. Let us bless the Lord, who hath given us Light; and make it our daily Prayer, that it may be the happy Means of guiding our Feet into the Way of Peace.—Let us with Pleasure and Thankfulness receive the Knowledge of Salvation, by the Remission of our Sins, without which we shall never see it, but at an unapproachable Distance.

SECT. 7.

Ver. 72. 73.

Ver. 70, 78.

Ver. 79.

Ver. 77.

Let us repose our chearful Confidence in this Almighty Saviour, this Horn of Salvation, which GOD's own right Hand hath raised up for us: Thro' him let us seek the Pardon of our Sins, and Deliverance from all the Enemies of our Souls. And let a grateful Sense of his Redeeming Love engage us, resolutely to walk in the strictest Holiness and Righteousness as in the Presence of GOD, and carefully to maintain before him a Conscience void of Offence all the Days of our Lives.

Ver. 69.

Ver. 74.

Ver. 75.

May we carry this Temper along with us into Solitude and Retirement; may it animate us in the busiest Scenes of Life; and in every particular Instance, may it determine us in our Choice of either, and regulate our Conduct in both!

Ver. 80.

S E C T. VIII.

Joseph's Suspicions concerning Mary removed, by the Appearance of an Angel to him. Mat. I. 18, to the End.

MAT. I. 18.

MAT. I. 18.

NOW the Birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his Mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before

AND now, having given an Account of the Birth of John, afterwards surnamed the Baptist, we proceed to that of JESUS CHRIST, the great Subject of our History, which was attended with the most surprising Circumstances, and was thus introduced. His Mother Mary being contracted to Joseph, according to the Method of the Jewish Espousals,

SECT. 8.

Mat. I. 18.

SECT. 8.
Mat I. 18.

sals, before they came to cohabit together as Man and Wife, she was found to be with Child; and this Pregnancy was, (as we have been informed above,) by the miraculous Operation of the Holy Spirit.

19

Now Joseph her Husband being a righteous Man (a), perceiving there was something very extraordinary in the Case, and being by no Means willing to expose her unto publick Infamy (b) by any severe Prosecution; nevertheless was so confounded with the Concurrence of the strange Circumstances that attended this Affair, as that in order to secure the Honour of his own Character, and to behave with all the Tenderness that might be to a Person that he loved, he purposed to himself to have divorced her as privately, as the Law of Moses would have allowed, that is, only in the Presence of two Witnesses, and without assigning any particular Cause.

20

And as he was revolving these Things in his Mind during the Night-season, full of the Thoughts of what he was to do, he fell asleep; and

fore they came together, she was found with Child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph her Husband, being a just Man, and not willing to make her a publick Example, was minded to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on these Things, behold, the Angel

(a) *A righteous Man.*] It is without any just Reason, that this Text is often assigned as an Instance, where the Word *δικαιος* is used to signify *merciful*, and some accordingly have here translated it, *a good natured Man*. If we consider the Information, which Joseph might have received from Persons of such an extraordinary Character, as *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, (who would certainly think themselves obliged to interpose on such an Occasion, and whose Story so remarkably carried its own Evidence along with it;) besides the Intimation the Prophecy of *Isaiah* gave, and the Satisfaction he undoubtedly had in the virtuous Character of *Mary* herself; we must conclude, that he had acted a very severe and *unrighteous* Part, had he proceeded to Extremities without serious Deliberation; and that putting her away privately would, in these Circumstances, have been the hardest Measure, which Justice would have suffered him to take.

(b) *To expose her unto publick Infamy.*] It is very possible, *παράδειγμα* may here refer to that exemplary Punishment which the Law inflicted on those, who had violated the Faith of their Espousals, before the Marriage was completed: *Deut. xxii. 23, 24.* where it is expressly ordered, that a *betrothed Virgin*, if she lay with another Man, should be stoned. We may suppose however, that the Infamy of a *publick Divorce*, tho' she had not been stoned, may also be expressed by the same Word. But then there was besides a *private* Kind of *Divorce*, in which no Reason was assigned, and the Dowry was not forfeited, as in the former Case; and by this she would not have been so defamed. See *Selden. Ux. Heb. lib. iii. cap. xvi. pag. 302, 365, 366.* and *Lightfoot. Hor. Heb. in loc.*

(c) An



Myndart pinx. *The Angel appeareth unto Joseph.* *Benoist sculp.*
Matt. II. v. 13.

Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a Dream, saying, Joseph thou Son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy Wife; for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

and behold, an Angel of the Lord (c) appeared to him in a Dream, and said unto him, Joseph, thou Son of David, (as being lineally descended from him,) fear not to take Home Mary thy Wife, according to the Espousals that have passed between you, tho' there may seem some Danger of bringing a Reflection on thyself and Family; for that which is begotten and formed in her, is of no Human Original, but was produced by the miraculous and unexampled Operation of the Holy Spirit himself. And in Consequence of it, when her Time is fulfilled, she shall bring forth a Son; and thou, under whose Protection and Care he shall be placed during his Infancy, shalt call his Name Jesus (d), that is, GOD the Saviour: For he shall prove that glorious and divine Person, intended by GOD to save his People, even all that truly believe in him, both from the Punishment, and the Dominion of their Sins; by procuring an ample Pardon for them, and raising them, after a Life of Holiness on Earth, to a State of compleat Perfection and Happiness.

SECT. 8.
Mat. I. 20.

21 And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his Name Jesus: for he shall save his People from their Sins.

21

22 (Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled,

Now all this was done, (that is, this miraculous Conception, together with all the Circumstances proper to attend it, was effected,) that this celebrated Prophecy might be accomplished (e), which the Lord had so long before

22

(c) *An Angel of the Lord.*] Probably Gabriel, who had been sent to Zacharias, and Mary. That Joseph's Scruple did not proceed, as some of the Fathers supposed, merely from Veneration, appears from the Reason given, why he should take Mary, which in that Case would have been the only Reason against it.

(d) *Call his Name Jesus.*] Bishop Pearson seems to have set the Etymology of this Name in the clearest Light, in his large Discourse on it: (*Pearson on the Creed, pag. 69,—71.*) in which he endeavours to prove, that JAH, one of the Names of GOD, enters into the Composition of the Hebrew Name *Jehoshuah*, to which *Jesus* answers. (Compare *Heb. iv. 8.* where, by the Way, I think it should have been rendered, if *Joshua* had given them Rest.) This Derivation most plainly shews, how *Christ's* being called *Jesus*, was in Effect an Accomplishment of the Prophecy, that he should be called *Emmanuel*.

(e) *That this Prophecy might be accomplished.*] Few are Strangers to the Objections which have been made against applying this Prophecy to *Christ*, which drove Grotius, Vol. I. Numb. III.

F

SECT. 8. before spoken by the Prophet *Isaiah*, (*Isa. vii.*
 Mat. I. 22. 14.) who said to the House of David in the
 Reign of *Ahaz*, when it seemed in the ut-
 23 most Danger of being destroyed; “*Be-*
 “ *bold*, and attend to it with a becoming Re-
 “ *gard*, while I assure you, that *GOD* will
 “ *accomplish* a yet nobler Work, than what
 “ *he is ready to perform* in your Deliver-
 “ *ance from Pekah*, and the Son of *Tabeal*;
 “ *for an unspotted Virgin*, descended many
 “ *Ages hence from this Royal Family*, now
 “ *to be rescued*, shall in a miraculous Man-
 “ *ner conceive*, and bring forth a Son, and
 “ *they shall call his Name Emmanuel*,” which
 being translated, signifies, *GOD with us*; that
 is, *GOD* dwelling in our Nature, on the
 most gracious and important Design; a
 Name, in Signification nearly equivalent to
 that of *Jesus*.

24 Then *Joseph* arising from his Sleep, with
 entire Satisfaction, and humble Acknowledg-
 ment, did as the Angel of the Lord had ap-
 pointed him, and without any farther Delay
 25 took Home *Mary* his Wife. Nevertheless,
 in Expectation of this wonderful Event, and
 out of Reverence to this Sacred Birth, he
 knew her not as a Wife, tho’ she dwelt under
 his Roof; but she continued a pure Virgin,
 even

filled, which was spoken of
 the Lord by the Prophet,
 saying,

23 Behold a Virgin shall
 be with Child, and shall
 bring forth a Son, and they
 shall call his Name *Emma-*
nuel, which, being interpret-
 ed, is, *GOD* with us.)

24 Then *Joseph* being
 raised from Sleep, did as the
 Angel of the Lord had bid-
 den him, and took unto him
 his Wife;

25 And knew her not,
 till

and many others, unhappily to suppose, that it immediately related to the Birth of a
 Child of *Isaiah*'s in a natural Way, and only in a secondary Sense, refer'd to *Christ*.
 The Controversy is too large for this Place. I content myself with observing, that a
 Son's being born of one then a *Virgin*, when she was married, was no such miraculous
 Event, as to answer such a pompous Introduction; and that it seems most reasonable,
 to interpret *Isa. vii. 16.* as referring to *Shearjashub*, whom *Isaiah* was ordered to take
 in his Hand, (*ver. 3.*) for no other imaginable Reason, but that something remarkable
 was to be said of him. So that the general Sense in short is this; “*You have affronted*
 “ *GOD* by refusing a *Sign* now, yet his transcendent Mercy will make your present
 “ *forfeited Deliverance*, (by the Death of these confederate Kings, which shall hap-
 “ *pen before* וְנָתַתִּי *this Child* in my Hand is grown up to the Exercise of Reason,)
 “ *a Sign* of a much nobler Deliverance by the *Messiah*; who shall be born of an im-
 “ *maculate Virgin*, and condescend to pass thro’ the tender Scenes of Infancy, as
 “ *other Children do.*” Compare *Isa. vii. 10.—16.* And see *Bishop Chandler's* ex-
 cellent Remarks on this Text, in his *Defence of Christianity*, pag. 325,—331. *Mr.*
Green's 4th Letter to *Mr. Collins*; and *Usher's Annals*, A. M. 3262.

(f) Till

III she had brought forth her First-born Son; and he called his Name Jesus.

even till she had brought forth her divinely begotten Son, who, on Account of his distinguished Glories, with peculiar Propriety might be called *the First-born (f)*. And according to the Direction of the Angel, he called his Name *Jesus*. But several other Circumstances, relating to this important Event, will afterwards be recounted.

SECT. 8.
Mat. I. 25.

IMPROVEMENT.

WE see here, in *Joseph*, an excellent Pattern of Gentleness, and Prudence. In an Affair which appeared dubious, he chose, as we should always do, rather to err on the favourable, than on the severe, Extrem. He was careful to avoid any precipitate Steps; and in the Moments of Deliberation, GOD interposed to guide, and determine, his Resolves.

With what Wonder, and Pleasure, did he receive these glad Tidings! With what Pleasure should We also receive them! For we too are informed of *Jesus*, who came to save his People from their Sins. An important, and glorious Salvation indeed! *Hosannah* to him, that cometh in the Name of the Lord! Blessed *Jesus*! answer thy Character, in delivering us, not only from Sin's condemning, but from its reigning Power!

Let

(f) Till she had brought forth her Son, the First-born.] There seems to be some peculiar Emphasis in the Expression, *τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτῆς τοῦ πρωτότοκου*, which justifies the Turn I have given to the Words. Compare *Luke* ii. 7. (where the very same Words are used, with a remarkable Exactness;) *Rom.* viii. 29. *Col.* i. 15. and *Heb.* i. 6.—Tho' I confess the Force of the learned and candid *Dr. Daniel Scott's* Remarks on this Note to be such, as to convince me, that this Expression might have been used with Regard to the *First-born Son* of any Family; and consequently, that no certain Argument of *Christ's* superior Dignity and Glory can be drawn from it: Yet from the Pen of one so deeply impressed with the Thought of it, as *Luke* as well as *Matthew* was, I think it may probably contain some Reference to it.—On what Terms *Joseph* and *Mary* afterwards lived, is of so little Importance to us, that I cannot but wonder, it should have been the Subject of so much Debate. It is sufficient for us to know, that she was a *Virgin*, not only at the Time of *Christ's* Conception, but at his Birth; as the Prophecy foretold she should be. The *Evangelist* therefore wisely contented himself, with recording this, without affirming any thing farther either Way on this delicate Subject: I say, either Way; for that the Manner of Expression here used, will not certainly prove, that *Mary* had more Children afterwards, appears from comparing *Gen.* xxviii. 15. *1 Sam.* xv. 35. *Job* xxvii. 5. *Psal.* cx. 1. cxii. 8. and *Mat.* xii. 20.

- SECT. 8.** Let our Souls bow to *Emmanuel*, our incarnate **G O D** : And while with holy Wonder we survey the various Scenes of his Humiliation, let us remember too his native Dignity, and his Divine Glory. By him **G O D** hath fulfilled his antient Promises in the most ample and glorious Manner, *in the Fulness of Time sending forth his Son, made of a Woman*, and sprung like a tender *Shoot* from the decayed Stock of *David* his Servant.
- Ver. 23.
- Ver. 22. While we study the Oracles of the *Old Testament*, let us with Pleasure trace the Notices of the great *Messiah* there, even of *Jesus*, to whom *all the Prophets give Witness*. May his Name be ever inscribed upon our Hearts ! In that Name may we *lift up our Banners*, and judge those Reproaches a Glory, which we may meet with in his sacred Cause (g).
- Ver. 24.

(g) In his sacred Cause.] There was, humanly speaking, a Probability, that *Joseph* might have brought some Suspicion on his Character, or Reflection on his Family, by admitting *Mary* in these Circumstances.

S E C T. IX.

The Genealogy of CHRIST from Abraham, as recorded by Matthew ; and from Adam, as recorded by Luke.
 Mat. I. 1,—17. Luke III. 23, to the End.

MAT. I. I.

SECT. 9.
 Mat. I. 1.

BEFORE we proceed to the Birth of this Divine Infant, whose Conception was so very remarkable, it will be proper to give some Account of his Descent according to the Flesh. And we shall therefore introduce it with a Table of *the Genealogy of Jesus Christ* (a) ; which is intended, not only as an

MAT. I. I.

THE Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the

(a) *The Genealogy of Jesus Christ.*] I am well aware, that the Word *γενεα*, and the Hebrew *דור*, which corresponds to it, sometimes signifies the *History* of a Person's Life, (as well as other Things,) and not merely his *Genealogy*; (compare *Gen. vi. 9. xxxvii. 2. Judith xii. 18. Jam. i. 23. and iii. 6. Gr.*) and that the learned *Vitringa* understands it so in this Place: (See *Vitring. Observ. Sacr. Lib. i. Dissert. i. pag. 39.*) Yet as it is much more frequently used in the latter Sense, (see *Gen. v. 1. x. 1. xi. 10, 27. xxv. 12. xxxvi. 1, 9. Numb. i. 20, &c. and Ruth iv. 18.* in all which

the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

an Introduction to his History, but more especially to shew, that he was *the Son of David* and *the Son of Abraham*, as it was often foretold the Messiah should be. (Compare Psal. cxxxii. 11. Isa. xi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 5. xxxiii. 15. and Gen. xii. 3. xxii. 18. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 14.)

SECT. 9.
Mat. I. 1.

2 Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Judas and his Brethren;

Now it is well known, that *Abraham*, that renowned Patriarch, and Friend of GOD, from whom the whole Jewish Nation had the Honour to descend, *begat Isaac* in his Old Age, that Son of Sarah according to the Promise, with whom GOD'S Covenant was established; and *Isaac begat Jacob*, on whom also it was entailed in Preference to Esau, tho' his elder Brother; and *Jacob begat Judab*, and his eleven Brethren, who became the Heads of their respective Tribes.

3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar, and Phares begat Esrom, and Esrom begat Aram;

And as Judah was the Person, to whom that extraordinary Promise was made, that his Descendants should continue a distinct Tribe, with some Form of Government amongst them, till Shiloh, that is, the Messiah, came (*b*); (Gen. xlix. 10.) and as it was from him that Christ descended, we shall confine ourselves to the Line of his Posterity. We therefore add, that *Judab begat Pharez*, and at the same Time *Zarah* his Twin-Brother, of *Thamar*, who had been his Son's Wife; and *Pharez begat Esrom*; and *Esrom begat Aram*; And *Aram begat Aminadab*; and *Aminadab begat Naasson*, who was Prince of the Tribe of Judah, when the People

4 And Aram begat Aminidab, and Aminidab begat Naasson,

which Places it is applied to *Genealogies*;) I think it best, with the learned *Dr. Scott*, to render it as above; only giving a little Hint of the more extensive Sense, the Word may possibly bear.

(*b*) Till Shiloh, that is, the Messiah, came.] This Sense of *Jacob's* Prophecy is so beautifully illustrated, and so strongly asserted, by the present learned Bishop of London, (*Dr. Sherlock*.) in his *Discourses on Prophecy*, *Dissert. 3. pag. 317, &c.* that if I was writing on this Passage of the *Old Testament*, I should have little to do but to refer my Reader to it.

(c) Of

SECT. 9. People were numbered and marshalled at Naasson, and Naasson begat
 Mount Sinai; (Numb. i. 7. x. 14.) and Salmon;
 Mat. I. 4. Naasson begat Salmon.

5 - And after their Settlement in Canaan, Salmon begat Boaz, of Rabab (c), who had been a Native of that Country, but entertained the Spies at Jericho, and afterwards, embracing the Jewish Religion, had the Honour to be thus incorporated with this noble Family: And Boaz their Son begat Obed, of Ruth the Moabitess (d), who had so resolutely chosen to adhere to the GOD and People of Israel; and Obed in a very advanced Age begat Jesse (e): And Jesse begat, besides several elder Children, David, the celebrated King of Israel, who was favoured with the Title of "the Man after GOD's own Heart," and had an express Promise, that the Messiah should descend from him. (Compare 2 Sam. vii. 12,—16. and Acts ii. 30.) And David the King begat Solomon, of Bathsheba, who had before been [the Wife] of Uriah the Hittite; and tho' that holy Man, in this unhappy Affair, acted

5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab, and Booz begat Obed of Ruth, and Obed begat Jesse;

6 And Jesse begat David the King, and David the King begat Solomon of her that had been the Wife of Urias;

(c) Of Rabab.] It is not indeed expressly said, she was Rabab of Jericho, commonly called the Harlot; but I think there can be no Room to doubt it, as we know she was contemporary with Salmon, and may conclude, that she (this Rabab) was, as all the other Women mentioned in this List, a remarkable Person. Now there was no other of that Name, especially of this Age, of whom the Compiler of this Table could, (so far as we can judge,) suppose his Reader to have any Knowledge.

(d) Boaz begat Obed, of Ruth the Moabitess.] The Son of a Moabite by an Israelitish Woman could never be allowed to enter into the Congregation of the Lord; that is, at least he was rendered incapable of being a Prince in Israel, and perhaps even of being naturalized by Circumcision; which may be the meaning of the Phrase, Deut. xxiii. 3. (See Mr. Lowman's Hebrew Government, pag. 130, & seq.) But it evidently appears from this celebrated Instance, that this Precept was not understood, as excluding the Descendants of an Israelite by a Moabitish Woman from any hereditary Honours and Privileges. Otherwise surely Salmon, the Son of Naasson, Prince of Judah, would never have married Rabab, one of the accursed People of Canaan; nor would the Kinsman of Boaz have wanted a much better Reason than he assigned, (Ruth iv. 6.) for refusing to marry Ruth when she became a Widow.

(e) Obed in a very advanced Age begat Jesse.] That Salmon, Boaz, and Obed, must each of them have been about an hundred Years old, at the Birth of his Son here recorded, hath been observed by many, and is well accounted for by Dr. Whitby in particular: Annot. on ver. 4.

acted in a Way most unworthy his Character, yet GOD on his deep Repentance graciously forgave him, and entailed the Promise on his Seed by her. SECT. I.
Mat. I. 6.

7 And Solomon begat Roboam, and Roboam begat Abia, and Abia begat Afa;

And, to go forward therefore with the Genealogy according to this Line, *Solomon begat Rehoboam*, from whose Government the Ten Tribes revolted under Jeroboam the Son of Nebat: *And Rehoboam begat Abijah; and Abijah begat Afa*, whose Reign was so long and prosperous: *And Afa begat the good Jehoshaphat; and Jehoshaphat begat Jehoram*, who unhappily dishonoured the holy Family, by an Alliance with Athaliah, the Daughter of Ahab. 2 Kings viii. 18.

8 And Afa begat Josaphat, and Josaphat begat Joram, and Joram begat Ozias;

And (to omit AHAZIAH, the Son of that wicked Woman, whose Impieties and Cruelties rendered her so infamous; 2 Chron. xxiv. 7. the ungrateful JOASH her Grandson, who murder'd Zechariah the Prophet, the Son of his great Benefactor Jehoida; 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21, 22. and AMAZIAH his Son, who succeeded him;) *Jehoram*, at the Distance of the fourth Generation, may be said to have begat Uzziab the Leper (f). *And Uzziab begat Jotham; and Jotham begat that*

9 And Ozias begat Joatham, and Joatham begat Achaz, and Achaz begat Ezekias;

wicked *Abaz*, who instead of being reformed by the chastising Hand of GOD, trespassed yet more and more against him; 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. *And Abaz begat the religious Hezekiab*, that distinguished Favourite of Heaven: *And Hezekiab begat Manassch*, so remarkable once for his enormous Wickedness,

10 And Ezekias begat Manasses, and Manasses begat

(f) *Jehoram* may be said to have begat *Uzziab*.] It is undeniably evident, from 2 Chron. chap. xxii. and following, that three Princes are here omitted. If this Table was taken from any publick Records amongst the Jews; the Evangelist does not seem responsible for the Exactness of it; but if he himself drew it up, I think it will be but modest in us to suppose, that it was by some peculiar Divine Direction that the Sin of *Jehoram* is thus animadverted upon, even to the fourth Generation; his intermediate Descendants being thus blotted out of the Records of *Christ's* Family, and overlooked as if they had never been.

(g) The

SECT. 9. nefs, and afterwards for his humble Repen-
 tance: *And Manasseb begat* that infamous
 Mat. I. 10. and hardened Sinner *Amon*; and *Amon begat*
Jofiah, that eminently pious Prince, whose
 Heart was so early and so tenderly impressed
 with an Apprehension of GOD's approaching
 Judgments. *And Jofiah begat Jehoiakim,*
 and his Royal Brethren, Jehoahaz and Zede-
 kiah, who both of them were Kings of Ju-
 dah; the former, Predecessor to Jehoiakim,
 and the latter, the Successor of his Son (g):
And about the Time of the Babylonish Capti-
ivity, Jehoiakim begat Jehoiachin, otherwise
 called *Jeconiah (b)*, who was so long the
 Prisoner of the Chaldeans.

gat Amon and Amon be-
 gat Jofias;

11 And Jofias begat Je-
 chonias and his Brethren,
 about the Time they were
 carried away to Babylon.

And

(g) The Successor of his Son.] On the Death of *Jofiah*, the People took *Jehoahaz*, otherwise called *Sballum*, tho' a younger Brother, and made him King in his Father's Stead; (2 Kings xxiii. 30, 31.) but *Pharaoh-Necho* in three Months Time deposed him, and carried him Captive to *Egypt*, according to the Prediction of the Prophet concerning him: (*Jer.* xxii. 10, 11, 12. compared with 2 Kings xxiii. 33, 34.) And having thus deposed him, he made *Jehoiakim* the elder Brother, who was formerly called *Eliakim*, King in his Room. But this *Jehoiakim* was soon subdued by the King of *Babylon*, who after his Conquest suffered him for a while to continue on the Throne; but on his Revolt to the King of *Egypt* again, he was slain by the *Chaldeans*; (2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2.) and thrown out unburied, as *Josephus* tells us, (*Antiq. lib. x. cap. 6. [ak. 8.] §. 3. Havercamp.*) agreeable to what the Prophet had foretold: *Jer.* xxii. 18, 19. xxxvi. 30. After his Death, his Son *Jehoiachin*, by some called *Jehoiakim the Second*, was put in his Place; and this is he who is elsewhere called *Jeconiah*, (*Chron.* iii. 16. and *Comiah*, *Jer.* xxii. 24. But after a Reign of three Months, he was taken Captive, and imprisoned by *Nebuchadnezzar*, 2 Kings xxiv. 8,—16. (according to the Prophecy, *Jer.* xxii. 24, 25, 26.) and after thirty-seven Years released: 2 Kings xxv. 27. In the mean Time, upon his being deposed, his Uncle *Zedekiah*, the third Son of *Jofiah*, was raised to the Throne; but after a Reign of eleven Years, his Eyes were put out, and he was carried Captive to *Babylon*, *Jerusalem* and the Temple being destroyed. 2 Kings xxiv. 17, 18. xxv. 7.—I have traced and stated the Matter thus particularly, chiefly because it is a Key, not only to the *Paraphrase* on this Text, but to much of the Book of *Jeremiah*, which, as it is plain that several *Chapters* of it are displaced, cannot be well understood without a very exact Knowledge of the preceding History.

(h) *Jehoiakim begat Jeconiah.*] I here follow the Reading of the *Bodleian*, and other *Manuscripts*, (Notice of which is taken in the Margin of our Bibles,) *Ιωακίμ δι' ἑσπέρης τοῦ Ιωακίμ· Ιωακίμ δι' ἑσπέρης τοῦ Ιεζεκιῆ.* And this indeed seems absolutely necessary, to keep up the Number of *fourteen Generations*; unless we suppose, that the *Jeconiah* here is a different Person, from that *Jeconiah* mentioned in the next *Verse*; which seems a very unreasonable Supposition, since it is certain, that throughout this whole *Table*, each Person is mentioned twice, first as the Son of the preceding, and then as the Father of the following.—I am obliged to the candid Animadvertiser of *Dr. Scott* for

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel, and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;

And after the Babylonish Captivity commenced, this Jechonias begat Salathiel (i); and Salathiel begat Zerubbabel (k), that illustrious Instrument of restoring and settling the Jewish Commonwealth on their Return from the Captivity: And Zerub-

SECT. 9.
Mat. I. 12.

13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud,

13
babel

for the small Alteration I have made in my Reading of this Verse, from what was published in the first Edition.

(i) *Jechonias begat Salathiel.*] I cannot take upon me certainly to determine, whether *Salathiel* was the Son of *Jechonias* by Descent, or Adoption. It is certain, that *Luke* (*chap. iii. 27.*) derives *Salathiel* from *David*, by *Nathan*, and not by *Solomon*, whose Line might possibly fail in *Jechonias*. And this would be most evidently congruous to *Jer. xxii. 30.* where it is said, that *Jechonias* should be written *Cbildalest*, as we render it: But as the Dispersion of *Jechonias's* Seed is there threatened, and at least *seven* Sons of his are reckoned up elsewhere, *1 Chron. iii. 17, 18.* (supposing *Affir*, as the Word signifies, to be only a Kind of Surname of *Jechonias the Captive*), a greater Number, than one could suppose so unhappy a Prince would adopt in his Imprisonment; I should rather think the Word עררי in the fore-cited Prophecy signifies, (as the *Seventy* suppose, who have translated it *εργαστος*), *naked, stripped, or rooted up*; and the more so, because it seems harsh, to suppose *ערי* should signify only *be adopted*. Yet I own, it is something strange, that *Salathiel*, who on this Supposition was a Descendant of *Solomon* should be adopted by *Neri*, a Descendant of *Nathan*, a younger and much inferior Branch of *David's* Family; or that it should be said by *Jeremiah*, that *none of Jechonias's Seed should rule any more in Judah, if Zerubbabel*, their first Ruler after the Captivity, was at farthest but his Great Grandson. On the whole, I submit so difficult a Question to the Determination of abler Judges, and content myself with thus hinting at what I found most material on either Side. If the two *Genealogies* do not speak of different Persons that were named alike, I should conjecture, that *Salathiel*, the Son of *Neri*, might marry the Daughter of *Jechonias*, and might possibly on that Account be also adopted by him. The attentive Reader will see, that this Hypothesis at least softens the Difficulties, inseparable from either of the former.

(k) *Salathiel begat Zerubbabel*] This illustrious Person *Zerubbabel* is so often said to have been the Son of *Salathiel*, or *Shealtiel*, which is nearly the same, (and accordingly the *Syriack* here reads *Schaltiel*;) See *Ezra iii. 2, 8. v. 2. Hag. i. 1, 12, 14. ii. 23.* that I incline more and more to think with *Brennius*, that the *Zerubbabel* mentioned *1 Chron. iii. 17, 19.* as the Son of *Pedaiah* the Brother of *Salathiel*, was a different Person from this. As the Name *Zerubbabel* signifies *a Stranger in Babylon*, it is no Wonder that it should be given to several Children born in the Captivity.—If this Solution be not allowed, I see not how the known Difficulty here can be removed, unless by acknowledging that the Books of *Chronicles* (the Author of which is unknown) may have suffered by the Injuries of Time, so that the present Reading of some Passages may be incorrect; which is very consistent with owning the plenary Inspiration of those Books. By allowing this, we should fairly get rid of *Two Parts in Three* of the seeming Contradictions in the Writings of the *Old Testament*, (I speak on an accurate Review of them;) and should be free from the sad Necessity of such evasive Criticisms, as are more like to pain a candid Heart, than to satisfy an attentive and penetrating Mind. The Omission of a Word or Two in a *Genealogical Table*, and sometimes the Mistake of a Letter or Two in transcribing, especially with regard to Names or Numbers, occasions many inextricable Difficulties, where in the *Original Reading* all might be perfectly clear.

VOL. I. N^o 3.

G

(l) Ze-

SECT. 9. *babel begat Abiud (l); and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor: And Azor begat Zadock; and Zadock begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud: And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob: And this Jacob begat Joseph, who was the Husband of Mary, that blessed Virgin, of whom was born, by the immediate Power of GOD, Jesus, who is commonly called Christ, as he was indeed GOD's Messiah, or Anointed One; the great Sovereign, and Prophet, and High-Priest of his Church, compleatly furnished for the Discharge of all those Offices, by a most plentiful Effusion of the Spirit, which was given, not by Measure, to him.*

Mat. I. 14.

15

16

17

This is the Genealogy of his reputed Father: *So that we see, as it here stands, that all the Generations, in the first Interval or Class of this illustrious Family, from Abraham to David, when we may look upon it as in its Rising State, are fourteen Generations: And after these, in the next Class, from David to the Babylonish Captivity, when it was seated on the Throne, and may be reckoned as in its Flourishing State, we may compute them as amounting to the same Number, and to consider them as they are represented here, they may again be counted fourteen Generations (m): And in like Manner, in the last Class, from the Babylonish Captivity to Christ, when by Degrees it sunk into Obscurity, and manifestly was in its Declining State, then also we may reckon them as fourteen Generations.*

biud, and Abiud begat Eliakim, and Eliakim begat Azor;

14 And Azor begat Sadoc, and Sadoc begat Achim, and Achim begat Eliud;

15 And Eliud begat Eleazar, and Eleazar begat Matthan, and Matthan begat Jacob;

16 And Jacob begat Joseph the Husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

17 So all the Generations from Abraham to David, are fourteen Generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon, are fourteen Generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ, are fourteen Generations.

LUKE

(l) *Zerubbabel begat Abiud.] Rhesa, mentioned by Luke, chap. iii. ver. 27. was probably another Son of Zerubbabel. Abiud might possibly be the same with Mesbulam, whose Name is mentioned in 1 Chron. iii. 12. or perhaps he, and his Descendants falling into Obscurity, their Names might be no where preserved, but in this Genealogy of Joseph's Family, which the Evangelist transcribed as he found it.*

(m) *They may be counted fourteen Generations.] I express it with this Latitude, as it is manifest that Three Persons are omitted in the second Class between Jehoram and*

Uzziah,

LUKE III. 23.

LUKE III. 23.

SECT. 9.

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty Years of Age, being (as was supposed) the Son of Joseph, which was *the Son of Heli*, 24. Which was *the Son of Matthat*, which was *the Son of Levi*, which was *the Son of Melchi*, which was *the Son of Janna*, which was *the Son of Joseph*, 25 Which was *the Son of Mattathias*, which was *the Son of Amos*, which was *the Son of Naum*, which was *the Son of Esli*, which was *the Son of Nagge*, 26 Which was *the Son of Maath*, which was *the Son of Mattathias*, which was *the Son of Semei*, which was *the Son of Joseph*, which was *the Son of Juda*, 27 Which was *the Son of Joanna*, which was *the Son of Rhesa*, which was *the Son of Zorobabel*, which was *the Son of Salathiel*, which was *the Son of Neri*, 28 Which was *the Son of Melchi*,

But tho' we have thus given the legal Genealogy of Christ from Abraham, as derived from Joseph his reputed Father, we shall yet add another, that ascends to Adam; And this is the Account which Luke hath given us in his Gospel; where after he had spoken of the Baptism of *Jesus*, when he was beginning [his publick Ministry,] and was about thirty years of Age, he traces his Descent in the Line of Mary (n); whose Father Heli adopting Joseph, whom he made his Son-in-Law, the Descent of Joseph may on that Account be reckoned from him, and so is in Effect the same with that of Mary. Christ therefore being born of Mary after her Espousals, may be consider'd upon this Account to be, (as at that Time he commonly was reckoned,) *the Son of Joseph*, who by Adoption, or rather by the Marriage of his Daughter, was the Son of *Heli* (o), The Son of *Matthat*, the Son of *Levi*, the Son

Luke III. 23.

24

of

Uzziab, ver. 8. and it is only by counting them as here represented that they make fourteen Generations. And if according to the Reading of the *Bodleian*, *Jehoiakim* be introduced in ver. 11, and considered as the last of this Class, (which seems the better Reading, as *Jeconiah* does not appear to have had any Brethren,) *Jeconiah* will thus be reserved for the third Class, which otherwise would want one Person to complete the Number.

(n) In the Line of Mary.] I am aware, that *Mr. Le Clerc*, and many other learned Men, have thought, that *Joseph* was begotten by *Heli*, and adopted by *Jacob*: But I much rather conclude, that he was adopted by *Heli*, or rather taken by him for his Son upon the Marriage of his Daughter, and that *Heli* was the Father of *Mary*; because an ancient *Jewish Rabbi* expressly calls her, *the Daughter of Heli*; and chiefly, because else we have indeed no true Genealogy of *Christ* at all, but only two different Views of the Line of *Joseph*, his reputed Father; which would by no means prove, that *Christ*, who was only by Adoption his Son, was of the Seed of *Abraham*, and of the House of *David*. Yet the Apostle speaks of it as evident, that *Christ* was descended from *Judah*; *Heb. vii. 14.* in which, if this Gospel were (as Antiquity assures us,) written by the Direction of *Paul*, perhaps he may refer to this very Table before us. See *Mr. Whiston's Harmony of the four Evangelists*, Prop. xvi. pag. 175, & seq.

(o) *Joseph*, who by Adoption, or rather by the Marriage of his Daughter, was the Son of *Heli*.] It is necessary to take the Words in this Latitude, because the true Father of *Joseph* appears to have been *Jacob* or *James*, the Son of *Matthan*. See *Mat. i. 15, 16.*

- SECT. 9. *of Melchi, the Son of Jannab, the Son of*
 Luke III. 25. *Joseph, The Son of Mattathias, the Son*
of Amos, the Son of Nabum, the Son of
 26 *Eli, the Son of Naggai, The Son of*
Maath, the Son of Mattathias, the Son
of Shimei, the Son of Joseph, the Son of
 27 *Judab, The Son of Jobanna, the Son*
of Rbesa, the Son of Zerubbabel, the Son of
 28 *Salathiel, the Son of Neri (p), The*
Son of Melchi, the Son of Addi, the Son of
Cosam, the Son of Elmodam, the Son of Er,
 29 *The Son of Josés, the Son of Eliezer, the*
Son of Jorim, the Son of Matthat, the Son
 30 *of Levi, The Son of Simeon, the Son*
of Judab, the Son of Joseph, the Son of
 31 *Jonan, the Son of Eliakim, The Son*
of Meleab, the Son of Mainan, the Son of
Mattathas, the Son of Nathan, the Son of
 that celebrated King of Israel *David, the*
 32 *Man after God's own Heart, The Son*
of Jesse, the Son of Obed, the Son of Boaz,
the Son of Salmon, the Son of Naasson,
 33 *The Son of Aminadab, the Son of Aram,*
the Son of Esrom, the Son of Pharez, the
 34 *Son of Judab, The Son of Jacob, the*
Son of Isaac, who was, according to the
Promise, the Son of that honourable Pa-
 triarch *Abraham, the Son of Terah, the*
 35 *Son of Nabor, The Son of Serug, the*
Son of Ragau, or Reu, the Son of Peleg,
 36 *the Son of Heber, the Son of Salab, The*
Son of Cainan (q), the Son of Arphaxad,
 the
- Melchi, which was the Son of Addi, which was the Son of Cosam, which was the Son of Elmodam, which was the Son of Er, 29 Which was the Son of Jose, which was the Son of Eliezer, which was the Son of Jorim, which was the Son of Matthat, which was the Son of Levi, 30 Which was the Son of Simeon, which was the Son of Juda, which was the Son of Joseph, which was the Son of Jonan, which was the Son of Eliakim, 31 Which was the Son of Melea, which was the Son of Menan, which was the Son of Mattatha, which was the Son of Nathan, which was the Son of David, 32 Which was the Son of Jesse, which was the Son of Obed, which was Son of Booz, which was the Son of Salmon, which was the Son of Naasson, 33 Which was the Son of Aminadab, which was the Son of Aram, which was the Son of Esrom, which was the Son of Phares, which was the Son of Juda, 34 Which was the Son of Jacob, which was the Son of Isaac, which was the Son of Abraham, which was the Son of Thara, which was the Son of Nachor, 35 Which was the Son of Saruch, which was the Son of Ragau, which was the Son of Phalec, which was the Son of Heber, which was*

(p) The Son of Neri.] See the latter Part of Note (i), pag. 49.

(q) The Son of Cainan.] There is no Mention made of this *Cainan*, in either of the Genealogies that *Moses* gives us, *Gen. x. 24.* and *xi. 12.* but *Salab* is there said to be the Son of *Arphaxad*. *Cainan* must therefore have been introduced here from the Translation of the *Seventy Interpreters*, who have inserted him in both these Places, in the same Order as we find him here; and as this Translation was then commonly used, and was more generally understood than the *Hebrew*, it is probable that some Transcriber of this Gospel added *Cainan* from that Version: Unless we suppose, that *Luke* himself might chuse, in writing this Genealogy, to follow the *Septuagins*, as he appears to do in several other Passages that he has quoted from the *Old Testament*. Nor

is

was the Son of Sala,
 36 Which was the Son of
 Cainan, which was the Son
 of Arphaxad, which was the
 Son of Sem, which was the
 Son of Noe, which was the
 Son of Lamech, 37 Which
 was the Son of Mathufala,
 which was the Son of Enoch,
 which was the Son of Jared,
 which was the Son of Male-
 leel, which was the Son of
 Cainan, 38 Which was
 the Son of Enos, which was
 the Son of Seth, which was
 the Son of Adam, which was
 the Son of G O D.

the Son of Shem, the Son of Noah, with whom he was preserved in the Ark : And it is well known, that Noah was the Son of Lamech, The Son of Methuselah, the Son of Enoch, who was translated without dying, and was the Son of Jared, the Son of Mahalaleel, the Son of Cainan, The Son of Enos, the Son of Seth, the Son of Adam, who being descended from no Human Parents, but formed by the immediate Power of a Divine Creating Hand, might with peculiar Propriety be called [the Son] of G O D, in his original State the Heir of Immortality and Glory.

SECT. 9.
 Luke III. 36.
 37
 38

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WHEN we survey any such Series of Generations, it is obvious to reflect, how like the Leaves of a Tree, one passeth away, and another cometh : Yet the Earth still abideth, and with it the Goodness of the Lord, which runs on from Generation to Generation, the common Hope of Parents and Children.

Of those who formerly lived upon Earth, and perhaps made the most conspicuous Figure among the Children of Men, how many have there been, whose Names have perished with them, and how many, of whom nothing but their Names are remaining ? Thus are we passing away, and thus shall we be shortly forgotten. Happy, while we are forgotten of Men, we are remembered by G O D, and our Names are found written in the Book of Life ! There they will make a much brighter Appearance, than in the Records of Fame, or

is it, after all, a Point of any Consequence, as the Design of the Evangelist was only to present us with the Genealogy of Christ in its Ascent to Adam, which is equally clear, whether we reckon Salab as the immediate Descendant of Arphaxad, or whether we consider him as his Grandson by Cainan.—And much less Reason is there to object to the apparent Difference there is, between the Names that Luke has given us, and those we meet with of the same Persons in the Old Testament : This is no more than what is usual, when the same Names are mentioned in a different Language ; nor will the Greek admit them to be so expressed, as to agree exactly with the Hebrew. But to avoid Confusion, I have rather chose, both in the former Genealogy, and this, to give the Names that are delivered in the Old Testament, as they are written in the Hebrew, to which our Language will admit us to come nearer than the Greek could do, and which must be allowed to be the more exact and truer Method of pronouncing them. Compare Gen. v. 3, & seq. xi. 10,—27. and I Chron. i. 1,—27.

SECT. 9. or than they would do even in such a Catalogue, of those who were related to *Christ according to the Flesh*; whose Memory is here preserved, when that of many, who were once the Wonder, and Terror of the Mighty in the Land of the Living, is lost in perpetual Oblivion.

Mat. i. 3, 5, 6. We observe among these Ancestors of *Christ*, some that were *Heathens*, and others that, on different Accounts, were of *infamous Characters*; and perhaps it might be the Design of Providence, that we should learn from it, or at least should on reading it take Occasion to reflect, that Persons of all Nations, and even *the chief of Sinners* amongst them, are encouraged to trust in him, as their Saviour. To him therefore let us look, even from *the Ends of the Earth*, yea, from the Depths of Guilt and Distress; and the Consequence will be happy, beyond all Expression, or Conception.

Luke iii. ult. *ADAM*, tho' originally *the Son of GOD*, lost that Inheritance of Life and Glory, which, in Consequence of such a Relation, he might reasonably have expected; but the *second Adam* repairs the Loss, which we had sustained by the Transgression of the *first*. We are now *predestinated to the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ*, and raised by him to the Hope of a fairer Inheritance, than the Terrestrial Paradise. Let it be our daily Labour, to secure this invaluable Blessing, that so as we have *borne the Image of the Earthly Adam*, we may in due Time *bear the Image of the Heavenly*, and at length attain to the perfect *Manifestation of the Sons of GOD*.

S E C T. X.

CHRIST is born at Bethlehem, and his Birth revealed by an Angel, to some Shepherds in the Neighbourhood of that Town; and he is circumcised on the eighth Day.

Luke II. 1,—21.

LUKE II. 1.

SECT. 10. *NOW* it came to pass in those Days, or about the Time, in which John the Baptist was born, and Christ conceived in the Manner related above, *that the Roman Emperor Augustus Caesar published an Edict, or Decree,*

Luke II. 1.

LUKE II. 1.

AND it came to pass in those Days, that there went out a Decree from *Cesar*

far Augustus, that all the World should be taxed :

Decree, that all the Land (a) of Judea, SECT. 10.
 which was then united under one Prince, Luke II. 1.
 and governed by Herod, should be publickly enrolled; or that the Number of its Inhabitants, both Male and Female, with their Families, and Estates, should be registered. This he ordered, as a Token of his particular Displeasure against Herod their King, and as an Intimation that he intended quickly to lay them under a Tax. *And here* 2
 we may observe by the Way, that *this was the first Enrollment* of the Jews, and was committed to the Care of Cyrenius, or, as the Latins write it, Quirinius, a Roman Senator; who being [afterwards] Governour of Syria (b), made a second Enrollment or Tax-

2 (And this taxing was first made, when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria:)

(a) *All the Land.*] Tho' οὐρανὸν doth undoubtedly sometimes signify the whole World; (*Acts* xvii. 31. *Rom.* x. 18. and *Heb.* i. 6.) and sometimes probably the Roman Empire; (as more especially in *Rev.* iii. 10. and xvi. 14.) See *Elfner*, in loc. Yet I think, the learned and ingenious *Dr. Lardner* hath fully proved, that it is to be taken in a more limited Sense, both here, and *Acts* xi. 28. as it plainly is, *Luke* xxi. 26. (See *Lardn. Credib. of Gosp. Hist. Part i. vol. i. pag. 542, and vol. ii. pag. 574, & seq.*) It is with peculiar Propriety called the whole Land, as it was soon after dismembered, and Nazareth, where Christ's Parents dwelt, was in a different Division from Bethlehem; as *Dr. Lardner* well observes.—That ἀπογραφὴ signifies a publick Enrollment, *Elfner* on this Text hath evidently shewn.

(b) *And this was the first Enrollment of Cyrenius, afterwards Governour of Syria.* *Ἀπὸ ἀπογραφῆς ἀρῶν ἐγένετο ἡγεμονιστοῦ τῆς Συρίας Κυρηναίου.*] The worthy Person whom I mentioned above, *Dr. Lardner*, in his unequalled Criticisms on this Text, (*Part i. vol. ii. pag. 718, & seq.*) has given the Reasons at large, which determined me to prefer that literal Version I have inserted. Our own is plainly mistaken, and is indeed hardly intelligible. The Words might perhaps have been rendered, *This Enrollment was before Cyrenius was Governour of Syria*; which to be sure is a true Assertion, and may perhaps, after all, be vindicated; but I think the Original expresses something more. Others have chose to render it, *And the Taxation that was consequent upon this Enrollment, was first executed when Cyrenius was Governour of Syria.*—If none of the Solutions proposed could be allowed, (as I think either of these justly may,) it would be a thousand times more reasonable, to suppose a Word omitted by some early Transcriber, (perhaps ἡ δὲ ἀρὰ, after ἐγένετο,) than to think that so accurate a Writer as *Luke*, were he to be considered only as a common Historian, should make such a gross Mistake, as to confound this Enrollment in the Reign of Herod, with that Taxation, which happened several Years after, on the Banishment of his Son Archelaus. A Fact of this Kind was too obvious, and I may add, too mortifying to the whole Jewish Nation, to be so soon forgot; not to say, that so strict a Pharisee as *St. Paul*, (who probably reviewed this Gospel,) educated by *Gamaliel*, would be sure to remember it with some peculiar Emotion.—Of the Tumults that happened in the Days of the Taxing, which was afterwards made by *Cyrenius*, (when on the Banishment

SECT. 10.
 Luke II. 3.

Taxation, which was so famous in the Jewish History for the Tumults that attended it.

And all the Inhabitants of Judea were obliged to obey the Edict, and went, each of them to his own native City, or the Place where his Paternal Inheritance lay (c), to be enrolled: A Circumstance wisely ordered by Providence, to verify the Truth of antient Prophecies, and introduce the promised Messiah; as by their coming to be thus registered among the Subjects of the Roman Empire, the Subjection of the Jews to the Romans very remarkably appeared.

- 4 And thus the Parents of Christ were providentially brought to Bethlehem, the Place where the Messiah was to be born, without leaving any Room to suspect them of Artifice and Design: For being thus obliged by the Emperor's Authority, Joseph went up from Galilee, even out of the City of Nazareth, where he then dwelt, into the Land of Judea, most properly so called, to the

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own City.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the City of Nazareth, into Judea,

nishment of Archelaus, Judea was reduced to the Form of a Province and annexed to Syria, under the Government of Cyrenius,) in Opposition to which a Disturbance was raised by Judas of Galilee, see Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xvii. in fine; lib. xviii. cap. 1. §. 1. Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 8. §. 1. and Acts v. 37.

(c) Where his Paternal Inheritance lay.] Some have conjectured, that Joseph might have a small Estate here: But that is, at best, very uncertain; at least, it is improbable, that Jesus inherited it, (Mat. viii. 20.) or that his Mother enjoyed it during her Widowhood. See John xix. 26, 27.—It is true indeed, that had the Original Settlement of the Divine Law been duely regarded, Estates in the Land of Promise would have been unalienable; and every Male descended from Jacob, and not of the Tribe of Levi, must have been born Heir to a certain Portion of Land, allotted to some of his Ancestors when the Division was first made; on which, however it might have been mortgaged, he must, if his Father were dead, have entered at the next Jubilee, if he lived to see it. But Things were now fallen into Confusion. The small Remains of the Ten Tribes, who were brought back at all, were, after their Return from the Captivity, incorporated together in the Neighbourhood of Judea, while Strangers were in Possession of large Tracts of Land once theirs; and the whole Country of Samaria was in the Hands of those, whom the Jews looked upon as the vilest Kind of Gentiles, that is, the Samaritans.—All that appears as to the Circumstance now before us, is, that every one was obliged to be enrolled at the Place, to which his Family belonged; and the Obedience of the Jews to this Decree is a plain Proof, that they were now dependent on the Romans, and the Sceptre was departing from Judah. See Lightfoot's Harmony on Luke ii. 1. and compare Gen. xlix. 10. and Numb. xxiv. 24.

I

(d) Of

dea, unto the City of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the House and Lineage of David,)

the City of David, which is called Bethlehem, SECT. IO. which was the Town where his Ancestors had formerly been settled: (For notwithstanding Joseph was reduced so low, as to follow the Trade of a Carpenter, yet *he was originally of the Family and Royal Household of David (d):*) It was to Bethlehem therefore that he went up *to be enrolled;* and thither he took *with him,* by Divine Direction (e), *Mary his espoused Wife, who was now big with Child,* and very near the Time of her Delivery.

Luke II. 4.

5 To be taxed with Mary, his espoused Wife, being great with Child.

5

6 And so it was, that while they were there, the Days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

But the Town was so crowded on this Occasion, that they were obliged to lodge in the Stable of a publick House, tho' in her present Circumstances it was so very inconvenient for her. *And so it was, that while they were there,* either waiting for the proper Officer who was to register the People, or staying till their own Turn came, *the Days of her Pregnancy were fulfilled,* and the Time came *that she should be delivered.* *And she*

6

7 And she brought forth her First-born Son, and wrapped him in Swaddling Clothes,

brought forth her Son, even him that justly bears the Character of *the First-born (f);* that glorious and excellent Person, who was the First-born of every Creature, and the Heir of all Things. *And she no sooner was delivered, but immediately she swathed him,*

7

(d) *Of the Family and Royal Household of David.*] I have here rendered *οἰκία*, Family, and *οἰκουμένη*, Household; because I apprehend, with Grotius, that it may refer to the Divisions of the Tribes into Families, and Households. Compare Numb. i. 18, & seq. and Josh. vii. 17, 18. In this Sense of the Words, after having told us, that Joseph was of the House of David, it would have been very unnecessary to add, he was also of his Family; but it was not at all improper to say, he was of his Family, and Household too: For all the Descendants of Eliab and his other Brethren, if there were any such remaining, would have been of David's Family, yet not of his Household. If the Word Lineage only signified Descendants, it would be exceeding proper to give Luke's Sense; but as I apprehend it includes collateral Branches, I thought fit to change it.

(e) *By Divine Direction.*] One can hardly imagine, he would otherwise have exposed her to the Hazards, of such a Journey, at so unseasonable a Time; for whatever the Emperor's Commands were, such a Case, as Mary's, must to be sure have been admitted as an Excuse, for her not complying with it.

(f) *The First-born.*] See before, the Paraphrase, and Note (f), on Mat. i. 25. Sect. 8. pag. 43.

SECT. 10.
 Luke II. 7.

him, being so miraculously strengthened by GOD, in this Hour of Extremity, as to be able to perform that Office herself (g); and having no other Conveniency near, she laid him in a Manger, which belonged to one of the Stalls there (b); because (as we have just now said,) there was no Room for them in any of the Chambers belonging to the Inn.

- 8 *And there were some Shepherds in that Country, who were then lying out in the Field, and watching in their Turns over their Flock by Night (i); which it was necessary they should do, to guard against the Wolves, and other Beasts of Prey, which were common there. And behold, on a sudden, an Angel of the Lord came upon them, and appeared in a visible Form, standing in the Air over their Heads; and their Eyes were immediately directed to it, by the Glory of the Lord, which shone round about them with such incomparable Lustre, as had in former Ages been the usual Symbol of the Divine*
- 9 *Pre-*

Clothes, and laid him in a Manger, because there was no Room for them in the Inn.

8 And there were in the same Country Shepherds abiding in the Field, keeping Watch over their Flock by Night.

9 And lo, the Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the Glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

(g) Being so miraculously strengthened, &c.] I had in the *First Edition*, here and in many other Places, inserted the Word *probably* in the *Paraphrase*: But on the whole, considering that in all such Performances the *Author*, and not the *Paraphrast*, is supposed to speak, I judge it more proper here to remind my Reader, (as I have elsewhere intimated,) that he is to take it for granted, I do not pretend in this Instance, and a great many others, to speak confidently; but that *the different Character*, which distinguishes the *Divine Text* from my fallible tho' upright Attempts to illustrate it, must guide him in determining what is *certain*, and what only *probable*, and perhaps after all *very doubtful*.

(b) *A Manger*, which belonged to one of the Stalls there.] Tho' *Heinsius* has learnedly proved, that *φάλη* sometimes signifies a *Stall*, yet it is certain, that more frequently it signifies a *Manger*; and the *Manger* was the most proper Part of the *Stall*, in which the Infant could be laid. If (as *Tradition* says) this *Stable* was cut out of a Rock, the Coldness of it must, at least by Night, have greatly added to its other Inconveniences.

(i) *Watching in their Turns over their Flock by Night*.] The Original *φύλασσόντες φύλακας της νυκτός* might more literally be rendered, *keeping the Watches of the Night*, which intimates their taking it *by Turns* to watch, according to the usual Divisions of the Night. And as it is not probable, that they exposed their Flocks to the Coldness of *Winter-Nights* in that Climate, where, as *Dr. Shaw* has shewn, they were so very unwholesome, (See *Shaw's Travels*, pag. 379.) it may be strongly argued from this Circumstance, that those who have fixed upon *December* for the Birth of *Christ*, have been mistaken in the Time of it.

(k) *There*

10 And the Angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold, I bring you good Tidings of great Joy, which shall be to all People.

11 For unto you is born this Day, in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this shall be a Sign unto you; Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in Swaddling Clothes, lying in a Manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the Angel a Multitude of the Heavenly Host, praising God, and saying,

Presence: *And they were exceedingly terrified* SECT. 10. at so uncommon, and so awful an Appearance. *And while they stood in silent A-* Luke II. 10.

mazement, the Angel said unto them in the mildest and most condescending Manner, Be not affrighted, O ye Shepherds! for the Design of my Appearance to you hath nothing terrible in it; but on the contrary, behold, and take the most thankful Notice of it, I bring you good News, and greet you with the Tidings of great and universal Joy, which shall be now occasioned, not only to you, but to all People in the whole Jewish Nation, yea, and to all the Human Race. For this very Day, this welcome blessed Day, there is born unto you (k), and unto all Nations, a glorious Saviour, who is even Christ the Lord, that illustrious Sovereign, whom you have so long been taught to expect, by the Title, and under the Character, of the Messiah: He is even now born, in the neighbouring City of David his Royal Father; and I call you to offer him your earliest Homage. Go therefore into the town without any farther Delay, and enquire after him; for this [shall be] a Sign to you, by which you will easily know him; you will find him an Infant in Swaddling Bands, lying in a Manger belonging to one of the Inns.

And immediately, to confirm them in the Belief of so strange a Truth, as that this illustrious Prince should be born in such mean Circumstances, as he had now described, there was seen with the Angel that spake to them, a great Multitude of the Celestial Army praising GOD, and saying, in the most chearful

(k) *There is born unto you.*] That one of the *Bodleian Manuscripts* reads it *ημιν*, to us, is of very little Weight, considering the Consent of Copies on the other Side; and affords but a very slender Support to *Mr. Fleming's* Conjecture, that this was a glorified *Human Spirit*, perhaps that of *Adam*, all whose happy Descendants might, he thinks, make up the Chorus. (*Fleming's Christology*, vol. i. pag. 80.) I should rather imagine, with *Grotius*, that this Angel was *Gabriel*.

SECT. 10. chearful and harmonious Accents, *Glo-*
 ry be to GOD in the highest Heavens, and
 Luke II. 14. let all the Angelick Legions resound his
 Praises in the most exalted Strains; for with
 the Redeemer's Birth, *Peace*, and all Kind of
 Happiness comes down to dwell on *Earth*;
 yea, the Overflowings of Divine *Benevolence*
 and Favour are now exercised towards sinful
Men (1), who thro' this Saviour become the
 Objects of his complacential Delight: Echo
 it back, O ye mortal Abodes, to ours! "Glory
 " to GOD in the Highest! On Earth Peace!
 " Benevolence and Favour unto Men!"

15 And it came to pass, that as soon as the
 Angels departed from them, and returned back
 into Heaven, the Shepherds said one to another,
 Come, let us go immediately to Bethlehem,
 and

14 Glory to GOD in the
 Highest, and on Earth Peace,
 Good Will towards Men.

15 And it came to pass,
 as the Angels were gone a-
 way from them into Heaven,
 the Shepherds said one to a-
 nother, Let us now go even
 unto Bethlehem, and see this
 Thing

(1) *Glory to GOD in the Highest; and Peace on Earth; Benevolence and Favour to-wards Men.*] I am well aware of the Ambiguity of these Words. I do not mean as to the Reading: For tho' the *Alexandrian*, and other *Manuscripts*, instead of εὐδοκία, give it εὐδοκίας, as if the Angels were proclaiming *Peace to Men of Favour and Good Will*, or unto those who were the Objects of the Divine Benevolence and Complacency; (which is a Reading that has been approved by many Learned Men, and in particular by *Beza*;) yet I think, the Authority of that is overborne by the more general Consent of the most antient *Manuscripts*, as well as by the *Versions* of the oldest Date, and the *Quotations* of the *Fathers* in the most early Ages, which almost universally oppose it. (See *Mill*, and *Grotius*, on the Place.) But taking the *Original*, as it stands, Δόξα ἢ εὐφροσύνη θεῷ, καὶ εἰρήνη γαῖᾳ, ἢ εὐδοκίᾳ, we must allow it to be capable of different Senses.—Some chuse to render it, *Glory to GOD in the Highest*, (that is, in Heaven,) and on Earth; *Peace*, yea *Favour*, towards Men: But then I think, instead of εὐφροσύνη, it rather would have been εὐφρανῶ; for so it is always usual to express, in Heaven and upon Earth. (Compare *Mat.* vi. 10. *Luke* xi. 2. *1 Cor.* viii. 5. *Eph.* i. 10. iii. 15. *Col.* i. 16, 20. *Rev.* v. 3, 13.)—Others have given as the Sense of it, that the *Good Will* or Favour, which is now shewn to Men, is the *Glory of GOD in the Highest*, and is the *Peace*, or Happiness, of those that dwell on Earth: And this indeed is an important Sense, and the *Original* well enough will bear it. But thus to change the *Doxology*, into a Kind of *Proverb*, or *Aphorism*, seems to destroy much of its Beauty.—I rather think, that they are all to be considered as the Words of a rejoicing Acclamation, and that they strongly represent the Piety and Benevolence of these Heavenly Spirits, and their affectionate good Wishes for the Prosperity of the *Messiah's Kingdom*. (Compare *Mat.* xxi. 9. *Mark.* xi. 10. and especially *Luke* xix. 38.) The new Translation that has been lately published, where it is rendered, *To Men on Earth Felicity in the Divine Favour*, does indeed express the Sense of the two latter Clauses, but by no Means with equal Ardour. The Shouts of a Multitude are generally broken into short Sentences, and are commonly *Elliptick*; which is the only Cause of the Ambiguity here. As this Beauty could not be preserved in a *Paraphrase*, I have repeated the Words, after they had been explained.

(m) *Entering*



But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the law. Gal. Chap. 4, Ver. 4.

The Shepherds come, and find him in a Manger. 61

Thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with Haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a Manger.

17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the Saying which was told them concerning this Child.

18 And all they that heard it, wondered at those Things which were told them by the Shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these Things, and pondered them in her Heart.

and see this great Thing which is done, even this wonderful and important Event which the Lord hath so graciously made known unto us. SECT. 10.
Luke II. 15.

And accordingly, with one Consent, they came in Haste, before the Night was over, leaving their Flocks to the Care of Providence; and entering into the Town, they followed the Direction which the Angel gave them, and quickly found Mary and Joseph, and the new-born Infant with them, just in the Circumstance which had been described, lying in a Manger. 16

And when they had viewed this Scene of Wonders, and had attentively considered [it,] they humbly paid their dutiful Respects unto their new-born Saviour; and having acquainted his Parents with the marvellous Vision they had seen, they immediately published abroad a full Account of this remarkable Occurrence, and gave a particular Relation of the whole of that which had been told them, in so wonderful a Way, concerning this Child. 17

And upon hearing this strange Account, there was a general Surprize; and tho' they were prevented by the Meanness of his Birth, from shewing a due Regard to one that made no better an Appearance, yet all that heard [it,] were astonished at those Things which were related to them by the Shepherds on this Subject. 18

But Mary in particular treasured up all these Things, and carefully retained them in her Memory; and tho' she did not blaze them abroad among the Populace, or make any vain Boast of such extraordinary Favours and Testimonies, yet she attentively regarded all these wonderful Events, entering into the Meaning [of them] in the secret Reflections of her Heart (m), and improving them all, 19

as

(m) Entering into the Meaning, &c.] I apprehend *Elfner* has abundantly vindicated this Sense of the Word *συνάδρασα*, in his Note on this Place.

SECT. 10. as a further Confirmation of what had been
 before revealed to her, and a Foundation
 Luke II. 19. for the early Actings of her Faith and Re-
 vidence towards her Divine Son.

20 *And the Shepherds returned, glorifying and
 praising GOD for all the Things which they had
 heard and seen at Bethlehem (n), so perfectly
 agreeable in every Circumstance to the Ac-
 count they had received but just before, as
 it was told unto them by the Angel; admiring
 the Mercy of GOD in sending such a Savi-
 our, and his Condescension in favouring them
 with such early Discoveries of him.*

21 *And when eight Days from the Birth of
 this holy Infant were fulfilled, (that is, when
 the eighth Day was come,) his pious Parents
 failed not, according to the Mosaic Law
 under which they were placed, to circumcise
 the Child; that so, tho' he had not any Cor-
 ruptions of Nature to mortify, which was
 in Part represented by that Institution, he
 might nevertheless in a regular Manner be
 initiated into the Jewish Church, and there-
 by be engaged to the Duties, and intitled to
 the Privileges, of a Son of Abraham, accord-
 ing to that Covenant. And his Name was
 called JESUS (o), that is, the Divine Savi-
 our; a Name, by which the Angel had
 called him, before he was conceived in the
 Womb of his Virgin Mother.*

20 And the Shepherds re-
 turned glorifying and prais-
 ing GOD for all the Things
 that they had heard and seen,
 as it was told unto them.

21 And when eight Days
 were accomplished for the
 circumcising of the Child,
 his Name was called JESUS,
 which was so named of the
 Angel before he was con-
 ceived in the Womb.

(n) *Which they had heard and seen at Bethlehem.] Joseph and Mary would, no
 doubt, upon such an Occasion, give them an Account of those Particulars, which the
 Sacred Historians have recounted above, relating to the Conception of this Divine
 Infant; and this Interview must greatly confirm, and comfort the Minds of all con-
 cerned.*

(o) *His Name was called JESUS.] Grotius thinks, there might be an Assembly of
 most of the Remainders of David's Family on this Occasion: But surely had there
 been many of them Inhabitants of Bethlehem, their Kinswoman would not, in such
 Circumstances, have been reduced to the Necessity of lodging in a Stable.*

IMPROVE-



The Circumcision.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WITH what humble Amazement should we contemplate this SECT. 10.
 first Appearance of our Incarnate Redeemer! Surely all the Ver. 6, 7.
 Angels of Heaven might justly have admired his Condescension, in
 assuming such a Nature as ours, and wearing a mortal Frame, tho'
 it had been attended with all the Ornaments and Splendours Earth
 could have given it. Tho' at his Entrance into our low World, he
 had been born of an imperial Family, placed under a Canopy of
 Velvet and Gold, or laid to repose on Pillows of Down, all this
 had been deep Abasement, in the Eyes of those who had beheld the
 Glories of his Celestial Throne, and the Honours paid him by *Cheru-*
bims and *Seraphims*: But Behold, the Son of GOD, and the Heir of all
 Things, is not merely in the Abodes of *Men*, but in a Place destin'd
 for *Beasts*, and while *wrapped in Swadling Clothes*, is laid in a Manger!

Yet, O blessed J E S U S, how much more venerable was that
Stable and *Manger*, when graced with thy sacred Presence, than the Ver. 12.
 most magnificent Palace, or most shining Throne of earthly Princes?
 How ill doth it become thy Disciples, to *seek for themselves great*
Things in this Life, or to be proud of its Pomp and Grandeur! Give
 us, O GOD, the Simplicity of Children, and make us willing to be
 conformed to the *Birth* of thy Son, as well as to *his Death*!

Yet mean as *his Birth* might appear, his Heavenly Father did not
 leave him without Witnesses. We see him, in this wonderful Account Ver. 9.
 that the *Evangelist* hath given us, surrounded with a brighter Lustre,
 than a Court, or a Crown, could have afforded. *Angelic Legions* are Ver. 11.
 employed, as Heralds, to proclaim the new-born King. And to
 whom are they sent? To humble pious *Shepherds*, diligently em- Ver. 8.
 ployed in the Duties of their proper Calling, and *watching by Night*
 for the Security of their Flocks. Who would not gladly have shared
 in their Poverty and Fatigue, to have heard with them these Ver. 10.
good Tidings of great Joy?

Let us observe with what Delight these Courtiers of Heaven un- Ver. 13, 14.
 dertook the happy Embassy to these lowly Mortals. Let us with
 Pleasure attend to the *Antem* of these benevolent Spirits. Far from
 envying the Favour that was done us, they ascribe *Glory to GOD* for
 it, and take their Part in the Joy they give. Let this Love of the
 whole *Heavenly Host* to us, awaken our Love to them, and our
 Longing for that blessed World, where We and They shall surround

SECT. IO. our dearest Redeemer, not in such a Form of Abasement as that in which he here appeared, but clothed in that Celestial Lustre, with which GOD hath rewarded the Humiliations of the Manger and the Cross.

In the mean Time, let our more intimate Concern in this great Salvation, engage us more cordially to join with these blessed *Angels* in their *Hallelujahs*; ascribing *Glory to GOD in the Highest*, for this *Peace on Earth*, this *Good Will towards Men*, the great Fountain of our present Tranquillity, and future Hope. Above all, if Divine Grace hath conquered all the foolish Prejudices of our Hearts against *Christ*, and taught us with humble Faith to apply to him, let us, with the *Shepherds*, *blefs GOD for the Things* which have been shewn us; and make it our Care to *spread abroad* the Savour of his Name, that others may join with us in paying their Homage and their Praises to him.

Ver. 14.

Ver. 20.

Ver. 17.

S E C T. XI.

The Purification of Mary, and her Offering in the Temple; where CHRIST is presented to GOD, and has a very memorable Testimony given him by Simeon and Anna. Luke II. 22,—39.

LUKE II. 22.

LUKE II. 22.

SECT. II. AND after Mary had been thus delivered of her son at Bethlehem, *when the Forty Days appointed for her Purification (a), according*

AND when the Days of her Purification according

(a) *Her Purification; καθαρισμὸς αὐτῆς.*] The *Alexandrian*, and some other *Manuscripts*, read *αὐτῆς*; and as it must be owned, that both *Mother* and *Child*, for a while after the Birth, were looked upon as ceremonially *Unclean*, it might not be improper, (with *Erasmus*, and some of the most considerable *Expositors*;) to admit this *Reading*, and to render it *their Purification*, as referring to them both. For notwithstanding it is true, that *Christ* had no Mortal Impurity, from which he needed to be cleansed, yet we may well enough suppose him, as he *bore our Sins*, to have submitted to this Ordinance, as well as *Circumcision*; and as he came into the World, *made of a Woman, made under the Law*, he would be ready to comply with any Institution of the Law, that he might thus *fulfil all Righteousness*. But as the *Law* that is referred to in this Place, speaks only of the *Woman*, and of the Sacrifice that was appointed to be offered for *her purifying*, I have retained the common *Reading*, and have made no Alteration in the *Version*.

(b) *The*



And when the days of her Purification according to the Law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord.

ing to the Law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord,

according to the Time limited by the Law of Moses, (Lev. xii. 2, 4.) were fulfilled (b), Jesus was taken by his Parents from the Place

SECT. II.
Luke II. 22.

23 (As it is written in the Law of the Lord, Every Male that openeth the Womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

where he was born, and in Obedience to the Divine Command they brought him to Jerusalem, there to present him as a First-born Son before the Lord in the Temple; According

23

as it is written in the Law of the Lord, (Exod. xiii. 2. and Numb. viii. 16, 17.) that "every First-born Male shall be called holy to the Lord, and shall be treated as devoted in a peculiar Manner to his Service." Agreeably to this Precept, they now went up to redeem him (c), at the Price of Five Shekels, which was

(b) *The Forty Days*—were fulfilled.] Mr. Whiston has supposed in his *Harmony*, (*Prop. xiv. pag. 158, & seq.*) that these *Forty Days* were not accomplished till their Return from *Egypt*: But although this may give the easiest Solution to *ver. 39*, it crowds so many Events into that little Space, and so intirely depends on a precarious Hypothesis, that *Christ was born about a Month before the Death of Herod*, (which I think Mr. Manne has intirely overthrown, in his *Dissertation on the Birth of Christ*, pag. 42,—45.) that it seems evident upon the whole, that the *Purification* preceded the *Flight into Egypt*, as most *Harmonizers* have thought. But whether the *Purification* was before, or after, the *Visit of the Wise-men*, is not so plain: I have placed it before; chiefly that I might not interrupt the Thread of the Story, and partly because the Meanness of the *Virgin's* Sacrifice makes it probable, she had not then received the Presents that were offered by the *Wise-men*. Nevertheless I acknowledge it very possible, that the *Purification* might happen, during the Interval of *Herod's* waiting for the Return of the *Wise-men*; and that the Holy Family might go from *Jerusalem* to *Egypt*, the very Night after *Jesus* had been presented in the Temple; as *Garthwait* intimates, in his excellent *Harmony*, (*chap. xi, xii.*) which is so accurately and judiciously composed, that, as far as I can judge, most of the Faults in *Le Clerc, Whiston, Wells, &c.* may be corrected by it. It was first printed at *Cambridge*, 1634, and is almost intirely the same with that, which was afterwards published under the Name of *Mr. Locke's Life of Christ*.—After all, I shall only observe, that this is one of the many Instances, in which the Order of the Sacred Story cannot be circumstantially determined with demonstrative Evidence.

(c) They went up to redeem him.] GOD having acquired a peculiar Right to the *First-born of Israel*, by preserving them amidst the Destruction brought on the *First-born of the Egyptians*, though he had accepted of the Tribe of *Levi* as an Equivalent, yet would have the Memory of it preserved by this little Acknowledgment of *Five Shekels*, (or about *Twelve Shillings and Six-pence* of our Money,) which was the Price that every *First-born Child* must be redeemed at; and in Case of an Omission here, it might reasonably have been expected, that the Child should be cut off by some Judgment. The *First-born* therefore were redeemed by paying of this Money, in such a Sense as all the People were, when at the Time that they were numbered, each of them paid *Half a Shekel*, as a Ransom for their Souls, that there might be no Plague among them; as there might otherwise have been, if that Acknowledgment of the Divine Goodness had been omitted. *Exod. xxx. 12,—16.* But that the *Five Shekels* demanded

SECT. II. was the Sum appointed to be paid for every
 Luke II. 23. eldest Son, without any Regard to the Con-
 dition of the Family: (Compare Numb. xviii.

24 15, 16.) *And to offer a Sacrifice, accord-
 ing to what is enjoined in the Law of the Lord,
 Lev. xii. 6, 8. where they, whose Circum-
 stances were so mean, as that they could not
 conveniently afford a Lamb, are ordered to
 bring a Pair of Turtle-Doves, or two young
 Pigeons; which Offering suited best the Vir-
 gin's Rank in Life, and she did not affect on
 this Occasion to exceed it.*

25 *And behold, there was then at Jerusalem
 a certain Man, whose Name was Simeon (d);
 and he [was] one, that was a singularly righ-
 teous and religious Person, who was waiting,
 with many others at that Time, for the
 Coming of the Messiah, the great expected
 Consolation of Israel (e); and the Holy Spirit
 of Prophecy was sometimes in an extraordi-
 nary Manner upon him:*

26 *And among
 other Things it was divinely revealed unto
 him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not
 die (f), before he had seen the great Anointed
 of the Lord, and his Eyes had beheld the
 promised Messiah.*

24 And to offer a Sacrifice according to that which is said in the Law of the Lord, A Pair of Turtle-Doves, or two young Pigeons.

25 And behold, there was a Man in Jerusalem, whose Name was Simeon; and the same Man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see Death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

And

manded for the First-born were paid to redeem them from being sacrificed on the Altar, is one of the most false and malicious Insinuations, that ever came even from the most inveterate Enemy of Revelation.

(d) *Whose Name was Simeon.*] Had Simeon been, as some suppose, the President of the Council, and Father of the celebrated Gamaliel, St. Luke would probably have inserted so honourable a Circumstance.

(e) *The Consolation of Israel.*] This is a Phrase that frequently is used, both by the antient and modern Jews, for a Description of the Messiah. The Days of Consolation, is a common Phrase among them, to signify the Days of the Messiah; nor is there any thing more usual with them, than to swear, by their Desire of seeing this Consolation; as Dr. Lightfoot proves by several Instances: *Hor. Hebr. in loc.* And it is easy to observe, that the same Way of speaking was made use of by the Prophets, who often introduce the Promise of the Messiah's Coming, to comfort the People of God in their Afflictions. Compare *Isa. xlix. 13. lii. 9. lxvi. 13. Jer. xxxi. 13. and Zech. i. 17.*

(f) *That he should not die.*] Our Translation, that he should not see Death, is most literal; but I did not apprehend the Antithesis, between seeing Death, and seeing Christ, to be intended as at all material, and therefore did not retain the Hebraism.

(g) *These*

embraces him in the Temple, and testifies of him.

.67

27 And he came by the Spirit into the Temple: And when the Parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for him after the Custom of the Law,

28 Then took he him up in his Arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace, according to thy Word:

30 For mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the Face of all People;

32 A Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of thy People Israel.

And he came under the secret, but powerful, Impulse of the Spirit, into the Temple, just at the Juncture of Time, when [his] Parents brought in the Child Jesus into the Court of Israel there, that they might do for him according to the Custom, which the Authority of the Divine Law had required and established in such Cases. And when the pious Simeon had discovered him by his Prophetick Gift, and saw that well-known Prophecy accomplished, (Hag. ii. 7.) that the Desire of all Nations should come into that second Temple, he was transported at the Sight of this desirable Child, and took him with a sacred Rapture into his Arms, and praised GOD, and said, with the highest Elevations of Devotion and Joy, Now, O my Sovereign Lord and Master, I thankfully acknowledge that thou dost dismiss thy Servant to the Repose of the Grave in Peace (g); and I can die with Pleasure, since thou hast dealt with me according to the gracious Engagements of thy Word to me; For mine Eyes have at length beheld him, whom thou hast appointed as the great Instrument of thy long expected Salvation: Even that Salvation, which thou hast prepared to set before the Face of all People, as the glorious Object of their Faith and Hope; Ordaining him to be a Light for the Illumination of the Gentiles, to reveal the Way of Life to them that sit in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death, as well as giving him to be the Consolation and the Glory of thy People Israel, who have the Honour of being peculiarly related to him.

SECT. II.
Luke II. 27.

28

29

30

31

32

And

(g) *Thou dost dismiss thy Servant in Peace.*] There may perhaps be an Allusion here to the Custom of saying, especially to an Inferior, when parting, *Go in Peace.* See *Note (l)*, on *Luke vii. 50. Sect. 60.*

SECT. II. *And when they heard this glorious Testimony given to the Infant Jesus, Joseph and his Mother were astonished at those Things, which were spoken of him by so eminent a Prophet; which appeared to them, so much the more remarkable, when compared with the miraculous Circumstances, which had attended his Conception and Birth;*

34 *And Simeon in the Warmth of his Devotion blessed them both, praying affectionately for them, that the Favour of God might continually attend them; and said to Mary his Mother, behold this [Child] of thine is appointed for an Occasion of the Fall, and Rising again of many in Israel, as he in Fact shall be the Means of bringing aggravated Ruin upon some by their rejecting him, as well as of procuring Salvation and Recovery to others on their believing in him; and his Appearance in the World shall be such, as if he was intended and set up for a Mark of Contradiction and Reproach (b), to be a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offence to many, while he shall be to others for a Sanctuary. (Isai. viii. 14.) Yea, with such cruel Malice and Indignity shall he be treated, that the Time will come, when a Dart shall (as it were) pierce thro' thine own Soul (i), and wound thee in the most sensible*

33 And Joseph and his Mother marvelled at those Things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his Mother, Behold, this Child is set for the Fall and Rising again of many in Israel, and for a Sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yea, a Sword shall pierce through thy own Soul also;)

(b) *A Mark of Contradiction and Reproach.*] The Word *σημα* seems here to be used for a *Mark* or *Butt*, to shoot or dart at; which finely intimates the deliberate Malice, and hellish Artifice, with which the Character and Person of *Christ* was assaulted, while he endured the *Contradiction of Sinners against himself.* Heb. xii. 3.

(i) *A Dart shall pierce thro' thine own Soul.*] Tho' *σημα* seems often to signify a *Sword*, (as particularly, in *Rev. i. 16. ii. 12, 16. vi. 8.*) yet we are assured by *Grotius*, it properly signifies a *Thracian Javelin*. It may perhaps, (as *L'Enfant* observes) be a beautiful Allusion to the preceding Figure, as if it had been told her, that the Darts levelled at her Son, should be reflected from his Breast to hers, in such a Manner as to wound her very Heart. Whether it be rendered *Sword* or *Dart*, it must undoubtedly refer, to the Part the holy *Virgin* took, in all the Reproaches and Persecutions, which *Jesus* met with; but never was it so signally fulfilled, as when she stood by the Cross, and saw him at once so scornfully insulted, and so cruelly murdered. See *John xix. 25.*

(k) Had.

also;) that the Thoughts of many Hearts may be revealed,

sensible Manner, when thou art Witness to those Agonies, which shall penetrate his. But these strange Revolutions shall be permitted, and these mysterious Scenes of Providence be opened, *that the secret Thoughts and Reasonings of many Hearts may be disclosed*; or that the real Characters of Men may be discovered, and the Sincerity of those who are approved may be made manifest, while the Hypocrisy and Earthly-mindedness of those, who intend only their own secular Advantage, under the specious Pretence of waiting for the Messiah's Kingdom, shall be exposed; who will be soon offended at the obscure Form of his Appearance, and at the Persecutions which shall attend him and his Cause.

SECT. II.
Luke II. 35.

36 And there was one Anna a Prophetess, the Daughter of Phanuel, of the Tribe of Aser: she was of a great Age, and had lived with an Husband seven Years from her Virginity:

37 And she was a Widow of about fourscore and four Years; which departed not from the Temple, but served GOD with Fastings and Prayers Night and Day.

38 And She coming in that

And there was also [one] Anna a Prophetess, the Daughter of Phanuel, a Person of some considerable Note in the Tribe of Aser. She was now very far advanced in Years, having lived only seven Years with a Husband, from the Time of her Virginity: And as her Husband died while she was very young, she had now been a Widow about eighty-four Years (k); who, whatever Estate she might have in the Country, departed not from Jerusalem, but kept always so near the Temple, as to be able to resort thither at the Hours of Morning and Evening Sacrifice; serving [GOD] with frequent Fastings and Prayers, in which this devout Matron spent a considerable Part of the Night as well as of the Day (l). And she coming in at that very

(k) Had now been a Widow about eighty-four Years.] I know that Grotius, and many others interpret this of her whole Age; but I think it most natural to suppose, that the Time of her Marriage is opposed to that of her Widowhood.

(l) In which she spent a considerable Part of the Night, as well as of the Day.] This is plainly the Meaning of Night and Day, nor can the Expression possibly signify more. Perhaps she might sometimes attend those Anthems, which the Priests sung in the Temple during the Night-Watches; Psal. cxxxiv. 1, 2. to which David may also allude, Psal. cxix. 62.

SECT. II. *very Time,* which was the Hour of Prayer,
 Luke II. 38.

joined with Simeon in what he had done, and publickly *made her Acknowledgments to the Lord (m)*, that is, to Jesus, who was now present in the Temple; and afterwards *spoke concerning him to all those of her Acquaintance in Jerusalem that were waiting*, like her, for the promised *Redemption* of Israel by the Messiah, of whose speedy Appearance there was an earnest Expectation raised among the pious and devout, as the appointed Period of his Coming now evidently approached (n).

39 And the Parents of Jesus, when they had performed all Things according to the Law of the Lord, departed from Jerusalem; and full of Admiration at the glorious Testimonies that were given to their Child, they some Time afterwards returned to Galilee (o), to their

that Instant, gave Thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for Redemption in Jerusalem.

39 And when they had performed all Things according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee,

(m) *Made her Acknowledgments to the Lord*, that is, to Jesus: *Αναμολογησὶς τῷ Κυρίῳ.*] The late *English Version* renders it, *She expressed her Thanks to the Lord, and spake of Jesus*; and it must be acknowledged, there are in this very *Section* two Instances, in which the *Relative Pronoun* refers to a remote, and not immediately preceding *Substantive*; ver. 22. and 27. But it is so evident, that *Christ* is often called *the Lord* by *Luke*, as well as by the other sacred Writers, that I can see no Necessity for giving this Passage such a Turn, contrary to all the ordinary Rules of Language. — And if it be objected, that the Infant *Jesus* did not seem capable at that Time, of resenting her Gratitude, as a Rational Agent; I answer, that *Anna* might properly be said to make her Acknowledgments to the Lord, if she addressed herself to the Child, as *Simeon* had done, confessing him to be *the Messiah*. The original Phrase may have a Reference to *Simeon's* Speech, and might be intended to intimate, that this of *Anna* was a Kind of *Response*, or Counter-part to his. But it is also very probable, that she, like *Simeon*, might also address some lofty *Hymn of Praise* to the GOD of Israel on this great Occasion; and if any one think the Word *Lord* is here put for *Jehovah*, tho' the former Interpretation seems to me more just and natural, I shall not oppose it as an Error of any Importance.

(n) The Period of his Coming now evidently approached.] *The Sceptre* now appeared to be departing from *Judah*, tho' it was not actually gone; *Daniel's Weeks* were plainly near their Period; and the Revival of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, joined with the memorable Occurrences relating to the Birth of *John the Baptist*, and of *Jesus*, could not but encourage and quicken the Expectation of pious Persons at this Time.

(o) They afterwards returned to Galilee.] *Luke* has omitted the Account, that *Matthew* gives us of the *Visit of the Wise-men*, and of the Holy Family's retiring into *Egypt*; and so has taken no Notice of their returning any more to *Bethlehem*: But there is no sufficient Reason to conclude from hence, that these Occurrences were antecedent to the *Purification of Mary*, and that the Holy Family immediately returned from *Jerusalem*

and some Time afterwards return to Nazareth.

7 F

lilee, to their own City, Nazareth.

their own City Nazareth (p), which was the Place of their usual Residence, and where (as will be seen hereafter,) this blessed Infant passed the Days of his Childhood and Youth.

SECT. I F.
Luke II. 39.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WHO can behold the pious *Simeon*, thus *welcoming Death*, Ver. 28. whilst he *embraced his Saviour*, without wishing to pass over the intermediate Moments of Life, to meet so peaceful a Dissolution? May we, like him, approve ourselves the faithful Servants of GOD; and then we may hope, that when our *Dismission* comes, Ver. 29. we shall share in his Serenity and Joy!

We may comfortably expect it, if our Eyes are now opened to Ver. 30. behold with Wonder and Delight, the great *Salvation* he has *pre-* Ver. 31. *pared* for his People; and if our Hearts, with our Lips, are frequently praising him, for this *Light*, which he hath given, *to lighten* Ver. 32. *the Gentiles*, as well as to be *the-Glory of his People Israel*.

As.

rusalem to Nazareth. For we have many other Instances of a like Kind, where Events are connected by *Luke*, and the other *Evangelists*, which did not immediately follow each other; of which *Luke xxiv. 50.* is particularly memorable, as will be shewn in its proper Place. I have expressed it therefore with some Latitude, as it seems to me probable, that upon leaving *Jerusalem* they returned to *Bethlehem*, where they were visited by *the Wise-men*; and which, as they had found it to be the Place appointed for the Birth of *Christ*, they might suppose also to be the Place designed for his Education and Abode, and might not chuse to remove from thence, till God had ordered them to do it. (See *Lightfoot's Harmony, Mat. ii. init.*) However, if they now returned to *Nazareth*, it is more than possible, that Providence might bring them afterwards to *Bethlehem*, upon some Occasion or other, that when the *Wise-men* came to enquire after *Jesus*, they might find him in the Place to which they were directed. See *Mr. Manne's first Dissertation on the Birth of Christ, pag. 41, 42.* and compare *Note (n)*, on *Mat. ii. 11.* in the next Section.

(p) *To their own City Nazareth.*] It has been suggested to me by a very learned and ingenious Writer, since the Publication of the preceding *Note*, that the Parents of *Christ* carried him back from *Jerusalem* to *Bethlehem* after the *Purification*, and lived there a Year or more, before the *Magi* came; *Joseph* probably thinking it his Duty to settle there, from the Persuasion he had, that this wonderful Child was the *Messiah*, and that the *Messiah* was to be educated, as well as born, at *Bethlehem, David's City*. From hence he removed to *Egypt*; and when he was directed to come back, *Joseph* appears to have designed to return with *Jesus* to *Bethlehem*, had not GOD commanded him to go to *Nazareth*, a Place which he seems to have esteemed too contemptible to be the Abode of so illustrious a Person. And this Gentleman thinks, that when *Nazareth* is here called *την ποδω αυτων*, *their own City*, it intimates an Attempt to settle elsewhere, in a City that was *not their own*.

- SECT. II. As such may *Christ* be universally owned, and adored, both by
 Ver. 34. *Jews and Gentiles!* In the mean Time, while he is set up as a *Mark of Contradiction* and Contempt, let us not be *ashamed* of him, or of his Words; but rather let those Indignities, which are offered to him, be as a *Sword* to pierce thro' our own Souls. Let us remember, that the Gospel with all the Difficulties which attend it, is the great Touch-stone, by which GOD will try the Characters of all, to whom it comes. May our ready Acceptance of it, and our zealous Adherence to that sacred Cause, approve the humble Sincerity with which we enquire into its Evidence; that *Christ* may not be to us a *Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence*, but rather the Means of raising us to GOD and Happiness, even to that *Redemption*, for which they that *wait*, shall never be ashamed!
- Ver. 35.
- Ver. 36. Our Circumstances in Life are various: There are comparatively few, who have such Leisure for extraordinary Devotion, as was the Privilege of the pious *Anna*: Where it is found, let it be valued and improved: But how great, and how many soever, our Engagements and Entanglements in Life may be, let the Care of our Souls be still our chief Concern. Let us be *serv*ing GOD, in one Sense or another, *Night and Day*; with *Prayers*, pouring out our Souls before him Morning and Evening; and at proper Seasons adding *Fasting* to Prayer, and publick Solemnities to private Retirements.
- Ver. 37.
- Ver. 25, 37. To conclude; let the Example of these *Aged Saints* impress and animate those, whose *hoary Heads*, like theirs, are a *Crown of Glory, being found in the Way of Righteousness*. (*Prov. xvi. 31.*) Let those venerable Lips, so soon to be silent in the Grave, be now employed in shewing forth the Praises of their Redeemer. *Surely Days should speak, and the Multitude of Years should teach such Wisdom, (Job xxxii. 7.)* Such *Fruit* may they produce in *Old Age*; and may they have the Pleasure to see all these pious Attempts most thankfully received by the *rising Generation*, and most gratefully improved by them; that they may quit the World with the greater Tranquility, in the View of leaving those behind them, to whom *Christ* shall be as *precious*, as he hath been to them, and who will be *waiting* for GOD's *Salvation*, while they are gone to enjoy it! Amen.

S E C T.

S E C T. XII.

The Sages, or Wise-men, come from the East, under the Guidance of a Star, to enquire after CHRIST; and being directed unto Bethlehem, pay him their Homage, and offer him their Presents there. Mat. II. 1,—12.

MAT. II. 1.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the Days of Herod the King, behold, there came Wife-

MAT. II. 1.

NOW after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, even in the Days of Herod the Great, who at the Time of Christ's Nativity was King of that Country, there happened a memorable Occurrence, which gave a great Alarm to the Jews, and made the Æra of Christ's Birth very remarkable among them. For behold, there were [certain] Sages (a), that is, wise and learned Men, (who, on Account of their applying themselves to the Study of Natural Philosophy, were called MAGI,) that had observed a bright and unusual Luminary in the Heavens, which they

SECT. 12.
Mat. II. 1.

(a) *Certain Sages.*] It would be quite foreign to my Purpose to enumerate the various Conjectures of learned Men, relating to these *Magi*. I find not amongst them all so wild an Hypothesis, as that of *Vander Hard*, (*New Memoirs of Liter. vol. ii. pag. 62. & seq.*) that they were learned *Jews*, who came from the Colonies carried away by *Salmanser* and *Nebuchadnezzar*, and were *Embassadors* in the Name of the whole Body to pay their Homage to the *Messiah*, and to congratulate their Brethren on his Birth. It is most probable, they were *Gentile Philosophers*, who by the Divine Influence on their Minds, had been led to improve their Knowledge of *Nature*, as the Means of leading them to that of the one living and true *GOD*; and it is not at all unreasonable to suppose, that God had favoured them with some extraordinary Revelations of himself, as he did *Melchizedek*, *Abimelech*, *Job* and his *Friends*, and some others, who did not belong to the *Abrahamic Family*, to which he never intended absolutely to confine his Favours.—As to the Title that is here given them, it is certain that the Word *Magi* was not appropriated in antient Times to such as practised *Wicked Arts*, but frequently was used to express *Philosophers*, or Men of Learning, and those particularly that were curious in examining the Works of Nature, and in observing the Motions of the Heavenly Bodies: (Compare *Dan. ii. 2, 27.* and *v. 11. Septuag.*) And indeed *Magi* is become a Title so familiar to us, and is so far naturalized among us, that I was almost ready to retain it in my *Version*, had I not feared it might excite in common Readers something of the same Idea with *Magicians*, which always suggests a bad Sense.

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K

(b) *Came*

SECT. 12.
Mat. II. 1.

they were taught to understand as an Intimation, that a very illustrious Person was then born in Judea, who was destined by GOD to that universal Empire, the Fame and Expectation of which had spread so far in those Parts: They therefore *came from the East-Country (b)*, where they dwelt, *to Jerusalem*, the Capital of the Jewish Kingdom. And there they began the Enquiry, which had occasioned them to undertake so long a Journey, *saying to those, who, they thought, might be most likely to inform them, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen a beautiful Light, which we understand to be his Star, in the East-Country (c)*, of which we are Natives; *and therefore we are come, in humble Submission to the Will of Providence, to prostrate ourselves before him (d)*, and to pay our Homage to him.

3 *And King Herod, who was a Prince of a very suspicious Temper, and whose Cruelties had rendered him exceedingly obnoxious to his Subjects, when he heard [of this] Enquiry of theirs, was very much troubled; and all Jeru-*

Wife-men from the East to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his Star in the East, and are come to worship him.

3 When Herod the King had heard these Things, he was

(b) *Came from the East-Country.*] I do not venture to determine in the *Paraphrase*, from what Part of the *East* these Philosophers came. Had they been, (as *Mr. Fleming* supposes, in his *Christology*, vol. ii. pag. 392.) a Deputation from all the *Magi* in *Persia*, *Media*, *Arabia*, and *Chaldea*; or had they been *Kings*, as the *Papists* fancy; so grand a Circumstance as either of these, would in all Probability have been expressly recorded. I rather think, with *Grotius*, that they came from *Arabia*, which is often called the *East*, (see *Gen.* xxv. 6, 18. *Job* i. 3. *Judg.* vi. 3. *1 Kings* iv. 30. and *Jer.* xlix. 28.) and was famous for Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh: (Compare *ver.* 11.) And if so, their Journey lay through a barren and scorching Country, and they were obliged to pass thro' Desarts infamous for Robbery and Murther, which much illustrated their Piety and Zeal.

(c) *We have seen his Star in the East-Country.*] There is no Need of supposing with some of the *Fathers*, that they knew the Signification of this *Star*, by comparing it with *Balaam's Prophecy*, *Numb.* xxiv. 17. or *Daniel's*, *Dan.* ii. 44. and ix. 25. nor can we think, as *Grotius* seems to intimate, that they discovered it by the Rules of their *Art*. It is much more probable, that they learned it by a *Divine Revelation*, which it is plain that they were guided by in their Return; as we see afterwards at *ver.* 12.

(d) *To prostrate ourselves before him.*] This I take to be generally the Signification of *προσκύβω*. It is a Ceremony still used to *Eastern Princes*, and hath been of great Antiquity. Compare *Gen.* xlii. 6. and xliii. 26, 28.

1

(e) Filled

and learns he should be born at Bethlehem.

was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Jerusalem was also in Perplexity with him, SECT. 12. fearing he should make it an Occasion of renewing some of those Tyrannical Actions, Mat. II. 3. which had lately filled them with so much Horror (e).

4 And when he had gathered all the chief Priests and Scribes of the People together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And therefore to secure his Crown, which Herod was afraid might be in Danger from this new-born King, when he had called a Council, and had assembled all the Chief of the Priests (f), and with them the Scribes of the People, whose peculiar Business it was to study and explain the Scriptures; he enquired of them, where it was, according to the Jewish Prophecies, that the long expected Messiah was to be born (g). And they said un-

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the Prophet;

to him with one consent, He is certainly to be born at Bethlehem in Judea; for so it is written by the Prophet Micah, chap. v. 2.

6 And thou, Bethlehem in the Land of Juda, art not the

6 " And thou Bethlehem Ephratah, in the Land of Judah, inconsiderable as thou mayst

(e) Filled them with so much Horror.] Besides that shocking Instance of his Cruelty, which he had formerly given, in the Slaughter of their Sanhedrim, (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 9. (al. 17.) §. 4. & lib. xv. cap. 1. §. 2.) his barbarous Inhumanity was such, that he had put to Death his beloved Wife Mariamne by a publick Execution, (Antiq. lib. xv. cap. 7. (al. 11.) §. 5.) and after this had caused Alexander and Aristobulus, the two Sons he had by her, to be strangled in Prison, on what appear to be no other than groundless Suspicions. (Antiq. lib. xvi. cap. 11. (al. 16.) §. 6.) These and many other Instances of his Cruelty are related at large by Josephus; and it was probably about this very Time, that he executed many of the Pharisees, on occasion of some Predictions they had given out, that God was about to take away the Kingdom from him; and likewise slew every one in his own Family, who adhered to those Things that were said by the Pharisees. (Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 2. (al. 3.) §. 4.) From whence it might be seen, there was not any thing so barbarous and horrid, which such a cruel Tyrant was not capable of doing.

(f) All the Chief of the Priests.] All the Chief Priests must comprehend here, not only the High-Priest for the Time being, and his Deputy, with those who formerly had borne that Office, but also the Heads of the twenty-four Courses, as well as any other Persons of Peculiar Eminence in the Priesthood. In this Sense Josephus uses the Word. Antiq. lib. xx. cap. 8. (al. 6.) §. 8. pag. 973. Edit. Havercamp.

(g) Where the Messiah was to be born.] How strongly all this Story implies a general Expectation of the Messiah, I need not say. I would only observe, that Herod seems to have believed that such a Person was foretold; and on the Credit of the Chief Priests and Scribes, that he was to be born in Bethlehem; and yet was at the same Time contriving to destroy him, which was the Height of impious Madness, as well as Cruelty.

SECT. 12. " mayst now appear, yet art by no means
 Mat. II. 6. " *the least (b) among the Cities* belonging to
 " the Princes or Heads of Thousands in Ju-
 " dab; for out of thee shall come forth a
 " great and illustrious Ruler, who shall feed
 " and govern my People Israel, most wisely
 " and tenderly performing the Office of their
 " great Shepherd."

the least among the Princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governour that shall rule my People Israel.

7 Then Herod having secretly called the Sages to an Audience, got exact Information from them (i), about what Time the Star, which they had seen, and which proved the Occasion of their Journey, first appeared to them; that he might thereby make some Conjecture concerning the Age of the Child to whose Birth it referred. (Compare ver. 16.)

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the Wise-men, enquired of them diligently what Time the Star appeared.

8 And after they had satisfied his Curiosity, and had informed him of the Observations they had made about this Star, Herod communicated to them the Answer he had received from the Priests and Scribes; and sending them to Bethlehem, as the Place where they might expect to see the new-born Prince, he said, Go, and make a very exact Enquiry concerning the Child you are seeking; and when you have found him, return hither

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go, and search diligently for the young Child, and when ye have found him, bring me
 Word

(b) *Art by no Means the least.*] When this, and several other Quotations from the Old Testament, which we find in the New, come to be compared with the Original, and even with the Septuagint, it will plainly appear, that the Apostles did not always think it necessary exactly to transcribe the Passages they cited, but sometimes contented themselves with giving the general Sense in some little Diversity of Language; as Erasmus has well observed, in his memorable Note on this Text. If the Clause in Micah which we render, *Though thou be little*, be translated, *Art thou small among the Thousands of Judah?* &c. it will solve the great Difference, which there seems to be between the Prophet and the Evangelist; and I think it is the easiest Solution of it: For the Mark of Interrogation is not always expressed, where the Sense shews it must be implied. See the Hebrew of Job xli. 1, 2. 1 Kings xxi. 7. and Zech. viii. 6.—I do not urge the learned Dr. Pocock's Solution, that the Word צעיר signifies, both little, and great; which seems by no means so natural and just an Account of the Matter, tho' Veil on this Place prefers it to all others.

(i) *Got exact Information from them.*] That this is the Signification of the Word ακριβως, the learned Dr. Scott's Note on this Place hath abundantly convinced me; and to that I refer for the Reason of giving this Version of it here, and in ver. 16.

(k) *Where*

The Wife-men are guided by a Star to Bethlehem.

Word again, that I may come and worship him also.

hither directly, and inform me of it (k), that I also, who would permit no Interests of mine to interfere with the Decrees of Heaven, may come with my Family and Court to pay my Homage to him, to which I look upon myself as peculiarly obliged.

SECT. 12.
Mat. II. 8.

9 When they had heard the King, they departed; and lo, the Star which they saw in the East, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.

And having heard this Charge from the King, they departed from Jerufalem, without the least Suspicion of his treacherous and cruel Design: And beheld, to confirm their Faith in him to whom they were going, the very same Star, or Meteor (l), which they had seen in the East-Country, appeared to them again, and moved on before them in the Air, till it came down still nearer to the Earth, and at length stood directly over [the Place] where the Sacred Infant was.

9

10 When they saw the Star, they rejoiced with exceeding great Joy.

And when they saw the Star, thus pointing out their Way, and at length by its Station over it marking the very House in which they were to find him, they rejoiced with a Transport of Joy [which was] exceeding great (m), to see themselves in so remarkable a Manner under the Divine Direction, and with such Certainty conducted to the glorious Person whom they came to seek.

10

And

(k) When you have found him, return,—and inform me.] It is really an amazing Thing, that so suspicious and so artful a Prince as Herod, should put this important Affair on so precarious a Foot; when it would have been so easy, if he had not gone himself, under Pretence of doing an Honour to these learned Strangers, to have sent a Guard of Soldiers with them, who might, humanly speaking, without any Difficulty have slaughtered the Child and his Parents on the Spot. Perhaps he might be unwilling to commit such an Act of Cruelty in the Presence of these Sages, lest their Report of it might have rendered him infamous abroad; or rather, we must refer it to a secret Infatuation, with which GOD can, whenever he pleases, confound the most Sagacious of Mankind.

(l) The Star, or Meteor.] I say Meteor, because no Star could point out, not only a Town, but a particular House. It is not at all strange, Justin Martyr, and other Fathers, should suppose it was a Comet, considering how little Astronomy was known in their Days; but one would not have imagined, Grotius should have gone so far, as in the least to intimate such a Suspicion.

(m) They rejoiced with a Joy which was exceeding great.] The Original Phrase, χαρισαν χαρην μεγαλην σφοδρα, is emphatical beyond anything which I can think of in our Language. They joyed a great Joy very much, though very bad English, comes nearest to a literal Version.

(n) When

SECT. 12.

Mat. II. 11.

And when they were come into the House (n), where Mary was lodged, being now something better accommodated than at the Time of her Delivery, they found the young Child with Mary his Mother; and how different soever this Appearance might be from what they had expected (o), they were not at all offended at its Meanness, but falling down on their Faces before him, they paid him their Homage. And as it was customary in those Countries, to offer some Present to any illustrious Personage they came to visit (p), they opened their Treasures, which they had brought along with them for this very Purpose, and presented him with the choicest Pro-

II And when they were come into the House, they saw the young Child with Mary his Mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their Treasures, they presented unto him Gifts; Gold,

(n) *When they were come into the House.*] Mr. Bedford observes in his *Chronology*, pag. 740, 741. that it is not expressly said, that the Sages came to *Bethlehem*: But from the Series of the Account that *Matthew* gives us, it seems so very plain, that few have questioned it; and it is the less to be doubted, because if *Christ* (as that Author supposes,) had been now at *Nazareth*, he could hardly have been carried into *Egypt*, without passing thro' *Herod's* Dominions. But it is more difficult to determine, whether, if the Sages found him at *Bethlehem*, (as we have Reason to conclude they did,) it was within a few Weeks of his Birth, or (as Mr. *Manne* supposes, pag. 41.) about a Year after, when they had spent some considerable Time at *Nazareth*, and afterwards, on some unknown Occasion, made a Visit to *Bethlehem*, where they must have contracted some Acquaintance. The latter Supposition is undoubtedly favoured by *Luke* ii. 39. and *Mat.* ii. 16. unless we say, that the *Star* appeared about the Time of *Christ's* Conception. It also suits best with all the Arguments brought to prove, that *Christ* was born *A. U. C.* 747, or 749, and that *Herod* died *A. U. C.* 750, or 751, compared with the Tradition of the Holy Family's spending Two Years in *Egypt*. (See *Munster* on *Mat.* ii. 14.) These Reasons have a Face of strong Probability, but I cannot say, they intirely convince me; and therefore in the *Paraphrase* I have determined nothing either Way. Compare Note (o) and (p) in the last Section, on *Luke* ii. 39. pag. 70, 71.

(o) From what they had expected.] Perhaps they expected, this great Prince would have been born in the Family of *Herod*; at least, we may be sure, it was some Surprise to them, to find him accommodated only like a *Carpenter's Child*: But they wisely considered, that such miraculous Honours as the *Star* gave him, were far beyond any external Circumstance; and therefore paid him their Homage as readily, as if they had found him in the richest Palace. An amiable Example of that humble ingenuous Temper, which fits a Man for the Reception of the Gospel!

(p) Customary in those Countries, to offer some Present to any illustrious Personage they came to visit.] That this was customary appears from many Passages of the *Old Testament*. (*Gen.* xliii. 11, 25. *1 Sam.* ix. 7, 8. *x.* 27. *1 Kings* x. 2. *Psalms* lxxii. 10. and *Prov.* xviii. 16.) And *Maundrel*, *Chardin*, and many other modern Writers of the best Credit, assure us, the Custom is yet retained. See also *Ælian. Var. Hist.* lib. i. cap. 31, 32, 33.

(q) Gold,

The ADORATION
of the Wise Men.



Paul Verelstede del.

And when they were come into the House, they saw the young Child with Mary his Mother, And fell down, and Worshipped him: *Matt. Chap. 2. Verse 11.*

Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrh.

Produce of their Country, fine Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrh (q). SECT. 12.

12 And being warned of God in a Dream, that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own Country another Way.

And after this, they were preparing to go back to Jerusalem, as Herod had desired them; but GOD, who knew the barbarous Intent of the King, interposed for the Preservation of his Son, and for their Security and Comfort. So being divinely admonished in a Dream, that they should not go back to Herod, they returned into their own Country, another and more direct Way (r), not at all solicitous as to the Consequence of Herod's Resentment. Mat. II. 12.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

LET us observe with Pleasure this farther Honour, which GOD did to his Only-begotten Son, in ordering a New Star to appear, as the Signal of his Birth; and in calling these illustrious Persons from afar, to pay their early Adorations to him. No doubt they thought such a Discovery, as brought them to the Feet of their Infant-Saviour (s), an ample Recompence for all the Fatigue, and Expence Ver. 2.

(q) *Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrh.*] This was a most seasonable Providential Assistance, to furnish Joseph and Mary, for so long and expensive a Journey as that into Egypt, a Country where they were intirely Strangers, and yet were to abide there for some considerable Time.

(r) *Another and more direct Way.*] This seems to be intimated in the Word *αναμνησται*, which might perhaps more literally have been rendered, *bend back their Course.* Herod in the mean while waiting for their Return, they had Time to get out of his Reach, before his Passion rose, which might have been fatal to them.

(s) *Such a Discovery—of their Infant-Saviour.*] I take it for granted here, that they had some Divine Intimation, or Human Instruction, (which Joseph and Mary might indeed have given them,) that Christ was to save his People from their Sins, and was Emmanuel, GOD with us. Surely GOD would not have guided them in this extraordinary Manner, merely to pay a transient Compliment to Jesus. Their Prostrations probably expressed Religious Adoration, as well as Civil Respect; and it is not unlikely, that their Report might in due Time make Way for the Reception of the Gospel, in the Country from whence they came.—And if, as early Antiquity reports, (*Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. i. cap. 13.*) and both *Dr. Cave (Lit. Hist. Vol. i. pag. 2.)* and the learned *Dr. Grabe (Spicileg. Patr. Vol. i. pag. 1,—6.)* seem to think, some Messages of extraordinary Respect were afterwards sent from Abgarus, King of Edessa in Arabia, to our Lord Jesus Christ, (which might be Fact, tho' the Letters now remaining should be supposed spurious,) it is very possible, the Report of these Sages, preserved by Tradition (if they were then dead,) might add Weight to that of Christ's Miracles, (about Thirty Years after,) and dispose that Prince to take the greater Notice of him.

SECT. 12. pence of such a Journey. *They were exceedingly transported, when they saw the Star.* So let us rejoice in every Thing which may be a Means of leading our Souls to *Christ*, and of disposing us to cast ourselves down before him with Humility and Self-Resignation!

Ver. 10.

Let us look upon this Circumstance of the Sacred Story as a beautiful Emblem of that more glorious State of the Christian Church, when *the Gentiles shall come to its Light*, and *Sages and Kings to the Brightness of its Rising*; when *the Abundance of the Sea shall be converted to it*, and *the Wealth of the Gentiles shall be consecrated to its Honour*. *The Multitude of Camels shall cover it, the Dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring Gold, and Incense, and they shall shew forth the Praises of the Lord.* Isa. lx. 3, 5, 6.

Ver. 6.

How wonderful was the Honour conferred upon so obscure a Town as *Bethlehem*, when it was made thus illustrious among *the Thousands of Judah*! Happy they, who consecrate not only their *Gold*, and their other Possessions, but also their *Souls*, and their *Bodies*, to that great Ruler, whose Office it is, *to feed and govern the Israel of GOD*; under whose Conduct and Care they shall receive Blessings infinitely more valuable, than all the Treasures of the *East*, or the *West*.

Ver. 11.

Ver. 3.

Ver. 8.

But oh, the fatal Power of carnal Influence on the Heart! This engaged *Herod* to receive the News of a Redeemer's Birth with *Horror*; and, with execrable Cruelty, and vile Hypocrisy, to contrive his Murther, under the specious Form of *doing him Homage*. Vain and self-confounding Artifice! Let us rejoice in the Thought, that *there is no Understanding, or Wisdom, or Counsel against the Lord*; no Scheme so artfully disguised, that he cannot penetrate it, or so politically formed, that he cannot with infinite Ease confound it.

Ver. 12.

To what Perplexity and Grief might these *Sages* have been brought, had they been made even the innocent Instruments of an Assault on this *holy Child*! But *GOD* delivered them from such an Alarm, and happily guided their Return; so that thro' his Care, and Favour, they carried Home, in the Tidings of the new-born *Messiah*, far richer Treasures than they had left behind. Thus shall they, who *in all their Ways acknowledge GOD*, by one Method or another find, that he will *graciously direct their Paths*.

S E C T.



— He took the Young Child and his Mother by Night and departed into Egypt .

S E C T. XIII.

The Flight into Egypt; the Slaughter of the Infants; and the Settlement of the Holy Family at Nazareth, after Herod's Death. Mat. II. 13,—23.

MAT. II. 13.

AND when they were departed, behold the Angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a Dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and his Mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee Word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy him.

MAT. II. 13.

AND after the Return of the Wise-men, ^{SECT. 13.} when they had paid their Homage unto Christ, and were departed, behold, the Angel ^{Mat. II. 13.} of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a Dream, with a Message from Heaven, saying, Rise up without any Delay, and take with thee the Infant and his Mother, and flee directly into the Land of Egypt (a), and continue there till I shall give thee Notice to return; for Herod, alarmed by the extraordinary Circumstances which have lately happened (b), is about to make a strict Search after the young Child to destroy him, lest he in Time should prove a formidable Rival to his Family.

14 When he arose, he took the young Child and his

And Joseph rising from his Bed, immediately obeyed the Heavenly Vision; for he took the Infant and his Mother by Night, and withdrew, with as hasty a Flight as their Circum-

(a) *Flee into the Land of Egypt.*] This Circumstance doth not at all agree with the Conjecture of *Grotius*, that this Vision might appear after their Return to *Nazareth*; for then (as *Le Clerc* justly observes,) it is much more probable, that they would have been ordered to flee into *Syria*, which was much nearer to *Nazareth*, than *Egypt*; to which they could not have passed from thence, without going thro' the very Heart of *Herod's* Dominions, unless they had taken a very large Circuit with great Expence and Danger.—The great Number of *Jews*, which resided in *Egypt*, would make their Abode there so much the more comfortable.

(b) Alarmed by the extraordinary Circumstances which have lately happened.] When the *Wise-men* had come so far to pay their Homage to a new-born Prince, the several Reports of what had lately happened would, upon this Occasion, be revived; and the Behaviour of two such celebrated Persons, as *Simon* and *Anna*, on the Presentation of *Christ* in the Temple, which might at first be only taken Notice of by a few pious Persons, would probably be now reported to *Herod*, and must add to the Alarm which the Enquiry of the *Sages* gave him.

SECT. 13.

Mat. II. 15.

Circumstances would allow, into the Land of Egypt, near the Borders of which Bethlehem lay. And they continued there till after the Death of Herod, which happened not till several Months after (c); that what was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet Hosea, on another Occasion, might thus, as it were, be fulfilled anew; and that in this Appointment of the Place, where Christ should take up his Abode, there might appear to be a manifest Allusion to that Saying, (Hof. xi. 1.) "Out of Egypt have I called my Son (d);" Christ being in a much

his Mother by Night, and departed into Egypt;

15 And was there until the Death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my Son.

(c) Which happened not till several Months after.] I pretend not to say exactly how many, but must content myself with referring the Reader for the Proof of this to Mr. Manne's most elaborate and elegant *Dissertation on the Birth of Christ*, (pag. 35,—39.) which advances very considerable Arguments to prove, that Christ was born in the Spring, A. U. C. 747. Jul. Per. 4707. and that Herod died about the Passover, A. U. C. 750. Jul. Per. 4710. probably towards the End of March; tho' on further Examination I rather incline to place the Birth of Christ, in September or October, A. U. C. 749. and to conclude that Herod died in March, A. U. C. 751. See Dr. Lardner's *Credib. Part i. vol. ii. pag. 796,—804. 963, ad fin.*

(d) Out of Egypt have I called my Son.] It is well known, that from the Time of Julian at least, the Enemies of Christianity have been cavilling at the Application here made of a Prophecy to Christ, which in its original Sense seems to belong to the People of Israel. Learned Men have laboured with great Solitude, to prove it literally applicable to Christ.—Mr. Peirce's Hypothesis, (in his *Dissertation on this Text*, added to his *Paraphrase on Philippians*, pag. 103, 108.) that the Prophet is pursuing two Subjects together, and alternately treating of each, which must therefore be read interchangeably, one Part referring to the People of Israel, and the other to Christ, (as if it were designed by GOD, that the Prophecy of Christ's being called out of Egypt should be obscured by such a Method,) appears indeed to be very ingenious: But I fear, if such Liberties were to be allowed, it would render the Scripture the most uncertain Book in the World.—Bishop Chandler (in his *Defence of Christianity*, pag. 294.) supposes, that Calling out of Egypt is a Proverbial Expression, for being delivered from eminent Danger; which might have been said to have its Accomplishment in Christ's Escape, tho' he had fled into Syria, Arabia, or any other Country: But with all due Deference to so great a Name, I must observe, that neither Isa. x. 26. Deut. xxviii. 68. or Zech. x. 11. seem sufficient to prove the Use of such a Phrase; and I apprehend, that if the Use of such a Proverb were proved, the Passage before us would still seem a plainer Reference to Hof. xi. 1. than to such a general Form of Speech; so that the Difficulty would still remain.—I once thought the Words *וְיִשְׂרָאֵל דְּאֶרְצוֹת מִצְרָיִם* might be rendered, and paraphrased after this Manner: "Though Israel be a Child, that is, wayward and troublesome like a little Infant, yet I have loved him, and in Token of my Tenderness to him, will call [Jesus] my Son out of Egypt; having there preserved him from the Dangers which threatened his Infancy, that he may at length accomplish my great intended Salvation." I still think, that this Conjecture deserves some Consideration, as much more probable than any other Solution of this Kind I have ever met with.—But on the whole, especially considering the Context, I chuse to take them, as Gratus, Heinsius, and many



—and sent forth and *Years Old & under.*

a much higher and nobler Sense the Son of SECT. 13.
 GOD, than Israel, of whom the Words were Mat. II. 15.
 originally spoken.

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the Wise-men, was exceeding wroth; and sent forth, and slew all the Children that were in Bethlehem, and in

Then Herod, seeing that he was deluded (e), 16
 and that a great Affront (as he imagined,) was designed him *by the Sages*, as there was now no farther Prospect of their returning to him, *was exceedingly enraged; and in order to make the Destruction of this unknown Infant as sure as possible, he sent forth a Band of Murtherers, and inhumanely slew all the Male Children (f) that were in Betlehem, and in*

many of the best Criticks do, for a mere *Allusion*; and the rather, as I am fully convinced, that the next Quotation in *ver. 17.* must necessarily be taken in this Sense.

(e) *Seeing that he was deluded.*] The Word *παραισθησθαι*, which properly signifies, to be played with, well expresses the View, in which the Pride of *Herod* taught him to regard this Action, as if it were intended to expose him to the Derision of his Subjects, and to treat him as a *Child*, rather than a Prince of so great Experience and Renown.

(f) *Sent forth a Band of Murtherers, and slew all the Male Children.*] A very ingenious and learned Friend of mine has attempted to account for *Josephus's Silence* as to this remarkable Fact, by a Conjecture, that instead of *sending forth* (as it was in the First Edition) *a Detachment of Soldiers*, (of which he justly urges, nothing is expressly said in the Text,) he might only send *Private Orders* to have the Children taken off as secretly as possible; so that it might not make any publick Noise and come to the Notice of the *Jewish Historian*.—But in Answer to this, (not to insist upon the Argument from *Macrobius, Saturnal. lib. ii. cap. 4.* that the Emperor *Augustus* had heard of it at *Rome*;) I would observe, that it is certain, nothing of such *Privacy* in the Dispatch of these Children can be inferred from the Word *αποσταλεις*; since it is also used to express the Crucifixion of *our Lord*, (*Acts ii. 23. x. 39.*) the Stoning of *Stephen*, (*Acts xxii. 20.*) and the Beheading of *James the Apostle*, (*Acts xiii. 2.*) all which were *Publick Executions*; as well as the intended Assassination of *Paul* by a Band of armed Men. (*Acts xxiii. 15.*) And if it be considered, on the one Hand, how difficult it is *privately* to murder *Children under two Years old*, as they are hardly ever left alone; and on the other, how ill such a cautious and uncertain Procedure would have agreed with the furious Disposition of *Herod*, and the haughty Rage in which these Orders were given; I believe few will incline to this *Hypothesis*.—As for the *Silence of Josephus*, it is to be considered, that *Bethlehem* was but a small Place; and therefore in a Reign of so much Cruelty, the Slaughter of its Infants might not be taken very much Notice of. *Josephus* was not old enough to remember it himself; and if he did not find it in the *Memoirs of Nicolas of Damascus*, (that flattering Historian, of whom we know he made great Use in compiling the *Life of Herod*;) he might be unwilling to introduce it, even if he were particularly acquainted with it; lest the Occasion might have led him to mention, what generally at least he is solicitous to decline, I mean *Christian Affairs*. On the whole, if we compare *Contemporary Historians* of every Age, we shall find some material Fact or another omitted by each of them; yet that *Silence of one* is never urged as an Argument against admitting the express Testimony of the rest. See *Dr. Lardner's Credib. Part i. vol. ii. Book. ii. chap. 2. §. 1. pag. 746, & seq.*

L 2

(g) From

SECT. 13. *in all the Coasts of it, from their Entrance upon the Second Year (g) and under; as that, according to the Time of which he had got exact Information from the Sages, must include all that were born there since the Appearance of the Star.*

Mat. II. 16.

17 And *then*, as this cruel Execution extended itself to the neighbouring Places, and in particular to Ramah, a Town of Benjamin, which lay near Bethlehem, *that remarkable Saying was farther fulfilled, which was spoken by Jeremiah the Prophet; (Jer. xxxi. 15.)* for this was plainly an Event, to which those Words might be applied with more literal Propriety, than to the Captivity of the Jews in the Time of Nebuchadnezzar, which they were originally intended to describe (*b*), when they were first delivered by

18 the Prophet, *saying, "In Ramah there was a most doleful Voice heard, Lamentation and Weeping, and abundant Mourning, as if Rachel, that tender Mother, who was buried*

in all the Coasts thereof, from two Years old and under, according to the Time which he had diligently enquired of the Wise-men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, *saying,*

18 In Rama there a Voice heard, Lamentation and Weeping, and great Mourning, Rachel weeping *for*

(*g*) *From their Entrance upon the Second Year.]* The Reasons which determined me to render *αποδύω*; thus, may be seen in *Sir Norton Knatchbull's* excellent Note on this Place. It is probable, that Herod in his Passion ordered the Slaughter of the Infants, as soon as he perceived that he was disappointed in his Expectation of the Return of the Wise-men, left otherwise the Child he was so jealous of might be removed; and as his Cruelty extended even to those who had entered on the second Year, which is expressly said to be according to the Time of which he had got exact Information from the Sages, it must be natural to conclude from hence, that it was not till some considerable Time after the Birth of Christ, that he was visited by the Wise-men, even tho' we should allow the first Appearance of the Star to have been (as some suppose,) about the Time of Christ's Conception. Compare Note (*n*) on Mat. ii. 11. pag. 78.—For the Version of *αποδύω*, see Note (*i*) on ver. 7. pag. 76.

(*b*) Which they were originally intended to describe.] It is very evident from the following Clause, (*Jer. xxxi. 17.*) *Thy Children shall come again to their own Border, that these lamented Persons were not slain, but carried into Captivity; and it is well known, that Ramah was the Place where they were assembled, to be led away to Babylon: (Jer. xl. 1.)* So that it is certain, this can only be an Allusion, as it is intimated in the Paraphrase. And I look upon this as a sure Argument, that a Passage in Scripture, whether Prophetical, Historical, or Poetical, may in the Language of the New Testament be said to be fulfilled, when an Event happens, to which it may with great Propriety be accommodated. See *Dr. Sykes, on the Truth of Christianity, chap. xiii. pag. 217, & seq.*

I

(*i*) Rachel,

for her Children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

“ buried near this Place (i), had risen out of her Grave, and was bewailing her lost Child, and refusing to be comforted, because they are not.”

SECT. 13.
Mat. II. 18.

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an Angel of the Lord appeareth in a Dream to Joseph in Egypt,

But after this, when Herod was dead (k), and an End put to all his Cruelties, behold, an Angel of the Lord again appeareth in a Dream to Joseph, while he continued to sojourn in Egypt, Saying, The Way is now prepared for thy Return from hence, and I am sent, according to the Intimation that was given thee before, to bring thee Notice of it; and therefore now arise, and take the Infant and his Mother, and go back to thine own Abode in the Land of Israel; for thou mayst safely do it, since they are dead, who sought to destroy the young Child's Life (l).

20 Saying, Arise, and take the young Child and his Mother, and go into the Land of Israel; for they are dead, which sought the young Child's Life.

21 And he arose, and took the young Child and his Mother, and came into the Land of Israel.

And Joseph had no sooner heard the Message that was brought him by the Angel, but he immediately arose, and cheerfully confiding in the Divine Protection, took the young Child and his Mother, according to the Command he had received, and came into the Land of

(i) Rachel, who was buried near this Place.] See Gen. xxxv. 19. and 1 Sam. x. 2.

(k) When Herod was dead.] It is well worth while to read the particular and affecting Account, which Josephus has given of the terrible Death of this inhuman Tyrant; whom GOD so remarkably made a Terror to himself, as well as to all about him. (See Joseph. Antiq. Lib. xvii. cap. 6. [al. 8.] §. 5. & Bell. Jud. Lib. i. cap. 33. [al. 21.] §. 5, 6, 7.) Eusebius thought it so great an Illustration of the Gospel History, that he has inserted it at large (Ecc. Hist. Lib. i. cap. 8.) with a Degree of Exactness, which joins with many other Instances of the like Nature, to shew us how cheerfully we may depend upon the many invaluable Extracts from a Multitude of antient Books now lost, which he has given us, both in his Ecclesiastical History, and in his other Writings, especially in his Preparatio Evangelica.

(l) They are dead, who sought to destroy the young Child's Life.] It is a very ingenious Conjecture of Mr. Manne, that Antipater, the Son of Herod, who, at the Time when Christ was born, was Heir-Apparent to his Crown, and was a Prince so cruel and ambitious, that he had procured the Death of his Two Elder Brothers, to clear his Way to the Succession, would very probably be an active Counsellor and Instrument, in seeking the Destruction of the new-born Jesus, and in advising to the Slaughter of the Infants. And as this Antipater died but five Days before Herod, both might be referred to in these Words of the Angel, They are dead, &c. See Mame's Dissert. pag. 74, 75. and compare Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xvi. cap. 8. [al. 11.] §. 4. lib. xvii. cap. 1, & 8. [al. 10.] §. 1. Edit. Havercamp.

(m) The

SECT. 13. *of Israel.* But when upon his coming to the Borders of it, he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in the Room of his Father Herod, knowing him to be the Heir of his Cruelty (m), as well as of his Kingdom, he was afraid to go thither to settle, or so much as to take it in his Way; but being again divinely admonished in a Dream, he withdrew into the Region of Galilee, which was under the Government of Herod Antipas (n), a Prince of a milder Character, and who was then on such hostile Terms with Archelaus, that there was no Danger of his giving them up to him. *And he went and dwelt in a little City, on the Confines of Zabulon and Issachar, which was called Nazareth, where he had formerly resided, before he went to Bethlehem; and being thus returned to his own City, Jesus was there brought up, and educated in a Place so very contemptible among the Jews, that it was grown into a Proverb with them, that no good Thing could be expected from thence: (John i. 46. vii. 52.) So that by this a Way was further opened by the Providence of GOD, that it might be fulfilled, what had been spoken in Effect by many*

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, in the Room of his Father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a Dream, he turned aside into the Parts of Galilee.

23 And he came and dwelt in a City called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the

(m) The Heir of his Cruelty.] *Archelaus*, in the very Beginning of his Reign, massacred Three Thousand *Jews* at once in the Temple, and was afterwards banished in the tenth Year of his Government, to *Vienna* in *Gaul* by *Augustus*, on a Complaint brought against him by the Chief of the *Jews* for his various Cruelties. See *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 9.* [al. 11.] §. 3. pag. 851. & cap. 13. [al. 15.] §. 2. pag. 866.

(n) *Galilee*,—under the Government of Herod Antipas.] *Herod the Great* divided his Dominions by his last Will, appointing *Archelaus* to succeed him as King of *Judea*, *Herod Antipas* to be Tetrarch of *Galilee* and *Peræa*, and *Philip* to be Tetrarch of *Trachonitis* and the neighbouring Countries. (*Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 8.* [al. 11.] §. 1.) But *Herod Antipas* endeavoured to supplant his Brother *Archelaus*, when Application was made to the *Romans* to confirm the Will, and went to *Rome* with a View of obtaining the Kingdom, (which was left to him in a former Will,) in which he was supported by the Interest of the whole Family, who hated *Archelaus*, and thought his Brother to be far more worthy of the Kingdom; and tho' he did not carry his Point, the Attempt was such as could not but widen the Breach there was before between them, and left no Room for any future Correspondence. See *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 9.* [al. 11.] §. 4. & cap. 11. [al. 13.] §. 4.

(o) He

the Prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

many of the Prophets, "He shall be called a Nazaræan (o)," that is, he shall appear in mean and despicable Circumstances, and be treated as the Mark of publick Contempt and Reproach.

SECT. 13.
Mat. II. 23.


I M P R O V E M E N T.

WHAT is our fallen Nature, that it can be capable of such Enormities, as we have now been surveying! Or what imaginable Circumstances of Grandeur and Power, can free the Mind of an ambitious Creature from Servitude and Misery! Who can behold Herod, under the Agitation of such a barbarous Rage, and not see the Vanity even of Royal Dignity, when the Man that sways the Sceptre over others, hath no Rule over his own Spirit! Surely none of the innocent Victims of Herod's Wrath, felt so much from the Sword of their barbarous Murderers, as the guilty Mind of the Tyrant from its own unnatural Transports.

The Indignation which arises in our Minds on the View of so much Wickedness, finds a secret Satisfaction in this Thought. But how grievous is it to reflect on what the Parents of these poor Babes felt, while the Sword that murdered their Children in their very Sight, pierced thro' their own Bowels! Happy, in Comparison with these, were the Wombs that never bare, and the Paps that never gave Suck! Let Parents remember, how soon their dearest Hopes may be turned into Lamentation, and learn to moderate their Expectation from their Infant-Offspring, and check too fond a Delight in them.

Let us all learn to be very thankful, that we are not under the Arbitrary Power of a Tyrant, whose Sallies of distracted Fury might spread Desolation thro' Houses and Provinces. Let us not say, Where was the great Regent of the Universe, when such a horrible Butchery was transacted? His all-wise Counsels knew how to bring Good out

(o) He shall be called a Nazaræan.] If the Solution given in the *Paraphrase* be not allowed, I must acquiesce in *Chrysostom's* Opinion, that the Passage referred to is lost: For it is very unnatural to explain this Text, by *Sampson's* being appointed a Nazarite, *Judges* xiii. 5. or the *Messiah's* being spoken of as *Netzer, the Branch*; *Isa.* xi. 1. or to account for it with *Witsius*, by *God's* being called *Netzer, the Preserver of Men*, *Job* vii. 20. (See *Wits. Meletem. Diff.* §. 16.) The joint Sense of many Scriptures is thus referred to, *John* vii. 38. and *James* iv. 5. And that the *Messiah* should be treated in a very contemptuous Manner, was foretold by *David*, *Psal.* xxii. 6, & seq. lxi. 9. by *Isaiab*, chap. lii. and liii. and by *Zecchariab*, chap. xi. 12, 13.

- SECT. 13.  out of all the Evil of it. The Agony of a few Moments transmitted these oppressed Innocents to Peace and Joy; while the impotent Rage of *Herod* only heaped on his own Head Guilt, Infamy, and Horror. He conceived *Mischief*, and he brought forth *Vanity*; (*Job* xv. 35.) and while he studied to prevent the Establishment of the *Messiah's* Kingdom, and set himself with impious Rage against the Lord, and against his Anointed, He that sitteth in the Heavens did laugh, yea, the Lord had him in Derision. (*Psal.* ii. 2, 4.) That GOD, who discerns every secret Purpose of his Enemies, and foresees every intended Assault, knows how, whenever he pleases, by a Thought, by a *Dream*, to baffle it.
- Ver. 13. The Preservation of the Holy Child *Jesus* in *Egypt*, may be considered as a Figure of GOD's Care over his Church, in its greatest Danger. GOD doth not often, as he easily could, strike their Persecutors with immediate Destruction; but he provides a *Hiding-Place* for his People, and by Methods not less effectual, though less pompous, preserves his chosen Seed from being swept away, even when the *Enemy* comes in like a *Flood*.
- Ver. 14, 15. *Egypt*, that was once the Seat of Persecution and Oppression to the *Israel* of GOD, is now a Refuge to his Son: And thus all Places will be to us, what Divine Providence will be pleased to make them. When, like *Joseph* and *Mary*, we are cut off from the Worship of his Temple, and perhaps removed into a strange Land, he can be a little *Sanctuary* to us, and give us, in his gracious Presence, a rich Equivalent for all that we have lost.
- Ver. 19. They continued here, till he gave the Signal for their Departure. Let us, in like Manner, remember, that it is GOD's Part to direct, and ours to obey; nor can we be out of the Way of Safety, and of Comfort, while we are following his Directions, and steering our Course by the Intimations of his Pleasure.
- Ver. 20. *Jesus* survived his Persecutors, and returned into the Land of *Israel* again: But such was his Condescension, that he abode at *Nazareth*, which seems to have been allotted him as the most humble Station. Let us never be unwilling to bear *Reproach* for him, who from his Infancy endured it for us; nor take Offence at the Meanness of his Condition, whose Removes were directed by Angelic Messengers, as immediate Envoys from the GOD of Heaven.
- Ver. 23.

S E C T.

S E C T. XIV.

JESUS, at the Age of twelve Years, comes up to the Passover at Jerusalem, and there discourses with the Doctors in the Temple. Luke II. 40, to the End.

LUKE II. 40.

AND the Child grew, and waxed strong in Spirit, filled with Wisdom; and the Grace of GOD was upon him.

LUKE II. 40.

AND the Child Jesus, being returned to Nazareth, was educated in that City under the Care of Joseph and his Mother, and there grew up, and became strong in Spirit, discovering early Marks of a sublime and heavenly Genius, and visibly appearing to be filled with an uncommon Portion and Degree of Wisdom; and it was plainly to be seen, that the Grace of GOD was eminently upon him; so that he made an extraordinary Progress in Knowledge and Piety betimes, and was thus looked upon as a distinguished Favourite of Heaven. (Compare Judges xiii. 24, 25.)

SECT. 14.
Luke II. 40.

41 Now his Parents went to Jerusalem every Year, at the Feast of the Passover.

Now his pious Parents went early to Jerusalem, at the Feast of the Passover; as it was usual for those Families to do, that were remarkably religious, tho' only the adult Males were by the Law obliged to appear before the Lord on this Occasion. (Compare 1 Sam. i. 3, 7, 21.)

41

42 And when he was twelve Years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the Custom of the Feast.

And when he was twelve Years old, and so according to the Jewish Maxims came under the Yoke of the Law (a), his Parents, when they went up to Jerusalem according to the usual Custom of the Feast, thought it proper to take him with

42

(a) Came under the Yoke of the Law.] Tho' I am not satisfied of the Truth of Grotius's Assertion, that the Jewish Children under this Age, were called *עֲרֵבָה*, or Little Ones, and afterwards *עֲרֵבָה*, or Children; (since it is certain that the Word *עֲרֵבָה* is often used for those under that Age; see 1 Sam. i. 24. Judg. xiii. 24. and Hof. xi. 1, 3.) yet I think the Fact asserted in the Paraphrase is generally allowed by Learned Men. See Wotton's Miscel. vol. i. p. 320. and Lightf. Hor. Heb. in. loc.

SECT. 14. with them, to celebrate that glorious Deliverance, which GOD had so many Ages ago wrought for his People when he brought them out of Egypt, the Memory of which was carefully to be transmitted to every succeeding Generation. (Compare Exod. xii. 26, 27.)

Luke II. 42.

43 And when they had finished all the religious Solemnities, to be observed in the Days of unleavened Bread, and were returning Home, the Child Jesus, charmed with the sacred Entertainments of the Temple, and eagerly desirous of improving in the Knowledge of his Father's Law, stayed behind them in Jerusalem; and neither Joseph, nor his Mother were aware [of it.]

44 But tho' they saw he was not with them, yet knowing his sociable Temper, they supposed he was somewhere in the Company, (as several Families travelled together on such Occasions :) And they went a whole Day's Journey, before they missed him; and then, in the Evening, they sought for him amongst their Kindred and Acquaintance, who were their Companions in the Journey, and with whom they concluded he had been. And not finding him with them, they returned immediately, and came back to Jerusalem, seeking him every where with great Concern, and ready to suspect that some hostile Assault might have been made upon him.

46 And three Days after their setting out (b), they found him in an Apartment of the Temple, where the Teachers of the Law used to lecture upon it to the People; and where young Persons in particular, were examined, and had a Liberty to ask what Questions they thought

43. And when they had fulfilled the Days, as they returned, the Child Jesus carried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his Mother knew not of it.

44 But they supposing him to have been in the Company, went a Days Journey; and they sought him among their Kinsfolk and Acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three Days they found him in the Temple, sitting

(b) Three Days after their setting out.] The first Day was spent in their Journey Homeward, the second in their Return to Jerusalem, and the third in searching after Christ there.—The Word *passo*, it came to pass, is a mere Expletive, and not imagining that the Rules of the most faithful and exact Translation would oblige me always to retain it, I have frequently omitted it.

(c) For

sitting in the midst of the Doctors, both hearing them, and asking them Questions :

thought proper, for their farther Information (c). Here was Jesus *sitting in the midst of the Doctors*, whose Profession it was to teach on these Occasions ; for he had placed himself among others at their Feet (d), and was, with all possible Diligence, *both attending to them, and asking them such Questions*, as he judged proper, for the farther Illustration of what they said.

SECT. 14.
Luke II. 46.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his Understanding and Answers.

And all who heard him, considering the Tenderness of his Age, *were in a perfect Transport of Admiration (e) at his Understanding*, and at the Penetration which he shewed, both in the Questions he put to them, and also in the Answers he returned to what they asked him.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed : and his Mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us ? behold, thy Father and I have sought thee forrowning.

And when he was discovered by his Parents, and they saw him thus employed, they likewise were struck with Wonder : And his Mother said unto him, Oh my Son, why hast thou dealt thus with us ? behold, this is now the third Day, that thy Father and I have sought thee from Place to Place, with inexpressible Anxiety and Distress.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me ? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's Business ?

And he said unto them, What is the Cause that you have sought me with so much Concern ? and why is it you were at such a Loss where you should find me ? Did ye not know, that I ought

(c) For their farther Information.] All these Things are so well illustrated and confirmed, by Dr. Lightfoot, in his *Hor. Hebr.* on this Place, that I cannot but refer the Reader thither. See also Drusus's excellent *Note* on this Place.

(d) *Sitting*—at their Feet.] I have often thought it a great Injury to the Character of our Blessed Redeemer, to represent this Story, whether in Pictures or Words, as if Christ, at this tender Age, went up into the Seats of the Doctors and there disputed with them. Not one Word is said of his *Disputing* by the Evangelist, but only of his *asking* some Questions, and *answering* others, which was a very usual Thing in these Assemblies, and indeed the very End of them. All was, no doubt, conducted with the utmost Modesty and Decorum. And if he were with others at the Feet of these Teachers, (where Learners generally sat ; see Luke x. 39. and Acts xxii. 3.) he might be said to be in the midst of them, as they sat on Benches of a semicircular Form, raised above their Auditors and Disciples.

(e) *Were in a Transport of Admiration.*] Every learned Reader must know, that the Word *ἐκστασι* here, and *ἐκστασις* in the next Verse, are much more forcible, than our Translation of them, and much more literally rendered here.

M 2

(f) I ought

SECT. 14. ought to be at my Father's (f) ? and that
 Luke II. 49. wherever I was, I should be so employed in
 his Service, as to be secure of his Protection ?

50 And they did not perfectly understand the
 Words which he spake unto them upon this Oc-
 casion (g), as being expressed in something
 of a concise and ambiguous Manner.

51 And he went down into the Country with
 them, and came to Nazareth; and there he
 did not assume any Air of Superiority, on
 Account of the extraordinary Applause he
 had met with from the People, who had
 heard him in the Temple; but still continued
 subject to his Parents, and respectful to them,
 as a most dutiful and obedient Child. And
 his Mother kept all these Sayings and Occur-
 rences in her Heart, and often reflected very
 seriously upon them.

52 And Jesus advanced considerably in Wis-
 dom, as well as in Age and Stature (h);
 and

50 And they understood
 not the Saying, which he
 spake unto them.

51 And he went down
 with them, and came to Na-
 zareth, and was subject unto
 them: But his Mother kept
 all these Sayings in her
 Heart.

52 And Jesus increased
 in Wisdom and Stature, and
 in

(f) *I ought to be at my Father's*; $\epsilon\upsilon\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \omega\alpha\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\varsigma\ \delta\epsilon\iota\ \sigma\iota\omega\alpha\iota\ \mu\epsilon$.] There is a known
 Ambiguity in the Original. I have chosen with Grotius, Cappellus, Fuller, &c. to
 follow the Syriac Version of the Words, where it is rendered, *in my Father's House*,
 which it is certain they will well bear; and so Josephus puts $\epsilon\upsilon\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \Delta\iota\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ for in Ju-
 piter's Temple; *contra Apion. lib. i. §. 18. pag. 449. Haverc.* (Compare John xix. 27.
Esther v. 10. vi. 12. vii. 9. Gr.) And indeed, tho' a general Apprehension of his being
well employed, might be a Reason, (as it is intimated in the Paraphrase,) against their
 excessive Anxiety, yet it could not (as the Words in this Connection seem to imply,)
 have directed them where to find him. It is to be remembered, this was the first Visit,
 Christ had ever made to the Temple, since he was a Child in Arms; and it is no
 Wonder therefore, that the Delight he found there inclined him to prolong it.

(g) *They did not perfectly understand the Words which he spake unto them.*] It is strange,
 Grotius should think $\sigma\upsilon\mu\mu\alpha\varsigma$ should here be rendered, *They did not attentively consider*
what he said, when the very next Verse assures us, *Mary kept all these Sayings in her*
Heart. The Phrase only implies, that there was something more in Christ's Words,
 than at first appeared. He conjectures there might be a Reference to his being *the*
Lord, who was to come into his Temple; (*Mal. iii. 1.*) which, if there be, it is indeed
 very obscure. It seems more probable, it may be an Intimation that he had many
 other important Visits to make to his Father's House; which evidently appears by the
 Sequel of the History.

(h) *In Wisdom, as well as in Age and Stature.*] It is well known, that $\eta\mu\omega\varsigma$ may
 signify either *Age* or *Stature*; but I think the latter is meant here because the former
 was too apparent to need the Mention. It seems a very just and important Remark of
 Erasmus here, that all the Endowments of the Man Christ Jesus were owing to the
 Divine Beneficence, and that the Deity communicated itself in a gradual Manner to
 that Human Nature which it had assumed.

(i) Those

in Favour with God and Man.

and grew proportionably in Favour both with GOD and Men; his Behaviour being not only remarkably religious, but so benevolent and obliging, as to gain the Friendship and Affection of all that were about him.

SECT. 14.
Luke II. 52.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

LET us, who are *Heads of Families*, take Occasion from the Story before us, to renew our Resolutions, that *we, and our House, will serve the Lord*; and remember, that it is a Part of our Duty, not only to GOD, but to our *Domesticks*, to engage them with us in his publick Worship; the Pleasures of which will surely be increased, when we see them, and especially our dear *Children*, joining with us in Attendance on our great common Father.

Let *Children* view the Example of the *Holy Child Jesus*, with an humble Desire to copy after it. Let them love the House and Ordinances of GOD, and thirst for the Instructions of his good Word. Let them think themselves happy, if his *Servants in the Ministry* bestow a Part of their important Time, in those Exercises which are especially suited for their Instruction; and let them not only be careful to return the properest *Answers* they can, but at convenient Times, with Modesty and Respect, *ask such Questions*, as may be likely to improve them in Knowledge and Grace.

Let those *Children*, whose Genius is most promising, and most admired, learn from the Blessed *Jesus*; to behave themselves in a humble and submissive Manner to all their *Elders*, and especially to their *Parents*; for tho' he was *the Lord of all*, yet was he *subject*, not only to *Mary* his real *Mother*, but to *Joseph*, tho' only supposed to be his *Father*. Such *Children* may well hope, that the *Grace of GOD* will still be *upon them*; and *growing in Wisdom*, as they do in *Stature*, they will also advance in *Favour with GOD and Men*; and be the *Darlings of Heaven*, as well as of *Earth*.

And, Oh, that the greatest and wisest of us, those of the longest Standing, and of the most eminent Stations in the Church, might learn of this admirable and Divine Child; that always remembering our Relation to GOD, and ever intent on learning his Will, and promoting his Glory, we might, with humble Acquiescence, accommodate ourselves to all the Disposals of his Providence! How easily could He, who discovered such early Marks of a sublime Genius, and

SECT. 14. *a* lively Wit, have relished the most elegant Delights of Science, and have eclipsed all the most celebrated Poets, Orators, and Philosophers of that learned and polite Age? But he laid all those Views aside, that he might pursue the Duties of that humble Rank of Life, which his *Heavenly Father's* infinite Wisdom had assigned him; and joined, as it would seem, to assist in maintaining himself, and his Parents too, by the daily Labour of his Hands. Let us learn from hence, that it is the truest Greatness of Soul, to know our own Place and Office, and to deny ourselves those Amusements of the Mind (*i*), as well as those Gratifications of the Senses, which are inconsistent with the proper Services of our different Relations and Callings.

Ver. 51.

(*i*) Those Amusements of the Mind.] I hope my younger *Brethren* in the *Ministry* will pardon me, if I bespeak their particular Attention to this Thought; lest if the main Part of their Time be given to the *Curiosities* of Learning and only a few Fragments of it to their great Work, *the Care of Souls*, they see Cause in their last Moments to adopt the Words of dying *Grotius*, perhaps with much greater Propriety than he could use them: *Proh! Vitam perdidit, operosè nihil agendo; Alas! I have thrown away Life, in doing nothing with a great deal of Pains.*

S E C T. XV.

The Opening of John the Baptist's Ministry. Mark I. 1,—6. Luke III. 1,—6. Mat. III. 1,—6.

MARK I. 1.

SECT. 15. *T*HE Beginning of the Gospel History of *Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of GOD*, as it is recorded by the Evangelist **MARK**, thus takes its Rise from the first
 2 Opening of John's Ministry. It was this John that came under the Character of the great Forerunner of the Messiah; *as it is written in the Prophets*, and particularly in Malachi, (chap. iii. 1.) "*Behold I will send my Messenger before thy Face, O my anointed Son, who shall prepare thy Way before thee,*" and as the Harbinger appointed to proclaim thy Coming, shall with remarkable
 I " Solem-

MARK I. 1.

THE Beginning of the Gospel of *Jesus Christ* the Son of *GOD*.

2 As it is written in the Prophets, Behold, I send my Messenger before thy Face, which shall prepare thy Way before thee.

3. The Voice of one crying in the Wilderness, Prepare ye the Way of the Lord, make his Paths straight.

LUKE III. 1. Now in the fifteenth Year of the Reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being Governour of Judea,

“ Solemnity make it the Business of his SECT. 15.
 “ Ministry to introduce thy Kingdom.” Mark I. 3.
 So also it was prophesied concerning him by Isaiah, (chap. xl. 3.) “ There shall be heard the Voice of one crying in the Wilderness (a), and solemnly proclaiming to this Purpose in the Deserts of Judea, Prepare ye with Readiness the Way of the Lord, and make his Paths straight and smooth, by removing every Thing which might prove an Obstruction to his gracious Appearance.” These Prophecies, (as it will presently be seen,) received a very signal and remarkable Accomplishment in John, who from his Office was surnamed the Baptist.

Now this eminent Person made his first LUKE III. 2. publick Appearance, in the fifteenth Year of the Reign of the Emperor Tiberius Cæsar, (reckoning the Beginning of his Reign from the Time, when Augustus made him his Colleague in the Empire (b);) when Archelaus being banished, and his Kingdom reduced into a Roman Province, Pontius Pilate was Governour, or Procurator, of Judea;

(a) *The Voice of one crying in the Wilderness.*] Most Commentators have imagined these Words, originally to refer to the Proclamation of Deliverance from the *Babylonish Captivity*: But there is no imaginable Reason for supposing an immediate Connection between the Conclusion of the *thirty-ninth Chapter of Isaiah*, and the Beginning of the *fortieth*; nor can I observe any Thing in the Process of this Chapter, which may not literally suit the Evangelical Sense here given it by *Mark*, as well as *Matthew* and *Luke*.

(b) Reckoning from the Time, when Augustus made him his Colleague in the Empire.] Supposing *Christ* was born *A. U. C.* 747. (as in *Note (c)*, pag. 82.) it is absolutely necessary to interpret the Words thus; because the *fifteenth Year of Tiberius*, if reckoned from the Death of *Augustus*, began in *August*, *A. U.* 781. and would thus be the *thirty-fourth Year of Christ's Life*, which is plainly inconsistent with *Luke* iii. 23. (See *Manné's Dissert.* pag. 136.—140.) But if the Birth of *Christ* be placed (as seems most probable) in *September*, *A. U.* 749. and *Tiberius* was admitted to a Part in the Empire (three Years before *Augustus* died) in *August* 764, the *fifteenth Year of Tiberius* on this Computation began in *August*, 778. And if *John* entered on his Ministry in the Spring following, *A. U.* 779. in the same Year of *Tiberius*, and, after he had preached about twelve Months, baptized *Jesus* in the Spring, 780. then *Jesus* at his Baptism would be but *thirty Years of Age* and some odd Months, which perfectly agrees with what *Luke* says of his being at that Time about *thirty Years old*. See *Dr. Lardner's Credib.* Part. i. vol. ii. pag. 838, 839.

(c) Divided:

SECT. 15. *Judea; and as the Dominions of Herod the*
 Luke III. 1. *Great had been divided after his Death (c); Herod Antipas, one of his Sons, was Tetrarch of Galilee, or Governour of that fourth Part of his Dominions; and his Brother Philip Tetrarch of another fourth Part, which was the Region of Iturea and Trachonitis, (the Name now given to that Tract of Land on the other Side Jordan, which had formerly belonged to the Tribe of Manasseh;) and Lysanias was Tetrarch of Abilene (d), a fair City of Syria, whose Territories reached even to Lebanon and Damascus, and were peopled with great Numbers of Jews. In those Days (e), while Annas and Caiaphas were High-Priests (f), the Word of GOD by Prophetic Inspiration, came unto John the Baptist (g), the Son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, who*

Judea, and Herod being Tetrarch of Galilee, and his Brother Philip Tetrarch of Iturea, and of the Region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the Tetrarch of Abilene,

2 *Annas and Caiaphas being the High-Priests, the Word of GOD [in those Days] came unto John [the Baptist,] the Son of Zacharias,*

(c) *Divided after his Death.] See Note (n), on Mat. ii. 22. pag. 86.*

(d) *Lysanias was Tetrarch of Abilene.] Some have thought this Lysanias another Son of Herod the Great; but it seems much more probable, that he was descended from a Prince of that Name, who had been Governour of that Country several Years before. See Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xiv. cap. 13. (al. 23.) §. 3. pag. 722. Havercamp.*

(e) *In those Days.] This is supplied from Mat. iii. 1. where it is proper to observe, that the Phrase $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\alpha\upsilon\varsigma\ \eta\mu\epsilon\rho\alpha\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\upsilon\varsigma$, is used in a very extensive Sense, for that Age of which he had spoken in the preceding Words, tho' these Events happened near thirty Years after those recorded in the former Chapter of that Gospel.—And the Phrase is here used with the greater Propriety, as John did indeed appear under his Publick Character while Christ continued to dwell at Nazareth; which was the Event that Matthew had last mentioned.*

(f) *While Annas and Caiaphas were High-Priests.] As it was not Caiaphas, but Ishmael, that immediately succeeded Annas or Ananus, (Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xviii. cap. 2. (al. 3.) §. 2. pag. 873.) I cannot suppose, as some have done, that Annas was High-Priest the former Part of this Year, and Caiaphas the latter; much less, that Luke knew so little of the Jewish Constitution, as to suppose there could be Two High-Priests properly so called. The easiest Solution is, that one was the High-Priest, and the other his Sagan, or Deputy; so that the Title might, with a very pardonable Liberty, be applied to both. See Note (a) on John xviii. 13. Vol. ii. Sect. 184.*

(g) *The Word of GOD came unto John the Baptist.] I think these Words declare as expressly as any Words can, that John was called to his Prophetic Work in the fifteenth Year of Tiberius; so that if Mr. Manno's Arguments prove, (as he supposes they do,) that Christ was crucified in that fifteenth Year, then it will follow, that all the Events, both of John's Ministry, and of our Lord's, must be reduced within the Compass of One Year; which is, for Reasons elsewhere given, utterly incredible. To conclude that by the Language, which Luke here uses, he intends to express the Time of Christ's Death, tho' it did not happen in the same Year, is doing the greatest*



And preached saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose Shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

rias, in the Wilderness [of Judea.] [MAT. III. 1.—]

who had lived for several Years retired in the *Wilderness of Judea.* Compare Luke i. 80. SECT. 15.
Luke III. 2.
pag. 38.

3 And [MAR. John did baptize in the Wilderness, and] came into all the Country about Jordan, preaching the Baptism of Repentance, for the Remission of Sins; [MAT. III. —I. MARK I. 4.]

3 And *John*, at the first Opening of his Ministry, *did* preach with great Power and *baptize in the Wilderness*; and perceiving the People inclined to pay an attentive Regard to his Doctrine, he did not confine himself to that Wilderness alone, but *came into all the Country about Jordan*, and went a Progress over it, from one Place to another, on both Sides the River; *preaching every where, as he went along, the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins*; earnestly exhorting Men, to repent of all the Irregularities of their Lives, and to be baptized in Token of their sincere Desire to be washed and cleansed from them; and assuring them at the same Time, that if they attended on this Institution in a truly penitent Manner, they might consider it as a Pledge and Token of their being forgiven by GOD.

MAT. III. 2. And saying, Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand.

And while he was thus urging his Exhortation, *and saying, Repent ye*; he pleaded with them a very new and important Argument, for (said he,) *the long expected Kingdom of Heaven is now approaching (b)*; and GOD is about

est Violence imaginable to the whole Passage. How much easier would it be, to admit of a little more Latitude in the Interpretation of *Dan. ix. 26.* an Aversion to which seems to have plunged that accurate and ingenious Writer into a Train of inextricable Difficulties, thro' all the latter Part of his *Second Essay*.

(b) *The Kingdom of Heaven is approaching.*] Dr. Sykes in his *Essay on the Truth of the Christian Religion*, chap. 3. has largely proved, that this Phrase refers to those Texts in *Daniel* quoted in the *Paraphrase*. It properly signifies the *Gospel-Dispensation*, in which Subjects were to be gathered to GOD by his Son, and a Society to be formed, which was to subsist first in more imperfect Circumstances on Earth, but afterwards was to appear compleat in the World of Glory. In some Places of Scripture, the Phrase more particularly signifies the former, and denotes *the State of it on Earth*: (See *Mat. xiii.* throughout, especially *ver. 41, 47.* and *Mat. xx. 1.*) And sometimes it signifies only *the State of Glory*: (*1 Cor. vi. 9.* and *xv. 50.*) But it generally includes both. It is plain, that the *Jews* understood it of a *Temporal Monarchy*, which GOD would erect; the Seat of which they supposed would be *Jerusalem*, which

SECRET. 15. about to appear in an extraordinary Manner, to erect that Kingdom spoken of by Daniel, Mat. III. 2. (chap. ii. 44. and vii. 13, 14.) as the Kingdom of the GOD of Heaven, which he would set up, and give to the Son of Man; making it finally victorious over all other Kingdoms. It is therefore (said the Baptist,) of the highest Importance, that you should be the Subjects of this Kingdom; which without a sincere and universal Repentance, you cannot possibly be.

LUKE III. 4. And upon this Occasion, he failed not to repeat, and to insist upon that Passage of Scripture, (which has in Part been just now mentioned,) making it evident, that this was all exactly as it is written in the Book of Discourses and Prophecies of the Prophet *Isaiah*; for this indeed is he, who was spoken of so expressly by that Sacred Writer, (chap. xl. 3, 4, 5.) when he is saying, with a manifest Reference to the Messiah's Kingdom, "There shall be heard the Voice of one crying aloud in the Wilderness; Prepare ye the Way of the Lord with the most thankful Readiness, and cheerfully set yourselves to make his Paths straight and plain, by removing every thing which might prove an Obstruction, when he comes on so gracious a Design. Every Valley shall therefore be filled up, and every Mountain and Hill shall be brought down before him (i);

" even

LUKE III. 4. As it is written in the Book of the Words of *Isaiah* the Prophet, [for this is he that was spoken of,] saying, The Voice of one crying in the Wilderness, Prepare ye the Way of the Lord, make his Paths straight: [MAT. III. 3.]

5 Every Valley shall be filled, and every Mountain and Hill shall be brought low;

which would become, instead of *Rome*, the Capital of the World; and the expected Sovereign of this Kingdom, they learnt from *Daniel*, to call the Son of Man; by which Title they understood a very excellent Person, who was the promised *Messiah*, the *Christ*, or the Anointed One of GOD. Both *John the Baptist* then, and *Christ*, took up this Phrase, and used it as they found it, and gradually taught the Jews to affix right Ideas to it, tho' it was a Lesson they were remarkably unwilling to learn. This very Demand of Repentance shewed, it was a *Spiritual Kingdom*; and that no wicked Man, how politick, or brave, how learned, or renowned soever, could possibly be a genuine Member of it. See my *Sermons on Regeneration*, Numb. IV. pag. 106,—117.

(i) Every Mountain and Hill shall be brought down before him.] *Grotius* has most elegantly illustrated the Reference, that appears so plainly in this Passage, to the Custom of sending *Pioneers*, to level the Way before Princes, when they are coming with numerous

The remarkable Manner of John's Appearance.

low ; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough Ways shall be made smooth ;

“ *even the crooked Roads shall be made into a straight Way, and the rough Places shall be laid smooth and level: For by the mighty Power of his Grace, which shall be now remarkably displayed, such a victorious Way shall be made for his Gospel, and it shall be propagated with such Speed and Success, that it shall seem, as if the whole Face of Nature were miraculously changed, and Mountains and Valleys, and Forests and Rocks, were to spread themselves into a spacious Plain before the Messenger of it. And thus, not the Land of Israel alone, but all Flesh, or the whole Human Race, not excepting the remotest Gentile Nations, shall see and admire the great Salvation of GOD.*”

SECT. 15.
Luke III. 5.

6 And all Flesh shall see the Salvation of GOD.

6

MAT. III. 4. And the same John had his Raiment of Camel's Hair, and a Leather Girdle about his Loins; and his Meat was Locusts and

Now, that this extraordinary Message might meet with the greater Regard, GOD was pleased to send it by a Person on many Accounts remarkable ; and especially for the Temperance, and even the Severity of his Manner of Living. For *this John wore*, (as the antient Prophets used to do,) *a rough Garment*, which was made of *Camel's Hair*, and so indeed was but a Kind of Sackcloth; and he had a *Leathern Girdle about his Waste*: (Compare 2 Kings i. 8. Zech. xiii. 4. Rev. vi. 12. and xi. 3.) And as for *his Food*, it was such as the Wilderiness afforded, which was frequently nothing but a large Kind of *Locusts (k)*, which the Law allowed him to eat ;

Mat. III. 4.

merous Attendants. But by the Import of the Language that the Prophet uses, it is plainly to be seen, that the main Work is GOD's, tho' Men are called to concur with him in it ; which is every where the Scheme of Scripture, as it certainly is of sound Reason. Compare Phil. ii. 12, 13.

(k) A large Kind of Locusts.] Tho' it may be allowed, on the Authority of the accurate Sandys, (see his valuable Travels, pag. 183.) and many others, that there is in these Parts a Shrub called the Locust-Tree, the Buds of which something resemble *Aparagus* ; yet notwithstanding all the Pains Sir Norton Knatchbull has taken to prove it, I cannot imagine the Word ἀργύρις is here to be understood, as referring to the Proceed of it. It is certain, the Word in the Septuagint, and elsewhere, generally signifies

Multitudes come and are baptized by him.

SECT. 15.
 Mat. III. 4.

eat; (Lev. xi. 21, 22.) and wild Honey, often to be found in hollow Trees, or in the Clefts of the Rocks. (Compare 1 Sam. xiv. 26. Judg. xiv. 8. and Psal. lxxxii. 16.)

and wild Honey. [MARK I. 6.]

5 These uncommon Circumstances of his publick Appearance concurred with the Time of it, to awaken in the People a great Regard for his Preaching: For their Uneasiness under the Roman Yoke, which *then* bore hard upon them, raised the most impatient Desire of the Messiah's Arrival, by whom they expected, not only Deliverance, but Conquest, and universal Monarchy. They therefore attentively listened to this Proclamation of his Approach; so that *the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and Multitudes out of all the Land of Judea, and all the Region round about Jordan, went out to hear him, and were attentive to*

5 Then went out to him [they of] Jerufalem, and all [the Land of] Judea, and all the Region round about Jordan, [MARK I. 5.—]

6 *him (1):* And great Numbers of them were brought under very ferious Impressions, by his faithful Remonstrances, Expostulations, and Warnings; and those that were awakened to Repentance, *were all baptized by him in the River Jordan, expressing the Convictions they were under by confessing their Sins,*

6 And were [all] baptized of him in [the River of] Jordan,

nifies the Animal which we call a *Locust*, or a large winged *Grashopper*, (See *Rev.* ix. 3, 7, 9.) which the Law allowed the *Jews* to eat; (Lev. xi. 21, 22.) and which *Pliny* assures us, made a considerable Part of the Food of the *Parthians* and *Ethiopians*. (See *Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xi. cap. 29. and lib. vi. cap. 30.*) The Matter is excellently illustrated by the learned Notes of *Heinsius*, *Drusus*, and *Elsner* on this Place: But *Erasmus* is tediously prolix upon it; and, which is strange, he is very warm too. What Need have we to keep a Guard upon our Spirits, when so great and so good-natured a Man could be angry, in a Debate of so small Importance!—I shall add only on this Point, with respect to the Use of *Locusts* for Food, what *Dr. Shaw* tells us, that when sprinkled with Salt, and fried, they taste much like the *River Cray-fish*; who justly contends for this Signification of the Word *αυγιδες*, in his excellent *Travels*, pag. 258. Where he also observes, that as the Months of *April* and *May* are the Time when these *Insects* abound, it may probably be conjectured, that *John* began his Ministry about that Season of the Year; which might also seem more convenient for receiving, and especially for *baptizing*, so great a Number of People, than *Winter* could have been.

(1) *Went out to him.*] The Novelty of a *Prophet's* Appearance in *Israel*, the Family of *John*, the Circumstances of his *Birth*, and the extraordinary Character he had no doubt maintained, for strict and undisssembled *Piety*, all concurred with the Causes mentioned in the *Paraphrase*, to draw such vast Multitudes after him.

4

Jordan, confessing their Sins, [MARK L—5.] Sins, and by submitting to this Rite engaging themselves for the future to Reformation and Obedience. SECT. 15. Mat. III. 6.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WITH what Pleasure should we hear *the Gospel of Jesus Christ* Mark i. 1. *the Son of GOD!* and with what Reverence remember the Dignity of his Divine Nature, amidst all the Condescensions of his Incarnate State!

It is surely Matter of unspeakable Thankfulness, that the *Kingdom* Mat. iii. 21. *of Heaven* should be erected among Men! that the Great GOD should condescend so far, as to take to himself a People from our mean and sinful World, and appoint his own *Son* to be the Governour of that *Kingdom!* How happy are we, that it is preached among us, and we are called into it! Let it be our great Care, that we be not only nominal, but real Members of it.

For this Purpose, let us remember, and consider, that to become the Subjects of this Kingdom we are to enter into it by the Way of *Repentance*; humbly *confessing our Sins*, and resolutely forfaking Ver. 6. them, if we do indeed desire to find Mercy.

Let us bless GOD, both for the Promises of *Pardon*, and for the Luke iii. 3. Appointment of the *Seals* of it, particularly of *Baptismal Washing*; always remembering the Obligation it brings upon us, to *cleanse ourselves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of GOD.* (2 Cor. vii. 1.)

And being ourselves become Members of *Christ's Kingdom*, let us Ver. 4, 6. pray that it may be every where extended. May Divine Grace remove every Obstruction, and make a *free Course* for his Gospel, that it may every where *run and be glorified*, so that *all Flesh may see the Salvation of GOD!*

John with this awful Severity of Manners, and of Doctrine, Mat. iii. 4. was sent *before Christ* to *prepare his Way*. Let us learn to reflect, how necessary it is, that the *Law* should thus introduce the *Gospel*; and let all the Terrors of *Moses*, and *Elias*, render the mild and blessed *Redeemer* so much the more welcome to our Souls.

S E C T. XVI.

John the Baptist *addresses suitable Admonitions to those that attended his Ministry, and proclaims the Approach of the Messiah.* Matt. III. 7,—12. Mark I. 7, 8. Luke III. 7,—18.

MAT. III. 7.

SECT. 16.
Mat. III. 7.

WHEN John opened his Ministry, there were Two very different Sects among the Jews: That of the PHARISEES, who were exceeding strict in Ceremonial Institutions, and in the Observation of Human Traditions; and that of the SADDUCEES, who, among other very obnoxious Notions, denied the Existence of Spirits, and a Future State of Rewards and Punishments. Yet some of both these Sects, out of Curiosity, or popular Custom, or from some other unknown Reason, attended on the Preaching of this Holy Man: *And when he saw among the Multitudes that came to be baptized by him, that many, both of the Pharisees and Sadducees (a), were coming to receive his Baptism (b);* as he well knew the open Prophaneness of the one, and the secret Wickedness of the other, *he did not flatter them at all in his Address; but said unto them, as with some Surprize, O ye abominable Broods of Vipers (c), crafty, malignant, mischievous*

MAT. III. 7.

BUT when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his Baptism, he said unto them, O Generation of Vipers, who hath warned

(a) *Pharisees and Sadducees.*] The most authentic Account of these Sects may be seen in *Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xviii. cap. 1. (al. 2.)* & *Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 8. (al. 7.)* *Haverc.* All Writers of *Jewish Antiquities* describe them largely; but, I think, on the whole, none better than *Dr. Prideaux, Connex. Vol. ii. pag. 335,—343.*

(b) *Coming to receive his Baptism.*] I express it in this Manner; for tho' some understand the Words *ἦν τοὺς βαπτίζοντες αὐτὸν*, of their coming to oppose his Baptism, I think the Reasons for that Interpretation not worth mentioning here, and refer my Reader to *Raphelius*, who has given them a larger Examination than they deserve. *Annot. ex Xen. pag. 7,—11.*

(c) *O ye Broods of Vipers.*] Some think this is to be understood, as if it had been said, *Ye wicked Children of wicked Parents:* But such a Reflection on their Parents is not

warned you to flee from the Wrath to come? [LUKE III. 7.]

mischievous Creatures, who hath taught you to put on this Form of Humility and Repentance, and admonished you to flee from the Wrath which is surely and speedily to come? SECT. 16.
Mat III. 7.

8 Bring forth therefore Fruits meet for [or worthy of] Repentance. [LUKE III. 8.—]

What is it that hath moved you to it, when you Pharisees think yourselves so secure from it, on Account of the pretended Sanctity of your Lives; and you Sadducees imagine it to be no other than a mere Fable and a Dream?

9 And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our Father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these Stones

Let me exhort you therefore, if you design to be baptized by me, to make it your serious and resolute Care, to bring forth Fruits worthy of Repentance, and to act like those that are Penitents indeed, forsaking, as well as confessing, your Sins. 8

And if you neglect this, do not presumptuously think it will be to any Purpose for you to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our Father (d); relying on your Descent from that holy Patriarch, and your being that Seed of his with whom a peculiar Covenant was made: For I solemnly say, and declare it unto you as a certain and important Truth, that GOD is able of these very Stones that are before your Eyes (e), which he can animate and sanctify whenever he sees fit, to raise up those, who, 9.

not necessarily implied. The Children of pious Eli are called Sons of Belial, merely with Reference to their own licentious Characters, as they knew not the Lord. See 1 Sam. ii. 12.—The Word *Γενεαὶ* may be used in the Plural Number, in Reference to the different Sentiments, and if I may be allowed the Expression, (familiar enough to the Jewish Doctors,) the different Families of these Sects in Question.

(d) We have Abraham for our Father.] Dr. Whitby well shews, how great the Presumption of the Jews on this Relation to Abraham was. Munster on this Text quotes a remarkable Passage from the Talmud, in which it is said; “That Abraham sits next the Gates of Hell, and doth not permit any wicked Israelite to go down into it.” These Jews might perhaps pervert the Promise, in Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. to support this vain and dangerous Confidence, in Opposition to such a Multitude of most express and awful Threatnings; particularly, Deut. xxxii. 19, & seq.

(e) Of these very Stones, that are before your Eyes.] The many learned Commentators, who refer this to God’s calling the Gentiles, supposing some of them to be present here, seem to lose all the Beauty of the Expression; which I have paraphrased at large, because I think few, if any, have set it in so strong a Light, as it will well bear. It is but a precarious Conjecture, that the Stones here referred to were those set up in Gilgal. Josh. iv. 3, 20.

() L

SECT. 16. who, tho' not descended from Human Parents, shall be, in a much nobler Sense than
 Mat. III. 9. you, *Children to Abraham*, as being made the

to raise up Children unto Abraham. [LUKE III.—8.]

Heirs of his Faith and Obedience; and he would sooner work such a Miracle as this, than he would suffer his Promise to fail, or admit you to the Blessings of his approaching Kingdom, merely because you have the abused Honour to descend from that peculiar Favourite of Heaven.

10 These are Truths of constant Concern, and now particularly seasonable; for the Patience of GOD will not much longer endure so provoking a People. You think of National Deliverance, but beware of National Judgments; for I assure you, that the Hand of GOD is lifted up, *and the Ax of Divine Justice is even now, as it were, applied to the very Root of the Trees; and therefore every Tree that doth not produce good Fruit, (even everyone that while he professeth himself to be one of GOD's People, contradicts that Profession by a Life of Wickedness, or by the Neglect of vital and practical Religion,) is very certainly and quickly to be cut down (f) by Death, and thrown into the Fire of Hell.*

10 And now also the Ax is laid unto the Root of the Trees: therefore every Tree which bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the Fire. [LUKE III. 9.]

Luke III. 10. Upon this many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who expected to have been treated with greater Respect, were so provoked, that they turned their Backs upon the Prophet, and refused to be baptized. (Compare Luke vii. 29, 30. and Mat. xxi. 25.) But it was otherwise with the common People, who were alarm'd

LUKE III. 10. And the People

(f) *Is very certainly and quickly to be cut down.*] It is expressed in the *Original* in the *Present Tense*; and it may be of some Importance to observe here, that in Scripture Language, that which is very sure, and very near, is spoken of as if it was *already done*. Thus *Christ* speaks of himself, as if he was already in Possession of his Glory, while he was here on Earth, *John xvii. 24.* And Sinners too are represented as *condemned already*, *John iii. 18.* And Saints are spoken of as *already glorified*, *Eph. ii. 6.* and *Heb. xii. 22, 23.*

(g) *The*

People asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

alarm'd by what he said, and the Multitudes, who were more teachable, asked him saying, What then shall we do, that we may be prepared for the Kingdom of the Messiah, and may escape this dreadful Condemnation and approaching Wrath? *And he answered and saith unto them,* Be careful not only to observe the Ceremonies of Religion, but to attend to the great Duties of Justice, and of Charity too, which are incumbent upon you, as well as on the Great and Rich, and he, for Instance, that hath two Coats, let him impart one of them to him that hath none; and he that hath Plenty of Food, let him do the like.

SECT. 16.
Luke III. 10.

11 Hearers and faith unto them, He that hath two Coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath Meat, let him do likewise.

11 *And he answered and saith unto them,* Be careful not only to observe the Ceremonies of Religion, but to attend to the great Duties of Justice, and of Charity too, which are incumbent upon you, as well as on the Great and Rich, and he, for Instance, that hath two Coats, let him impart one of them to him that hath none; and he that hath Plenty of Food, let him do the like.

12 Then came also Publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

12 *Then there came also some of the Publicans to be baptized:* Now these Publicans were a Set of Men, whose Office it was to collect the Taxes which the Romans had imposed on the Jews, and to pay them to others, who were called the chief of the Publicans; and these People being generally Persons of an infamous Character for their Injustice and Oppression, applied themselves to John under a strong Conviction of their Guilt, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do, to testify the Sincerity of our Repentance? *And he said unto them,* Tho' you are not absolutely required to quit your Employment, take Care that you exact nothing more than is enjoined you by your Principals, whose Servants you are in collecting the publick Money.

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

13 *And he said unto them,* Tho' you are not absolutely required to quit your Employment, take Care that you exact nothing more than is enjoined you by your Principals, whose Servants you are in collecting the publick Money.

14 And the Soldiers likewise

14 *And the Soldiers also applied themselves to him (g) on the same Oocasion, and in like Manner*

(g) The Soldiers applied themselves to him.] There is no Reason to believe, that these were Gentile Soldiers. Grotius has excellently proved, that the Jews in general did not scruple a military Life; and a Multitude of Passages from Josephus might be added to the same Purpose: And tho' most of the Soldiers in Judea, which was now a Province, might be Romans, yet those belonging to Galilee might probably be Jews.

John proclaims the Approach of the MESSIAH,

SECT. 16. Manner asked him, saying, And as for us, *what shall we do?* And he said unto them, *Terrify no Man* (b) by a violent over-bearing Conduct, nor wrong [any] by false Accusation in order to get a Liberty of living upon him at free Quarters; and be contented with your legal Wages or Pay (i), not raising Mutinies and Seditions to get it increased.

Luke III. 14.

- 15 And as the People were in great Suspence, and all were reasoning in their Hearts with much Solicitude concerning John, debating the Matter with themselves, whether he were the Messiah, or not;
- 16 John answered all that put the Question to him, in the most direct and positive Manner; saying, I indeed baptize you with Water, to engage you to the Exercise of Repentance, which by submitting to that Rite you solemnly profess; but there is one coming after me; even the Messiah himself, who is much more powerful and considerable than I can pretend to be; (see John x. 41.) whose very Shoes I am not worthy so much as to carry after him, [or] to stoop down and untie the Latchet of [them], but should esteem it as an Honour to perform the humblest Office of menial Service for him. And if you are indeed his People, be shall baptize you with a most plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit, and with Fire; causing his Spirit to descend upon his Followers in the Appearance.

wife demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do Violence to no Man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your Wages.

15 And as the People were in Expectation, and all Men mused in their Hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with Water [unto Repentance;] but one mightier than I cometh [after me, whose Shoes I am not worthy to bear,] the Latchet of whose Shoes I am not worthy to [MAR. stoop down and] unloose: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire: [MAT. III. 11. MARK I. 7, 8.]

Had these been Gentiles, John would surely have begun his Instructions to them, with urging the Worship of the true God.

(b) *Terrify no Man.*] The Word *deceusuris* properly signifies, "to take a Man by the Collar and shake him;" and seems to have been used *proverbially* for that violent Manner, in which Persons of this Station of Life are often ready to bully those about them, whom they imagine their Inferiors in Strength and Spirit; tho' nothing is an Argument of a meaner Spirit, or more unworthy that true Courage which constitutes so essential a Part of a good military Character.

(i) *With your legal Wages or Pay.*] The Word *stipendium* is well known to signify Provision or Food; but when applied to Soldiers, it is generally used to signify the Pay that was allotted for their Subsistence. (Compare Rom. vi. 23. where it is rendered Wages, and 1 Cor. ix. 7. where we translate it Charges.)

ance of a Flame of Fire, to represent its SECT. 16.
 operating on the Heart like Fire, to kindle Luke III. 16.
 pious and devout Affections, and to purify
 and enliven the Souls of Believers. (Com-
 pare Acts i. 5. and ii. 3.)

17 Whose Fan is in his Hand, and he will thoroughly purge his Floor, and will gather the Wheat into his Garner; but the Chaff he will burn with Fire unquenchable. [MAT. III. 12.]

But you are to remember, this is an awful, 17
 as well as an amiable Person, *whose Fan is in his Hand, and he will thoroughly winnow and cleanse his Church, which is (as it were) his Threshing-Floor, and at present is covered with a Mixture of Wheat and Chaff: For such will be the Nature of the Doctrine he shall teach, as will effectually discover what is the real Disposition of the Hearts of Men, and perfectly distinguish between the Hypocritical, and the Sincere. And happy will it be for those, that stand the Trial; for he will carefully gather them, as the Wheat into his Granary, and lay them up in Heaven as his peculiar Treasure: But as for the Chaff which is found among them, as for those empty vain Professors that are now mingled with his People, he will then treat them, as Men do the Sweepings and the Refuse of the Floor; and burn them up, as worthless and unprofitable Trash; and I faithfully warn you, that it will be with unquenchable Fire (k): Let this excite you therefore to escape so terrible*

(k) *The Chaff he will burn with unquenchable Fire.*] There is in what the Baptist here declares, an evident Allusion to the Custom of burning the Chaff after winnowing, that it might not be blown back again, and so be mingled with the Wheat: And tho' it may in Part refer to the Calamities to come upon the Jewish Nation for rejecting Christ; (as Bishop Chandler has observed, in his *Defence of Christianity*, pag. 85.) yet it seems chiefly to intend the final Destruction of all Sinners in Hell, which alone is properly opposed to the gathering the Wheat into the Garner. (Compare Mat. xiii. 40, 41, 42.) And howsoever it be certain, that the Word *αχυρα* in Greek Authors does generally signify all that is left of the Corn when the Grain is separated, including the Straw: (See *Raphel. Annot. ex Xen. in loc.* and *Gen. xxiv. 25, 32. Septuag.*) Yet I apprehend, that in this Place it must be equivalent to *χρως*, and signify Chaff as distinguished from Straw; since one can hardly imagine, either that any Thing so useful as Straw would be made the Symbol of these worthless *Reprobates*, or that it would be represented as burnt up.—As to the Phrase of burning the Chaff with unquenchable Fire, Mr. Horberry has observed with his usual Accuracy of Judgment,
 O 2 (Enquiry

SECT. 16. rible a Doom. (Compare Isa. xli. 16. Jer. xv. 7. and Ezek. xxii. 15.)

Luke III. 18: Such was, in general, the Tendency and Purport of John's Preaching: *And offering many other Exhortations to them to the same Effect, he published to the People these glad Tidings (1) of the Messiah's Approach, and endeavoured to prepare them, to receive him in a proper Manner; as will be more particularly shewn hereafter. (See John i. 15, & seq. and iii. 28, & seq.)*

18 And many other Things in his Exhortation preached he unto the People.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. iii. 7. **W**HAT an excellent Pattern of Ministerial Service does *John* exhibit in the Passage before us! Blessed is that *Gospel-Preacher*, who, like him, seeks not his own Ease and Pleasure, and indulges not to luxurious and sensual Inclinations; but cheerfully accommodates himself to the State and Circumstances which Providence hath assigned him, as infinitely more intent on the Success of his Ministry, than on any little Interest of his own, that can interfere with it!—Happy the Man, who, imitating the Impartiality of this faithful Servant of GOD, *giveth to every one his Portion of Meat in due Season*, and abhors the Thoughts of flattering Men in their Vices, or buoying them up with delusive Hopes in their Birth and Profession, while they are destitute of real and vital Religion!

Luke iii.
10,—14.

Mat. iii. 9. May this plain and awakening Address be felt by every Soul that hears it! And in particular, let the *Children of Religious Parents*, let those that enjoy the most eminent Privileges, and that make even the strictest Profession, weigh themselves in this *Balance of the Sanctuary*, lest they be *found wanting* in the awful decisive Day. And if the

(*Enquiry into the Duration of Future Punishment, Chap. i. N^o. 1, 2.*) that it is absolutely inconsistent with all Views of the *Restoration of the Wicked*; and that however the Phrase of being *consumed like Chaff*, might seem to favour the Doctrine of their *Annihilation*, (which nevertheless it is certain no Punishment of Mind or Body can of itself effect,) the Epithet of *Unquenchable* given to this *Fire* is so far from proving it, that it cannot by any easy and just Interpretation be reconciled with it.

(1) *Published these glad Tidings.*] *Ἐγγυησάμενος* has plainly this Import; and as it was a very imperfect Intimation, rather than a full Discovery of the Gospel, that was given by the *Baptist*, it does not seem so proper here to render it by *Preaching the Gospel*, tho' the Word has often that Signification. See *Mat. xi. 5. Luke iv. 18. and Acts viii. 4, &c.*

the Warnings of the Gospel have alarmed our Hearts, and put us upon fleeing from the Wrath to come, oh let the Terrors of the Lord engage us, not only to confess, but to forsake our Sins, and to bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance !

Let all to whom the Gospel Message comes, most attentively and seriously consider, in what alarming Circumstances of Danger and Extremity, impenitent Sinners are here represented. The Gospel is the last Dispensation we must ever expect; the Ax is at the Root of the unfruitful Tree, and it must e'er long be cut down and burnt, be its Branches ever so diffusive, and its Leaves ever so green.

Christ hath a Fan in his Hand, to winnow us, as well as the Jews. Oh that we may stand the Trial! And oh that, as his Wheat, we may be laid up in the Store-house of Heaven; when that Day cometh, which shall burn as an Oven, and when all that do wickedly shall be consumed as Stubble, and be burnt up as Chaff!

And to conclude: that we may be prepared for that final Trial, let us be earnest in our Applications to our gracious Redeemer; that as we are baptized with Water in his Name, he would also baptize us with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire: That by the Operations of his Holy Spirit on our cold and stupid Hearts, he would enkindle and quicken that divine Life, that sacred Love, that flaming, yet well-governed, Zeal for his Glory, which distinguishes the true Christian from the hypocritical Professor, and is indeed the Seal of GOD set upon the Heart, to mark it for eternal Happiness.

S E C T. XVII.

The Testimony John the Baptist gave to CHRIST, is taken Notice of by John the Evangelist, and his own Testimony added to confirm it. John I. 15,—18.

JOHN I. 15.

JOHN bare Witness of him, and cried, saying, This

JOHN I. 15.

AS the Messiah now was shortly to appear, and the Time just at hand, in which he was to enter on his Publick Ministry, the Way (as we have seen) was opened for his Coming, by John the Baptist's being sent to preach the Doctrine of Repentance.

SECT. 17.
John I. 15.

Repentance: And when the People came in Crouds from every Part to hear him, *John bore his Testimony of him*, in a publick Declaration of the Dignity of his Person, and of the great Design for which he was to come; which, tho' it was at first expressed in general Terms, yet did he afterwards apply it in particular to Jesus of Nazareth, pointing him out to be the Person he had spoken of: And with an Earnestness that suited the Importance of this grand Occasion, he openly proclaimed him to be the promised Messiah, and cried, saying, This is the Person, that I told you of; and *this was he, of whom I said before* (a), (Mat. iii. 11.) *He that cometh after me*, as to the Time of his Appearance in the World, and of his Entrance on the Stage of Publick Life, is upon all Accounts superior to me, and is deservedly preferred before me; for tho' indeed as to his Human Birth he is younger than me, and did not come into the World till a little after me, yet in a much more noble and exalted Kind of Being, *he existed long before me* (b), or even before the Production of any Creature whatsoever.

This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me, is preferred before me; for he was before me.

And

(a) *This was he, of whom I said.*] This probably might happen at the Time, when Jesus made his first Appearance among those, that came to be baptized by John; when at his offering to receive his Baptism, tho' John before had been a Stranger to him, and knew him not by any Personal Acquaintance with him, yet by some powerful Impression on his Mind, he presently discerned, that *this was he*, whom he before had taught the People to expect, and of whose Person he had given them so high a Character. For it was plainly from his Knowledge of him, that John at first would have declined baptizing him, as an Honour of which he looked upon himself to be unworthy. Nor is it to be doubted, but that when first he knew the Person, of whose Appearance he had raised such Expectations by his Preaching, he would immediately be ready to acquaint his Hearers, that *this was he*, who was intended by him; which they themselves might have been ready to conclude, from the uncommon Veneration and Respect with which the Baptist treated him, who had been always used to treat Men with the greatest Plainness. And upon this Account it may be proper, that *this Testimony* of him should be introduced (as I have placed it here) before the particular Account that the other Evangelists have given of his Baptism. Compare Mat. iii. 14. and John i. 27, 30.

(b) *He existed long before me;* καρὸν ἔμελλεν ἕξειν] This must undoubtedly refer to that State of Glory in which Christ existed before his Incarnation, of which the Baptist speaks

16 And of his Fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace.

And I John the Apostle, who had the Honour of being numbered among his most intimate Friends, would with Pleasure, in my own Name, and that of my Brethren, add my Testimony to that of the Baptist (c), as I and they have the greatest Reason to do, for of his overflowing Fulness have we all received whatever we possess, as Men, as Christians, or as Apostles; and he hath given us even Grace upon Grace (d), a rich Abundance and Variety of Favours, which will ever make his Name most dear and precious to our Souls.

SECT. 17.
John I. 16.

17 For the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.

For the Law was given by Moses, and we own it an Honour, to our Nation to have received it, and to that holy Man to have been the Messenger of it; yet to the Sinner it is a Dispensation of Death, and passes an awful Sentence of Condemnation upon him: [but] the Redeemer whom we celebrate is worthy of much more affectionate Regards; for Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ (e), who

17

speaks so plainly, *John* iii. 31. as abundantly to justify the Paraphrase. (Compare Note (b) on *John* i. 30. Sect. 21.) As for the preceding Clause, *μᾶλλον μὲν ἢ ἡμεῖς*, which we render *is preferred before me*, I think *Erasmus* truly expresses the Sense of it, in supposing it to refer to those distinguishing Honours, which had been paid to *Christ* in his Infancy, by *Prophets*, *Sages*, and *Angels* too, which nothing that had yet occurred in the Life of *John* could by any Means equal.

(c) I add my Testimony to that of the Baptist.] It is most evident, that what is said here in this Verse, as *Chrysostom* justly observes, must be considered as the Words of the Evangelist. *John the Baptist* had never yet mentioned the Name of *Jesus*, and the Expression *we all*, shews it could not be his Words; for those to whom he addressed himself, do not appear to have received Grace from *Christ*. The last French Version with great Propriety includes ver. 15. in a Parenthesis, and so connects this 16th Verse with the 14th;—as if it had been said, *He dwelt among us—full of Grace and Truth;—and of his Fulness have we all received.*

(d) Grace upon Grace.] This seems the most easy Sense of *χάρις ἐπὶ χάριτι*, as *αὐτὸ ἀνὰ ἀνάγκη* is Grief upon Grief. (*Theogn.* v. 344.) Compare *Ecclus.* xxvi. 15, 17. And see *Blackwall's Sacred Classics*, vol. i. pag. 164. Next to this, I should prefer *Grotius's* Interpretation, who would render it, *Grace of mere Grace*, that is, the freest Grace imaginable.

(e) Came by Jesus Christ.] I cannot lay so much Stress on the Word *ἐρχόμενος* here, as opposed to *ἰσθῆναι*, as to suppose it with *Erasmus*, to imply, that whereas *Moses* was only the Messenger of the Law, *Christ* was the Original of the Grace and Truth he brought into the World by the Gospel; since all that is intended by *ἐρχόμενος* is nothing more.

SECT. 17. who gives us an ample Declaration of Pardon, and an abundant Effusion of the Spirit, those substantial Blessings, of which the

John I. 17.

18 Mosaic Dispensation was but a Shadow. His Gospel therefore should be received with the most chearful Consent; for *no Man hath ever seen GOD*, nor indeed can see him, as he is an Incorporeal, and therefore an Invisible Being; but *the Only-begotten-Son, who is always in the Bosom of the Father (f)*, and ever favoured with the most endearing and intimate Converse with him, *he hath revealed and made him known*, in a much clearer Manner than he was before, by those Discoveries of his Nature and Will, which may have the most powerful Tendency to form us to Virtue and Happiness.

18 No Man hath seen GOD at any Time; the Only-begotten Son, which is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Ver. 16.

HAPPY are they, that (like this beloved *Apostle*,) when they hear the Praises of *Christ* uttered by others, can echo back the Testimony from their own Experience, as having themselves received of his Fulness! May an Abundance of *Grace* be communicated from him to us! We are not *straitened* in him, oh may we not be *straitened* in ourselves; but daily renewing our Application to him as our Living Head, may vital Influences be continually imparted to our Souls from him!

Ver. 17.

With Pleasure let us compare the Dispensation of *Jesus*, with that of *Moses*, and observe the Excellency of its superior *Grace*, and of its brighter *Truth*. But let us remember, as a necessary Consequence of this, that *if the Despisers of Moses's Law died without Mercy, they*

more, than that *it was*, or that *it came*, by *Jesus Christ*, according to the Sense in which the Word is often used in other Places; and *he* here is used of *Christ*, as well as of *Moses*: So that both are represented as *Messengers*, tho' of very different Dispensations.

(f) *In the Bosom of the Father.*] Criticks generally agree, this is one of the Places in which *us* is put for *in*; but had it here been rendered, *near his Father's Bosom*, it might as well have answered the Design of the *Original*, and would, I think, have been as expressive of that intimate Converse, and entire Friendship, which the Phrase implies. — *Elser* here cites a Passage from *Plato*, concerning the Regard due to the Authority of a *Son of GOD* when speaking of *his Father*; and it is indeed surprisingly apposite. *Elser. Observ. vol. i. pag. 296.*

they shall be thought worthy of a much sorer Punishment; and a more aggravated Condemnation, who tread under Foot the Son of GOD. (Heb. x. 28, 29.)

May we ever regard him as the Only-begotten of the Father; and since he hath condescended so far, as to come down from his very Bosom, to instruct us in his Nature and Will, let us with all Humility receive his Dictates; and earnestly pray, that under his Revelations, and Teachings, we may so know GOD, as faithfully to serve him now, and at length eternally to enjoy him.

S E C T. XVIII.

CHRIST is baptized by John, and the Holy Spirit descends upon him in a visible Form. Mark I. 9,—11. Mat. III. 13, to the End. Luke III. 21,—23.

MARK I. 9.

AND it came to pass in those Days, [LUK. when all the People were baptized,] that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee [unto

MARK I. 9.

AND it came to pass in those Days, when great Numbers of all Ranks and Professions among the Jewish People were baptized (a), that Jesus came from the Town of Nazareth in Galilee (b), where he had lived for

(a) When all the People were baptized.] John continued baptizing so long after this, that it is very evident the Word all must be taken with the Restriction used in the Paraphrase, as it is oftentimes in other Places.

(b) Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee.] The learned Dr. Thomas Jackson in his elaborate Examination of this Context (see his Works, vol. ii. pag. 515,—519.) supposes, that John the Baptist, inquiring into and hearing the Name of Jesus, and the Place from whence he came, and comparing it in his own Mind with that celebrated Prophecy, Isa. xi. 1, 2. concluded, that this Jesus, or Divine Saviour, as the Word may signify, (see Note (d) on Mat. i. 21. pag. 41.) coming from Nazareth, the Town of Rods, as the Etymology of that Name imports, was the Rod out of the Stem of Jesse, upon whom the Spirit should descend, and rest like a Dove on a Branch. And thus he would reconcile John's Address to Christ as so extraordinary a Person, Mat. iii. 14. with his declaring John i. 31, 33. that he knew him not before. But this seems a very precarious Solution, considering how possible it might be, that in so large a Place as Nazareth there might be several Persons of the Name of Jesus or Joshua, so very common among the Jews. It appears therefore much more reasonable to have Recourse to the Solution given in the Paraphrase and Note (d) on the last cited Text, Sect. 21. that he had a secret Intimation given him who it was that came to be baptized by him; and all that this very ingenious Writer has said, to shew the various

SECT. 18. for many Years in a retired Manner with
 his Parents, to the River Jordan; and ap-
 plied himself to John, that he might be bap-
 tized by him (c): And was accordingly bap-
 tized by John, in Jordan near Bethabara.
 (See John i. 28. Sect. 20.)

Mark I. 9.
 Mat. III. 14. Now the Providence of GOD had so ordered it, to prevent all Appearance of a Combination between them, that John was personally a Stranger to Christ: (John i. 33.) But nevertheless, as soon as he saw him, he received a secret Intimation from Above, that this was the Messiah, upon whom the Spirit should visibly descend: (See the Note on John i. 33. Sect. 21.) And upon this Account, such was the Modesty of John, that he was ready to decline the Service, and would have hindered him from doing what he proposed; and accordingly said unto him, Thou art so much my Superior, that I have need to be baptized by thee, with that far nobler Baptism which thou art to administer; and dost thou come to me on such an Occasion as this? I am confounded at the Thought, and cannot but consider it as too high an Honour for me.

15 And Jesus replying, said unto him, Tho' it be really as thou sayest, yet do not go about to hinder me, but permit [it] now; for however unable thou mayst be at present to enter into the particular Reasons of it, yet in Submission to the Divine Appointments It is decent for us thus to comply with all the Duties of Religion, and in this Manner

[unto John, to be baptized of him;] and was baptized of John in Jordan. [MAT. III. 13. LUKE III. 21.—]

MAT. III. 14. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh

Marks by which John might know Christ, without supposing such a particular Revelation as is there suggested, does but confirm me the more in the Necessity of admitting it.

(c) That he might be baptized by him.} By this he intended to do an Honour to John's Ministry, and to conform himself to what he appointed to his Followers: For which last Reason it was, that he drank likewise of the Sacramental Cup. And this we may consider as a plain Argument, that Baptism may be administered, to those who are not capable of all the Purposes, for which it was designed. See Dr. Whitby's Note, on Mat. iii. 16.

eth us to fulfil all Righteousness. Then he suffered him.

ner it becomes us to fulfil all Righteousness: **SECT. 18.**
 And upon this Account, as it is a Part of my Duty to attend this Institution, it is therefore a Part of thine to administer it. *Then,* as John knew that it became him not to debate the Matter any farther, *he permitted him* to be baptized.

Mat. III. 15.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the Water: and lo, the Heavens were opened unto him, [LUK. being baptized, and praying;] and he saw the Spirit of GOD descending [LUK. in a bodily Shape]

And after Jesus was baptized, as soon as he ascended out of the Water to the Bank of Jordan, behold, the Heavens were immediately opened (d) unto him, and in a wondrous Way appeared as if they had been rent asunder directly over his Head: And at that very Instant, as he was looking up, and praying (e) in a devout and holy Rapture, and as John was also fixing his Eyes upon this wonderful Sight, he saw the Spirit of GOD (f), in a corporeal Form (g), as a glorious and splendid Appearance of Fire, descending with a hover-

16

(d) *The Heavens were immediately opened.*] I think it plain, (as Grotius and Blackwall have observed,) that what is here intended, is to intimate, that directly on his coming up out of the Water, the Heavens were opened. For it must certainly appear to be a Circumstance of small Importance, and very little Use, for the Evangelist to say, that *Jesus went up straightway out of the Water, after he was baptized;* but if we take it in the other Way, it very fitly introduces the remarkable Account of what directly followed it. There seems to be such a Transposition of the Word *καὶ*, Mark i. 29. and xi. 2. See *Blackwall's Sacred Classics*, vol. i. pag. 89.

(e) *As he was praying.*] It is observable, that all the three *Voices from Heaven*, by which the Father bore Witness to Christ, were pronounced while he was *praying*, or very quickly after it. Compare *Luke ix. 29, 35.* and *John xii. 28.*

(f) *He saw the Spirit of GOD.*] There is no Question to be made, but that this wondrous Sight was seen by both of them: For *Mark* has so expressed it, as plainly to refer the seeing it to Christ; and *John the Baptist* has in another Place assured us that *he saw it*, and took particular Notice of it as *the Sign*, he was directed to observe, as the distinguishing and certain Characteristic of the *Messiah*. *John i. 32, — 34.* And I have therefore so expressed it in the *Paraphrase*, as not directly to confine the Sight of it to either.

(g) *In a corporeal Form.*] This is the exact English of *σωματικῶν ἰδῆν*, a Phrase, which might with Propriety have been used, tho' there had not been (as most understand it,) any Appearance in the Shape of the Animal here mentioned; but only a *lambent Flame* falling from Heaven with a *hovering Dove-like Motion*, which *Dr. Scott* (in his *Christian Life*, vol. iii. pag. 66.) supposes to have been all. *Dr. Owen* and *Grotius*, think it was a *bright Flame*, in the Shape of a Dove; and *Justin Martyr*, (who adds, that all *Jordan* shone with the Reflection of the Light,) says, that it was *ἡ ἰδῆν αἰγυρῆος*; and *Jerom* calls it *φανῶμα ἀγνῶτος*, the Appearance of a Dove. Both these Phrases are much more determinate than the Original; but I chuse to leave this, and many other Things, in the same Latitude as I find them.

SECT. 18. hovering Motion like a Dove, and coming upon him; as a visible Token of those secret Operations of that blessed Spirit on his Mind, by which, according to the Intimations God had given in his Word, he was anointed in a peculiar Manner, and abundantly fitted for his publick Work. (Compare Pſal. xlv. 7. and Iſa. lxi. 1.)

Shape] like a Dove, and lighting upon him. [MARK I. 10. LUKE III. -- 21, 22. --]

Luke II. 22. And as a farther Testimony of the Divine Regard to Christ, and of the glorious Dignity of his Person, this was attended with a very memorable Event; for behold, a loud and awful Voice came out of Heaven, when it was thus opened, which said, Thou art my beloved Son (b), in thee I am well pleased; that is, I perfectly approve thy Character, and acquiesce in thee as the great Mediator, thro' whom I will shew myself favourable unto sinful Creatures. (Compare Iſa. xlii. 1.)

LUKE III. — 22. And [10,] a Voice came from Heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased. [MAT. III. 17. MARK I. 11.]

23 And Jesus at that Time, when he received the Baptism of John, and was beginning the publick Exercise of [his Ministry,] was about thirty Years old (i); at which Time he

23 — And Jesus himself began to be about thirty Years of Age.—

(b) *Thou art my beloved Son.*] Both *Mark* and *Luke* express it thus; which inclines me to follow those Copies of *Matthew*, which agree with them, rather than the more common Reading there, *This is my beloved Son.* Εὐδοκῆσα properly expresses an entire Acquiescence in him.

(i) *And Jesus, when beginning his [Ministry,] was about thirty Years old.*] Of the Age of Jesus at this Time, see Note (b) on *Luke* iii. 1. pag. 95.—I can recollect no sufficient Authority, to justify our Translators, in rendering *ἡ ὡσεὶ ἑνὶ τριακοντῷ ἀρχόμενος*, began to be about thirty Years of Age, or was now entering on his thirtieth Year. To express that Sense, it should have been *ἡ ἀρχόμενος ἑνῶντι*, &c. as *Epiphanius*, probably by a Mistake, has quoted it.—The learned Author of the *Vindication of the Beginning of Matthew's and Luke's Gospel*, extremely dissatisfied with all the common Versions and Explications of these Words, would render them, *and Jesus was obedient, or lived in Subjection [to his Parents,] about thirty Years*; and produces several Passages from approved *Greek Writers*, in which *ἀρχόμενος* signifies *subject*. But in all those Places it is used in some Connection, or Opposition, which determines the Sense; and therefore none of them are Instances parallel to this. *Luke* evidently uses *ἀρχόμενος* *Chap.* xxi. 28. in the Sense we suppose it to have here; and since he had before expressed our Lord's Subjection to his Parents by the Word *ὑποτασσόμενος*, *Chap.* ii. 51. there is great Reason to believe, he would have used the same Word here, had he intended to give us the same Idea. And indeed, if *ἀρχόμενος* be allowed to have the Signification which this accurate Critick (for such undoubtedly he is,)

he chose to quit his Retirement, being then SECT. 18.
 in the full Vigour of Nature, and having Luke III. 23.
 attained the Age, in which the Priests used
 to begin their Ministrations in the Tem-
 ple. (Compare Numb. iv. 3, 47. and
 1 Chron. xxiii. 3.)

I M P R O V E M E N T.

LET our Lord's submitting himself to *Baptism*, teach us a holy Mat. iii. 15.
 Exactness and Care, in the Observance of those Positive Insti-
 tutions, which owe their Obligation merely to a Divine Command;
 for thus it also becometh us to fulfil all Righteousness; lest by break-
 ing one of the least of Christ's Commandments, and teaching others to
 do it, we become unworthy of a Part in the Kingdom of Heaven.
 (Mat. v. 19.)

Jesus had no Sin to confess, or wash away, yet he was baptized; Ver. 16.
 and GOD owned that Ordinance so far, as to make it the Season of
 pouring forth the Spirit upon him. And where can we expect this
 sacred Effusion, but in a conscientious and humble Attendance on
 Divine Appointments?

Let us remember, in how distinguishing a Sense Jesus is the Christ,
 the Anointed of GOD, to whom the Father hath not given the
 Spirit by Measure, but hath poured it out upon him in the most
 abundant Degree. Let us trace the Workings of this Spirit in Jesus,
 not only as a Spirit of miraculous Power, but of the richest Grace
 and Holiness; earnestly praying, that this holy Unction may from
 Christ our Head descend upon our Souls! May his enlivening Spirit Mark i. 10.
 kindle its sacred Flame there, with such Vigour, that many Waters
 may not be able to quench it, nor Floods of Temptation and Cor-
 ruption to drown it.

Behold GOD's beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased! As such let Luke iii. 22.
 us honour and love him; and as such let our Souls acquiesce in
 him, as in every Respect such a Saviour, as our Wishes might have
 asked, and our Necessities required.

With

is,) contends for here, since there is nothing in the Text to limit it, the Phrase
 would intimate, he was *subject to none* after this Time; an Assertion, which I should
 think both groundless and dangerous. — This Clause of *Luke* has been already
 mentioned in another Place, where it was only inserted, (out of its proper Order,) to
 compleat the Sentence. See *Sec. 9. pag. 51.*

SECT. 18. With what Amazement should we reflect upon it, that the Blessed *Jesus*, tho' so early ripened for the most extensive Services, should live in Retirement even till his *thirtieth Year*! That he deferred his *Ministry* so long, should teach us, not to thrust ourselves forward to publick Stations, till we are qualified for them, and plainly discover a Divine Call: That he deferred it no longer, should be an Engagement to us, to avoid unnecessary Delays, and to give GOD the Prime and Vigour of our Life.

Luke iii. 23.

Our Great *Master* attained not, as it seems, to the Conclusion of his *thirty-fifth Year*, if he so much as entered upon it; yet what glorious Achievements did he accomplish within those narrow Limits of Time! Happy that Servant, who with any proportionable Zeal dispatches the great Business of Life! So much the more happy, if his *Sun go down at Noon*; for the Space that is taken from the Labours of Time, will be added to the Rewards of Eternity.

S E C T. XIX.

CHRIST'S Victory over the Temptations of Satan in the Wilderness. Luke IV. 1,—13. Mat. IV. 1,—11. Mark I. 12, 13.

LUKE IV. 1.

SECT. 19. **T**HEN *Jesus* being full of the Holy Spirit, with which he had been just anointed in so extraordinary a Manner, returned from *Jordan*, where he had been baptized; and immediately after this was led by the strong Impulse of that Spirit on his Mind, into that desolate and solitary Place, the Wilderness (a); that

Luke IV. 1.

LUKE IV. 1.

AND *Jesus* being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from *Jordan*, and [MAR. immediately] was led by the Spirit [MAR. the Spirit driveth him] into the Wilderness,

(a) Into the Wilderness.] *Christ* probably intended this as a devout Retirement, to which he found himself strongly inclined, that he might give Vent to those sacred Passions, which the late grand Occurrences, of the *Descent* of the Spirit upon him, and the miraculous Attestation of a *Voice from Heaven*, had such a Tendency to inspire. It seems a very groundless Conjecture of *Mr. Fleming*, (in his *Christology*, vol. ii. pag. 315.) that he was carried thro' the Air to *Mount Sinai*: *Mr. Maundrel's* is much more probable, that it might be the Wilderness near *Jordan*; which, as he, who

where having fasted forty Days, he is tempted.

derness, [to be tempted of the Devil.] [MAT. IV. 1. MARK I. 12.]

that he might there be exercised, and tempted, SECT. 19. by the most violent Assaults of the Devil; and by conquering him, might afford an illustrious Example of Heroic Virtue, and lay a Foundation for the Encouragement and Support of his People, in their future Combats with that malignant Adversary. Luke IV. 1

MARK I. 13.— And he was there in the Wilderness forty Days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild Beasts; [and in those Days he did eat nothing.] [LUKE IV. 2.—]

And he was there in the Wilderness forty Days, and during that Time he was tempted by Satan; and also was surrounded with a Variety of the most savage and voracious Kinds of Wild Beasts: But they were so over-awed by his Presence, that (as in the Case of Daniel when in the Den of Lions, Dan. vi. 22.) none of them offered him the least Injury (b): And in all those Days he did eat nothing at all.

MAT. IV. 2. And when he had fasted forty Days and forty Nights, he was afterwards an hungred. [LUKE IV.—2.]

And when he had thus fasted forty Days and forty Nights, as Moses the Giver of the Law, (Exod. xxxiv. 28.) and Elias the great Restorer of it, had done before him; (1 Kings xix. 8.) having been thus far miraculously borne above the Appetites of Nature, at length he felt them, and was very hungry; but was intirely unprovided with any proper Food.

3 And when the Tempter came to him, he said, If thou be

And just at that Time, the Tempter coming to him (c) in a visible Form, (putting on a Human

who travelled thro' it, assures us, is a miserable and horrid Place, consisting of high barren Mountains, so that it looks as if Nature had suffered some violent Convulsions there. (See Maundrel's Travels, pag. 78.) This is the Scene of the Parable of the good Samaritan. (Luke x. 30.) Our Lord probably was assaulted in the Northern Part of it, near the Sea of Galilee, because he is said here to be returning, or going back to Nazareth, from whence he came to be baptized. Mark i. 9. pag. 113.

(b) None of them offered him the least Injury.] It is strange, that any should think, he was during this Time hunted by the Wild Beasts: This is the more improbable, as such a Hurry would have been inconsistent with the Design of God in leading him thither; which was, that he might be assaulted by Satan, at first probably by secret Suggestionis, the Horror of which would be increased by such a gloomy Place. The Angels might be the Instruments of intimidating the Beasts. Could Dr. Lightfoot have proved what he asserts, that this happened in October or November, the Cold would have been, as he suggests, an additional Circumstance of Affliction to our Lord: But it seems rather to have been in the Beginning of Summer. See Note (b), on Luke iii. 1. pag. 95. and Note (k), on Mat. iii. 4. pag. 100.

(c) The Tempter coming to him.] Our Translation, which in its rendering of these Words:

SECT. 19. Human Appearance, as one that desired to inquire farther into the Evidences of his Mission,) *said, If thou art the Son of GOD, in such an extraordinary Manner as thou hast been declared to be, and art indeed the promised Messiah, who is expected under that Character (d), command that these Stones become Loaves [of Bread,] to relieve thy Hunger; for in such a Circumstance it will undoubtedly be done.*

Mat. IV. 3.

4 *But Jesus answered, and said unto him, It is written in the Sacred Volume, (Deut. viii. 3.) "Man shall not live by Bread only, but by every Word proceeding out of the Mouth of GOD, or by whatever he shall appoint for the Preservation of his Life." He can therefore support me without Bread, as he fed the Israelites in the Wilderness (e); and, on the other Hand, even Bread itself, if these Stones were turned into it, could not nourish me without his Blessing; which I could not expect, were I to attempt a Miracle of this Kind, merely in Compliance with thy Suggestions, without any Intimation of my Father's Will.*

5 *Then, as the Devil found it was in vain that he had tempted Christ to a Distrust of Providence, he was for trying to persuade him to Presumption; and to this End, he taketh him along with him (f) to Jerusalem, which,*

be the Son of GOD, command that these Stones be made Bread. [LUKE IV. 3.]

4 But [Jesus] answered, and said, It is written, Man shall not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of GOD. [LUKE IV. 4.]

5 Then the Devil taketh him up into [Jerusalem,] the

Words is not so literal as the *Version* I have given, seems to intimate, what is not any where asserted in the Sacred Story, that this was the *first Time* the *Tempter* came unto him; a Circumstance which can hardly be supposed.

(d) The promised Messiah, who is expected under that Character.] That the *Jews* supposed the *Messiah* would be in a very extraordinary Manner *the Son of GOD*, appears from comparing *Mat. xiv. 33. xvi. 16. xxvi. 63. John i. 34, 49. xi. 27. xx. 31. and Acts viii. 37.*

(e) As he fed the Israelites in the Wilderness.] It is to this, the Passage that is quoted here hath a plain Reference, as it stands in the *Old Testament*.

(f) *Taketh him along with him.*] This is the exact *English* of *ωπαρμαβανι*: (See *Elzner. Observ. in loc.*) But whether he did, or did not, *transport him thro' the Air*, cannot I think be determined from this Passage.

4

(g) *The*

the Holy City, and setteth him on a Pinnacle of the Temple; [LUKE IV. 9.—]

which, being the Place where GOD dwelt in SECT. 19.
 so distinguishing a Manner, was commonly Mat. IV. 5.
 called *the Holy City (g)*; and there he setteth
him on one of the Battlements of the Temple (b);
 which in some Parts of it, and particularly
 over the Porch, was so exceeding high, that
 one could hardly bear to look down from
 it (i). And as he stood upon the Brink of
 this high Precipice, the Tempter saith unto
him, If thou art indeed the Son of GOD,
cast thyself down courageously from hence, and
 mingle with those, that are assembled for the
 Worship of GOD, in yonder Court. The
 Sight of such a Miracle will undeniably con-
 vince them of the Truth of thy Pretensions;
 and thou canst have no Room to doubt of thy
 Safety; for thou well knowest *it is written,*
 (Psal. xci. 11, 12.) “ *He shall give his*
 “ *Angels a Charge concerning thee, to keep*
 “ *thee (k), and they shall bear thee up in their*
 “ *Hands, lest thou shouldst by any Accident*
 “ *dash thy Foot against a Stone.*” And surely
 the Son of GOD may depend upon a Promise,
 which seems common to all his Saints.

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of GOD, cast thyself down [from hence:] for it is written, He shall give his Angels Charge concerning thee, [to keep thee;] and in their Hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any Time thou dash thy Foot against a Stone. [LUKE IV.—9, 10, 11.]

7 [And] Jesus [answer- ing] said unto him, It is writ- ten again, Thou shalt not tempt

And Jesus answering, said unto him, It is also written, to prevent the ungrateful Abuse of

(g) *The Holy City.*] This is a Phrase, that frequently, and very properly is used, to express *Jerusalem.* (Compare *Neh. xi. 1. Isa. lii. 1. Dan. ix. 24. and Mat. xxii. 53.*) The *Heathen* Writers in like Manner often call those Cities *Holy*, in which any of their *Deities* were supposed to hold their special Residence, and from whence their *Oracles* were delivered. (See *Elfner. Observ. Vol. i. pag. 17, 18.*)

(b) *One of the Battlements of the Temple.*] Tho' *Pinnacle* agrees very well with the Etymology of the *Greek Word*, yet according to its Use among us, it leads the *English Reader* to imagine, that he stood on the *Point of a Spire.* The Truth is, the Roof of the Temple was flat, and had a kind of *Balustrade* round it; (see *Deut. xxii. 8.*) and somewhere on the Edge of this *Battlement* we may suppose that *Satan* placed *Christ*, in his attacking him with this Temptation.

(i) *Hardly bear to look down from it.*] *Josephus* gives us this Account of it; *Antiq. Jud. lib. xv. cap. 11. [al. 14.] §. 5. pag. 781. Edit. Havercamp.*

(k) *A Charge concerning thee, to keep thee.*] Many (after *Jerom.*) have observed, that *Satan* made his Advantage of quoting Scripture merely by Scraps, leaving out those Words, in all thy Ways. The Cause of Truth, and sometimes of Common Sense, hath suffered a great deal by those who have followed his Example.

SECT. 19. of such gracious Promises as these, (Deut. vi. 16.) "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy
 Mat. IV. 7. "GOD," by demanding farther Evidence of what is already made sufficiently plain (l), as my Relation to GOD is, by the miraculous and glorious Testimony he hath so lately given me.

tempt the Lord thy GOD.
 [LUKE IV. 12.]

8 Again the Devil, being resolved once more to attack him by the most dangerous Temptation he could devise, *takeb him up into a Mountain* in those Parts, which was *exceeding high*; and from thence, *in a Moment of Time, sheweth him*, in an artful visionary Representation, *all the most magnificent Kingdoms of the World, and all the Luxury, and Pomp, and Glory of them*; displaying to his View one of the finest Prospects, that the most pleasurable and triumphant Scenes

8 Again, the Devil taketh him up into an exceeding high Mountain, and sheweth him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them, [in a Moment of Time:] [LUKE IV. 5.]

Luke IV. 6. could furnish out (m). And with the most egregious Impudence and Falsehood, *the Devil said unto him, All this extensive Power, [and] all these splendid Things, will I give thee, and all the Glory of them, which thou hast now before thee; (for it is all delivered to me (n), who am the Prince of this World, and*

LUKE IV. 6. And the Devil said unto him, All this Power [All these Things] will I give thee, and the Glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it. [MAT. IV. 9.—]

(l) By demanding farther Evidence of what is already made sufficiently plain.] That this is the Purport of the Phrase, *tempting GOD*, is easy to be seen, from comparing *Exod. xvii. 2, 7. Numb. xiv. 22. Psal. lxxviii. 18. and Psal. cvi. 14.* See *Limborch. Theolog. lib. v. cap. 22. §. 16.*

(m) One of the finest Prospects, that the most pleasurable and triumphant Scenes could furnish out.] As *Christ* was probably attacked with this Temptation upon some Mountain in the *Wilderness*, this beautiful and taking Prospect, that was represented to him, being set off by the Horror of the Place he was in, would in such a *Contrast* appear peculiarly charming. See *Note (a) pag. 119.*

(n) *For it is all delivered to me.*] *Grotius* has well observed, that this contains a vile Insinuation, that GOD had done, what none that truly understands the Nature of GOD and the Creature, can suppose possible, namely, that he had parted with the Government of the World out of his own Hands. And we may add to this, that in the *Text* which *Christ* has quoted, there is enough to overthrow that Notion; since GOD's appropriating to himself the *Worship* of all his Creatures, plainly implies his universal Empire and Dominion over all, and the Regard he has to the religious Adoration and Obedience of all the Subjects of his Kingdom.—It is remarkable, that, among other Things which several *Heathen* Writers learnt of the *Primitive Christians*, this was one; to represent *Evil Spirits*; as tempting Men from their Duty by Views of *Worldly*



Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence Satan.—

7 If thou therefore wilt [fall down and] worship me, all shall be thine. [MAT. IV.—9.]

and I give it to whom I please :) And SECT. 19. great as the Gift is, I am so charmed with that Wisdom and Magnanimity, which I have now observed in thee (o), that I propose to give it thee upon the easiest Terms thou canst imagine; for all that I desire is, that thou shouldst pay me Homage for it: *If therefore thou wilt but fall down and worship me*, upon thy making this little Acknowledgment to me, *all these Things shall be thine*,

Luke IV. 7.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, [Get thee hence, get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.] [MAT. IV. 10.]

8 *Then Jesus*, moved with Indignation at so blasphemous and horrid a Suggestion, answered and said unto him, with becoming Resentment and Abhorrence, *Get thee hence, Satan (p)*, and be gone out of my Sight; for I will no longer endure thee near me: *For it is written*, as a fundamental Precept of the Law, (Deut. vi. 13.) "*Thou shalt worship the Lord thy GOD, and him only shalt thou serve.*" It would therefore be unlawful thus to worship thee, who art no other than a mere Creature, even tho' thou wast indeed his Deputy on Earth; and how much more then must it be so, as thou art in Reality the great avowed Enemy of God and Man (q)?
for

Worldly Riches and Grandeur; over which, *Porphyry* in particular says, they often would pretend to much more Power than they really have. See *Elfner. Observ. Vol. i. pag. 18, 19.*

(o) I am so charmed with that—which I have now observed in thee.] This seems the most plausible View, in which the Temptation could be introduced.—It is plain from the next Verse, that this was the last Temptation; but *Luke* makes it the second: Whence it evidently appears, that *Luke* did not confine himself exactly to observe the Order of Time in his Story: A Remark of vast Importance for settling the *Harmony*. See Note (g) on *Luke i. 3. pag. 3.*

(p) *Get thee hence, Satan.*] The Word *μαται* plainly expresses his Authority over *Satan*, as well as his Detestation of so vile a Suggestion.

(q) The great avowed Enemy of God and Man.] This odious Character is intimated in the Name *Satan*, which our Lord gives him, by which he made it to appear he knew him, however he might seek to be disguised. If we suppose him now to have worn the Form of an *Angel of Light*, (as *2 Cor. xi. 14.*) it will make both this, and the former Temptation look more plausible: For thus, he might pretend, in the former, to take the Charge of *Christ* in his Fall, as one of his celestial Guards; and in this, to resign him a Province, which God had committed to his Administration and Care. And this may be consistent with supposing, that he first appeared as

SECT. 19. for such, under all thy Disguise, I well know thee to be.

Luke IV. 13. *And when the Devil had ended all the Temptation, we have given an Account of, being so baffled and confounded, as not to be able to present any others which seemed more likely to succeed, he departed from him for a Season; yet secretly meditating some future Assault. (Compare John xiv. 30.)*

Mat. IV. 11. *And then the Devil having left him, behold, a Detachment of Angels came and waited upon him (r), furnishing him with proper Supplies for his Hunger, and congratulating so illustrious a Victory over the Prince of Darkness.*

13 And when the Devil had ended all the Temptation, he departed from him for a Season.

MAT. IV. 11. Then the Devil leaveth him, and behold, Angels came and ministered unto him. [MARK I.—13.]

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. iv. 1, & seq. **W**HO can read this Account without Amazement, when he compares the Insolence and Malice of the *Prince of Darkness*, with the Condescension and Grace of the *Son of GOD!*

What was it, that animated and imboldened *Satan*, to undertake such a Work? Was it the easy Victory he had obtained over the *first Adam* in Paradise? Or was it the Remembrance of his *own Fall*, from whence he arrogantly concluded, that no Heart could stand against the Temptations of Pride and Ambition? Could he, who afterwards proclaimed *Christ* to be *the Son of the most high GOD*, and had perhaps but lately heard him owned as such by a *Voice from Heaven*, make any Doubt of his Divinity? Or if he actually believed it, could he expect to vanquish him? We may rather conclude,

a Man, (it may be, as a hungry Traveller, who pretended to ask the Miracle of turning *Stones* into *Loaves* for his own Supply;) for *Angels* under the *Old Testament* had often worn a *Human Form*. Compare *Gen. xviii. 2. xix. 1, 10, 16. Job. v. 13, 14. Judg. vi. 11, 12. and xiii. 3, 8, 10.*

(r) *Angels came and waited upon him.*] The Word *δύναμις* does often signify *to wait at Table*. See *Mat. viii. 15. Luke xvii. 8. xxii. 27. and John xii. 2.*—As one *Celestial Spirit* might have been abundantly sufficient for the Relief of our *Lord's* Necessities, it is reasonable to suppose, that the Appearance of a *Number of them* upon this Occasion was to do him the more illustrious Honour, after this horrible Combat with *Satan*; to which, for wise and gracious Reasons, he was pleased to condescend.



Coyne pinx.

Matt. 4. V. 11.

A. Walker sculp.

— and behold Angels came & Ministered unto him.

clude that he did not expect it; but mad with Rage and Despair, SECT. 19. he was determined, at least to worry that *Lamb of GOD*, which he knew he could not devour; and to vex, with his hellish Suggestions, that innocent and holy Soul, which he knew he could never seduce. *Wretched Degeneracy! How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning!* to be thus eagerly driving on thine own Repulse and Disgrace!

But, on the other Hand, how highly are we obliged to our great Deliverer, who hath brought forth *Meat out of the Eater*, and *Sweetness out of the strong*? Who can sufficiently adore thy Condescension, O *blessed Jesus*, who wouldst permit thyself to be thus assaulted and led from Place to Place, by an *Infernal Spirit*, whom thou couldst in a Moment have remanded back to Hell, to be bound Ver. 5, 8. in *Chains of Darknefs*, and overwhelmed with flaming Ruin!

The *Apostle* tells us, why he permitted this: It was, *that having himself suffered, being tempted, he might*, by this Experience that he had, of *Satan's* Subtilty, and of the Strength of his Temptations, contract an additional Tenderness, and be the more inclined, as well as better able, to succour us, when we are tempted. (*Heb. ii. 18.*) Let this imbolden us to *come unto the Throne of Grace*, to obtain *Mercy*, and *find Grace to help in the Time of Need*. (*Heb. iv. 16.*)

Let us remember and imitate the Conduct of the great *Captain of our Salvation*; and like him, let us learn to *resist Satan*, that he may *flee from us*. Like *Christ*, let us maintain such an humble Ver. 3. Dependance on the divine Blessing, as never to venture out of the *Way of it*, be the *Necessity* ever so urgent: Nor let us ever expose Ver. 6. ourselves to unnecessary *Danger*, in Expectation of extraordinary Deliverance. Like him, let us learn to *overcome the World*, and to Ver. 8, 9. despise all its Poms and Vanities, when offered at the Price of our Innocence,

To furnish us for such a Combat, let us take *the Sword of the* Ver. 4, 7, 10. *Spirit, which is the Word of GOD*. Let us not only make ourselves familiarly acquainted with the *Words of Scripture*, but let us study to enter into the true Design and *Meaning* of it; that so, if *Satan* should attempt to draw his Artillery from thence, we may be able to guard Ver. 6. against that most dangerous Stratagem, and to answer perverted *Passages of Holy Writ*, by others more justly applied.

Once more; when the Suggestions of *Satan* grow most horrible, let us not conclude, that we are utterly abandoned by *GOD*, because Ver. 9. we are proved by such a Trial; since *Christ* himself was *tempted*, even to *worship* the *Infernal Tyrant*. But in such Cases, let us reso-

SECT. 19. lutely repel the Solicitation, rather than parley with it, and say in Imitation of our Lord's Example, and with a Dependance on his Grace, *Get thee behind me, Satan.*

Ver. 10. If our Conflict be thus maintained, the Struggle will e'er long be over; and *Angels*, who are now the Spectators of the Combat, will at length congratulate our Victory.

S E C T. XX.

John the Baptist *being examined by the great Men among the Jews, acknowledges that he was not the Christ, and refers them to one among them, whom he confesses to be vastly his Superiour.* John I. 19,—28.

JOHN I. 19.

SECT. 20.
John I. 19.

WE have already taken Notice of the honourable Testimonies, that were given by John in a more general Way to the Messiah in his Discourses to the People, before Jesus was baptized: We shall proceed to others that were more particular, which followed after that Event; *and this that we shall now produce, is the Testimony of John, when the Sanhedrim, or grand Council of the Jews at Jerusalem, sent some, who were reckoned among the most venerable and holy Men of the Nation, even some of the Priests and Levites, to enquire of him, saying, Tell us plainly, who art thou, that drawest such a Croud of People after thee, and pretendest to something so uncommon?*

20 *And John, according to the natural Plainness of his Temper, presently replied to their Enquiry; and with the utmost Freedom, he most readily acknowledged, and did not at all affect,*

JOHN I. 19.

AND this is the Record of John, when the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, *Who art thou?*

20 And he confessed, and denied

denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

affect, either to deny, or to disguise his real Character; but in the strongest Terms he solemnly protested (a), I am not the Messiah, nor would I in the least pretend to arrogate to myself the Honours which are due to none but him.

SECT. 20. John I. 20.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No.

And upon this, they farther asked him, 21 What art thou then, if thou art not the promised Messiah? Art thou the celebrated Elijah (b), come down from that Abode in Heaven, to which he was miraculously translated, (2 Kings ii. 11.) to introduce the great and terrible Day of the Lord? (Mal. iv. 5.) And in Reply to this he said, with the same Plainness as before, Tho' it is true, that I am come in the Spirit and Power of Elijah; yet I am not he. And they again enquired of him, Art thou a Prophet of the former Generation raised from the Dead (c)? And he directly answered, No.

Now

(a) Solemnly protested.] The Word *ομολογησεν* is the same, which is rendered acknowledged in the former Clause; but being thus repeated, its Signification seems to be heightened, especially by its Opposition to *ουκ ηρησατο*, he denied not.

(b) Art thou the celebrated Elijah?] It is plain by this Question, that they were Strangers to the Parentage of John the Baptist. And with regard to the Reply he makes to this Enquiry, there is no Scruple to be made, but that the Baptist might justly deny that he was Elijah, as he indeed was not that Prophet, though he came in his Spirit. See Luke i. 17. pag. 16.

(c) Art thou a Prophet of the former Generation raised from the Dead?] It is necessary that this Question should be understood with such a Limitation, because John the Baptist was really a very illustrious Prophet, as we may plainly see from what is said by Christ himself, Matth. xi. 9. And this Interpretation (which is largely vindicated by Castalio,) seems much preferable to that of Theophylact, and Erasmus, who because of the Article *ο νεκρωτων*, would render it as we do, that Prophet; concluding without any Proof, that the Jews understood Deut. xviii. 18. not of the Messiah himself, but of some Prophet of considerable Note, who was to introduce him: And Grotius has supposed the Question that they offer, to refer to Jeremiah, of whose Return to Life, there was a mighty Rumour, that prevailed among the Jews. (Compare Matth. xvi. 14.) But I can see no Reason to restrain it to a particular Prophet; and since (as Limborch well observes in his Dispute with Orobio the Jew,) that Text in Deuteronomy was the clearest and strongest in all the Mosaic Writings, to enforce the Necessity of submitting to the Messiah, it is probable John would have corrected so great a Mistake, if they had put the Question to him upon this Presumption. The best French Versions render it as I have done; and indeed it seems to me, that the Word Prophet in the Evangelists, generally signifies one of those holy Men, who were the

Mes-

SECT. 20. Now as it only was in Negatives that he had hitherto replied; *they said unto him therefore yet once more, Tell us then plainly,*

John I. 22. *who art thou? that we may, in a more direct and satisfactory Manner, give an Answer to them that sent us: What dost thou say concerning thyself?*

23 And that they might not be mistaken in his Character, and might be wholly left without Excuse, if they regarded not the End for which he came, *he said, I am* (what I have frequently before declared myself to be,) *the Voice of one crying here in the Wilderness (d), and saying, Make the Way of the Lord clear and straight,* by removing every Obstruction; for he is now appearing for such gracious Purposes, as demand the most cheerful Reception; *as Isaiah the Prophet said, in a Passage which you cannot but be acquainted with. (Isa. xl. 3.)*

24 Now the Messengers that came on this Errand, were of the Sect of the Pharisees; who, as on the one Hand they professed a great Regard for the Prophets, and believed their Existence in a future State, so on the other Hand they strenuously opposed any Innovations in Religion, which were not warranted by the Tradition of the Elders.

25 And therefore, upon hearing this Account that John the Baptist gave them of himself, *they asked him again, and said unto him with some Warmth,*

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an Answer to them that sent us: What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I am the Voice of one crying in the Wilderness, Make straight the Way of the Lord; as said the Prophet Esaias.

24 And they which were sent, were of the Pharisees:

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why bap-

Messengers of God to Israel of old; which especially appears from *Mark vi. 15.* where *to be a Prophet,* and *to be as one of the Prophets,* are spoken of as distinct, which they could not be but on this Interpretation: And if the *alternative* be left out, and it be read, as it is in some Manuscripts, and printed Copies, *He is a Prophet like one of the Prophets* there will be a Foundation for the same Remark, and *one of the Prophets,* must signify, *one of the antient Prophets.*

(d) *I am the Voice of one crying in the Wilderness.*] The late Archbishop of Cambray beautifully illustrates the Humility of this Reply, as if this illustrious Prophet had said, "Far from being the Messiah, or Elias, or one of the Old Prophets, I am nothing but a Voice; a Sound, that as soon as it has expressed the Thought of which it is the Sign, dies into Air, and is known no more." See *Fenel. Oeuvres Philos.* Vol. ii. pag. 193.

(e) *Why*

baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet?

Warmth, *Why then dost thou take upon thee, thus to baptize (e) all that appear to be a-
wakened by thy Preaching, in Token of the Forgiveness of their Sins; since, by thine own Confession, thou art neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor even a Prophet of lower Rank raised from the Dead?*

SECT: 20.
John I. 25.

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with Water; but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

And *John answered them, by repeating the Testimony he had formerly borne to the People, (Luke iii. 16. pag. 106.) saying, I indeed baptize you with Water; but there is one that for some Time has stood in the midst of you, and is now coming to be daily conversant among you, whom as yet you know not to be so eminent a Person; who will administer a much more noble Baptism, attended with such miraculous Effects as will abundantly justify mine.*

26

27 He it is, who coming after me, is preferred before me, whose Shoes Latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

And *this is he, that cometh after me, as to the Time of his Appearance in the World, whom yet I have declared to have existed long before me; and who is therefore upon all Accounts deservedly preferred before me, as being one, whose glorious Dignity is such, as that I freely own him to be vastly my Superiour; of whom I am not worthy to be employed in any Office as his menial Servant, not even to unloose the Latchet*

27

(e) *Why then dost thou take upon thee, thus to baptize?*] It is not to be certainly determined from this Text; whether the *Baptism of Profelytes* was then in Use among the *Jews*, or not. The Words indeed will make a very strong and well adapted Sense, should they be understood, as if it had been said, Why is it then that thou dost institute such a *New Rite* as this? But surely too they will be very proper in the other Sense, if we should take them to imply, Why is it then that thou dost take upon thee, without any Commission from the *Sanhedrim*, to administer *Baptism*? and that, not only (as is usual,) unto those, who before this were *Heathens*, but even to the *Jews*? And this (for Reasons, which it would not be proper here to enter upon at large,) I take to be the more probable Sense, and so suppose *John's Use* of this Ceremony in such a Manner, to be a strong Intimation, that *Jews*, as well as *Gentiles*, must become *Profelytes* to the New Dispensation, that was then opening to the World; and howsoever holy they imagined themselves to be, yet they all stood in absolute Need of being washed from their Sins; as he before had most emphatically declared, *Mat. iii. 8, 9. pag. 103.*

SECT. 20. *Latchet of his Shoe*, or to untie the String with which his Sandals are bound on.

John I. 28. *These things passed on the other Side Jordan, at a Place called Bethabara, or the House of Passage; which lay near that Part of the River, which was miraculously dried up, that the Israelites under the Command of Joshua might pass over into Canaan; (see Josh. iii. 16. and Judges xii. 6.) which was the Place, where John was now baptizing.*

28 These Things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- H**OW remarkably were the Words of our blessed Redeemer fulfilled in *John, He that humbleth himself shall be exalted!*
- Ver. 20, 21. (*Luke xviii. 14.*) He declined assuming the Name of any of the Servants of GOD among the *Prophets*; and yet our Lord bore Testimony to him, as of a higher Rank than any of the *Prophets*, than whom there was *none greater among those*, that had in a natural Way been *born of Women.* (*Luke vii. 28.*)
- Ver. 27. Did *John*, this great and illustrious Saint, speak of himself as *unworthy to untie even the Sandals of Christ*; what Reverence then do we owe him? and what Reason have we to admire his Condescension, that he should honour us who are so much more *unworthy*, with the Title of *his Servants*?
- Ver. 26. Let not any, the most distinguished of that happy Number, wonder if they be *unknown* by the World, and perhaps too, slighted and despised; since it appears, that even *Jesus* himself, not only at his first Appearance *stood unknown* among the *Jews*, but afterwards was *rejected* by them, when his Claim was solemnly entered, and his Miracles most publickly wrought.
- Ver. 19, &c. Vain, and worse than vain, was this Message and Inquiry, which when answered, was so soon overlooked and forgot. May Divine Grace teach us to inquire, as those that are in Earnest in our Search! and *then shall we know to saving Purposes, if we thus follow on to know the Lord.* *Hof. vi. 3.*

S E C T.

S E C T. XXI.

John the Baptist bears a repeated Testimony to JESUS, as the Lamb of GOD; which proves an Occasion of introducing some of his Disciples into an Acquaintance with him. John I. 29,—42.

JOHN I. 29.

THE next Day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of GOD, which taketh away the Sin of the World.

JOHN I. 29.

THE next Day, after John had returned this Answer to the Priests and Levites, who were sent to inquire into his Character and Mission, he seeth Jesus, (who was now returned from his Temptation in the Desert,) coming towards him; and says to them that were near him, Behold, with the strictest Attention and Regard, that innocent and holy Person, who may properly be called the Lamb of GOD; as it is he that is the great Atoning Sacrifice, of which the Lambs that by Divine Command are daily offered in the Temple were intended to be Types; which expiates and takes away the Sin (a) of the whole World, and is set forth to be a Propitiation, not only for the Jews, for whom alone the Sacrifices of the Law were offered, but for the Gentiles too, that thro' his Name, whosoever believeth in him, may receive Remif-

SECT. 21.
John I. 29.

(a) *The Lamb of GOD, which expiates and takes away Sin.*] It is well observed by the Author of that excellent Treatise, called *Christ the Mediator*, that this is the only Sense, in which a Lamb can be said to take away Sin. Many suppose, this refers to the *Paschal Lamb*: but that was not in its chief Intention so much an *Expiatory*, as an *Eucharistical Sacrifice*. Grotius strangely enervates the Force of this Text, by chusing to explain it of that Reformation of the Lives of Men, to which *Christ* did not only press them by the Doctrine that he taught, but gave them an Example of it in his Death, redeeming them (as it is said) from their vain Conversation with his own precious Blood: (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) Whereas there is not any thing more evident, than that the great Design for which he died, was to atone for Sin, and to exempt us from the Punishment that our Iniquities deserved; that having put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, we might have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of our Sins. Compare Heb. ix. 26, 28. Eph. i. 7. and Col. i. 14.

SECT. 21. Remission of Sins. And I now point him out, and tell you, *This is he, of whom I formerly have said, That after me there comes a Man, who is to be preferred abundantly before me*, as being one that is incomparably greater and more excellent than I; *for he existed long*

John I. 30.

31

before me (b). (Compare John i. 15, 27. pag. 110, 129.) And till the Time of his Appearance in a publick Way, I was a Stranger to him, and *did not personally know him*; for it was ordered so by Providence, that notwithstanding the Relation which there was between us, we were not brought up in any Intimacy of Acquaintance with each other (c): Yet in the general I was aware of his intended Approach; and it was chiefly *for this End*, with a particular Regard to him, that I came (as you see) *baptizing with Water, that he might thus be more remarkably made manifest to Israel*, and might be introduced with greater Solemnity.

32

And John proceeded at the same Time, while Jesus was before him, and bore his Testimony to him, saying, This must be certainly the Son of GOD; for I declare, that when he was baptized, I plainly saw the Holy Spirit in a surprizing Token of his Presence,

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a Man, which is preferred before me; for he was before me:

31 And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with Water.

32 And John bare Record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a Dove, and it abode upon him:

(b) *For he existed before me.*] Dr. Hammond abundantly vindicates this Interpretation. Had ~~expressed~~ here, as in some other Places, signified *Chief*, ~~or~~, not ~~is~~, would have been joined with it, and *John the Baptist* would have said, *He is*, and not *he was my Chief*, which would apparently have been a very flat Tautology, instead of a Reason; whereas *Christ's having existed before John*, though he was born after him, was a most convincing Proof, that he was a very extraordinary Person, and was the strongest Reason that could well have been assigned, to shew that he was worthy of their superior Regard. Compare Note (b) on John i. 15. pag. 110, 111.

(c) We were not brought up in any Intimacy of Acquaintance with each other.] This was very surprizing, considering how nearly related they were to each other, and how remarkable the Conception and Birth of both of them had been; as well as what frequent Interviews they might have had, at the yearly Feasts at *Jerusalem*. There seems to have been a particular Hand of Providence, in thus preventing that Acquaintance, that might otherwise have grown up to an Intimacy and Tenderness of Friendship, which in the Eyes of a prejudiced and censorious World might have rendered *John's* Testimony to *Christ* something suspected. It is probable, that both *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth* died, while *John* was very young; and then he might soon forget *Jesus*, though he had seen him in his Infancy.

33 And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with Water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw, and bare Record that this is the Son of God.

35 Again the next Day after, John stood, and two of his Disciples :

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold

Prefence, *descending*, with a hovering Motion SECT. 21.
like a Dove, from Heaven, and it abode upon }
him. And that you may not suspect any John. I. 33.

Confederacy between us, I repeat the Assurance, which I but just now gave you, that *I did not personally know him*; but as he was approaching to me, I had a secret Intimation given me (*d*), that it was he, whom I should see to be distinguished by this Sign; for *he that sent me to baptize with Water*, as an Earnest of that nobler Baptism which is now soon to be expected, even that GOD whose Messenger I am, *He said unto me* by an unquestionable Revelation, This is the Sign that I will give thee, that *upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending*, in a corporeal and miraculous Appearance, and remaining upon him, *this is he that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.* And I saw this Sign with my own Eyes, and upon this convincing Evidence it is, that I *have testified* already, and still go on to testify, *that this is really the Son of GOD*, who is come into the World in a Human Form, to accomplish the great Work of Redemption and Salvation; who is therefore most reverently and affectionately to be received by us, as we regard his Father's Protection and Favour.

Again it came to pass *on the next Day*, that *John was standing* near the same Place, and *two of his Disciples* at that Time were with him (*e*). And looking stedfastly on *Jesus (f)*, as he was walking at some little Dif-

(*d*) I had a secret Intimation given me.] The Supposition of this, which is so perfectly agreeable to *John's* Prophetic Character, easily reconciles this Text, with *John's* respectful Speech to *Christ* when he came to be baptized; (*Mat. iii. 14. pag. 114.*) as *Jansenius*, and before him *Chrysoptom*, observed.

(*e*) Two of his Disciples were with him.] It plainly appears by *ver. 40.* that *Andrew* was one of these; and perhaps *John* the beloved Apostle, might be the other, who being the Penman of this Gospel, does frequently conceal his Name. Compare *John xiii. 23. and xx. 2.*

(*f*) Looking stedfastly on *Jesus.*] This seems the most exact Signification of the Word *αὐθιγὰς*, and I have thus translated it again in *ver. 42.*

(*g*) A

SECT. 21. Distance, *he* takes Occasion to repeat his former Declaration, and *says* to his Disciples, that he might lead them to a due Regard to Christ, *Behold the Lamb of GOD*, whom I before have represented as the great Expiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of Men. Behold the Lamb of GOD.

John. I. 36.

- 37 *And when the two Disciples that were with him, heard him speak such high and honourable Things of Christ, they took such Notice of it, that they immediately went on and followed Jesus, who was then returning to a Lodging which he had, at a small Distance from that Place (g). And Jesus turning back, and seeing them intent on following and coming after [him], says to them, not to discountenance and turn them back, but to encourage and invite them to a free Converse with him, What do you seek? and what may be the Business that you have with me? And they said to him, with the greatest Reverence and Respect, Rabbi, (which being translated from the Syriac, which was the Language that was then spoken by the Jews, is the same with Master,) may we have Leave to ask thee, where dost thou dwell? for we are desirous of making thee a Visit, that we may enter into some Conversation with thee, which would not be so proper or convenient in this publick Way.* And pleased to hear of the Enquiry they made, *he says unto them, Come with me now, and see where it is I lodge; for you shall both be welcome to attend me Home. And they most readily complied with his kind Invitation, and came, and saw where he dwelt, taking particular Notice of the Place;*
- 37 And the two Disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.
- 38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?
- 39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and

(g) A Lodging at a small Distance from that Place.] As *Jesus* was a Person who had no Attendants, and was a Stranger in this Country, we may conclude, that he had only some obscure and private Lodging here; which must have been at no great Distance from the Place where *John* baptized, as may be gathered from his appearing there from Day to Day. And by this Means he did an Honour to *John's* Ministry, and had an Opportunity of receiving his Testimony.

(b) He



The Calling of Andrew and Peter.

Andrew first brings his Brother Peter to him.

and abode with him that Day; for it was about the tenth Hour.

Place; and they went in, and continued with him all the Remainder of that Day; it being then about the tenth Hour, or Four in the Afternoon; so that they had an Opportunity of spending the whole Evening in Conversation with him, abundantly to their Delight and Satisfaction.

SECT. 21.
John I. 39.

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peters Brother.

Now Andrew, the Brother of Simon Peter who will make so considerable a Figure in this History, was one of the two Disciples, that heard John [speak of Jesus] in the Manner we have before related, and followed him.

40

41 He first findeth his own Brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, (which is, being interpreted, the Christ.)

And so exceedingly was he transported with the Pleasure that he found in his Acquaintance with him, that he was ready to impart the joyful News to others, to whom he knew it would be welcome; and hastening to communicate it to his Friends, as the most acceptable Tidings he could bring them, he first findeth his own Brother Simon (b), and tells him with the greatest Joy, We certainly have found the promised Messias; (which being translated from the Hebrew or the Syriac Tongue, is the Christ, or the Anointed One.)

41

42 And he brought him to Jesus: And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art

And that his Brother Simon might be satisfied of the Truth of what he told him, he brought him unto Jesus: And Jesus looking stedfastly upon him, as if he had read in his Countenance the Traces of his Character, and of his future Service in the Church,

42

said

(b) He first findeth his own Brother Simon.] This is a much more literal Translation of Επιστρας υιος ωσβολος αδελφου του ιδου Σιμωνα, than that of the New Translation in 1727, which renders it, The first that he found, or happened to meet with, was Peter.—He may perhaps be called his own Brother, to distinguish him from some other, that belonged to the Family, who possibly might be his Brother-in-Law, or was related to him only in Half-Blood.—Peter was so remarkable a Person, that it might be proper to tell us, who was the first Means of bringing him acquainted with Christ; and if John was the other Disciple that is here referred to, he might mean this as an humble Intimation, that Andrew's Zeal was in this Respect greater than his own —We may observe here by the Way, that Peter was not the First of Christ's Disciples, (in which the Papists would have been ready to have gloried,) but that another was the Means of bringing him to an Acquaintance with Jesus.

3

(i) Thou

SECT. 21. *said at his coming to him, Thou art Simon the Son of Jonas (i); and thou shalt also be called Cephas; (which in the Greek may be expressed by Peter, and signifies a Rock;) a Name, well adapted to his Character; upon Account of that resolute and patient Firmness, with which he should maintain the Cause of the Gospel; and which also expressed the Use which should afterwards be made of him, as he should prove in Subordination to Christ, one of the great Foundations of the Church.*

John I. 42. *art Simon the Son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, (which is, by Interpretation, a Stone.)*

I M P R O V E M E N T.

John i. 29. **L**ET our Faith daily behold *Jesus* under the Character of the *Lamb of GOD*, a Lamb indeed *without Blemish and without Spot*; by whose *precious Blood* we are *redeemed*, as by an infinitely more valuable Ransom than *Silver and Gold*. (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) As such let us humbly apply to him to *take away our Sins*, and rejoice that (as the Apostle *John* elsewhere expresseth it,) *he is the Propitiation, not for our Sins only, but also for the Sins of the whole World*; all Ages and Nations being interested in the Benefit of his Atonement. (1 John ii. 2.)

Ver. 33, & seq. Let us consider him as *anointed* by the *Holy Spirit*, and as *baptizing* his Church with it; and learn, after the Example of *John the Baptist*, to bear our *Testimony* to him again and again, with continued Steadiness, and growing Zeal.

Ver. 39. Our Satisfaction in him as the great and only Saviour, will surely grow in Proportion to our Acquaintance with him. If Divine Grace hath discovered him to us, and taught us to repose the Confidence of our Souls upon him, let us, like *Andrew* in the Passage before us, be concerned to make him known to others; and especially to lead our nearest Relatives, and our most intimate Friends, into that Acquaint-

Ver. 41.

(i) *Thou art Simon.*] Some have thought, that *Christ* intended an Allusion here to his Name *Simon*, which may signify a *Hearer*, intimating the Candour and Impartiality with which he was willing to *hear Christ's* Instructions. (See *Dr. Clarke's* Note.) But I did not express this in the *Paraphrase*, because it is not certain. Perhaps *our Lord* only meant to shew, that tho' he had never seen him before, he knew his Name, and his Family. Compare ver. 48. and *John* iv. 16, 19.



The Martyrdom of S^t. Andrew.

Acquaintance with him, which is so absolutely necessary to their SECT. 21.
eternal Happiness.

Let the condescending Readiness, with which our blessed Redeemer accepted, and even invited the Visit of these *two Disciples*, engage every Preacher of Righteousness most willingly to give his private, as well as his publick Labours, and his Time (valuable as that Treasure is,) to the Service of those, who are seriously affected with the Concerns of their Souls, and are enquiring after the Way to Salvation. We are sufficiently honoured, if by any Means, and by all, we may be instrumental in promoting that Cause, which employed the daily Labours of God's Incarnate Son, and at length cost him his very Blood!

S E C T. XXII.

The Calling of Philip, and the Interview of CHRIST with Nathaniel. John I. 43, to the End.

JOHN I. 43.

THE Day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

JOHN I. 43.

THE next Day after he had met with Peter, Jesus determined to depart from thence (a) to Galilee, and there to enter on his publick Ministry; and at his coming thither he findeth Philip, whom he intended for one of his most intimate Companions, and says unto him, Follow me; which, being secretly influenced by his Grace (b), he accordingly

SECT. 22.
John I. 43.

(a) *Determined to depart from thence; καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἐξῆλθεν.*] The Force of the Word *ἐξῆλθεν* seems to be something greater than our Translation expresses, and there are several other Texts which may suggest the same Remark. (Compare *Mat.* xiv. 5. xix. 17. xx. 14. *Luke* iv. 6. xxiii. 20. *John* iii. 8. v. 21, 40. vii. 17. viii. 44. xvii. 24. xxi. 22. and *2 Tim.* iii. 12.) Perhaps it may here intimate, that our Lord on this Occasion broke thro' the Importunity of some, who would rather have persuaded him, to continue at *Bethabara*, for the Advantage of farther Testimonies from the Baptist; or to have gone to *Jerusalem*, where they might imagine, that his Ministry would have been opened more honourably, than in *Galilee*. Compare *John* vii. 3, 4.

(b) *Being secretly influenced by his Grace.*] When we consider how suddenly some of Christ's Disciples left their stated Employments, to follow him, (according as we read, *Mat.* iv. 18,—22. *Luke* v. 27, 28. and xix. 5, 6.) it seems reasonable to allow some singular kind of Impression on their Mind, (as there was in the Calling of *Elisha*,

SECT. 22. cordingly did. Now Philip was an Inhabitant of Bethsaida, which was a Town of Galilee on the Sea of Tiberias, and was also the City of Andrew and Peter, who have already been particularly mentioned: And by his Calling these Disciples, he gave an Intimation of his Purpose, of making some longer Stay in that Country.

John I. 44.

45. And Philip, after he was thus become a Follower of Christ, findeth his pious Friend Nathaniel, who was also of Galilee, and lived in a Town of it which was called Cana, (John xxi. 2.) and says unto him, We have found him, who has so long been earnestly expected by us, even that illustrious and extraordinary Person, whom Moses gave us an Account of in the Law, and whom the Prophets also have described (c) in such a strong and lively Manner; and with the greatest Joy I am come to tell thee, I know him who he is, [even] Jesus the Son of Joseph, who comes from Nazareth, and is undoubtedly the promised Messiah.

46. And when Nathaniel heard, that he was one of Nazareth, his Prejudice against the Place was such, that he was ready to conclude, that Philip was mistaken; and he therefore said unto him, Can any good Thing at all, and especially any such great and glorious Blessing as this, come out of a Place so infamous as Nazareth (d)? And Philip says:

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the City of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good Thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

1 Kings xix. 19;—21.) which tho' for the present it superseded the Necessity of Arguments, yet did not exclude their attending to that afterwards, which might be necessary to defend their Conduct to others.

(c) Whom Moses—and the Prophets have described: οὐ γινώσκω Μωσῆς καὶ οἱ προφῆται.] This is a very literal Translation; for γινώσκω frequently is used in the same Sense elsewhere, and in particular is justly rendered thus, Rom. x. 5. (Compare Job. xviii. 9. Judg. viii. 14. and Ezra vii. 22. Septuag.)

(d) A Place so infamous as Nazareth.] As Nathaniel was a Native of Galilee, it appears from hence, that the Galileans themselves had but an ill Opinion of Nazareth, as worse than the rest of that Country; and indeed by the Figure its Inhabitants make in the Evangelists, they seem to have deserved it. See Luke iv. 16, 28, 29. and Mat. xiii. 54, & seq.

says unto him, Do not suffer yourself to be borne away by a vain popular Prejudice, but come and see; converse with him yourself, and you will soon be satisfied. SECT. 22.
John I. 46.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no Guile.

Now when Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, (tho' there was no personal Acquaintance between them,) at the first Sight of him he presently discerns what was his real Character, and says concerning him, so loud that he might easily hear it, Behold here cometh one [that is] truly an Israelite; (compare Rev. iii. 9. and John viii. 39.) a Person that indeed deserves the honourable Title of one of GOD'S People, and is worthy of his Descent from Jacob, his pious Ancestor, as being a plain and upright Man, in whom there is no Deceit, either towards GOD or Man. (See Gen. xxv. 27.)

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the Fig-tree, I saw thee.

Nathaniel, perfectly surprized at such an unexpected Testimony, presently says with all the natural Frankness of his Temper to him, Whence dost thou know me, or how canst thou at once thus undertake to answer for the most secret Part of a Stranger's Character? Jesus replied, and said unto him, I am not so entirely a Stranger to thy Character, as thou art ready to suppose, nor do I take it merely from uncertain Report; for before Philip called thee, I saw thee, when thou wast alone under the Fig-tree (e); and as I was present in Spirit to observe what passed in that secret Retirement, I know how well thou deservest the Testimony, which I have now borne to thine Integrity.

Natha-

(e) When thou wast under the Fig-tree.] I see no Reason at all to think, with Hinsfus, that the Conviction produced by these Words in the Mind of Nathaniel, proceeded from the Allusion he perceived them to bear to Zech. iii. 10. In that Day ye shall call every Man his Neighbour, under the Vine, and under the Fig-tree. It was Christ's saying that he saw him there, that struck his Mind in so powerful a Manner; and it is very probable, that he was then employed in some secret devout Meditations. See Dr. Evans's Christian Temper, vol. ii. pag. 343.

SECT. 22.
John I. 49.

Nathaniel was so struck with this express Reference, to what he knew none could be Witness to, but GOD and his own Conscience, that all his Prejudices were at once removed; and he immediately *replied* to Christ, and *says*, with all that Openness and Candour that was so natural to him, *Rabbi*, from this one Circumstance I cannot but believe all that my Friend hath told me concerning thee: And therefore I not only honour thee as a wife and holy Teacher, but am convinced that *thou art the Son of GOD*; yea, that *thou art* the promised Messiah, whom we so earnestly have been expecting as *the King of Israel*; for surely such Divine Knowledge can be lodged in no meaner Person (*f*).

50 And *Jesus* upon this *replied*, and *said* unto him, *Dost thou believe* me to be the promised Messiah, and the Son of GOD, merely because I told thee, that I saw thee under the Fig-tree? *Thou*, who discoverest so honest and teachable a Temper, *shalt see* much greater Things than these to prove it. And he accordingly proceeds, and *says*, not only unto him, but unto all that were then present with him, *Verily, verily, I say unto you* (*g*), and

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the Fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater Things than these.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto

(*f*) Such Divine Knowledge can be lodged in no meaner Person.] Just thus the Woman of Samaria argued, *John iv. 23. Come, see a Man, which told me all Things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?* which plainly intimates, that they supposed the Messiah would be endowed with the most perfect Knowledge, and have the Gift of Prophecy in the highest Degree.—There was a great deal of Courage in Nathaniel's making such a Declaration, if it was before a mixed Company; for Christ's assuming the Title of *the Son of GOD*, was afterwards interpreted to be no less than Blasphemy. *John x. 36. and xix. 7.*

(*g*) *Verily, verily, I say unto you: αμην, αμην, λεγω υμιν.*] There is no Doubt, but that these Words are to be taken for a solemn Affirmation; in which it is observable, that *John* has constantly repeated the *Amen*, while it is only mentioned once by the other Evangelists. And this we may suppose him to have done, either to excite the greater Attention, or in a more emphatical and stronger Manner to assert the Truth, not only of the Thing affirmed, but of the Person that affirms it. For as *Amen* in Hebrew signifies Truth, (*Isa. lxxv. 16.*) so *Christ*, as being *the true and faithful Witness*, is called *the Amen*. (*Rev. iii. 14.*) This repeated Asseveration therefore may be considered as an Intimation to us, not only that the Saying unto which it is prefixed is true, but that we should regard it as proceeding from *the true and faithful Witness*. See *Dr. Lightfoot's Harmony*, and *Hor. Hebra. in loc.*

(*h*) *From*

unto you, Hereafter you shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of GOD ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

and solemnly declare it as a most certain Truth, to be regarded with the most diligent Attention, and received as coming from the Mouth of one who is Truth itself; that *from this Time you shall see* such a surprising Train of Miracles (*b*) wrought by me, in the whole Course of my succeeding Ministry, that it shall seem as if Heaven was opened, and all the Angels of GOD were continually (as they appeared in Vision to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 12.) *ascending and descending* (*i*) [*to wait*] upon the Son of Man, and to receive and execute his Orders: And thus you will be furnished with a most convincing Proof, that humble as the Form of my present Appearance is (*k*), I am indeed the illustrious Person foretold under that Title, and am intended for that glorious Throne, around which the highest Angels shall account it their Honour to appear as humble Attendants, when the whole World shall be convened before it.

IMPROVE-

(*b*) *From this Time you shall see* a Train of Miracles.] Accordingly within *three Days* one glorious *Miracle* was performed by *Christ* at *Cana of Galilee*; which being the Town to which *Nathaniel* belonged, there is great Reason to believe he was present with the rest of *Christ's Disciples* at it. Compare *John* ii. 2, 11. *SECT.* 23.

(*i*) *The Angels of GOD ascending and descending.*] If *Nathaniel* was, as some have thought, the Person afterwards called *Bartholomew*, and made an *Apostle*, (see *Light-foot's Hor. Hebra. on Matth.* x. 3.) he must regard the Vision of *Angels* attending *Christ's Ascension*, as a glorious Accomplishment of these Words; as his final Appearance at the Day of Judgment, when the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him, will yet more eminently be. Compare *Matth.* xxvi. 64. where *אֵלֶּיךָ* so plainly signifies *hereafter*, that I much question, whether it might not justly have been rendered so here; but where I am dubious, I always chuse the more extensive Sense, in which (as here,) the more limited is generally comprehended.

(*k*) *Humble as the Form of my present Appearance is.*] Tho' it be very true, as *Dr. Sykes* has excellently proved at large, that the Phrase *Son of Man*, does generally refer to the glorious Kingdom, over which *Christ* was to preside, according to the Prophecies of *Daniel*: Yet I think it equally evident, that it is originally used in the *Old Testament*, in a Sense that carries something of *Humiliation* in it. See *Job* xxv. 6. *Psal.* viii. 4. cxliv. 3. *Isa.* li. 12., and especially *Psal.* lxii. 9. where we justly translate *בְּנֵי אָדָם* Men of low Degree. A Multitude of Texts, as well as this before us, appear with great Advantage, when this Remark is attended to; tho' *Le Clerc* cannot by any means be vindicated, in confining his Interpretation so intirely to this latter View.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

SECT. 22. **H**OW cautiously should we guard against popular Prejudices, which possessed so honest a Heart as that of *Nathaniel*, and led him to suspect, that the Blessed *Jesus* himself was an Impostor, and that *no Good* could be expected from him, because he had been brought up at *Nazareth*! But his Integrity prevailed over that foolish Bias, and laid him open to the Conviction of Evidence, which a candid Inquirer will always be glad to admit, even when it brings the most unexpected Discovery.

John I. 46. Ver. 47. How amiable is the Character here given of *Nathaniel*? *An Israelite indeed, in whom there is no Guile!* May the Attainment of so excellent a Character, and a Resemblance to him in it, be the daily Aim and Emulation of all, who have the Honour to be called into the *Israel of GOD!*

Ver. 48. A constant Intercourse with GOD in secret Devotion, will be a happy Expression of one Branch of this Sincerity, and an effectual Means of promoting the rest. Let it therefore be our Care, that the Eye of him that *seeth in secret*, may often behold us in religious Retirement, pouring out our Souls before GOD, and humbly consecrating them to his Service.—The Day will come, when those Scenes of Duty, which were most cautiously concealed, shall be commemorated with publick Honour; and when he who now discerns them, and is a constant Witness to the most *private* Exercises of the *Closet*, will reward them openly. (*Matth. vi. 6.*)

Ver. 51. Happy were those, who *saw the Miracles*, performed by the *Son of Man*, while he was here on Earth! and happy those favourite Spirits of Heaven, which were *ascending and descending*, as *Ministers of his to do his Pleasure!* But in some Degree, yet happier are they, *who having not seen, have believed.* (*John xx. 29.*) As their *Faith* is peculiarly acceptable, it shall e'er long be turned into *Sight*. They shall behold much *greater Things* than ever were seen Below, and more extraordinary Manifestations of his Glory, than they can now conceive; and being brought, with all his People, to surround his Throne, shall join in those nobler Services, which attendant *Angels* render him Above.

S E C T.

S E C T. XXIII.

CHRIST attends a Marriage-Feast at Cana in Galilee, and miraculously changes Water into Wine. John II.

I, — I I.

JOHN II. I.

AND the third Day there was a Marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the Mother of Jesus was there.

² And both Jesus was called, and his Disciples, to the Marriage.

JOHN II. I.

NOW the third Day after Christ's coming into Galilee, and discoursing there with Nathaniel, in the Manner we have related above, there was a Marriage at Cana, a Town in Galilee (a), which originally belonged to the Tribe of Asher: (Josh. xix. 28.) And Mary the Mother of Jesus was there (b); it being the Marriage of a near Relation, or an intimate Friend of hers. And Jesus, and those of his Disciples that were with him, (namely, the two Disciples that had followed him from the Banks of Jordan, with Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel,) being known to be in the Neighbourhood, were invited to the Marriage: And Jesus not affecting the Austerities, which became the Character and Ministry of John the Baptist, freely accepted of the Invitation, and favoured them with his instructive Presence.

SECT. 23.
John II. 1.

2

Now,

(a) *Cana, a Town in Galilee.*] It lay toward the Southern Part of the Land of Asher, Josh. xix. 28. and might be called *Cana in Galilee*, to distinguish it from another Town of that Name in *Cælosyria*, mentioned by *Josephus*. *Antiq. Jud. lib. xv. cap. 5. (al. 6.) §. 1. pag. 751. Havercamp.*

(b) *The Mother of Jesus was there.*] Some have supposed this Marriage to be celebrated at the House of *Cleopas* or *Alpheus*, whose *Wife* was *Sister* to the *Mother of our Lord*; (*John* xix. 25.) and one of whose *Sons* was *Simon the Cananite*, whom some have thought to be so called, from his being an Inhabitant of this *Cana*. (*Mark* iii. 18.) And this may be considered as the more probable, as *Mary* was not only present at the *Feast*, but was concerned about supplying them with *Wine*; and when the *Feast* was over, we are told at *ver. 12.* that *Jesus* was attended at his leaving *Cana*, not only with his own *Disciples*, but with his *Brethren*, or his nearest Kinsmen, who probably came thither as *Relations*, to be present at the Marriage.—As *Mary* here is spoken of alone, it may be reasonable to conclude, that *Joseph* was now dead, and that he lived not to the Time when *Jesus* entered on his publick Ministry, especially as he is nowhere mentioned in the Gospel afterwards. See *Dr. Lightfoot's Harmony, in loc.*

(c) Either:

SECT. 23.
John II. 3.

Now, as it was known that Jesus would be present at the Feast, this, in Conjunction with the Events which had lately arisen, occasioned a greater Resort of Company than was expected; and when the Wine provided for the Entertainment of the Guests fell short, the Mother of Jesus, who either had seen some of his Miracles in private, or received from him some Hint of his Intention now (c), thought proper to inform him of it, and says unto him, Son, dost thou observe, they have no Wine to carry on the Feast.

3 And when they wanted Wine, the Mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no Wine.

- 4 But Jesus not approving it, that she should take upon her to direct him in the Exercise of his miraculous Power, says freely to her, with an Air of serious Rebuke, and in a Plainness of Language suited to the Simplicity of those Ages and Countries, O Woman (d), what hast thou to do with me (e), thus to direct me how, and when, my Miracles

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with

(c) Either had seen some of his Miracles in private, or received some Hint, &c.] Without supposing the one, or the other of these, one can hardly imagine, why she should thus apply to him on this Occasion. For she could scarce suppose, he had Money to buy any large Quantity; nor would it have been so proper to have done it, if he had, lest it should have been interpreted as an Affront to the Bridegroom. But the Supply that she expected from him, was by his working of a Miracle; and it is plain, that notwithstanding the Rebuke she justly met with, yet she had still a View to this, by her Direction to the Servants afterwards, ver. 5. to do whatever he should order them.

(d) O Woman.] We have no Reason to conclude, that there was any Rudeness, in his addressing to his Mother thus. For tho' indeed it is a Manner of Expression, that is very unusual among us, to call a Person, Woman, when we are speaking to her, if she be one to whom we think that any Respect is due: Yet some of the politest Writers of Antiquity make the most well-bred and accomplished Princes use it, in their addressing unto Ladies of the highest Quality; and even Servants too are sometimes represented, as speaking to their Mistresses in the same Language. There are some Instances of this referred to, in Blackwall's Sacred Classics, vol. i. pag. 206. to which many more might easily be added.

(e) What hast thou to do with me?] Some have thought, τι εμοι και σοι, might be rendered, What is that to me and thee? What does it signify to us, or what Concern is it of ours, if they want Wine? But Jesus was of so benevolent a Temper, and Mary seems to be so far concerned as a Relation, that it does not in this Sense appear to be so proper a Reply. It seems rather to be intended as a Rebuke to Mary; and it was surely expedient, she should know, that Jesus was not upon such Occasions to be directed by her. And nothing is more evident, than that the Phrase in other Places has the Meaning that our Version gives it. See Matth. viii. 29. and Judg. xi. 12. 2 Sam. xvi. 10. 1 Kings xvii. 18. 2 Kings iii. 13. and ix. 19. Septuag.

with thee? Mine Hour is not yet come.

racles are to be wrought! Let me now say **SECT. 23.** it once for all, this is a Thing that does not lie within thy proper Sphere; and in particular, for what is now proposed, *my Time of doing it is not yet come (f)*; but it is best to wait a little longer; and leave it to my Conduct to determine, when it will be the fittest and the most convenient Season for me to interpose.

John II. 4.

5 His Mother saith unto the Servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

In this *his Mother* readily acquiesced, as 5 conscious to herself that she had been over-hasty, in the Proposal: But yet, as she inferred from his Answer, that he intended them some extraordinary Supply, she *says unto the Servants*, with some Degree of Authority, as being in part concerned in managing the Feast, *Whatever he shall order you, see that you carefully do it*; for he may have Reasons for it, beyond what you imagine.

6 And there were set there six Water-pots of Stone, after the Manner of the purifying of the Jews, con-

Now there were set there, near the Room 6 in which the Feast was kept, *six Water-pots* or *Jars of Stone*; from whence the Water might be taken, that was made use of by the Guests to wash their Hands and Feet, and that was necessary for the washing of the Cups and other Vessels that were used at Table according to the Jewish Custom of purifying; which in some Instances was grown to such a superstitious Nicety (g), as to require

(f) *My Time is not yet come.*] Some are for adding a Note of Interrogation here, (as Gregory Nyssen does,) and so would render it, *Is not my Time yet come?* As if he had said, "Am I not old enough to know, when to work *Miracles?* and now that I have entered on my publick Ministry, *is it not Time* that I should be exempt from thine Authority, and should be left to govern my own Actions without any Direction?" But I conceive the Sense, in which it is generally taken, to be more natural and easy: And I would rather chuse to understand it of the *Time*, when he intended to perform *this Miracle*, for which the proper Moment, tho' very near, was not yet quite come; than to refer it in a more general Way to the *Time* of his *doing Miracles in publick*, or more particularly to restrain it to the *Time* of his *Sufferings*, which *Christ* indeed has elsewhere called *his Hour*, and which *Mr. L'Enfant* supposes him here to intimate, that he would not anticipate, by provoking the *Jews* too soon; for thus, it would have implied a *Daniel* of his *Mother's Request*, which it is plain from *ver. 5.* she did not apprehend, and which the Event shews, that *Christ* did not design.

(g) Was grown to such a superstitious Nicety.] Besides the *Purifications* that were appointed by the Law of God, there was a Multitude of others that were then practised

SECT. 23. require a considerable Quantity of Water to be ready upon such Occasions: These Jars

John. II. 6.

7 were therefore of a considerable Bigness, containing each of them two or three Measures (b). And Jesus chusing for wise Reasons to make use of these (i), rather than the Vessels in which the Wine had before been contained, after some convenient Pause, that the failing of the Wine might be the more observed, goes to the Servants that were waiting, and says to them, *Fill up those Jars with Water. And they filled them up to the very*

8 *Brim.* And having presently transformed the Water by his Divine Power into excellent Wine, he says unto them, *Now draw some of it out, and carry it to the President of the Feast.* And in Obedience to the Orders Jesus gave them, they carried [it] to him.

9 Now when the President of the Feast had tasted the Water that was made Wine, and knew not whence it came, (tho' the Servants that drew the Water very well knew,) observing

containing two or three Firkins apiece.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the Water-pots with Water. And they filled them up to the Brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bare unto the Governour of the Feast. And they bare it.

9 When the Ruler of the Feast had tasted the Water that was made Wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the Servants which drew

tised in Compliance with the Tradition of the Elders. Compare *Mark* vii. 3, 4. and see *Godwin's Moses and Aaron*, lib. iii. cap. 11. §. 4.

(b) *Two or three Measures.*] The Measures of the Antients are so very uncertain, that it is hardly possible to determine the exact Content of these Vessels. Some have computed them to contain about two or three Hogsheads; and it is rendered so, in our Translation, as to make them contain above a Hundred Gallons. But it is hardly probable the Vessels were so large; and as the Word *μετρας* signifies no more than Measures, it is much better we should leave it as we find it, unless the Quantity could be determined with more Certainty. It seems most probable, that as the Jewish Bath was the most common Measure that was used in Liquids, this is the Quantity designed, where Measures are expressed without any Limitation. And as the Jewish Bath is reckoned to contain four Gallons and a half, the Content of these Vessels, if they are computed only at two Measures each, will amount to no less than fifty-four Gallons, which may be reckoned a sufficient Quantity. See *Dr. Lightfoot's Harmony*, in loc. and *Godwin's Moses and Aaron*, lib. vi. cap. 9. ad fin.

(i) Chusing to make use of these.] Jesus might rather chuse to make use of these large Vessels, thus to add to the Dignity of the Miracle, by the liberal Quantity of Wine produced; which we have no Reason to believe, was all drank that Day. If the Feast, as was usual, lasted several Days, (*Gen.* xxix. 27, 28. and *Judg.* xiv. 12, 17.) a considerable Expence might by this Means be saved, and an Equivalent given for the additional Charge of entertaining so many of his Disciples. Not to say, that this would prevent any Suspicion, that the Tincture, or Taste, of the Water might be derived from any Remainder of Wine in the Vessels; for indeed the Goodness of the Wine thus made, would be sufficient to obviate such a Thought.

drew the Water knew,) the Governour of the Feast called the Bridegroom;

10 And saith unto him, Every Man at the Beginning doth set forth good Wine, and when Men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good Wine until now.

11 This Beginning of Miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his Glory; and his Disciples believed on him.

observing that it had a finer Flavour than any they had drank before, *the President of the Feast calls for the Bridegroom*, at whose Expence he reckoned, that this Wine had been provided; *And says unto him, Thou hast acted To-day in a very uncommon Manner, for every Man that makes a Feast, first sets out the good Wine; and when they have drank plentifully (k), so that their Taste is not so delicate as before, then brings out that which is worse; [but] thou hast kept the good Wine until now,* and towards the Conclusion of the Feast surprizest us with what is much better than we have yet tasted. This naturally gave the Bridegroom an Opportunity of declaring that he knew nothing of this new Supply; which occasioned an Examination of the Servants, and so a Discovery of what Christ had done in it.

This was the Beginning of his publick Miracles (l); which Jesus wrought (as we have now related) in Cana of Galilee, and thereby manifested his Glory; and that in such an illustrious Manner, that his Disciples believed on him more stedfastly than before, as the Fact was so certain and so remarkable.

T 2

IMPROVE-

(k) *When they have drank plentifully.*] Tho' *πυθω* often signifies to drink to Excess, yet it would be very unjust and absurd to suppose, that it implies here, that these Guests had already transgressed the Rules of Temperance. None can seriously imagine the *Evangelist* so destitute of common Sense, as to represent Christ, as displaying his Glory, by miraculously furnishing the Company, with Wine to prolong a drunken Revel. It is much more reasonable to conclude, that it signifies here, (as it does in *Gen. xliiii. 34. Cant. v. 1: and Hag. i. 6. Septuag.*) only to drink so freely, as innocently to exhilarate the Spirits. And even this perhaps might only be the Case of some of them, and particularly not of those, who, drawn by a Desire to converse with Jesus, might be but lately come in.

(l) *This Beginning of his publick Miracles.*] This Interpretation seems much preferable to that of *Gratius*, who only supposes that this was the first Miracle wrought at Cana, another being afterwards mentioned: (*John iv. 46. Sect. 31.*) For it is plain, there must have been a long Series of Miracles wrought here, to justify such a Manner of speaking, which doth not at all appear to have been the Case. It rather seems to be here represented, only as the first of his publick Miracles; for it seems probable, that the Necessities of the Family might sometimes have engaged him, to have done something miraculous for its Relief in private. See Note (c), pag. 144.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- SECT. 23. **W**E have here *the first of Christ's publick Miracles*, which we find was not wrought till about his *thirtieth Year*. How much sooner could he have glorified himself, and amazed the World, by the Display of his Divine Power? But he waited his Father's Call, and the Delay added at length to the Lustre of his Works.
- John II. 11.
- Ver. 1. It was performed to grace a *Nuptial Solemnity*: And who doth not see, that it was in Effect a Testimony borne to the Honour and Purity of that happy State, on which so much of the Comfort of the present Generation, and the Existence of the future, regularly depends?
- Ver. 2. How happy were these *Guests*, while *Jesus* was among them! and how condescending did he appear, in making one on the Occasion! His social and obliging Temper should sweeten ours, and be a Lesson to his Followers, that they avoid every thing sour and morose, and do not censure others for innocent Liberties, at proper Seasons of Festivity and Joy.
- Ver. 3, 4. If *his Mother* met with so just a Rebuke, for attempting to *direct* his Administrations in the Days of his Flesh, how absurd is it for any to address her, as if she had a Right to *command him* on the Throne of his Glory? And how indecent for us, to direct his Supreme Wisdom, as to the Time and Manner in which he shall appear for us, in any of the Exigencies of Life?
- Ver. 5. Her Submission and Faith manifested on this Occasion are truly amiable: And with this we have surely Reason to admire the Benignity and Generosity of *Christ* in this *Miracle* before us; who consulted the Pleasure and Entertainment, as well as the Necessity of his Followers; and by this abundant Supply amply repaid any extraordinary Expence, which he might have occasioned to the Family.
- Ver. 7, 8. How easily could he, who thus *turned Water into Wine*, have transformed every Entertainment of a common Table into the greatest Delicacies, and have regaled himself daily with royal Dainties? But far superior to such animal Gratifications, he chose the Severities of a much plainer Life. Blessed *Jesus!* who can say whether thou art greater, in what thou didst, or in what thou didst not do! May none of us thy Followers be too intent on indulging our Taste, or any of our other Senses; but pursuing those intellectual and devotional Pleasures which were *thy Meat* and *thy Drink* on Earth, may we wait for that *good Wine* which thou reservest
- Ver. 10.

reservest for thy People *to the last*, and for those richer Dainties, **SECT. 23.**
with which thou wilt feast those, who shall *drink it with thee in thy*
Father's Kingdom! (Mat. xxvi. 29.)

S E C T. XXIV.

Our LORD celebrates the first Passover of his publick Ministry at Jerusalem; and vindicates the Outer Court of the Temple, from the Prophanation of those that bought and sold there. John II. 12, to the End.

JOHN II. 12.

AFTER this, he went down to Capernaum, he and his Mother, and his Brethren, and his Disciples; and they continued there not many Days.

JOHN II. 12.

NOW after Jesus had attended at *this* **SECT. 24.**
Marriage, where he miraculously **John II. 12.**
turned the Water into Wine, *he and his*
Mother, and his Brethren, (or his near Relations,) *and his Disciples,* who were now ready to attend him wheresoever he should go, *went down from Cana to Capernaum,* a City that lay near the North Part of the Sea of Galilee, on the South Border of the Land of Naphtali: *And at this Time* the Stay they made was but short, for *they continued there not many Days.* **13.** *And the Reason of their leaving it so soon was, that the Passover of the Jews drew near (a),* when it was ordered by the Law
of

13 And the Jews Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

(a) *The Passover of the Jews drew near.*] As the Evangelists have not expressly determined the Number of Passovers, which happened between the Baptism and Death of Christ, or during the Course of his publick Ministry; so it is well known, that learned Men have been much divided in their Opinions about them. By far the greater Part have supposed there were Four; reckoning this, the first; the Feast mentioned John v. 1. the second; the Passover spoken of, John vi. 4. as the third; and that at which Christ suffered, the fourth. But there are others of a different Opinion. — The celebrated Sir Isaac Newton reckons Five; the first, this which is now before us; the second, according to him, happened four Months after Christ's Discourse with the Woman of Samaria, John iv. 35; the third, a few Days before the Story of the Disciples rubbing the Ears of Corn, Luke vi. 1; the fourth, a little after the feeding of the Five thousand; and the last, at the Time of our Lord's Crucifixion. The Reasons for this the Reader will find at large, in Sir Isaac Newton's Observat. on Proph. part.

SECT. 24. of Moses, that all the Males should appear before the Lord: (Exod xxiii. 17. and Deut. xvi. 16.) And therefore Jesus, who maintained a religious Regard to the Ceremonial, as well as the Moral Part of the Law, went up to Jerusalem to worship at the Temple.

John II. 13.

14 And at his coming thither, he found in the outer Court and Cloysters of the Temple, those that under a Pretence of accommodating such as came to worship there with proper Sacrifices, sold Oxen, and Sheep, and Doves (b); and he also saw there the Money-changers sitting at their Tables, who, for a certain Profit, changed any foreign Coin into that which was current, and larger Pieces of Money into Half-Shekels, which were on some Occasions to be paid into the sacred Treasury, (Exod. xxx. 15.) Now at the Sight of this, Jesus was moved with a just Indignation, to think that so sacred a Place, honoured with such peculiar Tokens of the Divine Presence, should be profaned in this audacious Manner; and so great an Affront be put on the devout Gentiles, in whose Court this Market was kept: And therefore having made a Whip of the small Cords,

(with

14 And found in the Temple those that sold Oxen, and Sheep, and Doves and the Changers of Money, sitting:

15 And when he had made a Scourge of small Cords, he drove them all out

part i. chap. 11. and the most considerable of them will be touched upon in their proper Places.—Mr. Manne has with great Learning and Ingenuity attempted to revive a long exploded Notion, that *Christ's Ministry continued but sixteen Months*; (see *Manne's Second Dissertation*, pag. 146, & seq.) so that there were but *Two Passovers* during the whole Course of it. Mr. Whiston's Reasoning against this Hypothesis, in the sixth of his late *Dissertations*, appears to me unanswerable. For he there shews, that if this was true, *Christ* must have travelled on an Average near *ten Miles a Day*, during the Course of his Ministry. Besides, the *Transpositions* in Scripture, which this would introduce, seem very unwarrantable and dangerous; and among other Difficulties, it is none of the least, that Mr. Manne is obliged to suppose, that *Christ* only purged the Temple at his last Passover, and consequently that *St. John* has misplaced this Story; tho' ver. 24. of this Chapter, and ver. 22, 23, 24. of the next, (Sect. 27.) afford such strong Arguments to the contrary. Compare Note (c), and Note (m), of this Section.

(b) Sold Oxen, and Sheep, and Doves.] There must have been a grand Market for these Animals at such Times; for *Josephus* tells us, that no less than 256,500 Victims were offered at one Passover. See *Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9.* (al vii. 17. §. 3. pag. 399.) Edit. Flavercamp.

(c) He



And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the Temple, and the Sheep, & the Oxen, and poured out the changers of Money, and overthrew the Tables. S^t. John Ch. II. ver. 15.

out of the Temple, and the Sheep, and the Oxen; and poured out the Changers Money, and overthrew the Tables;

16 And said unto them that sold Doves, Take these Things hence; make not my Father's House an House of Merchandise.

17 And his Disciples remembered that it was written,

(with which they were used to tie the Beasts to some Rings fixed in the Pavement for that Purpose,) *he drove them all out of the Temple, and the Sheep, and the Oxen, which they had brought into it; and he also poured out the Money of the Exchangers, and overturned the Tables at which they were sitting. And he said to them that sold Doves, Take all these Things away from hence directly; [and] do not, for Shame, make my Father's House, by such scandalous Practices as these, an House of publick Traffick, and turn it to a common Market-place, or Exchange. Now by his saying thus he openly proclaimed, that GOD was his Father (c), and made such a Declaration of his Divine Mission, as could not but be greatly observed by the Multitude. And his Disciples, when they saw so meek a Person in such an unusual Transport of just Displeasure, remembered that*

SECT. 24.
John II. 15.

16

17

(c) He openly proclaimed, that GOD was his Father.] The most considerable Argument, which Mr. Manne has brought to prove, that this Expulsion of the Merchants from the Temple happened only in our Lord's last Passover, and consequently that it is here transposed, is, that such an open Declaration, that the Temple was his Father's House, would have put him too much into the Power of his Enemies, and would have been inconsistent with the prudent Reserve, which Christ kept on this Head, (see Manne's Dissert. pag. 179, 180. and compare Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, pag. 91, & seq.) as well as with the Reflection of his Brethren; John vii. 3, & seq. (the Notes on which Place in Sect. 98. may be consulted here.) — But in Reply to this Objection, I would beg Leave to observe, (1.) That for Jesus to call the Temple his Father's House, did not amount to an express Declaration that he was the Messiah; since the Jews in general spake of GOD as their Father. John viii. 41. (See John x. 24, 25. with the Note there, Sect. 134.) And (2.) That though in the Circumstances that here attended it, there was an oblique Intimation of something extraordinary; it might not be so dangerous now, as afterwards; because our Lord not having opened the Spiritual Nature of his Kingdom, or as yet rendered himself obnoxious to the Pharisees by such just Invectives as he afterwards used, they, who expected the Messiah to appear about this Time, and longed for his Appearance, might be inclinable for a while to wait the Issue of Christ's Pretensions, and so much the rather, as he now wrought some wonderful Miracles. (Compare ver. 23. and chap. iii. 2.) Accordingly we find in the Beginning of the next Chapter, one of the Chief among the Pharisees comes privately to confer with Christ in a very respectful Manner. It seems necessary to acquiesce in these Solutions, because the Conference, which refers to the Miracles wrought at this Feast, is expressly said to have been, before John the Baptist was imprisoned. Compare John iii. 22,—24.—Sect. 27.

(d) Re-

SECT. 24. *it was written of David (d), in Words which well expressed the Character of Christ on this Occasion, (Psal. lxxix. 9.) "The Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up;"* as if it were said, A Regard for the Honour of thy Sanctuary, like a secret Flame glowing in my Bosom, preys upon my Spirits, and would have consumed me, had I not given it Vent.

- 18 A Fact so publick and remarkable as this, could not but immediately come to the Knowledge of the Priests, and Rulers of the Jews (e), whose Supreme Council sate in a magnificent Chamber belonging to the Temple (f): Some of them therefore, when they heard of it, answered and said unto him, By what Authority dost thou thus take upon thee to reform what is amiss here, and what Sign dost thou shew us, seeing that thou dost these Things, to prove thy having a Divine Commission, since it is certain thou hast none from the Government?
- 19 Jesus answered and said unto them, You shall not want convincing Evidence, that I have an Authority far superior to what Man can give me; for if you demolish this Temple, I promise and assure you, I will raise it up again in three

ten, The Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up.

18 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, What Sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou dost these Things?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this Temple, and in three Days I will raise it up.

(d) Remembered that it was written of David.] That these Words were originally spoken of David, and not of Christ, is plain from the fifth Verse of the lxxixth Psalm; O GOD, thou knowest my Foolishness, and my Sins are not hid from thee; which cannot be applied to Christ. Abundance of other Scriptures are quoted, with such a beautiful Accommodation as this.

(e) Rulers of the Jews.] It seems most probable, that the Jews here mentioned were Rulers, because we know, that the great Assembly of Jewish Rulers, (that is, the Sanhedrim,) sate in the Temple, and that the chief of them often attended Publick Worship there. This Action of Christ (in driving out the Buyers and Sellers) must undoubtedly come to their Knowledge; and as their Office would seem to authorize them to call him to an Account, we are sure their Prejudices against him would incline them to do it.

(f) A magnificent Chamber belonging to the Temple.] This fine Rotunda was called from its beautiful Pavement, *Lishcath-Haggazith*, and stood on the Wall of the Temple, Part of it within, and Part of it without, its sacred Precincts. See Calmet's Dictionary, at the Word *Sanhedrim*; Lightfoot's Description of the Temple, chap. 9. and Witsii Miscell. Sacr. Lib. i. Diss. iii. §. 66.

(g) Demolish

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six Years was this Temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three Days!

three Days (g). The Jews then said unto him, in proud Derision and Contempt of what they did not understand, *This Temple hath been no less than six and forty Years building (b)*, (for it is now so long, since Herod began to repair it,) and notwithstanding many thousand Men have been employed upon it, it is not yet entirely finished; *and wilt thou undertake to raise it up in three Days?* None certainly will be foolish enough, to pull it down, to try the Experiment. But they were quite mistaken in the Sense of what he said; for what they understood him to have spoken of ~~the Temple at Jerusalem~~, he spake of the much more sacred Temple of his own Body, in which the Deity dwelt, in a far nobler

SECT. 24.
John II. 20.

21 But he spake of the Temple of his Body.

21

Man-

(g) *Demolish this Temple, and I will raise it up in three Days.*] It is most evident, that Christ intended nothing more in these Words, than the Paraphrase expresses, and did not mean to command them to demolish the Temple; though his Enemies indeed did, some Years after, misrepresent this Saying, as if he had intimated a Purpose of doing it himself. Compare Mark xiv. 58. Sect. 185.

(b) *This Temple hath been six and forty Years building.*] Mr. Whiston, (in his *View of the Harmony*, pag. 143.) would render it, *Forty and six Years hath this Temple been built*: But as it would have been absurd to argue from the Time since the Temple was built to the Time it would require to rebuild it, this Sense must certainly be wrong; and Dr. Lightfoot has well shewn, that the Word *συνδομήν* may signify (as we render it,) it hath been so long building. *Hor. Hebr. in loc.*—Mr. Fleming's Calculation, (in his *Christology*, vol. ii. pag. 366,—371.) to prove, that the second Temple was forty-six Years building, is not only very precarious, but also very unnecessary; for the Words refer to the Time, since Herod began to rebuild it, which he first proposed to the People in the eighteenth Year of his Reign, (*Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xv. cap. 11. [al. 14.] §. 1. Havercamp.*) and though he finished what he proposed in eight or nine Years, it seems, (as Dr. Lightfoot and Dr. Lardner have judiciously observed,) that the Jews still went on improving and adorning it: For long after this, under the Government of Florus, (about the Year of Christ 65,) Josephus speaks of the Temple's being finished, and the Workmen dismissed: So that it seems they were at work upon it, all the Time of Christ's Ministry and Life. (Compare *John* viii. 59. Sect. 105. *John* x. 31. Sect. 134. and see *Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xx. cap. 9. [al. 8.] §. 7. pag. 978.* and *Lardner's Credib. Part i. vol. i. pag. 534,—539.* and *vol. ii. pag. 856,—860.*)—Now as the eighteenth Year of Herod's Reign from the Death of Antigonus began some Time in A. U. C. 734. and his Proposal to rebuild the Temple might then be made to the Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles, it will from thence be but a few Months more than forty-six Years to the Passover, A. U. 781. Or since a Year or more might probably be spent in preparing for the Work, before he actually began it, it may thus be brought down to A. U. 782, or 783, which is the lowest Time to which this Passover can be referred.

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(i) The

SECT. 24. Manner than in their Holy Place; (Col. ii. 9.) and he might give some Intimation of it, in the Gesture that he used in speak-

John II. 21

22 ing. *When therefore he was risen from the Dead, just on the third Day after his Crucifixion, his Disciples remembered, that he had said this to them; and they yet more firmly believed the Scripture, in all its Prophecies concerning the Messiah's Kingdom, and their Faith in him was confirmed by the Word which Jesus had spoken: For such a wonderful Event as the Resurrection of Christ considered in its Connection with this solemn Prediction (i), justly appeared as the fullest conceivable Proof of his Divine Mission.*

23 *And while he was at the Passover in Jerusalem, on the Feast-day, many of the Jews who were then present there, seeing the Miracles which he wrought (k), believed in him (l), and were inwardly persuaded, that he was*

24 *the Messiah: But Jesus did not care to trust himself to them (m), so far as to acknowledge it expressly, that he was actually the promised Messiah, and by confessing who he was, to put himself into their Power; because*

25 *he knew them all, And had no Need that any one should testify, or tell him any thing, of the Character of any Man, tho' ever so much a Stranger to him: For he himself by an immediate and unerring Penetration*
knew

22 When therefore he was risen from the Dead, his Disciples remembered, that he had said this unto them: and they believed the Scripture, and the Word which Jesus had said.

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the Feast-day, many believed in his Name, when they saw the Miracles which he did.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all Men,

25 And needed not that any should testify of Man: for

(i) The Resurrection of Christ, considered in its Connection with this solemn Prediction.] This important Thought is set in a very strong Light by *Dr. Jenkins*, in his *Reasonableness of Christianity*, vol. i. pag. 25, 26.

(k) Seeing the Miracles which he wrought.] These Words, as also those in *John* iii. 2. and iv. 45. plainly refer to some Miracles wrought by *Christ*, the Particulars of which are not transmitted to us.

(l) Believed in him.] It is in the Original, *believed in his Name*; a *Hebraism*, which it did not seem necessary to retain. Nothing is more common, than to put the Name of a Person for the Person himself. Compare *John* i. 12. xx. 31. *Psal.* lxxv. 1. *Acts* i. 15. and *Rev.* iii. 4.

(m) Did not trust himself to them.] I look upon this as a Demonstration, that the *Passover* here spoken of, was not that, at which *Christ* suffered; for then there had been no need of such a Precaution, and indeed no room for it.

for he knew what was in Man. *knew what was in the Heart of every Man;* and consequently knew, that those People had such gross Notions of the Messiah's Kingdom, that there was no Room for him to confide in them, or to expect them to be faithful to him. SECT. 24.
 John II. 25.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

HOW powerful is the Love of this World, when it could engage even the *Priests* and the *Pharisees*, to let out *the Temple* itself, for a *Market-place*! tho' a professed *Zeal* for the Honour of it, made so great a Part of the *Righteousness*, of which they boasted before GOD. But *our Lord* beheld the Scene with *just Indignation*; as that Displeasure is indeed *just*, which arises from a Sense of Dishonour done to GOD, and Contempt poured on the Institutions of his Worship. Happy shall we be in the warmest Emotions of *Zeal*, which do not transport us beyond the Rules of Prudence and Love, and make us forget those Stations in Life, which require the same Principles to shew themselves in widely different Effects! Ver. 14.
 Ver. 15, 16.

Methinks the State of the *Temple*, when these *Traders* had erected *their Seats* and their *Stalls* in it, and turned the Courts of *GOD'S House* into a *Market*, is too just an Emblem of the State of our *Hearts*, when we appear in the Sanctuary distracted with *worldly Cares*, to the Neglect of that *one Thing needful*, which then demands our most attentive Regards. Would to GOD, that in this Sense *our Father's House* were not often made a *House of Merchandize*! Let us pray, that *Jesus*, by his good Spirit, would assert it to himself, and *drive out* those Intruders, which break in upon our truest Enjoyments, in Proportion to that Degree in which they in-trench on our Devotion. Ver. 16.

After a thousand Proofs of his Divine Mission, the *Jews* were wicked and desperate enough, with sacrilegious Hands to *destroy the Temple of Christ's Body*: But let us be thankful for the undoubted Evidence we have, that as an everlasting Monument of his Power and Truth, he *raised it again in three Days*. Ver. 19.

Happy will it be for us, if we cordially *believe* a Gospel, so gloriously attested; but most vain will that Belief be, which doth not penetrate and influence the Heart. Let us remember, that we have to do with him, that formed our Nature, and is most intimately acquainted with all its Recesses. *He knows what is in Man*: May he

SECT. 24. see nothing in us, which shall not be thoroughly agreeable to the Profession we make, of being his faithful Disciples!

Ver. 24. To conclude; let us learn from the *Caution* which *Jesus* used, not rashly to put ourselves, and our Usefulness, into the Power of others; but to study a wise and happy Medium, between that universal Prejudice and *Suspicion*, which while it wrongs the best and the most worthy Characters, would deprive us of all the Pleasures of an intimate Friendship, and that undistinguishing *Easiness* and Openness of Temper, which might make us the Property of every hypocritical Pretender to Kindness and Respect.

S E C T. XXV.

The former Part of our LORD's Conference with Nicodemus, in which he states the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration. John III. 1,—10.

JOHN III. 1.

SECT. 25. **N**OW while our Lord was thus attending at Jerusalem to keep the Passover, there was a certain Man of the Sect of the Pharisees, whose Name was Nicodemus, a Magistrate of the Jews, and a Member of the great Sanhedrim; (John vii. 50.) who being alarmed, as many of his Brethren were, and filled with Wonder at the Miracles that Jesus wrought, made him a Visit in Person, that he might more distinctly be informed of the Nature of his Doctrine, and of the true Intent and Purpose of his Coming. But, lest any Offence should be taken at his conversing openly with him, he secretly came to Jesus by Night, in order to a private Conference with him at his own Lodgings; and with the greatest Reverence and Respect, he said unto him, in his own Name, as well as in the Name of several of

JOHN III. 1.

THERE was a Man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a Ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by Night, and said unto him.



Nicodemus comes by night to Jesus to be instructed in his Doctrine.

him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a Teacher come from G O D; for no Man can do these Miracles, that thou dost, except God be with him.

of his Brethren, Rabbi (a), the Wonders thou hast done have been related to us, and having seriously considered the Account that has been given us, we know, and cannot but allow, that thou art a Teacher come with a Commission from G O D: For we are thoroughly convinced, that none can ever do these wondrous Miracles, that are in all Respects so beneficial and divine, which we perceive thou dost, unless he be invested with a Power from on high, and G O D himself be with him in an extraordinary Manner. (See John ix. 30, 33.) I am come therefore to desire a more particular Account (b) from thine own Mouth, both of the Doctrine which thou teachest, and of the Kingdom which thou declarest God is about to erect.

SECT. 25.
John III. 2.

3 Jesus answered and said unto

Jesus knowing the Prejudices he laboured under, both as a Jew, and a Pharisee, judged it necessary immediately to acquaint him, with the absolute Necessity of a thorough Change by Divine Grace, both in Heart and Life; a Change so great, as might appear like coming

3

(a) Said unto him, Rabbi.] This Title cannot but appear very remarkable, as given by a Person of so great Dignity, to one who with Regard to his Education and Rank in secular Life made so low an Appearance as our Blessed Lord did.

(b) I am come to desire a more particular Account, &c.] Our Lord's Answer intimates, that he either expressly made, or secretly intended such an Enquiry; and it is impossible to enter into the Beauty of this Discourse, without considering it in this View. Our Lord touches on the following grand Points, in which it was of the utmost Importance, that Nicodemus and his Brethren should be informed:—That no external Profession, nor any ceremonial Observances, or Privileges of Birth, could intitle any to the Blessings of the Messiah's Kingdom;—that an entire Change of Heart and Life was necessary to that Purpose;—that this must be accomplished by a Divine Influence on the Mind;—that Mankind was in a State of Condemnation and Misery;—that the free Mercy of God had given his Son, to deliver them from it, and to raise them to a blessed Immortality, which was the great Design and Purpose of his Coming;—that all Mankind, that is, Gentiles as well as Jews, were to share in the Benefits of his Undertaking;—that they were to be procured by his being lifted up on the Cross, and to be received by Faith in him;—but that if they rejected him, there was no other Remedy, and their eternal aggravated Condemnation would be the certain Consequence of it.—Our Lord might enlarge more copiously on these Heads; which it might be the more proper to do, as some of them were directly contrary to the Notions commonly entertained by the Jews, concerning the Messiah's Kingdom.

I

(c) Unless

SECT. 25.
John III. 3.

coming into a new World, and would bring the greatest and most learned Men to the Simplicity of little Children. (Compare Mat. xviii. 3.) He therefore answered and said unto him, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee*, and declare it with the utmost Solemnity, as a Truth of the highest Importance, that whatever great Privileges any may inherit by his natural Birth, or how exact and strict soever he may be in Ceremonial Observances, *unless a Man be born again (c)*, he cannot possibly see the Kingdom of GOD, in such a Manner as to secure an Interest in its invaluable Blessings.

4 Now as this Form of Speech was figurative and concise, *Nicodemus* did not understand what it meant; and therefore says unto him, *How can a Man be born again, when he is old, as I now am? Can he possibly enter a second Time into his Mother's Womb, and so be born over again?* It would be perfectly absurd to think, that thou intendest this should be taken in a literal Sense; and I confess, I am at a Loss to know, what figurative Interpretation is to be put upon it.

5 Then *Jesus*, to explain his former Meaning, answered, *Verily, Verily, I say unto thee*, and

unto him, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee*, Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of GOD.

4 *Nicodemus* saith unto him, How can a Man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second Time into his Mother's Womb, and be born?

5 *Jesus* answered, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee*, Except

(c) *Unless a Man be born again; εαν μη τις γεννηθη ανωθεν.*] Some would render *ανωθεν*, from Above; but it is plain, that *Nicodemus* did not take it so; for he thought, that without entering a second Time into his Mother's Womb, there was no being born in the Manner *Christ* spoke of, *ανωθεν*, that is, again.—What is added, at ver. 5. explains what was before undetermined, as to the Original of this Birth. *Dr. Owen* with great Propriety observes, “That if *Regeneration* here mean only *Reformation of Life*, our Lord, instead of making any new Discovery, has only thrown a great deal of Obscurity, on what was before plain and obvious, and known not only to the *Jews*, but the wiser *Heathens*. And indeed, (says he immediately after,) this is the main Article in Dispute between many. Some think, all Things in Scripture are expressed in Condescension to our Capacities, so that there is still to be conceived in many of them an inexpressible Grandeur; while, on the other Hand, others suppose, that under the Pomp and Grandeur of the most hyperbolical Expressions, Things of a low and ordinary Sense are to be understood.” See *Dr. Owen on the Spirit*, pag. 175.—For the full Import of the Phrases used in this Verse, see my *Sermons on Regeneration*, N° iv, and v.

(d) Is

cept a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of GOD.

and again repeat it, that *unless a Man be born of Water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of GOD*; or in plain Terms, SECT. 25.
John III. 5.

6 That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.

whosoever would become a regular Member of it, he must not only be baptized, but as ever he desires to share in its spiritual and eternal Blessings, he must experience the renewing and sanctifying Influences of the Holy Spirit on his Soul, to cleanse it from the Power of Corruption, and to animate it to a Divine and Spiritual Life. For were it possible for a Man to be born again, in the literal Sense that you have mentioned, by entering a second Time into his Mother's Womb, such a second Birth would do no more to qualify him for the Kingdom of GOD, than the First; for *that which is born of the Flesh, is only Flesh*; and what proceeds, and is produced from Parents that are sinful and corrupt, is sinful and corrupt as they are (*d*); but *that which is born of the Spirit, is formed to a Resemblance of that blessed Spirit*, whose Office it is to infuse a Divine Life into the Soul.

7 Marvel not, that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Wonder not, therefore, that I said unto thee, and have declared it as a Truth that you are all concerned in, that *You yourselves, even tho' you are Jews, and Pharisees, and Rulers of the People, yet must be born again*; since the Degeneracy of the Human Nature is of so universal an Extent, as to be common to you all. Nor have you any Cause to be surprized, if there be some Things in this Doctrine of Regeneration, which are of an obscure and unsearchable Nature, for even
in

(*d*) Is sinful and corrupt as they are.] The many Passages, in which *Flesh* is put for a *corrupt degenerate Nature*, enslaved to animal Appetites and Pursuits, seemed to me to justify this Interpretation; And would to GOD, Fact and Experience did not so plainly vindicate it! (Compare *Gen. vi. 3. Rom. viii. 8. Gal. v. 17, 24. and Jude ver. 23.*) Indeed it seems to me impossible, to clear up either the Beauty of the *Antithesis*, or even the Truth of the Assertion, on any other Interpretation.

SECT. 25. in the Natural World many Things are
 John III. 8. *so. The Wind, for Instance, bloweth where it will, sometimes one Way and sometimes another, and is not subject to the Direction or Command of Man; and tho' thou hearest the Sound thereof, and feelest its sensible and powerful Effects, yet thou canst not exactly tell, from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; for whatever general Principles may be laid down concerning it, when you come to account for its particular Variations, the greatest Philosophers often find themselves at a Loss: And in like Manner, so it is with every one that is born of the Spirit; and you are so far from being capable of accounting for it, that it is easy to be seen, there is a sovereign Freedom in that Divine Agency, which makes it oftentimes impossible to say, why it is imparted to one, rather than to another; and there is a Secret in the Manner of its Operation on the Mind, which it is neither necessary to know, nor possible to explain.*

9 But *Nicodemus*, who had been accustomed to the Pomp and Ceremony of an external Religion, *answered and said unto him, How can these Things be?* for after all this Explanation I am still at a Loss to understand, what this being born of the Spirit means, and therefore cannot conceive how it should be so absolutely necessary.

10 *Jesus then answered and said unto him, How, Nicodemus! art thou a Teacher of Israel, of so distinguished a Rank and Character, and dost thou not know these Things (e);* when so much is every where said

8 The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 *Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these Things be?*

10 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a Master of Israel, and knowest not these Things?*

(e) *Art thou a Teacher of Israel, and dost thou not know these Things?* Could it be proved that the *Jewish Rabbi's*, so early as *Christ's* Time, called a *Baptized Person*, one *born again*, or *born of Water*, that would strongly illustrate the Passage before us. But though *Dr. Claget*, and *Mr. Locke*, and after them *Dr. Clarke*, give the Words this Turn, the Fact did not appear to me so evident, as to allow of my inserting it in the

said in the Scripture, of the purifying and quickening Operations of the Divine Spirit on Men's Hearts? Compare Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. and Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) It is high Time, thou shouldst be better informed concerning them.

SECT. 25.
John III. 10.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

HE that hath Ears to hear, let him hear with Attention, what the Blessed Redeemer said on this great Occasion. It is surely a Matter of universal Concern: For who would not desire to enter into the Kingdom of GOD? to be an acceptable Member of Christ's Church now, and an Heir of Glory beyond the Grave?—But how is this Blessing to be expected and secured? Thus saith the Lord himself, *Unless a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of GOD.*—Let us remember therefore, that it is not enough, that a new Name be given us, or that a new Profession be assumed; it is not enough that we are descended from the most pious Ancestors, that we have been externally devoted to GOD by the early Seal of his Covenant, or that we openly have made a solemn and express Profession of our own Faith and Obedience, and have been *born of Baptismal Water* in our riper Years. There must be a *New Nature* implanted, a *new Creation* formed in our Souls, by the almighty Energy of the *Eternal Spirit*, or it had been better for us, that we had *never been born* at all.

That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh; and as we all proceed from a corrupt Original, we do not more evidently bear the Image of the earthly Adam, in the Infirmities of a mortal Body, than in the Degeneracy of a corrupted Mind. Oh, let us earnestly intreat, that being born of the sanctifying Influences of the Spirit, we may bear the Image of the Heavenly! And to these Influences let us with all Humility and Thankfulness be ready to yield up our Souls as remembering, that they are of a free and sovereign Nature, like the Wind,

the Paraphrase.—However it is strange to me, that any should doubt whether Proselytes were admitted into the Jewish Church by Baptism, that is, by Washing; when it is plain from express Passages in the Jewish Law, that no Jew, who had lived like a Gentile for one single Day, could be restored to the Communion of their Church without it. Compare Num. xix. 19, 20. and many other Precepts relating to Ceremonial Pollutions; by which the Jews were rendered incapable of appearing before GOD in the Tabernacle or Temple, till they were washed, either by Bathing or Sprinkling.

SECT. 25. *Wind, that bloweth where it will, and does not stay for the Command of the Children of Men.*

Ver. 7, 8. Let none of us indulge a vain and useles Curiosity with respect to the *Manner of the Spirit's Operations*; or *wonder*, that we meet with some Things, that are secret and unknown, in Matters of a Spiritual Nature; when we see daily, there are so many Things unknown in the common Appearances of the Natural World, and indeed so few that we can perfectly understand.

Ver. 10. May the Pride of a falsely pretended *Reason*, be subdued to the Authority of *Faith*! And more especially may such as are *Teachers in Israet*, or who are designed for that important Office, take their Instructions with all Humility, from this *Teacher sent from GOD*! For it must surely be not only *their Calamity*, but that too of the *Church* in general, if its Guides continue ignorant of those sublime and spiritual Truths, which *Christ* came down from Heaven to reveal, or are so biafled by the carnal Reasonings of a depraved Mind, as to be indisposed and backward to receive them.

Ver. 2.

S E C T. XXVI.

The latter Part of our LORD's Conference with Nicodemus, in which he opens the Design of his coming into the World, and shews the absolute Necessity of Faith in him. John III. 11,—21.

JOHN III. 11.

SECT. 26. *JESUS* pursuing his Discourse with Nicodemus, said, I find that you are stumbled at this Doctrine of Regeneration, which I have now been opening to you; but howsoever it may still appear to be obscure and strange, yet labour to subdue the Prejudices that arise against it; for *verily, verily, I say unto thee*, that in the Doctrine we have now delivered, *we speak* nothing but *what we certainly*

JOHN III. 11.

Verily, verily I say unto thee, We speak that we do

do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our Witness.

tainly know (a), and testify no other, than that which we have seen (b), and can declare upon the surest Grounds to be a most important Truth, and to be perfectly agreeable to what we have received in Commission from GOD himself; and yet, the Disposition of the Jewish Rulers and People is generally such, that ye receive not our Testimony, and are likely still to reject it: For these

SECT. 26.
John III. 11.

12 If I have told you Earthly Things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe,

Things, which I have already told you, are but the first Principles, to make Way for what is yet more marvellous. Now if I hitherto have told you Things which have been capable of being represented to you in a familiar Way, and being illustrated by obvious and well-known Similitudes; so that by reason of their Plainness, and of the frequent References to them in the Old Testament, they may be called *Earthly Things*; and ye believe not even these: How then would you believe, if I should yet go on to tell you other Doctrines, which are not capable of being thus explained; and which indeed are so much

12

more

(a) *We speak what we know.*] Some have supposed, that as *Christ* speaks here in the *Plural Number*, he may refer, not only to the Doctrine that was delivered by himself, but to the Testimony that was given to the Truth of it by *John the Baptist*, and to the Preaching also of his own *Disciples*, who all concurred in testifying the same Things; the Certainty of which they were assured of by the Teachings of the *Spirit*, and by their own Experience, while it was known to *Christ* by his Omniscience, and by the intimate Acquaintance that he had with all the Counsels of the *Father*.—And others have supposed, that he includes here with himself, the *Father*, and the *Spirit*, who are expressly spoken of in other Passages, as bearing Witness to the Truth of what he said, and as agreeing with him in the Testimony that he gave. (Compare *John* viii. 18. xiv. 20, 26. and 1 *John* v. 6, 8.)—But there is no Necessity, we should suppose him to refer to any other than himself; since nothing is more usual than for a Person of Authority to speak of himself in the *Plural Number*, as *Christ* may be observed to have done elsewhere; (*Mark* iv. 30) and in the next Verse he appears to have restrained it to himself, where he says only in the *Singular Number*, *If I have told you Earthly Things, &c.* See *Lightfoot's Harmony* in loc.

(b) *And testify that which we have seen.*] *Christ* seems here to allude to what was mentioned in the *Law*, as qualifying a Man to be a *Witness*, that he was able to declare of what he testified, that he had seen, or known it: (*Levit.* v. 1.) And as he therefore had a clear Perception, and a certain Knowledge of the Truth of what he said, there was the highest Reason to receive his Testimony, and to regard him as a true and faithful Witness.

X 2

(c) *Heavenly*

SECT. 26.
John III. 12.

more mysterious and sublime, that in Comparison of what has been already told you, they may be called *Heavenly Things* (c) ?

13

(Compare Heb. vi. 1, 2. Psal. ciii. 11. and Isa. lv. 9.) Yet even these you will have no just Reason to suspect, when you consider whence they come, *and* who it is that reveals them to you; for *no one ever has ascended up to Heaven*, to search into the secret Counsels, and to obtain an intimate and perfect Knowledge of the Truths of GOD (d); *unless*, as you will see hereafter, *he* has done it, *who is really descended from Heaven*; [even] *the Son of Man who is in Heaven*, as there is the Place of his stated Abode, whither he shortly will return, and as he now is present there by his Divine Nature, which fills both Heaven and Earth.

14

And now I mention the Son of Man, let me rectify that grand Mistake of yours concerning his Kingdom, which otherwise may be attended with such fatal Consequences. You expect to see him raised on a magnificent Throne, and not only breaking off the Yoke from the Jewish Nation, but leading them

lieve, if I tell you of Heavenly Things?

13 And no Man hath ascended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, *even* the Son of Man which is in Heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up

(c) *Heavenly Things.*] This has been understood by some, of those sublime and heavenly Doctrines, that were afterwards revealed,—of the *Eternal Generation of the Son*, and of the *Fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily*,—and of those other *Mysteries of Godliness*, that are above the Reach of Human Reason, and cannot be illustrated by *Earthly Things*. (See *Lightfoot's Harmony in loc.*) Though it would rather seem, that *our Lord* does more immediately refer to the Doctrines which he mentions in the remaining Part of his Discourse to *Nicodemus*,—of his Descent from Heaven to instruct us in the Things of GOD, and be united to the Human Nature here below, while by his Divine Nature he still continued to be present above,—of the Design for which he came into the World, to be lifted up upon the Cross, that he might save us from our Sins,—of Everlasting Life and Happiness to be obtained by Faith in his Death,—and of the Condemnation of all those that should reject him: Which may be counted as *the deep Things of GOD*, which he reveals unto us by his Spirit, and which the *natural Man* who disregards that Spirit, *receiveth not*, for they are *Foolishness* unto him; *neither can he know them*, because they are *spiritually discerned*. 1 Cor. ii. 10, 14.

(d) *Ascended up to Heaven* to search into—the Truths of GOD.] The Phrase of *ascending into Heaven*, is plainly used in this Sense; Deut. xxx. 12. Rom. x. 6. and Prov. xxx. 4.—As for the Turn here given to the Particle $\mu\mu$, see the Note on John xvii. 12. Sect. 179.

(e) A

up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up;

them on to conquer and destroy the Gentiles: **SECT. 26.**
 But I must assure you, that *as Moses lifted up* John III. 14.
the brazen Serpent on a Pole in the Wilderness,
 to heal those that were dying by the Venom
 of the fiery Serpents there; (see Numb. xxi.
 8, 9.) *so also must the Son of Man be first*
lifted up on a Cross, (compare John viii. 28:
 xii. 32, 34.) and then publickly exhibited in
 the preaching of the Gospel, that Sinners
 may by him receive a far more noble and
 important Cure (e): Even *that whoever* 15
believeth on him, may not perish, as all in their
 natural State would otherwise do (f), *but*
may obtain so perfect a Recovery, as certainly
 to have *Eternal Life.* For this is indeed the 16
 Summary of that important Message which I
 bring to the Children of Men, that **G O D**
so loved the World (g), apostate and miserable
 as it was; yea, to such an amazing and un-
 utterable a Degree did he love it, *that he*
gave even his Only-begotten Son from his Em-
 braces, *that whoever believeth on him,* what-
 ever be the Nation he belongs to, or whatever
 his Guilt be, *he may not perish* under the Sen-
 tence of Divine Justice, *but may have Ever-*
lasting

15 That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal Life.

16 For GOD so loved the World, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.

(e) A far more noble and important Cure.] The grand Point of *Similitude* here, is in the *Manner* of performing the *Cure*, that is, by *believing Regards* to something *lifted up* for that Purpose, by a *Divine Appointment*. It would be *Blasphemy* to run a *Parallel* between *Christ*, and that which gave us the deadly Wound: And to talk, as *Grotius* and *Dr. Clarke* here do, of the Resemblance between him, and the Image of the *Serpent*, as he was *made in the Likeness of sinful Flesh*, seems in this Connection to be foreign to the Purpose.

(f) As all in their natural State would otherwise do.] This is strongly implied here, and yet more strongly in *ver. 18.* where all that *do not believe* are said to be *condemned already*: And till Men enter deeply into this important Truth, the Gospel may indeed be their Amusement, but I see not how it is like to be their Joy, or their Cure.

(g) *G O D so loved the World.*] It is not only a very arbitrary Criticism, by which *Erasmus* makes these the Words of the *Evangelist*, rather than of *Christ*; but if it were admitted, it would destroy much of the Beauty and Energy of that awful Admonition, which *our Lord* gives to *Nicodemus*, and by him to his Brethren, in this his first Entrance on his Ministry. No doubt, many of them attended him to learn the Result of *this Conference*, which to the best of his Understanding we may conclude he honestly reported. And it is sad to think, what an Aggravation it was of the Unbelief and Impenitence of that grand Council, who afterwards treated *Christ* with so much Contempt and Malignity.

SECT. 26. *lasting Life and Glory. For GOD sent not his Son into the World, to condemn the*

John III. 17.

World, and to execute that Vengeance upon them, which their Guilt might have taught them to fear; nor did he send him to destroy the Gentile Nations, as your Jewish Prejudices are ready to represent it; but that the World of Mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, might be saved by him, even all without Exception who will listen to the Overtures of his Gospel.

18

And therefore, on the one Hand, be that believeth on him, how great soever his Sins may have been, and however unpardonable according to the Tenour of the Mosaic Law, yet shall not be finally condemned, but shall obtain a compleat Pardon; and on the other Hand, be that believeth not, whatever his external Profession and Privileges may be, is condemned already, remaining under the Sentence of his former Guilt, yea, and subjecting himself by his Refusal of the only Remedy to greater and more aggravated Woe; because he hath not believed in the illustrious Name (b) of the Only-begotten Son of GOD, though expressly revealed to him on so glorious and important an Occasion.

19

Now through the great Perverseness of Mankind I certainly foresee, that this will be the Case with Multitudes; for this is the great Condemnation, the Crime that fills up the Measure of Mens Iniquities, and proves the surest Cause of their final and speedy Ruin; that a Divine Light is come into the World, and yet Men have loved Darknes rather than Light, and have chosen to remain ignorant, rather than to submit themselves to the Teachings of this Heavenly Revelation; and

17 For GOD sent not his Son into the World, to condemn the World; but that the World thro' him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only-begotten Son of GOD.

19 And this is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men loved Darknes rather than

(b) *Believed in the illustrious Name.] Though the Name of a Person be often put for the Person himself, yet I think it is farther intimated in that Expression, that the Person spoken of is great and magnificent; and therefore it is generally used, to express either GOD the Father, or our Lord Jesus Christ.*

than Light, because their Deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth Evil, hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reprov'd.

21 But he that doeth Truth, cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in G O D.

and the Reason is plainly this, *because their Deeds were evil*, and they have not Virtue enough to resolve on a thorough Reformation. SECT. 26.
John III. 19.

For every one who is conscious to himself that he *doth Evil*, and will persist in his Wickedness, *hateth the Light*, as the Cause of Anguish and Shame to his guilty Mind; and he *cometh not to the Light*, lest his Actions should be reprov'd by it, and so his Character expos'd, and his Conscience disquieted. (Compare Eph. v. 13.) 20

But he that practises Truth (i) and Virtue, sincerely endeavouring to adjust his Actions according to the eternal Law of Righteousness, or the Nature and Obligation of Things, comes to the Light with Confidence and Pleasure, and takes all Opportunies of improving his Knowledge, that his Actions may be made manifest, as in open Day; knowing it will appear that they are wrought in G O D (k), that is, that they are agreeable to the Divine Nature and Will, and the Consequence of that Union of Soul with him, which is the highest Dignity and Happiness of a rational Creature. Be it therefore known unto you all, that this Gospel which I preach, is the great Touchstone of Men's true Characters; and as nothing but a Corruption of Heart can oppose it, so I faithfully warn you, that if you reject it, it is at the Peril of your Souls. 21

This

(i) He that practises Truth: ο ποιων την αληθειαν.] This Phrase often occurs, as the Character of a good Man: (Compare Psal. cxix. 30. Isa. xxvi. 2. 1 Pet. i. 22. 1 John i. 6. and 2 John, ver. 4.) And it is used with great Propriety, since there is as really a Truth or Falsehood in Actions, as in Words; as Mr. Wallaston in particular has shewn at large. See Relig. of Nature, Chap. i.—Of the same Kind is the Phrase ποιων ψαλμοι, used more than once by St. John, perhaps in a beautiful Opposition to this before us; and should it be rendered, *practiseth a Lie*, that Opposition would be more apparent. See Rev. xxi. 27. xxii. 15.

(k) That they are wrought in G O D: ο ουσ υπρακουσα.] Grotius thinks, that ο is here used for κατα, and that it only signifies, agreeable to the Divine Nature. This is certainly comprehended, but it is not all it expresses. His Instance of the like Use of the Particle, in 1 Cor. vii. 39. seems insufficient; for to marry ο τω Κυριω in the Lord, signifies there, the marrying one who is in Christ, that is, a Christian.

SECT. 26. This was the Purport of our Lord's Discourse with Nicodemus ; and it appears by John III. 21. some following Circumstances of the Story, that it made a deep and lasting Impression on his Mind. See John vii. 50. and xix. 39.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Ver. 13. **H**OW happy is it for us, that since *none* of the *Children of Men* ever *ascended up into Heaven*, to learn the Mysteries of Divine Knowledge there, *the Only-begotten Son of GOD* has been pleased to *come down from thence*, that he might instruct us ! He *spake what he knew*, and *testified what he had seen* : Oh that Men were so wise, as to *receive his Testimony*, be the Discoveries ever so new, or the Doctrines ever so sublime !

Ver. 11. Let us with peculiar Pleasure attend unto that *Abstract of the Gospel*, which he exhibited in this profitable and comprehensive Discourse with *Nicodemus*.—It presents to our View **CHRIST**, and *him crucified*. It opens the Treasures of Divine Beneficence and Compassion, and shews us the Father of Mercies *so loving a World*, which he might justly have abhorred and destroyed, as to *give his Only-begotten Son* to be a Ransom for it.

Ver. 16. Let us behold him *lifted up* on the Cross, as the great Attractive, to whom all were to be *drawn* ! In him shall we find the *Divine Cure* for our Souls, infected as they are with the Poison of Sin, if we behold him, not merely with a curious, but a *believing Eye*. Whatever our Wounds be, if in the Exercise of *Faith* we look to him, we shall not die of them ; but it is owing to our own Obstinacy and Impenitence, if we yet *perish*.

Ver. 14. He might justly have appeared in a different Form, for the *Condemnation* of Sinners, rather than their *Salvation*. The *Son of GOD* might have *come into* an apostate *World*, armed with Thunderbolts of flaming Vengeance, to punish the Violation of his Father's Law ; but his Hands are filled with eternal Blessings.

Ver. 15. As we love our own Souls, let us apply to him in Time for this *Salvation*. Let us dread the aggravated *Condemnation* of those, who, *when Light is come into the World*, prefer *Darkness* to it, and obstinately shut their Eyes against it, though it be the Dawnings of an eternal Day.

Ver. 19. *May Integrity and Uprightness preserve us ! (Psal. xxv. 21.)* And Ver. 20, 21. conscious of a real Desire to govern ourselves according to the *Light* we

we have, may we chearfully lay ourselves in the Way of more; that SECT. 26.
 in the last awful Day, when the Sentence of Divine Wrath shall be
 executed on all the Servants of Sin, and their Character shall stand
 disclosed in the most odious Colours, ours may shine out beautiful
 and fair, and the good *Deeds* that we have done, being now wrought
in GOD, may then not only be accepted and applauded, but thro'
 the Grace of the Redeemer, abundantly rewarded by him!

S E C T. XXVII.

John the Baptist's last Testimony to CHRIST, on Occa-
 sion of a Dispute, concerning his Baptism, and that
 administered by our LORD's Disciples. John III. 22,
 to the End.

JOHN III. 22.

AFTER these Things came Jesus and his Disciples into the Land of Judea, and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

23 And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much Water there: and they

JOHN III. 22.

AFTER these Things, Jesus and his Disciples came from Jerusalem where they had kept the Passover together, into a Part of SECT. 27.
the Land of Judea, at some Distance from the Capital City; and there he continued with them, and by their Ministry, tho' not in his own Person, baptized. (See John iv. 2.) John III. 22.

And John was also at that Time baptizing at Enon, which was a Place near Salim, a Town on the West Side of Jordan; and he particularly chose that Place, because there was a great Quantity of Water there (a), which made it very convenient for his Purpose:

(a) At Enon,—because there was a great Quantity of Water there.] It is exceeding difficult to determine the true Situation of this Place, about which Geographical Writers are not at all agreed. We may conclude however from ver. 26. that it was on the West Side of Jordan, as Bethabara, where John had baptized before, was on the other Side.—But nothing surely can be more evident, than that *πολλα υδατα*, many Waters, signifies a large Quantity of Water, it being sometimes used for the Euphrates, Jer. li. 13. S. ptuag. To which I suppose there may also be an Allusion, Rev. xvii. 1. Compare Ezek xliii. 2. and Rev. i. 15. xiv. 2. xix. 6. where the Voice of many Waters does plainly signify the Roaring of a high Sea.

SECT. 27. pose: *And they came from all Parts, and were baptized by him.* For the Reader

John III. 24. will observe, that *John the Baptist was not yet thrown into Prison (b)*; as he was a few Months after, by the Injustice of Herod, in whose Territories that Place lay.

25 *And there was about this Time, a warm Dispute [between some] of the Disciples of John, and a [certain] Jew (c), who had been baptized by Christ, about this Right of Purifying, or Baptism, which was administered in different Parts by these two Divine Teachers; for notwithstanding their Commissions and Administrations were so harmonious, yet some, thro' Ignorance and Weakness, were ready to oppose them to each other.*

26 *And such was the Concern of John's Disciples upon this Occasion, that they came to John, and said, unto him, Rabbi, we are solicitous for thy Honour in the present Conjunction of Affairs; for he that was lately with thee on the other Side Jordan, and to whom thou gavest such an honourable Testimony there, behold, he now baptizeth, and People from all Parts, yea even such as have before received thy Baptism, come unto him; which, as we fear, may cause thy Baptism to be neglected, and tend to the Injury of thy Character, since some are already making*

they came, and were baptized.

24 For John was not yet cast into Prison.

25 Then there arose a Question between some of Johns Disciples, and the Jews, about purifying.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest Witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all Men come to him.

(b) *John was not yet thrown into Prison.*] I think it probable from hence, as well as from Tradition, and many other Passages in this Gospel itself, that St. John wrote it as a Supplement to the rest. For he speaks of the Baptist's Imprisonment, as a Thing generally known, and yet says nothing of his Martyrdom, tho' he had given so large an Account of his Ministry. We cannot suppose, he would have omitted so material a Fact, had he not known that the other Evangelists had recorded it at large; as will be seen in the next Section, and in Sect. 77.

(c) *A certain Jew.*] The many Copies which read it thus, as well as the Authority of the Syriac Version, and the Citations of some of the Fathers, determine me to prefer this Reading, which I think gives rather an easier Sense; as a single Jew might most properly be opposed to John's Disciples, who were Jews themselves; and as a considerable Part of the Nation had entered themselves into that Number, at least so far as receiving his Baptism was a Token of it.

I

(d) *Yea*

king very invidious Comparisons, between SECT. 27.
him and thee.

27 John answered and said, A Man can receive nothing, except it be given him from Heaven.

But *John replied* to his Disciples, with an John III. 27.
Humility and Integrity agreeable to the rest of his Character, *and said*, in order to convince them farther of the superior Honours due to the blessed Jesus; Do not give Way to such vain Partiality, and Fondness for me; for a Man can indeed receive, and therefore ought to assume *nothing* to himself, *unless it be given him from Heaven*; but we are just what GOD is pleased to make us, and must stand in that Rank, which his infinite Wisdom has seen fit to assign us.

28 Ye yourselves bear me Witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

Nor have you any Reason to be surprized at the Report you bring me, or to imagine I shall regard it as a Matter of Complaint; for *you yourselves*, in what you now have said, *bear Witness to me (d)*, and cannot but remember, *that* even from the very first of my Appearance, *I expressly said*, and was on all Occasions ready to repeat it, *that I am not the Christ; but that I am sent as a Harbinger before him*, and therefore am so far from being in any opposite and separate Interest, that his Success is my greatest Joy. 28

29 He that hath the Bride, is the Bridegroom: but the Friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly

the Bridegroom only, that hath the Bride, and it is his peculiar Right to enjoy her as his own; *but* as for *the intimate Friend of the Bridegroom, who standeth near him, and beareth him* express his Delight and Complacency in her *(e)*, he is so far from envy-
ing 29

(d) *You yourselves bear Witness to me: αὐτοὶ ὑμεῖς μοι μαρτυρεῖτε.*] There seems to be an Intimation in these Words, that what they themselves had just been saying, was a sufficient Proof of what *the Baptist* was going to declare; for they had described *Jesus*, by the Character of *him to whom John had borne Witness*.

(e) *Hearth him* express his Delight and Complacency in her.] Some have supposed, that this alludes to a peculiar Ceremony, attending the *Marriages* among the *Jews*; which the Reader may find in *Dr. Hammond in loc.* and *Selden. Uxor. Heb. lib. ii. cap. 16.* But perhaps it may be a more general Reference, to any of the natural Expressions of *Joy* on such an Occasion.—I pretend not to determine, how far *Bishop Patrick* may be right, in supposing, “that this is an Allusion to the *Cabbalistic Doctrine*,

SECT. 27. ing and repining at it, that if he really deserves the Name of a Friend, he rather rejoices with exceeding great Joy on Account of the Bridegroom's Voice. Such therefore is the Friendship and the high Regard I have for Jesus, that *this* that you have told me, is *my Joy*; which is so far from being at all impaired, that it is heightened and compleated on this happy Occasion, which you should rather have been ready to congratulate, than to have made it Matter of Complaint.

30 I know, that as to him, *he* daily *must increase*, and like the growing Moon appear continually more and more glorious; *but I must gradually wane*, and *decline*, till I entirely disappear from hence: (For the End of my Ministry is now in a great measure answered, and therefore I quickly expect to be dismissed from it.) And it is fit it should be so; for *he, that cometh from Above* as Jesus did, *is far above all* the Children of Men, and so undoubtedly is above me; while on the other Hand, *he that originally was of the Earth (f)*, being born like me in a Natural Way, *is still of the Earth*, mean and imperfect, and can never hope by any Refinements and Improvements, to equal what is Heavenly and Divine; but what he says will correspond with his Original, and being Earthly in his Rise, he *speaketh of the Earth*; the Subjects of his Discourse are comparatively low, or howsoever noble and sublime they be, there is a Mixture of Infirmary and Weakness in his Way of treating them: Whereas *he, who originally cometh from*

ly because of the Bridegroom's Voice: This my Joy therefore is fulfilled.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

31 He that cometh from Above, is above all: He that is of the Earth, is Earthly, and speaketh of the Earth; ha.

" that *Fipheret*, the great *Adam*, or the *Messiah*, is married to *Malcutb*, the Congregation of *Israel*, as the terrestrial *Adam* was to *Eve*." See his *Preface to Canticles*, §. 4. (f) *He that was of the Earth*.] To render *o no in tnc yrs* thus, prevents the Appearance of a *Tautology* in the following Words, *ex tnc yrs est*, which would otherwise seem unavoidable.

(g) Under

He that cometh from Heaven, is above all.

from Heaven, and who has shewn so wonderful a Condescension in his visiting this lower World, is still, in the midst of all his voluntary Abasement, incomparably above all that dwell upon Earth, not only in the Dignity and Glory of his Person, but in the Spiritual and Heavenly Nature of his Doctrine.

SECT: 27.

John III. 31,

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no Man receiveth his Testimony.

And I declare it to you with the greatest Confidence, that what he hath seen and heard, or what he knows to the utmost Degree of Certainty, that does he testify, and publish to the World; and I exceedingly lament it, that notwithstanding all that Eagerness of Curiosity with which the Multitudes are flocking now about him, yet no Man cordially receives his Testimony; and among all that hear him there are very few, who are duly affected with what he delivers, and yield as they ought to its Divine Evidence and Importance.

32

33 He that hath received his Testimony, hath set to his Seal, that God is true.

But he, who hath indeed received his Testimony, acts a most wise and happy Part, and hath, as it were, set his Seal [to it,] that GOD is true; acknowledging his Hand in these Credentials given to his Son, and his Veracity, in sending him thus furnished, to fulfil his ancient Promises to his People.

33

34 For he whom God hath sent, speaketh the Words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by Measure unto him.

For he, whom GOD hath sent into the World as the promised Messiah, speaketh the Words of GOD, and all that he reveals should be regarded as Divine Oracles; for GOD giveth not the Powers and the Inspiration of his Spirit [to him] by Measure, under such Limitations, and with such Interruptions, as he gives it to his other Messengers (g); but it dwells in him.

34

(g) Under such Limitations, and with such Interruptions, as he gives it to his other Messengers.] With what Limitations and Interruptions, the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit were given, even to the greatest of the Children of Men, we shall have repeated Occasion to observe in the Process of this Work.

(b) This.

SECT. 27. him by a constant Presence, and operates by a perpetual Energy.

John III. 35. *Father loveth the Son*, incomparably beyond the most faithful of his Servants; and hath not only established him as the great Teacher of his Church, but hath given the Government of *all Things into his Hand*, that he may be regarded as the universal Lord.

36 So that instead of repining at his growing Glories, you should rather be solicitous to secure an Interest in his Favour; for this is the Substance, and this the End of my whole Testimony (*b*), that *he who believeth on the Son, hath a sure Title to eternal Life*, and hath already the Beginnings of it wrought in his Soul; *but he that is disobedient to the Son (i)*, and obstinately persists in his Unbelief and Impenitence, *shall not see and enjoy that Life*; but, on the contrary, is so far from it, that *the Wrath of GOD*, and the unpardoned aggravated Guilt of all his Sins, *abideth even now upon him*, and will quickly sink him into final Condemnation and Ruin.

Thus did that holy Man, John the Baptist, conclude those Testimonies to Christ, which are recorded in the Gospel, and was quickly after imprisoned by Herod the Tetrarch; as the Course of this History will presently shew.

35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all Things into his Hand.

36 He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life; but the Wrath of GOD abideth on him.

IMPROVE-

(*b*) This is the Substance, and this the End of my whole Testimony.] *Erasmus* here destroys (as he had done before, at *ver. 16.*) the Beauty of this Discourse, by supposing that the latter Part of it is to be considered, as the Reflection and Attestation of the Evangelist, upon Occasion of the Testimony that was given by the Baptist; tho' he seems himself at a Loss to fix the Clause, at which this supposed Change of the Person speaking begins.

(*i*) He that is disobedient to the Son.] I think it is of great Importance, to preserve a Difference in the Translation, correspondent to that in the Original, between ο αμαρτανος ουκ εστιν υιος του πατρος, and ο αμαρτανος ουκ εστιν υιος του υιου; because the latter Phrase explains the former, and shews that the Faith, to which the Promise of Life is annexed, is an effectual Principle of sincere and unreserved Obedience; and it is impossible to make one Part of Scripture consistent with another, unless this be taken into our Idea of Saving Faith: As I have shewn at large, in the first of my Sermons on Salvation by Grace through Faith.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

IT is indeed too true, that *the Spirit, which naturally dwelleth in* SECT. 27.
us all, lusteth to Envy; (Jam. iv. 5.) and it is far from being a
 low Attainment in Religion, to look with Complacency and Thank- Jobn III. 26.
 fulness on the superior Abilities and Acceptance of others, especi-
 ally of those who once appeared in an inferior Rank. But for the
 Cure of this unreasonable and restless Passion, so contrary to the true
 Spirit of the Gospel, let us remember that *a Man can receive nothing* Ver. 27.
 at all, *except it be given him from Heaven.* It is GOD that makes
 one Man to differ from another; and surely nothing can be more
 unreasonable, than that, when we ourselves have received all from
 his Bounty, *our Eye should be evil, because he is good. (Mat. xx. 15.)*

If we are indeed the *Friends of Christ*, we shall rejoice to see his Ver. 29.
 Interest advance, and especially to see Souls espoused to him, as the
 great *Bridegroom* of the Church, whoever are the Instruments of
 promoting so happy a Work. *Would to GOD, that in this Sense*
all the Lord's People were even as the greatest of the Prophets, or as
the very chief of the Apostles! (Numb. xi. 29.)

But if indeed they were so, yet like those brightest Luminaries Ver. 30.
 of the Church, they must in Time have their *Change*, and their
Wane. If GOD does not darken their Glories by a sudden *Eclipse*,
 yet They who are now, like *the Baptist, burning and shining Lights,*
must like him gradually decrease, while others are increasing about
 them; as They in their Turns, grew up amidst the Decays of the
 former Generation. Let us know how to *set*, as well as to *rise*; and
 let it comfort our declining Days, to trace in those that are like to
 succeed us in our Work, the Openings of yet greater Usefulness. So
 shall we grow in our Meetness for that World, where *all the Right-*
eous shall shine forth together, as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their
Father, in a bright Resemblance of him, with whom there is no Va-
riableness, nor Shadow of turning.

As the surest Means of guiding us to that happy World, let us Ver. 33.
 make it our great Care, *by receiving the Testimony of Christ, to set our*
Seal to the Truth of GOD, engaged in his Cause.—With how
 much Pleasure should we do it, and with what Joy should we reflect,
 that *the Father so loveth the Son,* that he has not only given him the Ver. 34, 35.
 rich and unmeasurable Communications of the *Spirit,* but *has com-*
mitted also into his Hand, the Reins of Government! Let his faithful
 Servants remember it with Joy, and cheerfully commit their Con-
 cerns

SECT. 27. cerns to him, who is made Head over all Things for the Benefit of his Church. (Eph. i. 22.)

Ver. 36. And to conclude ; let it engage us, to see to the Sincerity of our Faith in him, and Subjection to him ; since it is not a light Matter, but our Life, even the very Life of our Souls. May GOD awaken those, on whom his Wrath now abideth, to a Sense of their Danger ; and may he strengthen in each of our Souls that Faith, which is the Pledge of a happy Immortality !

S E C T. XXVIII.

John the Baptist is imprisoned by Herod. Luke III. 19, 20. Mark VI. 17,—20. Mat. XIV. 3,—5.

LUKE III. 19.

SECT. 28. **T**HUS John went on to prosecute the great Design of his Appearance, and to prepare the Way for the Reception of Jesus : But much about this Time, it pleas'd God, to permit the Course of his Ministry to be interrupted, and his Life itself to be quickly after brought to its Period. For Herod Antipas the Tetrarch of Galilee, having out of Curiosity sent for him to his Court, this holy Man thought it his Duty to admonish him, in Regard to the publick Scandals of his Life, and Reign. Now Herod being thus plainly and faithfully reprov'd by him, both on Account of Herodias his Brother Philip's Wife, (for to the Infamy and Scandal of his Character, he had ungenerously took her from her Husband, and publickly married her (a), in Contempt of all

LUKE III. 19.

BUT Herod the Tetrarch, being reprov'd by him, for Herodias [fake] his Brother Philips Wife, [MAR. for he had married her ;] and

(a) On Account of Herodias,—for he had married her.] Josephus gives us an Account of this incestuous Marriage, which proved the Occasion of the Baptist's Imprisonment and Death : (Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 5. (al. 7.) §. 1, 4. Havercamp.) From whence it appears, that this Herodias was Daughter to Aristobulus, one of the Sons of Herod the Great, and consequently was Niece both to Philip her former Husband, and to Herod-

and for all the Evils which Herod had done, [MAT. XIV. — 3. MARK VI. — 17.]

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in Prison.

MARK VI. 17.—For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him, [and put him] in Prison. — [MAT. XIV. 3.—]

all Laws Human and Divine (b);) and also, SECT. 28. for all the other Evils that Herod had done, Luke III. 19. which were many and great; that haughty Prince was so exasperated, that instead of falling under the Admonition, he meditated Revenge: And though for the present he 20 dismissed him (c), it was not long before he prosecuted his Design, and added yet this Act of Wickedness to all [the rest] of his enormous Crimes, that he confined and shut up John in Prison. For Herod himself (d) Mark VI. 17. sent Officers after him, and seized John, who had returned to prosecute his Ministry in a Place which lay within the Territories of Galilee; and having thus got him into his Power, he bound him with Chains (e), and put him in Prison; though his Confinement there was not so close, but that his Disciples were sometimes suffered to converse with him.

Herod Antipas the Tetrarch her latter. By Philip, whom Josephus also calls Herod, (as Princes had often several Names,) she had one Daughter, whose Name was Salome; (*ibid.* pag. 885.) who probably was the young Lady afterwards mentioned, Sect. 77. as instructed by her Mother to ask the Head of John the Baptist. And that Historian informs us, that Herod the Tetrarch to make Way for his Marriage with Herodias, divorced his former Wife, the Daughter of Arctas; which made this Commerce a Kind of double Adultery, and was the Occasion of a War between those two Princes, in which Herod's Forces were defeated.

(b) In Contempt of all Laws Human and Divine.] The only Case in which the Law allowed of marrying one who had been a Brother's Wife, was when the Brother died Childless: (*Lev.* xviii. 16. xx. 21. and *Deut.* xxv. 5.) whereas in this Instance, Philip was yet living, and had a Daughter by Herodias. It was also in Violation of all the Rites of Hospitality, that Herod while a Guest in his Brother's House, seduced his Wife; as Josephus expressly observes. *Antiq. lib.* xviii. cap. 5. §. 1. pag. 883.

(c) Though for the present he dismissed him.] Else there would have been no need, for his sending to seize him, as we are presently told he did.

(d) Herod himself.] There seems to be a peculiar Emphasis in this Expression, which probably may be designed to intimate, that his seizing John was not merely the Effect of Herodias's Solicitations, but of his own Repentment. — The Place where he seized him, might probably be Enon, where John had lately baptized, and where he again might return to his Work; and if so, Enon must have been in Herod's Jurisdiction. Compare Note (a) on John iii. 23. pag. 169.

(e) Bound him with Chains.] It is plain from Matthew's Manner of expressing this, that he bound him, and put him in Prison, that Chains were added to his Confinement, as usual in such Cases. (Compare Acts xii. 6. and xxviii. 20.) So that those Versions, which consider *etiam* as an Expletive, lose Part of the Sense.

SECT. 28. him. (Compare Mat. xi. 2, 4. and Luke vii. 19, 22. Sect. 57.)

Mark VI. 18. And tho' he might assign other Political Reasons, to excuse his Conduct, as if his growing Popularity rendered him dangerous to the State (*f*); yet the true Reason for which he did it was this, that *John* had treated him with such a Freedom as he knew not how to bear, and *had told Herod* to his very Face, *It is not lawful for thee, that thou shouldst take upon thee as thou dost, to have thy Brother's Wife*, nor canst thou ever have any solid Peace of Conscience,

19 while thou continuest to retain her. And for this Cause *Herodias* also was yet more furiously incensed against him, and with an unrelenting Cruelty still *hung upon him* (*g*); and not contented with what he suffered in his Imprisonment, *would fain have put him to Death*; but *she could not* immediately com-

20 pass that Design: For *Herod*, notwithstanding all his Resentment, still *reverenced John* (*h*) in his Heart; *knowing that he was a righteous and holy Man*, of which the Fidelity of his Reproofs was a very convincing Evidence. And therefore calling him to frequent Audiences, *he heard him discourse with Attention* (*i*), and Pleasure; and was so far influ-

18 For *John* had said unto *Herod*, It is not lawful for thee to have thy Brothers Wife. [MAT. XIV. 4.]

19 Therefore *Herodias* had a Quarrel against him, and would have killed him, but she could not.

20 For *Herod* feared *John*, knowing that he was a just Man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many Things.

(*f*) Dangerous to the State.] *Josephus* expressly says, that *Herod* was afraid, the Authority of so great a Man should occasion a Revolt among his Subjects; and that he thought it better to take him off, than to venture the Danger of such a Revolution, as he might have occasioned. *Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 5. §. 2. pag. 884.* He there adds, that he first confined him in the Castle of *Machæris*.

(*g*) *Herodias hung upon him.*] This seems to me the Import of the Phrase *ἄνωγει*, which is with peculiar Propriety applied, to a Dog's fastening his Teeth into his Prey, and holding it down. See *De Dieu in loc.* and compare *Luke xi. 53.*—There seems an Opposition seldom remarked, between *this*, and *ver. 17. Herod himself seized him*, but *Herodias* went still farther.—*Josephus* gives a very bad Character of this *Herodias*, and assures us, that her ambitious and envious Spirit was at last the Cause of *Herod's* Ruin, and her own. *Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 7. (al. 9.)*

(*h*) *Reverenced John, φ. τιμω.*] The same Word is justly so translated, *Eph. v. 33.* and there are many other Passages, where it has the same Sense. See *Luke xii. 5.* and *Rev. xi. 18. xiv. 7.*

(*i*) *Heard him with Attention.*] So I chuse to render *ἄκουσεν αὐτὸν*, rather than *pre-served*

Things, and heard him gladly.

MAT. XIV. 5. And when he would have put him to Death, he feared the Multitude, because they counted him as a Prophet.

influenced by it, that he *did many Things* according to his Exhortations (k). SECT. 28.

But as John was still pressing him to dismiss Herodias, and telling him the Insufficiency of any other Reformation, while he continued his infamous Commerce with her; and she in the mean Time wearied Herod with her Importunity; when he at length was so far wrought upon, that he would gladly have consented to put him to Death, he was so apprehensive of the Consequences of it, that he durst not do it, since he feared the Multitude; because he knew, that they respected John, and looked upon him as a Prophet (l), and he did not think it safe to provoke such a factious People, by an Action so extremely unpopular. Mat. XIV. 5.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WHAT dangerous Things are Grandeur and Power, if Divine Grace does not secure the Hearts of those who possess them! How unhappy are they, whose fatal Prerogative it is, to be able to oppress with Impunity, and to render it hazardous even to reprove them! Di-Luke iii. 19; 20.

John well deserved the Veneration and Esteem of Herod, when he thus took the Freedom to perform this dangerous Office of Friendship, and to manifest a Fidelity so seldom to be found in Courts, and indeed so often wanting elsewhere. A wise Prince would

served or protected him; (compare Luke ii. 19. Gr.) though I know that the Word sometimes signifies to preserve. (Mat. ix. 17.) Our English Version of this Passage appears to be improper; and I hope, the little Transposition I have made here will be forgiven, since it makes not the least Alteration in the Sense, and suits best with the Genius of our Language. Such little Liberties elsewhere seem not so considerable, as to need a more particular Apology.

(k) Did many Things.] Grotius would have it rendered, that he had heard him formerly with Pleasure, and had done many Things; supposing this refers to what had passed before his Imprisonment; but such a Change doth not appear necessary, as the Paraphrase plainly shews.

(l) Looked upon him as a Prophet.] Accordingly Josephus says, (in the Place quoted above, in Note (f),) that the Jews in general looked on the succeeding Calamities of Herod's Reign, as a Judgment from God, for his Injustice to this holy Man.

SECT. 28. would have courted his Friendship, and sought his Advice; but he is at length rewarded with *Imprisonment and Death*.

Mark vi. 17. This good Man was taken from his Work, and laid aside in the Midst of his Days and his Usefulness; but he calmly acquiesced in the Disposals of Providence, and no doubt carried along with him to his *Prison*, incomparably more Happiness, than his Persecutors could find on the *Throne*.

In this Confinement, the *Prophet* was not forgotten; but as if *Herod* had studied to increase his own Torment, he must be sent for, again and again, to discourse before him. That he revered a Man of such approved Integrity, none can wonder: But, while he would not be entirely reformed by his Remonstrances, that he should bear him with Pleasure, and do many Things, is very surprising. Delusive Pleasure! unprofitable Reformation! while, whatsoever Instances he gave of his regarding him, *Herodias* was yet retained. May Divine Grace preserve us from such fatal Partiality! since did we keep the whole Law, and offend allowedly but in one Point, we should become guilty of all. *Jam. ii. 10.*

We cannot wonder, if a Reformation thus insincere and partial, was but short-lived, and was followed at length by a grosser Apostacy. *More bitter than Death is the Woman, whose Heart is Snares and Nets, and her Hands Bands.* (*Eccles. vii. 26.*) To what may not the Artifices of such an abandoned Creature, work up the Wretch that is intangled with her Charms? Such was the Influence of *Herodias* over him, that at her Instigation *Herod* is prevailed upon to seek the *Death* of that righteous and holy Man, whose Virtues he revered, and whose Preaching he had attended with Pleasure.

Mat. xiv. 5. But the *Fear of the People* restrained him, though he was destitute of the *Fear of GOD*, and had not any generous Regard to Men. Thus does GOD govern the World, and thus does he protect his Church, by often making it the Interest, even of the worst of Men, to forbear those Injuries and Cruelties, which the Malignity of their Natures might otherwise dictate. Let us courageously commit the keeping of our Souls to him in Well-doing, as firmly believing, that whatever Hazards we may be exposed to, the *Wrath of Man* shall on the whole be found to praise him, and the Remainder of that *Wrath* shall be restrain. *Psal. lxxvi. 10.*

SECT.

S E C T. XXIX.

CHRIST going from Judea to Galilee, meets with a Woman of Samaria, and enters into a Conference with her, in which he discovers himself to her, as the Messiah. John IV. 1,—26.

JOHN IV. 1.

WHEN therefore the Lord knew, how the Pharisees had heard, that Jesus made and baptized more Disciples than John,

JOHN IV. 1.

THE Testimony which the Baptist had given to Christ, together with the Miracles he himself had wrought at Jerusalem during the Passover, (see John ii. 23. and iii. 2.) impressed the Minds of the People to such a Degree, that during his long Abode in those Parts, vast Numbers were continually flocking around him; which gave great Umbrage to the Jewish Rulers. When therefore the Lord knew, that the Pharisees, whose Interest in the Sanhedrim was so considerable, had heard with great Concern, what began to be so much talked of abroad, that Jesus made and baptized more Disciples, than John the Baptist himself had done (a); (Though indeed Jesus himself, for wise Reasons, did not chuse to baptize any

SECT. 29.
John IV. 1.

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his Disciples,)

2

(a) More Disciples than John the Baptist himself had done.] I am not certain, whether this happened before John's Imprisonment, or after; but if I had been sure it happened before, I should still have thought it proper to add the Account of that Event, (as I have done in the preceding Section,) immediately after his last Testimony, though some other Facts might possibly intervene: But if, (which seems most probable,) Mat. iv. 12. and Mark i. 14. (Sect. 31. init.) refer to this Journey, they both in plain Words assert, it was after John's Imprisonment. — I cannot forbear saying, it is astonishing, that a Person of Mr. Whiston's Learning and Sagacity, should place all these Events before the Baptism and Temptation of Christ. Were his Arguments to confirm his eighth Proposition, far more specious than they are, they would never solve, or balance the flagrant Absurdity of making John declare, (John i. 32, 34.) that he saw the Spirit descending on Christ, above a Year before it did, so descend; yet this ingenious Writer has forgotten himself so far, as to represent the Matter in this contradictory View. (See Whiston's Harmony, pag. 135,—139. and pag. 227. compared with pag. 242.) The Interpretation given above, of Mat. iii. 14. and Luke iii. 21. (pag. 113, 114.) may solve some of the chief Arguments, on which he builds this singular Hypothesis.

5

(b) Jesus.

SECT. 29. any with his own Hands (*b*), but left some
 of his Disciples to do it, in the Name of a
 John IV. 3. Messiah shortly to be manifested ;)

3 He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

In order to avoid both their Envy and their Curiosity, he left Judea, after having continued there about eight Months (*c*), and departed again into Galilee, his former Abode, where the Influence and Power of the Council were not so great.

4 Now, unless he would have taken such a Circuit through Judea, and the neighbouring Parts, as in his present Circumstances was very inconvenient, he was obliged to go thro' the Country of Samaria. He cometh

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

5 therefore, in his Way, to a City of Samaria, originally called Sichem, but now, especially by the Jews, *Sichar*; which Name they used as a Term of Reproach (*d*), intimating thereby that it was the Seat of Drunkards: (See Isa. xxviii. 1.) And it was near that Piece of Ground, which Jacob, (having purchased it of the Children of Hamor, Gen. xxxiii. 19.) by a particular Grant, gave to Joseph his beloved Son. (Compare Gen. xlviii.

5 Then cometh he to a City of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the Parcel of Ground that Jacob gave to his Son Joseph.

6 22. and Josh. xxiv. 32.) And there was a Well belonging to it, called *Jacob's Well*; it having been used by him and his Family, while they dwelt in these Parts. (See Gen. xxxiii. 18. xxxv. 4.) Now Jesus being wearied with

6 Now Jacobs Well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with his Journey, sat

(*b*) Jesus himself did not chuse to baptize any with his own Hands.] This might be, partly to avoid importunate Inquiries whether he was the *Messiah*, and partly to prevent those Prejudices which might have arisen against the more perfect Form of *Baptism* afterwards instituted, if any had received this less perfect *Baptism* from *Christ* himself.

(*c*) After having continued there about eight Months.] This appears from *ver. 35.* for *Harvest* began quickly after the *Passover*; *Lev. xxiii. 10, 15.* *Christ* therefore stayed in *Judea* from one *Passover*, till within four Months of the other; that is, near eight Months. So that this Journey into *Galilee* must be made near the Middle of *Winter*, probably about the Beginning of our *December*. See *Sir Isaac Newton*, on *Prophecy*, pag. 147, 148.

(*d*) A Term of Reproach.] It is remarkable, as *Mr. L'Enfant* observes, that *Sichar* in the *Syriac* Language signifies a *Drunkard*, and a *Liar*.

(*e*) Sat



Christ and the Woman of Samaria.

sat thus on the Well; and it was about the sixth Hour.

with his Journey, *sate down immediately* (e) **SECT. 29.**
by the Side of the Well, [and] it was then about John IV. 6.
the sixth Hour, or just high Noon; so that the Heat joined with the Fatigue of the Journey to increase both his Thirst and Faintness (f).

7 There cometh a Woman of Samaria to draw Water; Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

And at this very Juncture of Time, there comes a certain Woman of Samaria, to draw Water; and Jesus (on Purpose to introduce a Discourse, by which he graciously intended her Conversion and Salvation,) says unto her, I desire you would give me [some Water] to drink. For his Disciples were not near to assist him, but were gone to the neighbouring City to buy Food.

8 For his Disciples were gone away unto the City, to buy Meat.

8

9 Then saith the Woman of Samaria unto him, How is it, that thou being a Jew, askest Drink of me, which am a Woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no Dealings with the Samaritans.

9 Then says the Woman of Samaria to him, How is it, that thou, who art, as appears by thy Habit and Dialect, a Jew, askest Drink of me, who am a Woman of Samaria? For the Reader must observe, that the Jews have no friendly Intercourse with the Samaritans (g), nor

(e) *Sate down immediately.* [Eκασθῆτος ὡρῆς, that is, weary as he was, says Dr. Whitby. I think Mr. Blackwall has not sufficiently proved, that ὡρῆς sometimes signifies therefore, or for this Cause, though he has attempted it, in his Sacred Classics, vol. i. pag. 143, 144. The Particle seems to have much the Sense I have here given it. Acts xx. 11. and may often be rendered accordingly, upon that, or after which. See Acts vii. 8. xvii. 33. xxvii. 44. and John viii. 59. Compare Elshner Observ. vol. i. pag. 303.]

(f) The Heat joined with the Fatigue, &c.] It is well known, that in the Latitude in which Jerusalem lies, the Weather sometimes in December is exceeding hot at Noon, even on Days when the Cold has been very severe in the Morning.

(g) The Jews have no friendly Intercourse with the Samaritans.] This must be the Import of οὐκ ἔχουσιν here, for it is evident from ver. 8. that the Jews had some Dealings with them. It has been frequently observed, that many Causes concurred to occasion this inveterate Hatred of the Jews to the Samaritans; such as, — not only their foreign Extract, and the early Mixture of Superstition and Idolatry in their Religion, (2 Kings xvii. 24, 33,—41.)—but also the injurious Manner in which they treated the Jews after their Return from the Captivity; (Ezra iv. 1,—6. Neh. vi. 1,—14,)—and especially, their building a Temple on Mount Gerizim, which they made the Center of their Worship, in Opposition to that at Jerusalem. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 8.—And perhaps nothing contributed more, to expose them to the Contempt and Abhorrence of the Jews, than that infamous Offer they made to Antiochus, of dedicating that Temple to Jupiter, and admitting the Rites of his Idolatrous Worship, at a Time when the Jews were suffering the utmost Extremities in Defence of their Religion. See Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 5. (al. 7.) §. 5. Havercamp.—The Reader may find several Passages in Whitby, and Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in loc. that express the mutual Aversion of the two Nations to each other.

(h) *Ἐβραῖοι*

SECT. 29. nor so much as care to receive any Favour
 from them, looking upon them as an im-
 pure and accursed Nation.

John IV. 9.

10 *Jesus* to convince her, that he was not under the Power of such common Prejudices, and to awaken her farther Enquiries, answered and said unto her, *If thou hadst known the great Gift of GOD, which he is now bestowing upon the Children of Men by his Son, and who it is that says unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst not only have complied with his Request, but wouldst e'er this Time surely have asked him (b), and he, without objecting to thee on Account of the People to whom thou belongest, would readily have given thee living Water (i), far better than what thou art now drawing. By which our Lord intimated his Ability and Readiness to communicate those Influences of God's holy Spirit, which afford the noblest Refreshment to the Soul, and therefore are often described by Water.*

11 But *the Woman*, who understood him only in a common Sense, of fresh Spring Water, says to him with greater Respect than before, (as being struck, both with the Piety and Kindness of his former Reply,) *Sir, thou hast no Bucket (k), nor any Thing else to draw*

10 *Jesus* answered and said unto her, *If thou knewest the Gift of GOD, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living Water.*

11 *The Woman* saith unto him, *Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the Well*

(b) *Thou wouldst surely have asked him.*] This seems exactly to express the Force of the Phrase, *ου ου ηρωα; αυτου.*

(i) *He would have given thee living Water.*] It is certain, that the Phrase *living Water* does in many good Authors signify *Spring Water*, or *running Water*, in Opposition to that which stagnates, and so quickly grows not only *flat*, or as we commonly express it *dead*, but at length *corrupt*. (See *Elm. in loc.* and compare *Gen. xxvi. 19. Lev. xiv. 6. Jer. ii. 13.*) Yet as *our Lord* elsewhere in a remarkable Passage recorded by this Evangelist, (*John vi. 51.*) calls himself *living Bread*, because by Feeding upon him *Life* is to be obtained, it seemed convenient literally to adhere to the *Original* in this *Version*; though I own, it is very probable, this *Woman* understood *our Lord* of some fine *Spring Water*, which flowed so easily as not to need the Pains of *drawing*, and was, on this Account at least, preferable to that of *Jacob's Well*. And *our Lord's* Reply, *ver. 13, 14.* shews that the *Simile* would hold in that Respect.

(k) *Thou hast no Bucket.*] This, as it is the most material Instrument for *drawing Water*, answers the *Greek αυθημα*, better than any single *English* Word I recollect.

And

Well is deep; from whence then hast thou that living Water?

draw with, and the Well before thee, which is the only Spring hereabouts, is very deep; whence hast thou then this living Water, of which thou speakest? or what is the extra-ordinary Supply, which thou declarest may be had from thee? *Art thou greater and wiser, than our Father Jacob, who gave us this Well, leaving it to his Descendants as a Legacy of Importance; and while he lived, he drank of it, himself, with his Children, and his Cattle, as the best Water in these Parts?*

SECT. 29.
John IV. 11.

12 Art thou greater than our Father Jacob, which gave us the Well, and drank thereof himself, and his Children, and his Cattle?

Art thou greater and wiser, than our Father Jacob, who gave us this Well, leaving it to his Descendants as a Legacy of Importance; and while he lived, he drank of it, himself, with his Children, and his Cattle, as the best Water in these Parts?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this Water, shall thirst again:

Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this Water, how much soever it may be esteemed, though it refresh the Body for a little while, will quickly thirst again: But he that drinketh of the Water, which I shall give him, will find it so reviving to the Soul, that he will never thirst (I), or be in Danger any more of perishing for Want; but the Water which I shall give him, will be a never-failing Source for his Supply, and will be in him, as a Fountain of Water that will continually be springing up, and flowing on, to everlasting Life: For that which I shall communicate to him, will bring him to everlasting Composure and Satisfaction of Mind now, and will be the Earnest and Principle of Eternal Happiness.

15 The Woman saith unto

The Woman, still ignorant of his Spiritual Meaning, and understanding him only of Natu-

And we find afterwards, upon the Woman's returning in haste to the City, that she left her Water-pot, or Pail, behind her, ver. 28. which was the Vessel she had brought to draw with.—Mr. Maundrell tells us, that the Well, now shewn as Jacob's, is thirty-five Yards deep. Maund. Journey to Jerus. pag. 63.

(I) Will never thirst.] Some would render *ε μὴ διψῶναι ἢ τὸν αἰῶνα*, shall not thirst for ever; but not to urge how much this spoils the Antithesis, the Expression used, John vi. 35. *ε μὴ διψῶναι αἰῶνως*, is not liable to any such Ambiguity. The Force and Truth of our Lord's Assertion seems to lie in this, that the most impatient and restless Desires of the Soul being satisfied, when it is fixed on GOD as its supreme Happiness, other Thirst was not worth being mentioned. See John viii. 51, 52. Sect. 105. John xi. 26. Sect. 140. with the Notes on those Places; and John xiii. 10. Sect. 169.

- SECT. 29. Natural Water, *says unto him, Sir, I claim thy Promise, and desire thou wouldst give me this extraordinary Water, that I may not thirst any more, nor have the Trouble to come hither daily to draw it, as I now do.*
- John IV. 15.
- 16 *Jesus perceiving her Ignorance, and willing to discover himself to her, in a Manner that might more immediately touch her Conscience, says unto her, Go Home, and call thy Husband to me, and then come hither again.* *The Woman, sensible of the Way in which she lived, and thinking to conceal her Shame, answered and said, I have no Husband. Jesus says to her, Thou hast answered well, in that thou hast said, I have no Husband: For I know, that thou hast had five Husbands, and that he whom thou hast now with thee, as thou hast never been lawfully married to him, is not thy Husband (m); in this Respect thou hast spoken truly and properly.*
- 17 *The Woman, surprized at such an extraordinary Instance of his Knowledge, (yet desirous at the same time, to turn off the Discourse, from a Subject so much to her Confusion,) says to him, Sir, I perceive, by thy discovering the Circumstances of my Life so truly, tho' I am a perfect Stranger to thee, that thou art a Prophet; and therefore I would gladly take this Opportunity of being informed, concerning that great Question, which divides the Jewish and Samaritan Nations (n).*
- 16 *Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy Husband, and come hither.*
- 17 *The Woman answered and said, I have no Husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no Husband:*
- 18 *For thou hast had five Husbands, and he whom thou now hast, is not thy Husband: in that saidst thou truly.*
- 19 *The Woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a Prophet.*

It.

(m) *Is not thy Husband.*] This can imply no less, than that she was *not married* to the Man she lived with *now*, at all; for *Christ* seems to allow, the other *five* to have been *Husbands*, though her Separation from some of the former, and her Marriage with the rest, had probably been unlawful; which quite overthrows that Argument, which *Jerom* would draw from hence, against the Lawfulness of *marrying more than once*. See *Heinsius, in loc.*

(n) *That great Question, which divides the Jewish and Samaritan Nations.*] It is well known, and necessary to be recollected here, that *Sanballat*, by the Permission of *Alexander*

20 Our Fathers worshipped in this Mountain; and we say, that in Jerusalem is the Place where Men ought to worship.

It is well known from the Mosaic Writings, SECT. 29. that our Fathers worshipped on this Mountain (o), which we think a Circumstance of John IV. 20. considerable Weight in our Favour; where as you Jews say, that the Temple at Jerusalem is the great Place, where we should all present our Sacrifices unto GOD, and ought to attend upon the Duties of his Worship, and whither all the Tribes are to resort three Times a Year. I would beg therefore to be informed by thee in this important Case, which of the Two I should believe, and which is really the Place most acceptable unto GOD.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the Hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this Mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

In Answer to this Case of Conscience, 21 Jesus says to her, Woman, believe me, and attend to what I say, The Hour is now coming, when this Controversy shall be intirely over, and neither on this Mountain, nor at Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father, in the same Manner as you now do; for GOD is going now to introduce such a pure and spiritual Dispensation, as will remove all Manner of Distinctions as to the Place in which he would be worshipped, and supersede the Ceremonies practised here or there. But as to this Dispute which has 22 so long been carried on between the Jews and

22 Ye worship ye know not

Alexander the Great, had built a Temple upon Mount Gerizim, for Manasseh his Son-in-Law, who, for marrying Sanballat's Daughter, was expelled from the Priesthood, and from Jerusalem. (See Neh. xiii. 28. and Joseph. Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 8.) This was the Place where the Samaritans used to worship, in Opposition to Jerusalem; and it was so near Sichem, the Scene of this Story, that a Man's Voice might be heard from the one to the other. Judg. ix. 7.

(o) Our Fathers worshipped on this Mountain.] As the Samaritans pretended to deduce their Genealogy from Jacob, so it is evident, that this refers to Abraham, and to Jacob, who erected Altars in this Place, (Gen. xii. 6, 7. and xxxiii. 18, 20.) and possibly to the whole Congregation, who were directed, when they came into the Land of Canaan, to put the Blessing upon Mount Gerizim. Deut. xi. 29.—And though Hyrcanus the Son of Simon, who succeeded his Father as High-Priest and Prince of the Jews, had long ago destroyed the Temple, which Sanballat built here; (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 9. [al. 17.] §. 1.) yet it is plain, that the Samaritans still resorted thither, having, no doubt, rebuilt it, though probably in a meaner Manner.

A a 2

(p) Worship

SECT. 29. and you, it is apparent on the Principles of the Mosaic Religion, that you Samaritans are in a gross Mistake ; and with respect not only to the Place, but in a great Measure to the Object also, and the Manner of your Services, *you worship you know not what* : Whereas *we* Jews are much better instructed in these Things, and *know* whom, and on *what* Authority *we* worship : For truly the Salvation GOD has promised to his People is to arise from the Jews, and the Way of obtaining it is with the greatest Advantage

John IV. 22.

- 23 to be learnt among them. *Nevertheless*, as I said before, I assure you again, *the Hour approaches, and now is* just arrived, *when the true and acceptable Worshippers shall worship the great Father* of all, not with these external Rites, on which you lay so much Stress, but *in Spirit and in Truth (p)*, or in a more devotional and rational Manner, to which these corporeal and typical Ordinances must soon give Way ; *for the Father seeketh such to worship him*, as that kind of Homage is most suited to his own Nature, as well as peculiarly delightful and useful to the pious
- 24 Mind. For *GOD is himself a pure Spirit ; and therefore they that worship him, ought to worship him in Spirit and in Truth* : And as some Degree of Spirituality and Sincerity is necessary under every Dispensation, you need not wonder, if at length he set aside those external Rites, which were never principally regarded by him.

not what ; we know what we worship ; for Salvation is of the Jews.

23 But the Hour cometh, and now is, when the true Worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth : for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 GOD is a Spirit ; and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

The

(p) *Worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth.*] Truth is elsewhere opposed to Types and Ceremonies, *John i. 14, 17. Heb. viii. 2. ix. 24.* This important Sentiment, as likewise what is said in *ver. 24.* is well illustrated by many fine Quotations from ancient Writers by *Grotius, in loc.* And all that know any thing of that learned Commentator, know that he has a thousand rich Collections of this Kind, which do great Honour to *Scripture*, by illustrating its superior Beauties ; but it would be quite foreign to the Design of this Work, either to transcribe such Collections, or to attempt any Supplement to them.

I

(g) *Teach*

25 The Woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all Things.

The Woman saith unto him, I know that **SECT. 29.**
the Messiah, who is called Christ, is coming, ^{John IV. 25.}
 and will soon appear; [and] when he is actually come, he will undoubtedly teach us all these sublime Truths at which you have been hinting, and whatever other Things it is necessary for us to know (q).

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee, am he.

Upon her mentioning this, as *Jesus* was **26.**
 not apprehensive of those Inconveniencies here, which might have attended such an open Acknowledgment among the Jews (r), he plainly and directly tells her in so many Words, *I that am now speaking to thee, am He*: A Declaration, which, no doubt, she heard with great Amazement; but before she could answer him, the Disciples appeared, which for the present put an End to the Conference.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Condescending and compassionate Redeemer! who would thus ^{John iv.}
 graciously converse with a Samaritan, with a Woman of an ^{6, — 9.}
 infamous Reputation too, from whom, on various Accounts, a
 haughty Pharisee would have turned away in proud Disdain! and
 could

(q) *Teach us all Things* it is necessary for us to know.] This, (as well as *ver.*
 29, 42.) plainly proves, both that the Samaritans expected the *Messiah*, and that they
 concluded he would be a *Prophet*.

(r) Not apprehensive of those Inconveniencies here, which might have attended
 such an open Acknowledgment among the Jews.] That *Christ* was very cautious of
 acknowledging himself to be the promised *Messiah*, in his conversing with the *Jews*,
 is very apparent: (Compare *Mat.* xvi. 20. *Mark* viii. 29, 30. *Luke* xxii. 67. and
John x. 24.) And the Reason was, that the *Jews* had such Notions of the *Temporal*
Kingdom of the *Messiah*, that they would have construed an open Declaration of him-
 self, under that Character, as a Claim to the *Throne of David*; in Consequence of
 which, many would have taken up Arms in the Cause, (*John* vi. 15.) and others
 would have accused him to the *Roman Governor*, as a Rebel against *Cæsar*; (*Luke* xx.
 20.) as they afterwards did, *Luke* xxiii. 2. — This *Mr. Locke* has stated at large, in
 his *Reasonableness of Christianity*, pag. 59, — 77. Yet I think there was a Nicety in
Christ's Conduct, beyond what is there represented; for *our Lord* in Effect declared
 the Thing, while he declined that particular Title; and, in a Multitude of Places, re-
 presents himself as the *Son of Man*, and the *Son of GOD*, which were both equivalent
 Phrases, and generally understood by the *Jews*, though a *Roman* would not so easily
 have entered into the Force of them. Accordingly we find, this Interpretation was
 in Fact given to them. *John* vii. 31, 41. and ix. 22.

SECT. 29. could forget his *Thirst*, pressing as that Appetite is, that he might instruct, and lead her to the *Waters of Life*!

John iv. 10. Gracious *Gift of GOD* to the Children of Men! How noble and how lasting a Delight, does it administer! Let it be our Language, Lord, evermore give us this *Living Water*! Oh, pour out

Ver. 15. this enlivening *Spirit* on us, which alone can allay the *Thirst* of our

Ver. 13. Souls, and give us that lasting Satisfaction, which we in vain would seek from these *broken Cisterns*, from these precarious Streams; till

Ver. 14. at length the *Fountain springs up* in Paradise, and flows on to *Life everlasting*!

Ver. 23. May this good *Spirit* anticipate those immortal Delights to our Souls, by leading us into that *Spirituality of Worship*, which the

Nature of *GOD* demands, and which the Gospel-Dispensation is so eminently calculated to promote! Let it be inscribed on our Hearts,

Ver. 24. that *GOD is a Spirit*; and let it teach us to *worship him in Spirit and in Truth*. Such *Worshippers the Father seeks*; such may he ever find in us!

Ver. 20, 21. May all intemperate Zeal for Matters of doubtful Disputation, all Sentiments of Bigotry and Severity against our Brethren, be happily swallowed up, in this infinitely greater Concern! and while others contend about *Places and Forms of Worship*, may we pour out our *Hearts* before him, and feel the *Love of GOD* and Man, *shed abroad in them, by his Spirit given unto us*! (Rom. v. 5.)

S E C T. XXX.

*CHRIST'S Discourse with his Disciples at Jacob's-Well:
His Visit to the Samaritans, and their Regards to him.*

John IV. 27,—42.

JOHN IV. 27.

SECT. 30. **T**HUS expressly did Jesus declare to the Woman of Samaria, that he was the Messiah; and immediately upon this, his *Disciples*, (who, as was said before, were gone into the City to buy Food,) came to this Well, where Jesus had appointed them to meet him; and they wondered, that he was thus

John IV. 27.

JOHN IV. 27.

AND upon this came his *Disciples*, and marvelled that he talked with the *Woman*;

His Disciples return, and the Woman goes to the City.

man; yet no Man said, What seekest thou? or, why talkest thou with her?

that *talking* in so friendly a Manner *with* **SECT. 30.**
the Woman (a), whom they knew to be one **John IV. 27.**
of that Nation, so peculiarly obnoxious to the
Jews. But though it gave them some Uneasiness, yet they had such a Reverence for him, that *none* of them said, *What dost thou seek from this Samaritan? or, why dost thou talk with her?*

28 The Woman then left her Water-pot, and went her Way into the City, and saith to the Men,

Then the Woman, seeing other Company 28
coming up to interrupt the Discourse, immediately *left her Water-pot* or Pail behind her, as her Thoughts were taken up with Matters of far greater Importance; *and went away in Haste to the neighbouring City, and says to the Men* of her Acquaintance there, *Come directly to Jacob's-Well, and you may* 29
there see a wonderful Man, who has told me, in a manner, all that ever I did, even some of the most secret Circumstances of my past Life: Is not this the expected Messiah? I assure you, it seems exceeding probable to me that he is; and he himself has told me so in so many Words.

29 Come, see a Man which told me all Things that ever I did: Is not this the Christ?

30 Then they went out of the City, and came unto him.

They therefore, struck with so great a 30
Name, in Concurrence with so strange an Event, *went in great Numbers out of the City, and came to him*, who still continued where the Woman left him.

31 In the mean while his Disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

In the mean Time, the Disciples intreated 31
him to refresh himself, saying, Rabbi, eat
of

(a) *With the Woman, μετὰ γυναικός.*] As the Article is wanting, the Prussian Testament, and many others render it, *with a Woman*; and Dr. Lightfoot, in his Note on this Place, has produced a great many unaccountable, and some of them very stupid Passages, from the Talmud, and other Rabbinical Writers, to prove that it was reckoned scandalous for a Man of Distinction to talk publicly with a Woman. (See Lightfoot's Hor. Hebra. in loc.) But the Disciples surely knew, that Jacob, and Moses, and others of their greatest and holiest Prophets, had done it; and some of them in Circumstances remarkably resembling this, in which the Woman came to draw Water. Compare Gen. xxix. 9,—12. Exod. ii. 15,—17. (See also 1 Sam. ix. 11,—14.) It is plain, the Wonder here was, that he talked with a Samaritan.—As for the Omission of the Article, see Note (b) on John i. 1. pag. 5. and the End of Note (d) in this Section, on John iv. 36.

SECT. 30. of the Provisions we have brought thee (b).

But he, referring to the Conversation he had lately had with the Woman, and to the Preparation making for the Conversion of the Samaritans, *said unto them,* with an Air of great Satisfaction; *I have Meat to eat, that ye know not of,* which gives me a much better Entertainment, than you can bring me.

33 *The Disciples therefore,* not understanding his Words in that spiritual Sense in which he intended them, *said one to another* with some Surprize, considering where he was, *Has any one* been with him in our Absence, and *brought him* any [Food] to eat here?

34 *Jesus,* who knew the Loss they were at to understand his Meaning, *says,* to explain it *to them,* My most refreshing and delightful Food is to do the Will of him that sent me into the World, and to finish his Work as fast as possible, in the Conversion of Souls, and in the Propagation of his Kingdom; and I with Pleasure can assure you, that it is now going on successfully.

35 *Do not you say,* that there are yet four Months, and Harvest cometh (c)? Nay but behold,

32 But he said unto them, I have Meat to eat, that ye know not of.

33 Therefore said the Disciples one to another, Hath any Man brought him ought to eat?

34 Jesus saith unto them, My Meat is to do the Will of him that sent me, and to finish his Work.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four Months, and then cometh Harvest? Behold, I say

(b) *Eat of the Provisions we have brought thee.*] Their bringing back the Provisions to him here, makes it probable, that he did not intend, had it not been on this Occasion, to have gone into the Town; and so (as was said in the *Paraphrase, ver. 27.*) ordered his *Disciples* to meet him at this Place, which was undoubtedly well known to Travellers.

(c) *There are yet four Months, and Harvest cometh.*] *Dr. Whitby,* and *Grotius,* and many others understand this, as if *our Lord* had said, "It is a *Proverbial Expression,* for the Encouragement of Husbandmen, that there are but *four Months* between *Seed-time,* and *Harvest.*" And the Author of the *late English Translation* therefore renders it, (in his *Paraphrastic Manner,*) *You commonly say, 'other four Months, and the Harvest will come.* But I cannot acquiesce in this Interpretation: (1.) Because none of the learned Writers mentioned above, nor *Dr. Lightfoot,* who is large on this Text, could produce any such *Proverb.* (2.) Because indeed there could be no Foundation for it, since the Distance between *Seed-time* and *Harvest* must differ, according to the different Kinds of Grain in question. And, (3.) Because if there had been such a *Proverb,* it would have been improper to apply it here; since *our Lord* was not speaking of the Period of Time between the *Prophets sowing,* and the *Apostles reaping,* (to which *four Months* has no Analogy;) but only means to tell them, that though they reckoned yet *four Months* to the *Earthly Harvest,* the *Spiritual Harvest* was now ripe.

say unto you, Lift up your Eyes, and look on the Fields; for they are white already to Harvest.

behold, I say unto you, Lift up your Eyes even now, and survey the Fields round about you; for they are already laden with a plentiful Crop, and appear white unto the Harvest: Alluding to the Disposition of the People in general, and more particularly to the Multitude of Samaritans, who, struck with the Report of the Woman, were coming to enquire after him as the Messiah; and unto whom he pointed, and directed them to look, as being then within their View.

SECT. 30.
John IV. 35.

36 And he that reapeth, receiveth Wages, and gathereth Fruit unto Life eternal: that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together.

And he yet farther added, It is your Happiness to be employed in such a Work as this; for he that faithfully reaps the Harvest, of which I now speak, receiveth far more valuable Wages than Men can give, and has the great additional Satisfaction of thinking, that he gathers in the Fruit unto eternal Life (d): So that on this Account, both he that sows, and he that reaps, may rejoice together; and those Souls, to whose Salvation they have in different Ways contributed, will be to both, a Crown of Honour, and Objects of everlasting Complacency and Delight.

36

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

For in this Sense it may be justly said, that herein is that Proverbial Saying remarkably true, One soweth, and another reapeth; for after he has sown his Field, it often happens, that a Man dies, before he gathers in the

37

ripe. So that I chuse, as Sir Isaac Newton does, to take the Words in their plainest Sense, as an Intimation, that it was then four Months to the Beginning of Harvest. See Note (c) on ver. 3. pag. 182. And I take this Passage to be of great Importance, for settling the Chronology of Christ's Ministry.

(d) Gathers in the Fruit unto eternal Life.] I apprehend our Lord's Thought here, to have been more comprehensive, than Commentators have been aware. He seems to compare the Case of a Christian Minister, to that of a considerate Reaper, who is supported in his Fatigue, not only by a Regard to his own Wages, but to the Advantage which the Publick receives by the Harvest he gathers in. This the Expression συναγαγει καρπον εις ζωην αιωνιον, seems plainly to import, and so is nearly parallel to Jam. v. 20. and suggests a most forcible Consideration, to Diligence and Zeal.—Καρπος here seems to be put for τοι καρπον, the Fruit, that is, the Souls, he gathers in.

SECT. 30. the Harvest, and so leaves it to another, who enjoys the Advantage of his Pains. And thus it is, that *I have sent you forth to reap the Fruit of that, on which you have not laboured*, either to till or sow the Ground; the Prophets, and other holy Men of former Ages, having toiled, as it were, to cultivate the Field, and thereby made your Work a great deal easier than it would otherwise have been. So that the Success of my Preaching this Day in your Absence, is an Emblem of what GOD has wisely ordered in the Course of his Providence: *Others have laboured, and you are entered into the Field, on which their Labour has been carefully employed (e)*. Let this engage you therefore, to apply yourselves in Earnest to your Work, with a becoming Spirit, and a ready Cheerfulness.

John IV. 38.

39 Now when the Woman had informed the People, of the Discourse which she had had with Jesus, *many of the Samaritans from that City believed on him*, as some extraordinary Person, *by reason of that Saying of the Woman, who testified concerning him, He told me all that ever I did.* When therefore the Samaritans had heard the wonderful Account the Woman gave of Jesus, and were come with her to the Well to see him, they were so taken with the Manner of his Deportment, and the Strain of his Discourses, that *they intreated him to tarry with them for some Time*, as being desirous of a farther Acquaintance with him, and of receiving farther Benefit from his Instructions: *And ready to lay hold of every Opportunity of doing good, he went with them to their City, and continued there two Days (f).*
And

38 I sent you to reap that, whereon ye bestowed no Labour: other Men laboured, and ye are entered into their Labours.

39 And many of the Samaritans of that City believed on him, for the Saying of the Woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: And he abode there two Days.

(e) The Field on which *their Labour* has been employed.] This seems the Signification of *κοπος* here, as *Grotius* well proves. Compare 2 *Cor.* x. 15.

(f) *Continued there two Days.*] This was a proper *Medium*, between entirely neglecting them, and giving them so much of his Time and Company, as would have

broken

41 And many more believed, because of his own Word :

And there were many more, who in this Time believed on him (g), on Account of his own Discourse, which they might also see confirmed by some extraordinary Works. SECT. 30.
John IV. 41.

42 And said unto the Woman, Now we believe, not because of thy Saying : For we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World.

And they said to the Woman, Now we believe, and that not merely, nor yet chiefly, on Account of what thou hast spoken of him ; for we ourselves have heard him teach, and have examined his Credentials ; and by the most convincing Evidence, we know, that this is really the Christ, the Saviour of the World (h), even the expected Messiah, and are determined to regard him as such. 42

I M P R O V E M E N T.

LET us behold with Pleasure, the glorious Example of our Blessed Redeemer, and learn to imitate his Zeal. It was his Meat and Drink to pursue his Father's Work, to glorify God, and do Good to Souls : And ought it not to be ours ? Let us bless God, for every Opportunity of applying to it, and every Field of Service, which Providence opens to us. John iv. 34.

Let Gospel-Ministers, especially, be thankful, for all that hath been done to introduce their Services, not only by the Ministrations of the Prophets under the Old Testament, but by the Apostles also under the New, and by succeeding Servants of Christ in every Age of the Church. In this Sense, with regard to us, is that Proverb true, One soweth, and another reapeth. We have entered into Ver. 38.
Ver. 37.

broken in upon the Design of his Journey into Galilee, or might have given Umbrage to the Jews.

(g) Many more believed on him.] This was the more extraordinary, as they not only had a National Prejudice against him as a Jew, but living near Mount Gerizim, had a particular Interest in maintaining the usual Worship there ; which must be very advantageous to the Neighbourhood. Perhaps on this they would no longer worship there, which might irritate the rest of the Samaritans, and might in part provoke the ill Usage, that Christ afterwards met with in this Country. Luke ix. 52, 53.

(h) The Saviour of the World.] They might probably collect from what was prophesied by Jacob of the Messiah, Gen. xlix. 10. To him shall the Gathering of the People be ; that the Gentile Nations were to receive some Benefit by the Messiah's Coming, and one Way or another to be subjected to him ; and Christ's Discourse might confirm that Apprehension : But there is no Reason at all to believe, they perfectly understood the Doctrine of the Calling of the idolatrous Gentiles, which was so long a Mystery even to the Apostles themselves.

SECT. 30. *into the Labours of others: May others in Time enter into ours!*

May the Work be delivered over from one faithful Hand to another, and be carried on by each with growing Zeal and Success! Blessed Time, when all the *Workmen* shall meet, and join their Songs; and each of the Souls *gathered in to eternal Life*, shall be, to all concerned in their Conversion, or Edification, an Ornament of Glory, and a Source of Pleasure!

Ver. 29. Surely if we *know Christ* ourselves, we shall, like this *Woman of Samaria*, be solicitous to communicate the Knowledge to others, and

Ver. 28. shall sometimes forget our little *Worldly Interests*, to attend to this vastly superior Care. May we *believe in him*, not merely on the

Ver. 41, 42. Report and *Testimony of others*, but on our own *Experience*; that having *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, we may bear a more lively and effectual Testimony to him!

Let us watchfully observe the Leadings of Providence; and whatever our own Schemes may have been, let us still adjust our Conduct by the Intimations of present Duty; and especially, where we have Reason to believe, that GOD is by his *Spirit* beginning to work on Men's Hearts, let us be ambitious of being *Workers together with him*. *A Word spoken in such a Season is remarkably good*, and it is a great Part of Christian and Ministerial Prudence, to observe, and improve those tender Times.

S E C T. XXXI.

CHRIST comes from Samaria into Galilee, and while at Cana cures a Nobleman's Son, who lay at the Point of Death in Capernaum. Mark I. 14, 15. Mat. IV. 12. John IV. 43, to the End.

MARK I. 14.

SECT. 31. *NOW* after John was cast into Prison, and Jesus had heard [of it] in Judea, where he then was, he withdrew from thence, [and] came into Galilee (a), (as was said before,

MARK I. 14.

NOW after that John was put in Prison, [when Jesus had heard that, —he

John.

(a) *After John was cast into Prison, Jesus withdrew and came into Galilee.*] It is strange that Mr. Whiston, and some others, should represent it as an Argument against

JESUS goes on to Galilee, after John's Imprisonment. 197

—he departed, and] came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God; [MAT. IV. 12.]

John iv. 3. Sect. 29.) being willing to take the Advantage of those Impressions, which the Ministry of John might have made, on the Minds of the People there, who had so signal an Esteem for him; an Esteem, which would be heightened, rather than abated by the injurious Things which they saw him suffer. Jesus came therefore into that Country (b), *preaching the good News of the Kingdom of GOD*, which was speedily to be erected by the Messiah, whom GOD had appointed to raise and govern it; *And saying, Behold the Time fixed by the ancient Prophets, is now fulfilled, and the Kingdom of GOD is near; see to it therefore that you cordially repent of all your Sins, and believe the Gospel, which I publish to you, that you may secure an Interest in the Blessings of it.*

SECT. 31.
Mark I. 14.

15 *And saying, the Time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of GOD is at hand: Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.*

And having been prevailed upon (as we have seen before,) to stop at Sichar in his Way, after he had continued there two Days with the Samaritans, he departed from thence, and went, (as has been just now said) into Galilee. And he chose to make a Journey through a considerable Part of it, before he returned to Nazareth; that the Reputation he

15

JOHN IV. 43. Now after two Days, he departed thence, [that is, from Sichar,] and went into Galilee.

John IV. 43-

44 For Jesus himself testified,

44

against the Order, we have followed here; that it would have been imprudent, and inconvenient for Christ, to have gone immediately into Herod's Territories, just after he had seized John; when two of the Evangelists assure us, this was the very Reason of his Journey. The Cause of John's Imprisonment was particular; and the Reasons assigned in the Paraphrase seem considerable, besides that already mentioned. John iv. 1, 3. See Note (a), pag. 181.

(b) Jesus came therefore into that Country.] Mr. Le Clerc supposes, (in his Harmony, pag. 75.) that Jesus went from Sichar directly to Nazareth, and that this Visit which he made to Cana, (at ver. 46.) was some Time after he was expelled from Nazareth, and had dwelt at Capernaum. But that he took a Circuit elsewhere before he went to Nazareth, is certain from John iv. 43, 44. compared with Luke iv. 14,—16. And though we cannot positively say, whether the Visit to Cana was made in this first Journey, or in the other, which is mentioned afterwards, (Luke iv. 44. Mat. iv. 23. and Mark i. 38, 39. Sect. 36.) yet I have introduced it here, because John mentions it immediately after his coming from Sichar; and it has been a Maxim with me in this Work, to take all the Stories and Discourses in the Order they lie, if there be not, (from other Evangelists,) a plain Reason for transposing them.

4.

(c) For

SECT. 31. he gained elsewhere, might be some Balance to those Prejudices, which the Inhabitants of that Place would naturally entertain against him: *For Jesus himself testified, that a Prophet has no Honour in his own Country (c)*; where those that knew him in his Childhood and Youth, can hardly be persuaded, to look upon him with the Reverence due to a Messenger from GOD.

John IV. 44.

45 *When therefore he came into Galilee, the Galileans received and entertained him with a great deal of Pleasure; (compare Luke iv. 14, 15.) for many of them had been Witnesses to his surprising Miracles, having seen all the wonderful Things that he did at Jerusalem during the Feast of the Passover, (for they also came to the Feast;) and they had now an Expectation of seeing some of them renewed. Jesus therefore, encouraged by this Readiness of theirs to attend his Ministry, pursued his Journey till he came again to Cana of Galilee; which was the Place, where he before had made the Water Wine.*

46 *Jesus therefore, encouraged by this Readiness of theirs to attend his Ministry, pursued his Journey till he came again to Cana of Galilee; which was the Place, where he before had made the Water Wine.*

47 *And while he stayed at Cana, there was a certain Nobleman belonging to King Herod's Court (d), whose Son was dangerously ill at Capernaum; [Who] when he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, went*

tified, that a Prophet hath no Honour in his own Country.

45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the Things that he did at Jerusalem, at the Feast: For they also went unto the Feast.

46. So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the Water Wine.

And there was a certain Nobleman, whose Son was sick at Capernaum:

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto

(c) *For Jesus himself testified, that a Prophet has no Honour in his own Country.] There is no manner of Occasion here, to render *γὰρ*, although; for it is plain, that this is spoken as the Reason, why he rather chose, to travel into those Parts of Galilee, and not to go directly to Nazareth; which is particularly called his own Country, in Distinction from Galilee, and even from Capernaum. Luke iv. 23.*

(d) *A certain Nobleman belonging to King Herod's Court.] Though Herod was only Tetrarch of Galilee, yet was he commonly distinguished by the Title of King; (see Mat. xiv. 9. and Mark vi. 14. Sect. 77.) and as Capernaum lay in his Dominions, it is probable, that this was one belonging to his Court, who was a Nobleman of some Distinction. For this is properly the Signification of *βασιλικός*, which the Syriac and Arabic Versions render, a Minister, or Servant of the King: And many have conjectured, that the Person who is here spoken of, was Chuzai, Herod's Steward, whose Wife is thought to have been converted on this Occasion, and became afterwards an Attendant on Christ. Luke viii. 3.*

(e) At

unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his Son; for he was at the Point of Death.

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see Signs and Wonders, ye will not believe.

49 The Nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my Child die.

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy Way; thy Son liveth. And the Man believed

went in Person at least a Day's Journey (e) SECT. 31.
cross the Country, to him, and earnestly in- John IV. 47.
treated him that he would come down to

Capernaum, and cure his Son; for he was given over by the Physicians, and seemd 48
just ready to die. Jesus said therefore unto

him, and them that were about him, I perceive that though the Samaritans shewed so great a Regard to my Word, and the Report of my Miracles, *unless you see* with your own Eyes some remarkable and repeated Signs and Wonders, you will not believe: Thereby justly reprov-
ing him and them, for that Mixture of Suspicion and Slowness of Faith, which he discerned in their Minds (f).

The Nobleman, weak as his Faith was, determined nevertheless to urge the Matter to the utmost; and therefore without any Explication or Apology on that Head, *says to him, Sir, I beseech thee to come down before my Child die;* for the Case is so extreme, that a Delay may be attended with the most fatal Consequences. 49

Upon which Jesus, 50
to shew that it was not necessary for him to go in Person to accomplish the Cure, *says to him, Go thy Way Home,* for I assure thee, that *thy Son* is living, and at this Instant, while I am speaking to thee, *is recovered* from his Illness. And the Man, tho' he had never seen, or heard of a parallel Case

(e) At least a Day's Journey.] This may be very fairly inferred from *ver. 52*, as well as from the Accounts, the best Geographers give of the Situation of *Cana* and *Capernaum*.

(f) Reproving him and them, for that Mixture of Suspicion, &c.] It is necessary to suppose some such Reference, to illustrate the Justice of this Reproof; for in the general it was very reasonable to expect, that *Christ* should work Miracles in Proof of his Divine Mission, as he himself does plainly intimate elsewhere. See *John xv. 24*. Who can tell, but the very Person now applying to him, might have made some such Declaration, that he would never believe such Things, till he saw them with his own Eyes? *Christ* might mean by this Reflection to humble him, and to shew him a Specimen of his extraordinary Knowledge, as well as Power.

(g) Tho'

SECT. 31. Case (g), believed the Word that Jesus spoke unto him, and went away without any farther Importunity.

John IV. 50.

51 Now the Day after he had took his Leave of Jesus, as he was going down to Capernaum, some of his Servants met him on the Road, eager to bring him such acceptable News, and told [him,] saying, Thy Son who was so dangerously ill, is now recovered.

52 And therefore, to compare it with the Account that Jesus gave, he presently enquired of them, what was the Hour when he began to mend: And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh Hour, or at One in the Afternoon, the Fever left him at once, and he grew well on a sudden.

53 The Father therefore knew, that [it was] at the very Hour, in which Jesus said to him, Thy Son is recovered; and when he came to reflect on the astonishing Circumstances of the Case, he and his whole Family believed, that the Person by whom so convincing and beneficent a Miracle was wrought, must be, not only as he before supposed, some great Prophet, but even the Messiah himself.

54 This is again the second Miracle which Jesus performed at Cana; and he wrought it, when he came out of Judea into Galilee; a Circumstance in which it agreed with the former (b).

lied the Word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his Way.

51 And as he was now going down, his Servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy Son liveth.

52 Then enquired he of them the Hour, when he began to amend: And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh Hour the Fever left him.

53 So the Father knew that it was at the same Hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy Son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole House.

54 This is again the second Miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

John iv. 44. **H**OW unreasonable are the Passions and Prejudices of Mankind, and this in particular, that a Prophet should have no Honour in his own Country! One would have imagined, that Jesus at least, free

(g) Tho' he had never seen or heard of a parallel Case.] It is plain he had heard of Christ's Miracles, but this is the first recorded, in which he cured the Patient at a Distance, and probably was hitherto in this Respect unequalled.

(b) A Circumstance in which it agreed with the former.] Compare John i. 43. and ii. 1. That the Words must be taken with such a Limitation, evidently appears from what John had before said of the many Miracles which Christ had already wrought elsewhere. See John ii. 23. and iii. 2.

free as he was from all the Follies of Childhood and Youth, should SECT. 31.
 have been an Exception; nay indeed, that he should have been pe-
 culiarly honoured there, where his early Wisdom and Piety could
 not but be observed.

Our Lord however intended them a Visit, even at *Nazareth*; and Ver. 43.
 it is the Duty of his *Ministers*, to bear their Testimony, *whether Men*
will bear, or whether they will forbear. Yet should they learn of
 their great Master, to study as much as they can, to obviate those
 Prejudices which might prevent their Usefulness, and should use the
 most prudent and gentle Methods to vanquish them.

Such was this beneficial *Miracle of our Lord*; which may afford
 us many Particulars worthy of our Notice. With what Affection
 and Zeal, does this tender *Parent* apply to *Christ*, on the Sicknes Ver. 47.
 of his *Child*! Let us not be less importunate, when soliciting Spiritu-
 al Blessings, in behalf of our dear Offspring: And so much the
 rather, as *their Lives* are so precarious, and we know not how soon Ver. 49.
 these lovely *Flowers* may be cut down, and all farther Petitions
 for them be for ever superseded.

Our Lord, while at a *Distance* from the Patient, wrought and Ver. 50, 51.
 perfected the Cure. And has he not still the same Divine Power,
 though he does not exert it in the same miraculous Way? Let not
 his *bodily Absence* abate our Faith, while praying for others, or for
 ourselves.

Salvation now came to this *House*, and Blessings infinitely more Ver. 53.
 valuable, than noble Blood, or ample Possessions, or royal Favour,
 or recovered Health could give; for *the Cure* wrought on the *Body*
of one, was a Means of producing *Faith* in the *Hearts of all*. Blessed
Jesus! thy Power was no less employed in the latter, than in the
 former. Oh may that Power work in such a Manner on our Souls,
 as that we all may be disposed, cordially to receive thee, and cheer-
 fully to venture our *eternal All* upon thee! May *we and our Houses*
 concur in so wise and happy a Resolution: And not insisting upon
Evidence beyond what thy gracious Wisdom has thought fit to give Ver. 48.
 us, may we candidly receive the Light we have, and faithfully im-
 prove it so, as to be at length intitled to the *Blessedness* of those, *who*
have not seen, and yet have believed! (*John xx. 29.*)

S E C T. XXXII.

CHRIST *preaching at Nazareth, is at first admired, but immediately after rejected: The People there making an Attempt upon his Life, he leaves them, and comes to Capernaum. Luke IV. 14,—30.*

LUKE IV. 14.

SECT. 32. **I**T has already been observed, that after John the Baptist was imprisoned, and *Jesus* was acquainted with it, he left Judea, and returned into Galilee; and from what follows it will be plainly seen, that he went thither under the Guidance, and in the Power of the Spirit (a); for as a mighty Impulse on his own Mind determined him to undertake the Journey, so an amazing Divine Energy attended his Progress through it; and his Renown was spread abroad, as soon as he arrived in Galilee, and went through all
 15 *the neighbouring Region.* And ready to embrace all Opportunities that offered to instruct the People, he went from Place to Place, and taught in their Synagogues, with universal Admiration and Applause (b).
 16 And having thus prepared his Way, he came at length to Nazareth, where it has been observed before, (Mat. ii. 23. and Luke ii. 51.) that he was educated; and according to his Custom, which he constantly observed there, and elsewhere, he entered into the Synagogue

LUKE IV. 14.

AND *Jesus* returned in the Power of the Spirit into Galilee, and there went out a Fame of him through all the Region round about.

15 And he taught in their Synagogues, being glorified of all.

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his Custom was, he went into the Syna-

(a) *In the Power of the Spirit.*] It seems a very wild Thought of Mr. Fleming's, that this intimates, *Christ* was transported through the Air hither, after his Temptation in the Wilderness. See *Flem. Christol.* vol. ii. pag. 315.

(b) *With universal Applause:* δὲ δόξα μὲν πάντων ἡρώδων.] Our Translation, which has rendered it, *being glorified of all*, is indeed more literal: But *to glorify a Preacher* is an uncommon Phrase in English; and that I have used is so plainly equivalent to the other in Signification, that I hope it may be allowed as very just.

(c) Being

Synagogue on the Sabbath-Day, and stood up for to read.

nagogue on the Sabbath-Day; and out of Regard to the high Reputation he had lately gained, being desired by the Ruler of it to officiate (c), he stood up to read the Scriptures, which made a constant Part of their publick Worship. (See Acts xv. 21.)

SECT. 32.
LukelV. 16.

17 And there was delivered unto him the Book of the Prophet Esaias; and when he had opened the Book, he found the Place where it was written,

And the Book of Iſaiab the Prophet was delivered to him, a Paragraph of the Law having been read before; and unrolling the Volume of the Book (d), he found that Place of it, (Iſa. lxi. 1, 2, 3.) where it was written to this Effect (e);

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the Poor, he hath sent

“ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me in an abundant Degree, for the important Purpose to which he hath anointed me (f), and solemnly set me apart; and important indeed it is, [for] he hath sent me, to preach good News to the Poor and Afflicted (g), to heal those whose Hearts

(c) Being desired by the Ruler of it to officiate.] One cannot but be amazed at the Ignorance of Suidas, in arguing from hence, that Christ was a Priest. It is well known that any Man of Gravity and Reputation might, at the Request of the Ruler, officiate on such Occasions. Compare Acts xiii. 15.

(d) Unrolling the Volume of the Book.] So ἀνατέλλας properly signifies, and I chuse to retain it, that the Form of the Books then used may thus be recollected: They were, as the Copies of the Old Testament in the Jewish Synagogues now are, long Scrolls of Parchment, that were rolled upon two Sticks. The Reader may see an excellent Account of them, in Mr. Jer. Jones's Vindication of St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. xv. pag. 151,—170. And this Form of their Books shews in the most convincing Manner, how improbable such Transpositions are, as those learned Harmonizers, Mr. Whiston, and Mr. Manne, make the Foundation of their respective Hypotheses.

(e) It was written to this Effect.] It is evident, that the Quotation, as it stands here, does neither exactly agree with the Hebrew, nor the Septuagint. The many old Copies, in which that Clause, ἰασασθαι τὰς συντριμμυνας τῆς καρδίας, to heal the Broken-hearted, is wanting, has inclined many learned Criticks, with Grotius, to suppose it added from the Hebrew: But one would rather conclude, that Christ read the Passage as it was, and that these Words might accidentally be dropped by some early Transcriber.

(f) For the Purpose, to which he hath anointed me: ἵνα κηρῶ ἐγὼς με.] It is very difficult to explain the Connection of the Two Clauses in this Passage, if we render ἵνα κηρῶ either because, or therefore; and I cannot recollect, that it ever signifies because. But the Translation I propose seems to remove the Difficulty. See Acts xix. 32.

(g) Poor and Afflicted.] Grotius well observes, that it is probable some Copies might read ὀφθαλμοὶ, the Poor, instead of ὀφθαλμοὶ the Meek, which is the Word made use of in Iſaiab. And as to that Clause, of restoring Sight to the Blind, which is omitted in Iſaiab, I am not able to determine, whether our Lord in his Discourse borrowed this Clause from Iſa. xlii. 7. by Way of Illustration; or whether (as Dr. Prideaux supposes,

- SECT. 32. "Hearts are broken with Sorrow, to proclaim
 Luke IV. 18. "free Dismission to wretched Captives, even
 "the Recovery of Sight to them that are
 "Blind in Prison, [and] to set those at Li-
 "berty who are bruised with the heavy Load
 19 "of their Fetters (b); In a Word, to
 "proclaim, as by the Sound of a Trumpet,
 "that welcome Year of the Lord (i), which
 "the Year of Jubilee, pleasing and grateful
 "as it is, can but imperfectly represent,
 "tho' Debts are then forgiven, and Slaves
 "released, and Inheritances restored to their
 "original Owners."
 20 And having rolled up the Book, which was
 a long Scroll of Parchment, he delivered it
 to the Servant of the Synagogue, whose
 proper Office it was to take Care of it; and
 then according to the Custom of the Jewish
 Rabbies, *sate down* to preach; (see Mat. v. 1.
 xxiii. 2, 3. xxvi. 55. and John viii. 2.) and
 the Eyes of all in the Synagogue were atten-
 tively fixed upon him, as they were very cu-
 rious to know, what he would say on a
 Scripture, which seemed so plainly to refer
 to the Messiah (k).

19 To preach the accept-
 table Year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the
 Book, and he gave it again
 to the Minister, and *sate*
 down; and the Eyes of all
 them that were in the Syna-
 gogue, were fastened on
 him.

And

poses, in his *Connection*, vol. ii. pag. 547.) it was taken from some *Chaldee Targum*; which is now lost.

(b) *Sight to them that are Blind, and to set those at Liberty who are bruised.*] It is beautifully observed by the judicious *Mr. Cradock*, in his excellent Book on the *Evangelists*, that the former Clause seems an *Allusion*, to the wretched State of those *Prisoners*, who, according to the inhuman Custom still retained in the *Eastern Countries*, had their Eyes put out: And with regard to such as these, this great Deliverer is represented as *restoring them*, a Work far beyond all Human Power. See *Cradock's Harm.* pag. 69. — I take them to be the same with those, who are spoken of in the next Clause, as *bruised with the Weight of their Fetters*; for it is plain, that even *Blind Captives* were sometimes loaded with them; as was the Case with *Samson*, *Judg.* xvi. 21. and with *Zedekiah*, *2 Kings* xxv. 7.

(i) *That welcome Year of the Lord.*] It is strange, that any *antient*, or *modern Writers*, should argue from hence, that *Christ's Ministry* lasted but *one Year*, or a little more. One might as well plead, from *2 Cor.* vi. 2. that the *Day of Salvation* included, but *one natural Day*.—Here is a plain *Allusion* to the *Jubilee*. Compare *Lev.* xxv. 9, 10. and *Psal.* lxxxix. 15.

(k) A Scripture, which seemed so plainly to refer to the Messiah.] Though many *Commentators* of Note apply *Isa.* lxi. 1. to the *good News* of the Dismission of the
 Jews

21 And he began to say unto them, This Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears.

And he began to speak at large from this excellent and suitable Passage; and the main Tendency and Purport of his Discourse was to say to them, To-day this Scripture, I have now been reading, is remarkably fulfilled in your Hearing; for I am the Person, foretold under this Character, and sent with such ample Powers, to fulfil these Purposes of the Divine Mercy.

SECT. 32.
Luke IV. 21.

22 And all bare him Witness, and wondered at the gracious Words, which proceeded out of his Mouth. And they said, Is not this Josephs Son?

And, strong as their Prejudices were against him, they all, by their very Countenances, (see Job xxix. 11.) bore their Testimony to him, as a most excellent Preacher; and were astonished at those graceful, as well as comfortable Words (1), which proceeded out of his Mouth; so that they could not forbear saying to each other, even while he spoke, Is not this he, that was brought up among us, the Son of Joseph the Carpenter? and if it be, how is it possible that a Man of so mean an Education, should be able to discourse thus excellently well?

22.

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this Proverb, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy Country.

And he said to them farther, You will undoubtedly say to me in the Words of that common Proverb, Physician, cure thyself; [and] for the Satisfaction of thy own Relations and Neighbours, if thou art really so extraordinary a Person, do also here at Home in thine own Country those miraculous Works, which, as we have heard, were done at Capernaum, and

23.

Jews from Babylon; I refer it to the impartial Reader to judge, whether it be not much more probable, that ver. 4, 5, 6. (where the Prophet speaks, of repairing the waste Cities, planting Vineyards, &c.) may be either meant in a Spiritual Sense, or literally predict the Temporal Prosperity of the Church after the Conversion of the Jews; than that Christ should mistake the true Sense of the Text, or build his Argument on a mere Allusion. See Dr. Sykes's Vindication of Christianity, pag. 259. and Jeffery's True Grounds, pag. 120.

(1) Astonished at those graceful Words.] The Phrase in the Original, λογος της χαριτος, literally signifies Words of Grace; which, it is probable, may refer to the agreeable Manner of Christ's Discourse, as well as to the Matter of it: And as they could not but take Notice of the Majesty and Grace with which he spoke, so it must naturally fill them with Astonishment, considering the Meanness of his Birth and Education. See Elfner, in loc.

SECT. 32. and elsewhere (*m*). *But to expose the*

Vanity of this Suggestion, he went on, and

Luke IV. 24. *said, Verily I say unto you, that no Prophet is*

acceptable in his own Country; (compare John iv. 44. pag. 198.) and therefore I know that you, who have been acquainted with me from my Infancy, will, through Envy and Prejudice, refuse me an Opportunity of working such Miracles, and would indeed be still as obstinate and unbelieving as before, if you

25 *should see them. But let it be remembered by you, that GOD sometimes punishes*

Men for this unreasonable Temper, by directing his Prophets to confer those Favours on Strangers, of which their Countrymen, and Neighbours, have rendered themselves so unworthy. For thus, I tell you as a certain Truth, which well deserves your Consideration, that there were many poor Widows in Israel, in the Days of Elijah, when the

Heaven

24 *And he said, Verily I say unto you, No Prophet is accepted in his own Country.*

25 *But I tell you of a Truth, many Widows were in Israel in the Days of Elias, when the Heaven was shut*

(*m*) *At Capernaum, and elsewhere.] It is strange, that Dr. Clarke, and many others, should lay so much Stress, as they do on this, as an Argument to prove, that this Visit to Nazareth was made after that to Capernaum, in which those Miracles were wrought, which are recorded, Mark i. 21,—34. and Luke iv. 33,—41. (Sect. 35, 36.) when Luke himself so plainly says, that he came down from Nazareth to Capernaum, and then gives an Account of those Miracles; (Luke iv. 30, & seq.) and Matthew also introduces the History of them, with saying, (Mat. iv. 13.) that leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt at Capernaum.—We are expressly told by John, that Jesus, after the Miracle which he wrought at Cana in Galilee, went with his Mother and his Brethren and Disciples to Capernaum, and continued some Time, though not very long there: (John ii. 12. Sect. 24.) And it is very possible, he might visit it again in his passing through Galilee, (John iv. 43, 44. Sect. 31.) which if he did, after the Cure wrought on the Nobleman's Son there, (which undoubtedly preceded this Visit to Nazareth,) he would certainly meet with some extraordinary Regard, as the Cure was performed at a Distance, and many other Miracles might then be wrought there: So that this Passage may refer to these and other Miracles, not particularly recorded by Luke; as we have seen before, that John refers to others, (John ii. 23. and iii. 2.) which neither he himself had mentioned, nor indeed any of the rest of the Evangelists.—If it be asked, why Christ did not perform such Miracles here, as elsewhere? we answer, — that this whole Discourse is intended to prove, that GOD might dispense these extraordinary Favours as he pleased; — and they do not appear to have brought their Sick to him, and seem to have suspected his Power; (compare Mat. xiii. 58. and Mark vi. 5. Sect. 73.) a Suspicion, the Unreasonableness of which was greatly aggravated, by the credible Report of what he had done in the Neighbourhood, and by the Knowledge they had of his early Piety and exemplary Behaviour.*

shut up three Years and six Months, when great Famine was throughout all the Land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a City of Sidon, unto a Woman that was a Widow.

27 And many Lepers were in Israel in the Time of Elifeus the Prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 And all they in the Synagogue, when they heard these Things, were filled with Wrath,

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the City, and

Heaven was, as it were, shut up for three Years and six Months (n), so that there was no Rain, and a great Famine prevailed in all the Land: And yet Elijah was sent to none of them, with a miraculous Supply of Meal and Oil, but to a Widow Woman at Sarepta, [a City] of the Gentiles, in the Country of Sidon. (1 Kings xvii. 9.)

And there were also many Lepers in Israel, in the Time of Elisha the Prophet, yet none of them was miraculously cleansed, but that singular Favour was bestowed on Naaman the Syrian (o), a Gentile, and one of a hostile Nation. (2 Kings v. 14.) Presume not therefore on your being my Countrymen and Neighbours, so as on that Account to reject my Message; lest you provoke God to send those Blessings to Strangers, and even to Gentiles, of which such Infidelity and Ingratitude would render you unworthy.

Nothing could be more disagreeable to them than such an Intimation, and all that were in the Synagogue, when they heard these Things, were filled with the most outrageous Fury: And rising up at once, in a tumultuous Manner, without any Reverence to the Place or Day, or any Sense of Justice or common Humanity, they violently cast him out of the Synagogue, and out of the City too;

(n) The Heaven was shut up for three Years and six Months.] This is again asserted by the Apostle James, (chap. v. 17.) either as grounded on our Lord's Authority here, or as a Circumstance established by Tradition; for in both Places it is spoken of as a Thing well known: Nor can we doubt, but the Account is very exact, though the particular Time is not determined in the Old Testament, nor is it certainly deducible from it.—Lightfoot, and others have observed, that there is somewhat here remarkable in this Circumstance of Time, as it agrees with the Continuance of Christ's publick Ministry; that as Elijah shut up Heaven by his Prayers, so that it rained not on the Earth, by the Space of three Years and six Months, so from the Baptism to the Death of Christ, the Heavens were opened for the like Space of Time, and his Doctrine dropped as the Rain, and his Speech distilled as the Dew. (Deut. xxxii. 2.) See Lightfoot's Harmony, and Grotius, in loc.

(o) None of them was cleansed, but Naaman the Syrian.] Of the Force of the Particle $\mu\eta$ here, and in some other remarkable Places, see the Note on John xvii. 12. vol. ii. Sect. 179.

(p) Basseu

SECT. 32.
Luke IV. 25.

28

29

SECT. 32. too; and brought him to the very Brow of
 Luke IV. 29. *the Mountain, on which their City was built,*
 30 *that they might cast him down headlong, and*
 dash him to pieces. But Jesus, when he
 had permitted their Madness to go thus far,
 confounded their Sight in such a miraculous
 Manner, that *he passed through the midst of*
them unknown (p), and went away to the
neighbouring City of Capernaum, where he
abode for some Time.

and led him unto the Brow
 of the Hill, (whereon their
 City was built,) that they
 might cast him down head-
 long.

30 But he passing through
 the midst of them, went
 his Way.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Luke iv. 16. **W**E see, that it was the *Custom* of our Blessed Saviour, to fre-
 quent the *Synagogues* every *Sabbath-Day*: How well there-
 fore does it become his Servants, to be constant in their Attendance
 on public Ordinances, especially since those of the *Gospel* are in
 many Respects so much nobler, than any which the *Mosaic* Insti-
 tution would admit!

Ver. 17. In the *Synagogues* the *Scriptures* were constantly read; and it is
 Matter of pleasing Reflection, that in all Ages of the *Christian*
Church, the *reading them* hath usually been made a Part of the
 Service in most of its solemn Assemblies. Let it still be so with us,
 for this Reason among others, that so glorious a Testimony to the
 Genuineness of *Scripture*, may not be impaired in our Hands, but
 transmitted to those that shall arise after us.

And surely the *Old Testament*, as well as the *New*, deserves our
 attentive Perusal; in which, if we are not strangely negligent, or
 strangely prejudiced, we must often meet with remarkable *Pro-*
phesies of Christ, shining with a pleasing Lustre, like *Lights in a*
dark Place. (2 Pet. i. 19.) How amiable a View of him is given, in
 Ver. 18, 19. that which he now opened? Let us seriously attend to it. It is a
 moving Representation, that is here made, of the deplorable *State* in
 which the *Gospel* finds us! The helpless *Prisoners of Divine Justice*,
 the wretched *Captives of Satan*, stripped and wounded, the Eyes of
 our

(p) *Passed through the midst of them unknown.*] Whether the *Miracle* lay, in ren-
 dering himself intirely invisible, or in putting on some *other Form*, or in affecting
 their Eyes, or Minds, in such a Manner that they should not *know him*, we cannot
 certainly determine; but it seems evident, that there was something *miraculous* in the
 Case. Compare *John* viii. 59. *Luke* xxiv. 16. and *2 Kings* vi. 18,—20.

our Understanding *blinded*, and the Powers of our Souls *enfeebled*, and, as it were, *bruised* with those Chains, which Prejudice and Vice have fastened upon them! But in these miserable Circumstances, *Jesus* appears, to *open the Doors of our Prison*, to *strike off our Fetters*, and even to *restore our Sight*. He comes to *enrich* our impoverished Souls, and to *preach* a far better *Jubilee*, than *Moses* could proclaim; the free Forgiveness of all our Sins, and the Recovery of an Inheritance of Eternal Glory. Surely it should be to us a most *acceptable Time*. *Blessed are the People that know this joyful Sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the Light of thy Countenance!* (*Psal.* lxxxix. 15.)

SECT. 32.

In some Sense, *this* instructive and comfortable *Scripture is this* Ver. 21, 22. *Day fulfilled in our Ears* likewise. Let us also *bear our Testimony* to the *gracious Words* of this welcome Messenger, whom *G O D* *bath anointed* for such happy Purposes.

One would have imagined, that while the *Eyes* of his Auditors were *fixed upon him*, their *Souls* should have drank in his Doctrine, as *the thirsty Earth* sucks up *the Rain*, and that every Heart should have been opened to embrace him. But, O Blessed *Jesus*, while thou art preaching these *glad Tidings of great Joy*, what a Return dost thou find! Thou art ungratefully rejected, thou art Ver. 20. *impiously assaulted*; and had their Rage and Malice been able to prevail, *the joyful Sound* would have died into empty Air, as soon as it began, and this thy *first Sermon at Nazareth*, had been thy *last*. Ver. 28, 29.

Thus disdainfully art thou still *rejected* by Multitudes, who still hear the same Message, echoing from thy Word. And is there not a Malignity in the Hearts of Sinners, which might lead those of our own Days, to the outrageous Wickedness of these *Nazarenes*, were their Opportunities the same, rather than they would bow their stubborn Hearts to the *Obedience of Faith*? But while they are *crucifying thee afresh* by their Sins, and *putting thee to open Shame*, may we honour thee as the *Son of G O D*, the *Saviour of Men*; and labour by the Ardour of our Love, and the Steadiness of our Obedience, in some Measure to balance the Ingratitude of those, who while they are opposing thee, are destroying themselves!

S E C T. XXXIII.

CHRIST goes to Capernaum, and teaches in the Synagogue there with great Acceptance; and calls Peter and Andrew, and James and John, to a more stated Attendance upon him. Mat. IV. 13,—22. Luke IV. 31, 32. Mark I. 16,—20.

M A T. IV. 13.

SECT. 33.
Mat. IV. 13.

AND Jesus, leaving Nazareth, from whence he was expelled and driven out in the ungrateful Manner that was before described, came and dwelt for a while at Capernaum, which was a considerable City of Galilee, that lay on the Sea-coast, even on the Northern Shore of the Lake of Genesareth, in the Confines of Zebulon and Naphtali; and from thence he made several small Excursions, to visit the neighbouring Places.

- 14 And this was ordered by a special Divine Providence, that what was said by the Prophet *Isaiab*, (chap. ix. 1, 2.) might be fulfilled (a),
- 15 When speaking of the Land of Zebulon, and the Land of Naphtali, by the Way of the Sea, and the Country about those Parts of Jordan (b), which is called by the general Name of Galilee of the Gentiles (c), (because so many Gentiles were early

M A T. IV. 13.

AND leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, [a City of Galilee,] which is upon the Sea-coast, in the Borders of Zebulon and Nephtholim: [LUKE IV. 31.—]

14 That it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by *Esaias* the Prophet, saying,

15 The Land of Zebulon, and the Land of Nephtholim, by the Way of the Sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:

(a) That what was said by the Prophet *Isaiab* might be fulfilled.] The common Translation is, Word for Word, correspondent to the Original: But the Sense, as it stands here, is so entirely the same, that I was unwilling to spoil the Structure of the Paraphrase, by crowding in the Word saying; nor do I think such an Exactness necessary, in order to render a Version perfectly faithful.

(b) About those Parts of Jordan.] That *orinar* sometimes has this Signification, will appear, by comparing *Josh. xii. 1, 7.* and *Numb. xxxii. 19. Septuag.*

(c) Galilee of the Gentiles.] The learned *Drusus* has given a large Account of the Reason of this Name, and concludes, it was the Upper Galilee, in the Land of Naphtali, whereas the Lower lay in Zebulon, and Capernaum was situated on the Confines of both. *Grotius* traces the Name up to *Gen. xiv. 1.* but most Commentators refer it to *1 Kings ix. 11,—13.* supposing that *Solomon's* giving a Tract of Land here to *Hiram,*

16 The People which sat in Darkness, saw great Light; and to them which sat in the Region and Shadow of Death, Light is sprung up.

early settled there, and had filled it with a Variety of Superstitions,) he says, "That though God had once made these Nations vile, yet he would hereafter render them glorious (d); since even there, by the Settlement and Preaching of the Messiah among them, *The People that sat in Darkness, saw* (that is, should surely see) *a great and glorious Light*, to disperse that Ignorance and Vice which before clouded them; and even to them that *sate*, miserable, and helpless, in the dark Region and gloomy Shadow of Death itself, in the most melancholy and the most dangerous Condition, *Light has* remarkably *sprung up* (e), to cheer their Hearts, and guide them into the Ways of Peace and Happiness."

SECT. 33.
Mat. IV. 15.

16

17 From that Time Jesus began to preach, and to say,

And from that Time of his Departure into Galilee (f), *Jesus began to preach*, in all the Places

17

ram, occasioned it to be filled with Foreigners, and to be peopled with a Mixture of Phœnicians, Egyptians, and Arabians; according to the Account that Strabo gives, *Geograph. lib. xvi. pag. 523.*

(d) Though God had made them vile, yet he would hereafter render them glorious.] I follow Mr. Mede's just and beautiful Version, and Interpretation, of *Isa. ix. 1.* See *Mede's Works, pag. 101, 102.* and *Jeffery's Review, pag. 125, 126.* where that Interpretation is both vindicated and improved: And I see no Reason to doubt, that it is originally meant of the Illumination and Honour, these afflicted Countries should receive, by the Presence and Preaching of Christ.

(e) *Light has sprung up.*] The Heathen Writers represented the Arrival of some great Publick Benefactor in a Place, as a new Light sprung up in the midst of Darkness. See *Elfner, Observ. vol. i. pag. 19.*

(f) From that Time of his Departure into Galilee.] It is but just before, that Matthew speaks of Christ's Departure into Galilee, (*ver. 12.*) and it is much more probable, that he refers in general to this, than to the Time of his leaving Nazareth, (which he has mentioned in *ver. 13.*) as it is evident from *Luke iv. 14, 15.* and *John iv. 43, 45.* that Christ began to preach in the Synagogues of Galilee, before he went to Nazareth. And thus I might have introduced this Text as parallel to *Mark i. 15.* but that I would avoid, as much as possible, breaking the Thread of the Narration. Compare Notes (b) and (c), in *SECT. 31. pag. 197, 198.*—The attentive Reader will easily perceive, that I suppose our Lord made only one Tour about Galilee in the four or five last Months preceding his Second Passover, of which Matthew gives a general Account below, *Mat. iv. 23, 25. SECT. 36.* Nor can I see, that Sir Isaac Newton had any just Reason to conclude it a Second Circuit quite distinct from the former. It is true indeed, that our Lord is said, *Mat. iv. 13.* after leaving Nazareth, to have come and dwelt at Capernaum: But if that should be allowed to imply his making this

SECT. 33. Places that he came to, in a more publick
 Manner, *and to say, Repent,* and turn unto
 Mat. IV. 17. the Lord, *for he is now fulfilling his antient*
 Promises, and *the Kingdom of Heaven is at*
 Luke IV. 31. *band (g).* And this was the Doctrin
 which *he was teaching them,* during the
 Time of his Abode at Capernaum, and this
 he made the Subject of his Preaching in
 their Synagogue *on the Sabbath-Days;* not
 being discouraged by the ill Usage that he
 met with at Nazareth, upon his preaching
 32 of the same Doctrin there. *And they*
were powerfully struck (b), and very much
 affected *with his Doctrin;* for *his Word*
was attended with an Air of Authority and
 Majesty, which incomparably exceeded that
 low and servile Manner of Preaching, which
 the Scribes and Pharisees commonly used, in
 retailing their precarious Traditions and in-
 fipid Comments to the People.

Mark I. 16. *And it was about this Time, that as Jesus*
was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw
two Brethren, that have been already men-
tioned (i), Simon, who was also called Peter,
and

say, Repent, for the King-
 dom of Heaven is at hand.

LUKE IV.—31. And
 [he] taught them on the
 Sabbath-Days.

32 And they were affo-
 nished at his Doctrin; for
 his Word was with Power.

MARK I. 16. Now as
 [Jesus] walked by the Sea
 of Galilee, he saw [two Bre-
 thren,] Simon [called Peter,]
 and

the Place of his more stated Residence, so as to call it *his Home,* it is evidently inti-
 mated, that he *did not stay long* in it at first, and shortly after it is spoken of only as
one of the Cities in which he was sent to preach: Mark i. 38. Nor can I find, that
 after he began to preach, he ever continued long in any one Place.

(g) *The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*] See Note (b) on Mat. iii. 2. pag. 97.

(b) *Powerfully struck.*] See Luke ii. 47, 48. Note (c), pag. 91.

(i) *Two Brethren,* that have been already mentioned.] *John* gives us an Account,
 (chap. i. 40,—42. Sect. 21.) that *Andrew* and *Simon* had before been called to the
 Knowledge of *Christ,* upon the Banks of *Jordan,* and that the Name of *Peter* had
 been then given to *Simon:* And it is probable, that from their first Acquaintance with
 him, they followed *Jesus* for some Time, and went with him to *Cana,* and *Capernaum,*
 (*John* ii. 2, 12. Sect. 23, 24.) and afterwards to *Jerusalem,* (*John* ii. 13, 17.
 Sect. 24.) and tarried with him while he continued in *Judea.* (*John* iii. 22. Sect. 27.)
 But when the *Pharisees* grew jealous of the Number of his Followers, and *Herod*
 was offended at the Popularity of *John,* we may suppose, that *Jesus* at his Return to
Galilee, might think it prudent to dismiss his Disciples for a Time, till he himself had
 gone about from Place to Place to preach the Gospel, and had informed the People
 more particularly of the Character of his Person, and the Nature of his Doctrin:
 Or possibly they might leave him at the Time, when the *Samaritans* prevailed upon
 him to go with them to their City; (*John* iv. 40. Sect. 30.) for after this we read

Peter and Andrew are now called to attend him *statedly*. 213

and Andrew his Brother, casting a Net into the Sea; (for they were Fishers:) [MAT. IV. 18.]

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become Fishers of Men. [MAT. IV. 19.]

18 And straightway they forsook their Nets, and followed him. [MAT. IV. 20.]

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw [other two Brethren,] James,

and Andrew his Brother, casting a Net into the Sea; for by their Occupation they were Fishers. SECT. 33.
Mark I. 17.

And after some Circumstances, an Account of which will presently be given, (Sect. 34.) Jesus said to them, Come after me, and from henceforth attend me constantly in the Course of my Ministry, and I will make you to become Fishers of Men, and give you such abundant Success in your Ministry, that the Number of Souls converted by you, shall be greater than that of the Fish you have been used to catch.

And they being struck with a very wonderful Miracle (k), the Particulars of which will presently be related, immediately forsook their Nets, though the fishing Trade was all they had to depend upon in Life, and followed him. 18

And going a little Way from thence, he saw two other Brethren, James the Son of Zebe- 19

no more of his Disciples being with him, till he now found them at the Sea of Galilee. For they no sooner were gone Home, but they returned again to their old Employment, and continued in it, till they were now taken off from any further Regard to their Worldly Business, and were particularly called by Christ to a constant and stated Attendance upon him. See *Lightfoot's Harmony*, on Luke v. 3.

(k) Being struck with a very wonderful Miracle.] The Account of this Miracle, (which is recorded by Luke, chap. v. 1,—11.) I shall consider in the next Section, and shall there give my Reasons, in Note (a), for supposing it happened at this Time, and was not, as Mr. Whiston would have it, the Occasion of another Call to these Disciples. But I would here observe, that besides him, some who agree with me in this Particular, yet out of Regard to the supposed Regularity of St. Luke's Narration, place this Call of the four Disciples, after the Ejection of the Devil, and the Cure of Peter's Mother-in-Law, at Capernaum, and Christ's Travels through Galilee, which are recorded, Mat. viii. 14, 15. iv. 23,—25. and Mark i. 21,—39. (Sect. 35, 36.) See Cradock, Le Clerc, Wells, Clarke, and L'Enfant, in their Harmonies. But they seem to have forgot, that St. Mark expressly asserts, (chap. i. 21.) that after the Calling of these four Disciples, They went into Capernaum, and straightway on the ensuing Sabbath, he entered into the Synagogue, and there cast out the Devil, &c. and then, (ver. 29.) forthwith when they were come out of the Synagogue, they entered into the House of Simon and Ananew, with James and John, and Simon's Mother was cured.—Now it seems one of the most important Rules, for settling the Harmony of the Evangelists, that where any One of them has expressly asserted, that he follows the Order of Time, we should in regard to him, transpose others, who do not assert equal Exactness in that Particular. (See Jones's Vindication of Matthew, pag. 111, 112.) This is the Case here, and therefore I have here transposed not only Luke, but also Matthew, who uses Notes of Time much more frequently, and seems to me in the main more exact in the Series of his Story, than Luke.

SECT. 33. *Zebedee, and John his Brother; and they were in a Ship by the Sea-side, with Zebedee their Father, employed in mending their Nets, which had been broken by the vast Draught of Fishes, they had taken just before.*

Mark I. 19.

20

And he immediately applied to them, as he had done before to Peter and Andrew, and called them to follow him: And they no sooner had received his Orders, but presently they left their Father Zebedee, with the hired Servants in the Ship; and in Consequence of the secret Energy which attended that Call, they joined with Peter, and Andrew, and with the greatest Chearfulness and Readiness went after him, being determined to continue with him as his stated Attendants: And they were all afterwards honoured with extraordinary Favours from their Master, especially John, who was his Bosom Friend, and came to be called, by Way of Eminence, the Disciple whom Jesus loved.

James the Son of Zebedee, and John his Brother, who also were in the Ship [with Zebedee their Father,] mending their Nets. [MAT. IV. 21.—]

20 And straightway he called them: and they [immediately] left their Father Zebedee in the Ship, with the hired Servants, and went after him. [MAT. IV. —21, 22.]

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Luke iv. 31. **S**UCH was the Zeal and Courage of our Blessed Redeemer, that he no sooner had been persecuted and assaulted at Nazareth, but he went and preached in the Synagogue at Capernaum. Thus may all the Opposition that we meet with in the Course of our Duty, animate, rather than overbear, our Resolution in performing it!

Matt. iv. 15. How happy was the Land of Zebulon and Naphtali, in the Visits of such a Guest! And may we not add too, how happy is our own Land, in being visited by the everlasting Gospel, which is now much more clearly discovered to us, than it was to these Coasts, while Christ began to open his Ministry among their Inhabitants.

Ver. 16. In us is this Prophecy of *Isaiab* eminently fulfilled: We but a few Ages ago *sate in Darkness*, and behold, we see a great Light. Our Country, amidst all the Advantages of its Soil and Situation, was in a spiritual Sense, *the Region and the Shadow of Death*; but the Sun of Righteousness is risen upon us, nor do we only behold his rising Beams, but his Meridian Lustre. May we not be so ungrateful, as obsti-

obstinately to shut our Eyes against it, lest *the Valley of Vision*, and **SECT. 33.** *Emanuel's Land*, should on the whole prove to us, the *Land of Destruction*, and *the Valley of Death* itself!

That this may never be our Case, let us diligently attend to this *Divine Teacher*, who speaks with such *Authority*, and whose *Words* Luke iv. 32. are so weighty and *powerful*. May we feel the Energy and Authority of them! May they call us off from every undue Attachment to the *Business*, or the *Pleasures of Life*! And if he should ever see fit to try us, as he did these his Servants, with a Command to **Mark i. 17.** *for sake our nearest Relations*, and our *Earthly All*, for his Service, let us do it with Pleasure; remembering on the one Hand, that *he who loves Father or Mother, Wife or Children, Houses or Lands, more than Christ, is not worthy of him*; and on the other Hand, that *he who abandons these Engagements for his Sake, shall receive an hundred-fold now in this Time, and in the World to come Life everlasting.* (*Mat. x. 37. and Mark x. 29, 30.*)

S E C T. XXXIV.

St. Luke gives a more particular Account of a miraculous Draught of Fishes, by which Peter, and his three Partners were prevailed upon *statedly* to follow CHRIST. Luke V. 1,—11.

LUKE V. 1.

AND it came to pass, that as the People pressed upon him to hear the Word of

LUKE V. 1.

THE Calling of those four celebrated **SECT. 34.** Apostles, Peter and Andrew, and *James and John*, was briefly related above; **Luke V. 1.** but considering the important Part which most of them bear in the following History, we shall here give a more particular Account of it (a). *Now it came to pass, that while Jesus*

(a) We shall here give a more particular Account of it.] *Mr. Whiston* (in his *Harmony*, pag. 251, and 254.) supposes, with some others, that this is a distinct Story, from that of *the Calling of these Disciples*, which we have in the preceding *Section*, and that they were then called only to an *occasional*, but now to a *stated* Attendance on *Christ*. But I could not acquiesce in this, for the following Reasons: (1.) There are

- SECT. 34. Jesus continued to reside at Capernaum, of GOD, he stood by the Lake of Gennefareth, *when the Multitude pressed upon him, with Eagernefs, to bear the Word of GOD; as he stood by the Lake of Gennefareth (b), on the Banks of which he had been walking;*
- Luke V. 1. *2 (Mark i. 16. Sect. 33.) He saw two little Veffels, standing by the Side of the Lake, but with no Person in them; for the Fishermen, after the Labour of a very unsuccessful Night, were gone out of them, and were washing their Nets in the Sea, as they stood on the Shore.*
- 3 And entering into one of the Veffels, which belonged to Simon Peter, with whom, as well as with his Brother Andrew (c), we have already*
- 2 And saw two Ships standing by the Lake; but the Fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their Nets.*
- 3 And he entered into one of the Ships, which was Simons, and prayed him that*

many leading Circumstances the same, in the Narrations of both: As, for Instance, that Peter, Andrew, James, and John left their Ships, their Nets, and their Father, or, as Luke expresses it, left all, to follow Christ, on his Promise that he would make them Fishers of Men. (2.) There is no Circumstance of the Story we have now before us, which may not be reconciled with the other; as the attentive Reader will perceive by my Paraphrase, especially on ver. 11. where (as in many other Cases,) I have chosen in a few Words to suggest the Solution of seeming Inconsistencies, rather than to state the Difficulties and Answers at large. (3) If this Interpretation be not allowed, then neither Matthew nor Mark, have given us any Account of Christ's calling these four illustrious Persons, and intimate Friends of Matthew, to a stated Attendance on him. And, (4.) There seems no Reason to believe, that these four Disciples forsook Christ again, within a few Days; or even a few Hours, after that Call, which Matthew and Mark have recorded. Yet this Mr. Whiston must suppose; for it is plain, Christ left Capernaum, and proceeded on his Progress, the very next Day after those Cures, which so directly followed that Call of these Disciples which is related by those Two Evangelists. See Note (k) on Mark i. 18. pag. 213. and compare Mark i. 35,—39, and Luke iv. 42,—44. Sect. 36.

(b) *The Lake of Gennefareth.*] This is the same, with what is elsewhere called, the Sea of Galilee, (Mark i. 16.) and the Sea of Tiberias, (John vi. 1.) being distinguished by these Names, as it was situated on the Borders of Galilee, and the City of Tiberias lay on the Western Shore of it. And for its other Name Gennefareth, as Herod had a Palace near Tiberias, there were delightful Gardens on the Banks of it, which possibly might be the Reason of this Name, which some would have to be derived from גני סריים, the Gardens of Princes; tho' others rather think it, to be only a Corruption of the Word Cinnereth, or Cinneroth, which is the Name by which the Sea was called in the Old Testament. (Numb. xxxiv. 11. and Josh. xii. 3.)—It was a large Collection of Waters, thro' which the River Jordan passed, and was continually supplying it with a fresh Quantity of Water. Josephus tells us, it was an hundred and forty Furlongs long, and forty broad: (Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 10. (al. 18.) §. 7. pag. 257. Havercamp.) And it was usual with the Jews, to call such Places Seas, where there was such a large Extent of Water. See Lightfoot's Harmony, and Drusius, in loc.

(c) His Brother Andrew.] The Name of Andrew is omitted by St. Luke, in the Rela-

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*And when they had brought their Ships to land, they forsook all
and followed him. S^t Luke Ch.V. ver. 11.*

that he would thrust out a little from the Land; and he sat down, and taught the People out of the Ship.

ready seen that he had formed some Acquaintance on the Banks of Jordan (d), while John was baptizing there, (John i. 37,—42. Sect. 21.) he desired him, that he would put out a little Way from Land, that he might thus avoid the Croud, and at the same Time be more conveniently heard; and at a proper Distance he sat down, and taught the Multitude out of the Vessel.

SECT. 34.
Luke V. 3.

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the Deep, and let down your Nets for a Draught.

And when he had made an End of speaking to the People, he said to Simon, Put out yet farther into the deep Water, and then let down your Nets into the Lake for a Draught of Fishes.

5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the Night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless at thy Word I will let down the Net.

And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have been labouring all Night, and have caught nothing; nevertheless I will let down the Net, and make another Trial, at thy Word, both in Obedience to it, and in Dependance on it.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great Multitude of Fishes; and their Net brake.

And accordingly when they had done it, they inclosed a great Multitude of Fishes; so that their Net brake in several Places, as they were drawing them up.

7 And they beckoned unto their Partners which were in the other Ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the Ships, so that they began to sink.

And they beckoned to their Partners, James and John, who were at some Distance from them in the other Vessel, to come and assist them; and they came, and filled both the Vessels, so that they were overladen, and drew so much Water, that they seemed ready to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus Knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful Man, O Lord.

Now Simon Peter seeing [this,] fell down before the Knees of Jesus in Amazement, and covered with Confusion said, Lord, what am I, that thou shouldst come into my Vessel to me? let me intreat thee now to go out from me, for I am such a sinful Man, O

Relation that he gives us of this Story; but it is plain from the Account of it, that we have just now had from Matthew and Mark, in the foregoing Section, that Andrew was then present with Simon, and that they both were called at the same Time.

(d) He had formed some Acquaintance on the Banks of Jordan.] See Note (i) on Mat. iv. 18. pag. 212.

SECT. 34. O Lord (e), that I am utterly unworthy to receive and entertain thee, nor dare I to continue in the Presence of so great and holy

Luke V. 8.

9 a Prophet. For this amazing Proof that Jesus had now given of his Power was such, that *Astonishment seized him, and all that were with him, on Account of the vast Draught of Fishes which they had taken; And in like Manner also James and John, the Sons of Zebedee, who were Partners in the Trade with Simon, were struck with Wonder and Amazement at the Sight of this surprizing Miracle. And Jesus said to Simon, Do not fear, for instead of doing thee any Harm, I from this Time design to employ thee in much nobler Work, in which I will give thee such happy Success, that thou shalt captivate Men (f), in greater Abundance, than those Fishes which thou now hast caught.*

10
11 And when they had brought their Vessels to Land, they, (that is, first Peter and Andrew, and presently after them, James and John, who were mending their broken Nets with Zebedee their Father, upon Christ's repeating the Call,) left their Vessels and Nets, with the Fish they had taken, even All they had in the World, and followed him; being now determined to attend stately upon his Ministry, that they might thus be fitted for the great Work, in which he intended to employ them.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the Draught of the Fishes which they had taken :

10 And so was also James and John, the Sons of Zebedee, which were Partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch Men.

11 And when they had brought their Ships to Land, they forsook all, and followed him.

IMPROVE-

(e) *Go out from me, for I am a sinful Man, O Lord.*] Peter could not but conclude, there was some peculiar Presence of GOD, with a Person who could perform such a *Miracle*; and a Consciousness of Sin made him afraid to appear in the Presence of such a one, lest some Infirmity, or Offence, should expose him to some more than ordinary Punishment. (Compare *Judg.* vi. 22. xiii. 22. and *1 Kings* xvii. 18.)—It is also well known, that the *Antients* thought it improper and unsafe, (where it could be avoided,) for Good Men to be in the same Ship with Persons of an infamous Character: Nor would the *Heathens* sometimes permit the very *Images* of their *Deities* to be carried in the Vessel with such, or even with those concerning whom there was any strong Suspicion. See *Elfner. Observ.* vol. i. pag. 202, 203.

(f) *Thou shalt captivate Men.*] This is the exact English of *ῥαβδων*, which is so translated, *2 Tim.* ii. 26. *To catch* implies something more of *Artifice*, than the Word carries in it, or the Occasion seems to require.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

HOW wonderful a Choice does *Jesus* make, of those who were SECT. 34-
Luke V. 10. to be the chief Ministers in his Kingdom! Surely the same Divine Power, which prevailed on these honest *Fishermen* to leave their little *All* to follow him, could with equal Ease, have subdued Ver. 11. the Hearts of the Greatest and Wisest of the Nation, and have engaged them to have attended him in all his Progress thro' the Country, with the exactest Observance, and the humblest Reverence. But he chose rather to preserve the humble Form in which he at first appeared, that thus he might answer the Schemes of Providence, and by *the weak Things of the World confound them that are mighty.* (1 Cor. i. 27.)

Yet we may observe, that he does not go to call them that stood Ver. 4, 5. all the Day idle, but on the contrary, confers this Honour upon honest Industry; on them that had been *toiling all the Night*, in the proper Duties of their Station and Profession in Life. Let us pursue our Business, with Vigilance and Resolution; assuring ourselves, that however mean it be, *Christ* will graciously accept us in it; and let us fix our Dependance on his Blessing, as absolutely necessary to our Success.

These pious *Fishermen* let down their Nets at *Christ's* Word, and it was not in vain. How vast was that Power, which brought such a *Multitude of Fishes* into it? But how much greater, and more apparently Divine, was the Energy, which by the Ministration of Ver. 6. one of these illiterate Men, converted at once a much greater Number of *Souls*, and turned the Despisers and Murtherers of *Christ*, into his Adorers? (See *Acts* ii. 41.)

Blessed *Jesus*, we would humbly bow ourselves before thee, as the Lord of Nature, and of Grace; and instead of saying with *Peter*, *Depart from us, for we are sinful Men*, we would rather say, Ver. 8.

“ Lord, for that very Reason, while we own ourselves most unworthy of thy Presence, we most importunately intreat it: Come unto me, O Lord, for I am a sinful Man, and if thou stand at a Distance from me, I perish! Come, and recover my Heart from the Tyranny of Sin; come, and possess, and fix it for thyself!”

That secret Power, which these good Men felt on their Souls, Ver. 9, 10. while the Words of *Christ* were sounding in their Ears, would be to them a Token for Good, as to the Success of their Ministry upon others.

SECT. 34.

others. Surely we cannot wish any thing of greater Importance, for the Edification of the Church, than that the Persons who are employed in its publick Offices, may themselves experimentally know the Power of Divine Grace, and be brought to a Determination to follow *Christ*, whithersoever he goeth, before they undertake to invite and persuade others to do it.

S E C T. XXXV.

CHRIST *entering into Capernaum, teaches in the Synagogue, and casts out a Devil; and coming into Peter's House, cures his Mother-in-Law of a Fever.* Mark I. 21,—31. Mat. VIII. 14, 15. Luke IV. 33,—39.

MARK I. 21.

MARK I. 21.

SECT. 35.

MARK I. 21. **W**HEN our Lord had thus called Peter and Andrew, and James and John, they all left the Side of the Lake, and entered with him into the City of Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath-Day (a), going, according to his Custom, into the Synagogue, he taught [them] the important Truths, which he was in so extraordinary a Manner commissioned to vindicate, or to reveal. And they were again struck with Amazement (b); at the Sublimity and Excel-

AND they went into Capernaum, and straightway on the Sabbath Day he entered into the Synagogue, and taught :

22 And they were astonished

(a) *And immediately on the Sabbath-Day.*] It is in the Original, τοις σαββατοις, in the Plural Number; and it is frequently expressed in the same Manner, where it is plainly to be understood of a particular Day; as Mat. xii. 1. xxviii. 1. Acts xiii. 14. and elsewhere. There is no Doubt, but it is spoken here of the next Sabbath, and probably of the very next Day, after his coming back with his Disciples to Capernaum. See Note (A) on Mark i. 18. pag. 213.

(b) *They were again struck with Amazement.*] It has already been observed, that they were thus amazed, at his first coming to preach among them: (Luke iv. 32. Sect. 33.) And there seems also to have been something in the Discourses, as well as in the Miracles of this last Sabbath, that he spent among them at this Time, which raised their Wonder and affected them in a peculiar Manner; as appears from the Multitude of sick People, which were brought to him that Evening. See Mark i. 32-33. Luke iv. 40. and Mat. viii. 16. in the next Section.

(c) *The*

and publickly casts out a Devil in the Synagogue.

221

nished at his Doctrine; for he taught them, as one that had Authority, and not as the Scribes.

Excellency of *his Doctrine*; for he was continually teaching them in such a Manner, as *one who had an immediate Authority from God*, to dictate to them; and not as the Scribes, their established Teachers, who dealt in precarious Traditions, and fanciful Allegories; the Amusement of light Minds, but utterly unfit to alarm the Conscience, and to captivate the Heart.

SECT. 35.
Mark i. 22.

LUKE IV. 33. And in [their] Synagogue there was a Man, which had a Spirit of an unclean Devil, and cried out with a loud Voice, [MARK I. 23.]

And there was in their Synagogue a Man, that had the Spirit of an unclean Dæmon (c), or fallen Angel, possessing him, by which he was miserably distorted, and agitated; and he, either compelled to bear an unwilling Testimony to Christ, or desirous by malicious Praises to bring him into Suspicion, as a Confederate with those Infernal Spirits, cried out with a loud Voice, Saying, in the Name of all the rest, Let us alone; what hast thou to do with us, O Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us, by driving us out of our Abodes on Earth to the Regions of Darknes? I well know thee, and under all the Disadvantages of thy present Appearance, can sufficiently discern, who thou art; and therefore dread thee, as the Holy One of GOD, whom he hath sanctified and sent into the World, for the Destruction of my Kingdom in it: But take Notice, that I do not begin the Quarrel, by offering thee any Injury or Affront.

34

34 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of GOD. [MARK I. 24.]

But

(c) *The Spirit of an unclean Dæmon.*] It is well known, that a late learned and ingenious Writer hath revived the Notion, long since maintained by *Mr. Joseph Mede* and *Dr. Bekker*, that these supposed *Demoniacs*, were only *Lunaticks* or *Epilepticks*: But on the most impartial Perusal of what has passed between him, and his learned Antagonists, I am fully convinced, that there is no sufficient Reason for departing from the received Interpretation; and I should think this Story alone a convincing Proof on the Side of it. It is most incredible, that an *Evangelist* should have been left to ascribe this Man's Disorder, to the *Spirit of an unclean Dæmon*, if it were only *Lunacy* or the *Falling-sickness*; or that a *Physician* of common Sense, should speak of it as a memorable Circumstance, that such a *Distemper* did not hurt a Man by leaving him. See *ver. 35.*—I retain the Word *Dæmon*, as the *Epithet unclean* seems to have little Force, when joined with *Devil*, being necessarily implied in it.

5

(d) *Having*

SECT. 35. But Jesus, scorning Praises from so impure a Mouth, rebuked him, saying, Be silent, and come out of him: And upon this the Demon having thrown him violently from his Seat into the midst of the Assembly, [and] having terribly convulsed him (d), cried with a loud Voice, [and] came out of him; but was so restrained by the Divine Power and Mercy, that he did him no farther Harm (e); and the Man immediately recovered, and was perfectly well.

Mark. I. 27. And they were all exceedingly amazed at so miraculous a Cure, so that they enquired of each other, and said, What an extraordinary Event is this? [and] what a new and unexampled Doctrine is this? for behold, he does not only distinguish himself by his incomparable Manner of teaching, but with majestic Authority, and efficacious Power, he commandeth even the unclean Spirits, and they instantly obey him, and come out of the Possessed, shewing thereby that they are subject to him. And his Fame was so raised by this signal Miracle, that it went forth immediately through all the Region of Galilee, and made Way for his Reception in the Progress he afterwards took into every Place of the neighbouring Country.

28
29 And presently after this miraculous Cure, Jesus going out of the Synagogue with his Disciples, they came, with James and John in

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy Peace, and come out of him. And when the Devil had thrown him in the midst, [and torn him,] he [cried with a loud Voice, and] came out of him, and hurt him not. [MARK I. 25, 26.]

MARK I. 27. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What Thing is this? what new Doctrine is this? for with Authority [and Power] commandeth he even the unclean Spirits, and they do obey him, [and come out.] [LUKE IV. 36.]

28 And immediately his Fame spread abroad throughout all the Region round about Galilee, [into every Place of the Country round about.] [LUKE IV. 37.]

29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the Synagogue, they entred into the House of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

(d) Having terribly convulsed him.] This seems to be the proper Meaning of the Word *σπαραξεν* that is used by Mark here, which signifies to shake or move with Violence; and to this Purpose Grotius has observed, that *σπαραγμος* is sometimes used to signify a Convulsion. And it is much more natural to understand it thus, than to suppose the Devil to have torn him, (according to the common Translation,) which leads the Reader to imagine, that he grievously wounded him; when Luke expressly says, that he hurt him not.

(e) Did him no farther Harm.] This is probably the Sense of *μην βλαβεν αυτοι*, for while the Convulsion continued, it must have given some Pain, and might have been attended with lasting Disorder, had not the restraining and healing Power of Christ prevented.

(f) Kept



*And when the Unclean Spirit had torn him, and
cried with a loud voice he (came out of him)*

30 But Simons Wives Mother lay sick of a [great] Fever, and anon they tell him of her, [and besought him for her.] [LUKE IV. 38.]

31 And he came, [and stood over her,] and took her by the Hand, and lift her up, [and rebuked the Fever ;] and immediately the Fever left her, and she [arose, and] ministr'd unto them. [LUKE IV. 39, MAT. VIII. 14, 15.]

in their Company, into the House of Simon SECT. 35.
and Andrew, who being Brothers did then Mark I. 30.
live together : And Simon's Wife's Mother was dangerously ill, and kept her Bed (f) of a violent Fever ; and having seen the Miracle which he had wrought but just before in the Synagogue, they presently tell him of her, and intreated him that he would be pleased to interpose for her Recovery. And 311
coming into the Room where she lay, and standing near her, he took her by the Hand, and raised her up in her Bed, and with an Air of Majesty rebuked the Fever (g) ; and immediately the Fever left her at once ; and she was instantly restored to such a Degree of Strength, that she arose, and waited upon them ; being so far from needing the Assistance of others, as she had done before, that she became capable of taking her Part in the Business of the Family.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

JUSTLY may we join our *Astonishment*, with that of the Inhabitants of *Capernaum*, and say, What manner of Teaching is this? and with what Regard should it be received, when the Devils themselves, and the most desperate *Diseases*, are thus apparently subject to him that uses it? Mark ii. 27.

We see the Malice of *Satan*, in possessing, and tormenting the Bodies of Men. Luke iv. 33. GOD then permitted it, to render *Christ's* Triumph over him, so much the more illustrious, and the Appearance of that great *Deliverer*, so much the more welcome (b). Such Diabolical

(f) *Kept her Bed.*] This seems the proper Meaning of the Word *κατὰ κλινὴν*.

(g) *Rebuked the Fever.*] There could be no Inconvenience in the *Evangelist's* using this Phrase, more than in saying, *he rebuked the Winds and Sea* ; (see *Mat. viii. 26.*) for it is hardly to be thought, the *Jews* would imagine the *Fever* a real Person ; but it was quite otherwise, as to their Notion of *Demons*.

(b) The Appearance of that great *Deliverer*, so much the more welcome.] It would be very foolish to imagine, that GOD suffered these unhappy Persons to be possessed, merely that *Christ* might have the Honour of curing them : But it is to be considered, that the View under which *Christ* is most frequently represented, is, as the great:

- SECT. 35. bolical Operations as these, are now restrained; and it is Matter of great Thankfulness, that they are. But would to GOD, that malignant Enemy did not, in a yet more fatal Manner, *possess the Souls of Men, and work in the Children of Disobedience!* Yet there can the Power of *Jesus* prevail, to *bind the strong Man, and spoil his Goods.*
- Ver. 34, 35. Wisely did *Christ* silence the suspicious *Praises of an unclean Spirit*; and vain is all the Hope which Men build, merely on those *orthodox Professions* of the most important Truths, in which *Satan* himself could vie with them.
- Mark i. 29, 30. *Christ* returning from the *Synagogue* finds the *Mother-in-Law of Peter*, detained from the solemn Assemblies, a Prisoner at Home under an afflictive Providence, which that Circumstance of *Confinement* probably rendered yet more afflictive to her. But the Mercy which the Evening brought with it, was a rich Equivalent for all the Sorrows of the Day. *Jesus*, their welcome Guest, appears as the great *Physician*, both of Soul and Body; a Touch of his *Hand* asswages the Tumult in her Veins, and at his *Voice* the Distemper leaves her. Surely as the great *Lord* in the Kingdom of Providence, he performs those *Cures*, which are now wrought by natural Means, and is to be owned in them. Must not each of us thankfully acknowledge, how often he hath *rebuked Fevers*, and other Distempers, by the Skill of Physicians, and the Efficacy of Medicines; so that they have departed

great *Antagonist* to the *Prince of Darkness*, and the *Gospel* has its Foundation in the *Victory* which *Satan* has gained over Mankind. Compare *Gen.* iii. 15. *Mat.* xii. 28, 29. 1 *John* iii. 8. *Heb.* ii. 14. and *Rom.* xvi. 20. (as also *Mat.* vi. 13. *John* xvii. 15. *Eph.* vi. 16. and 1 *John* ii. 13, 14. iii. 12. v. 18, 19. in all which Places *ωσως* seems to signify *the Wicked One*, that is, *the Devil*, whose powerful Influence over Men is intimated, or expressed, in each of them :) And it appears from *Wisd.* ii. 24. that the *Jews* before *Christ's* Time had something of this Notion, and considered the Wicked in general, as taking Part with the *Devil*: The Words are, *Through Envy of the Devil came Death into the World, and they that do hold of his Side do find it.* The inspired *Texts* above shew, that the Expression is just; and it was certainly on this Account a most wise and gracious Dispensation, to permit the *Devil* about this Time to give some unusual Proofs of his Existence, Power, and Malice, in thus attacking *Mens Bodies*; which would naturally convince them, what a dangerous Enemy he was to their *Souls*, and what Need they had of the Patronage of *Christ*; as the sensible *Victory of Christ* in these *Dispossession*s, would be a Proof, and Specimen, of that illustrious and compleat Triumph over him, and his Confederate Powers, in which *our Lord's Mediatorial Kingdom* is to end. No Kind of *Miracles* therefore could be more fit, to attest his *Mission*, and to promote his *Interest* among Men; and hence it is, that hardly any are more frequently and circumstantially described.—This seems a sufficient Answer, to the Difficulty proposed by *Mr. Mede*, (see his *Works*, pag. 28.) and a clear Proof, that we shall do no Service to *Christianity*, by endeavouring to disprove the Reality of these *Possessions*, or by dropping the Mention of the *Infernal Powers* in our Preaching, how fashionable soever such Omissions may grow.

departed from us, perhaps when we esteemed them desperate, and had received *the Sentence of Death in ourselves.* SECT. 35.

Let us learn to imitate the pious *Gratitude* of this good Woman, who, when recovered, *immediately arose and ministered unto Christ.* Thus let it be our Care, that those Lives which are spared by his Goodness, and that Strength which is renewed by his Power, may be faithfully and affectionately devoted to his Service.

S E C T. XXXVI.

CHRIST having performed several Cures on the Evening of the Sabbath-Day, retires early the next Morning to his Devotions; and declining a longer Abode at Capernaum, takes a Circuit about Galilee, preaching and working Miracles. Mark I. 32,—39. Luke IV. 40, to the End. Mat. VIII. 16, 17. and IV. 23, to the End.

MARK I. 32.

AND at Even, when the Sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and [many] that were possessed with Devils. [MAT. VIII. 16—LUKE IV. 40—]

LUKE IV.—40. All they that had any sick with divers Diseases, brought them unto him: and he [cast out the Spirits

MARK I. 32.

THE Remainder of the Day, Jesus spent in Peter's House; and in the Evening, when the Sun was set, and consequently the Sabbath was ended (a), they brought unto him, on their Beds and Couches, which they scrupled before to carry (b), all that were ill, and many that were possessed with Devils: Yea, all that had any Persons in their Houses, sick of various Distempers, brought them unto him for Relief: And he sent none of them away with a Denial, but with a sovereign Authority cast out the [evil]

LUKE IV. 40.

(a) When the Sabbath was ended.] It is well known, that the Jews reckoned their Day, from Evening to Evening, and that the Sabbath begun and ended at Sun-set. See Lev. xxiii. 32.

(b) Which they scrupled before to carry.] We have a memorable Instance of this Scruple, in John v. 10,—16. Sect. 46.

SECT. 36. [*evil*] *Spirits with a Word; and treating those*
 Luke IV. 40. that were Diseased in the most gracious and
 compassionate Manner, he *laid his Hands on*
every one of them, and healed all that were
sick, without the Use of any Means, how
inveterate and desperate soever their Distem-

Mat. VIII. 17. *per was: That thus it might appear to*
 17. *be accomplished in some Measure, which was*
spoken of him, in a more noble and impor-
tant Sense, by the Prophet Isaiab (c), saying,
 (chap. liii. 4.) *“ He himself graciously took*
“ our Infirmities upon him, and with incre-
“ dible Labour, Self-denial, and Compassion,
“ bore [away] the Burden of our Diseases (d),
“ and happily delivered us from those Mis-
“ reries, which our Corruption and Depravity
 Mark I. 33. *“ had introduced.” And this occasioned*

such a Concourse of People, that in a Man-
ner the whole City of Capernaum was gathered
together at the Door of the House, in which
Jesus was; some coming as humble Peti-
tioners for themselves or their Friends, and
others as curious Spectators of the surprizing
Miracles he wrought.

And

(c) In a more noble and important Sense, *by the Prophet Isaiab.* It seems evident, that *Isaiab*, in the Place here referred to, speaks of the *Sufferings* which *Christ* endured for us; for on Account of these only, could he be *esteemed* (as it is added in the End of the Verse,) *stricken, smitten of GOD, and afflicted.* So that the *Evangelist* has only introduced it, as an *Allusion* to those Words, as being capable of the Sense here given, in themselves; though we are certainly to understand them in a more exalted Sense, when we consider them in their Connection. Or if they should be understood by any, as if it had been said, “ Though he miraculously cured our Diseases, yet he was thus ungratefully censured;” it must be then allowed on this less natural Interpretation, that *Peter* uses them *allusively*, when he applies them to the *Crucifixion of Christ*, as he evidently does, 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. Such Instances are frequent in the Sacred Writers, and they are Elegancies and Beauties, rather than Imperfections. Had it been argued from this Text, that the *Messiah* must have *healed the Sick*, there had been then indeed some Room for an Objection.

(d) *Bore away the Burden of our Diseases.* *Grotius* has well observed the *Emphasis* of the Word *Carraui*, which signifies to *carry a heavy Load*, (*Rom.* xv. 1. *Gal.* vi. 2.) and so does well express the *indefatigable Labours of Christ*, spending the Evening in *healing the Sick*, probably with many intermingled Discourses, after he had employed the Day in *preaching*. I have endeavoured to suggest this Idea, in the *Paraphrase*.

(c) *Cautious*

Spirits with his Word, and
 laid his Hands on every one
 of them, and healed [all that
 were sick.] [MAT. VIII.
 —16. MARK I. 34.—]

MAT. VIII. 17. That it
 might be fulfilled which was
 spoken by *Esaias* the Pro-
 phet, saying, Himself took
 our Infirmities, and bare our
 Sicknesses.

MARK I. 33. And all
 the City was gathered to-
 gether at the Door.

LUKE IV. 41. And Devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them, suffered them not to speak; for they knew that he was Christ. [MARK I.—34.]

And there were Devils also, that came out of many, crying out with great Violence, (as that before had done, which had been cast out by him in the Synagogue,) and saying, as that other did, We know thee, who thou art, the promised Messiah, and the Son of GOD. But he severely chid them, and did not suffer them to speak these Things, so frequently and largely as they would otherwise have done; for they well knew that he was the Messiah: But as wise Reasons made him, in his own Discourses, often to decline the Opportunities he had of expressly avowing that Title and Character, so they engaged him in a much stronger Manner to be more particularly cautious, with respect to evil Spirits, of receiving it from them (e).

SECT. 36.
Luke IV. 41.

MARK I. 35. And in the Morning, rising up a great while before Day, [when it was Day,] he went out, and de-

Thus was it, that the Day was spent in preaching, and the Evening in working Miracles: And after all this Labour and Fatigue, Jesus allowed himself but a very short Repose; for in the Morning he rose before it was Light (f), and as the Day was coming on, he went out of the House where he had lodged, to avoid the Concourse of the People,

(e) Cautious of receiving it from them.] It is probable, that if it was not by mere Constraint that these evil Spirits made this Confession, it was (as was hinted before, on Luke iv. 33. pag. 221.) with an artful Design to bring our Lord into Suspicion, as acting in Confederacy with them; and the perverse Pharisees might perhaps lay hold of this Occasion, of fixing on Christ that impious and senseless Calumny, that he did not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils. Mat. xii. 24.

(f) In the Morning—before it was Light: *πρωι αυχου λιας*.] This does sufficiently express the Sense of the Original; for *αυχου λιας* does properly signify, when the Night was very far advanced, or when it was yet deep Night, and either of these Interpretations, in this Connection, implies, that the Dawning of the Day was near at hand. And thus it may be easily reconciled with Luke; for *γινομενης ημερας*, which the common Translation renders, when it was Day, might as well have been rendered, as the Day was coming on: For *γινομενης* may be understood, (as Grotius has observed,) not only as expressive of the Time that is already come, but as implying what is near at hand, or what is forming now, and ready to approach. (Compare John xiii. 2. and the Note there. See. 169.)—Some have indeed maintained, that different Facts are referred to in the Texts of Mark and Luke before us; the former referring to Christ's Rising, the latter to his Going out: But it seems, that Mark connects his Going out so immediately with his Rising, that no Stress can be laid on such a Distinction.

F f 2

(g) All

SECT. 36. People, or any Interruption from the Family, and privately departed to a desert Place in the Neighbourhood; and there prayed to his Heavenly Father in Secret, pouring out his Soul in the most copious and affectionate Manner.

departed into a solitary Place, and there prayed. [LUKE IV. 42.—]

36 And when the Day was something advanced, and Crouds of People came to enquire after him, Simon Peter, and they that were with him, (who have been already mentioned as his Partners and Companions,) guessing where Jesus was, went out and followed after him.

36 And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him.

37 And when they had found him at his private Devotions, they said unto him, Master, the Providence of GOD calls thee now to more publick Service; for all the People of the City are assembled yonder, and are seeking after thee (g).

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All Men seek for thee.

LUKE IV. 42. And what they said was immediately confirmed; for the Multitudes sought after him with so much Diligence, that they traced the Steps of Peter and his Companions, and while they were speaking came even to the Place in which they had found him; and they would fain have detained him a while, and pleaded in a very importunate Manner,

LUKE IV. —42. And the People sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

MARK I. 38. that he should not depart from them. But they could not prevail: And he said to them that were his constant Attendants, Let us go directly into the neighbouring Towns, that I may preach there also, without returning back to Capernaum at present; for, tho' we have many Friends and Well-wishers there, I must by all means preach the Kingdom of GOD to other Cities also; as for that Purpose I am sent into the World by my Father, with the most:

MARK I. 38. And he said unto them, Let us go into the next Towns, that I may preach there also; for [I must preach the Kingdom of GOD to other Cities also; for therefore am I sent,] there-

(g) All the People are seeking after thee.] It is very likely, that Peter, and they that were with him, warm as they were with the Expectations of a Temporal Kingdom, might think this a very favourable Opportunity of increasing Christ's Popularity, on which those Hopes were built.

(b) Con-

therefore came I forth.
[LUKE IV. 43.]

most extensive Designs of Usefulness, [and] SECT. 36.
therefore I came forth from his more im-
mediate Presence.

MAT. IV. 23. And Je-
sus went about all Galilee,
[and cast out Devils,]
teaching in their Syna-
gogues, and preaching the
Gospel of the Kingdom,
and healing all manner of
Sickness, and all manner of
Disease among the People.
[MARK I. 39. LUKE IV.
44.]

And thus Jesus took a Circuit with his MAT. IV.
Disciples through all Galilee, teaching in their 23.
Synagogues, wherever he had an Opportu-
nity, and preaching the good News of the
Kingdom which God was about to erect;
and he confirmed and illustrated what he
said (b), by casting out Devils, and healing
every Disease, and every Malady of the Peo-
ple, among whom he came.

24 And his Fame went
throughout all Syria; and
they brought unto him all
sick People, that were taken
with divers Diseases and
Torments, and those which
were possessed with Devils,
and those which were Lu-
natick, and those that had
the Palsy; and he healed
them.

And his Fame went through all the neigh- 24.
bouring Country of Syria, and they brought
to him from thence, as well as from nearer
Places, all, that is, great Numbers of sick
People (i), that were seized with a Variety of
Distempers and most tormenting and incu-
rable Pains, even Dæmoniacks, and Lunaticks,
and Paralyticks (k); and he healed them, not
excepting those, whose Cases were the most
deplorable and helpless. And these mi- 25.

25 And there followed him
great Multitudes of Peo-
ple from Galilee, and from
Deca-

raculous Cures, together with his excellent
Manner of preaching, rendered him so po-
pular, that great Multitudes of People fol-
lowed him, from all the Towns of Galilee,
and

(b) Confirmed and illustrated what he said.] It is justly and beautifully observed,
by the Author of a late Discourse on the Miracles of Christ, that they were not only a
Proof, but a Specimen, of the Power he claimed as the Messiah. Thus his giving
Sight to the Blind, illustrated his Power of enlightening the prejudiced Minds of Men;
his healing their Bodies, shewed how able he was to heal their Souls, and was a Speci-
men of his Authority to forgive Sin, as it was in part an actual Removal of its Pu-
nishment; his casting out Devils, was an Emblem of his final Victory over Satan;
and his raising particular Persons from the Dead, was a convincing Display of his
Power to accomplish a general Resurrection.

(i) All, that is, great Numbers of sick People.] It would be endless to enumerate
the Texts, where common Sense requires us to take the Word all, in this general
Manner. See Mark i. 37. Luke iii. 21. John iv. 29. xiv. 26. 1 Cor. ix. 22. and
Phi. ii. 21.

(k) Even Dæmoniacks, and Lunaticks, and Paralyticks.] Possession, Madness, and the
Palsy, are justly reckoned as Cases of great Misery, and little Hope; the Evangelist
therefore properly instanced in these. It is an evident Proof, that these were thought
distinct Cases; for the different Readings are so ill supported, as not to deserve a par-
ticular Mention.

(l) From:

SECT. 36. *and from the Region of Decapolis (l), and Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and even from Jerusalem, and the rest of Judea (m), and all [the Country] about Jordan (n), from beyond Jordan.*
 Mat. IV. 25. *both on its Eastern, and Western Banks.*

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mark i. 32, 33. **H**OW delightfully were the *Sabbaths* of *Christ* spent, in the midst of all his *Fatigues*! How pleasantly did *the Sun* go down upon him, when he had been imitating that *Heavenly Luminary*, in his steady and constant *Course*; scattering a brighter *Light*, and more beneficial *Influences*, upon all about him!

Ver. 35. And when the *Sabbath* had been spent in these *Labours* of *Piety* and *Love*, how happily were the *Fruits* of it carried into the ensuing *Week*? The first *Morning* of it, that it might be most pleasantly and most profitably begun, *Jesus rose before it was Light*, that he might enjoy *God* and himself, in religious *Retirement*. It surely becomes us sometimes willingly to deny ourselves the *Gratifications* of *Sleep*, that we may have the better *Opportunity* for *Devotion*. And it should be the peculiar *Care* of those who are employed in *God's* publick *Service*, to cultivate *Communion* with him in private; lest while they keep *the Vineyard* of others, their own be neglected and impoverished. (*Cant. i. 6.*)

Luke iv. 42. Our Lord's *Retirement* is interrupted by *the People*, who came to enquire after him, and desired to have detained him longer among them: And who, that has ever known the *Pleasure* of conversing

(l) From *Decapolis.*] This is well known to have been a *Tract* of *Land*, on the *East Side* of the *Sea of Galilee*, in which *Ten Cities* were situated near each other, and formed into a distinct *District*. It formerly belonged to the *Half Tribe of Manasseh*.

(m) From *Jerusalem, and Judea.*] Hence *Sir Isaac Newton* concludes, that *Christ* had been at *Jerusalem* at his *second Passover*; and that these *People* had attended him from thence. (See *Newton on Prophecy, pag. 151.*) The *Circuit* described above, might indeed have been the *Employment* of *four Months*, and probably took up most of that *Time*; but *Matthew* might have used this *Expression*, if *Persons* who came from *Jerusalem* followed *Christ* here, though he himself had never been there at all. On the whole, however ingenious and probable the *Hypothesis* of this learned *Author* is, it is liable to so many *Objections*, that on the maturest *Deliberation* I durst not venture to build upon it the *Structure* of an *Harmony*, entirely different from that of all other *Commentators*, except *Oslander*, which (if I mistake not,) in most *Places* agrees with his *Maxims*. I rather chuse to add an *Appendix*, representing the *Order* in which the *Sections* are to be read according to him, which will, to the more curious *Part* of my *Readers*, be sufficient, and will excuse me from the *Necessity* of swelling these *Notes* in such a *Manner*, as I must otherwise have done.

(n) *About Jordan.*] See *Note (b)* on *Mat. iv. 15. pag. 210.*

ing with him, would not desire, that it might be longer continued, and frequently renewed? But, in this Instance, *their Request* must be *denied*; the great Purposes of his *Ministry* required his Presence elsewhere, and he breaks through all that Importunity, which would have broken in upon his Schemes of Usefulness: A Resolution, which we must learn, in some Cases, to imitate, if we would prosecute the Business of Life, with Vigour and Success. Let us often reflect, *wherefore we were sent*, and judge by that, where GOD would have us to be; that by the Intimations of his Pleasure, every Motion may be regulated, and every Abode determined.

Where-ever *Christ* removes, he still goes about doing Good, publishing the Gospel, and confirming it by the most amazing Works of Power, and of Mercy. How well were these *Miracles* suited, to awaken Men's Attention, and to convince their Consciences of his Divine Mission! Well might *his Fame* go over the whole Country: May it extend itself now to the remotest Regions, that all the Ends of the Earth may look unto him, and be saved; (*Isa. xlv. 22.*) while he displays a *healing Power* over their *Spirits*, proportionable to that which he here exerted on their *Bodies*!

S E C T. XXXVII.

CHRIST begins his Sermon on the Mount, with the Beatitudes, and general Exhortations to exemplary Piety. Mat. V. 1,—16.

MAT. V. 1.

AND seeing the Multitudes, he went up into

MAT. V. 1.

AND [*Jesus*] in his Circuit through Galilee, seeing the vast Multitudes which flocked around him from all Parts, thought it proper to inform them, more largely than he had hitherto done, concerning the Nature of his Doctrine, and the Design of his Appearance; that he might correct those false Notions of the Messiah's Kingdom (a), which

SECT. 37.

Mat. V. 1.

(a) That he might correct those false Notions of the Messiah's Kingdom.] In order to enter into the Beauty of this Discourse, it is necessary to consider it, as addressed,

SECT. 37.
Mat. V. 1.

which so generally prevailed, and which would prove so pernicious to those who were governed by them. He therefore *went up to a Mountain (b)*, that he might be the better heard by the Crouds which surrounded him; *and when*, according to the Custom of the Jewish Rabbies in their Sermons, *he was set down* to teach them, they that were already *his Disciples*, and others that were disposed to receive Information, *came near to him.* *And opening his Mouth (c)*, with an Air of great Solemnity, to intimate the Importance of what he was going to deliver, *he taught them* the most suitable and excellent Lessons. And as Happiness was the great End, to which the wisest Philosophers undertook to conduct their Hearers, our Lord began his Discourse with several weighty, though uncommon Remarks, as to the surest Method of obtaining it; *saying,*

You

a Mountain; and when he was set, his Disciples came unto him.

2 And he opened his Mouth, and taught them, saying,

sed, not merely to the *Apostles*, (who were not yet chosen under that Character,) but to his *Disciples* in general, and to vast Numbers of People, who, affected with the Sight, or Fame of his *Miracles*, were now assembled around him; probably expecting, that he would immediately declare himself the *Messiah*, and full of those false Notions of his *Kingdom*, which so generally prevailed. *Mr. Blair*, in his excellent *Discourses on this Chapter*, has shewn, (I think, beyond all others,) how directly the Beginning of *this Sermon* is levelled against these *Prejudices*. He has also observed, (as it is very necessary to do,) what a beautiful *Correspondence* there is, between the *Characters* described in these *Beatitudes*, and the *Blessings* connected with them.

(b) *Went up to a Mountain.*] It does not appear, in what Part of *Gallilee* this *Mountain* was situated; and (if the *Cure of the Leper*, which *Christ* performed at his *descending from it*, was wrought in the *Confines* of some *other City*, and not of *Capernaum*,) there is no Reason to suppose, as most *Expositors* do, that it was in the Neighbourhood of *Capernaum*. (See *Mat. viii. 1, 2.* and *Note (b)* on *Luke v. 12. Sect. 44.*) *Mr. Maundrell* says, that what is now called the *Mount of the Beatitudes*, is a little to the North of *Mount Tabor*; (*Trav. pag. 115.*) and if this be its true Situation, it must be at some considerable Distance from *Capernaum*.—I shall elsewhere give some Hints of the Reasons, which have led me to conclude, that *this Discourse* was different from, and previous to, that which *Luke* has given us, in the *vith Chapter* of his Gospel, *ver. 20, & seq.* though many of the Sentiments and Expressions are the same. (See *Note (a)* on *Luke vi. 20. Sect. 53.*)

(c) *Opening his Mouth.*] I do not take the Expression, of *opening his Mouth*, to be always a *Plesnasm*; the Manner in which it is used elsewhere, may sufficiently prove the contrary. Compare *Judg. xi. 35, 36.* *Job iii. 1. xxxiii. 2.* and *Acts viii. 35. x. 34.* And thus the *antient Greek and Roman Writers* used it, as *Elsner* proves, *Obs. vol. i. pag. 20, 21.*

3

(d) *Happy*

3 Blessed are the Poor in Spirit ; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

You naturally congratulate the Rich and the Great, and expect, under the Reign of the Messiah, to be advanced to Wealth, and Dignity, and Power ; but *Happy (d) are the Poor in Spirit (e)*, those humble Souls, that deeply conscious of their Ignorance and Guilt, can quietly resign to Divine Teachings and Divine Disposals, and accommodate themselves to the lowest Circumstances which Providence shall appoint them : For howsoever they may be despised and trampled on by Men, *theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven* ; they will be most likely to embrace the Gospel, and they alone will be intitled to its most important Blessings, for Time, and Eternity.

SECT. 37.
Mat. V. 3.

4 Blessed are they that mourn ; for they shall be comforted.

You admire the gay and jovial Part of Mankind, and please yourselves with the Hopes of Joy and Festivity ; but I say unto you, *Happy are the Men of a more serious Temper, and especially they that now mourn under a penitent Sense of their Sins (f) ; for they shall e'er long be comforted with the Discoveries of God's forgiving Love, and be cheared with the reviving Rays of his everlasting Favour.*

You

(d) *Happy.*] I have here used the Word *happy*, rather than *blessed*, as more exactly answering to *μακαριοι*, as the other does to *ευδουρημοι* ; and I the rather chose to render it thus, because *our Lord* seems to intimate by it, not only that the Dispositions here recommended would be the Way to future Blessedness, but that they would immediately be attended with the truest Happiness, and the most noble Pleasures.

(e) *The Poor in Spirit.*] Though I cannot think with *Mr. Joseph Mede*, (pag. 25.) that this chiefly refers to a Disposition, to *part with their Possessions* for charitable Purposes ; or confine it, with *Grotius*, and *Baxter*, to a Disposition to *bear Poverty* with Resolution, Submission, and Cheerfulness ; yet I doubt not, but the latter of these is comprehended in that *Humility*, which is here expressed by *Poverty of Spirit* ; which is a Temper, that indeed is absolutely necessary, in order to our being cordially reconciled to the Gospel Method of Salvation.

(f) *They that mourn* under a penitent Sense of their Sins.] It seems proper to restrain it within these Limits, since there is a *Sorrow of the Wor'd*, which ends in *Death*, 2 Cor. viii. 10. And though *Mourning* for the Calamities of Life be often allowable and commendable, yet it is so natural an Affection, and sometimes in its Degree so sinful, that one can hardly suppose *our Lord* here pronounced a *Blessing* upon it in such general Terms.

SECT. 37.
 Mat. V. 5.

You imagine, that military Courage and martial Exploits, are to introduce the Kingdom now to be erected, and to raise Men to distinguished Stations in it; but I rather say, *Happy are the Men, who are Meek and Gentle, under Injuries and Provocations, and are cautious in offering, but patient in bearing them; for they shall weather many a Storm, which would bear down the Rugged and Obstinate, and at length (as the Psalmist expresses it, Psal. xxxvii. 11.) "shall inherit the Earth, and delight themselves in the Abundance of Peace,"* which can only have its Seat in such gentle Bosoms.

6 *Happy are they, that instead of desiring insatiably the Possessions of others, and endeavouring to obtain them by Violence or Deceit, eagerly hunger and thirst after Righteousness (g), and make it the delightful Business of Life to improve in all the Branches of Virtue and Goodness; for they shall never be disappointed in these pious Pursuits, but be abundantly satisfied with the Righteousness they seek, (compare Prov. xxi. 21.) and be competently supplied with every necessary inferior Good. (See Mat. vi. 33.)*

7 Far from training you up to delight in Scenes of Desolation and Slaughter, I rather declare, *Happy are the Merciful and Compassionate,*

5 Blessed are the Meek for they shall inherit the Earth.

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after Righteousness; for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed are the Merciful;

(g) *That hunger and thirst after Righteousness.*] The very pious and judicious Writer, I mentioned above, in Note (a), has taken a great deal of Pains to prove, that these Words are chiefly designed to recommend a *Love of Justice* towards our Fellow-Creatures; and is for rendering *χορσασθησονται*, *they shall be fed to the full*, while those, who are violent and rapacious, as *young Lions*, may *lack and suffer Hunger*. Psal. xxxiv. 10. But the *Phrase of hungering and thirsting after Righteousness*, must surely be expressive of much more, than merely a steady Care to treat all Mankind equitably, and to avoid what would be injurious and oppressive; and we may rather understand it, as a just and beautiful Description, of a holy Ardour of Soul, in Pursuit of the most eminent Attainments in *universal Goodness*, which will end in compleat *Satisfaction*, as the necessary Consequence of perfect Holiness, in a future State.—These different Views of the *future Blessedness*, sufficiently vindicate *our Lord* from the Charge of *Tautology*, though we should suppose, (as after all that *Mr. Blair* has said to the contrary, I think we must,) that *our Lord* leads the Minds of his Disciples upwards, in almost each of these *Beatitudes*.

(b) *Happy*

ful; for they shall obtain Mercy.

passionate, that feel the Sorrows of others as their own, and with tender Sympathy hasten to relieve them; *for they shall obtain that Mercy from GOD*, which the best and happiest of Mankind need, and on which they continually and entirely depend.

SECT. 37.
Mat. V. 7.

8 Blessed *are* the Pure in Heart; for they shall see GOD.

Indulge not a Thought of those licentious Gratifications, which are often mingled with Victory, and are accounted as the Pleasures of the Great; *Happy are the Men*, that not only abstain from these gross Enormities, but are concerned that they may be *Pure in Heart* too (*b*), avoiding every irregular Desire, and mortifying every unruly Passion: This resolute Self-denial shall be the Source of nobler and more lasting Pleasure; *for they shall see GOD* (*i*), and thus purified and refined, shall enjoy him in his Ordinances now, and dwell with him for ever in Heaven.

8

9 Blessed *are* the Peace-makers;

I come not, as you may fondly suppose, to lead you forward to the Field of Battle, or to teach you to propagate Religion by the Sword; but, on the contrary, I declare unto you, *Happy are the Peace-makers*, who not only avoid Contention, but labour to extinguish it wherever it prevails; *for* though mistaken Men may ascribe such a gentle Disposition to Cowardice and Meanness of Spirit,

9

(*b*) *Happy are the Pure in Heart.*] *Mr. Blair* supposes, this may refer to the Expectation they had of possessing themselves of *beautiful Captives*, in those Wars, by which they fancied that the *Messiah's Kingdom* would be raised and established. The large *Seraglio's* of Eastern Princes and Great Men, which, by a very mistaken Taste, were regarded as Matters of State and Grandeur, gave too much Countenance to such a wild and extravagant Notion: But as the Hint is at most but obliquely intimated, I thought it convenient to touch upon it only in a very transient and general Manner.

(*i*) *For they shall see GOD.*] *Elser* has illustrated *this Text*, by shewing, that the Pagans thought a Good Man might *see their Deities*, in some Circumstances when to the Wicked they were invisible. (*Elser. Observ. vol. i. pag. 22, 23.*) But this in *their Theology* might be intended to subserve some fraudulent Views, from which the Nature of *Christianity* is most abhorrent. The Remark however may in some Degree shew, how natural the Thought is, in the Words before us.

SECT. 37. Spirit, *they shall* have the Honour to be called *the Children of the GOD of Peace (k)*, and be owned by him in that dear Relation, as they resemble him in the Benevolence of their Characters.

makers; for they shall be called the Children of GOD.

Mat. V. 9.

10 Instead of these Poms and Pleasures, these Victories and Triumphs, (in Expectation of which you may now be crouding around me,) my Followers must prepare themselves for the Severity of Suffering; but *Happy are they that are persecuted for the sake of Righteousness*, and couragiously endure the greatest Extremities, for the Testimony of their Consciences: Their richest Treasure is beyond the Reach of their most inveterate Enemies, *for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, and they shall reign with GOD in everlasting Glory.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for Righteousness sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

11 And, on these Principles, *Happy are ye*, my sincere Disciples and faithful Friends, *when Men shall injuriously reproach you, and persecute you, and shall falsely say every thing that is evil and scandalous of you, for my Sake*, and because of your professed Relation to me.

11 Blessed are ye when Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of Evil against you falsely for my Sake.

12 Be not discouraged under all this Load of Infamy and Oppression, but rather *rejoice, and triumphantly exult (l)*; *because your Reward in Heaven [will be] proportionably great and distinguished: For this has in all Ages been the Portion, and the Proof, of the most eminent Saints; and you particularly know from the Sacred Records, that it was thus they persecuted the Prophets of their own Nation (m), who were long before*

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your Reward in Heaven: for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you.

(k) *The Children of the GOD of Peace.*] So GOD is often called, *Rom. xvi. 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Phil. iv. 9. and Heb. xiii. 20.* (Compare *Ecclus. iv. 10.*) *To be called GOD's Children*, signifies to be really so, and to have a Right to that Name conferred upon us by a Divine Adoption. See *1 John iii. 1. and John i. 12.*

(l) *Triumphantly exult.*] Of the emphatical Signification of the Word *αγαλλιασθε*, see Note (f) on *Luke i. 14. pag. 16.*

(m) *Thus they persecuted the Prophets of their own Nation.*] This is abundantly evident, from the known Histories of *Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Ezekiel,*

fore you, the Embassadors from GOD to SECT. 37. them; and as you now share in the Tribulation of those holy Men, you shall e'er long share in their Glory. Mat. V. 10.

13 Ye are the Salt of the Earth; but if the Salt have lost its Savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under Foot of Men.

Let it be, in the mean Time, your Care to imitate their Piety and Zeal, as remembering, that you, my Disciples, are to be, as it were, *the Salt of the Earth*, the Means of preventing or curing the Growth of that Corruption which prevails in it, and of seasoning Men's Minds with Wisdom and Grace: *But* it would be most unhappy for yourselves, as well as for them, if you should be destitute of those blessed Principles; for *if the Salt be grown inspid (n), with what can it possibly be seasoned? It is no farther of any Avail, or Significancy at all, but as a useless Thing is left to be thrown out of Doors, and to be trampled on by Men, as the common Dirt of the Streets: Thus worthless and contemptible will you, my Disciples, be, even in the most eminent Stations, if you lose your Character for real and vital Religion.* 13

14 Ye are the Light of the

And therefore, that this may not be the Case with you, consider the distinguished Circumstances in which you are placed: *You are, like the Sun, to be the Light of the World; and how conspicuous and bright should* 14

Ezekiel, Amos, &c. See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16. Mat. xxiii. 29,—35. Acts vii. 51, 52. and Heb. xi. 36, 37.

(n) *If the Salt be grown inspid.*] Mr. Le Clerc sinks the Meaning of this noble Passage very low, when he supposes our Lord only intends to compare his Disciples to Salt-ashes, used in manuring the Ground. (See Luke xiv. 34, 35.) That Passage, in which Livy calls Greece, *Sal Gentium, the Salt of all the Nations*, on Account of those Intellectual Improvements they learnt from thence, might easily have suggested a much nobler Sense, which the Paraphrase expresses. The Word *μωρανθη* has a peculiar Beauty and Strength here, and might literally be rendered, *if it be insatuated, or grown foolish*, alluding to the common Figure, in which Sense and Spirit are expressed by Salt; but I thought the Metaphor too strong to be literally retained in the Version, and therefore contented myself with a distant Imitation, as we call a flat lifeless Discourse *insipid*. Compare Job vi. 6. and Col. iv. 6.

(a) A

SECT. 37. Should you appear under that Character?

Mat. V. 14. Even a City, that like yonder Town, is situated on a Mountain (o), cannot be hid, but will attract Men's Eyes from a considerable

15 Distance. Neither do Men light so much as a common Lamp, and put it under a Bushel, and conceal it there; but they rather set it on a Stand, and it giveth Light to all that are in the House. How much less will it become you, whom I have compared to the Sun (p), to hide, or to suppress

16 your Rays? On the contrary, let it be your Care, that your Light may so shine before Men, that they may continually see your good Works, in every Circumstance and Relation of Life; and may thereby be engaged to glorify your Father who is in Heaven; not only praising him for sending such a Religion into the World, but also themselves embracing your Faith, and imitating your holy Example.

the World. A City that is set on a Hill, cannot be hid.

15 Neither do Men light a Candle, and put it under a Bushel; but on a Candlestick, and it giveth Light unto all that are in the House.

16 Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. v. 1, 2. **W**HAT abundant Reason have we to bless God, that this large and edifying Discourse of our Blessed Redeemer, is thus particularly recorded by the Sacred Historian. Let every one, that hath Ears to hear, attend to it; for surely never Man spake, as our Lord here doth. Let us fix our Souls in a Posture of humble Attention, that we may receive the Law from his Mouth.

He

(o) *A City, that like yonder town, is situated on a Mountain.*] Mr. Maundrell tells us, that there is a City called *Saphet*, supposed to be the antient *Bethulia*, which standing on a high Hill, might easily be seen from the Mountain on which Christ made this Discourse; and probably supposes, he might point to that here, as afterwards he did to the *Birds*, and the *Lilies*: Mat. vi. 26, 28. (*Maundr. Travels, pag. 115.*) Many Writers have justly observed, that our Lord, like *Socrates*, takes his *Similes* from the most obvious Things, familiarly known to his Hearers, and often before their Eyes, even while he was speaking; a Thought most largely illustrated, by *Sir Isaac Newton on the Prophecies, pag. 148, 149.*

(p) How much less will it become you, whom I have compared to the Sun, &c.] That this is the Sense and Spirit of this beautiful Passage, Mr. Pierce has well shewn, in his fourth Dissertation.

He opened it with *Blessings*, repeated and most important *Blessings*. SECT. 37.
 But on whom are they pronounced; and whom are we taught to think the *Happiest* of Mankind? The *Meek* and the *Humble*, the *Penitent* and the *Merciful*, the *Peaceful* and the *Pure*, those that hunger and thirst after *Righteousness*, those that labour, but faint not, under *Persecution*! Blessed *Jesus*, how different are thy Maxims, from those of the Children of this World! They call the Proud *happy*, and admire the Gay, the Rich, the Powerful, and the Victorious. But let a vain World take its gaudy Trifles, and dress up the foolish Creatures that pursue them. May our Souls share in that *Happiness* which the *Son of GOD* came to recommend, and to procure! May we obtain *Mercy* of the Lord; may we be owned as *his Children*; may we see *his Face*; and may we inherit *his Kingdom*! With these Enjoyments, and these Hopes, we will cheerfully welcome the lowest, or the most painful Circumstances. Ver. 3, — 12.

Let us awaken and stir up our Souls to the Cultivation of those amiable *Virtues*, which are here recommended to our Pursuit; this *Humility* and *Meekness*, this *penitent Sense* of Sin, this ardent *Desire* after *Righteousness*, this *Compassion* and *Purity*, this *Peacefulness* and *Fortitude of Soul*; and in a Word, this *universal Goodness*, which becomes us, as we sustain the Character of *the Salt of the Earth*, Ver. 13, 14. and *the Light of the World*.

Is there not Reason to lament it, that we answer the Character no more? Is there not Reason to cry out with a good Man in former Times *, “Blessed *Jesus*, either these are not thy Words, or we are “not *Christians*.” Oh, season our Hearts more effectually with thy *Grace*! Pour forth that *Divine Oil* on our Lamps! Then shall the Flame brighten; then shall the antient Honours of thy Religion be Ver. 16. revived; and Multitudes be awakened and animated, by the Lustre of it, to glorify our Father in Heaven. Amen.

* *Linacer.*

S E C T. XXXVIII.

Our LORD declares his Purpose of establishing, and vindicating the Moral Law, and enters on his Divine Exposition of it. Mat. V. 17,—26.

MAT. V. 17.

MAT. V. 17.

SECT. 38. **T**HAT the great Design of our Lord's Appearance might be more fully understood by the Multitudes, that were now assembled around him, he proceeded in his Discourse and said; *Suppose not, that I am come to dissolve that goodly Fabrick of holy Precepts, contained in the Sacred Writings of the Law, or the Prophets; for I solemnly assure you, that I am not come to dissolve but rather to vindicate and illustrate, to compleat and adorn [them,] (a) both by my Example and Discourses, as well as to answer the highest Ends of the Ceremonial Institutions. For verily I say unto you, that as their Original is Divine, their Honours shall be perpetual; so that till Heaven and Earth pass away, and the whole visible Frame of Nature be disjointed, not one jot or one Tittle shall pass or perish from the Law-(b),*
till

THINK not, that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18

18 For verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and Earth pass, one Jot or one Tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled.

(a) To vindicate and illustrate, to compleat and adorn them.] I was willing to take the Word *αληθεύω* in its most extensive Sense, as comprehending what *Christ* has done to answer the End of the *Ceremonial Law*, as well as to vindicate and enforce the *Moral*: Yet by the Connection it seems, that the latter was chiefly intended; and this Phrase, *the Law and the Prophets*, is used in this Sense, *Mat. xxii. 40*. It is strange, that any should have questioned, whether the *Precepts of Moses* required such *Spirituality* of Obedience, as *Christ* here demands. That great Command, of *Loving the Lord GOD with all the Heart, &c. and our Neighbour as ourself*, (*Mat. xxii. 37*.) must surely comprehend all this. I shall only add, that *Vitringa's* Interpretation of *αληθεύω*, who supposes it here to answer to the *Chaldee* *נמך*, which signifies to *paraphrase, illustrate, open, or explain*, seems to me worthy of Consideration. (Compare *Rom. xv. 19. απληρωσαμεν το ευαγγελιον*: I have fully explained the Gospel; and *Col. iv. 12. απληρωμενοι εν διληματι του Θεου*: compleatly instructed in the Will of GOD.) See *Vitring. Observ. Sacr. lib. i. dissert. iii. cap. 5. §. 3.*

(b) One Jot, or one Tittle.] The Word *ιωτα*, which we render *Jot*, undoubtedly answers

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven : but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

till all Things, which it requires or foretells, shall be effected (c). *Whoever therefore shall himself transgress or violate one of the least of these Commandments, which are contained therein ; and especially, whoever shall teach other Men so to do, whether by his licentious Principles, or irregular Example ; he shall be accounted [one of] the least and unworthiest Members in the Kingdom of Heaven, or in the Church of the Messiah, and shall soon be intirely cut off from it, as unfit for so holy a Society : But whosoever shall do them, and teach [them] with that Advantage which nothing but the Authority of a good Example can give, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven, and be treated with distinguished Honour and Favour, in Proportion to his Zeal in so good a Cause.*

SECT. 38.
Mat. V. 19.

20 For I say unto you, That except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and

of all, that hear me this Day ; for I say unto you, with all the Solemnity that so important an Affair requires, *That unless your Righteousness abound far more than [that,] which is apparent in the Lives, or even required in the Precepts, of the Scribes and Pharisees (d),*

as

answers to the Hebrew Letter *Yod*, whence the English Word here used seems to be derived, and which being the least Letter of their Alphabet, might properly be used proverbially on this Occasion.—*Kappa*, which we render *Tittle*, properly signifies one of those little ornamental *Curvatures* or *Flourishes*, which when Hebrew is elegantly written, are generally used at the Beginning and End of a Letter, and sometimes at the Corners too.—I think it might well have been rendered, *not the least Letter, or Stroke, &c.* and so much the rather, as *Yot* and *Tittle*, in English, signify much the same.

(c) *Till all Things, which it requires or foretells, shall be effected:* [עַד אֲשֶׁר יֵשְׁבֵעַ הַחֹק.] The Translation here given, is most literal and comprehensive. The Law has its Effect, when its Sanctions are executed, as well as when its Precepts are obeyed.

(d) Apparent in the Lives, or even required in the Precepts, of the Scribes and Pharisees.] As our Lord levels his following Discourse, not so much against the corrupt Lives of these Jewish Teachers, as against their Doctrines, I conclude, that the Text chiefly refers to the latter : Yet since their Lives were yet worse than their Maxims, it must comprehend the former. They seem (so far as we can judge by this Sermon, and other Scriptures,) to have taught,—that the Precepts of the Law extended only to the outward Actions,—that a Zeal in the Ceremonial Parts of Religion

SECT. 38. as highly as they are generally esteemed; ye shall be so far from making any illustrious Figure, that ye shall not by any Means enter into the Kingdom of Heaven (e), or be owned by the Son of Man as truly his Subjects.

Mat. V. 20.

21

To illustrate this, I will now proceed to explain some of those Precepts of the Law, which these Pharisaical Teachers have, by their perverse Glosses, enervated, and dishonoured: And I will begin with the Sixth Commandment. *You have heard, that it was said to the Antients (f), and particularly to your Fathers at Mount Sinai, Thou shalt not kill (g): And you have been taught, that the only Design of it was, to restrain Men from actual Murther; and accordingly it has been added, that whosoever shall unlawfully kill another, shall be obnoxious to the Judgment (h), and be capitally punished in the common Courts*

and Pharisees, ye shall in no Case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

21 Ye have heard, that it was said by them of old Time, Thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill, shall be in Danger of the Judgment.

would excuse Moral Defects and Irregularities,—and that some important Privileges were inseparably connected with a Descent from Abraham, &c.

(e) *Ye shall not by any Means enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*] This must greatly surprize Christ's Hearers, if the Proverb, which has since prevailed, were of so ancient a Date; for it has been commonly said by the Jews, that "if but Two Men were to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, one of them would be a Pharisee, and the other a Scribe."

(f) *You have heard, that it was said to the Antients.*] Thus are the Words *επειδη τω αρχαιω*, to be rendered. See Grotius, and Whitby, in loc.

(g) *Thou shalt not kill.*] I might have rendered, *On purpose, Thou shalt not commit Murther*; as Dr. Scott has very properly done: But I chose to retain the Words of the Commandments, as they are usually expressed among us, that it might at first hearing be more apparent to every Reader, that what follows each is our Lord's Commentary upon it.

(h) *Shall be obnoxious to the Judgment.*] To understand this, and the following Verse, it is necessary to observe, that the Jews had a common Court of Twenty-three Men, wherein Capital Sentences might be passed, on which a Malefactor might be strangled, or beheaded; this was called the Judgment: But the Sanhedrim, or Council, was the Supreme Jewish Court, consisting of Seventy-two, in which the highest Crimes were tried, which they, and they alone, punished with stoning, which was thought a more terrible Death than the former. See Grotius's excellent Note on this Text, of which the best Commentaries upon it since him, are little more than Transcripts. (See Bishop Hopkins's Works, pag. 65, 66.)—As Murther was undoubtedly a Capital Crime, Dr. Lightfoot, and after him Dr. Whitby, must be mistaken, in supposing, that Judgment here signifies Punishment from the immediate Hand of GOD, as in a Case which Human Laws would not reach. See Lightf. Hor. Hebr. and Whitby, on Mat. v. 22.

(i) With-

22 But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his Brother without a Cause, shall be in Danger of the Judgment: and whosoever shall say to his Brother, Raca, shall be in Danger of the Council: but whosoever shall say, Thou Fool, shall be in Danger of Hell-fire.

Courts of Judicature. *But I say unto you,* SECT. 38. *that it was the Design of GOD in this Precept, to prohibit extravagant Passions, and abusive Language, as well as the most fatal Effects of them in destroying the Lives of each other: So that whosoever shall, without just Cause (i), be angry with his Brother, so as secretly to wish him Evil, shall be obnoxious to the Judgment, or shall be liable to a worse Punishment from GOD, than any that your common Courts of Judicature can inflict (k): And whosoever to his secret Anger shall add opprobrious and contemptuous Words, or, for Instance, shall say to his Brother, Raca, that is, thou worthless empty Fellow (l), shall be exposed to yet more terrible Effects of the Divine Resentment, and be obnoxious to a yet severer Punishment, that will as far exceed the former, as that inflicted by the Scaubedrim, which extends to Stoning, does that which follows on the Judgment of the Inferior Courts, which only have the Power of the Sword: But whosoever, in his unreasonable Passion, shall presume to say unto his Brother, Thou Fool, that is, thou graceless wicked Villain (m), thereby impeaching his*
Moral

Mat. V. 22.

(i) *Without just Cause.*] Though *men, without Cause,* be wanting in some old Versions and Manuscripts, the Sense plainly implies it. See *Dr. Whitby, in loc.*

(k) *To a worse Punishment from GOD, &c.*] That Judgment must here signify Punishment from GOD, is plain, because this *causeless Anger* might be so concealed in the Heart, as not to admit of Conviction before Men.

(l) *Raca, that is, thou worthless empty Fellow.*] *Drusus* gives the most learned and accurate Account of the Etymology and Import of this Word, which seems pretty exactly to answer to *Corcomb* in our Language.

(m) *Thou Fool, that is, thou graceless wicked Villain.*] *Mr. Blair* thinks, that *μωρος, thou Fool,* answers to *Βακτηρη*; but that being only applied to a *Debauchee,* seems too contracted. *Wicked Men* are so often called *Fools* in the *Old Testament,* especially in the Writings of *David* and *Solomon,* that the Appellation in the *Jewish Language,* signifies, not so much a weak thoughtless Creature, as a Man deliberately guilty of some heinous Crime, or in one Word a *Villain.* On this Account I cannot but think it wrong, that *αυτος, Luke xxiv. 25. or αφεος, 1 Cor. xv. 36.* should by so harsh a Translation as ours, have been confounded, with such an infamous Word as this.

SECT. 38. Moral Character, as well as reflecting on his Intellectual, *shall be obnoxious to the Fire of Hell*, or to a future Punishment more dreadful, even than that of being burnt alive in the Valley of Hinnom (*n*), from whence you borrow the Name of those Infernal Regions.

Mat. V. 22.

- 23 Remember *therefore* to lay aside all your Animosities, and to live in Peace and Love, as ever you would escape G O D's Wrath, and secure his Favour. Without this, your most expensive Sacrifices would be so vain, that I must inculcate it on every one of you, as a most necessary Caution, *If thou art bringing thy Gift*, however costly and free (*o*), even to the very Altar, and there recolle^{ct}est, that *thy Brother has any just Cause of [Complaint] against thee*, do not content thyself with a secret, and it may be a treacherous Purpose, that thou wilt hereafter accommodate the Affair, but bring it to an immediate Issue; And leaving *thy Gift there*, in the Hand of those that are ministring *before the Altar*, go away, and first make it thy Care to be reconciled to thy

23 Therefore, if thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy Brother hath ought against thee;

24 Leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy Way, first be reconciled to thy

(*n*) Burnt alive in the Valley of Hinnom.] Though it is so well known to the Learned, I must beg Leave to remind my English Reader, that the Valley of Hinnom, or Tophet, had been the Scene of those detestable Sacrifices, in which Children were burnt alive to Molech; (compare 2 Kings xxiii. 10. 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. and Jer. xix. 2,—5. xxxii. 35.) and was afterwards defiled by Jofiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. and made a Receptacle for the Filth of the City, where Fires were kept continually burning, to consume it: And it is probable, that if any Criminals were executed on the Statute, Lev. xx. 14. or xxi. 9. this accursed and horrible Place might be the Spot of Ground, on which they were consumed. However that were, it seemed, both with regard to its former, and latter State, a fit Emblem of Hell itself, (see Isa. xxx. 33. and Jer. xix. 11,—13.) which in the Syriac Language, takes its Name from thence, and was commonly called Gehenna by the Jews. (See Lightf. Hor. Hebr. in loc. and Preface to his Harm. of the New Test.)—It must here signify a Degree of Future Punishment, as much more dreadful than that incurred in the former Case, as Burning alive was more terrible than Stoning. For I apprehend the Punishment of each Degree of Anger and Fury here mentioned, is to be referred to the Invisible World, or else our Lord's Words would not be generally true.

(*o*) *If thou art bringing thy Gift*, however costly and free.] Δορον, a Gift, implies, that it was a Free-will Offering, which adds great Strength to the Sentence, beyond what it would have had, if the Word had been Σωσιαρ, Sacrifice.

thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.

thy Brother, by an Acknowledgment of thy Fault, and by a Readiness to make him any reasonable Satisfaction; *and then come, and offer thy Gift (p)*, which thou mayest then cheerfully hope, GOD will accept at thine Hands.

SECT. 38.
Mat. V. 24.

25 Agree with thine Adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the Way with him; lest at any Time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison.

And it will be Prudence, as well as Humanity, to apply this Advice to Suits at Law, if you are so unhappy as to be engaged in them: My Counsel then to each of you is, that thou shouldst make it thine Endeavour to come to a friendly Agreement with thine Adversary (q) quickly, while thou art in the Way, going with him to a Magistrate; lest the Adversary should deliver thee to be tried before the Judge; and the Judge deciding the Cause against thee, deliver thee to the Officer of the Court, to keep thee in Custody till Payment be made; and thou, not having enough by thee to discharge an Account, inflamed with so many additional Articles of Expence, shouldst be cast into Prison: Verily I say unto thee, thy Antagonist, when he has got thee at such an Advantage, will be more rigorous in his Demands than before; and thou shalt not by any Means come out from thence, till thou hast discharged the very last Farthing of thy Debt. And surely,

25

26

if

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no Means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing.

(p) First be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.] It is observable, that Philo, (de Sacrif. pag. 844.) explaining the Law of the *Trespafs-Offering*, tells us, "That when a Man had injured his Brother, and repenting of his Fault voluntarily acknowledged it, (in which Case both Restitution and Sacrifice were required,) he was first to make Restitution, and then to come into the Temple presenting his Sacrifice, and asking Pardon." This is a very just and natural Account of the Matter, and adds a great Illustration to this Text: Especially when it is considered, that our Lord supposes in this Case, not a *Trespafs-Offering*, but a voluntary Gift presented before the Altar; and yet declares, that this will not be accepted, while there is a Consciousness of having wronged a Brother, and not made him Reparation.

(q) Come to a friendly Agreement with thine Adversary.] The Word *antidunō* properly signifies, a Person who is going to Law with another. I have rendered *come to a friendly Agreement*, because the Original seems to imply, not only Peace, but Benevolence.

(r) If

SECT. 38. if by impenitent Wickedness thou makest
 thyself the Prisoner of the Divine Justice^(r),
 Mat. V. 26. thy Case will be yet more deplorable and
 hopeless.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- Mat. v. 17. **L**ET us seriously consider, and often recollect, the Purposes of
 Christ's Appearance: *He came not to destroy the Law and the
 Prophets*, or to dissolve Mens Obligation to observe them; but ra-
 ther to inforce, as well as to fulfil them. How fatally shall we
 pervert the Purposes of his Coming, if we regard him as the *Mini-
 ster of Sin*? How ungratefully shall we abuse the merciful Consti-
 tution of his *Gospel*, should we take Encouragement from thence
 to violate his *Law*? Dangerous, as well as ungrateful, Abuse in-
 deed! For GOD's Eye will be watchful over its Honours, and his
 Hand exerted to maintain them; so that *Heaven and Earth shall
 pass away*, before it shall fail of its *Accomplishment*, in being either
 obeyed, or avenged on the impenitent Sinner. May it be our constant
 Ver. 18. Care to *keep* it ourselves, and to *teach* others to observe it! May we
 Ver. 19. *teach* it by our Lives, as well as our Lips; and let our daily Conver-
 sation demonstrate, how practicable, and how amiable, its Precepts
 are! So shall we be *great in the Kingdom of Heaven*, in the Pursuit
 of which we may give full Scope to the noblest Ambition of which
 Human Nature is capable.
- Ver. 20. Let our Hearts own, and feel, the *spiritual* Sense of GOD's
Law, that we may rise to a more sincere, and more extensive
Righteousness, than that of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. May we *de-
 light in it after the inward Man*, and learn to regulate our Thoughts,
 and our Passions, as well as our external Behaviour by it!
- Ver. 21, 22. Especially, let us avoid all the malignant and ill-natured *Passions*,
 all Thoughts of rash and immoderate *Anger*, all Words of Contu-
 mely and *Reproach*. If we would maintain Communion with the
 Ver. 23. *GOD of Love*, let Love govern in our Hearts; and when we come
 to

(r) If thou makest thyself the Prisoner of the Divine Justice.] This Thought is a natural Reflection on what was said before; but it is rather intimated, than expressed, in our Lord's Words, which so naturally lead to the Sense given in the *Paraphrase*, that to those who are unacquainted with the *Popish* Manner of managing Controversies, it might seem surprizing they should ever be urged in Favour of *Purgatory*. The Vanity and Inconsistency of it, is well exposed by *Bishop Burnet, on the Articles, pag. 169.* and *Limborch, Theolog. lib. vi. cap. 10. §. 22.*

to present our Devotions to him, let us *lift up holy Hands, without* SECT. 38. *Wrath, as well as without Doubting.* (1 Tim. ii. 8.) So may we promise ourselves a gracious Welcome; so shall we carry away the most valuable Blessings!

But are none of us Strangers to this blessed State? Are none of us obnoxious to the Divine Displeasure? If we are so, with what a holy Solicitude of Soul should we labour to make up the *Controversy*, and *come to an Agreement, while we are yet in the Way*, with this Ver. 25. *awful Adversary!* lest we be immediately hurried before the Tribunal of the *righteous Judge of all the World*, and be delivered into the Hands of Justice, to be reserved in *everlasting Chains*, beyond the Possibility of Redemption.

Lord, we were all the *Debtors*, and in one Sense, the *Prisoners* of Ver. 26. *thy Justice*; and of ourselves were most incapable, not only of *paying the uttermost Farthing*, but even of discharging the least Part of the Debt! We bless thee for that generous *Surety*, who has undertaken, and discharged it for us; and by the Price of whose atoning Blood we are *delivered from the Chains of Darknes*, and are *translated into the glorious Liberty of thy Children*.

S E C T. XXXIX.

Our LORD proceeds in his Exposition of the Law, strictly prohibiting Uncleaness, Divorce, Contention, and Revenge, and urging the contrary Virtues. Mat. V. 27, to the End.

MAT. V. 27.

YE have heard, that it was said by them of old Time, Thou shalt not commit Adultery.

28. But I say unto you, that

MAT. V. 27.

JESUS proceeded in his Sermon to the SECT. 39. Seventh Commandment, and observed, *You have often heard, that it was said to the Antients, Thou shalt not commit Adultery;* Mat. V. 27. and that Law has been explained, as if it related only to the grossest Acts of Uncleaness: *But I say unto you, that it extends,* 28. not only to unchaste Actions and Words, but even to Looks, and the very Thoughts of the

SECT. 39.
Mat. V. 28.

the Heart: For *whosoever shall gaze on a Woman (a) to lust after her, and thus cherish and indulge the secret Workings of irregular Desire in his Mind, has already committed that Adultery with her in his Heart (b),* which this Commandment was designed to forbid, and thereby rendered himself, in the Sight of God, guilty of the Breach of it.

- 29 You will think me severe, in requiring you so strictly to mortify all the irregular Propensities of Nature; but you will find it, on the whole, as much for your Interest, as it is to part with a gangrened Member, to prevent the Death of the whole Body; yea indeed, it is infinitely more so. *And if therefore thy right Eye offend or insnare thee (c),* or any thing dear as thy right Eye, would be the necessary Occasion of leading thee into Sin, *pluck it out with inexorable Resolution, and cast it far from thee with Abhorrence; for it is advantageous to thee, that one of thy Members should perish, rather than thy whole Body should be thrown into Hell;* which yet must be the fatal Consequence, of indulging the most favourite Lust.
- 30 *Yea, if thy right Hand offend or insnare thee (d),* though

that whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart.

29 And if thy right Eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy Members should perish, and not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell.

30 And if thy right Hand offend

(a) *Whosoever shall gaze on a Woman; ο βλεπων γυναικα.*] There are several other Places, where the Word βλεπω, signifies to look on an Object with great Attention, or to fix the Eye upon it. See *Mat.* vii. 3. xviii. 10. *Luke* vii. 44. viii. 18. *Acts* i. 9. iii. 4. *1 Cor.* iii. 10. x. 12. *Phil.* iii. 2. and *Rev.* xvii. 8.

(b) *Committed Adultery with her in his Heart.*] In the first Edition I had rendered it, *debauched her*, because it is plain μοιχευσω must extend to single as well as married Persons; but on the Animadversion of a learned Friend, I am convinced that the Spirit of our Lord's Meaning is best expressed, by retaining the Word used in the Seventh Commandment, and giving the Passage such a Turn as I have now given it in the Paraphrase, which does not at all limit the Sense. But to render γυναικα, a married Woman, would be a Limitation, I think, not to be justified.

(c) *Offend or insnare thee.*] It is well known, that this is the Force of the Word σκandalισω, which most literally signifies, to be a *Stumbling-block* in a Person's Way, or an *Occasion of his Fall*; and so implies much more, than merely to *displease*. I mention this Remark, obvious as it is, because the Sense of so many Texts depends on attending to it. See *Rom.* xi. 9. xiv. 13, 21. xvi. 17. *1 Cor.* viii. 13. *Gal.* v. 11. and *Rev.* ii. 14.

(d) *If thy right Hand offend or insnare thee.*] The greatest Part of *Christ's Auditors* were

offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy Members should perish, and not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell.

though it be so useful and necessary a Part, do not spare it, but immediately cut it off, and cast it from thee; for I renew the Declaration, that it is highly advantageous to thee, that any one of thy Members should perish, rather than thy whole Body should be thrown into Hell (e), to be the Companion of thy guilty Soul there, in everlasting Horror and Misery.

SECT. 39.
Mat. V. 30.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his Wife, let him give her a Writing of Divorcement.

It has been said, (Deut. xxiv. 1.) Who- ever would dismiss his Wife, let him give her a Writing of Divorce: And this Precept, which was indeed intended to prevent the Frequency of such Dismissions, by making it so solemn and irrevocable a Thing, has perversely been interpreted, as a Warrant for having Recourse to it upon every trifling Occasion. But such a Practice is directly

31

32 But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his Wife, saving for the Cause of Fornication, causeth her to commit Adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth Adultery.

contrary to the Original Design of Marriage, and highly injurious to the common Good of Mankind: I therefore think it necessary to restrain so dangerous a Liberty, and say unto you, that whosoever shall dismiss his Wife, except it be on the Account of Whoredom (f), causeth her by a second Marriage to commit Adultery, or at least exposeth her to great Danger of doing it; and whosoever shall marry her, that is thus unlawfully dismissed (g),

32

com-

were poor People who lived by their daily Labour; and to these the Loss of a right Hand would be a much greater Calamity, than that of a right Eye: So that there is a Gradation and Force in this Passage, beyond what has generally been observed.

(e) *Rather than thy whole Body should be thrown into Hell.*] This plainly implied the Doctrine of a Resurrection, though Christ had not yet expressly taught it.

(f) *On the Account of Whoredom.*] It is very evident, that *whore*, as here used, must have a more ambiguous and larger Sense, than the English Word, *Fornication*, which generally answers to it; and must be understood here of *Adultery*.

(g) *Shall marry her that is unlawfully dismissed.*] Mr. Blair, (in the third Volume of his *Sermons*, pag. 111, 112.) explains this Clause, as intended to forbid Women divorced for Adultery to marry, which he thinks an additional Punishment inflicted on Persons guilty of so enormous a Crime, and a wise Provision for preventing bad Women from committing Adultery, in hopes of opening their Way to another more agreeable Marriage. But I prefer the Sense here given, because it makes this latter

SECT. 39. *committeth Adultery*, since the Bond of the former Marriage does in the Account of Mark V. 32. GOD remain undissolved.

- 33 *Again, you have heard that it was said to the Antients, (Lev. xix. 12. Deut. xxiii. 21.) Thou shalt not perjure or forswear thyself, but shalt diligently perform unto the Lord thine Oaths and Vows: And this has been expounded, as extending merely to those Oaths, in which the Name of GOD is expressly used, and only prohibiting the Violation of such, but tolerating the Use of them, even on slight Occasions, so it be not in Confirmation of a Falsehood. But*
- 34 *I say unto you, Swear not at all, in your common Discourse with each other (b), even so much as by the Creatures; either by Heaven (i), for it is the Throne of the glorious and holy GOD; Or by the Earth, for it is under his Dominion, and subject to him as his Footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the City of the great King of Israel and of the Universe: Neither shalt thou swear by thy Head, for thou art so far from having*
- an

33 Again ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old Time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oaths.

34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by Heaven, for it is God's Throne;

35 Nor by the Earth, for it is his Footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the City of the great King:

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy Head, because thou

Clause more correspondent to the former, and prevents the Necessity of supposing $\mu\omicron\iota\chi\omega\upsilon$ to be used in two different Senses so near together.

(b) *Swear not at all in your common Discourse with each other.] The Opposition between this Verse, and the 37th, limits the Prohibition to this Sense: And waving that, it would be necessary to interpret it as a Restrictive, rather than an Universal Precept, and to consider it as more particularly levelled at the common Practice of the Jews, who reckoned Swearing by the Creatures to be far more excusable than Swearing by the Name of GOD, and made but little Scruple of the frequent Use of it. For that all Swearing is not here condemned as a Thing absolutely evil, is fully evident from other Passages of Scripture, and of Necessity must be allowed, to vindicate the Conduct of Christ, and his Apostles. Compare Mark viii. 12. Mat. xxvi. 64. Rom. i. 9. ix. 1. Gal. i. 20. 2 Cor. i. 18. and Heb. vi. 16.*

(i) *Either by Heaven.] Though I allow, with the learned Heinsius, that the Words, $\mu\eta\ \omicron\mu\omicron\sigma\sigma\alpha\iota\ \omicron\lambda\omega\varsigma$, may be rendered, By no means swear, either by Heaven, Earth, or the like; yet it will not follow, that the Words only forbid Swearing by Creatures, since ver. 37. forbids whatever is more than Yea, or Nay. So that it is absolutely necessary, to have Recourse to some other Solution of this Prohibition, as well as of that, in Jam. v. 12. where any other Oath is forbidden; and nothing is more natural and easy, than to understand it, in both Places, as a Prohibition of the Use of Oaths in common Conversation.*

(k) *Cometh*

thou canst not make one Hair white or black.

an absolute Power over it, that thou *canst* not make the Colour of one Hair of it white or black: So that these Oaths by the Creatures, if they have any Sense at all, are an implicit Appeal to GOD. *But* I charge you to avoid the customary Use of all such Oaths, as well as of those in which the Name of GOD is directly expressed; and let your Conversation be all plain and simple: When you affirm, say *Yes, yes*; and when you deny, *No, No*: For if you conduct yourselves, as you ought, this will be sufficient to gain you Credit; and you may be assured, that whatever is more than these, cometh from the Evil one (k), who artfully contrives by the habitual Use of Swearing even by the Creatures, to lessen your Reverence for the Solemnity of an Oath, and to lead you at length to take the Name of GOD in vain, even by Perjury itself.

SECT. 39.
Mat. V. 36.

37 But let your Communication, be *Yea, yea*; *Nay, nay*: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of Evil.

37

38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth.

38

You have heard that it has been said in the Law, (Deut. xix. 21.) An Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth: And this Statute, which was only intended to direct Judges, as to the Penalties to be inflicted in Case of violent and barbarous Assaults, has been interpreted, as encouraging a rigorous severe Revenge of every Injury a Man might receive. But I say unto you, that when you meet with ill Usage in the World, you do not immediately set yourselves against the

39 But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but who-

39

do not immediately set yourselves against the inju-

(k) Cometh from the Evil one.] *Ex re wronge est* will properly bear this Version, and some Copies read *diabola*, cometh from the Devil. I would observe, that whether this Version, or the common one be admitted, the Clause before us contains a Demonstration, that ver. 34. is to be explained with the Limitation proposed; for it is evident, that Oaths were in some Cases not only allowed, but required, by the Mosaic Law. (See *Exod. xxii. 11. Lev. v. 1. Numb. v. 19, 21. and Deut. xxix. 12, 14.*) So that if *Christ's* Prohibition had here referred to Swearing in Solemn and Judicial Cases, he would in these Words have charged the Divine Law with establishing an Immorality, which it is most absurd to suppose: And I cannot but wonder, that so obvious and decisive a Thought should not have been more insisted upon in this Controversy.

SECT. 39.
Mat. V. 39.

injurious Person (l), in a Posture of hostile Opposition, and with a Resolution to return Evil for Evil; *but*, where the Damage is not great, chuse rather to pass it by, tho' possibly it might on that Account be repeated, than to enter into a rigorous Prosecution of the Offender: On these Principles, *if any Man strike thee on thy right Cheek, patiently turn*

40 *the other to him also (m)*. *And if any one be resolved to sue thee at Law, and to take away thy Vest, permit him to take thy Mantle too (n)*; for the Loss of both would be but a Trifle, in Comparison of those Vexations, Snares, and Expences, which would probably attend the Continuance of the Suit.

41 *And if any press thee to go with him one Mile, obliging thee and thy Carriages to attend him on a publick Account (o)*, rather go *with him two more, than*

whosoever shall smite thee on thy right Cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any Man will sue thee at the Law, and take away thy Coat, let him have thy Cloak also.

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a Mile, go with him twain.

(l) *Do not set yourselves against the injurious Person.*] So the Phrase *ἀδικησάτω σοὶ* may exactly be rendered. (Compare 2 Tim. iii. 8.) Had our Lord meant to intimate, that we should rather suffer ourselves to be murdered, and our Families to be ruined, than resist the Villain that attempts it, he would have laid down so strange a Precept in the strongest Terms; and it is very unreasonable to infer it from this Passage, which speaks of so trifling an Injury, as a *Slap on the Face*, or suing a Man for the Value of a *Waistcoat* or *Cloak*.—If it be asked, whether we are universally forbidden to resist on these Occasions? I answer, we are; unless we be in our Consciences convinced, that in present Circumstances to stand on our Defence will be more for the publick Good; and in those Cases, this particular Precept is superseded, by the general Law of universal Benevolence. But I apprehend these Expressions intimate, that on the whole it will generally be for the best, to wave rigorous Prosecutions on such slight Occasions.

(m) *Turn the other to him also.*] This is a Proverbial Phrase, to express a meek Submission to Injuries and Affronts. See *Isa.* l. 6. and *Lam.* iii. 30.

(n) *Thy Mantle too.*] *Vest* and *Mantle* more exactly answer to *χιτών* and *μαλίσσα*, than *Coat* and *Cloak*; (compare *John* xix. 23. and see *Cassaubon*, in *loc.*) and are Parts of Dress, under different Names still retained in *Barbary*, *Egypt*, and the *Levant*. See *Dr. Shaw's Travels*, pag. 289,—292. The *Mantle* being much larger than the *Vest*, must probably be more valuable; and as it would be natural for a Robber on the Highway to take the *outer Garment* first, I look on this Manner of expressing it, as a good Argument for retaining our Translation of *μαλίσσα*, and rendering it *sue thee at Law*, rather than take it in a more general Way, as signifying to *strive* or *contend*; though I know it has sometimes this last Signification, as *Lud. Cappellus* urges.

(o) *Press thee to go with him, &c.*] The Word *press* seems best to answer the Original *ἀναγκάζω*, which is well known to be derived from the Name of those Officers who were commissioned for this Purpose by the *Persian Emperors*, when *Judea*

than disturb the Peace by a forcible Oppo-
sition ; for in many such Cases as these, it
will be more for your own Comfort, as well
as the Credit of your Profession, to submit,
than contend.

SECT. 39.
Mat. V. 41.

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.

When thou seest any one in real Necessity, and hast it in the Power of thine Hand to do it, *give to him that asketh thee thy Charity (p); and do not turn away, with a severe Denial, him that would borrow of thee (q);* for in some Cases a seasonable Loan may be as valuable a Kindness, as a Gift.

42

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy :

By such Condescensions and Favours, you will generally gain the Friendship of those with whom you converse ; but if any should be so base, as notwithstanding all to persist in using you ill, do not indulge to Sentiments of Revenge. I know, *you have heard that it was said to our Fathers, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour; (Lev. xix. 18.) and from thence, tho' in direct Contradiction to many other Scriptures, (Exod. xxiii. 45. Lev. xix. 17. and Prov. xxv. 21.) some have argued, as if it had been added, Thou shalt hate thine Enemy; and the Precepts for destroying the Canaanites, (Deut. vii. 16. and the like,) have been abused to countenance such an Addition (r).*

43

But,

one of their Provinces. See *Drusus in loc.* (Compare *Mat. xxvii. 32.*) Among the Jews, the Disciples of their Wise Men were excused from such Services ; but *Christ* advises his Disciples not to insist on that Exemption. See *Lightf. Hor. Hebr. in loc.*

(p) *Give to him that asketh thee thy Charity ; τὸ ἀσκήσει σε δίδω.*] *Mr. Blair* would refer this to *ωμονοῦ*, in *ver. 39.* and render it, *Give to the injurious Person what he asketh thee ;* and has a very beautiful Discourse upon it in that View : But it is plainly unnecessary to limit it ; and I think, that on this Interpretation, it would too much coincide with *ver. 44.* In whatever Sense it be taken, it must admit of some Exceptions, or it will not only be inconsistent with such Precepts, as require us to take Care of our Families ; (as *1 Tim. v. 8.*) but with natural Justice, and common Sense. It is amazing therefore, that any, who do not think themselves obliged by the literal Sense of this Precept, to *give* or *lend* to every idle importunate Creature, whatever he asks, should insist on a rigorous Interpretation of the preceding Passage, from *ver. 34.* to *41.*

(q) *Do not turn away him that would borrow of thee.*] *Τὸν δειχῶτα ἀπὸ σε δανισαῶντα μὴ ἀποστρέφῃς,* is thus most literally rendered.

(r) The Precepts for destroying the Canaanites have been abused, &c.] These Precepts were of a peculiar Nature ; and that in particular, *Deut. xxiii. 6. Thou shalt not*

not.

SECT. 39. *But, instead of favouring this pernicious Maxim, I say unto you, Love your Enemies,*

Mat. V. 44.

and whatsoever you may suffer by them, while you abhor their sinful Practices, shew a Concern for the true Welfare of their Persons; *blest them that in the bitterest Manner curse you, (whether by prophane Execrations in their common Discourse, or by unjust Anathema's in their Ecclesiastical Assemblies;) be ready to do Good to them that hate you, and pray for the Conversion of them that insult you (s), and persecute you:*

45 *That you may thus approve yourselves to be the Children of your Heavenly Father; for with the most diffusive Kindness and Beneficence he causeth his Sun to arise on the Evil and the Good, and showereth down Rain on the Just and the Unjust; so that his Enemies share in his providential Bounties, and subsist on his daily Care.*

46 Let it be therefore your Concern, to imitate this extensive Goodness; *for if you only love them that love you, what Reward have ye? or what extraordinary Praise can ye expect? Do not even the most infamous and scandalous Sinners, such as the very Publicans,*

44 But I say unto you, Love your Enemies, blest them that curse you, do Good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you:

45 That ye may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven; for he maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what Reward have ye? Do not even the Publicans the same?

not seek their Peace, nor their Prosperity, all thy Days for ever, relates to avoiding throughout all Generations any Association with the Moabites; which was an everlasting Brand of Infamy set upon them, for the Affront which in the Matter of Peor they had offered to GOD himself, under whose Conduct the Israelites were. But tho' it forbids any National Alliance with them, it seems, that the Settlement of Ruth in Israel when she embraced the Jewish Religion, (Ruth i. 16.) and the Permission given to the Moabites to live as Tributaries under David after the Conquest of their Country, (2 Sam. viii. 2.) were not at all inconsistent with this Law.

(s) *That insult you; ἐπιτιμαίνω ὑμᾶς.*] As this Word, according to the Judgment of Erasmus, Beza, and several other able Critics, is derived from *Agrus*, the Name of Mars, it may perhaps strictly answer to *Dragooning* in our modern Language: But as it is plainly used by St. Peter, to express abusive Language, (1 Pet. iii. 16.) I chose to render it *insult*, which may be applied, either to injurious Words, or Actions. To traduce, does by no means express the Force of the Idea. Nor can I think, with the learned Elser, vol. i. pag. 30, 31. that this Clause is to be interpreted chiefly of malicious Prosecutions in Judicial Courts, tho' that be a Sort of *Insult* and *Persecution*, undoubtedly comprehended among many others, and often expressed by the Greek Words here used.

47 And if ye salute your Brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the Publicans so?

licans, do the same? And if ye salute and embrace your Brethren only (t), or those of the same Sect, Party and Interest with yourselves, what extraordinary Thing do you practise, more than the rest of Mankind, tho' your Advantages are so much greater than theirs? Do not even the Heathens and Publicans do so? And will not common Humanity teach even the very worst of Men Civility to those that treat them with Respect, and excite them to some Sentiments of Gratitude to their Friends and Benefactors?

SECT. 39.
Mat. V. 47.

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.

You who stand in so near a Relation to GOD, as my professed Disciples, should far excell them: Be ye therefore, in these Instances of undeserved and forfeited Goodness (u), and in all other Respects, as far as frail Mortality will admit, perfect, even as your Heavenly Father is perfect (w); whose Name you

48

(t) *If ye salute and embrace your Brethren only.*] The Word *συναινεσις* alludes to the Custom, of saluting by embracing. And when Christ cautions against confining their Regards to Brethren, he may perhaps obliquely glance at those Prejudices, which different Sects had against each other, and intimate that he would not have his Followers imbibe that narrow Spirit. Would to GOD, the Hint had been more attended to, among the unhappy Subdivisions, into which his Church has been crumbled; and that we might at least advance so far, as cordially to embrace our Brethren in Christ, of whatever Party or Denomination they are!

(u) *In these Instances of undeserved and forfeited Goodness.*] The Love to Friends, enjoined by the Scribes and Pharisees, was very imperfect: We are to labour after a more compleat Resemblance to GOD, in loving Enemies. Our Lord therefore afterwards expressed it, in a parallel Discourse, by saying, *Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful.* Luke vi. 36. But it is probable, he used a greater Latitude of Expression here, to remind us of our Obligations to imitate the Divine Being in all his moral Perfections.

(w) *Perfect, even as your Heavenly Father is perfect.*] Many Authorities are produced by Elser, in his Note on this Text, to prove, not only that the Heathens gave the Epithet of *τελειος*, or perfect, to many of their Gods, especially the Chief; but that some of their Writers describe Clemency and Goodness to Enemies, as a Virtue by which Mortals make the nearest Approach to Divine Perfection.—These Words conclude Christ's excellent Vindication of the Law, from the corrupt Glosses of the Jewish Teachers. I know it has been objected to it, that considering the many figurative Expressions used in it, we might as easily trace out the Duties recommended, by the Light of Reason alone, as adjust the Sense of such obscure and hyperbolical Precepts. But if it were really so, (which I cannot grant,) it is to be remembered, that the chief Design of the Gospel, is not to inform us what is Justice, Humanity, and Charity; in particular Cases, (which a View of present Circumstances can alone discover,)

SECT. 39. you will most effectually honour, and whose
 Mat. V. 48. Favour you will most happily secure, by a
 Care to imitate him to the utmost, in all the
 moral Perfections of his Nature. (Compare
 Eph. iv. 31, 32. v. 1.)

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- Mat. v. 48. **A**LAS! how may we blush to call God *our Father*, while we resemble him so little! And what Reason is there, on a Survey of these Directions of *our Lord*, to acknowledge our Deficiencies and our Faults! Let us review the many Advantages, we enjoy as *Christians*, and the Engagements we are under, in the particular Circumstances, in which Divine Providence has placed us; and blush to think, that *we do* so little *more than others*, perhaps in many Instances falling short even of the Virtues of *Heathens*.
- Ver. 47. Let us particularly be instructed by these Lessons of our Divine Master, to recompence *Good for Evil*: Lessons, which come with peculiar Grace from his Mouth, as he was himself the kindest *Friend* to his most inveterate *Enemies*, and bore and forgave more, than any but himself could possibly do.
- V. 43,—45. Let us, who are his *Disciples*, abhor *Contention* and *Revenge*. Let us not prosecute every little *Injury* to the utmost, nor govern ourselves by those false Maxims of Prudence and Honour, which Pride and Self-Love have introduced on the Ruins of real *Christianity*. Let us not, even in the most legal Methods, seek the Punishment of those who have *wronged us*, except in Circumstances in which we are in our Conscience persuaded, it will, on the whole, be greater *Charity*, to animadvert on the Offence, than to pass it by; and even then, let us act in a calm and dispassionate Manner, pitying and loving the Persons of the *Injurious*, even while, for the Sake of Society, we prosecute their Crimes.
- Ver. 46. If this be our Duty towards our *Enemies*, how inexcusable are we, if we are cold and insensible to our *Friends*! And how much worse than *Publicans* themselves, if we do not *love them that love us*, and *do Good* to those from whom we have *received it*. Happy is that *Christian*, to whom the God of Nature hath given a Heart so turned to

cover,) but to awaken a Regard to the known, tho' neglected, Dictates of *Natural Religion* on these Heads; and this may be most effectually done, by such animated and sprightly Exhortations as these, especially when considered as coming from a Person, whose *Authority* and *Love* concur to demand our Attention and Obedience.

to Sentiments of Benevolence, that, in all these Instances, Love is a SECT. 39.
Law unto itself!

Yet let us remember, that the whole of our Duty is not comprehended in these *Social Regards*. The great Author of our Being, who hath endowed us with rational Faculties, justly requires that we assert their Empire over the meaner Powers of Appetite and Passion. We see that he forbids, not only gross Enormities, as *Adultery*, Ver. 27, 28; (which, though so unaccountably spared by the Laws of many *Christian* Countries, the *Heathens* themselves have condemned as a Capital Crime, and which some of the most barbarous Nations have esteemed infamous;) but the *Uncastity of the Eye*, and of the *Heart*. Let us then earnestly pray, that G O D would create in us a *clean Heart*, and renew a *right Spirit within us*; (*Psal. li. 10.*) and let us maintain a most resolute Guard over our Senses, and our Thoughts, remembering that there is no other Alternative, but that Ver. 29. the *dearest* of our *Lusts* must be *mortified* and subdued, or our *whole Persons* be cast into *Hell*.

Elevate our Affections, O Lord, to nobler Objects, than those Ver. 30. which are suited merely to animal Nature! Teach us to *keep under the Body*, and bring it into *Subjection*; (*1 Cor. ix. 27.*) that we may not finally be cast away from thy Presence, and fall into that dreadful State, where every Drop of sinful Pleasure will be recompensed with full Vials of Misery and Despair!

S E C T. XL.

Our LORD having thus vindicated the Mosaic Law, proceeds in his Divine Discourse on the Mount, to caution his Disciples against *Vain-glory*, in *Alms-deeds*, *Prayer*, and *Fasting*. Mat. VI. 1,—18.

MAT. VI. I.

TAKE heed that ye do not your Alms before Men, to be seen of them: other-

MAT. VI. I.

OUR Lord proceeding in his Discourse, SECT. 40. to caution them against *Vain-glory*, Mat. VI. 1. said unto them, *Take heed*, in general, *that you practise not your Righteousness (a)*, or perform not

(a) *Practise not your Righteousness.*] As some Copies, and very antient Versions, read VOL. I. NUMB. XII. K k *dyano-*

SECT. 40.
 Mat. VI. 1.

not any religious Action, in an ostentatious Manner before Men, making it your chief End to be viewed and admired by them: Or otherwise, if this Caution be neglected, you will have no Reward from your Heavenly Father, who knows all the secret Principles of your Heart, and indispensably requires the greatest Uprightness and Sincerity there.

- 2 The Caution is so important, that I shall illustrate it in various Particulars. *When therefore, for Instance, thou performest [thine] Alms-deeds, do not as it were sound a Trumpet before thee, and make Proclamation to all around, to induce them to take Notice of it; as it is customary for the Hypocrites to do, in the publick Assemblies (b), and in the Streets, that acting their Part as on an open Theatre (c), they may be applauded of Men, who are the Spectators of their Liberality: Verily I say unto you, that in this empty Sound of*
- Human

otherwise ye have no Reward of your Father which is in Heaven.

2 Therefore when thou dost *thine* Alms, do not sound a Trumpet before thee, as the Hypocrites do, in the Synagogues, and in the Streets, that they may have Glory of Men: Verily I say unto you, they have their Reward.

δικαιοσύνη, Righteousness, instead of *ελεημοσύνη*, Alms-deeds, and several of the Fathers quote it so, I chuse with Beza, to follow that Reading; because it prevents the Appearance of a Tautology in the following Words, and makes this Verse a general and very proper Introduction to the remaining Part of the Section, in which the Caution is branched out into the particular Heads, of Alms, Prayer, and Fasting. (See Dr. Mill, in loc.)—Nevertheless I by no Means insist on the Change: But if it be admitted, I cannot acquiesce in the Criticism of a learned Friend, who would explain Righteousness, as here signifying Charity, or Liberality; because though I am well aware it has that Signification sometimes, (I think not so often as some have supposed,) yet admitting it here would destroy that beautiful Variety between this and the following Verse, which I have endeavoured to illustrate in the Paraphrase, and which makes it so proper an Introduction to this Part of our Lord's Sermon.

(b) *In the publick Assemblies.*] It is certain, that the Word *συναγωγη* may be taken in this Extent; and though it is most probable, it may even here refer to Religious Assemblies, yet we may recollect on this Occasion, that it is a known Custom in the Eastern Nations, to distribute Alms, when they are going to enter on publick Councils.—The Phrase of *sounding a Trumpet before them*, seems only a figurative Expression, to represent their doing it in a noisy ostentatious Way; as it is certain, that to do a Thing *with the Sound of a Trumpet* is sometimes used proverbially to express a publick Ostentation. See Elser, in loc.

(c) *Acting their Part as on an open Theatre.*] Erasmus, and Beza, very justly observe, that *δεικνύει* in the Verse before, is a Theatrical Word; and *υποκρίται* is well known to signify Players disguised (as the Grecian Actors used to be,) in Masks; not to say, that the *sounding a Trumpet*, may allude to the Musick of the Stage. I have endeavoured to express this, in the Phrases here used in the Paraphrase.

3 But when thou dost Alms, let not thy left Hand know what thy right Hand doth :

4 That thine Alms may be in Secret, and thy Father which seeth in Secret, himself shall reward thee openly.

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the Hypocrites are ; for they love to pray standing in the Synagogues,

Human Praise, they have their poor Reward (d), and must expect no Acceptance and Recompence from GOD. *But when*

thou art doing [thine] Alms, use the utmost Privacy, and, if it be possible, let not thy left Hand know, what thy right Hand is doing (e), when it is stretched out to these charitable Purposes ; and far from publishing it with vain Affectation, conceal it, as far as may be, from thy nearest Friends : *That thine Alms may be performed in secret ; and thy Father who sees in secret,* and knows every Circumstance of your most retired Actions, *will himself* be ready to honour and reward thee another Day, and that openly before the assembled World.

And, again, when thou prayest, (as if thou art my Disciple indeed, thou often wilt,) *thou shalt not be as the Hypocrites,* who discover on all Occasions the Vanity of their Hearts ; for even when performing their particular, and those that ought to be their secret Devotions, *they love to pray standing in the publick Assemblies* in Sight of Numbers of People ; and fixing them exactly to one constant Hour, contrive to be caught, as it were, just at that sacred Time (f), not only in

(d) *They have their Reward.]* Sir Norton Knatchbull earnestly contends, that *αρετιν των μωδων αυτων*, ought to be rendered, *they fall short of their Reward* : But the Word *αρετιν* is plainly used in the Sense, in which our Translators take it, Luke vi. 24. Phil. iv. 18. and Philem. ver. 15. and it is with peculiar Propriety, that *Human Applause* is here called *their Reward*, as being that which they chuse, and seek. See Beza's elegant Note on the Words.

(e) *Let not thy left Hand know, what thy right Hand is doing.]* It is said, that the *Poor's Chest* stood on the *right Hand*, as they entered the *Synagogues*, to which some suppose the Words to allude. It is plainly a *Proverbial* Expression, of strict Care to conceal an Action.

(f) *Contrive to be caught at that sacred Time.]* Thus the late pious and eloquent Mr. Grove explains, and finely illustrates this Text, in his *Discourse on Secret Prayer*, pag. 3, 4. It is plain, this Custom still prevails among the *Mohometans* ; as Pfeiffer has observed, *Theolog. Mohammed. Oper. pag. 848, 974.* and Bobovius, in his *Turkish Liturgy*, §. 1. See a remarkable Illustration of it, in Mr. Addison's *Freeholder*, N^o 59.

SECT. 40. in the common Places of Resort, but *in the*
 Mat. VI. 5. *Corners of the Streets*, where several Ways
 meet; *that they may thus be sure of being*
viewed by a great Number of Beholders:

But howsoever upon this Account they may indeed be admired of *Men*, as Persons of singular Piety; yet *verily I say unto you, that in this Admiration of those that observe*

6 *them, they have all their Reward.* But *thou, O my Disciple, whoever thou art, when thou prayest, and dost not intend it as a Social Exercise of Devotion, withdraw from the Sight and Intercourse of Men, and enter into thy Closet, or any other retired Apartment (g); and having shut thy Door, to prevent Interruption, and exclude Spectators, pray with a holy Freedom of Soul, to thy Father, who is with thee in secret; and thy Father, who always sees in secret, as distinctly as in the most open Scene of Action, will regard these Addresses with peculiar Pleasure, as the Emotions of a pious and sincere Heart; and will another Day reward thee openly for these Duties, which were so entirely referred to the Views of honouring and pleasing him.*

7 *But when you pray, do not use a vain Multiplicity of Words (h), as it is usual for the*
 Heathens

nagogues, and in the Corners of the Streets, that they may be seen of Men: Verily I say unto you, they have their Reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy Closet, and when thou hast shut thy Door, pray to thy Father which is in Secret: and thy Father which seeth in Secret, shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain Repetitions, as the Heathen

(g) *Enter into thy Closet, or any other retired Apartment.]* Ταμειον signifies *Closet, Chamber, Wardrobe, Warehouse, or any other separate Place*; and *Mr. Blair* piously conjectures, that *Christ* might use a Word of such Latitude, that none might omit *secret Prayer* for want of so convenient an Apartment, as they could wish, to retire into. It will, I hope, be observed, that many Remarks of this Kind proceed on a Supposition, that the Spirit of God directed the Apostles in their Writings, to chuse such *Greek Words*, as most exactly corresponded to those in the *Jewish Language*, which *Christ* used.

(h) *Do not use a vain Multiplicity of Words, μη πολυλογησαι.]* *Beza* has well explained the *Etymology* of the Word; and *Dr. Hammond* shews, how applicable it was to the Devotion of the *Gentiles*. (Compare *1 Kings* xviii. 26. and *Acts* xix. 34.) It is plain, that the *Jews* were running into the same Fault, if we may judge by their oldest *Liturgies*. (See *Le Clerc, in loc.* and *Selden, de Syned. lib. i. cap. xii. pag. 467, & seq.*) And *Dr. Wotton* has illustrated the Text so well, if it be considered as referring to them, that one could wish he had produced some better Authorities than he has done for reading *υποπλησαι* rather than *επιμασαι*. See *Wot. Misc. vol. 2. pag. 186, —188.*

(i) That

Heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what Things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

Heathens to do, in the Invocation of their Deities; for they foolishly think, they shall be heard in their Addresses to them for their speaking much. Be not ye therefore in this Respect, like them, since you are so much better instructed in the Divine Nature than they, and cannot but know, that your Prayers are intended to affect your own Hearts, that they may be fit to receive Blessings, and not to inform or work upon the Heart of GOD: For your Heavenly Father is ready to bestow his Blessings on you, and always knows what you really want, even before you ask him, which therefore should teach you to avoid whatever may look like prescribing to him, by too minute and repeated a Detail of Particulars.

SECT. 40.

Mat. VI. 7.

8

9 After this Manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name:

Thus therefore pray ye, or to this Effect at least, and in this plain, concise, and humble Manner, if not in these very Words: " Our Father, who art seated on a Throne of Glory in the highest Heaven; while we bow before thine awful Presence with the humblest Reverence, we would nevertheless approach thee with a filial Confidence, as our bountiful and compassionate Parent; uniting our Supplications to thee, with Hearts full of brotherly Love, and asking for each other the Blessings we seek for ourselves. We would so remember our Relation to thee, as to be above all Things concerned for thy Glory, and therefore make it our first Petition, May thy illustrious Name be sanctified! May the whole Race of Mankind, yea, the whole World of intelligent Creatures, pay that dutiful Veneration to thy Divine Majesty (i),
 " which

9

(i) That dutiful Veneration to thy Divine Majesty.] The Name of GOD seems a Phrase, nearly answering to that of *Majesty*, when applied to an Earthly Sovereign; as *Mr. Blair* has justly observed: *Serm. vol. iv. pag. 42.*

(k) More

SECT. 40. " which thy matchless Perfections so justly
 " require! And for this Purpose, *May*
 Mat. VI. 10. " that *thy Kingdom*, which thou art now
 " introducing among Men, more perfectly
 " *come* (*k*); may it be established with greater
 " Efficacy, be more clearly discovered, and
 " more resolutely pursued! *May thy Will*,
 " always wise, and always gracious, *be done*,
 " *as in Heaven, so likewise upon Earth*; and
 " may we Mortals be taught to regard it
 " with a Resignation, Acquiescence, and
 " Obedience (*l*), resembling that of the
 I I " Heavenly Spirits! And as for our-
 " selves, O Lord, we would not seek the
 " great Things of Life, we would not be
 " anxious about its distant Futurities, but
 " humbly intreat, thou wouldst open that
 " bountiful Hand on which we continually
 " depend, and wouldst *give us this Day our*
 " *daily Bread* (*m*), providing a competent
 " Supply for our present Necessities, and
 " teaching us to refer the rest to thy con-
 12 " tinual paternal Care! *And though we*
 " have in many Respects been disobedient
 " and ungrateful Children, yet we beseech
 " thee,

10 Thy Kingdom come:
 Thy Will be done in Earth,
 as it is in Heaven :

11 Give us this Day our
 daily Bread :

12 And forgive us our
 Debts,

(*k*) More perfectly *come*.] It is reasonable to believe, *this Petition* had a Sense peculiar to the Period in which it was prescribed; and that we, under this perfect Revelation of the Gospel, cannot properly use it precisely with the same Meaning: But so extensive a *Phrase* may justly admit of other Senses, at least by *Accommodation*, as the *Assembly's Catechism* with great Propriety illustrates it, and I believe there are few, who decline the Use of *this Prayer* on this Account, who do not often use *Scripture Phrases* with a much greater Latitude.

(*l*) Resignation, Acquiescence, and Obedience.] I have here joined these several Expressions, because I am not able certainly to determine, which was most directly intended. There is a great deal of Beauty and Spirit, in the Interpretation, which *Mr. Addison* gives of this Petition: *Spectat. vol. iii. N° 207.*

(*m*) *Our daily Bread*; τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιβιωτικόν.] I can see no Reason for changing our received *Translation*; and cannot but acquiesce in *Mr. Mede's* Remark, that ἐπιβιωτικόν signifies, what is *sufficient* for our *present Support* and Subsistence, as περισσεύον signifies *abundant*: So that *this Petition* is nearly parallel to that of *Agur*; *Prov. xxx. 8.* (See *Mede's Works*, pag. 125.) This is a most excellent Lesson, to teach us, on the one Hand, Moderation in our Desires, and on the other, an humble Dependance on Divine Providence for the most necessary Supplies, be our Possessions, or our Abilities, ever so great.

(*n*) Such

Debts, as we forgive our Debtors:

“ thee, O most compassionate Father, to
 “ forgive us our Offences, whereby we stand
 “ chargeable, as it were in thy Book, with
 “ Debts which we can never clear: Yet do
 “ thou freely forgive them all, as we also
 “ desire to forgive our Debtors, even all that
 “ have in any Respect offended and injured
 “ us: Yea, such Pardon may we receive
 “ from thee our GOD, as we are willing to
 “ impart to them (n)! And do not bring
 “ us into Circumstances of pressing Tempta-
 “ tion, lest our Virtue should be vanquished,
 “ and our Souls endangered by them; but
 “ if we must be thus tried, do thou graci-
 “ ously rescue us from the Power of the Evil
 “ One (o), that he may not triumph in our
 “ Sin and Ruin! These Things we know
 “ that thou canst do for thy Children, and
 “ we are humbly bold to hope, thou wilt do
 “ them for us; for thine is the Kingdom of
 “ universal Nature (p), and the Fulness of
 “ Al-

SECT. 40.
 Mat. V. 12.

13 And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil: For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and

13

(n) Such Pardon—as we are willing to impart to them.] It is hardly possible to imagine a more effectual Expedient, to promote the *Forgiveness* of Injuries, than this of making it a Part of our *daily Prayer*, to ask *such Pardon* from GOD, as we impart to our offending Brother. For in this Circumstance, every malicious Purpose against him, would turn *this Petition* into an *Imprecation*, by which we should, as it were, bind down the Wrath and Vengeance of GOD upon ourselves.

(o) *Rescue us from the Evil One.*] Πυσαι ημας απο του ωνητου may literally be rendered thus. For this Signification of ο ωνητου, see Note (h), pag. 224.

(p) *For thine is the Kingdom, &c.*] Though I am sensible there is some Reason to doubt of the Genuineness of this *Doxology*, notwithstanding all that *Mr. Jones* (in his *History of the Canon*, vol. i. pag. 141, 142.) has urged in its Defence: (See *Dr. Mill. in loc.* and *Mr. Hallett*, in his *Notes on Scripture*, vol. i. pag. 133, & seq.) Yet it is certainly very antient; and, as *Bishop Hopkins*, *Mr. Blair*, and other excellent Writers have well observed, so admirably suits, and enforces every preceding Petition, that I could not persuade myself to omit it. And I hope the learned Reader will excuse me, if in Matters of Moment, I sometimes seem over-cautious of omitting some Passages, which are indeed wanting in many antient *Manuscripts*, and omitted by some celebrated *Commentators*, antient as well as modern. I apprehend I shall have done my Part, in thus hinting at the Doubt, which learned Men have entertained concerning them, where I conceive the Reasons for such Doubt to be considerable.—For the Word *Amen*, as it signifies *Truth*, see Note (g) on *John* i. 51. pag. 140. When added to the Conclusion of our Prayers, it is intended to express the Sincerity and Earnestness with which we desire the Blessing we ask, with some Chearfulness of Hope as to the Success of our Petitions.

(g) Ema-

SECT. 40. " Almighty Power, and the Glory of infinite and the Glory, for ever.
 " Perfection; and to thee be the Praise of Amen.
 Mat. VI. 13. " all ascribed for ever. Amen. So may it
 " be! We most sincerely and earnestly de-
 " sire, that thou mayst be glorified, and our
 " Petitions heard and accepted."

14 Let this be the Model of your Prayers, for these are the most important Blessings you can ask. And let me particularly charge you, to remember the View and Connection, in which I have taught you to ask the Pardon of your Sins: *For if you forgive Men their Offences, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you*, supposing that Forgiveness proceed from a truly religious Principle:

15 *But if you do not forgive Men their Offences*, but continue to cherish Resentment, and to seek Revenge, *neither will that God*, whom you call *your Heavenly Father*, own you for his genuine Offspring, and *forgive you your Offences*; but by using the Petition I have now been prescribing, you will in Effect bind down a Curse upon yourselves.

16 I would also apply the general Advice, I before gave, to Fasting, as well as to Prayer; and would *again* exhort you, that *when you keep a private Fast*, (as I conclude, my Disciples will often do,) *you be not like the Hypocrites*, going about with a dejected melancholy Face, and *putting on a dismal Air*; for upon these Occasions *they emaciate, contract, and deform their Countenances (q)*, that by their sad and mournful Looks *they may appear*

14 For if ye forgive Men their Trespases, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But if ye forgive not Men their Trespases, neither will your Father forgive your Trespases.

16 Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the Hypocrites, of a sad Countenance; for they disfigure their Faces, that they may appear unto Men

(q) Emaciate, contract, and deform their Countenances.] I know not any Word in our Language, which exactly answers to *απανθω* in this Connection. It is rendered corrupt, in ver. 20. (compare Acts xiii. 41. Heb. viii. 13. and James iv. 14.) and properly signifies to change, spoil, and consume; and is with peculiar Elegance applicable to such an Alteration of the natural Countenance, as proceeded from their emaciating themselves, and contracting their Faces into a dismal Form.—The learned Author of *Fortuita Sacra*, pag. 13,—22. has rendered it unnecessary for me, to add any thing more on this, or the following Verse.

Men to fast: Verily I say unto you, they have their Reward.

appear to Men to fast, and may be esteemed as Persons of unusual Mortification and Holiness: Verily I say unto you, that in this Notice that is taken of them by their Fellow-Creatures, they have all their Reward, and have not any to expect from God.

SECT. 40.
Mat. VI. 16.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine Head, and wash thy Face;

But thou, O my Disciple, when thou keepest such a Fast, and comest from thy devout Retirement, dress thyself just as thou dost at other Times; anoint thy Head with Oil, and wash thy Face (r) instead of fouling it with Ashes; That thou mayest not appear

17

18 That thou appear not unto Men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in Secret; and thy Father which seeth in Secret, shall reward thee openly.

to Men as one that fasteth, but only to thy Father who is in secret; and thy Father, who sees in secret, and observes what passes in Retirement, as the surest Test of Men's true Characters, will not fail to reward thee openly for thy genuine and unaffected Devotion.

18

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us learn from these repeated Admonitions of our Blessed Redeemer, what is the only acceptable Principle of every Religious Action; namely, a Desire to approve ourselves to GOD in it: And let us particularly bring it into the Instances, in which it is here recommended.

Mat. vi. 1.
5, 16.

Our Lord takes it for granted, that his Disciples would be both charitable and devout. Let us cultivate both these Branches of the Christian Temper, and avoid Ostentation in both; as remembering the Day approaches, when every one of us must be made manifest in his true Character before the Tribunal of Christ.—And, oh, what Discoveries will then be opened upon the World! How many specious Masks will be plucked off, that the Hypocrite's Character may appear in its native Deformity! And on the other Hand, how many secret Acts of Piety and Benevolence, which have been industriously

Ver. 2, 6.

(r) Anoint thy Head with Oil, and wash thy Face.] This was usual among the Jews, not only at Feasts, but at other Times. Compare Ruth iii. 3. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. and Judith xvi. 8. On the other Hand, Dust and Ashes were often used in Times of deep Mourning, or publick Fasting, which must sadly deform the Countenance. See 2 Sam. xiii. 19. Esth. iv. 1, 3. Isa. lxi. 3. Dan. ix. 3. and Jonab. iii. 6.

SECT. 40. oufly concealed from Human Observation, will then shine forth
 Ver. 18. in all their Glory, celebrated and rewarded by *GOD himself, who sees in secret*, and whose Eye penetrates all the Recesses, of our Houses, and our Hearts!

Ver. 6. There may our Praise, and our Portion be! In the mean time, let us with humble Pleasure obey the Call of our Divine Master, and be often addressing our *Heavenly Father* in such Language as he hath taught us; *entering* for secret Exercises of Devotion *into our Closet, and shutting our Door*, excluding (as far as possible) every Thought, which would interrupt us in these sacred and happy Moments. From thence let our *Prayers* daily come before the Throne *like Incense*, and *the lifting up of our Hands* be as the Morning, and *the Evening Sacrifice*. (*Psal. cxli. 2.*)

Ver. 9,—13. *Christ* himself has condescended, to teach us to *pray*. Attentive to his Precepts, animated by his Example, and emboldened by his Intercession, let us learn, and practise the Lesson. Shed abroad on our Hearts, O Lord, thy *Spirit of Adoption*, which may *teach us to cry Abba, Father!* to draw nigh to thee, with filial Reverence and Confidence, and with fraternal Charity for each other, even for the *whole Family*, to whom thou graciously ownest the Relation. Inspire us with that Zeal for thy Glory, which may render the Honour of *thy Name*, the Prosperity of *thy Kingdom*, and the Accomplishment of *thy Will*, far dearer to us, than any Interest of our own! On thee may we maintain a chearful Dependance for our *daily Bread*, and *having Food and Raiment, be therewith content!* (*1 Tim. vi. 8.*) most solicitously seeking the *Pardon* of our *past Sins*, and the Influences of thy Grace to preserve us from *future Temptations*, or to secure us in them! And may our Sense of that Need,

Ver. 14, 15. in which we stand, of *Forgiveness from thee*, dispose us cordially to *forgive each other*, especially as thou hast wisely and graciously made this the necessary Means of receiving our own Pardon! Our corrupted Hearts are too little disposed for these Sentiments; but may God's Almighty Power produce, and cherish them in us! and while the *Comfort* is ours, may *all the Glory* be his, *through Jesus Christ our Lord!* Amen.

S E C T.

S E C T. XLI.

Our LORD cautions his Disciples against the Love of the present World, and urges a Variety of lively and convincing Arguments to dissuade them from Anxiety about the Morrow. Mat. VI. 19, to the End.

MAT. VI. 19.

LAY not up for yourselves Treasures upon Earth, where Moth and Rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves break thro' and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves Treasures in Heaven; where neither Moth nor Rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through, nor steal.

MAT. VI. 19.

I Would also take this Opportunity, of SECT. 41. Mat. VI. 19. cautioning you, my Hearers, against that covetous Temper, which the Pharisees are so ready to indulge; (compare Luke xvi. 14. and Mat. xxiii. 14.) and therefore add, *Do not make it your great Care to lay up for yourselves Treasures here on Earth*, where so many Accidents may deprive you of them; *where the Moth* for Instance may spoil your finest Garments, *and a devouring Canker* may consume your Corn, or may corrupt the very Metals you have hoarded (a); *and where Thieves* may dig through the strongest Walls that you have raised about them, *and may steal* them away. *But build your Happiness on a nobler and more certain Foundation, and store up for yourselves Treasures in Heaven*, where none of these Accidents can happen; *where neither Moth nor Canker can consume them, and where Thieves cannot break in, nor steal* them away; but the Arms of everlasting Power and Love shall secure you from every Calamity and Invasion.

20

The

(a) *Canker may consume your Corn, or corrupt the very Metals you have hoarded.]* The Word *Bevoris* is by some translated *Smut*, or *Weavel*, and is supposed to signify any little *Insect*, that gets into Corn, and eats it. *Mr. Blair* seems to understand it so, and thinks *our Lord* here refers to *Clothes*, *Grain*, and *Gold*, as the chief *Treasures*, respectively obnoxious to *Moth*, *Smut*, and *Thieves*; which may seem the more probable, as a different Word, *cor*, is used for *Rust*, *Jam. v. iii.* But as *Bevoris* properly signifies any thing that *eats into* another Substance, I rather chose to render it *Canker*, which has much the same Ambiguity, and to *paraphrase* it in a Manner including both the Senses.

L 1 2

(b) If

- SECT. 41. The Influence which this Advice will
 Mat. VI. 21. have on your whole Conduct, should engage you to attend more diligently to it; *for where that which you account your chief Treasure is, there will your Heart also be*, and thither will the Tendency and Series of your Actions be referred. See therefore, that you form a right Judgment on so important an Article, and do not over-value the World and its Enjoyments: For as *the Eye is the Lamp of the whole Body*; and therefore, on the one Hand, *if thine Eye be clear (b)*, and free from any vitiating Humour, *thy whole Body will be full of Light*; . . . But on the other Hand, *if thine Eye be distempred, thy whole Body will be full of Darknes*: . . . So it is with Respect to the practical Judgment you form, as to the Worth of Earthly and Heavenly Enjoyments. *If therefore the Light that is in thee be Darknes, how great is that Darknes!* And if the Maxims you lay down to yourselves are wrong, how very erroneous must your Conduct be!
- 22 The Light of the Body is the Eye; If therefore thine Eye be single, thy whole Body shall be full of Light:
- 23 But if thine Eye be evil, thy whole Body shall be full of Darknes: If therefore the Light that is in thee be Darknes, how great is that Darknes!
- 24 And do not impose upon yourselves so far, as to imagine that your Hearts can be equally divided between Heaven and Earth: For as *no Man can serve two Masters*, whose Interests and Commands are directly contrary to each other; *but will quickly appear, either*
- 24 No Man can serve two Masters: for either he will

(b) *If thine Eye be clear, &c.*] Some Commentators have explained this, as if our Lord intended here, to urge the Practice of *Liberality*, as what would have a great Influence on the whole of a Man's Character and Conduct; and suppose it illustrated by all those Passages, where *an evil Eye* signifies a grudging Temper, and a *good Eye* a bountiful Disposition; (compare *Deut. xv. 9. Prov. xxiii. 6. xxviii. 22. and xxii. 9. Hebr.*) and also by those Texts, in which *Simplicity* is put for *Liberality*: (*Rom. xii. 8. and 2 Cor. viii. 2. ix. 11, 13. Gr.*) See *Hammond, Whitby, L'Enfant, and Beaujobre, in loc.* But the Sense given above, appears most natural, as well as most extensive. — I have rendered *αγιος*, *clear*, rather than *single*, as less ambiguous, and with more evident Propriety applied to the *Eye*: It is opposed to an *Eye* overgrown with a *Filth*, which would obstruct the Sight.

(c) G.O.D

will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

either comparatively to hate the one, and love the other; or by Degrees at least will grow weary of so disagreeable a Situation, so as to adhere entirely to the one, and quite neglect and abandon the other: So you will find, you cannot at the same Time serve GOD and Mammon (c), that unworthy Idol, to which so many are devoting their Hearts, and their Pursuits.

SECT. 41.
Mat. VI. 24.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no Thought for your Life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your Body, what ye shall put on. Is not the Life more than Meat, and the Body than Raiment?

And I would charge you therefore to take heed, that your Affections be not engaged in a Service, so inconsistent with Religion and true Happiness; and in particular, I say unto you (d), Be not distressed with anxious Cares about your Subsistence in Life (e), what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, when your present Stock of Provisions is gone; nor with Respect to your Body, what you shall put on, when the Garments you have are worn out. Is not Life a better and more valuable Gift than Food, and the Body than Raiment? And if it be, why should you

(c) GOD and Mammon.] Mammon is a Syriac Word for Riches, which our Lord beautifully represents as a Person, whom the Folly of Men had deified. It is well known, the Greeks had a fictitious God of Wealth; but I cannot find, that he was ever directly worshipped in Syria, under the Name of Mammon.

(d) Therefore I say unto you, &c.] A late Writer, who takes upon him, by the Strength of his own Reason, to reject at Pleasure what the Apostles believed and taught, strangely complains of a Want of Connection, between this, and the preceding Verse. But can there be any better Reason assigned, against immoderate Anxiety, than this, that such a Subjection to Mammon, as this expresses, is utterly inconsistent with the Love and Service of GOD?

(e) Be not anxious about your Subsistence in Life.] It is certain, that the Word *μεταμέλει* generally signifies, an excessive Anxiety; (see Luke x. 41. xii. 11. xxi. 34. and Phil. iv. 6. and indeed almost every other Place where it is used;) which is agreeable to the Derivation of it. There is no need therefore to say, (as Archbishop Tillotson, vol. ii. pag. 255. and Dr. Clarke, in his Sermons, vol. iii. pag. 116, & seq. do;) that our Lord only addresses this to his Apostles, who were to cast themselves on an extraordinary Providence, without being any ways concerned themselves, for their Support. Mr. Blair has well proved the contrary at large, in his excellent Appendix to his fourth Sermon, vol. i. pag. 55, & seq. and it is easy to observe, that the Arguments our Lord urges, contain nothing peculiar to their Case, but are built on Considerations applicable to all Christians. Compare Phil. iv. 6. and 1 Pet. v. 7. as also Luke xxii. 35, 36. and Acts xx. 34. from whence it appears, that the Apostles themselves were not entirely to neglect a prudent Care for their own Subsistence, in Dependence on miraculous Provisions.

(f) The

SECT. 41. you not trust that Almighty and Gracious Being, who formed your Bodies and inspired them with Life, to maintain the Work of his own Hands?

Mat. VI. 25.

- 26 You may surely do it, when you reflect on his Care of the inferior Creatures: *Look on the Birds of the Air*, for Instance, that are now flying around you (*f*); for though they are gay and chearful to a Proverb, yet do *they neither sow, nor reap; nor do they, like some other Animals, gather a Stock of Food into Hoards, to lay up for Winter; and yet the rich Providence of your Heavenly Father plentifully feedeth them: And are not you, his Children, much more valuable in his Sight, than they?* as well as much better furnished with Means of providing for yourselves (*g*)? Why then should you at any Time suspect his Care? And after all, this immoderate Carefulness is useless, as well as unnecessary; for *which of you can by [all his] Anxiety add to his Age or Vigour (h), so much as one Cubit, or even the smallest Measure or Moment, beyond what God shall appoint? Nay, it is much more probable, you should rather impair, than strengthen your Constitution, by*
- in-

26 Behold the Fowls of the Air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into Barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them: Are not ye much better than they?

27 Which of you, by taking Thought, can add one Cubit unto his Stature?

(*f*) *The Birds of the Air* now flying around you.] It is not so proper to render *αἰνῶν*, *Fowls*, as that Word generally signifies the *larger Kind of Birds*, and especially those under the Care of Men.—For mentioning *the Birds*, as then in their Sight, see the latter Part of Note (*o*) on *Mat. v. 14. pag. 238.*

(*g*) *Are not you much more valuable than they, as well as much better furnished with Means of providing for yourselves?*] *Οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο διαφέρει αὐτῶν*, may be rendered, *Have not you greatly the Advantage of them?* which may refer to Men's being capable of *sowing, reaping, and gathering into Barns*, which the *Birds* are not: And though I rather prefer the *former Sense*, I thought it not improper to hint at *the other*; as I have done in many other Places, where such Ambiguities have occurred.

(*h*) *Can add to his Age.*] It is well known, that this is frequently the Signification of the Word *ἡλικία*; there being many Places, where it is evident, that it is used for *Age*, (as *John ix. 21, 23.* and *Heb. xi. 11.*) and certainly it makes the best Sense here; for it is seldom found, that Persons are solicitous about growing a *Cubit taller*.—I confess a *Cubit of Age* is not a common Phrase among us, though an *Inch of Time* be sometimes used; and in this View had I rendered *Cubit* by *Moment*, as a learned Friend who remarked on this Passage advised, it would have been very justifiable.

(*i*) *Was*

indulging such a Temper, which sometimes SECT. 41.
brings on grey Heirs and Death before their Mat. VI. 27.
Time.

28 And why take ye Thought for Raiment? Consider the Lillies of the Field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

And as for Raiment, why are you anxious [about that?] Observe not only the Animal, but what is yet much lower, the Vegetable Part of the Creation; and particularly, consider there the Lillies of the Field, how they grow; they toil not, to prepare the Materials of their Covering, nor do they spin, or weave them into Garments: Yet I say unto you, 28

29 And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his Glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

that even the magnificent Solomon in all his Royal Glory, when sitting on his Throne of Ivory and Gold, (1 Kings x. 18.) was not arrayed in Garments of so pure a White (i), and of such curious Workmanship, as one of these Lillies presents to your View. And 29

30 Wherefore if GOD so clothe the Grass of the Field, which To-day is, and To-morrow is cast into the Oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little Faith?

if GOD so clothe the Grass of the Field, and shelters and adorns the Flower (k) that grows wild amongst it, which is [flourishing] To-day, and perhaps To-morrow is thrown into the Furnace, or the Still (l), [will be] not much more [clothe] you, his Servants, and his Children, O ye of little Faith! that you should 30
be

(i) *Was not arrayed in Garments of so pure a White.] As the Eastern Princes were often clothed in white Robes, and they were generally counted a magnificent Apparel, (compare Esth. viii. 15. and Dan. vii. 9.) I think it more natural to explain the Words thus, (as Calmet does, in his Dissert. vol. ii. pag. 230.) than to suppose with Ray, (on the Creation, pag. 107.) that *αἴμα* signified Tulips of various Colours, or a Purple Kind of Lilly. Some have indeed quoted Cant. v. 13. in Support of the last Interpretation; but that Text may refer to the Fragrancy of those Flowers, rather than their Hue.*

(k) *Shelters and adorns the Flower.] The Word ἀμφανούσῃ, which we render clothe, properly expresses the putting on a compleat Dress, that surrounds the Body on all Sides; and is used with peculiar Beauty, for that elegant, yet strong external Membrane, which (like the Skin, in the Human Body,) at once adorns the tender Structure of the Vegetable, and likewise guards it from the Injuries of the Weather. Every Microscope, in which a Flower is viewed, affords a lively Comment on this Text.*

(l) *Is thrown into the Furnace, or the Still.] I apprehend, that this may be as properly the Signification of the Word ὄβανον, as Oven, and that the Sense will thus appear to be more easy; for it can hardly be supposed, that Grass or Flowers should be thrown into the Oven, the Day after they are cut down; unless it was the Custom, to heat their Ovens with new Hay, which seems not very natural. Eifner indeed renders ὄβανον, *Stubble*, but that seems not to suit the Context.*

SECT. 41. be so diffident, as to distrust his Care, or in the least to doubt of it!

Mat. VI. 31. *Be not ye therefore any more distracted, and torn in Pieces (as it were,) with anxious and unbelieving Thoughts, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink? how is it we shall be provided for, or what shall we wear, in the Remainder of our Lives? (For it is really beneath your Character, as my Disciples, thus to distress yourselves on this Account: The Heathen, who are Strangers to the Promises of GOD's Covenant, and to the Hopes of his Glory, do indeed seek after all these Things; and it is no Wonder, that their Minds are taken up with them: But you have greater Business to employ you, and higher Hopes to animate and encourage you;) for you may be assured, that as your Heavenly Father knows, that you need all these Things, while you dwell in the Body, he will not fail to provide them for you.*

33 *But I exhort you, that you turn your Cares into a nobler Channel, and seek in the first Place, and with the greatest Earnestness and Concern, the Kingdom of GOD, and his Righteousness (m); labouring to secure an Interest in the Promises of the Gospel yourselves, and to promote its Reception among others, that by submitting to the Righteousness of GOD, you may be thus accepted as Righteous before him: In that you will be sure of Success, and as for all these little Things, of which I have now been speaking, they shall be added to you over and above (n), and*

31 Therefore take no Thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these Things do the Gentiles seek;) for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have Need of all these Things.

33 But seek ye first the Kingdom of GOD, and his Righteousness, and all these Things shall be added unto you.

(m) *The Kingdom of GOD, and his Righteousness.*] By *Righteousness*, Dr. Sykes here understands the *Messiah, the Righteous Branch*, who was to rule in *Righteousness*, and in whose Days the *Righteous were to flourish*. (See Dr. Sykes, on *Christianity*, pag. 35, 36.) But it seems more natural, to interpret it, of that Way of becoming *righteous*, which the Gospel proposes, and which *St. Paul*, by a Phrase exactly equivalent to this, calls *the Righteousness of GOD*. Compare *Rom. x. 3.* and *Phil. iii. 9.*

(n) *Added over and above.*] This seems to be the exact Import of the Word *over and above*, than which Expression nothing could have been more proper; for these *Temporal*

34 Take therefore no Thought for the Morrow; for the Morrow shall take Thought for the Things of itself: sufficient unto the Day is the Evil thereof.

and as it were thrown in, amidst a Croud of far more valuable Blessings. And therefore while you faithfully attend to this, be not anxious, even for the Morrow, and much less for future Years: For indeed the Morrow shall provide for itself; that Providence which hath taken Care of you formerly, shall send in new Supplies, and suggest new Expedients, as new Necessities and Difficulties require them: And in the mean time, you need not anticipate future Trials; for without such an Addition, sufficient for the present Day [is] the Evil of it, and it is well if you have Wisdom and Grace proportionable even to that.

SECT. 41.
Mat. VI. 34.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

HOW kind are these Precepts of our Blessed Redeemer! the Substance of which is indeed but this, *Do thyself no Harm.* Let us not be so ungrateful to him, and so injurious to ourselves, as to harass and oppress our Minds, with that Burthen of Anxiety, which he has so graciously taken off. Every Verse and Clause, we have been reading; speaks at once to the Understanding, and the Heart. We will not therefore indulge these unnecessary, these useless, these mischievous Cares; we will not borrow the Anxieties and Distresses of the Morrow, to aggravate those of the present Day: But rather will we cheerfully repose ourselves on that Heavenly Father, who knows that we need these Things, and has given us Life, which is more than Meat, and the Body, which is more than Raiment; and thus instructed in the Philosophy of our Heavenly Master, will learn a Lesson of Faith and Cheerfulness, from every Bird of the Air, and every Flower of the Field.

Let the Gentiles, that know not God, perplex their Minds with unworthy Suspicions, or bow them down to the ignoble Servitude of Mammon, that base Rival of our Living Jehovah: But we, from desiring to share our Hearts, and our Services, between two such

poral Blessings are by no means essential to the Stipulations of the Covenant of Grace, but are entirely to be referred to the Divine good Pleasure, to add, or withhold, as God shall see fit. Compare 1 Kings iii. 11, 13.

- SECT. 41. **U**ch contrary *Masters*, will chearfully devote them to him, whose Right to them is so infinitely beyond all Room for any Contest. Let
 Ver. 19, 20. us *take heed and beware of Covetousness*, and make it our Business not to *board up Earthly* and corruptible *Treasures*, but *first seek the Kingdom of GOD, and his Righteousness*: So shall *other Things be added* for present Subsistence; and so shall we *lay up in Store* an incorruptible *Treasure in Heaven*, in which we shall be rich and happy, when the *Riches of this World* are consumed with their Owners, and the whole *Fashion of it is passed away*.
- Ver. 22, 23. While these Divine Maxims are spreading their *Light* about us, let our *Eye be clear* to behold them, and our Heart open to receive them; and let us cautiously guard against those deceitful Principles of Action, which would give a wrong Bias to all our Pursuits, and turn *the Light which is in us* into a fatal and incurable *Darkness*.

S E C T. XLII.

Our LORD proceeds in his Discourse to caution his Disciples against rash Judgment, and to exhort them to Impartiality, Prudence, Prayer, and Resolution, and warns them against Seducers. Mat. VII. 1,—20.

M A T. VII. 1.

M A T. VII. 1.

SECT. 42. **Y**OU, my Disciples, live in a very censorious Age, and the Scribes and Pharisees, who are in the highest Esteem for the Strictness of their Lives, place a great Part of their own Religion in condemning others (a); but see to it, that you *do not judge* those about you, in this rigorous and severe Manner, nor pass such unnecessary or uncharitable Censures upon them, *that you may not yourselves be*

JUDGE not, that ye be not judged.

(a) Place a great Part of their own Religion in condemning others.] Tho' *Christ* does not so directly level his Discourse against the *Pharisees* in this Chapter, as in the *Two foregoing*, he seems to glance upon them in this, and other Expressions, which he uses in it. That they were very culpable on this Head appears from such Passages, as *Luke xviii. 9,—14, xvi. 14, 15.* and *John vii. 47, 49.* (Compare *Isa. lxxv. 5.*) Their unjust Censures of *Christ* are the strongest Instances of it, that can be conceived.

(b) Look

2 For with what Judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what Measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

be judged with the like Severity. For in **SECT. 42.** this Respect you will find, that according to *the Judgment with which you judge others, you shall be judged; and by that very Measure that ye mete to them, it shall be measured back to you:* God and Man will make great Allowances to the Character of the Candid and Benevolent; but they must expect "Judgment without Mercy, who have shewed no Mercy;" nor can they deny the Equity of such Treatment. (Jam. ii. 13.)

Mat. VII. 2.

3 And why beholdest thou the Mote that is in thy Brothers Eye, but considerest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye?

The Caution I have mentioned is more apparently necessary, considering how prone Men are to be partial to themselves: *But why dost thou, whoever thou art, look at that little Infirmity, which is but like a Mote in thy Brother's Eye, while thou observest not the much greater Fault, which is like a Beam in thine own Eye (b)?*

3

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy Brother, Let me pull out the Mote out of thine Eye; and behold, a Beam is in thine own Eye?

Or how canst thou say to thy Brother, with any Appearance of Justice, or any Degree of Assurance, Hold still [and] I will take the Mote out of thine Eye (c); while behold, it is much more visible, that [there is] a Beam in thine own Eye?

4

5 Thou Hypocrite, first cast out the Beam out of thine own Eye; and then shalt

Thou partial Hypocrite, begin thy Reformation at Home, and make it thy first Care to clear out the Beam from thine own Eye, or to

5

COR-

(b) Look at a Mote in thy Brother's Eye, while thou observest not the Beam in thine own Eye.] Dr. Lightfoot (Hor. Hebr. in loc.) has shewn, that this Expression, as well as that in ver. 2. was a Proverb among the Jews. The Word *κακός*, which we render Mote, is well explained by Hesychius, who tells us, it signifies a little Splinter of Wood; (though others understand it of a small Seed;) and thus it is opposed to *δοκός*, a large Beam, with great Propriety. But as it is impossible, that such a Thing as a Beam of Wood should be lodged in the Eye, I am ready to imagine, that these Words might signify different Kinds of Distempers, to which that tender Part is subject; the former of which might be no more in Comparison of the latter, than a Grain, or Splinter, to a Beam.

(c) Hold still, [and] I will take the Mote out of thine Eye.] This seems to be the exact Meaning of *αὐτὸς ἄγει*, which I chose to translate thus literally, as I think it elegantly intimates, how ready Men are to shrink back from Reproof. The Simile here used implies, that it is as absurd for a bad Man to set up for a Reprover of others, as it would be for one that is almost blind himself, to pretend to perform Operations on other Men's Eyes.

SECT. 42. correct the Errors of thy Judgment, and the Enormities of thy Life; and then wilt thou better discern, [how] to remove the Mote out of thy Brother's Eye, and mayst attempt it with more Decency, as well as greater Probability of Success.

shalt thou see clearly to cast out the Mote out of thy Brothers Eye.

6 I would farther remind you, that how unexceptionable soever your own Characters may be, there is some Caution to be used in attempting to reprove, or even to inform others; or you may expose your Admonitions to Contempt, and yourselves to Abuse. Give not that holy [Food] to Dogs, or to such prophane, furious, and persecuting Wretches, as deserve no better a Name; nor cast your precious Pearls of Heavenly Wisdom before such profligate Sensualists, as resemble Swine rather than Men; lest, as those Brutal Creatures might do, if Jewels were thrown before them, they trample them under their Feet with Scorn, and turning [upon you,] as if they had received an Injury rather than a Favour, fasten on you, and tear you (d): For so extremely fordid and malignant will you find many, in these degenerate Days.

6 Give not that which is holy unto the Dogs, neither cast ye your Pearls before Swine, lest they trample them under their Feet, and turn again and rent you.

7 Now whether you want Wisdom to guide you in these Difficulties, or Fortitude to animate you against such Hardships, or in a Word, whatever your Exigencies or Necessities may be, ask the Divine Assistance in.

7 Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find:

(d) And turning [upon you,] tear you.] I cannot blame the Translation of 1 727, which follows *Castalio*, and renders it, *lest these* (that is, the Swine,) *trample them under Foot, and those* (that is, the Dogs,) *turn upon you, and tear you*. This may perhaps be our Lord's Meaning, but it did not seem necessary to alter the Version, as it is possible, that Dogs might trample upon Jewels, and Swine might be ready to wound those that disturbed them.—That the Figure here supposed is sometimes used, does indeed appear by comparing *Mat. xii. 22. 1 Cor. xi. 11. 2 Cor. ii. 15. and Philem. ver. 5.* But I think the Order of the Words, as they stand in the Original, may very well be retained in the Translation of these Places; for the Transposition of Words, even where there is a Trajection in the Sense, is so dangerous a Thing where Sacred Writers are in Question, that no small Advantage gained in Elegance or Perspicuity seems sufficient to counterbalance it.

and encourages them to Fervency in Prayer.

And: knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

in Prayer, *and it shall be given you; seek it, and you shall find it;* and if it be a while delayed, *knock with repeated Importunity at the Door of Mercy, and it shall at length be graciously opened to you.* To this you are

SECT. 42.
Mat. VII. 7.

8 For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

8 encouraged by the Experience of every Praying Soul; *for every one that asketh aright, receiveth; and he that diligently seeketh, findeth; and to him that patiently knocketh, [the Door] shall be opened.*

9 Or what Man is there of you, whom if his Son ask Bread, will he give him a Stone?

9 And indeed (e) it is no inconsiderable Encouragement, which you may derive from that natural Affection to your Offspring, which a merciful G O D has infused into the Hearts of those of you that are Parents; for *what one Man is there among you (f), in all this numerous Assembly, who, if his Son should ask him for Bread, will give him a Stone?*

10 Or if he ask a Fish, will he give him a Serpent?

10 Or if he ask him for a Fish, will give him a Serpent? Can you imagine any Father could be so unnatural, as to deny the necessary Supplies of Life to his hungry Child, and instead of these, to give him what would starve or poison him? *If therefore you,*

11 If ye then being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much

11 imperfect and evil as you are, and some of you perhaps tenacious, froward, and unkind, yet know how to give good Gifts to your Children; if you find your Hearts disposed and ready

(e) *And indeed.*] Dr. Whitby thinks, that where the Particle η is placed at the Beginning of a Sentence, it is intended merely for a Mark of Interrogation; and in this Way it is, that he supposes, we are to understand it here, and likewise in Matt. xx. 15. and 1 Cor. xiv. 36. But as the Sense will very fitly bear it, I conceive that in each of these Places, it may be rendered *indeed*.

(f) *What one Man is there among you?*] This seems to be the Emphasis of $\tau\upsilon\varsigma\ \epsilon\upsilon\upsilon\ \epsilon\grave{\iota}\varsigma\ \sigma\upsilon\upsilon\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\theta\upsilon\omega\tau\epsilon\varsigma$: Some think it also to imply the same, as if it had been said, *Which of you is there, though but a Man?* And as what is added in the eleventh Verse plainly expresses this Sense, perhaps it might also be intended here.—Young Preachers will, I hope, observe, how much Life and Force it adds to these Discourses of our Lord, that they so closely are directed, through the whole of them, as an immediate Address to his Hearers, and are not loose and general Harangues, in the Manner of those Essays, which are now grown so fashionable in Pulpits. If any are grown too polite, to learn true Oratory from Christ, I wish, they would, at least learn it from Demosthenes, who, I doubt not, would have admired the Eloquence of this Sermon.

(g) Being

SECT. 42. ready to communicate the best of what you have for their Relief and Sustenance; *how much more will your Almighty and All-bountiful Father in Heaven, who has a perfect Sight of all your Wants, and can with perfect Ease supply them, and who himself has wrought into your Hearts these benevolent Affections, be ready to exceed you in expressing his Kindness, so as freely to give good Things, to those that ask them of him, by fervent and constant Prayer?*

12 Being animated *therefore* by his Goodness (g), study to express your Gratitude for it, by your Integrity, and Kindness to your Fellow-Creatures; and take it as a most sacred Rule, *All Things which ye would be willing that Men should do to you, do ye also in like Manner to them*: Treat them in every Instance, just as you would think it reasonable to be treated by them, if you were in their Circumstances, and they in yours: *For this is, in Effect, a Summary and Abstract of all the humane and social Virtues, recommended in the moral Precepts of the Law, and the Prophets*; and it was one of the greatest Ends of both (b), to bring Men to this equitable and amiable Temper.

13 It will indeed be very difficult thus to overcome the Prejudices of Self-Love, and to subdue those other Corruptions of the Heart, which oppose themselves to the Obedience

much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good Things to them that ask him?

12 Therefore all Things whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law, and the Prophets.

13 Enter ye in at the strait Gate; for wide is the Gate,

(g) Being animated *therefore* by his Goodness.] Some would have us to consider the Particle *in* in this Passage, as a mere *Expletive*; but there is certainly a Force in the *Connection*, beyond what most have observed. See the excellent Discourses of Bishop Atterbury, and Dr. Evans, upon it; which illustrate the Sense, Reasonableness, and Use, of *this Golden Law*, in a Manner that deserves the most attentive Perusal.

(b) One of the greatest Ends of both.] I say *one of the greatest*, that this may be reconciled with our Lord's declaring the Love of GOD to be *the first and great Commandment*; (Mat. xxii. 38.) and it is indeed a most absurd and fatal Error to imagine, that *the Regulation of social Life is the only End of Religion*. I fear, many good-natured Deists will perish, by taking this one Principle for granted, and my Heart is wounded with the sad Apprehension of it.

(i) Per-

Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction; and many there be which go in thereat :

dience of the Divine Laws; and the Persecutions, to which good Men are often exposed, will increase the Difficulty (i) : But I would press you to exert a becoming Resolution, and courageously to enter in thro' the Strait Gate of Self-denial and Holiness ; for wide is the Gate, and smooth and spacious the Way, which leads to Destruction ; and there are many who enter into Destruction by it : And this they do, because they are discouraged by the Hardships, which attend the Entrance on a Religious Life, or must be expected in a Progress in it ; as they see, that strait is the Gate, and rugged and painful the Way, which leads to eternal Life ; and they who find it, and with a holy Ardency and Resolution press into it, so as to arrive at that blessed End, are comparatively few : See to it therefore, that you be of that little Number.

SECT. 42.

Mat. VII.

13.

14 Because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way, which leadeth unto Life ; and few there be that find it.

14

15 Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in

And it concerns you so much the rather to be careful about it, as the Falsehood of many, who set up for religious Teachers, will in some Degree increase the Difficulty and Danger. Be therefore on your Guard against

15

(i) Persecutions—will increase the Difficulty.] In order to reconcile what is here advanced, with those Passages, which assert *Christ's Yoke* to be *easy*, and the *Ways of Wisdom* to be *Ways of Pleasantness*, &c. a late learned Writer thinks it necessary to suppose, that *this Text* refers entirely to the Case of *Persecution* ; and that the *Strait Gate* is a violent Death, which lay at the End of the *Narrow Way*, and concluded the Injuries and Calamities, which *Persecutors* would bring upon *Christians*. (See *Mr. Hallet's Disc.* vol. iii. pag. 24,—29.) But nothing is more certain, than that *Christ* requires from all his *Disciples*, in all Ages and Places, a Life of *Mortification* and *Self-Denial* ; which, though it is mingled with, and introductory to, *Pleasures* abundantly sufficient to counterbalance it, yet to corrupt Nature is difficult and painful. (See *Mat.* v. 29, 30. xvi. 24. *Rom.* vi. 6. viii. 13. *Col.* iii. 5. *Gal.* v. 16, 17. and *1 Cor.* ix. 26, 27.) However therefore I allow, that *Persecutions* are to be included among other Difficulties, yet I can see no Reason to believe, that *Martyrdom* was so common in the Age of those to whom *Christ* addressed himself, as to be spoken of in such general Language, as the *Gate leading to Life* : Not to insist upon it, that our Lord now speaks of what then was, and not what would be the Case in future Years ; and that he mentions the *Gate*, before the *Way* ; whereas I think *Mr. Hallet's* Interpretation would have required a different Order.—When *Grotius* refers the *Straitness of the Gate*, to the Difficulty of *Virtue* in itself, and the *Ruggedness of the Way*, to accidental Oppositions, he seems to refine too much.—Many parallel Passages from *Heathen Writers*, may be seen in *him*, and *Dr. Whitby*.

SECT. 42.
Mat. VII.
15.

against those false Prophets, who come to you indeed in the Clothing of Sheep (k), in the most specious Forms of Humility, Innocence, and Piety; but inwardly are ravening Wolves, which seek nothing but to feed themselves, by the Destruction of the Flock.

- 16 And you will find, on a more accurate Observation of their Actions, that you may generally know them by their Fruits (l), and discover, thro' all their Disguise, that base Character which lurks beneath, and which may justly render you suspicious as to their Doctrines: (2 Tim. iii. 5,—9.) For do Men look to gather Grapes from Thorns, or Figs from Thistles (m)? Or can it be expected by you, in a common Way, that you should gather Spiritual Advantage, or should obtain

in Sheeps Clothing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves.

16 Ye shall know them by their Fruits: Do Men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles?

(k) *Who come to you in the Clothing of Sheep.*] It is a very low Thought, to suppose that our Lord here refers to the rough Habit worn by false Prophets of old; for which Purpose so many Criticks quote Zech. xiii. 4. and, very unaccountably, Heb. xi. 37. For, not to insist on the Probability there is, that those rough Garments might be made of Goats or Camels Hair, rather than Wool; (compare 2 Kings i. 8. and Mat. iii. 4.) the Beauty of the Simile is lost by this Interpretation. *A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing*, is grown into a Proverb, for a wicked Man that makes a great Profession of Religion, yet cannot dissemble so well, as not to be discovered by attentive Observation; which was just the Character of the Pharisees in our Saviour's Days, See Mat. xxiii. 23,—28. and Luke xi. 39,—42.

(l) *You may know them by their Fruits.*] The Characters of Men are not to be discovered by the Doctrines that they teach; and therefore this cannot (as some have thought,) be the Meaning, of knowing them, who were their Teachers, by their Fruits. It is more reasonable to explain it of their Actions, which are often called Fruits. (Compare Mat. iii. 8. xxi. 43. John xv. 2, 5. and Col. i. 6.)—It will be objected, that bad Men may teach good Doctrines, and even the worst have been known to do it in some Instances. But as to this I answer, that our Lord does not exhort his Disciples, to reject whatever such Men taught, but only to be upon their Guard against them, that they might not credit any Thing merely on their Authority.—I only add, that this Caution would by a Parity of Reason extend; to all that set up for Teachers, as well as to Prophets; (not to insist on the Latitude in which that Word is used;) so that it would at least obliquely glance on the Pharisees, whose Influence over the People was so injurious to the Gospel, and so exceeding mischievous to those who had a Veneration for them, that our Lord found it necessary often to repeat such Cautions. See Mat. xv. 12, 13. xvi. 6. xxiii. 2, & seq. Mark viii. 15. and Luke xii. 1.

(m) *Do Men gather Grapes from Thorns, or Figs from Thistles?*] These Words suppose, the Plant was known to be a Thorn, or a Thistle, and represent the Folly, of looking for Grapes or Figs from Plants, that had it not in their Nature to bear them, or of expecting Good from Persons that were vicious and corrupt. Had Christ meant, what has commonly been supposed, he would rather have said, *You do not find Thorns on a Vine, or Thistles on a Fig-tree.*

17 Even so every good Tree bringeth forth good Fruit; but a corrupt Tree bringeth forth evil Fruit.

18 A good Tree cannot bring forth evil Fruit: neither can a corrupt Tree bring forth good Fruit.

19 Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down and cast into the Fire.

20 Wherefore by their Fruits ye shall know them.

Religious Improvement, from the Lessons SECT. 42.
of Wicked Men? Their Influence, on Mat. VII. 17.
the whole, will be more likely to debauch,
than edify your Minds; for as the Fruit will
be agreeable in its Nature and Kind to the
Tree that produces it, *even so every good Tree
produces good Fruit, but a corrupt Tree pro-
duces bad Fruit;* and in like Manner will the
Fruits that Men produce, be answerable to
the habitual Frame and Disposition of their
Hearts. Nor can it indeed be otherwise
in the usual Course of Things; for as *a good
Tree cannot bear evil Fruit, so neither can a
corrupt Tree bear good Fruit.* (Compare Mat.
xii. 33.—35. Sect. 62.) And therefore,
by the Way, to prevent such false Pretend-
ers to Religion from being a lasting Incum-
brance and Mischief, they shall assuredly be
overtaken by the righteous Judgment of
GOD; and as you see, that *every Tree,
which, after a competent Trial beareth not
good Fruit, how fair and flourishing soever
it may seem, is cut down, and cast into the
Fire;* such too will be the End of hypocri-
tical Professors and ungodly Men, which it
becomes you all seriously to consider. Up-
on the whole, it will be found, that there
is now a Difference in Men's Characters,
correspondent to the great Difference to be
made in their future Estate; *so that I had
Reason to say, that you shall generally know
them by their Fruits:* The Disguise will fall
off in an unguarded Moment, and it will
be your Wisdom, to observe and improve
the Signal.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WHEN will the happy Time come, in which *Christians* shall form themselves on these important *Maxims* of their great *Master!* When shall they be known to be *his Disciples*, by the
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SECT. 42. *Candour of their Sentiments, the Equity of their Conduct, and the Beneficence of their Actions, as well as by the Articles of their Faith, and the Forms of their Worship! Let us all apply these Charges to ourselves, in the dear and awful Name of him that gave them.*

Mat. vii. 1, 2. What can be more dreadful to us, than to think of being severely *judged* by that GOD, without whose hourly Forbearance, and gra-

Ver. 3,—5. *acious Indulgence, we are all undone? Let us then exercise that Mercy, which we need: and to form our Minds to this most reasonable Temper, let us often be thinking of our own many Infirmities, and be humbling ourselves before GOD on account of them.*

Ver. 7, 8. Animated by the gracious Invitations, and the precious Promises which are here given, with earnest Importunity let us make our daily *Addresses* to his Throne; *asking*, that we may receive; *seeking* that we may find; and *knocking*, that the Door of Mercy may be opened to us. And while any of us feel in our Hearts, the Workings of

Ver. 9,—11. *Parental Tenderness* towards our Infant Offspring, let us consider it as a delightful Emblem of yet greater *Readiness* in our *Heavenly Father*, to pity and relieve *his Children*.

May universal Righteousness and Charity be practised by us in the whole of our Behaviour, and may we *always exercise ourselves herein to have a Conscience void of Offence, both towards GOD, and towards Men!* (*Acts xxiv. 16.*) May we avoid all Manner of Injustice, and guard against the Sallies of a proud and over-bearing Temper! May we be upright and benevolent in all our Conduct, and make it our constant Care to govern our Actions by that most equitable *Rule*, of *doing to others, as we would reasonably desire they should do to us*, on a Change of our Circumstances, and theirs! Happy those generous Souls, in whom the Bias of *Self-Love* is so rectified, that they can in this Instance hold the *Balance* between themselves and others, with an impartial and unwavering Hand!

Ver. 20. On the whole, let us remember, that we ourselves are at last to be tried by the Rule, by which we are here directed to judge of others, even by *the Fruits* which we produce. May GOD by his

Ver. 17, 18. *Grace make the Tree good, that the Productions of it may be found to his Glory, and the Refreshment of all around us! that we may*

Ver. 19. *not be cut down as Cumberers of the Ground, and cast into the Fire!*

The *Way of Life*, which our Blessed Redeemer has marked out for us in such Precepts as these, may indeed to corrupt Nature appear *rugged and narrow*, and *the Gate strait*, through which we are to pass: But let us encourage ourselves against all these Difficulties, by

Ver. 14. *considering that Immortal Life and Glory, to which they infallibly lead.*

lead. Then shall we, doubtless, prefer the most painful Way of Piety and Virtue, though with yet fewer Companions than we might reasonably expect, to all those flowery and frequented Paths of Vice, which go down to the Chambers of Death. SECT. 42.

S E C T. XLIII.

Our LORD concludes his Sermon on the Mount, with a lively Representation, of the absolute Necessity of a practical Regard to his Precepts. Mat. VII. 21, to the End.

MAT. VII. 21.

NOT every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.

MAT. VII. 21.

THESE are the Precepts I thought proper to give you, and you must govern your Lives by them, if ever you hope to find your Account in the most diligent Attendance on my Ministry: For it is not every one who saith unto me, Lord, Lord, who is ready now in Words to acknowledge me as his Master, or who at last with the most passionate and earnest Cries intreats my Mercy, that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven (a), and be admitted to the compleat Felicity, in which the Administration I am now opening, shall finally terminate: But he only shall be intitled to that Privilege, who conscientiously performs, in the main Series of his Life, the holy Will of my Father who is in Heaven. SECT. 43.
Mat. VII. 21.

22 Many will say to me in

It will be your Wisdom, to attend to these Things; for though you now see me in what may seem a mean and despicable Form, the Time will certainly come, when I shall ap- 22

(a) Shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.] Here the Kingdom of Heaven, must signify, that of Glory above; for calling Christ, Lord, is the very Circumstance which constitutes us the Subjects of his Earthly Kingdom, or Members of his visible Church. Compare Mat. viii. 11. Luke xiii. 28. and 1 Cor. xv. 50.

SECT. 43. appear as the universal Judge : And I now forewarn you, that *many will say to me, in that Day, when their Eternal State is to be determined, Lord, Lord, have we not been employed in distinguished Offices in thy Church, and been furnished for them even by miraculous Endowments ? and in Pursuance of them, have we not taught, and prophesied in thy Name ? and in the Authority of thy Name have cast out Devils ? and in thy Name have done many wonderful Works ?*

23 *And nevertheless I will then openly declare unto them, I never knew you,* or never approved of your Character (b), even when you made the most florid Profession (c); and therefore depart from me, ye Workers of Iniquity (d) : And whatever you that hear me, may now imagine, that Separation from me will be their everlasting Destruction.*

24 Hear therefore the Conclusion of the whole Matter, and seriously attend to it. *Every one, whoever he be, and how great soever his former Irregularities may have been, who heareth these my Words, and doth them, or in the main Course of his Life governs his Temper and his Actions by them, lays a solid Foundation for present Comfort, and everlasting Security and Joy : I will compare him therefore to a Prudent Man, who*

25 *built his House upon a firm Rock ; And the stormy Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat with Violence upon*

in that Day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name ? and in thy Name have cast out Devils ? and in thy Name done many wonderful Works ?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you ; depart from me, ye that work Iniquity.

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these Sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a Wise Man, which built his House upon a Rock ;

25 And the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House : and

(b) *I never knew you, or never approved of your Character.*] The Word *know* is plainly used in this Sense, *Psal. i. 6. Mat. xxv. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 19. John x. 14. Rom. vii. 15. and perhaps, 1 Cor. viii. 3.*

(c) *Even when you made the most florid Profession.*] This is a very remarkable Circumstance, that is strongly implied in the Words, *I NEVER knew you.*

(d) *Depart from me, ye Workers of Iniquity.*] There is an incomparable Dignity in this whole Passage, which I have endeavoured a little to illustrate in the *Paraphrase*. The poor despised *Jesus*, not only calls *God his Father*, but speaks as the *Eternal Judge*, before whom Men should beg, and plead, for their very Lives, dreading *Banishment* from him, as their final Destruction.

and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock.

upon that House; and it fell not, for it was founded on a solid Rock. And thus shall the good Man's Hopes be established, when they come, as all must come, to the strictest Trial.

SECT. 43.
Mat. VII. 25.

26 And every one that heareth these Sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a Foolish Man, which built his House upon the Sand;

But every one that heareth these my Sayings; and doth them not, how constantly soever he may attend them, and whatever Zeal he may profess for them, may justly be compared to a foolish Man, who, without any Care to secure the Foundation, built his House upon the Sand; And the stormy

26

27

27 And the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House: and it fell, and great was the Fall of it.

Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew with a tempestuous Violence, and struck directly on that House; and it fell at once, and its Ruin was great and wide, as the Building had been: A lively Emblem of the Ruin, which will another Day overwhelm the unhappy Man, who trusts to an outward Profession and Form of Godliness, when he does not sincerely and practically regard it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these Sayings, the People were astonished at his Doctrine.

And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these excellent Sayings (e), the Multitudes that heard him, were struck with Amazement at his Doctrine. For in this,

28

29 For he taught them as one having Authority, and not as the Scribes.

and his other Sermons, he was still teaching them (f), as one that had a Divine Authority to dictate in his own Name, and not as the Scribes, their established Teachers; who generally contented themselves, with quoting the Name and Authority of some celebrated

29

Doctors

(e) When Jesus had finished these excellent Sayings.] This plainly intimates, that all this Discourse was delivered at once, and consequently that several Passages related by Luke, as spoken at different Times, are Repetitions of it. Compare Mat. v. 3, & seq. with Luke vi. 20, & seq.—Mat. v. 13. with Luke xiv. 34, 35.—Mat. v. 25. with Luke xii. 58.—Mat. vi. 9, & seq. with Luke xi. 2, & seq.—Mat. vi. 20, 21.—Luke xii. 33, 34.—Mat. vi. 24. with Luke xvi. 13.—Mat. vii. 1, & seq. with Luke vi. 37, & seq.—and Mat. vii. 13, 14, with Luke xiii. 24.

(f) He was still teaching them.] Beza has well observed, that these Words refer to the continued Course, and general Character of his Teaching, of which this Discourse is a noble Specimen; indeed so glorious a one, that I persuade myself the Reader will pardon my having paraphrased it in so copious a Manner.

(g) To

SECT. 43. Doctōrs of the former Age, and that frequently to confirm some trifling Remark, or *useless Ceremony of Human Device* (g) :
 Mat. VII. 29. Whereas the Discourses of Christ were weighty and convincing, and always delivered with an Air of Seriousness, Dignity, and Majesty, becoming the great Prophet and King of his Church, and the immediate Delegate from GOD to Men.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. vii. 28. **H**OW justly may our *Admiration* concur with *theirs*, that heard these Sayings of our Lord, while we have the Honour and Pleasure of attending these Discourses, as the inspired Penmen have recorded them, by the Assistance of that *Spirit*, who was to bring all Things to their Remembrance ! Are we not struck with the Authority of this *Divine Teacher*, so as to bear our Witness to the gracious and edifying Words that proceeded out of his Mouth ? (Luke iv. 22.)

V. 24.—27. Let us not content ourselves with applauding what we have heard, but let us go away and practise it. Shortly will that *stormy Day* arise, which must try the *Foundation* of our Hopes. GOD will lay Judgment to the Line, and Righteousness to the Plummet ; and the Hail shall sweep away the Refuge of Lies, and the Waters shall overflow the Hiding-place. How thankful should we be, that GOD has laid in Zion for a Foundation, a chief Corner-stone, elect and precious, with an Assurance, that he that believeth on him shall not be confounded ! (Compare Isa. xxviii. 16, & seq. and 1 Pet. ii. 6.) But let every Man take heed, how he builds thereupon ; lest the Weight of his Ruin be proportionable to the Height of his Hopes. (1 Cor. iii. 10.)

Ver. 21. We say unto Christ, Lord, Lord ; but let us remember, this will not secure our entering into his Heavenly Kingdom. Whatever be our Profession, or whatever our Office in his Church, the most splendid and honourable of our Works will be vain, if we are found Workers of Iniquity ; for our great Master will then disown us, as those whom he

(g) To confirm some trifling Remark, or useless Ceremony of Human Device.] If we may judge of the Teachings of the Scribes, in Christ's Days, by the Jewish Talmuds, or even by their Mishnah, this was so eminently the Character of it, that nothing could be more justly contemptible ; and their frigid and insipid Comments and Lessons could no more be compared with those Strains of Divine Eloquence, with which our Lord's Discourses abounded, than a Glow-worm can be compared to the Sun.

he has never approved. Blessed Jesus! it will then be in vain, to fly SECT. 43.
 to thee with the Importunity of Prayer, and to repeat the most earnest
 Addresses. We would now, while yet there is Room for it, fall down
 before thee, intreating thee to add the *Teachings* of thy Spirit to
 those of thy *Word*, that we may be effectually engaged to *do the Will*
of thine Heavenly Father, that we may finally be *confessed* and owned
 by thee, and be admitted *into the Joy of our Lord!*

S E C T. XLIV.

JESUS descending from the Mount, cleanses a Leper,
 who applied to him for a Cure. Mat. VIII. 1,—4.
 Luke V. 12,—16. Mark I. 40, to the End.

MAT. VIII. 1.

WHEN he was come
 down from the Mountain,
 great Multitudes followed
 him.

MAT. VIII. 1.

NOW when Jesus had finished this large SECT. 44.
 and excellent Discourse, *as he was com-*
ing down from the Mountain (a) on which Mat. VIII. 1.
 he delivered it, great Multitudes of People,
 impressed and charmed with what they had
 already heard, followed him to the Town to-
 wards which he went, in Hopes of farther
 Instruction and Edification.

LUKE V. 12. And it
 came to pass, when he was
 in a certain City, behold, a
 Man

And when he was just in the *Confines* of Luke V. 12;
 a certain City (b), in the Neighbourhood of
 that

(a) *As he was coming down from the Mountain.*] I think this a sufficient Warrant,
 for fixing this Story, where we introduce it; tho' it be contrary to the Order in which
 many learned Men have placed it. Neither Mark nor Luke are, in this Respect, by
 any Means so express in the Connection of it. Yet an attentive Reader will observe,
 that I have not in this Instance transposed either of them. The erroneous Opinion,
 that Luke vi. contained the Sermon on the Mount, and fixed it to an Order different
 from Matthew's, is that, by which so many have been led into a Mistake here.

(b) *In a certain City:* εἰς μίαν τῶν πόλεων.] As Luke expresses it thus, I am apt to
 think it was not Capernaum, which Luke had so often named before: and consequent-
 ly, that the Mountain on which Christ's Sermon was delivered, lay at some Distance
 from thence; whereas the Plain, on which some of it was repeated, was contiguous
 to Capernaum, into which, as Luke says, he entered at the Close of it. (See Luke vii. 1.
 Sect. 55. and compare Note (b) on Mat. v. 1. pag. 232.)—I speak of the *Confines* of
 this City, whatever it was; because Lepers were not allowed to live in Towns. Com-
 pare Numb. v. 2. 2 Kings vii. 3. 2 Chron. xxvi. 21. and Luke xvii. 12.

SECT. 44. that Mountain, behold, a Man full of Leprosy, and dreadfully over-run with that sad Disease, seeing Jesus, and having been informed of the many miraculous Cures which he had done, came to him, most earnestly intreating him to have Pity on his wretched Case; and first kneeling down to him, he then fell prostrate before him, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, though my Distemper be to Human Power incurable, (2 Kings v. 7.) yet I know assuredly, that if thou wilt, thou canst cleanse me from it.

Mark I. 41. And Jesus, pleased with so strong a Degree of Faith, performed the Cure, and did it also in the most condescending Manner; for being moved with Compassion at so melancholy a Sight, he took him aside from the Multitude (c), and stretched out his Hand, and touched him, saying unto him, I will that thy Petition be granted, and from this Moment therefore be thou clean. And the Almighty Power of his commanding Word immediately took Place, and as soon as he had spoken, the Leprosy departed from him; and it appeared by the Alteration of his Countenance, that he was intirely cleansed from that loathsome and inveterate Disease.

43 And Jesus had no sooner wrought this Miracle, but having strictly charged him not to divulge the Matter (d), he dispatched him pre-

Man full of Leprosy; who seeing Jesus, [MAT. came to him, beseeching him; and kneeling down to him,] fell on his Face, [MAT. and worshipped him;] saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. [MAT. VIII. 2. MARK I. 40.]

MARK I. 41. And Jesus moved with Compassion, put forth his Hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will, be thou clean. [MAT. VIII. 3.—LUKE V. 13.—]

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the Leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. [MAT. VIII. 3.—LUKE V. 13.—]

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

(c) He took him aside from the Multitude.] Else I think there could have been no Room for the Charge of Secrecy given below; and the Supposition of such a Circumstance, which certainly happened in another Cure, (compare Mark viii. 23. Sect. 88.) will be a sufficient Answer to the Objections, which Mr. Whiston has urged against following the Order of St. Matthew here. See his Harmony, pag. 107. and Jones's Vindication, pag. 112,—121.

(d) Having strictly charged him not to divulge the Matter.] Some have supposed, that *καταμαρτυρησεν* αυτοω implies, that Christ reproved him sharply for the Sin, for which he had been visited with this Disease, and threatened him with the fatal Consequence of it, if he returned to Sin again: And in this Case, the Probability of what we have supposed is strengthened, that this was spoke to him in private, and was delivered in the same Manner, as the like Caution was, which Christ afterwards gave to the Impotent Man. (Compare John v. 14. Sect. 46.) But as the Word is generally used, to signify

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any Man; but go thy Way, shew thyself to the Priest, and offer for thy cleansing those Things [MAT. the Gift,] which Moses commanded, for a Testimony unto them. [MAT. VIII. 4. LUKE V. 14.]

presently away; Saying unto him as he departed from him, See that at present thou say nothing unto any one of my having performed this Cure (e); but make it thy first Business to go directly to Jerusalem, and there shew thyself to the Priest, whose Office it is legally to pronounce thee clean; and offer the Gift of Birds and Lambs, [and] all those Things, which Moses has commanded, for thy Purification; (Lev. xiv. 1,—32.) that it may be for a Testimony to them, that the Cure is really perfected; and that if I should ever be heard of as the Author of it, they may see my Regard even to the Ceremonial Precepts of the Law. But such was the Impression that was made upon the Leper, by so great an Instance of Divine Mercy to him, and he was so transported with Joy at his miraculous Deliverance; that he went out into the neighbouring Country, and began to publish it much, and to proclaim the Matter where-ever he came.

SECT. 44.
Mark I. 44.

45— But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the Matter.—

And the more Jesus avoided the Ostentation of such Works, so much the more there went a Fame of him abroad through all the Country; and great Multitudes from all Parts

45

Luke V. 15.

LUKE V. 15. [And] so much the more, there went a Fame abroad of him; and great Multitudes came together

nify the giving of a strict Injunction, or a solemn Charge, (as Phavorinus, Suidas, and Hesychius have explained it,) I rather chuse to understand it of the strict Charge, that Christ gave to the Leper, not to divulge the Manner of his Cure, which is expressly mentioned in the following Verse; and in which Sense it is evident, that the same Word is used, Mat. ix. 30. Sect. 72. where the same Charge is given to the Two Blind Men, that Christ restored to Sight.

(e) See, thou say nothing unto any one, of my having performed this Cure.] Christ probably designed by this, not only to avoid the Shew of any Ostentation of his miraculous Power, but to prevent the Malice of the Priests; who might have been unwilling to pronounce this Leper clean, and have been ready to deny the Cure, if they were told that he was healed by one, they were so strongly prejudiced against; or might perhaps have censured Christ, as having usurped an Office that belonged to them, and taken upon him to pronounce a Leprous Person clean. Christ therefore would not have him to make known the Circumstances of his Cure to any, till he had first of all been with the Priest; and upon this Account, dispatched him presently away, or sent him off in haste, that he might reach Jerusalem, before the Priests had any Information of this Miracle; as seems to be implied in the Force of those Words, in ver. 43. *ωτις ηθελεν αυτος.* See Grotius on Mat. viii. 4. and Lightfoot's Harmony, in loc.

SECT. 44. *Parts came together to him, to hear him preach the Gospel, and to be healed of their Infirmities by him.*

Luke V. 15.

Mark I. 45.

And after some Interval of Time, the Resort to him was *so great, that he could no longer openly enter into the City, without drawing a Multitude of Attendants after him; but was obliged for a while to be chiefly*

Luke V. 16.

without in desert Places. And to avoid the Interruptions of the Croud, *he frequently withdrew into the Wilderness, and prayed; chusing in these Circumstances, to spend some Time in more than ordinary Devotion, that he might engage a Blessing on the Truths he had so largely delivered, and obtain that Success, which this Eagerness of the People seemed to promise to his Gospel.*

gether [to him, from every Quarter,] to hear, and to be healed by him of their Infirmities. [MARK I.—45.]

MARK I.—45.—*Info- much that Jesus could no more openly enter into the City, but was without in desert Places.—*

LUKE V. 16. And he withdrew himself into the Wilderness, and prayed.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Luke v. 12.

OUR Souls are overspread with the *Leprosy of Sin*: And where should we apply for Help, but to the healing Power, and recovering Grace, of the great Redeemer! Be the Malady ever so deep, spreading, or inveterate, we may surely adopt the Words of *the Leper* before us, and say, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* And how much Reason have we to hope, his Compassion will be moved in our Favour, and his Power exerted in our Cure!

Mark i. 43.

44.

If we have received that Favour, we are under the Obligation of *no Command to conceal it.* It is, on the contrary, our Duty, most gratefully to *publish it abroad,* for the Honour of our Benefactor, and the Advantage of those, who may be encouraged to make the same Application, in humble Hope of the same Success.

But when will the happy Time come, that Men shall be as solicitous, about their *spiritual Welfare,* as about the *Health* of this *mortal Body!* Almighty Physician, exert thine Energy in this Instance, as a Token of farther Favours! Convince Men of their Pollution and Danger, and bow their stubborn Knee, that it may bend in *submissive and importunate Supplication!*

Mark i. 41.

Let the *compassionate Air,* with which this Cure was wrought, be considered by all *spiritual Physicians,* as a Lesson of Condescension and Tenderness; and let the *Modesty,* with which it was conducted,

After some Days CHRIST returns to Capernaum.

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ducted, engage us to avoid every Appearance of Ostentation and Vain-glory. SECT. 44.

To conclude ; since *Christ* himself found it proper to retire into a desert Place to pray, when Crouds of Admirers were flocking in upon him ; let it teach those, who are engaged in the Scenes of *Publick Business*, and fill them up with the greatest Applause, yet resolutely to command some *Seasons* for Retirement ; as remembering, that the more various and important our *Publick Labours* are, the more evidently do we need to draw down Succour by ardent *Prayer*, that we may be strengthened and prospered in them. Luke v. 16.

S E C T. XLV.

CHRIST returning to Capernaum, heals a Man quite disabled by the Palsy ; vindicates his Power of forgiving Sins ; and calls Matthew the Publican to attend him. Mark II. 1,—14. Luke V. 17,—28. Mat. IX. 2,—9.

MARK II. I.

AND again he entered into Capernaum, after some

MARK II. I.

AND after Jesus had spent [some] Days (a) in devout Retirement, he appeared again in Publick, and entered into Capernaum ; and it SECT. 45.
Mark II. I.

(a) *And after Jesus had spent some Days.*] *Matthew* has recorded so many Events, between the Cure of the *Lepser*, and the *Paralytick*, that I should not have connected them, had not *Mark* so expressly asserted, that some of those Events, especially the *Dispossession of the Legion*, happened long after ; (see *Mark* iv. 35. Note (a), Sect. 69. and *Mark* v. 1. Sect. 70.) and *Luke* strongly intimates the same, concerning the other Story of the *Centurion's Servant* ; (see *Luke* vii. 1, 2, & seq. Sect. 55.) Now I think the Honour of the *New Testament* requires,—that when one of the *Evangelists* does expressly assert the Order, in which he places Facts in Question, and the other does not so expressly assert it, (which is the Case with *Matthew* here,) the Order of the latter, tho' an Apostle and Eye-witness, should be changed, out of Regard to the former. As likewise,—that if none of the *Three* assert their Order, that in which any *Two* agree to place a Fact in Question, should be chosen, rather than that of the *Third*. And on these two Rules I have proceeded in many Instances.—But that the Order of *Matthew* should be changed for that of *Luke*, when neither of them assert any thing concerning that Order, is what I think no Inference from *Luke* i. 3. can justify. (See Note (g) on that Text, pag. 3.) Much less can it be allowable, expressly to contradict *Matthew*, for the sake of keeping to the Order of *Luke* ; which yet

SECT. 45. *it was quickly taken Notice of, and great Numbers of People soon heard, that he was in the House, where he formerly dwelt; and as he had been some Time abroad, and greatly increased his Reputation, both by his Miracles and Preaching, they flocked around him with the greatest Eagerness.*

Mark II. 1. *And it happened on a certain Day, while he continued here, that as he was teaching the People, [several] of the Pharisees and Doctors of the Law were sitting by; who were come out of every Town of Galilee, and even of Judea, and particularly [from] Jerusalem (b), and by Appointment met here to attend his Doctrine, and observe his Miracles; at which the Governors of the Jewish Church began now to be greatly alarmed. But notwithstanding the malicious Views with which they came, Jesus went on as usual in his Work, and the miraculous Power of the Lord was [present] to heal them (c),*
 who

some Days, and it was noised that he was in the House.

LUKE V. 17. *And it came to pass on a certain Day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and Doctors of the Law sitting by, which were come out of every Town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the Power of the Lord was present to heal them.*

most *Harmonizers* seem to have done, even when he was relating what passed in his own House and Presence. (See Note (a) on *Mat. ix. 18. Sect. 72.*) Could I have persuaded myself to take such Liberties with any of the Sacred Writers, I should not have doubted to follow *Matthew* and *John* in their Order universally, as *Sir Isaac Newton* doth, and to transpose *Mark* and *Luke* wherever they disagree with either of them; for I cannot observe, that *those Two* do in any Instance disagree with each other in any of the Facts in Question.—As to the Story of the *Paralytick* here before us, *Mark* strongly connects it with that of *the Leper*, as happening *some Days after it*; tho' *Matthew* does not mention it till the *next Chapter*, and places several Events between them; while *Luke*, according to his frequent Custom, mentions it only as happening *on a certain Day*. This therefore seems to be the proper Place to introduce it, and *Matthew's Order* may be changed, for the Reasons given above.

(b) *From Jerusalem.*] If this happened, as most Commentators suppose, a little before *Christ's second Passover*, (*John v. 1.*) some of these might be sent from the *Sanhedrim* with a View of gaining some Information concerning *Jesus*, to guide their Resolves concerning him at the *ensuing Feast*, in which they persecuted him, and sought to slay him; *John v. 16.* It is very probable, that the *Scribes at Jerusalem*, hearing how expressly he had attacked their Interpretation of the Law, some Days before, in his celebrated *Sermon on the Mount*, (which so far as we can learn, was the first Time he did it,) might summon their Brethren in the neighbouring Country, to meet them at *Capernaum*, in order to attend on the next of *Christ's publick Discourses*, wherever it might happen to be.

(c) *The Power of the Lord was present to heal them.*] According to the common Method of Construction, this may seem to intimate, that the *healing Power of Christ* was exerted on *some of the Pharisees*: But as they came from distant Parts to attend
 Christ

who then applied to him for the Cure of SECT. 45.
their Diseases.

MARK II. 2. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no Room to receive *them*, no not so much as about the Door: and he preached the Word unto *them*.

And immediately so many of the neighbouring Inhabitants were assembled, that there was not Room to receive [*them*] in the House, or even about the Door; so desirous were they to hear how Jesus would acquit himself, in the Presence of such curious, critical, and prejudiced Enquirers, as those that were then sitting around him. And he preached the Word of the Gospel to *them*, with his usual Plainness, Seriousness, and Authority, and confirmed it by various Miracles.

3 And [behold,] they come unto him, bringing [a Man] sick of the Palsy, which [lying on a Bed] was borne of four: [LUK. and they sought Means to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him.] [MAT. IX. 2.—LUKE V. 18.]

And, behold, among many others in most deplorable Circumstances who were cured by him, *they come unto him, bringing a Man seized with the Palsy*, and quite disabled by it, so that he was obliged, in order to his being presented to Jesus, to be *laid on a Bed or Couch, and carried by four Men.* And they endeavoured to bring him in, and lay him down before him, hoping that so melancholy a Sight would affect his compassionate Temper, and engage his Assistance.

LUKE V. 19. And when they could not find by what Way they might bring him in, [and could not come nigh] because of the Multitude, they went upon the House-Top, and [uncovered the

And when they could not find any Way to bring him in, and could not so much as come near enough to speak to Jesus, because of the Croud, and feared a Delay might lose so precious an Opportunity, they carried him round to a back Passage, by which *they went up to the Top of the House*, (compare Mark xiii. 15.) which, according to the Jewish Custom, was made flat; (Deut. xxii. 8.) and uncovered the

Christ as Spies, it is not probable, they were *Diseased Persons*; or that, if any of them, being advanced in Years, might labour under *some Infirmities*, they were so great and visible, that a Cure would be immediately remarked; and least of all can we suppose, they had *that Faith in Christ* which he required in those, whom he intended to heal. (See Mark vi. 5. and compare John vii. 48.) It is more reasonable therefore to conclude on all these Accounts, that this is *one of those few Places*, where the Relative *Them* is referred to a *remoter Antecedent*, than that which is immediately before it. Compare in the *Original*, Mat. xi. 1. xii. 9. Luke v. 30. John viii. 44. Acts viii. 26. and Heb. xiii. 17. See *Glass. Philolog. Sacr. pag. 513, — 515.*

(d) *When*

SECT. 45. *the Roof of the Apartment where [Jesus] was,* (which was a Room that had no Chamber over it,) opening a Way into the House by lifting up a Kind of Lattice or Trap-Door; (compare 2 Kings i. 2.) *and when they had pulled [it] up,* or had removed the Frame of it to make the Passage wider (d), *they let down [the Paralytick] with his Couch, thro' the Tiles,* with which the other Part of the Roof was paved, *into the Midst (e) of the Company assembled,* and so laid him before Jesus. *And Jesus seeing their Faith,* and graciously excusing the Inconveniencies into which their Affection had transported them, *said to the Man that had the Palsy,*

Luke V. 19.

Mat. IX. 2.

Take

the Roof where he was : and when they had broken it up, they] let him down through the Tiling with his Couch, into the Midst before Jesus. [MARK II. 4.]

MAT. IX.—2. And Jesus seeing their Faith, said unto the Sick of the Palsy, Son,

(d) *When they had pulled it up,* or had removed the Frame, &c.] *ἔκρυψε*, which we render *broken up*, plainly signifies *pulling out* : (Gal. iv. 15.) And no Man in his Senses can suppose, *the Evangelist* meant to say, that they *tore up the Beams* and Rafter of the House upon this Occasion ; and yet this has been made the Foundation of great Objections against this Story. We have a Right to suppose, this *Removal of the Frame* was done *with Care* ; because the Circumstances plainly require such *Care*, and Common Sense would suggest it. *Woolston's* perverse Attack on *this Miracle*, is as plausible, as any thing he has writ against *Christianity* ; but I have endeavoured, in as few Words as possible, to suggest an Answer to the chief of his Objections ; and it may be considered as a Specimen of the Manner, in which I shall proceed in other Cases of the like Nature : For it would be very improper to enter on the Controversy at large here, especially after all the convincing and unanswerable Treatises, which have lately been written in Defence of *the Evangelists* ; among which I apprehend none more valuable, than that called, *The Miracles of Christ vindicated, in four Parts* ; to which I with great Pleasure refer, for a larger Account of this Story, and the others handled by the excellent Author of it.

(e) *They let down the Paralytick—into the Midst.*] What is suggested in the *Paraphrase* is the most probable Account of the Matter, if we suppose *our Lord* to have been in any *covered Room* of the House. But *Dr. Shaw's* Hypothesis, which goes on Principles which were quite unknown to me till I had the Pleasure (since the First Edition of this Work) of reading his excellent *Travels*, seems to me yet more natural. From considering what is now the Form of the Houses in *Barbary*, and the *Levant*, he supposes that *το πρῶτον* signifies the *Court-Yard*, round about which the House was built ; and that *our Lord* was there. He thinks, that, crowded as this *Area* was, the Bearers of the *Paralytick* might get in at the *Gate-Way*, (where perhaps *Christ* could neither be seen nor heard,) and might carry him up *the Stairs*, which commonly go up from thence ; and being got to the *Flat Roof*, might take down inwards a Part of the *Balustrade* or *Parapet-Wall*, and so *let down the Bed* with Cords by the Side of the glazed and perhaps painted *Tiles*, which might beautify the Walls of the House towards *this Court*. Many of his Quotations from the *Antients* do in a very agreeable Manner, at once illustrate this Account, and receive new Light from it. See *Dr. Shaw's Travels*, pag. 373,—380.

Son, be of good Cheer, thy Sins be forgiven thee. [MARK II. 5. LUKE V. 20.]

MARK II. 6. But [behold,] there were certain of the Scribes [LUK. and the Pharisees] sitting there, and reasoning in their Hearts, [they said within themselves, This Man blasphemeth.] [MAT. IX. 3. LUKE V. 21.—]

7 [Who is this] Why doth this Man thus speak Blasphemies? Who can forgive Sins but GOD only? [LUKE V.—21.]

8 And immediately, when Jesus [knowing their Thoughts,] perceived in his Spirit, that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these Things [Wherefore think ye Evil] in your Hearts? [MAT. IX. 4. LUKE V. 22.]

9 Whether is it easier to say to the Sick of the Palsy, Thy

Take Courage, Son (f), for thy Sins are forgiven thee, and in Token of it, I assure thee, thy Distemper shall be removed. SECT. 45.

But behold, such was the Perverseness of some of the Scribes and Pharisees, who were then sitting there, that on his saying to the Man in such an absolute and sovereign Way, Thy Sins are forgiven thee, they took Offence at the Expression; and reasoning in their Hearts upon it, they said within themselves, maliciously reflecting on him, This Man most certainly blasphemeth: Who is this, that pretends to such an Authority? [and] why does this arrogant Man thus allow himself to speak such Blasphemies as these? Such a Speech as this, surely deserves the Name; for who can undertake to forgive Sins, but GOD alone, the awful Majesty of Heaven, who is affronted and dishonoured by committing them?

And immediately, when Jesus, who perfectly well knew the secret Workings of their Thoughts, perceived in his own Mind, that they reasoned thus in themselves, though they did not openly declare their Dissatisfaction and Censure; he said to them, Why do you reason thus in your Hearts, and so maliciously reflect upon me? [and] wherefore do you think [such] Evil Things of what I have now been saying? I shall be at no Loss to vindicate the Reasonableness of it: For which is easier, to say to this Paralytick, Thy Sins

(f) Take Courage, Son.] Few can need to be told, that Son is a Title of Condescension and Tenderness, by which Superiors addressed Inferiors, that were not properly their Children: (Compare Josh. vii. 19. Eccles. xii. 12. and 2 Tim. ii. 1.) as Father was a correspondent Title of Respect. (Compare 2 Kings v. 13. vi. 21. xiii. 14.) Yet it seems probable from the Use of it here, that the Patient was a Young Man, considering that Christ himself was but a little above Thirty; and if it were so, it made the Case the more pitiable. Luke uses the Word Man on the Occasion; and Christ might possibly use both; as the Apostle joins Men and Fathers, Acts vii. 2. and Men and Brethren, or literally, Men, Brethren: Acts i. 16. ii. 29. xv. 7, 13. xxiii. 1. and xxviii. 17.

SECT. 45.
Mark II. 9.

Sins are forgiven thee; or to say to him, Arise, and take up thy Couch, and walk away with it? May it not justly be concluded, that if I have a Power efficaciously to say the one, I may without any Usurpation say the other likewise; and declare the Sin forgiven, when I can thus miraculously re-

10 *move the Punishment of it? But that you may know, the Case I put is not a vain presumptuous Boast, but that the Son of Man here on Earth, tho' appearing in so humble and obscure a Form, has yet a Divine Authority to forgive Men's Sins, (he turns about, and says to the Paralytick,)*

11 *O Man, I say unto thee, Arise immediately, and to shew thou art perfectly healed at once, take up thy Couch on which thou liest, and bearing it on thy Shoulders, go thy Way to thine own House, for at this Instant I will enable thee to do it.*

Luke V. 25. *And immediately he was so strengthened by a secret Power which went along with the Word, that believing the Virtue and Efficacy of it, he rose up before them all; and taking up the Couch on which he lay, tho' before he was utterly weak and helpless, he went forth, vigorous and chearful, to his own House, humbly glorifying and adoring GOD for that extraordinary Cure which he had now received.*

26 *And when the Multitude saw [it,] they were all amazed, and with united Acclamations glorified GOD, who had given such mighty and beneficent Power to Men, and raised up so eminent a Prophet to his People. And they were filled with such a reverential Kind of Fear and Dread, under the Apprehension of so marvellous a Proof of the Divine Presence among them, that they could not forbear saying one to another, We have indeed seen most extraordinary strange Things to Day; and*

Thy Sins are forgiven thee: or to say, Arise, and take up thy Bed, and walk? [MAT. IX. 5. LUKE V. 23.]

10 But that ye may know, that the Son of Man hath Power on Earth to forgive Sins, (he saith to the Sick of the Palsy,) [MAT. IX. 6.—LUKE V. 24.—]

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy Bed, and go thy Way into thine House. [MAT. IX.—6. LUKE V.—24.]

LUKE V. 25. And immediately he rose up before them [all,] and took up [the Bed] whereon he lay, and departed to his own House, glorifying GOD. [MARK II. 12.—MAT. IX. 7.]

26 And [MAT. when the Multitude saw it,] they were all amazed; and they glorified GOD, [MAT. which had given such Power unto Men,] and were filled with Fear, saying, We have seen strange Things To-day; [We



S^T. MATTHEW.

[We never saw it on this Fashion.] [MARK II.—12. MAT. IX. 8.]

and after all the Wonders we have known, SECT. 45. *We never before saw any Thing like it, nor* Luke V. 26. *have we heard of any such Event as this in the Days of our Fathers.*

MARK II. 13. And he went forth again by the Sea-side, and all the Multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

And when the Evening advanced, and the Day grew cooler, *he went forth again by the Sea-shore; and all the Multitude, who had before attended in, or about the House, and many more who could not get near enough to see and hear what passed there, resorted to him; and he cheerfully went on with his Work, and taught them here, after all the former Labours of the Day.*

MATTH. IX. 9. And [LUK. after these Things,] as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a Man [I. UK. a Publican,] named Matthew, [or Levi, the Son of Alphaeus,] sitting at the Receipt of Custom; and he said unto him, Follow me. And he arose, [LUK. and left all,] and followed him. [MARK II. 14. LUKE V. 27, 28.]

And after these Things, as Jesus passed out Mat. IX. 9. from thence, (that is, from the House in which the Paralytick had been cured,) and was going down to the Sea-side, *he saw a Man, (who was indeed a Publican (g), that collected the Customs there,) whose Name was Matthew, [or] as he was otherwise called Levi, the Son of Alphaeus, the Brother of James; (compare Mark iii. 18. Luke vi. 15. Acts i. 13.) and he was then sitting at the Custom-house (b): And calling him to be one of his Disciples, he said unto him, Follow me. And immediately consigning his Books and Cash to some careful Hand, he arose, and left all the Care and Profits of his Employment, and followed him, with most grateful Acknowledgments of his Condescension, in admitting a Person of his Station of Life, into the Number of his stated Attendants.*

(g) *A Publican.*] This was a very odious Name among the Jews, and their Employment was attended with so much Corruption and Temptation, that there were few among them that were Honest Men; but they were generally Persons of so infamous and vile a Character, that *Publicans* and *Sinners* are often joined together as *Synonymous Terms.* (Mat. ix. 11. xi. 19. and elsewhere.) See the *Paraphrase* on Luke iii. 12. pag. 105.

(b) *At the Custom-house.*] So *taberna* properly signifies. Some have rendered it *Toll-booth*, and I should have followed them, had I not apprehended that the Word might have suggested some *modern Idea*, for which there is in the *Original* no Foundation.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

SECT. 45. **I**T is a Pleasure to reflect upon it, that *Christ* was attended by such vast Numbers of People, and that they who were *Teachers* of others, should themselves sit down to hear him. But it is melancholy to reflect on the perverse Purposes, with which many of them came; and how few did, on the whole, receive his Word into their Hearts, so as to bring forth Fruit unto Perfection. Curiosity led some, and Interest others; and some came to find Occasion of *hating him*, whose whole Business in Life was to do Good. Yet these low, these vile Purposes did not prevent his Preaching, and working Miracles before them, and being ready to exert his Power for their Benefit. Thus courageous and resolute let us be, in the Discharge of our Duty; thus solicitous, that we may not be overcome of Evil, but may (which, on the whole, is always in some Degree practicable,) overcome Evil with Good. (*Rom. xii. 21.*)

How industrious were the Attendants and Friends of this poor Paralytick, to obtain a Cure for him! What Contrivance, what Labour did they use, to find a proper Opportunity to bring him in, and lay him before *Jesus*! Ought we not to be as tender and zealous, in all the Offices of the truest Friendship; and to imitate, so far as suits the Difference of Circumstances, their importunate Application, and their lively Faith?

Theirs had its Praise, and its Reward. Our Lord said to this Dis-tempered Person, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee.* He pardoned all his Iniquities, while he healed all his Diseases. (*Psal. ciii. 3.*) This was a Blessing, that would render the Cure yet incomparably more valuable; and this reviving Declaration had the Son of GOD a Power

to add, and to pronounce. The Scribes and Pharisees, ignorant and prejudiced as they were, considered such a Declaration, as Blasphemy. Their Principle indeed was right, that GOD alone has Power to forgive Sins, and it is impious for Men to claim it; but their Application

was evidently wrong. The miraculous Effect plainly shewed the Divine Authority of the Blessed *Jesus*. And he has still the Key of David; he openeth, and no Man shutteth; and shutteth, and no Man openeth. (*Rev. iii. 7.*) Almighty Saviour, may we each of us receive from thee Forgiveness of our Sins; and we will not complain, tho' our Sicknesses should not immediately be removed! Let us glorify

GOD, who has given this Power to his Son; and thankfully acknowledge, that we are ourselves, in many Respects, the Monuments both of his pardoning, and healing Mercy.

To

To conclude ; let us view with humble Wonder and Pleasure, this **SECT. 45.** farther Instance of the Condescension and Grace of the Redeemer, **Mat. ix. 9.** in the Call of Matthew : His Condescension, in calling to so near an Attendance, and so intimate a Friendship, a Man who was a *Publican*, infamous as that Employment was ; and his Grace, which could immediately inspire him with so firm a Resolution of *quitting all* the Profits of it, that he might reduce himself to Circumstances of Life, as precarious as those of his Divine Master. Many, no doubt, censured him as a rash *Enthusiast*, or a *Lunatick*, rather than a *Sober Convert*, but he is even now reaping the abundant *Reward* ; his Loss is Gain, and his Contempt Glory.

S E C T. XLVI.

CHRIST goes up to a Feast at Jerusalem, (generally supposed to be his second Passover,) and there cures a poor Impotent Man at the Pool of Bethesda. John V. 1, — 16.

JOHN V. I.

AFTER this, there was a Feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

JOHN V. I.

AFTER this, there was a great Feast of **SECT. 46.** the Jews, even the Feast of the Passover (a) ; and Jesus according to his Custom **John V. 1.** went up to Jerusalem, both that he might pay a religious Regard to the Ceremonial Law, and that he might take an Opportunity of teaching considerable Numbers of People, assem-

(a) *A Feast of the Jews, even the Feast of the Passover.*] It is certain from *Luke vi. 1.* (*Note (b), Sect. 49.*) that a *Passover* happened soon after the Facts recorded in the preceding *Section* ; and most *Criticks* (after the Example of *Irenæus, lib. ii. cap. 39.*) conclude that *this* was it. And indeed, as the *Passover* was the greatest of all their *Feasts*, it is sometimes denoted by the Word *ætern*, even without the *Article*. (See *Mark xv. 6.* and *Luke xxiii. 17.*) — *This Chapter* may, at least, be as well introduced here, as any where else ; and one has little Temptation to recede from *this Order*, in Favour of *Mr. Manne's* singular Hypothesis ; who supposes, that the *Feast* here spoken of was the *Feast of Pentecost*, and that *this whole Chapter* is transposed, and should come in at the End of the *Sixth*. How little this is capable of Defence, we shall endeavour to shew in the *Notes* on *John vi. 1,* and *4.* See *Sect. 78.* *Note (b),* and *(c).*

SECT. 46. assembled from distant Parts and Countries,
 where he did not appear in Person.

John V. 2. Now it is well known, that *there is at Jerusalem, near the Sheep-[Market] (b), a Pool, or great Reservoir of Water (c), which is called in the Hebrew Language, Bethesda, or the House of Mercy; and was indeed, as the Name intimates, a Kind of Hospital, having five Porticos or Cloysters (d) built round it, to accommodate and shelter those who might resort to it for Pleasure, Convenience, or Cure: For the Water was highly esteemed, on Account of some Medicinal Virtues which attended it, and the Benefit many had received by bathing in it; and its Reputation was greatly advanced, since those miraculous Circumstances had been observed, which we shall presently mention.*

3 *In these Cloysters were laid a great Number of sick and diseased Persons, such as were either Blind, or Lame, or had any Part of their Body Withered; who either came, or were brought thither, in Expectation of a Cure, and lay there waiting for the moving*

4 *of the Water.* For GOD, to add the greater Lustre to his Son's Miracles, as well as to shew that his antient People were not entirely forgotten by him (e), had been pleased

2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the Sheep-Market a Pool, which is called in the Hebrew Tongue, Bethesda, having five Porches.

3 In these lay a great Multitude of impotent Folk, of Blind, Halt, Withered, waiting for the Moving of the Water.

4 For an Angel went down

(b) *Near the Sheep-Market.] I chuse to retain the common Translation of Sheep-Market, rather than Gate, because, if the Report of the best Travellers is to be credited, the Place shewn for the Pool of Bethesda is much nearer the Temple, than the Sheep-Gate could be. (Compare Neh. iii. 1. and xii. 39.)*

(c) *A Pool, or great Reservoir of Water.] The Etymology of the Word $\kappa\omicron\lambda\upsilon\mu\epsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$ intimates, it was a Place to swim in; so that it seems to me to have been a Kind of Bath, like those near Jericho, where Aristobulus was drowned by Herod's Order, as he was swimming. (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xv. cap. 3. §. 3.) I do not find any satisfactory Proof, (tho' many have asserted it,) that the Sheep to be sacrificed were washed here, or that the Blood of the Sacrifices ran into it: Yet this is the Foundation of that strange Conjecture of Dr. Hammond, which we shall presently mention.*

(d) *Having five Porticos or Cloysters.] It is a very probable Thought of Dr. Lightfoot, (in his Harmony in loc.) that the Basin itself might be in the Form of a Pentagon, and that these Cloysters might correspond to its Five Sides.*

(e) *To add the greater Lustre to his Son's Miracles, &c.] These Reasons are suggested, and well illustrated, in Mr. Calvin's judicious Notes on this Story.*

(f) *At*

down at a certain Season into the Pool, and troubled the Water: Whosoever then first

ed of late to perform some supernatural Cures at this Place. *Far at a certain Season (f)*, which returned at some particular Periods, an unusual Motion was discovered in the Water, and from the marvellous Effects of it, it was rightly concluded, that at that Time *an Angel descended into the Pool, and stirred the Water (g)*, by which a healing

SECT. 46.
John V. 4.

(f) *At a certain Season.*] Tho' *κατα καιρον* might be sometimes rendered, at that Time, (as Rom. v. 6.) and some have therefore thought the *Passover*, or the *Feast* that was mentioned just before, to be the *Season* when the *Angel came and stirred the Water*: Yet as the Words will very justly bear the Sense, that has been given them in our *Translation*, there is no Reason why we should suppose it, to have only been an *Annual Miracle*, which would but needlessly increase the Difficulty. Indeed the *Expectation* of the People intimates, it was at *some particular Periods*, tho' probably they were not fixed in such a Way, as that they certainly could tell the *stated Times* of their Return; at least we know not what they were, nor can it be determined from this *Indefinite Expression*. And if it be thus taken to refer, to a *certain Hour of the Day*, or *Day of the Week*, (perhaps the *Sabbath*, which was the Day that they were now expecting it,) *κατα καιρον* will signify, at every such Time, as *κατ' εταυρον* every Year, Heb. x. 1. and *καθ' ημεραν*, every Day, Acts ii. 46, 47.

(g) *An Angel descended into the Pool, and stirred the Water.*] The late English Version renders it a *Messenger*, agreeable to the strange Hypothesis of Dr. Hammond; who thinks, that this Water had contracted a natural Virtue, by washing the Carcases, and Entrails of the Sacrifices in this Pool, and that on stirring it up, that Virtue exerted itself the more; so that a proper Officer was appointed for that Purpose: A Thought so unphilosophical, as well as ungrounded in History and Antiquity, that one would wonder how so learned a Man could fall upon it.—Mr. Fleming, to avoid the apparent Difficulties of the literal Interpretation, concludes, that the latter Part of the third, and the whole fourth Verse, is a spurious Addition of some ignorant Monk, in the Eighth or Ninth Century; because that Part is wanting in Beza's Manuscript, and is written by a later Hand in the Margin of that in the French King's Library, which Lamy in his Harmony so much extols. But I cannot acquiesce in this Omission, since the Passage in Question is found in all the other most celebrated Manuscripts, as also in the Syriac Version, and all the rest in the Polyglott Bible: And besides this, the seventh Verse (which none dispute,) implies, that there was a miraculous Virtue in the Water after it was troubled, which extended only to the first that went in, and cured his Disease, whatever it were: So that the chief Difficulties would still remain, were Mr. Fleming's Criticism to be allowed. (See his *Christology*, vol. i. pag. 13,—15.)—I cannot here discuss the Matter at large, but beg Leave in a few Words to hint at what seems to me the easiest Solution, of this greatest of Difficulties in the History of the Evangelists, in which of all others the learned Answerers of Mr. Wolfen have generally given me the least Satisfaction, and which few Commentators enter into: And I am pleased to find, long since I wrote this Note, that the ingenious Dr. Pearce agrees with me in the most material Circumstances of this Hypothesis. (See his excellent *Vindication of Christ's Miracles*, pag. 68, & seq.)—I imagine this Pool might have been remarkable for some Mineral Virtue attending the Water; which is the more probable, as Jerom tells us, it was of a very high Colour: This, together with its being so very near the Temple, where a Bath was so much needed for religious Purposes,

SECT. 46. ing Virtue was communicated to it; and *the* first after the Troubling of
 John V. 4. *first Person therefore that went in, after the* the Water stepped in, was
Stirring of the Water, was instantly cured (b), made whole of whatsoever
whatever the Distemper was that he before Disease he had.
was seized with.

5 And it now happened, that a certain Man was lying there, who had been thirty-eight Years disabled by an Illness, which had seized his Nerves, and taken away the Use

5 And a certain Man was there, which had an Infirmitie thirty and eight Years.

6 of all his Limbs. *Jesus then seeing him, as he lay by the Side of the Pool, and knowing that he had been now a long Time [in this melancholy Condition,] says to him, with a View to stir up his Attention to himself, and*

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long Time in that Case, he saith unto him,

to

may account for the building such stately *Cloysters* round it, *three* of which remain to this Day. (See *Maundrell's Travels*, pag. 108.) Some Time before this *Passover*, an extraordinary *Commotion* was probably observed in the Water; and Providence so ordered it, that the next Person who accidentally bathed here, being under some great Disorder, found an immediate and unexpected *Cure*: The like *Phenomenon* in some other desperate Case, was probably observed on a *second Commotion*: And these *Commotions* and *Cures* might happen *periodically*, perhaps *every Sabbath*, (for that it was yearly none can prove,) for some Weeks or Months. This the *Jews* would naturally ascribe to some *Angelick Power*, as they did afterwards the *Voice from Heaven*, (*John* xii. 29.) though no *Angel* appeared. And they, and *St. John*, had Reason to do it, as it was the *Scripture Scheme*, that these benevolent *Spirits* had been, and frequently are, the invisible Instruments of Good to the Children of Men. (See *Psal.* xxxiv. 7. xci. 11. *Dan.* iii. 28. and vi. 22.) On their making so ungrateful a Return to *Christ* for this *Miracle*, and those wrought at the former *Passover*, and in the intermediate Space, this *Celestial Visitant* probably from this Time returned no more: And therefore it may be observed, that though the *Evangelist* speaks of the *Pool*, as still at *Jerusalem*, when he wrote, yet he mentions the *Descent of the Angel*, as a Thing which *had been*, but not as still continuing. (Compare *ver.* 2. and 4.)—This may account for the surprising Silence of *Josephus*, in a Story which made so much for the Honour of his Nation. He was himself not born when it happened; and tho' he might have heard the Report of it, he would perhaps (as is the modern Way,) oppose *Speculation* and *Hypothesis* to *Fact*, and, like *Dr. Wellwood* in a much plainer Case, (see his *Letter* relating to *Maillard's Cure*,) have Recourse to some indigested and unmeaning Harangues on the unknown Force of *Imagination*: Or if he secretly suspected it to be true, his dread of the *Marvellous*, and Fear of disgusting his *Pagan* Readers with it, might as well lead him to suppress this, as to disguise the *Passage through the Red Sea*, and the *Divine Voice from Mount Sinai*, in so mean and foolish a Manner, as it is known he does. And the Relation in which this *Fact* stood to the History of *Jesus*, would make him peculiarly cautious in touching upon it, as it would have been so difficult to handle it at once with Decency and Safety.

(b) *The first that went in—was cured.*] This may be well considered as a Circumstance wisely ordered by Providence, to illustrate the superior Power and Goodness of the Son of GOD, who, not at distant Periods of Time, but every Day, not only performed a single Cure, but healed whole Multitudes that resorted to him.

6

(i) *Even*



Jesus saith unto him Arise take up thy bed and Walk.

him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The Impotent Man answered him, Sir, I have no Man, when the Water is troubled, to put me into the Pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy Bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the Man was made whole, and took up his Bed, and walked:—

—And on the same Day was the Sabbath.

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath-Day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy Bed.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same

to engage him to reflect on his own helpless State, and on the Greatness of the Mercy he designed him, *Dost thou desire to be cured of thine Infirmary?* **SECT. 46.** *The poor Disabled* 7

Man answered him, Sir, I cannot but earnestly desire it, but am now ready to despair of being so happy; for I am Poor, as well as Lame; and I have no Man to wait on me, and put me into the Pool, when the Water is stirred; and my own Motions are so slow, that while I am coming towards it, another descends before me, and enjoys the Benefit of the Miracle.

Upon this *Jesus says to him, with an Air of Divine Majesty and Authority, Arise, take up thy Couch on thy Shoulders, and walk away with it, to shew how perfectly thou art recovered.* *And such Virtue attended these Words, that the Man immediately became well; and leaping up in a Transport of Wonder and Joy, he took up his Couch, and walked away with it to his own House, through some of the most publick Parts of the City.* 8 9

Now on that Day, that this miraculous Cure was wrought, it was the Sabbath: Yet Christ commanded him, even on that Day, to carry his Couch, both to shew his own Authority, and to exercise the Faith and Obedience of his Patient. *The Jews therefore, who saw him pass by in this Manner, said to him that was cured, It is the Sabbath-Day; and therefore it is not lawful for thee, thus to carry a Couch, or to bear any Burthen whatsoever: (Compare Jer. xvii. 21, 22. and Neh. xiii. 15,—19.) How is it then, that thou art so presumptuous as to profane this holy Day?* *But he answered them, by giving an Account of his Cure, and only added, He that miraculously healed and made me well, and restored me with a Word* 10 11

- SECT. 46. a Word to this Health and Strength, *even* *he* (*i*) *said to me, Take up thy Couch, and walk* *away with it; and I could not question his Authority to dispense with such a Ceremonial* *Precept.* And upon this, dropping all Mention of the Cure, and only fixing on what seemed liable to Exception (*k*), *they asked him then, Who is the Man that said unto thee, on this sacred Day, Take up thy Couch, and walk away with it?* *Now he that was healed, did not at that Time know who it was that had cured him; for as there was a Croud of People in the Place, Jesus had modestly slipped away* (*l*) among them, as soon as he had spoke the healing Word.
- 12 *Then asked they him, What Man is that which said unto thee. Take up thy Bed, and walk?*
- 13 *And he that was healed, wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a Multitude being in that Place.*
- 14 *Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the Court of the Temple, and said unto him, Behold, by the singular Mercy of GOD, thou art now recovered to Health and Vigour; but take heed that thou *sin no more, lest something yet worse befall thee*; for thou knowest in thine own Conscience, that the Iniquities of thy Youth brought this Calamity upon thee (*m*), and the Deliverance thou hast now received,*
- 14 *Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the Temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse Thing come unto thee.*

(*i*) *Even he.*] There seems to be this *Emphasis* in the Word *αὐτός*, in this Connection after *οὐκ ἔφη*. It is very far from being an *Expletive*, though few *Versions* take any Notice of it.

(*k*) Only fixing on what seemed liable to Exception.] They do not ask, *Who is it that has made thee well?* but, *Who is it, that bade thee to take up thy Couch upon the Sabbath-Day?* though he had just told them, it was the *Author* of his *Cure*, that gave him that *Command*: For all that they proposed was, not to hear of any Good that had been done, to engage their *Admiration* and *Applause*, but to lay hold of some Occasion to find Fault, to gratify the *Pride* and *Malice* of a censorious Temper.— I am obliged to *Grotius* for this delicate Remark, which well illustrates their *Partiality* and *Malignity*.

(*l*) *Modestly slipped away.*] The Word *ἔκρυψε* (as *Casaubon* observes in his learned *Note* on the Place,) is an elegant *Metaphor* borrowed from *Swimming*: And we may thus observe, how well it expresses the easy unobserved Manner, in which he, as it were, *glided* through them, while, like a Stream of Water, they opened before him, and immediately closed again, leaving no Trace of the Way he had taken.

(*m*) The Iniquities of thy Youth brought this Calamity upon thee.] *Our Lord* seems, not merely to have referred to a general Notion, that *Diseases* were the *Punishments of Sin*, but to glance at some Irregularities of the Man's *younger Years*, which, though

received, will be a dreadful Aggravation of SECT. 46.
thy future Guilt.

15 The Man departed, and told the Jews, that it was Jesus which had made him whole.

The Man then informed himself of those John V. 15. that stood by, who it was that spoke to him, and knowing him to be the Person to whom he was obliged for his Cure, he *went away* from the Temple, and told the Jews who had before examined him, that it was Jesus of Nazareth who had restored him to Health; expecting, no Doubt, by this Discovery, to have procured him that Honour and Respect, which was due to so much Power and Goodness.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these Things on the Sabbath-Day.

And yet the Jews were so far from paying him any just Acknowledgments, that, on the contrary, they prosecuted Jesus on this Account, and endeavoured to put him to Death, as an impious Transgressor of the Law, because he had done these Things on the Sabbath-Day: And in pursuance of that unrighteous and barbarous Purpose, they brought an Accusation against him before the Sanhedrim (n), which occasioned the large and excellent Apology, related in the Two following Sections.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WHAT Reason have we humbly to adore that *Almighty Being*, who kills and makes alive, who wounds and heals! (Deut. xxxii. 39.) If the Jews had Cause of Thankfulness for this miraculous Interposition, surely those Virtues which God has in a John v. 4. natural Way bestowed on Medicines, and that Sagacity which he has given to Men for the Discovery of those Virtues, are Matter of much greater Acknowledgment, as the Blessing is so much more extensive and lasting.

But

though they were committed before *Christ* was born, (for we are told, *ver. 5.* that this *Disabled Man* had laboured under his Disorder *thirty-eight Years*;) yet were perfectly known to him.

(n) Before the Sanhedrim.] See the Reason for this Conjecture, in the next Section, *ver. 17, Note (a)*, compared with *ver 33.*

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SECT. 46. But how much greater still are our Obligations to him, for the Blessings of his Gospel, and the Ordinances of his Worship, those Waters of Life, by which our spiritual Maladies are healed, and Vigour restored to our enfeebled Souls! Let us humbly attend them; yet during that Attendance, let us look beyond them: For surely the Efficacy of this Pool of Bethesda did not more depend upon the Descent of the Angel, than the Efficacy of the noblest Ordinances depends on that Blessed Spirit, which operates in, and by them.

Ver. 3. Multitudes were continually attending at this Pool: And why then is the House of GOD forsaken? where not one alone, but many, at the same Moment, may receive Spiritual Sight and Strength, yea and Life from the Dead? Yet, alas, under the Diseases of the Soul, how few desire to be made whole! Blessed Jesus! if thou hast awakened that Desire in us, we would adore thee for it, as a Token for Good; and would lift up our believing Eyes to thee, in humble Expectation that thou wilt graciously fulfil it.

Ver. 14. The Man, who was lately languishing on his Couch, we quickly after find in the Temple: And where should they be found, who have been raised up from Beds of Weakness, and brought out from Chambers of Confinement, but in the Sanctuary, rendering their Praises to the GOD of their Mercies? How reasonable is the Caution, which our Lord gave him there? Sin no more, lest a worse Thing come unto thee. May we see Sin, as the Root of all our Afflictions; and by the Bitterness of them, may Sin be imbittered to us, and our Hearts fortified against relapsing into it, especially when we have been chastised, and restored again!

Ver. 15. One would have expected, that when this grateful Creature published the Name of his Benefactor, Crouds should have thronged about Jesus, to have heard the Words of his Mouth, and to have received the Blessings of his Gospel; and that the whole Nation should have gloried in the Presence of such a Person, as far more valuable, than the Descent of a Heavenly Spirit at some particular Seasons for the Cure of their Diseases, or even the Abode of an incarnate Angel among them, would have been. But instead of this, behold the Malignity of our fallen Nature, and the Force of stubborn Prejudice! They surround him with an hostile Intent; they even conspire against his beneficial Life; and for an imagined Transgression in a Point of Ceremony, would have put out this Light in Israel. Let us not wonder then, if our Good be evil spoken of: (Rom. xiv. 16.) Let us not wonder, if even Candour, Benevolence, and Usefulness do not wholly disarm the Enmity of some; especially of those, who have been taught to prefer Sacrifice to Mercy, and who, disrelishing

ing the genuine Contents of the Gospel, naturally seek Occasion SECT. 46.
to slander and persecute the Professors, and especially the De-
fenders of it. }

S E C T. XLVII.

CHRIST vindicates the Miracle, which he had wrought at the Pool on the Sabbath-Day, and solemnly declares the Dignity of his Person and Office. John V. 17,—30.

JOHN. V. 17.

BUT Jesus answered them, My Father worketh

JOHN V. 17.

THE Miracle, which he had just performed, was a plain Evidence of his Divine Authority and Power: *But Jesus being questioned by the Jews, and, as it seems, examined before their most solemn Council (a), for the Cure he had wrought on the Sabbath-Day; he took the Opportunity of declaring at large, the Dignity of his Person, the Evidence of his Mission, and the absolute Necessity of Faith in him to their eternal Salvation (b); while in Reply to the malicious Charge which they brought against him, he answered them as follows: My Heavenly Father in the Administration of his Providential Kingdom worketh continually, from the Beginning of the World even till now; and upon Sabbath-Days, as well as others, he exerts that unremitting and unwearied* SECT. 47.
John V. 17.

(a) Before their most solemn Council.] I here follow *Mr. Fleming's* Opinion (in *his Christology, vol. ii. pag. 296.*) which seems to be confirmed by *ver. 33.* and there appears a great deal of additional Propriety and Beauty in the Discourse, when it is considered in this View.

(b) He took the Opportunity of declaring at large, the Dignity of his Person, &c.] *Christ* had hinted at several of these Things, in his *Conference with Nicodemus, (John iii. 13,—21. Sect. 26.)* who had probably reported them to his Brethren. But he *here* expatiates more largely on some of them; and no doubt, if *Nicodemus*, as a Member of the Council, was now present, he heard him with great Pleasure and Improvement.

SECT. 47. wearied Energy, which is the Life of the Creation: *And in like Manner I also work,* in Obedience to the Intimations of his Will, and in Subserviency to his Glory. And in this very ACTION I have given you so visible a Proof that I am directed and assisted by him, that you ought humbly to acquiesce in it; without presuming to cavil at what is so evidently Divine, or to limit the Majesty of Heaven by those Rules, which he has prescribed to his Creatures.

worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 But upon hearing this suggested by our Lord in Vindication of himself, they were so far from yielding to the Argument, that *for this very Reason* the Resentment of his Adversaries was increased; and being *therefore* more incensed against him than before, the Rulers of the Jews endeavoured the more eagerly to put him to Death, because (as they imagined,) he had not only violated the Sabbath, but had now also gone so far as even to have called GOD his own Father (c); in so peculiar and appropriating a Sense, as in Effect to make himself equal with GOD; while he thus argued his own Right to work on the Sabbath-Day, from GOD's working upon it; though this was evidently no Argument with Respect to Mankind in general, nor had ever been pleaded, by the greatest of the Prophets, in such a View.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also, that GOD was his Father, making himself equal with GOD.

19 *Jesus therefore,* to explain the Matter more fully to them, and to leave them yet more inexcusable in their malicious Opposition to him, answered and said unto them, *Verily, verily, I say unto you,* and do most faithfully and solemnly declare, that *the Son* of

19 Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son.

(c) Called GOD his own Father.] This is the plain and literal Sense of the Original, *καλεσας ιδιον*. The whole Nation of the Jews thought GOD their Father; (John viii. 41.) and they could not therefore have accounted it Blasphemy, to have used the Phrase, had they not interpreted it in so high and appropriating a Sense.

(d) The

Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what Things soever he doth, these also doth the Son likewise.

of GOD, great and glorious as he is, now acts in an avowed Subjection to the Authority of the Father, and can do nothing of himself (d), in Pursuance of any distinct Schemes, or separate Interest of his own, unless he see the Father doing it (e), or perceive him intimating it as his Pleasure that it should be done: For what soever are the Things that he (that is, the Father) doth, even these likewise doth the Son in a most intimate Conjunction with him, at all Times cheerfully complying with his Purposes, and esteeming it his Honour always to be employed in his Service.

SECT. 47.
John V. 19.

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all Things that himself doth: and

For the Father loveth the Son, and that with so intire an Affection, that he sheweth him all Things that he himself doth (f), letting him into the Secret of his Councils, and teach-

20

(d) *The Son can do nothing of himself.*] I cannot forbear mentioning a remarkable Note of the learned *Elfner*, (*Observ. vol. i. pag. 307, & seq.*) in which he shews by a great Variety of Instances, that the later *Heathen Writers* seem to have ascribed to *Minerva*, as the Daughter of *Jupiter*, many Things which our *Sacred Scriptures* speak of *Christ*, as the Son of GOD.

(e) *Unless he see the Father doing it.*] Whether our *Lord* here means in the general, unless he see it to be correspondent to the Father's Schemes; or whether he refers to any peculiar *Divine Impulse*, which he sometimes felt upon his Mind, leading him to exert his miraculous Power in this or that Instance; I cannot certainly determine; but rather incline to the latter, which might also be comprehended in *ver. 17.* — The Particle $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$, which is exactly the same in Signification with $\epsilon\gamma\omega$, is here also used in a less proper Sense. See the Note on *John xvii. 12. Sect. 179.* and compare *John viii. 38. Sect. 104.*

(f) *Sheweth him all Things that he himself doth.*] The Editors of the *Prussian Testament* say, that the Word $\delta\alpha\iota\delta\omega\sigma\iota$, which we have rendered *sheweth*, signifies here to teach, or form to any thing, as a *Master forms his Scholar* to do what he himself doth, and teaches him the Secrets of his Art or Profession: But I cannot acquiesce in this Sense, as expressing the whole Meaning of the Phrase. It rather refers to the ample and comprehensive Knowledge, which the Son has, of the whole Plan of the Father's Councils, in all their mutual Relations and Dependances; whereas the *Prophets*, and the *Apostles* too, had, in Comparison of this, but very limited and contracted Views. Compare *Isa. xl. 10.* where it is said (as we have no Room to doubt) of *Christ*, and probably in this Sense, — *his Work is before him.* — *Dr. Whitby* refers $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$ to the Son, and understands it as if it had been said, *Whatever the Son doth, is by the Direction of the Father*; but I think the Genius of the *Greek Language* would not in that Sense have allowed the Repetition of $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$; but it would rather have been said, $\omega\sigma\tau\alpha\ \alpha\ \omega\sigma\tau\iota\ \delta\alpha\iota\delta\omega\sigma\iota\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$: Not to insist upon it, that the Sense, in which I have explained it, is much nobler, and not so nearly the same with what *Christ* had said in the preceding Verse.

(g) This

SECT. 47. teaching him in the most wonderful and divine Manner, to act in Prosecution of them :
 John V. 20.

20. *And he will shew, or point out to him, far greater Works, than these which he has hitherto performed; which shall hereafter be accomplished by him, that you may all be filled with Wonder, tho' you will not be open*

21 to Conviction. You have now seen the Cure of one, who had been long disabled by a Disease, but I have not yet raised any from the Dead: Yet you shall quickly see, that it is not for Want of Power; *for as the Father, whenever he pleases, raises up and animates the Dead, so also you shall have sufficient Evidence, that the Son animates whom he will.*

22 Nor is it to be wondered at, that he should have so great a Power lodged in him; *for the Father now in his own Person judges no Man, but has given the Administration of all Judgment to the Son, before whom all Men are at last to appear, and by whom they are to be assigned to their final and*

23 eternal State. And this important Power GOD has committed to me (g), *that notwithstanding the humble Form in which I now appear, all may be engaged to honour the Son, even as they honour the Father himself; yielding an unreserved Homage and Obedience to him, as what is necessary to*
 approve

and he will shew him greater Works than these, that ye may marvel :

21 For as the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

22 For the Father judgeth no Man; but hath committed all Judgment unto the Son;

23 That all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honour-

(g) This important Power GOD has committed to me.] Tho' our Lord here speaks of himself in the *third Person*, yet afterwards in *ver. 30, & seq.* he speaks in the *first*; and common Sense would teach all that heard him, that by *the Son* he here meant *himself*. Now I appeal to any unprejudiced Person to judge, whether our Lord's making such a Declaration as *this*, before the *Jewish Rulers*, and probably in *full Council*, was not far more liable to Exception, than merely his calling the Temple *his Father's House* (*John ii. 16.*) at his *first Passover*; in the same Manner as he long before had done, in calling GOD *his Father*, even when he was but *twelve Years old.* (*Luke ii. 49.*) So little is there in *Mr. Manne's* Argument from that Text. (See *Note (c)* on *John ii. 16. pag. 151.*)—And it is also to be remembered, that according to *Mr. Manne's Scheme of the Harmony*, he makes *this* to have happened about *ten Months before Christ's Death*, and long before many of those Charges to his Disciples, *not to make him known*, from whence this Gentleman argues, that the fore-cited Words in *John ii. 16.* could not be spoken till his *last Passover*.

(b) Renew

and all were to honour him, as they honour the Father.

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honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, which hath sent him.

approve their Duty and Fidelity to GOD: SECT. 47. For *he that* in such a Circumstance, and on such a Discovery, *honoureth not the Son*, as worthy of the highest Veneration, *honoureth not the Father that sent him*; but affronting him in the Person of so dear and so great an Embassador, must expect to be treated as an Enemy and a Rebel. John V. 23.

24 Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation; but is passed from Death unto Life.

This is a Truth of the utmost Consequence to your final Happiness, and therefore I insist the more largely upon it: See then that none of you presume to pass it slightly over, for *verily, verily I say unto you*, and solemnly declare it in the Presence of you all, *He that beareth my Word* with an attentive Regard, *and truly believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting Life*: He is already intitled to it, yea, it is already begun in his Soul; *and he shall shortly possess it in its full Perfection, and shall not come into Condemnation* for any former Offences; *but is passed from that State of Death* in which Men naturally are, *to a State of Life, Security, and Felicity.* Think not this an

25 Verily, verily I say unto you, The Hour is coming, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of GOD; and they that hear shall live:

incredible Assertion; for *verily, verily I say unto you*, and in the strongest Terms renew the important Declaration (*b*), that *the Season cometh, and is now just at Hand, when the Dead shall bear the Voice of the Son of GOD, and they that bear [it] shall immediately live*; for within these few Months there shall be some dead Bodies raised to Life by the Word of his Power, (see Mark v. 41. Luke vii. 14. John xi. 43. and compare Mat. xxvii. 52, 53.) and many Souls that are dead in Sin, shall by his Grace be quickened and made

(*b*) Renew the important Declaration.] These *Repetitions* of this solemn *Affirmation* are by no means vain, considering the vast Importance of the Truth, and how incredible it would appear, that he who stood before them in so humble a Form, was in Reality the *Lord of Life*, and the universal *Judge*. See Note (*g*) on *John i. 51.* pag. 140.

(*i*) Some

SECT. 47. made spiritually alive (i). *For as the*
 John V. 26. *Father has originally and essentially Life in*
 himself, so he has also given to the Son, that
 he should, for these Purposes of glorious and
 divine Operation, have a Principle of Life
 in himself to be communicated unto whom
 27 he will: (See I Cor. xv. 45.) *And he has*
 given him Authority, not only to quicken
 Men now, but also to execute final Judgment,
 because he is the Son of Man; and as he has
 voluntarily humbled himself to so lowly a
 Form, (see Phil. ii. 5,—11.) GOD will ac-
 complish to him all those glorious Predic-
 tions, which represent him as possessed of
 universal and perpetual Dominion, and com-
 ing in the Clouds of Heaven in that Day,
 when the Judgment is set, and the Books
 are opened. (See Dan. vii. 9,—14. Phil. ii.
 8, 9. and Heb. xii. 2.)

28 And therefore, wonder not at this, which
 I have now declared concerning the Resur-
 rection of a few, shortly to be expected;
 for the Hour is coming, in which all that are
 dead and buried now, and all that shall then
 be lying in the Graves, tho' mouldered
 away and consumed there, shall hear his
 29 Voice, And shall come forth out of the Dust;
 they that have done Good, to the Resurrection
 of eternal Life, and they that have done E-
 vil, to the Resurrection of final Damnation.
 See to it therefore, that you shew a due Re-
 gard to him, before whom you yourselves
 are to stand; and do not rashly condemn a
 Person,

26 For as the Father hath
 Life in himself, so hath he
 given to the Son to have Life
 in himself;

27 And hath given him
 Authority to execute Judg-
 ment also, because he is the
 Son of Man.

28 Marvel not at this;
 for the Hour is coming, in
 the which all that are in the
 Graves shall hear his Voice,

29 And shall come forth,
 they that have done Good,
 unto the Resurrection of
 Life, and they that have
 done Evil, unto the Refur-
 rection of Damnation.

(i) Some dead Bodies raised to Life, and many Souls made spiritually alive.] I ex-
 press it thus ambiguously, because I am something doubtful, whether it may not refer
 to the Conversion of Sinners by Christ's Ministry, rather than the Resurrection of a few
 by his miraculous Power. It is well known, Sinners are often represented in Scripture,
 as dead; (Mat. viii. 22. Eph. ii. 1. v. 14. 1 Tim. v. 6. and Jude, ver. 12.) and if
 the Expression, *or answerable*, is to be taken, as we render it, with the most literal Exact-
 ness, for they that hear, or they, and they alone, that so attend unto the Voice of Christ,
 as to believe in him,—it will then limit it to this Sense; which seems also favoured
 by ver. 24. where Death plainly signifies a State of Sin and Condemnation.

(k) I seek

30 I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge; and my Judgment is just; because I seek not mine own Will, but the Will of the Father which hath sent me.

Person, from whose Lips you are to receive SECT. 40.
 your decisive Sentence. Not that any John V. 30.
 corrupt Bias of partial Resentment will be brought into the Proceedings of that Day, or into any of my Conduct; for *I can of myself do nothing*, but now act by a delegated Power, as the Minister of a Righteous God: And therefore *as I hear, I judge*, pronouncing according to the Evidence of Facts before me; and upon this Account it must appear, that *my Judgment is just; because I seek not any distinct Will or separate Interest of my own (k), but the wise and holy Will of the Father who sent me*; which is, that every Man should be treated according to his real Character, and be the Object of Favour, or of Wrath, as his Temper and Conduct have been upright, or wicked.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WITH what humble Prostration of Soul should we bow before the Lord Jesus Christ, while we read such Words as these! Tho' he appeared under the *Form of a Servant*; and as *Man*, John v. 19. and *Mediator*, confessed a holy Subjection to *his Father*, and *his GOD*; yet is he *his own*, his *only-begotten Son*, the *Son whom he loves*, whom he *honours*, whom he commands *all Men to honour* Ver. 20. *even as himself*, and to whom such *Power and Authority* are committed, that he is the Principle of *Life*, and the Administrator of *Judgment*. Ver. 26. Let us adore the Wisdom of such a Contrivance, that *he who humbled himself* thus low, should be so *highly exalted*. Ver. 27. Let us labour to secure an Interest in him; treating him with that Submission, Duty, and Obedience, which becomes at once the *Divinity* of his *Nature*, and the *Dignity* of his *Office*.

May we be enabled by Divine Grace, so to *bear the Voice* of his Ver. 25. Gospel, that we may arise to a *Life* of holy Obedience; that we may another Day *bear him* with Joy, calling forth our sleeping Dust, Ver. 28.

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and

(*) *I seek not any distinct Will or separate Interest of my own.*] This Limitation the Sense evidently requires. See *Heb. x. 9, 10. Mat. xxvi. 39.* and *Note (b) on Mat. xii. 7. Sect. 49.*

CHRIST *had not only his own Testimony,*
 and *arise to the Resurrection of Life*; while those that have despised
 and rejected him, shall find themselves the helpless Prisoners of his
 Justice, and with Reluctance and Terror *come forth to the Resur-*
rection of Damnation!

S E C T. XLVIII.

CHRIST *having declared to the Jews, (and, as it seems,*
to the Sanhedrim,) the Dignity of his Person, Office,
and Character, goes on to represent the Proofs of his
Mission; and concludes his Discourse with proper Ad-
monitions and Cautions. John V. 31, to the End.

JOHN V. 31.

SECT. 48. **O**UR Lord proceeded in his Discourse
 to the Jews, and said, I have certainly
 entered a very high Claim, and represented
 myself as a Person of great Dignity and Au-
 thority; nor do I say it without sufficient
 Proof. Indeed *if I bear this Witness of my-*
self alone, it must be acknowledged, that my
Testimony is not immediately [to be admitted
as] true (a): You have a Right to insist on
 other Evidence; and a Variety of it arises
 from the Testimony of John, from the
 Power of my Miracles, from the Testimony
 of the Father, and from innumerable Pas-
 sages in your own Sacred Writings.

32 I would then first observe, that besides
 what I have told you of myself, *there is*
another of undoubted Reputation and Vera-
city, that beareth Witness of me; and I know
that the Witness, which he beareth of me, is
true and credible, and well remember, by
 the

JOHN V. 31.

IF I bear Witness of my-
 self, my Witness is not
 true.

32 There is another that
 beareth Witness of me;
 and I know that the Wit-
 ness, which he witnesseth
 of me, is true.

(a) *Is not [to be admitted as] true.* That this is the Sense of the Word *true* here,
 is very evident; and appears in Part from comparing *John viii. 13, 17. Self. 103.*

(b) The

33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare Witness unto the Truth.

34 But I receive not Testimony from Man: but these Things I say, that ye might be saved.

35 He was a burning and a shining Light; and ye were willing for a Season to rejoice in his Light.

the happiest Tokens, the great Fact on which SECT. 48. it especially turned (b): Nor can you reasonably take upon you to dispute it; for the Person I refer to, is John the Baptist, whom your whole Nation agreed to reverence as a

John V. 32.

Prophet: And you know, that you yourselves sent Messengers on Purpose from your own Court unto this John; (John i. 19,—27. Sect. 20.) and he in the most express Terms bore a faithful and honourable Testimony to the Truth, of what I have now attested and referred to, assuring you that he saw the Spirit in a visible Form descend upon me.

33

I do not indeed receive the chief Testimony, on which I rest the Credit of my Mission, from Man; nevertheless, I say these Things to you, on your own Principles, out of a tender and compassionate Concern for your Conviction, that you, who are now conspiring against my Life, may be saved from that Destruction which he foretold, as the Portion of those who should reject me, and which the greatest of them shall not be able to escape.

34

(Mat. iii. 10, 12. Sect. 16.) He was indeed a burning and a shining Light, (Ecclus' xlviii. 1.) who to his bright and distinct Knowledge of the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, joined a most fervent Zeal in bearing his Testimony to them; and for a while you were disposed greatly to rejoice in his Light (c); but you did not express that

35

con-

(b) The great Fact on which it especially turned.] The Propriety and Spirit of our Lord's Expression, *I know that the Witness which he beareth of me is true*, is much illustrated, by supposing, that here is an oblique Reference to that great Event, the Descent of the Holy Spirit on Christ at his Baptism; on which John so expressly grounded the Testimony he bore to Christ, the very next Day after their Messengers came to him, who probably staid some Time to make their Remarks on his Preaching and Conduct. (See John i. 29,—34. Sect. 21.) And the blessed Effects of this Effusion on Christ still continued, and incessantly wrought in him.

(c) For a while you were disposed greatly to rejoice in his Light.] Our Lord might speak thus of John, though he was yet living, as his Light was now in a great measure extinguished by his Imprisonment; so that the Argument from this Text, for transposing

SECT. 48. continued Regard to his Preaching, which
 at his first Appearance you seemed to promise.
 John V. 35.

36 I will not therefore insist farther on this Topick, *but* proceed to other Evidence. And *I have* indeed a *Testimony*, which is much greater still *than* [*that*] of *John*; for the *Works* of Wonder and Mercy, which the *Father* has assigned and given in Commission to me, that according to his wise and gracious Purposes *I might accomplish* them among you, even these miraculous *Works*, which *I* daily perform, are also Witnesses in my Behalf, and bear a most convincing *Testimony* to me, that the *Father* has sent me as his Embassador to Men, with the most ample Commission to reveal his Will.

37 And indeed I may say with the greatest Propriety, that by these Miracles, as well as by the publick Testimony that he gave me at my Baptism, the *Father* who has sent me, has with the strongest Evidence confirmed my Mission, and has himself borne Witness to me: Nor have you any Reason to dispute the Testimony that he thus hath given me, [*though*] you have never either heard his Voice, or seen his Form, as being one whom no Man hath seen, nor can see; for he has testified the same concerning me in his Word, where he has spoken of me in the clearest

38 Manner. But notwithstanding the Submission you profess to his Authority, you will not be persuaded to receive the Testimony he has given; and after all that he has said, it is still evident, that you have not his Word cordially abiding in you (d), nor do

36 But I have a greater Witness than *that* of *John*; for the Works which the *Father* hath given me to finish, the same Works that *I* do, bear Witness of me, that the *Father* hath sent me.

37 And the *Father* himself which hath sent me, hath borne Witness of me: Ye have neither heard his Voice at any Time, nor seen his Shape.

38 And ye have not his Word abiding in you: for whom

this Chapter, seems inconclusive. Had the *Sanhedrim*, as some have supposed, imprisoned *John*, before he was seized by *Herod*, (see the *Preface* to the *Prussian Testament*, pag. 244.) our *Lord* would hardly have failed to reprove them for it, on so natural an Occasion as this.

[d] You have not his Word abiding in you.] Some would render it, You have not his LOGOS,

whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

do you shew a due Regard even to those former Revelations, which you acknowledge as Divine; for notwithstanding all the Reasons that are there given to induce you to it, you do not believe him, whom he hath sent with a much fuller and clearer Discovery of himself, than any of his former Messengers have brought.

SECT. 48.
John V. 38.

39 Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal Life, and they are they which testify of me.

You make it your Employment and your Study to peruse and search the Scriptures (e), and enter into deep Enquiries concerning the Contents of them; because you very rightly apprehend, that you have the Doctrine of eternal Life in them, that they contain the Promises, and instruct you in the Way of obtaining it: And these now are [the very Writings,] which in numberless Passages bear a most important Testimony to me.

39

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.

And yet the Obstinacy of your Hearts is such, that notwithstanding you profess so great a Regard for them, you will not come to me, that you may have that eternal Life, which they direct you to obtain in this Method, but rather chuse to die under the Force of your inveterate Prejudices.

40

41 I receive not Honour from Men.

I speak of your coming to me, but let me remind you, that it is not out of an Ambition

41

LOGOS, that is, me residing among you for any Continuance of Time; (see Mr. Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, pag. 65.) and refer it to Christ's making so short an Abode at Jerusalem: But I prefer the more obvious Sense. Compare John xv. 7.

(e) You search the Scriptures.] There is a known Ambiguity in the Word *scripturas*, which may justify either this Translation, or the common one; nor is it very material, which is preferred. I thought the following Words, which express their high Opinion of the Scriptures, rather suited the former; and it is exceeding probable, that at a Time when the Pharisees were so impatient of the Roman Yoke, they would with great Diligence search the sacred Oracles, for Predictions relating to the Messiah; tho' it is too plain, they had an unhappy Bias on their Minds, which prevented the good Effects, which might have been expected from that Enquiry, had it been impartial. — It is also well known, that refined Criticisms on their Sacred Writings made the most fashionable Branch of Learning among the Jews, in Comparison of which Profane Literature was held in great Contempt, and indeed by many of their Zealots in great Abhorrence. See Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xx. cap. ult. §. ult. and Mr. Biscoe's Sermons at Boyle's Lecture, pag. 89, 90.

(f) I re-

SECT. 48. bition of drawing Multitudes about me, to follow and applaud my Teaching; for the whole of my Conduct proves, that I receive

John V. 41.

42 *not Glory from Men (f)*. But I say it, out of a tender Regard for your Instruction and Reformation; for notwithstanding your distinguished Profession of Piety, and the eminent Station in which you are placed, I know you, and have observed it for some Time concerning you, *that you have not the Love of GOD in you*, that great and only Principle of true Religion and Happiness.

43 For I am come to you in my Father's Name, and with evident Credentials from him, yet you receive me not; which if you had really loved him you would undoubtedly have done: Whereas if another should come in his own Name (g), without such Credentials, and set up a Scheme of temporal Grandeur and Dominion, him you would readily receive, in Pursuit of those worldly Principles, which tho' directly contrary to the Love of GOD, yet bear the Rule in your corrupt Hearts.

44 But how indeed can you believe in me, and fall in with such an humbling and self-denying Scheme, as that of my Gospel, while with an ambitious Emulation, you are receiving Honour of each other (b), and seek not that

42 But I know you, that ye have not the Love of God in you.

43 I am come in my Fathers Name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own Name, him ye will receive.

44 How can ye believe, which receive Honour one of another, and seek not the Ho-

(f) *I receive not Glory from Men.*] The whole Series of this Discourse excellently shews, how far our Lord was from soothing the Vanity of great and learned Men, in order to obtain their Favour.

(g) *If another should come in his own Name.*] Some think here is a Reference to Barchochebas, a noted Impostor in the following Age, for adhering to whom the Jews were severely chastised by Adrian. (*Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. cap. 6.*) But it is certain, there were many other pretended Messiahs, who wrought no Miracles, and yet met with a much better Reception from the Pharisees, than Christ did; and I doubt not, but Christ meant to include, at least all those, who appeared while the Sanhedrim existed.

(b) *You are receiving Honour of each other.*] This has much more Spirit, if we consider it, as applied to the Members of the Sanhedrim, who had such distinguished Titles of Honour; than if we only take it, as spoken to a mixed Multitude, who might happen to surround Christ in the Temple: The Taste of the Populace seldom lies that Way.

Honour that *cometh* from God only?

that true Honour which [comes] from the Ap-
probation of GOD alone, and from the Testi-
mony of your Conscience's in his Sight? SECT. 48.
John V. 44.

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust:

Nevertheless remember this, that you will
another Day appear self-condemned for this
your Infidelity: And *do not think, that* to
convict you in his Presence, *I will accuse you*
to the Father; it will not be necessary, that
I should do it; for even now, *that Moses, in*
whom you trust, as your great Law-giver and
Patron, *is* (as it were) *your Accuser* before
GOD (*i*), and charges you with being regard-
less, of him, as well as of me. 45

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.

For if you had believed Moses, and really had that Re-
gard to him which you profess to have, *you*
likewise surely *would have believed me*; for
he wrote concerning me, in many most me-
morable Passages (*k*). 46

47 But if ye believe not his Writings, how shall ye believe my Words?

But I will now
conclude my Discourse; for *if you do not be-
lieve his Writings*, which are daily in your
Hands, and the Divine Authority of which
you so strenuously assert, *how shall I expect,*
that under the Power of such Prejudices, *you*
should *believe my Words*? 47

When our Lord had thus spoken, he with-
drew; and they were so over-awed with the
Majesty of his Presence, and the unanswer-
able Force of his Discourse, that they did
not attempt to seize, or detain him.

IMPROVE-

(*i*) *That Moses in whom you trust, is your Accuser.*] This is one of the most expres-
sive Passages that can be imagined, in which *Moses*, their great Lawgiver, is repre-
sented as looking down with *Indignation* upon these *Elders*, who gloried in being the
most distinguished of his *Disciples*; and seeing how injuriously they treated *Jesus* the
great Prophet, turning himself to GOD with a severe *Accusation* against them, and
urging *his own Predictions* as an Aggravation of their inexcusable Infidelity.

(*k*) *He wrote concerning me*, in many most memorable Passages.] *Christ* might per-
haps intend to refer, to what *Moses* had written,—of the *Seed of the Woman*; (*Gen.*
iii. 15.)—of the *Seed of Abraham*, in which all the Nations of the Earth should be
blessed; (*Gen. xxii. 18.*) of the *Shiloh* who should come, to gather the People; (*Gen.*
xliv. 10.)—and of the Prophet, whom GOD should raise up unto them from among
their Brethren; (*Deut. xviii. 18.*)—as well as to the many Ceremonial Institutions,
which had their final Accomplishment in him.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- SECT. 48. **H**OW various is the Evidence of our Redeemer's Mission, and with what Pleasure should we trace it in the *Testimony* which *John* bore, the *Miracles* which himself wrought, the *Testimony* of the *Father* to him, and the *Predictions* which the *Prophets* uttered and recorded! To confirm our Faith in all, let us be daily *searching the Scriptures*, as the Oracles of GOD, and the great Fountains of Life and Salvation. We profess a Regard to them: May that Regard never be our Condemnation! or the blessed *Penmen* witness against us, as *Moses* against those, who gloried in his Writings, and yet wanted a true Faith in them!
- In Proportion to the Degree in which we are convinced of the *Truth* of *Christ's Religion*, let us set ourselves to cultivate the *Temper* which he exercised. He *sought not Glory from Men*, but made his *Father's Will* the Rule of his Actions, and his *Father's Honour* the End of them. Let us not greedily catch at *Human Applause*, but aim at an infinitely nobler Object, even *the Honour that cometh from GOD alone*, the only true Judge of Actions and Characters, because the only Discerner of Hearts.
- May we have, not only *his Word* in our Hands, but *his Love remaining in us*; that thereby our natural Aversion to the Methods of his saving Grace in the Gospel may be subdued, that notwithstanding the *Obstinacy* of our degenerate Wills, we may *come unto Christ*, that we may have *Life*! May we *receive him* with the greatest Readiness, as *coming to us in his Father's Name*; and not only for a *Season rejoice in his Light*, but *steadfastly continue in his Word*, as *made known to all Nations for the Obedience of Faith*; that the Advantages which we enjoy, may not be found to aggravate our Guilt, and to condemn us with the unbelieving *Jews*!
- Christ* shewed the *Tenderness* of his Compassion, even in the Severity of his Rebukes, and spoke these awful and awakening Words, that these his unjust and inveterate Enemies *might be saved*. May they be the *Power of GOD unto our Salvation*; as they will be, if we *believe in him, whom he hath sent*!

S E C T.

S E C T. XLIX.

CHRIST vindicates his Disciples from the Censure of the Pharisees, for rubbing the Ears of Corn in their Hands, as they passed through the Fields on a Sabbath-Day. Luke VI. 1,—5. Mat. XII. 1,—8. Mark II. 23, to the End.

LUKE VI. 1.

LUKE VI. 1.

AND it came to pass [at that Time,] on the second Sabbath after the first, that

AFTER the preceding Conference with the Jews, our Lord departed from Jerusalem, where he had met with such an ungrateful Reception, and returned towards Galilee (a): And it came to pass, that about this Time, on the First Sabbath after the Second [Day of unleavened Bread] (b). Jesus, attended

SECT. 49.
LUKE VI. 1.

(a) Returned towards Galilee.] We may reasonably conclude this, because both Mark and Luke mention his being there quickly after this Story. Compare Mark iii. 7. and Luke vi. 12, 13. with vii. 1.

(b) The First Sabbath after the Second Day of unleavened Bread.] So I venture to render *δευτερονπασιον*, the Word used by Luke, yet not without much Hesitation; for it is so singular an Expression, that (as Erasmus long since did,) I despair of seeing its Sense exactly ascertained.—Could Theophylact, or his very learned Followers, Scaliger, Lightfoot, and Whitby, produce any Instance of *δευτερονπασιον* being used for the Second, or *τριτονπασιον* for the Third of the Sabbaths between the Passover and Pentecost, I should entirely acquiesce in the Translation here given; which supposes, this was the First of those Seven Sabbaths which followed the Second Day of unleavened Bread, from whence the Fifty Days to Pentecost were to be computed. See Lev. xxiii. 15, 16.—On the other Hand, could the great Grotius, or his Followers Woltzogenius and Brennius, have produced an Instance, in which *αγρονπασιον*, or *τητονπασιον* occurs, there would have been Reason to conclude with them, that there were Three prime Sabbaths, which were accounted Sabbaths of peculiar Solemnity; the First, that after the Day of the Passover; the Second, which is the Day here mentioned, that after Pentecost; and the Third, that after the Feast of Tabernacles.—For Want of sufficient Authorities to support either of these Interpretations, Sir Isaac Newton, (on Proph. pag. 154.) after Epiphanius and Beza, has advanced another, yet less probable than either; which is, that it was the Second of the two great Feasts of the Passover; as we call Easter-Day itself High Easter, and its Octave, Low Easter, or Low Sunday. But though the Seventh Day of unleavened Bread was to be a Holy Convocation, yet the Law expressly allowed the Jews to dress Victuals on it; (Exod. xii. 16.) which would have afforded so direct an Answer to the Pharisees Objection, that one can hardly suppose Christ would have failed to urge it.—On either of these Two last Suppositions, it must be rendered, the Second Prime Sabbath: But as I could not translate it all, without fixing it one Way or the other, I chose the former Rendering for these two

SECT. 49. attended as usual by a Train of Followers, (who had been with him at the Feast,) Luke VI. 1. *went through the Corn-Fields; and as his Disciples were hungry, and the Barley was now ripe, they began as they went, to pull off some of the Ears of Corn (c), and rubbing them in their Hands to break off the Beards and the Husk, did eat the Grain.*

2 *And some of the Pharisees, who were employed by the Rulers, to follow him from Place to Place, as malicious Spies on all his Discourses and Actions, when they saw it, were offended at the Time and Circumstances*

that [Jesus] went through the Corn-Fields; and his Disciples [were an hundred, and began [MAR. as they went,] to pluck the Ears of Corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their Hands. [MAT. XII. I. MARK II. 23.]

2 And certain of the Pharisees [when they saw it,] said

Reasons. (1.) Because I cannot find, that there is any Divine Command to observe the *Sabbaths* which followed the Day of the *Three great Feasts*, and particularly that of *Pentecost*, with any such peculiar Solemnity, as to afford sufficient Reason for this distinguishing Title; though large Sacrifices were to be offered every Day for *Seven Days* after the *Passover*, and for *Eight* during the *Feast of Tabernacles*; which are distinctly prescribed, *Numb. xxviii. 16,—25. and xxix. 12, & seq.* And (2.) Because, considering what *Philo* and *Isidorus* assert, and *Josephus* intimates, of *Corn being ripe in Judea* about the Time of the *Passover*, (see *Petav. Var. Diss. lib. ii. cap. 11. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xviii. cap. 18. and Joseph. Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 10. §. 5.*) and the *Law* of presenting the *Loaves* made of *new Wheat* on the Day of *Pentecost*, (*Lev. xxiii. 17.*) it seems probable the *Harvest* was generally concluded before that Day. (See also *Scalig. Emend. Temp. Proleg. pag. xxv, xxvi. and lib. vi. pag. 557, 558.*)—I suppose these Considerations, or the Authority of such great Names, may have determined most *Harmonizers*, to introduce this Story immediately after the *Fifth Chapter of John*; nor do I see any Reason to vary from them herein. And the Order would be the same, if *Reland's* Conjecture were to be admitted, that the *αυρονωπος* was the *first Sabbath* in the *Civil*, and the *δευτερονωπος* the *first* in the *Ecclesiastical Year*: (See *Reland. Antiq. Heb. lib. iv. cap. 9.*) But this is a Conjecture, which has so little to support it even in *Hypothesis*, as scarcely to deserve a Mention.

(c) *To pull off some of the Ears of Corn.*] The Word *σάκκας* here used may indifferently signify *Ears* of any Kind of *Grain*, but it might probably be *Barley*, that being first ripe in those Parts. (Compare *Exod. ix. 31, 32.*) *Sir Isaac Newton* lays a great deal of Stress on this, for fixing the *Time of Christ's Death*; concluding, this *Passover* must happen late, and that it was *Two Years* before that, in which our Lord was crucified, and consequently, that *Christ's Death* must be fixed to such a Time, that the *Passover* two Years before it may be a late one. But I fear the Argument is not so conclusive, as one could wish, considering with what Ingenuity and Labour it is pursued. For that great Man seems to have forgot, how expressly *Maimonides* and the other *Rabbies* assert, that the *Jews* did not always fix their *Passover* by the *Vernal Equinox*, but in Case of a backward Spring, added an *Intercalary Month* between that and *Abib*. (See *Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. on Mat. xii. 1.*) If this be credible, it shews how little we can ascertain the *Jewish Passovers* by *Astronomical Calculations*; and if it be not, why did *Sir Isaac* proceed in his *Computations* on these Rules for the *Translation of Feasts*, which we have only by late *Rabbinical Tradition*? See *Bachart. Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 50.*

said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath-Days? [MAT. XII. 2.—]

MAT. XII.—2. [And] they said unto him, Behold, thy Disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath-Day. [MARK II. 24.]

LUKE VI. 3. And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when [MAR. he had Need, and] was an hungred, [MAR. he,] and they which were with him? [MAT. XII. 3. MAR. II. 25.]

4 How he went into the House of GOD [MAR. in the Days of Abiathar the High-Priest,] and did take and eat the Shew-Bread, and gave

stances of the Action (d), and reprovng his Disciples said to them, Why do you thus gather and rub out the Grain; for that is a Kind of servile Work, which it is not lawful for any one to do on the Sabbath-Days?

And that they might involve their Master also in the same Charge, tho' he did not himself join with them in it, they said to him, Behold, these thy Disciples, in thy very Presence, do that which it is not lawful for any one to do on the Sabbath; and wilt thou permit it to pass without a Reproof?

And Jesus said in Answer to them, Have you that value yourselves so much on your Acquaintance with the Sacred Writings, and set up for the Expositors of them to others, never read that, which David did, in his extrem Necessity, when he, and they that were with him were hungry? How he went into the Tabernacle, which is the House of GOD, in the Days of Abiathar, who was afterwards the High-Priest (e), and then officiated for his Father Ahimelech; (See 1 Sam. xxi. 3, & seq.) Have you forgot, that this faithful Servant of GOD, this Man after his own Heart, took and eat the Shew-Bread;

(d) Offended at the Time and Circumstances of the Action.] The Law so expressly allowed, to pluck Ears of Corn as one passed thro' a Field, that, malignant as they were, they pretended not to find Fault with the Thing itself; (see Deut. xxiii. 25.) but they were perverse enough, to think this a Kind of reaping and dressing the Grain, which was indeed forbidden on the Sabbath.

(e) Abiathar, who was afterwards the High-Priest.] If our present Reading (which Beza suspects, tho' older than the Syriac Version,) be allowed as genuine, here is a remarkable Instance of a Person being designed by an Office, which he did not bear till after the Date of the Event referred to; in like manner as Cyrenius (Luke ii. 2.) is called Governour of Syria, because he was so after the Enrollment. It seems indeed that Ahimelech was High-Priest, when David took the Shew-Bread, tho' in all the Story he is only called the Priest; and as it is merely an arbitrary Supposition, that the Father was sometimes called Abiathar, or the Son Ahimelech, it seems impossible to defend the received Reading, otherwise than by supposing, with Grotius, that as Abiathar was a much more celebrated Person than his Father, our Lord mentions his Name in Preference to the other. He was probably present, and for any thing we certainly know, his aged Father might act by his Advice in the Affair referred to; which if he did, it was exceeding proper to mention him here.

S s 2

(f) Some-

SECT. 49.
 Luke VI. 4.

Bread, which had that very Day been taken from the Holy Table, and gave it also to those that attended him; which it was neither lawful for him, nor them to eat, nor even for the Levites themselves, but for the Priests alone? Yet in this Case, their Necessity was judged a sufficient Excuse, for dispensing with the Observance of such a Ceremonial Institution. (See Lev. xxiv. 6,—9.)

Mat. XII. 5.

Or have you not read in the Law, that by those Sacrifices which are appointed for the Sabbath-Day, and some of them peculiar to it, the Priests themselves, who minister in the Temple, are obliged to perform very servile Works on the Sabbath-Days, in making up the Fires, killing, flaying, and dressing the Sacrifices, and the like, by which others would be justly reckoned to profane the Sabbath; and yet doing it with an immediate Reference to the Service of God, they are accounted blameless, and really are so. Now I say unto you, that there is [something] greater than the Temple here (f), and of much more Importance than the Service of it. My Disciples therefore may surely be vindicated on such an Occasion as this, when in Attendance upon me, in Prosecution of my Service, they do what is so much less laborious, than the Offices which you allow there in the Priests.

Mark II. 27.

And he said unto them farther, on this Occasion, The Sabbath was made for the Benefit of Man, subservient to the Rest and Relief of his Body, as well as to be spent in religious Improvement; and not Man for the Observation

gave also to them that were with him, [which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them,] but for the Priests alone? [MAT. XII. 4. MARK II. 26.]

MAT. XII. 5. *Or have ye not read in the Law, how that on the Sabbath-Days the Priests in the Temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?*

6 *But I say unto you, that in this Place is one greater than the Temple.*

MARK II. 27. *And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath. [LUKE VI. 5.—]*

(f) *Something greater than the Temple.] So many Manuscripts, with Theophylact, read $\mu\epsilon\lambda\iota\sigma\alpha$, something greater, instead of $\mu\epsilon\lambda\iota\omega\upsilon$, one greater, (see Dr. Mill, in loc.) and in this View the Opposition seems so natural, that I prefer this Reading. Our Lord might perhaps point to his own Body, the noblest Temple of the Deity; (compare John ii. 21. Sect. 24.) or it might refer to the Work then going on: But the former Sense is much more natural.*

(g) *I re-*

ervation of the *Sabbath*, or of any other **SECT. 49.**
 Ceremonial Institution whatsoever.

MAT. XII. 7. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the Guiltless.

But if you had known the Intent of that **Mat. XII. 7.** Scripture, **Hof. vi. 6.** and had considered *what this meaneth*, “ *I require Mercy, and not Sacrifice (g)* ; that is, I always prefer “ *Acts of Charity to Matters of positive Institution, when in any Instance they interfere with each other (b)* ;” *you would not have condemned the Innocent*, as you have now done, merely for rubbing out a Handful of Corn to refresh them in my Service.

8 For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath-Day. [**MARK II. 28.** **LUKE VI.—5.**]

You are therefore, on the whole, greatly **8** to blame, to censure them ; and would be so, if they had only my Dispensation for what they do, and were defended by no farther Arguments ; *for the Son of Man is a Person of so great Dignity and Authority, that he indeed is Lord (i) even of the Sabbath*

(g) I require Mercy, and not Sacrifice.] So *שָׂמַח* evidently signifies, when it expresses the *Will* of a Superior ; and this the *original* Word *דְּמַצִּית* imports, which seems here to answer to that *modern Phrase* used by Princes, *Such is our Pleasure*.

(b) I always prefer Acts of Charity, &c.] I must here repeat a very obvious Remark, because the Sense of so many important Scriptures depends upon it ; *viz.* that according to the Genius of the *Hebrew Language*, one Thing seems to be *forbidden*, and another *commanded*, when the Meaning only is, that the latter is *greatly to be preferred* to the former. The Text before us is a remarkable Instance of this ; as likewise *Joel ii. 13. Mat. vi. 19, 20. John vi. 27. Luke xii. 4, 5. and Col. iii. 2.* And it is evident, that *Gen. xlv. 8. Exod. xvi. 8. John v. 30. vii. 19.* and many more Passages, are to be expounded in the same *comparative Sense*. — A late ingenious Writer says, “ Our Lord don’t compare *moral* and *positive* Duties together here, but “ *only the Commandments of Men with the Commandments of GOD.*” But it is plain, the Series of *our Lord’s* Arguments here is intended to prove, that *Circumstances of Necessity* dispense with some *Ceremonial Observances*, which were in the general commanded by *GOD* ; and manifestly goes upon this Foundation, that *Ceremonial Institutions*, being the *Means* of Religion, if *Circumstances* occurred in which they interfered with the *End* of it, they were *suspended* of Course ; and *when* this is the Case, the Conscience of particular Persons is to judge, as in the Sight of *GOD*.

(i) For the Son of Man is Lord, &c.] The Author of the *New Translation* renders it in *Matthew*, *The Sabbath is subservient to Man* ; tho’ he paraphrases it, as it stands in *Mark*, *The Son of Man has a Power of dispensing with the Law of the Sabbath* ; which is undoubtedly the true Sense : For I cannot find, that *the Son of Man* does in the *New Testament* signify any one, but *Christ* : And were the Words (which are exactly the same,) to be translated in *Mark*, as he has rendered them in *Matthew*, they would be a mere Repetition of *ver. 27. The Sabbath was made for Man, &c.* — It is worthy of our Notice, that *Matthew* introduces these Words with *אֲנִי* *for*, and *Mark*.

SECT. 49. *sabbath* [*itself*] (*k*); and he may hereafter give
 Mat. XII. 8. you far more surprizing Instances of his
 Power over it.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. xii. 1. **W**ITH Pleasure we observe the Zeal, which these Attendants
 of *Christ* express, who chose on a *Sacred Festival* to expose
 themselves to *Hunger* as well as *Toil*, rather than they would lose
 the Benefit of his Instructions, which like the *Heavenly Manna* on
 the Day preceding the *Sabbath*, were *then* poured out in a *double*
 Plenty. But what numerous Auditory is so candid, as to contain
 none, who come like these *Pharisees*, with a Desire to cavil, rather
 than to learn! The Malignity of *their Temper* sufficiently appeared,
 in taking *Exception* at so small a Circumstance: *Hypocrites* that could
 thus *strain at a Gnat*, and yet *swallow a Camel*; (Mat. xxiii. 24.)
 scrupling to *rub out a few Grains of Corn*, while they sought to *de-*
vour Widows Houses, and were under this grave *Mask* of the strict-
 est Piety, *inwardly full of Rapine, and all Wickedness!* (Luke xx.
 47. and xi. 39.)

Ver. 2. Ver. 6, 8. Ver. 7. Let us attend to the *Apology*, *Christ* makes for his *Disciples*. It
 speaks his own *Authority*, as *greater than the Temple*, and *Lord of*
the Sabbath: And well might He, *in whom dwelt all the Fulness of the*
Godhead bodily, without the least *Presumption*, use such Language as
 this. It likewise declares much of the *Genius of his Religion*, which
 deals not in *Forms and Ceremonies*, and *dispenses* even with *Rituals* of
 a *Divine Appointment*, when *Humanity and Benevolence* interfere
 with the Observance of them. Since *GOD will have Mercy rather*
than Sacrifice, let us abhor the Perverseness and Wickedness of those,
 who sacrifice *Mercy* itself, not merely to *Ceremonies* of a *Divine Ori-*
ginal, but to their own arbitrary Inventions, superstitious Dreams,
 and

Mark with *we*, *therefore*, or *so that*; and both Connections may be justified. Yet as
 it is hardly to be imagined, *both* were equally intended, I look upon this to be a con-
 siderable Proof, that the *Sacred Writers* were not always critically exact in the Use of
 their *Particles*: A Remark which I apprehend to be of great Importance, both for
 clearing their Sense, and vindicating their Character. Whoever considers the *Ambi-*
guity of many of those *Hebrew Particles*, which correspond to the *Greek*, will find
 little Reason to wonder at it. Compare *Luke xi. 36. Sect. 64. and Note (d)* there.

(*k*) *Even of the Sabbath itself; και το σαββατο.*] This certainly implies, that the *Sab-*
bath was an Institution of great and distinguished Importance; and may perhaps also
 refer, to that *Signal Authority*, which *Christ* by the Ministry of his *Apostles* should
 exert over it, in changing it from the *Seventh* to the *First Day of the Week*.

and precarious, tho' confident Determinations. Let us practise habitual *Caution* and *Candour*, lest before we are aware, we condemn *the Innocent* and the Pious, and become guilty of what is much more displeasing in the Sight of GOD, than the Faults which a peevish and censorious Temper may fancy it discovers in our Brethren.

SECT. 49.

S E C T. L.

CHRIST on a following Sabbath cures a Man whose Hand was withered, and vindicates that Action from the Cavils of the Pharisees. Luke VI. 6,—II. Mat. XII. 9,—15.—Mark III. 1,—7.—

LUKE VI. 6.

LUKE VI. 6.

AND it came to pass also, [when he was departed thence,] on another Sabbath, that he entered [MAR. a-gain]

WE have just mentioned an Instance of the Pharisees cavilling at a very innocent Action of the Disciples; we shall now proceed to another, in which they charged our Lord himself, with the Violation of the same sacred Rest, in a yet more malicious and unreasonable Manner. For it came to pass also, when he was departed from thence (a), (that is, from the Town, in whose neighbouring Fields they had rubbed out the Ears of Corn) that on another Sabbath, he entered again, as he was used to do, into the Synagogue,

SECT. 50.

Luke VI. 6.

(a) *When he was departed from thence.*] There can be no Doubt as to the Connection of this Story with the preceding, in which all the Evangelists agree; and indeed, had not Luke told us it was on another Sabbath, the Words of Matthew would have led us to imagine, it had been the same Day. Perhaps he might spend most of the Week, in the Town, to which the Fields mentioned above belonged.—Beza's favourite Manuscript, now at Cambridge, as well as one of Stephen's, adds the following Words in Luke, immediately before this Story: *The same Day seeing a certain Man at Work on the Sabbath, he said to him, O Man, if thou knowest what thou doest, thou art happy; but if thou dost not know it, thou art cursed and a Transgressor of the Law.* This is undoubtedly a spurious Addition; for had the Pharisees heard any thing like this from Christ, they would have followed him no farther, and observed him no more, to find Matter even of Capital Accusation against him. And indeed it goes on a very false Supposition, that the Ceremonial Law was already abrogated.

(b) They

SECT. 50. *synagogue*, in some other City which lay in his Way thro' Galilee, and taught his Heavenly Doctrine there. And behold, a remarkable Circumstance occurred; for *there was a Man present, whose Right Hand was withered*, the Nerves and Sinews of it being so shrunk up, that it was entirely useless.

7 And the Scribes and Pharisees, who were there also present with him, watched him, to observe whether he would again heal on the Sabbath-Day; that they might find some new Matter for an Accusation against him, having succeeded so ill in the former Attempt, and plainly perceiving that his Reputation grew more and more among the People.

8 But when the Synagogue-Worship was dispatched, and our Lord's Sermon was also concluded, he knowing the Malignity and Wickedness of their Thoughts and Views, instead of being discouraged by the Design they had against him, said to the Man who had the withered Hand, Rise up from thy Seat, and stand in the Midst of the Assembly: And he cheerfully arose, and stood in the most conspicuous Part of the Synagogue, hoping to receive the Favour of a Cure.

Mat. XII. 10. And as the Pharisees saw what Jesus intended, they asked him, saying, Is it then to be taken for granted, that it is lawful to cure on Sabbath-Days, as well as at other Times? And they put the Question in that general Form (b), on Purpose that they might have an Opportunity to accuse him, and not from any

gain] into the Synagogue, and taught: And [behold,] there was a Man [MAR. there,] whose Right Hand was withered. [MAT XII. 9, 10.— MARK III. 1.]

7 And the Scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath-Day; that they might find an Accusation against him. [MAR. III. 2.]

8 But he knew their Thoughts, and said to the Man which had the withered Hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the Midst. And he arose, and stood forth. [MARK III. 3.]

MAT. XII. — 10. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-Days? that they might accuse him.

(b) They put the Question in that general Form.] The Word *Synagogue* is very extensive, and properly includes all the Care, Labour, and Attendance, which the Case of any distempered or wounded Person can require; as I apprehend our English Word *Cure* also does; though, thro' the Poverty of our Language, we are forced to apply it to those miraculous Effects, which were so instantaneously produced by the healing Word of our Blessed Redeemer. What Syriac Word they might use, I know not; but it is plain the Question is put in very general Terms, which best favoured their base Purpose, of founding an Accusation on our Lord's Answer.

(c) If

11 And he said unto them, What Man shall there be among you, that shall have one Sheep, and if it fall into a Pit on the Sabbath-Day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

any Desire of Instruction. *And he said* SECT. 50. *to them, in Reply to that insnaring Question, What Man is there of you, in all this Assembly, who if he have but one Sheep, that on the Sabbath-Day should fall into a Pit (c), and be in Danger of perishing there, would not lay hold of it without Delay, and make no Scruple of attempting, presently to raise it up from thence, though it would be a Work of some Labour and Difficulty?* Now I 12

12 How much then is a Man better than a Sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-Days.

leave it to your own Consciences to reflect, *how much is a Man better than a Sheep? So that you must on your own Principles allow, that it is lawful to do well, and to perform the lovely Acts of Charity and Mercy (d) even on Sabbath-Days: And you must own, for Instance, that if a Man should fall into a Pit, it would be lawful on that Day to pull him out; and consequently too, it must be lawful, if he labours under a Disease, to apply any proper Remedies for his Cure; much more then must it be so, to cure a Person without any laborious Application, merely by speaking a Word.*

LUKE VI. 9. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one Thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath-Days to do Good, or to do Evil? to save Life, or to [kill, and] destroy it? [MARK III. 4.—]

Then Jesus said farther to them, To end the Controversy in a few Words, I will ask you one Thing more: Is it lawful to do Good on Sabbath-Days, or to do Evil? to save Life, or to destroy, [and] even kill the Innocent? Thereby secretly referring to the Purpose of destroying his Life (e), which, while they were

(c) *If ye have but one Sheep, that should fall into a Pit.] The common Version is more literal; but that which I have given, plainly suits our English Idiom better, and appears to me perfectly faithful: For the Stress of the Thought cannot lie on supposing a Man to have but one Sheep in all; but in this, that one only fell into the Pit, yet for the comparatively small Value of that one, he would not scruple to undertake the Labour of helping it out on the Sabbath.*

(d) *To do well, and to perform the lovely Acts of Charity and Mercy.] This is the Meaning of that Phrase, καλως ποιεω: In the Use of which, the Evangelist might intimate an Appeal to some Reminders of a moral Sense, distinguishing the natural Beauty of such Actions, which these worst of Men could not totally eradicate.*

(e) *Secretly referring to the Purpose of destroying his Life.] I appeal to every Reader of Taste, whether there be not another Kind of Spirit in these Words, on this*

SECT. 50. were thus scrupulous about the Observation of the Sabbath, they were even then forming in their Hearts. *But they were silent*; being convinced in their own Minds of the Reasonableness of what he said, and stung with secret Remorse of Conscience, yet unwilling to confess what they saw, and felt.

Mark III. 4.

5 *And when he had looked round upon them all with a just Indignation, being grieved for the Hardness of their Hearts, and for that Condemnation and Ruin which he knew it would bring upon them, as well as for the Mischief it might occasion to others, he says to the Man that laboured under the Calamity which was mentioned before, Stretch forth thine Hand. And accordingly he stretched it out; and was not only strengthened for that particular Motion, of which he was before incapable, but his Hand was perfectly restored, and was well and strong as the other.*

6 *And the Pharisees were so incensed at the Affront, which they imagined they had received, in our Lord's neglecting their Censure, and intimating his Knowledge of the evil Purposes of their Hearts, that they were no longer able to bear the Place; but went out of the Synagogue, and immediately took Counsel together with the Herodians (f), who, different*

MARK III.—4. But they held their Peace.

5 And when he had looked round about [LUK. upon them all] with Anger, being grieved for the Hardness of their Hearts, he saith unto the Man, Stretch forth thine Hand. And he stretched it out: and his Hand was restored whole as the other. [MAT. XII. 13. LUK. VI. 10.]

6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took Counsel with the Herodians against

Supposition of such a Reference, than we could find in them, by any forced Attempt to prove, that *not to have cured a withered Hand* in these Circumstances, would have been in a Sense *destroying Life*. Such cold and unnatural *Criticisms* have been a great Dishonour to *Scripture*, and I persuade myself, the Authors of them have not seen, whither they tended.

(f) *With the Herodians.*] The *Herodians* were a *Set* of Men, who, so far as we can judge by their Name, seem to have distinguished themselves by their Zeal for the Family of *Herod*; whom they might perhaps compliment with the Title of the *Messiah*, though it is plain, that neither *Herod* himself, nor the Generality of the People, fell in with this extravagant Opinion. (See *Mat. ii. 1,—4.*) However, from their high Regard to *Herod*, these Men would naturally be zealous for the Authority of the *Romans*, by whose Means *Herod* was made, and continued *King*; and it is probable, as *Dr. Prideaux* conjectures, (*Conn. vol. ii. part 2. book 5. ad fin.*) that they might incline to conform to them in some Particulars, which the Law would not allow of; and particularly, in the Admission of *Images*, though not in the *Religious*, or rather *Idolatrous*,

They go out in a Rage, and conspire his Death.

against him, how they might destroy him. [MAT. XII. 14.]

different as their Civil and Religious Notions were from those of the Pharisees, joined with them in their Enmity to Christ, and zealously united in a Conspiracy against him, how they might destroy him, either by a publick Prosecution, or a private Assassination.

SECT. 50.
Mark III. 6.

LUKE VI. 11. And they were filled with Madness, and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

And they were filled with Madness and Rage against him, and discoursed over the Point at large with each other, to determine what they might do, to prevent the growing Reputation of Jesus among the People, and to put a Period at once to his Labours, and his Life.

Luke VI. 11.

MAT. XII. 15. — But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence, [with his Disciples to the Sea.—] [MARK III. 7.—]

But Jesus knowing [it,] that nothing might hinder him from fulfilling his Ministry, withdrew himself from thence, and went with his Disciples to the Sea of Galilee, on the Shore of which he frequently preached to the People.

Mat. XII. 15.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WHAT Actions are so fair and lovely, that Malice cannot turn them into Reproach! What Characters are so unblemished, what so exemplary, that Uncharitableness cannot revile and condemn them! While the Eyes of distressed Multitudes were turned to Christ, as their only Physician and most valuable Friend, the Eyes of the Pharisees are continually upon him for Evil; and they behold his wondrous Miracles, not for their own Conviction, but that they may, if possible, turn them into the Means of his Destruction. So ineffectual are the most obvious and demonstrative Arguments, till Divine Grace conquer Mens natural Aversion to a Redeemer's Kingdom, and captivate their Hearts to the Obedience of Faith!

Luke vi. 7;

Ver. 9, 11;

To have reviled and dishonoured Christ, and to have endeavoured to prevent the Success of his Ministry, had been a daring Crime;

Mark iii. 6;

T t 2

but

latrous, Use of them. Herod's Attempt to set up a Golden Eagle over the East Gate of the Temple, is well known; (see Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 6. (al. 8.) §. 1, — 3.) these complaisant Courtiers would, no doubt, defend it; and the same Temper might discover itself, in many other Instances. On all these Accounts they were most diametrically opposite to the Pharisees; so that the Conjunction of their Counsels against Christ, is a very memorable Proof of the Keeness of that Malice, which could thus cause them to forget so deep a Quarrel with each other.

SECT. 50. but these desperate Wretches *conspire against his Life*; and different as their Principles and Interests were, form a transient Friendship, to be cemented by his Blood. Blessed *Jesus*, well mightest thou say, *Many good Works have I shewn you, and for which of them would you murder me?* (*John x. 32.*)

Mat. xii. 11, 12. What *Reasoning* could be more plain and forcible, than this which *our Lord* used? and yet, like *deaf Adders*, they *stop their Ears*, and harden their Hearts against it. Inhuman Creatures, that were more concerned for the Safety of a *Sheep*, than the Happiness of a *Man*! Yet would to *God*, that unworthy Temper had died with them; for surely there are those, even among *professing Christians*, who regard their *Cattle*, more than even the *Souls* committed by Providence to their Care, and therefore, no doubt, more than *their own* too!

Mark iii. 5. The *Indignation*, which *Christ* felt on this Occasion, was a just and amiable Passion. Happy they, whose *Anger*, like his, is only awakened by *Sin*, and burns only to destroy that *accursed Thing*!

Mat. xii. 13. The Malice of the *Pharisees* did not restrain the Benevolence of our compassionate *Saviour*, nor deprive the poor *Patient* of his *Cure*. Such let our Conduct be! Let us *not be overcome of Evil*: Let not the most unjust Censures, or the most malicious Opposition, break our Spirits so, as to prevent us from doing our Duty. If

Luke vi. 11. others are *mad* with persecuting Rage, let us pity them; and let all their Fury against the Cause of *God*, be improved as a Motive to excite our most zealous and courageous Endeavours for its Service.

S E C T. LI.

CHRIST retiring to the Sea-Side, cures great Multitudes with such Modesty and Gentleness, as was agreeable to Isaiah's Prophetick Description of his Conduct. Mark III. 7,—12. Mat. XII. 15,—21.

MARK III.—7.

MARK III.—7.

SECT. 51. **I**T was before observed, that *Jesus* retired from the Synagogue, where he had cured the Man that had a withered Hand, and went

—**A**ND a great Multitude from Galilee followed.

Multitudes follow him to the Sea-Side, and are healed.

followed him, and from Judea, [MAT. XII.—15.—]

went with his Disciples to the Sea-shore: SECT. 51.

We now pursue the Story (a), and add, that he was there attended by a great Multitude Mark III. 7.

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan, and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great Multitude, when they had heard what great Things he did, came unto him.

of People, who followed him from Galilee, and even from Judea; And particularly from Jerusalem, where that extraordinary Cure lately wrought at the Pool of Bethesda, and that excellent Defence with which it was followed, had greatly increased his Popularity: Nay, there were some, that came yet farther from the South, and were from Idumea, the Natives of which Country being long since obliged to become Jews (b), had many of them seen Jesus at the Feasts; and others too attended him from the Eastern Regions, which lay beyond Jordan: And also a great Multitude from the Western Parts, even as far as from the Neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon, having heard what great and glorious Things he did, came to him.

9 And he spake unto his Disciples, that a small Ship should wait on him, because of the Multitude, lest they should throng him.

And he spoke to his Disciples, that a little Vessel should be in Readiness near him, because of the Multitude, that was now flocking around him; that they might not throng in upon him, in a Manner which would have been very inconvenient to him, and would have prevented great Numbers of them from seeing and hearing what passed.

10 For he had healed many, [and he healed them all,] inasmuch that they pressed upon him for to touch.

For he had healed many, and [indeed] all that applied to him; so that they eagerly rushed in upon him (c), even as many as were under any remarkable

(a) We now pursue the Story.] The Connection of this Section with the preceding, both in Matthew, and Mark, is express: And I desire the Reader would once for all observe, that when I give no Reason for placing the Sections in the Order in which they stand, it is because I am not aware there is any Difficulty or Controversy about them. And their following each other in the Evangelists, though without any express Note of exact Connection, I always reckon a good Reason for continuing that Order, unless there be some weighty Argument inducing us to change it.

(b) Obligated to become Jews.] That Hyrcanus had obliged them to this, about an hundred and fifty Years before the Birth of Christ, we are assured by the Account Josephus gives us, Antiq. lib. xiii. cap. 9. (al. 17.) §. 1.

(c) Rushed in upon him.] This the Phrase *επιπροσβουλον αυτω*, yet more strongly expresses;

SECT. 51. *markable Scourge of GOD's afflicting Hand, that they might touch him, and so partake of that healing Virtue which went out from*

Mark III. 13.

11 *him. And they who were possessed with impure Spirits, as soon as ever they saw him, though they before were perfect Strangers to him, immediately fell down before him in a Posture of Submission and Homage; and such a Terror seized the Demons that possessed them, that they cried out with all the Appearances of Horror and Confusion, saying, We know, that thou art the Messiah, the Son of the most High GOD (d).*

12 *But our Lord preserved the usual Modesty of his Temper, on these Occasions, as well as others; and being desirous to occasion as little Disturbance and Offence as possible, he charged them with Strictness and some Appearance of Severity (e), that they should not make him known: For intending to visit several of those Parts himself, he was unwilling to give an unnecessary Alarm to his Enemies; and he always chose to avoid every Degree of Ostentation.*

Mat. XII. 17. *So that in him it might be evidently seen to be accomplished, which was spoken by Isaiah the*

touch him, as many as had Plagues. [MAT. XII.—15.]

11 *And unclean Spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him and cried, saying, thou art the Son of God.*

12 *And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known. [Mat. XII. 16.]*

MAT. XII. 17. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken*

presses; which signifies, that they were ready to drive each other upon him, so that those nearer him could hardly stand, being pressed forward by those behind.

(d) *Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the most High GOD.] The Leicester Manuscript reads it, Σὺ εἶ ὁ Θεός, υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ: Thou art GOD, The Son of GOD; which I mention not that I think the Authority of that sufficient to justify a Change in the received Reading, but only as one remarkable Instance, among many others which I could easily give, of the Negligence with which that Manuscript was collated by Dr. Mill's Correspondent; since this Reading, memorable as it is, is omitted by the Doctor. But I hope the World will e'er long be favoured with a far more exact Account, not only of that Manuscript, but of several others much more valuable than that, some quite omitted by Dr. Mill, and others very imperfectly collated. This we are encouraged to expect from the Reverend, accurate, and indefatigable Mr. Wasse of Ayno, whose obliging Readiness to assist me in this Work, I do myself the Honour of acknowledging with the utmost Gratitude.—His Death, since the Publication of the first Edition of this Volume, is a Calamity to the Learned World, long to be lamented.*

(e) *He charged them with Strictness, and some Appearance of Severity.] This we may take to be included in the Force of that Expression, ὡλλὰ ἐπισημα αυτοῖς.*

(f) *By*

A Prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled in CHRIST.

335

SECT. 51.
Mat. XII. 18.

spoken by Eſaias the Prophet, ſaying,

18 Behold, my Servant whom I have choſen, my Beloved in whom my Soul is well pleaſed: I will put my Spirit upon him, and he ſhall ſhew Judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He ſhall not ſtrive, nor cry, neither ſhall any Man hear his Voice in the Streets.

20 A bruifed Reed ſhall he not break, and ſmoking Flax ſhall he not quench, till he ſend forth Judgment unto Victory.

the Prophet (f), (Iſa. xlii. 1,—4.) ſaying,
 “ Behold the great Meſſiah, *my Servant,*
 “ *whom I have choſen* for the great Work of
 “ redeeming and ſaving my People; he is
 “ *my Beloved, in whom my very Soul does*
 “ entirely acquieſce, as every Way qualified to
 “ perform it; for *I will put my Spirit upon*
 “ *him, and he ſhall proclaim Judgment,* that
 “ is, the great Law of Religion, Righteouſ-
 “ neſs, and Truth, even to the moſt diſtant
 “ of *the Heathen Nations.* He ſhall not
 “ contend with martial Violence, nor cry out
 “ in a clamorous and turbulent Manner, nor
 “ ſhall any one bear his Voice in the Streets,
 “ as giving a loud and diſquieting Alarm:
 “ But he ſhall manage his Adminiſtration
 “ with ſo much Gentleneſs and Sweetneſs,
 “ with ſo much Caution and Tenderneſs,
 “ that, (as it is Proverbially expreſſed,) he
 “ ſhall not break even a bruifed Reed or
 “ Cane, which snaps aſunder immediately
 “ when preſſed with any conſiderable
 “ Weight; nor ſhall he *extinguish even the*
 “ *ſmoking Flax (g),* or the Wick of a Lamp,
 “ which when it is firſt beginning to kindle,
 “ is put out by every little Motion: With
 “ ſuch kind and condeſcending Regards to
 “ the Weakeſt of his People, and to the
 “ firſt Openings and Symptoms of a hopeful
 “ Character, ſhall he proceed, *till he ſend*
 “ *forth*

19

20

(f) By *Iſaias the Prophet.*] I refer the Learned Reader to *Grotius*, and *Heinſius*, for the Difference between the Original, and the Quotation here, which chiefly lies in the Clause, of *ſending forth Judgment unto Victory.*

(g) *He ſhall not break a bruifed Reed, nor extinguish the ſmoking Flax.*] The im-
 mense Pains *Zegerus*, and ſome other Commentators have taken, to ſhew on what Ac-
 counts either the *Phariſees*, or the *Multitudes*, or the *Jews* or *Gentiles*, might be
 compared to a *bruifed Reed*, or *ſmoking Flax*, ſeem very wide of the Purpose. They
 ſeem to be only *Proverbial Expreſſions*, to ſignify a Perſon of a moſt gentle Character,
 (as I illuſtrate them above,) and ſomething reſemble the *Proverb* among the *Spaniſh*
Jews to the ſame Purpose; *If ſuch a one were to walk on a Pavement of Eggs, he would*
not break them. (See *Pol. Synopf. in loc.*) To ſuppoſe, with *Dr. Lightfoot*, it ſignifies
 he ſhall not make ſo much Noiſe, as breaking a *bruifed Reed* does, or pouring Water
 on *ſmoking Flax*, ſinks the Idea too low.

(h) Till

SECT. 51. " *forth Judgment to Victory (h)*, or till he
 Mat. XII. 21. " make his righteous Cause gloriously tri-
 " umphant over all Opposition. *And* 21 And in his Name shall
 " this gentle and gracious Administration the Gentiles trust.
 " shall charm Mankind in so sensible and
 " irresistible a Manner, that *the Gentiles shall*
 " *confide in his illustrious Name (i)*; and
 " distant, yea barbarous Nations, shall seek
 " their Refuge and Salvation in his Grace;
 " though Israel may ungratefully reject
 " him, and therefore be justly abandoned
 " by GOD."

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. xii. 17. SURELY *Face* does not more exactly answer to *Face in Water*,
 than the Character of *Christ* drawn by the *Prophet*, to his Tem-
 per and Conduct as described by the *Evangelists*. How should *Zion*
 rejoice, and the *Daughter of Jerusalem* shout, that such a *King com-*
eth unto her, meek, and having Salvation. (Zech. ix. 9.) Let us with
 Pleasure trace his *gentle Administration*, and with a chearful Confi-
 dence commit our Souls to so kind, and so faithful a Hand: Far
 Ver. 20. from *breaking*, he will strengthen *the bruised Reed*; far from *quench-*
ing the smoking Flax, he will rather blow it up into a Flame.

How well does it become the *Disciples of Christ*, and especially
 how well does it become his *Ministers*, to imitate what was so ami-
 able in their *Lord*, and not to *despise the Day of small Things!* Let
 Ver. 19. us not *strive, nor cry*; but laying aside all unnecessary Contentions,
 and angry Debates, let us *receive one another*, as *Christ hath received*
us; (Rom. xv. 7.) and avoiding all vain *Ostentation*, let us silently
 and

(h) *Till he send forth Judgment to Victory.*] *Isaiab* says, to *Truth*: And we may take
 the Words to signify, *till he make the Cause of Righteousness and Truth* compleatly
victorious; or, *till at length he take a righteous and speedy Vengeance*, on the *Jews* for
 rejecting him, to verify and fulfil the *Truth* of his Predictions. — I have expressed it
 in a Manner, which may suit *either*; but I think the *former* much preferable, since
 then the Words describe the general Character of *Christ's Administration* in all Ages;
 and especially, as it best agrees with the Sense of the *Original*: *He shall bring forth*
Judgment unto Truth: He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set, or esta-
blished, Judgment in the Earth: Which Phrases explain each other, and the Sense of
 each is abridged here.

(i) *And the Gentiles shall confide in his Name.*] *Isaiab's* saying, chap. xlii. 4. *The*
Ishles shall wait for his Law, is illustrated and explained, by this correspondent Phrase,
 which *Matthew* uses.

and meekly attend, each of us, to the Discharge of his proper Office. So may we hope, that the Cause of Religion will go on successfully around us, and that *Righteousness* will in due Time be brought forth to complete *Victory* over all Opposition, and by its own genuine Influences be happily established in the Earth.

The Gentiles trust in a Redeemer's Name, and the British Isles are numbered among those, that wait for his Law. May our Souls with humble Submission bow themselves to receive it, and observe it with such faithful Care and obedient Regards, that our Example, wherever it is seen, may promote the Reception of it, among those that as yet are Strangers to it!

S E C T. LII.

Our LORD having spent the Night in Prayer on a Mountain, in the Morning chuses the Twelve Apostles; and then comes down to the Multitude assembled in the Plain, and performs a great Number of Miracles among them. Luke VI. 12,—19. Mark III. 13,—19.—

LUKE VI. 12.

AND it came to pass in those Days, that he went out

LUKE VI. 12.

AND it came to pass, in those Days (a) of his Teaching near the Sea of Galilee, that Jesus seeing the general Notice which was taken of his Appearance, and the Inclination which Multitudes had to be farther informed concerning him, determined to chuse a Number of Persons, who should assist and succeed him in his Ministerial Work. And as the Office, to which he intended to assign them, was of so great Importance, even to the remotest Ages; previous to the

(a) In those Days.] There can be no Doubt of the Place of this Section, since this Choice of the Twelve Apostles is mentioned, both by Mark, and Luke, just in this Connection; and Matthew does not mention it at all, till he comes to speak of the Mission of the Twelve, which is plainly a different Thing, and happened some Time after. (Compare Luke ix. 1, 2. with Mat. x. 1,—5. Sect. 74.)

SECT. 52. the Choice of them, *he went forth to a neighbouring Mountain to pray: And his Heart* was so much enlarged on this momentous Occasion, that notwithstanding all the Labours of the preceding Day, he *continued all Night* at his Devotions, *in an Oratory* [devoted to the Service] of GOD (b), where he had some Opportunity of being sheltered by the Trees which were planted round it.

Luke VI. 12.

13 *And when it was Day*, early in the Morning, *he called his Disciples to him* [even] those whom he pleased; (compare John xv. 16.) and they cheerfully came to him upon his Summons: *And out of them he chose* [and] constituted Twelve (c), whom he also named his Apostles or Envoys; a Name, which well expressed the Office for which they were designed: These he now fixed upon, that for some Time they should continually be with him, not only to attend upon his Publick Ministry, but to enjoy the Benefit of his Private

out into a Mountain to pray, and continued all Night in Prayer to GOD. [MARK III. 13.—]

13 And when it was Day, he called unto him his Disciples, [whom he would; and they came unto him:] and of them he chose [and ordained] Twelve, whom also he named Apostles; [that they should be with him, and

(b) *In an Oratory* [devoted to the Service] of GOD; *in τῷ ἱερῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ.*] This is so singular an Expression, that I cannot agree with our Translation; but rather conclude with Drusus, Prideaux, Whitby, Hammond, and many other good Criticks, that we are to understand it of an Oratory, or Proseucha, or Prayer-House, as Dr. Watts chuses to render it, (in his late ingenious Discourse on the Holiness of Places, pag. 111.) and as the Word seems also to be used, Acts xvi. 13. (See Hammond, in loc.) Descriptions of these Places may be found in most Writers of Jewish Antiquities, and in none that I know of, better than in Calmet, (at the Word Proseuche,) and in Prideaux's Connection, vol. i. pag. 387,—389. It is well known, they were open at the Top, and planted round with Trees; as well as often situate by the Side of Seas, or Rivers, as was probably the Case here. I did not chuse, with Dr. Whitby, to render it, in GOD's House of Prayer, that Phrase having been so peculiarly appropriated to the Temple. See Mat. xxi. 13.

(c) *Constituted Twelve.*] So I chuse to render *συνεταξα*, rather than *ordained*; *Ordination to the Ministry*, carrying along with it an Idea, by no means suiting what passed now, which was so long before their entering on the Office. The Word is used elsewhere, for *appointing to an Office*; 1 Sam. xii. 6. Gr. and Heb. iii. 2.—It is probable, our Lord chose Twelve Apostles, in Reference to the Twelve Tribes of Israel; (see Mat. xix. 28. Luke xxii. 30. Rev. xxi. 12, 14. and compare Exod. xxiv. 4. Deut. i. 23. and Josh. iv. 2, 3.) and therefore Care was taken, on the Death of Judas, to chuse another to make up the Number: (Acts i. 21, 22, 26.) Which seems to have been a Piece of Respect paid to the Jews, previous to the grand Offer of the Gospel to them; whereas when they had generally rejected it, Two more, Paul and Barnabas, were added, without any Regard to the particular Number of Twelve.

6

(d) H

and that he might send them forth to preach;] [MARK III.—13, 14.]

Private Conversation; that he might furnish them the better for the great Work, in which they were to be employed; and that at length, after suitable Preparation, he might, with more Advantage, send them abroad to preach his Gospel, and thereby make Way for his own Visits to some more distant Parts, where he had not yet been. And to enable them the more effectually to do it, he determined that they should then have Power, to heal Distempers, and to cast out Demons from those unhappy People who were possessed by them; well knowing, such Endowments would command a Regard, notwithstanding the Meanness of their Appearance.

SECT. 52.
Luke VI. 13.

MARK III. 15. And to have Power to heal Sicknesses, and to cast out Devils.

16 And Simon he surnamed Peter; [LUKE VI. 14.—]

And the Twelve Persons, who were so signally honoured by him, and whose Names (excepting that of Judas Iscariot,) will be ever venerable in the Christian Church, as being next to Christ the great Foundations of it, (Eph. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14.) were these: Simon, whom (it has been observed before, John i. 42. pag. 136.) he surnamed Peter (d), that is, a Rock, on Account of his remarkable Steadiness and Intrepidity of Temper, (see Isa. 1. 7.) as well as the peculiar Use to be made of him: And James [the Son] of Zebedee, the Fisherman, and John the beloved Disciple, who was the Brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which signifies, Sons of Thunder (e); thereby intimating, with what victorious and resistless Power they should bear down all Opposition, and with divine Eloquence and mighty Miracles,

16

17 And James the Son of Zebedee, and John the Brother of James; (and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The Sons of Thunder;) [LUKE VI.—14.—]

17

con-

(d) He surnamed Peter.] To surname, here plainly signifies, to give an additional Name; *κατακαλεῖται τὸν Σίμων πέτρον Πέτρον.*

(e) Boanerges, which signifies, Sons of Thunder.] As it stands in this Form, it is plainly a Corruption of בני רעש, *Beni regeb.* Considering the remarkable Gentleness of John's Temper, and Manner of Writing, it is more reasonable to interpret this Title, as in the Paraphrase; than to refer it to any thing peculiarly awful or awakening, in their Manner of Address, beyond what was to be found in the other Apostles.

SECT. 52. confound the Enemies of his Gospel: *And*
 Mark III. 18. *Andrew, and Philip*, of whose first Acquaintance with Christ we were before informed; (John i. 40, 43.) *and Bartholomew; and Matthew*, or *Levi*, who had lately been called from the infamous Employment of a Publican; (Mat. ix. 9. pag. 297.) *and Thomas*, who was also called *Didymus*, as having a *Twin-Brother*; *and James [the Son] of Alphaeus*, called *James the Less*; (Mark xv. 40.) *and Lebbeus*, whose Sirname was *Thaddeus*, and who was [*also called*] *Judas*, or *Jude*, [*the Brother*] of *James (f)*; *and Simon the Cananite*, called also *Zelotes (g)*, or the *Zealot*, as having before professed a distinguishing Zeal for the Law: *And*, worthy of being mentioned in the last Place, or rather unworthy of being mentioned at all, otherwise than with the greatest Abhorrence, was *Judas Iscariot*, or a *Man of Carioth*, (Josh. xv. 25.) that infamous abandoned Wretch, *who also was the Traitor, that afterwards*

18 *And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the Son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus, [or Judas the Brother of James,] and Simon the Canaanite, [called Zelotes;] [LUKE VI.—14, 15, 16.—]*

19—*And Judas Iscariot, [which also was the Traitor,]*

(f) *Lebbeus*, whose Sirname was *Thaddeus*, and who was also called *Judas*, or *Jude*, *the Brother of James.*] That this Person had all these Names, appears from comparing the Catalogues given us in the Places before us, and in *Mat. x. 2,—4.* and *Acts i. 13.* *Lebbeus* being derived from לב, which signifies the *Heart*, and *Thaddeus* probably from תד, a *Syrochaldaic* Word, which, as some Criticks tell us, signifies *the Breast*, *from* equivalent Names, and may signify *the hearty Judas*; perhaps, to distinguish him from that *other Judas*, whose faithless *Breast*, and foul *Heart*, had brought a Kind of Infamy on the Name; so that neither *Matthew*, nor *Mark*, use it when speaking of this Apostle, and *John* takes particular Care to prevent the Confusion, which might arise from the Ambiguity of it. *John xiv. 22.*

(g) *Simon the Cananite, called also Zelotes.*] It is Matter of some Doubt with me, whether he was called *the Cananite*, as being a Native of *Cana in Galilee*, as some have thought; or whether it be derived, as *Dr. Hammond* thinks, from the Hebrew קנז, *Kanah*, and signifies the same with *Zelotes*. But tho' we have many Instances of extraordinary Zeal, in *Phinebas*, *Elijah*, the *Maccabees*, &c. and read in ancient *Jewish Writers* of the *Judgment of Zeal*, by which *Stephen* was murdered, *Paul* assaulted, &c. yet I cannot find any Set of Men, distinguished by that Name, till mentioned by *Josephus*, (*Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 3. (al. 5.) §. 9.*) a little before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. If *Simon* had the additional Name of *Zelotes* given him, on Account of his personal Zeal for the Law, (which is possible,) he might probably be a *Pharisee*: But *Mr. Fleming's* Conjecture, that he was the *Father of Judas Iscariot*, who is called *the Son of Simon*, (*John xii. 4.*) seems very precarious, considering how common the Name of *Simon* was. See *Fleming's Christology, vol. ii. pag. 167.*

(h) *That*

tor,] which also betrayed him.—[LUKE VI.—16.]

wards was so ungrateful to his Lord, that he SECT. 52.
even betrayed him (b) into the Hands of his Mark III. 19.
 bloody Enemies: He had professed himself
 with secular and worldly Views a Disciple of
 Christ; and tho' our Lord well knew him,
 yet as his Character was free from any visi-
 ble Ground of Suspicion, in order to accom-
 plish what was delivered in the Sacred Ora-
 cles, he was pleased to invest him with this
 holy Office, and to place him among his
 Apostles. (Compare John xiii. 18.)

LUKE VI. 17. And he came down with them, and stood in the Plain, and the Company of his Disciples, and a great Multitude of People out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the Sea-Coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their Diseases;

And after he had acquainted these Twelve Luke VI. 17.
 Persons with his Design, and had given them
 such private Instructions, as he judged con-
 venient, to render their Attendance upon
 him subservient to the Execution of their im-
 portant Office, *he came down from the Moun-
 tain with them, and stood in the neighbouring
 Plain: And as the Morning was now pretty
 far advanced, the Croud of his Disciples [ga-
 thered round him;] and besides those that
 had followed him for some Time, and were
 now persuaded of his Divine Mission, there
 was also still waiting upon him (as we ob-
 served above, Mark iii. 7, 8. pag. 333.) a
 great Multitude of People from all Parts of
 Judea, and particularly from Jerusalem, and
 even from the Shore of Tyre and Sidon, which
 lay on the Mediterranean Sea; who came to
 bear him, and to be healed of their Diseases:
 And they also who were infested with unclean
 and wicked Spirits (i), made their Applica-
 tion to him; and they were cured of the ter-
 rible*

18 And they that were vexed with unclean Spirits: and they were healed.

18

(b) *That even betrayed him.*] It is plain, that *now* has great Force here, if it be rendered *even*; or else it seems a mere *Expletive*.

(i) *Unclean Spirits.*] It seems to me an excessive Refinement, in the learned *Editors of the Prussian Testament*, to distinguish, (as they do in their *Note on Mat. x. 1.*) *unclean Spirits*, from other *evil Spirits*, which might possess Men; supposing the Word, only to signify such Kind of *Spirits*, as drove Men to *dwell among the Tombs*, by which they became *ceremonially unclean*. How little it can be supported from *Luke iv. 33.* see the *Note there, pag. 221.* It is evident, *unclean*, and *evil Spirits*, are generally used as nearly *synonymous Terms*, referring to the *moral Impurity* and *Malignity* of their *Natures*. Compare *Mat. xii. 43. Luke xi. 24. and Rev. xvi. 13, 14.*

SECT. 52. rible Disorders, which those malignant Be-
 ings occasioned. *And the whole Multitude*
 Luke VI. 19. of these unhappy People endeavoured at least
to touch him; for so extraordinary were the
 Miracles of this Day, that in some Instances,
 where our Lord did not so much as take any
 apparent Notice of the Case, yet *there went*
 a Divine, tho' secret, *Virtue out of him, and*
 wrought so powerfully on those that touch-
 ed him, that it *healed them all*, how desperate
 soever their Distempers were.

19 And the whole Mul-
 titude sought to touch him;
 for there went Virtue out of
 him, and healed them all.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Luke vi. 13. **W**HEN we consider how much the Church in all Ages has
 been indebted to the Labours of *the Apostles*, and how much
 we ourselves owe to them, we shall see great Reason of Thankful-
 ness to our wise and gracious Master, who was pleased to assign this
 Work to his Servants, and so eminently to qualify them for it. It is
 Mark iii. 14. observable, that *before he sent them forth*, he chose them to *be with*
him, in a more constant Attendance on his Person and Ministry.
 May all who succeed them, as *Preachers of the Gospel*, be such, as
 have intimately *known Christ* themselves, and have been accustomed
 to spiritual Converse *with him*; that they may with the greater Abil-
 ity, Zeal, and Efficacy, recommend him to others!

Luke vi. 12. We may assure ourselves, that these, his future *Ministers*, had no
 inconsiderable Share in those *Petitions*, in which with unabating
 Fervour, and Intenseness of Devotion, *our Redeemer* spent this me-
 morable *Night*. And if we have any Regard for the Support of
 Religion in the rising Age, let us likewise be earnestly *praying*, both
 for them that are already *in the Ministry*, and for such as are *pre-*
paring for it. This surely ought to be the frequent Care, not only
 of those who have the *tremendous Charge of educating such*, as are
 e'er long to be intrusted with the Honour of the Gospel, and the
 Care of Souls; but of those who are now struggling with the glo-
 rious Labours and Trials of that important Office; and even of all
 those *private Christians*, who cordially love the Interest of their
 Master, and wish the Salvation of their Fellow-Creatures.

Let us unite our Cries to him, who has engaged to be *always*
with his Church, even to the End of the World, and say, "Light up,
 " O Lord, a brighter and a stronger Flame in the Lamps of thy
 " Sanctu-

“ Sanctuary! Polish these Arrows of thy Quiver, that they may SECT. 52.
 “ pierce deep into the Consciences of Men! Let thy *Priests* be
 “ clothed with Salvation, that thy *Saints* may shout aloud for Joy!
 “ And pour forth upon them so plenteous an *Uction* of thine
 “ *Holy Spirit*, that the Odours of thy Grace may by their Means
 “ be diffused around, throughout all thy Tabernacles; like that of
 “ the fragrant *Oil*, which was poured on *the Head of Aaron*, in
 “ such rich Abundance, that it not only ran down on his *Beard*,
 “ but reached even to *the Skirts of his Garments*! Amen, and
 “ Amen.”

S E C T. LIII.

CHRIST in the Audience of his new chosen Disciples, and of the Multitude, repeats in the Plain many remarkable Passages of his Sermon before delivered on the Mount. Luke VI. 20,—36.

LUKE VI. 20.

AND he lifted up his Eyes on his Disciples, and said, Blessed be ye Poor; for yours

LUKE VI. 20.

AND [Jesus] lifting up his Eyes on his SECT. 53.
 Disciples, who surrounded him, and Luke VI. 20.
 more especially directing them to his Apostles whom he had lately chosen, said unto them (a), *Happy are you*, who are enriched with

(a) Said unto them.] Hardly any Thing, that I have observed in the common Harmonies, surprizes me more, than that so many of them make *this Discourse*, to be the very *Sermon on the Mount*, recorded at large by *Matthew* in his fifth, sixth, and seventh Chapters. That was delivered by *Christ*, sitting on a Mountain; (*Mat. v. 1.*) *this*, (as it seems from *ver. 17.*) standing in a Plain; and, which weighs yet much more with me, there is such a Difference in the Expression, when the parallel Passages come to be compared, that it seems evident, the *Evangelists* have not related it exactly, if they meant to give us the same. On the other Hand, there appears not the least Difficulty in supposing, that *Christ* might here repeat a Part, of what he had delivered some Months before, to another Auditory, and probably at some greater Distance, than just in the same Neighbourhood: (See *Note (b)* on *Luke v. 12.* pag. 287. and *Note (b)* on *Mat. v. 1.* pag. 232.) For it is plain from other Instances, that this is nothing more, than what he often had Occasion to do. (Compare *Mat. ix. 32,—34.* with *Mat. xii. 22,—24.*—and *xvi. 21.* with *xvii. 22, 23.* and *xx. 17,—19.*) And indeed, since it is certain from *Mat. vii. 28, 29.* that what that *Evangelist* has recorded as the *Sermon on the Mount*, was all delivered at once, they who suppose *this* the

SECT. 53.
 Luke VI. 20.

with Divine Knowledge and Grace, though your Circumstances in this World are *Poor* and mean; *for the Kingdom of GOD* in all its transcendent and eternal Glories *is yours*, and you are hastening on to the full Possession of it. *Happy are you, who are now Hungry*, and destitute of all the comfortable Accommodations of Life, if you feel that nobler Appetite, by which the religious Soul longs after Improvements in Holiness (*b*); *for you shall e'er long be filled* with the most substantial and valuable Blessings. *Happy are you, who now mourn* under a Sense of Sin, or under that wholesome Discipline of Affliction, by which GOD reduces his wandering Children, and trains them up to superior Virtue; *for all your Sorrow shall pass away like a Dream, and you shall e'er long laugh* and rejoice, in a complete Deliverance from it. (See Mat. v. 4.) *Happy are you, when Men shall hate you, and persecute you; when they shall separate you [from their Assemblies] (c)*, as unworthy of Communion with them; *and shall reproach you* in their private Conversation, *and cast out your Names* as infamously *evil* in their publick Acts of Civil or Ecclesiastical Judgment, *on Account of your professed Adherence to the Son of Man*: (See John ix. 22, 34.) For that glorious and sacred Person is able abundantly to repay

yours is the Kingdom of GOD.

21 Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh.

22 Blessed are ye, when Men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their Company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your Name as evil, for the Son of Mans Sake:

the *very same*, must grant, that great Part of it was *repeated* at different Times, and on different Occasions. (See Note (*e*) on Mat. vii. 28. pag. 285.) Dr. *Whitby*, and Mr. *Blair*, agree with me in this Account of the Matter, chiefly on the Reasons I have here assigned.

(*b*) *Who are now hungry*,—if you feel that nobler Appetite, &c.] Compare Note (*g*), on Mat. v. 6. pag. 234. And let it be observed in general, that the Sense of the more *dubious Expressions* in this Discourse, may be much illustrated, by comparing *parallel Passages* in the *Sermon on the Mount*; to which I have accordingly referred, not judging it necessary to repeat in the *Notes* here, what I had said there.

(*c*) *Separate you from their Assemblies.*] *Grotius's* excellent *Note* on this Clause, well deserves a most attentive Reading, containing a most learned *Dissertation* on the various Kinds of *Excommunication* among the *Jews*.

23 Rejoice ye in that Day, and leap for Joy ; for behold, your Reward is great in Heaven : for in the like Manner did their Fathers unto the Prophets.

repay all you can suffer for him : And therefore, far from being dismayed and overwhelmed with Trouble and Distress at such Abuses and Assaults, *be glad in that Day, and with holy Alacrity even leap for Joy ; for behold, your Reward in Heaven is great,* in Proportion to your Sufferings on Earth: *For thus their Fathers did to the Prophets* of old, who now are in Seats of distinguished Glory. (See Mat. v. 11, 12.)

SECT. 53.
Luke VI. 23.

24 But *Woe* unto you that are Rich ; for ye have received your Consolation.

But there is, generally speaking (*d*), Cause to denounce a *Woe* to you who are Rich ; for so insnaring are the Circumstances in which you are placed, that it is much to be feared, *you have* already received all your Consolation, (compare Luke xvi. 25.) and will be so taken up with the transient Pleasures of Time, as to forget and forfeit everlasting Blessedness.

24

25 *Woe* unto you that are Full ; for ye shall hunger. *Woe* unto you that laugh now ; for ye shall mourn and weep.

There is generally Reason to say, *Woe* unto you, who are now filled to the full, and pampered with all the most luxurious Dainties ; for you shall e'er long suffer Hunger, and fall into a State of Indigence and Misery, aggravated by all the Plenty which you have enjoyed and abused. *Woe* unto you, who spend your Lives in Mirth and Gaiety, and are so vain as now to laugh off every solemn and awful Thought ; for you have Reason to expect a Portion in those doleful Regions, where without Intermision and without End you shall mourn and lament.

25

26 *Woe* unto you, when all Men shall speak well of you ; for so did their Fathers to the false Prophets.

And again, I may generally say, in so corrupt an Age as this, *Woe* unto you, when all Men speak well of you ; for such universal Applause is seldom to be gained without sinful Compliances, and thus did their Fathers to the false Prophets of old, who

26

foothed

(*d*) Generally speaking.] Compare Mat. xix. 23, 24. It is most evident, that such Expressions as these in Scripture, are to be taken with some Limitations ; otherwise they would be contrary to Fact, in some Instances.

SECT. 53. *foothed them in their Idolatries and other Crimes, with smooth Addresses, and vain Assurances of Security and Happiness.*
 Luke VI. 26.

27 You, my Disciples, if you would approve your Fidelity to GOD and to me, must act in a very different Manner, by which you will certainly expose yourselves to Hatred and Persecution: *But I say unto you, and to all that hear me this Day, Far from entertaining Sentiments of Malice and Purposes of Revenge, Love even your Enemies; and do Good to them that hate you; Bless them, that in the Malignity of their Hearts revile and curse you; and cordially and fervently pray for them, that most spitefully harass and abuse you.* (See Mat. v. 44.)

29 And as ever you would attain to such exalted Degrees of Fortitude and Goodness, accustom yourselves patiently to bear the common Injuries of Life, which a false Sense of Honour and Interest renders so much more intolerable, than they really are. *If, for Instance, a Man smite thee on the [one] Cheek, rather than return the Blow, offer also the other to him; and if he take away thy Mantle, do not by Violence attempt to hinder him [from taking] also thy Vest.* (See the Notes on Mat. v. 39. pag. 252.)

30 I would also charge it upon you, to labour after a diffusive Liberality, as well as exemplary Meekness: Be ready then to *give to every one that asketh thee* for an Alms, where thou hast Reason to believe it is Charity to do it; *and from him that taketh away thy Possessions* in an injurious Manner, *do not immediately demand them back* in the Forms of Law; but rather endeavour, by gentler Methods, to reduce the Offender to Reason.

31 And do not by any Means imagine, that the Injuries you receive from others will cancel the Bonds of common Humanity to them;

27 But I say unto you which hear, *Love your Enemies; do Good to them which hate you;*

28 Bless them that curse you; and pray for them which despitefully use you.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* Cheek, offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy Cloak, forbid not to take thy Coat also.

30 Give to every Man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy Goods, ask them not again.

31 And as ye would that Men

And thus we shall appear to be Children of G O D.

Men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

them ; but *as you would* reasonably desire SECT. 53.
Luke VI. 31.
that Men should do to you, do you also in like Manner to them, and by putting yourselves, as it were, in their Places, endeavour to form your Minds to an impartial Judgment. (See Note on Mat. vii. 12. pag. 278.)

32 For if ye love them which love you, what Thank have ye ? for Sinners also love those that love them.

And indeed if you only love them that love you, what great Thanks are due to you upon that Account? For there are some Sentiments of Gratitude common even to the worst of Men, which incline the most scandalous Sinners, to love those that love them, and to profess an affectionate Regard for those, by whom they have been treated with Respect and Kindness.

33 And if ye do Good to them which do Good to you, what Thank have ye ? for Sinners also do even the same.

And if you do good Offices only to them that are your Benefactors, what mighty Thanks are due to you for that ? For even the most infamous Sinners, either from Instinct, or from mere Self-Love, may often be observed to do the same. (Compare Mat. v. 46, 47. pag. 255.)

34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what Thank have ye ? for Sinners also lend to Sinners, to receive as much again.

And if you lend only to them, from whom you hope to receive, and that, perhaps, with considerable Advantage to yourselves, what Favour do you shew in that, or what extraordinary Thanks are due to you on that Account? For even the greatest Sinners lend to other Sinners like themselves, that when there is Occasion, they may receive the like Assistance in Return from them.

35 But love ye your Enemies, and do Good, and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your Reward shall be great, and ye shall be the Children of the Highest:

But I exhort you to love your Enemies, and to do Good, and lend in Cases of great Necessity, even when you can hope for nothing again (e): And so your Reward in Heaven will be great, and you will appear to be the Sons of the most High God; for in the Course of

(e) *When you can hope for nothing again.*] I cannot think, (as *De Dieu*, and some others have done, agreeably to the *Syriac* and *Arabic Versions*;) that *under consideration* should be rendered, *causing none to despair*; since neither the *Phrase itself*, nor the *Opposition* in which it stands to *ver. 34.* will admit such an Interpretation. See *Dr. J. W. Patby's* Note here:

SECT. 53. of his daily Providence *he is kind to the Ungrateful and Evil*, causing the undeserved

for he is kind unto the Unthankful, and to the Evil.

Luke VI. 35. Benefits of the Sun and Rain to descend upon them, and filling their insensible Hearts with Food and Gladness. (Compare Mat. v.

36 44, 45. and Acts xiv. 17.) *Be ye therefore merciful, as he also whom you call your Heavenly Father is merciful*; and unto whom indeed you cannot stand related as his Children, if you have no Concern to imitate, and to obey him. (Compare Mat. v. 48. pag. 255.)

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Luke vi. 20. **H**OW necessary is it, that our forgetful Hearts should have *Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept*? If *Christ* did not think it improper to *repeat this Discourse*, surely it will not be needless for us to *renew our Attention* to it. Oh that every Word of it were *engraven on our Hearts, as with the Point of a Diamond*, that we might learn, in spite of all the foolish Wisdom of this World, to form ourselves on these Maxims, as the surest Guide to present, and to eternal Felicity!

V. 21,—26. *Our Lord* again pronounces the *Poor* and the *Hungry*, the *Mournful* and the *Persecuted*, *happy*; and represents those as *miserable*, who are *Rich* and *Full*, *Joyous* and *Applauded*: Not that this is universally the Case; but because prosperous Circumstances are so frequently a sweet Poison, and Affliction a healing, though bitter Medicine. Let the Thought reconcile us to *Adversity*; and awaken our Caution, when the *World smiles* upon us; when a *plentiful Table* is spread before us, and our *Cup runneth over*; when our *Spirits* are *gay* and *sprightly*; or, when we hear, what to corrupted Nature is too harmonious *Musick*, that of *our own Praise* from Men. Oh that we may secure, what is of infinitely greater Importance, the *Praise of our Heavenly Master*, by a constant obediencial Regard to these his Precepts!

V. 27,—34. May we be happy Proficients, in the Art of *bearing*, and *forgiving Injuries*! May we be *ready to every good Word and Work*? maintaining an *Eye* quick to observe, a *Heart* tender to feel, a *Hand* open to relieve, the *Calamities* and *Necessities*, of *Friends*, of *Strangers*, and of *Enemies*: *Giving* to some; and where, perhaps, there may

may be little Prospect of a Return, *lending* to others; which, if SECT. 53. it engage them to greater Industry, is as real a Benefit, as if the *Loan* were a *Gift*.

On the whole, let us not presume to call GOD *our Father*, if Ver. 35, 36. we do not labour to *resemble him*; nor dare to challenge the peculiar Honour and Privileges of *Christ's Disciples*, if we do not distinguish ourselves from others, by the *Charity* of our *Tempers*, and the *Usefulness* of our *Lives*, as well as by the *Articles* of our *Faith*, and the *Forms* of our *Worship*.

S E C T. LIV.

Our LORD goes on to repeat many remarkable Passages of his Sermon on the Mount, with some proper Additions relating to the same Subjects. Luke VI. 37, to the End.

LUKE VI. 37.

JUDGE not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.

LUKE VI. 37.

JUDGE not others with Rigour and Severity, and you may hope, that you shall not yourselves be judged with that Severity, which you must otherwise expect from GOD, and which the most innocent and virtuous Characters would not be able to bear: *Condemn not others with a rash Censoriousness, and you shall not be condemned: Forgive others their Offences, and if you do it from a truly religious Principle (a), you shall also be forgiven by GOD those Offences against him, which are infinitely greater than any you can possibly receive from your Fellow-Creatures. (See Mat. vii. 1. pag. 274.)*

SECT. 54.
Luke VI. 37.

Give

(a) If you do it from a truly religious Principle.] This must be supposed, to make it consistent with those Passages, in which *Love to GOD*, and *Faith in Christ*, as well as other Branches of the *Christian Temper*, are insisted upon as so absolutely necessary, that without them the greatest *Lenity* and *Indulgence* to our Fellow-Creatures, cannot give us a Claim to the Promises of Pardon and Salvation.

350. *The Danger of following blind and ignorant Teachers.*

SECT. 54.
Luke VI. 38.

Give liberally to those that need your Assistance, and it shall be given back to you in a rich Abundance; for it will gain you so much Love and Respect, that GOD will so influence Mens Hearts in your Favour, that Men shall, as it were, pour into your Lap (b) good Measure, Blessings pressed down, and shaken together, and even running over: For it may be taken as a general Rule, that by the same Measure that you measure with to others, it will in Return be measured back to you. (See Mat. vii. 2. pag. 275.)

39 He spake also at the same Time a Parable to them, (which he afterwards repeated, Mat. xv. 14.) to caution them against submitting with an implicit Faith to the Conduct of ignorant or vicious Men, who might set up for religious Teachers; and said, *Can the Blind undertake to guide the Blind? Will they not both in such a Case be likely to fall into a Pit, or Ditch, which may happen to lie in their Way?* And in like Manner, you have nothing to expect, from following such

40 Men, but to perish with them. There is little Reason to hope, that under their Instruction, you should be wiser and better than they: For it is, you know, a common Proverb, that *the Scholar is not above his Teacher; but* all that can reasonably be expected is, that every one who is a finished [Scholar] should come up to him that teaches him, and it is this that he will principally aim at, to be as his Master: It is of great Importance therefore, that you should well consider whom you take to be your Teachers; for it is necessary, that your Righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, if you expect

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good Measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall Men give into your Bosom: For with the same Measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.

39 And he spake a Parable unto them, Can the Blind lead the Blind? shall they not both fall into the Ditch?

40 The Disciple is not above his Master; but every one that is perfect, shall be as his Master.

(b) *Into your Lap.*] Here is an evident Reference to the *Mantles*, which the Jews wore, into which a considerable Quantity of Corn might be received. Compare *Ruth* iii. 15. *2 Kings* iv. 39. *Neh.* v. 13. *Prov.* xvi. 33.

pect a Share in the Kingdom of Heaven. SECT. 54.
(See Mat. v. 20. and x. 24, 25.)

41 And why beholdest thou the Mote that is in thy Brothers Eye; but perceivest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye?

42 Either how canst thou say to thy Brother, Brother, let me pull out the Mote that is in thine Eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye? Thou Hypocrite, cast out first the Beam out of thine own Eye, and then shalt thou see clearly, to pull out the Mote that is in thy Brothers Eye.

43 For a good Tree bringeth not forth corrupt Fruit; neither doth a corrupt Tree bring forth good Fruit.

44 For every Tree is known by his own Fruit: for of Thorns Men do not gather Figs, nor of a Bramble-bush gather they Grapes.

Yet on the other Hand, I would not have you to be forward in blaming them, or any other, while you neglect a due Regulation of your own Temper and Conduct; for why dost thou look at the little Mote which is in thy Brother's Eye, and observest not the much greater Disorder, which is like a Beam in thine own Eye? Or how canst thou with

any Decency, or to any Purpose, say to thy Brother, Brother, hold still, [and] I will take out the Mote which is in thine Eye; while thou art at the same Time so blind and partial, that thou seest not the Beam which is in thine own Eye? Thou Hypocrite, who falsely pretendest that Zeal for the Honour of Religion, which while thou art thus careless of thyself thou canst not really have, first cast out the Beam from thine own Eye, and then thou wilt discern, [how] to take out the Mote that is in thy Brother's Eye; which is an Office, that requires greater Wisdom and Conduct, than in thy present Circumstances thou canst be supposed to have. (See the Notes on Mat. vii. 3, 4. pag. 275.)

Till thou shalt thus reform thyself, there is not much to be expected from thine Endeavours to reform others: For as there is no good Tree, which produces bad Fruit; so neither is there any bad Tree, which produces good Fruit: For all the World is agreed, that every Tree is to be known by its proper Fruit: Men, for Instance (c), do not gather Figs of Thorns, nor do they gather a Cluster of Grapes from a Bramble. (Compare Mat. vii. 16. pag. 280.)

And

(c) Men, for Instance.] This is one of those many Places where the Word *pro* (for) has not its usual Signification, of introducing the Reason of something before asserted, but merely intimates an Illustration of it.

SECT. 54. And indeed, where Men converse with any Degree of Intimacy, they may be known, and judged of by their Words, as well as by their Actions: *A good Man* maintaining an habitual Sense of the Divine Presence, and feeling in his own Soul a Spring of habitual and diffusive Benevolence to his Fellow-Creatures, naturally *produces that which is good, out of the good Treasure of Grace and Love, which is laid up in his Heart: And on the other Hand, a bad Man out of the bad Treasure of evil Principles and corrupt Affections, which is laid up in his Heart, produces that which is bad, which often breaks out before he is aware, and discovers his Character, even contrary to his Intention: For his Mouth naturally speaks from the Overflowing of the Heart, and no Man has so much Artifice as to command it entirely, so that it shall never discover itself in some unguarded Moment.* (Compare Mat. xii. 34, 35. Sect. 62.)

46 Yet remember, it is not merely by Mens Words, that their Character will finally be judged, *and their Estate fixed; especially, that it will not be determined by a few pious and devotional Forms of Speech, which in themselves are of very little Worth: For why do you call me, Lord, Lord, or what imaginable Purpose does that Profession serve, if in your Practice you are regardless of my Will, and do not the Things which I say, and command, to all that call themselves my Disciples?* (Compare Mat. vii. 21.)

47 This is a Vanity, of which I have formerly warned you; and to repeat the Warning, *I will shew you, on the one Hand, to whom that Man is like, who comes to me, and bears my Words, and practises agreeably to them; and on the other Hand, to whom it is that he may be resembled, who hears my Words,*

45 A good Man out of the good Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth that which is good: and an evil Man out of the evil Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the Abundance of the Heart his Mouth speaketh.

46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the Things which I say?

47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my Sayings, and doth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:

48 He is like a Man; which built an House, and digged deep, and laid the Foundation on a Rock; and when the Flood arose, the Stream beat vehemently upon that House, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a Rock.

Words, and doth them not. As to the former, *he is like a Prudent Man, that built an House on the River Side; and considering the Importance of the Undertaking, and the Difficulty of the Situation, dug deep thro' the Sand, and Marle, and Gravel, till he came to the solid Stone, and placed the Foundation of his House upon a Rock; and afterwards he was abundantly repaid for all his Labour and Expencc; for when the Inundation came, the Current of the River with an impetuous Torrent violently broke upon that House, and yet was not able to shake it; because it was founded upon a Rock: Thus securely will the practical Hearer stand the Shock of Temptations, and the Trial of Death, and of the Judgment-Day. But on the other Hand, he that bears my Words, and does not practise them, is like a Foolish Man, that built an House on the bare Surface of the Ground, without any Care to secure a Foundation; against which the impetuous Stream did violently break with the same Fury, and being unable to withstand the Shock, it presently fell down; and the Ruin of that House was irreparably great, and its Inhabitants were all crushed under it. (Compare Mat. vii. 24,—27. Sect. 43.)*

SECT. 54.
Luke VI. 48.

49

49 But he that heareth, and doth not, is like a Man, that without a Foundation built an House upon the Earth, against which the Stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the Ruin of that House was great.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

LET a frequent Reflection on our own Faults, teach us *Candor*; Luke vi. 37. and let a Sense of our continued Dependance on the Divine Liberality, make us *liberal* towards those that need our Assistance; lest we lose the Comforts so justly forfeited, and *abused Mercies* be another Day repaid with *Measures of Wrath, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.* Ver. 38.

We are another Day to give an Account of ourselves before GOD; let us then judge for ourselves in Matters of Religion, and be very careful, that we do not stupidly follow *blind Guides*, till we *fall with them* into Destruction. “Lead us, O Lord, in the Way everlasting!” Ver. 39.

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“Form

- SECT. 54. " Form us to a more perfect *Resemblance* of our great *Master* !
 Luke vi. 40. " Make us *severe to ourselves*, and, so far as it is real *Charity*, *indulgent to others* ! Sanctify our *Hearts* by thy *Grace*, that they
 V. 41,—44. " may be as *Trees bringing forth good Fruit*, or as *Fountains pouring out wholesome Streams* ! *There* may a *good Treasure* be laid
 Ver. 45. " up, from whence *good Things* may be abundantly produced !
 " *There* may those holy and benevolent *Affections* continually spring
 " up, which may flow forth with unaffected *Freedom*, to refresh
 " the *Souls*, and animate the *Graces*, of all that are around us !"
 V. 46,—49. May these beautiful, striking, repeated *Admonitions*, which our *Saviour* gives us, of the *Vanity* of every *Profession*, which does not influence the *Practice*, be attended to with *Reverence* and *Fear* ! We are *building for Eternity* ; may we never grudge the *Time* and *Labour*, of a most serious *Enquiry* into the great *Fundamental Principles* of *Religion* ! May we discover *the sure Foundation*, and raise upon it a noble *Superstructure*, which shall stand fair and glorious, when *Hypocrites* are swept away into everlasting *Ruin*, in that *awful Day*, in which *Heaven and Earth shall flee away from the Face of him that sits upon the Throne* ! (*Rev. xx. 11.*)

S E C T. LV.

CHRIST, after preaching in the Plain, goes to Capernaum, and miraculously cures, even at a Distance, the Centurion's Servant, that was sick of a Palsy. Luke VII. 1,—10. Mat. VIII. 5,—13.

LUKE VII. I.

SECT. 55. IN the Two former Sections we have heard the excellent Discourse that Jesus made ; and now when he had finished all these his Sayings, which, tho' immediately addressed to his Disciples, he had delivered in the Hearing of the People, who stood round him in the Plain, having dismissed the Assembly, he quickly after entered into Capernaum again.

2 And at that Time the Servant of a certain Roman Officer in that City, (called a Centu-

LUKE VII. I.

NOW when he had ended all his Sayings in the Audience of the People, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain Centurion's Servant, who was dear unto

unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, [when Jesus was entered into Capernaum,] he [came unto him; *having first*] sent unto him the Elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come, and heal his Servant: [MAT. VIII. 5.]

MAT. VIII. 6. And saying, Lord, my Servant lieth at Home sick of the Palsy, grievously tormented.

LUKE VII. 4. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this;

5 For he loveth our Nation,

(a) *He came to him.*] It is very plain from Luke's larger and more circumstantial Representation of the Case, that *the Centurion* did not come at first in his own Person; (see Luke vii. 6, 7.) but he might properly be said to do that, which he directed *the Elders* to do in his Name: And nothing is more frequent even to this Day, in our Courts of Law, than to say that a Person comes into the Court, and asks a Thing, which he asks perhaps only at third Hand, by the Council, whom his Solicitor has employed in his Cause.

(b) *Worthy of this Favour.*] By far the greater Number of Copies read it, as it stands

Centurion, from his having the Command of a Company of Soldiers consisting of a Hundred Men,) *who was dear to his Master, and greatly esteemed by him, was exceeding ill, and in great Danger of Death.* And bearing of Jesus, when he entered into Capernaum, where the Nobleman's Son was miraculously cured by him at a Distance; (John iv. 46. Sect. 31.) such was the Faith of the Centurion in his Power to help him, that *he came to him* (a) with a very humble and respectful Application; which indeed he did not directly presume to make in his own Person, [*but first*] sent unto him the Elders of the Jews, or some of the most considerable of them that dwelt in this City, in whom his Generosity had procured a considerable Interest; humbly intreating him by them, that he would condescend to come, and set him free from the Distress that he was in, not doubting his Ability to heal his Servant: And saying, Lord, my faithful and beloved Servant lies at Home in [my] House in a very deplorable Condition, being seized with the Palsy; which, though it has quite disabled him from Motion, yet has left him sensible of Pain, with which he is so dreadfully tormented, that he can take no Rest.

And such was the Regard the Elders of the Jews had for him, that *being come to Jesus, they intreated him with great Importunity, saying, He, in whose Name we now address thee, is one who is worthy of this Favour* (b): For though he be a Gentile,

SECT. 55. tile, and a Stranger among us, yet *he* is a Worshipper of the true GOD, and greatly loves our Nation; so that he takes many Opportunities of doing Good in the Neighbourhood, (compare Acts x. 2.) and has carried his Generosity so far, that *he hath built us a Synagogue* for publick Worship, at his own Expence.

Mat. VIII. 7. *And Jesus*, willing to pay some distinguishing Respect to a Person of so worthy a Character, *saitb unto him*, or sent him Word by those who had petitioned for him, *I will immediately come* down to the Centurion's House, to see the Servant he is so concerned about, *and heal him*.

Luke VII. 6. *And accordingly, Jesus went with them. And now*, as he was going thither, *when he was not a great Way from the House, the Centurion sent some other Friends to him*; and at last, came himself in Person; *and answered* the kind Message which Jesus had sent him, *saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself* to come any farther; *for I am not worthy, that thou who art so holy and honourable a Person, shouldst enter under my Roof*:

7 *Wherefore indeed neither did I think myself, who am an Alien from this holy Nation, worthy to come immediately to thee*; but first chose to make use of the Elders of the Place, and of these my other Friends: And all that I would now presume to ask, is, that thou wouldst *but please only to speak the Word, and I know that my Servant shall immediately be healed. For even I, [who] am only a Centurion, a Man ranged under the Authority of my Commanding Officer (c), yet*

tion, and he hath built us a Synagogue.

MAT. VIII. 7. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

LUKE VII. 6. Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the House, the Centurion sent Friends to him, [and answered,] saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my Roof: [MAT. VIII. 8.—]

7 Wherefore, neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a Word, [speak the Word only,] and my Servant shall be healed. [MAT. VIII. 8.—]

8 For I also am a Man set under Authority, having under

stands in our Version; *Worthy for whom He should do this*: Yet the Connection seems to intimate, that the original Reading was *απεξου, Thou shouldst do this*. I have chose to render it in such a Manner, as will suit either.

(c) *Ranged under the Authority of my Commanding Officer.*] It is well known, that

der me Soldiers; and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my Servant, Do this, and he doth it. [MAT. VIII. 9.]

yet as I have Soldiers under myself, order and govern them by the Intimations of my Will, whether present or absent; and I say to one, Go to such a Place, and he goeth; and to another, Come hither, and he cometh; and to my Slave (d), Do this, and he immediately doth it: Now I firmly believe, thou hast yet a more absolute Power over the strongest and most desperate Diseases, and canst at Pleasure command them off from the Afflicted, when thou art either near, or at a Distance; and I shall thankfully accept this Cure, in the Manner that may be least inconvenient to thyself.

SECT. 55.
Luke VII. 8.

When Jesus heard these Things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the People that followed him, [Verily] I say unto you, I have not found so great Faith, no, not in Israel. [MAT. VIII. 10.]

And Jesus hearing these Things, admired him on Account of his great Humility, and the Strength of his Faith; and turning about, he said to the Multitude that followed him, Verily I declare unto you, that through all my Journies and Converse, I have not found, even in all Israel, such an illustrious Degree of Faith, as now appears in this Stranger, who only sojourns among you. But I say unto you with great Solemnity, that many shall at last come, not only from the neighbouring Provinces of the Roman Empire, but even from the remotest Gentile Nations, which lie to the East and West (e) of its utmost Boundaries, and shall sit down with your pious Ancestors Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, to share with them in the delightful Entertainments, and final Blessedness, of the Kingdom

Mat. VIII.
II

MAT. VIII. 11. And I say unto you, that many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven.

that the Roman Centurions were subject to the Command of their respective Tribunes; as our Captains are to that of their Colonels.

(d) Slave.] As the Word δούλος generally signifies a Slave, rather than a hired Servant, I chose to render it thus here; as thinking it most expressive of the Authority, to which the Speech refers.

(e) From the East and West.] Perhaps this may be only a Proverbial Phrase, to signify coming from the most distant Parts: But I cannot forbear observing here, that the Gospel spread much more to the East and West of Judea, than to the North and South of it; though it seems rather to be spoken as a general Expression, as will appear by comparing it with Luke xiii. 29. and Isa. xliii. 5, 6.

(f) Final

SECT. 55. *dom of Heaven (f).* But many of the Children of the Kingdom, who were born within the sacred Inclosure, and appeared to stand fairest for all the Mercies of the Covenant, and indeed the Bulk of the Jewish Nation, shall be rejected with Abhorrence for their Unbelief, and be cast out into that gloomy Darknes which is without (g): There shall be perpetual weeping for Sorrow, and gnashing of the Teeth with Envy at such an enraging Sight.

Mat. VIII.
12.

13 And having uttered these Words, for the Admonition of the Jews, and for the Encouragement of this pious Stranger and his Friends, Jesus said to the Centurion, who now stood by, Go thy Way Home (h) in Peace; and be it unto thee, and to thy Servant, according to thy Faith. And in that very Hour that he spake these Words, just at that Instant, was his Servant healed.

LUKE VII. 10. And they who had been sent from the Centurion, as his Messengers to Christ, returning with him to the House, were Eye-Witnesses of the Cure, and found the Servant that had been sick, restored to perfect Health and Vigour (i). This might occasion the Conversion of the Family; and was a Miracle that greatly

12 But the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer Darknes: there shall be weeping, and gnashing of Teeth.

13 And Jesus said unto the Centurion, Go thy Way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his Servant was healed in the self-same Hour.

LUKE VII. 10. And they that were sent, returning to the House, found the Servant whole that had been sick.

(f) Final Blessedness of the Kingdom of Heaven.] So the Phrase must here be explained; for it cannot be said with any Propriety, either that the holy Patriarchs share with Christians in the present Privileges of the Gospel State, or that the Jews weep and wail, on Account of their being excluded from them.

(g) Gloomy Darknes which is without: το σκοτος το εξωθεν.] It has justly been observed by many Commentators, that this Phrase, which is often used, after the Kingdom of Heaven has been compared to a Banquet, contains a beautiful Allusion to the Lustre of those illuminated Rooms, in which such Feasts were generally celebrated; as opposed to that Darknes, which surrounded those, who by Night were turned out: But it also sometimes goes yet farther, when the Persons excluded are supposed to be thrown into a dark Dungeon. Compare Mat. xxii. 13. xxv. 30. and Jude ver. 13.

(h) Go thy Way Home.] This most evidently proves, that the Centurion was at length come out of his House, probably on hearing that Jesus was nearer to it, than he apprehended, when he sent the second Message by his Friends.

(i) Restored to perfect Health and Vigour.] This the Word *επανοηθη* seems to import; nor did it suit the Honour and Goodness of Christ, to leave the Cure incomplete. Compare Mat. viii. 15.

greatly raised the Fame of Jesus, and made the Multitude more eager in their pressing after him. SECT. 55-
Luke VII.
10-

I M P R O V E M E N T.

IT is pleasant to think of this good *Centurion*, who amidst all the Temptations of a Military Life, retained the Principles, not only of Liberality and Humanity, but of Piety too; and probably amidst the Raillery of his irreligious and idolatrous Brethren, had the Courage to frequent, and even to *build a Synagogue*. Surely his *Devotion* did not enervate, but rather invigorate and establish his *Valour*; nor did he find himself less dutifully-regarded by the *Soldiers* under his Command, for this Parental Tenderness to his afflicted *Servant*, which brought him thus humbly to *petition Christ* in his Favour. Such may our *Officers* be! and we may hope, that the *Hosts of Heaven* will with Pleasure cover their Heads in the Day of Battle, and obedient *Troops* be formed by their Example and their Care, to the Discipline of *Virtue*, as well as of *War*.

We see the Force of real *Goodness*, to conquer the most inveterate *Prejudices*: The *Elders of the Jews at Capernaum* turn Petitioners for a *Gentile*, for a *Roman Centurion*: So may we disarm the Virulency of a *Party Spirit*, and conciliate the *Friendship* of those, who otherwise might have their *Eyes upon us for Evil*!

In plentiful Circumstances, and an honourable Station; how great is the *Humility* of this *worthy Man*! How low are the Thoughts that he has of himself! And with what Veneration and Respect does he address himself to *Christ*! And had *this Centurion* been even a *Tribune*, or a *General*, this humble Address would well have become him, when he was thus applying unto *Christ*. And how well does it become us, when intreating the blessed *Jesus* to exert his healing Power on our Hearts, to bow with deep Humility before him, and to say, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my *Roof*, or worthy the Honour of appearing in thy Presence!" He that thus humbleth himself, shall be exalted; (*Luke xviii. 14.*) nor do we ever stand fairer for the Praise of *Christ*, than when we see ourselves *undeserving*, even of his Notice.

Behold an Instance of *Faith*, in a *Stranger to the Commonwealth of Israel*, by which their *Unbelief* was condemned! Oh that the *Virtues of Heathens* may not another Day rise up to our *Condemnation*, notwithstanding an higher Profession, and much nobler Advantages!

SECT. 55. We cannot but rejoice to hear, that *many shall come from the East and the West, to sit down with the pious Patriarchs in the Kingdom of Heaven*: But how deplorable is the Case of those *Children of the Kingdom*, who, with all their towering Expectations, *shall be cast out*, and doomed to hopeless Sorrow, and to everlasting *Darkness*!

Ver. 11.

Ver. 12.

May *Almighty Grace* awaken those, who are now ignorant of the Value and Importance of the *Blessings* of the *Gospel*; and excite those *holy Desires* after them, which may prevent that *Impatience* and *Envy*, that *Rage* and *Despair*, with which they must otherwise view them at an unapproachable Distance; yea, view them possessed by *Multitudes*, whom they are now most ready to despise!

S E C T. LVI.

After having quitted the Multitude, who crouded in upon him, and reposed himself that Night at Capernaum, JESUS goes the next Day to Naim, and raises the Son of a poor Widow from the Dead. Mark III. —19,—21. Luke VII. 11,—17.

MARK III.—19.

MARK III.—19.

SECT. 56. **N**OW after Jesus had performed this Miracle, and was prevented thus from going to the Centurion's; before he left Capernaum with his Twelve new-chosen Apostles, *they went into an House (a)*, where he commonly resided while he was in that City.

Mark III. 19.

—AND they went into an House.

20 *And the Multitude, that had been standing in*20 *And the Multitude cometh*

(a) *They went into an House.*] We must conclude from the Manner in which *Mark* connects this with the *Names of the Apostles*, that it happened very quickly after their being chosen. The other *Evangelists* inform us of some previous Events, which happened in the mean Time; but they might be dispatched in a few Hours. This therefore is undoubtedly the proper Place for these Verses; and it is strange, that *Le Clerc*, and others, should have placed them before the Sermon in the Plain. (See *Luke* vi. 17,—20. pag. 341, 343.) I suppose, this was after the *Cure of the Centurion's Servant*, as the Word *woodbois* (*Mat.* viii. 5.) seems to intimate, that *Christ* was then entering *Capernaum*; and the *Multitude* was not yet dismissed, when that *Cure* was wrought. (*Mat.* viii. 10.)

(b) *They*

He departs the next Day from Capernaum to Naim.

cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat Bread.

in the Plain, *assemble again* about the Doors and Windows of the House; and animated by the illustrious Miracle he had just performed on the Centurion's Servant, they pressed so eagerly upon him, that they of the Family could not so much as eat Bread, tho' it was the proper Hour for it. *And*

SECT. 56.
Mark III. 20.

21 And when his Friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

when his Friends had heard [of it,] that he was so intent upon his Work as to go out of Doors again to preach to the People, they went out after him, to lay hold on him, and importune him to come in; for they said, *He is transported too far* (b), not to allow himself Time for his Meals, after all the Watchings of the last Night, and the Fatigue of this Day (c).

21

LUKE VII. 11. And it came to pass the Day after, that he went into a City called Naim; and many of his

And Jesus having so far yielded to their Importunity, as to repose himself that Evening there, it came to pass on the next Day, that he went from Capernaum to a City called Naim (d); and many of his Disciples went thither

LUKE VII.
11.

(b) *They said, He is transported too far: or, &c.]* Our Manner of rendering these Words, *He is beside himself*, or *he is mad*, is very offensive. One can hardly think, *Christ's Friends* would speak so contemptibly and impiously of him; and if *that Sense* must necessarily be retained, it would be much more decent to render the Clause, *It* (that is, *the Multitude* mentioned in the Verse before,) *is mad*, thus unreasonably to break in upon him. But 2 Cor. v. 13. is the only Passage in the *New Testament*, where the Word has this Signification: It generally signifies, to be *greatly transported*, or, as we express it, in a Word derived from this, to be *thrown into an Ecstasy*. (Mark ii. 12. v. 42. vi. 51. Luke viii. 56. and Acts ii. 7, 12. xii. 16.) And tho' the *Seventy* sometimes use it for *fainting away*, (Gen. xlv. 26. Josh. ii. 11. and Isa. vii. 2.) I do not find, it ever signifies *that Faintness*, which arises from Excess of Labour, or Want of Food; but *our Lord's Attendants* seem to have feared, lest *his Zeal*, and the present *Fervency of his Spirit*, should have been injurious to his Health.

(c) After all the Watchings of the last Night, and the Fatigue of this Day.] Compare Luke vi. 12, & seq. Sect. 52. whence it appears, *our Lord* had sat up the preceding Night, and eaten nothing *this Day*; but spent the Morning in giving a Charge to his new-chosen Apostles, and the Advance of the Day in preaching to a vast Auditory, and working many Miracles.

(d) *To a City called Naim.]* If *Naim* was a City of the Tribe of *Issachar*, and lay at the Foot of Mount *Tabor*, (where most Geographers have placed it,) *our Lord* made a pretty long Journey this Day, especially considering what was mentioned in the last Note; for he must thus have travelled about *Twelve Miles*. *Lightfoot* supposes it, to be the same with *En-gannim*, which is mentioned in Josh. xix. 21. and xxi. 29. but this lay also in the Tribe of *Issachar*, and must have been at no less Distance from *Capernaum*.

362 *Meeting the Funeral of a Widow's Son, he raises him to Life.*

SECT. 56. *thither with him, and a great Multitude of others. And when he approached the Gate of the City, a Circumstance happened, which proved the Occasion of one of the most memorable Miracles of his Life. For behold, the Corps of a dead Person was carried out in Funeral Proceſſion, (according to their Manner of burying without the Walls of their Cities,) and the Deceased was the only Son of his Mother, and ſhe was a Widow, which made the Caſe ſo much the more deplorable; and this ſad Circumſtance, together with others which attended it, ſo influenced the Minds of many of her Neighbours, that there was a great Multitude of the City with her.*

Luke VII.
12.

- 13 *And the Lord ſeeing her in this afflicted Condition, was moved with tender Compaſſion for her; ſo that he prevented any Opportunity of Solicitation on their Part, and ſaid unto her, Weep not any longer upon this Occaſion; for I am come to bring thee Conſolation and Relief. And preſently approaching them, he touched the Bier, on which, according to the Manner of that Place and Time, the Corps was laid, covered over with a Kind of Mantle or Winding-Sheet; and the Bearers, who were carrying it upon their Shoulders, ſtood ſtill: And with an unaffected Freedom and Simplicity he ſaid, in ſuch a Manner as diſcovered his Divine Authority, Young Man, I ſay unto thee, Arife. And as ſoon as he had ſpoken theſe aſtoniſhing Words, the Youth who had been dead, awakened by that Almighty Energy which went along with them, ſate up, and began to ſpeak: And Jeſus, when he thus had ſhewn his Power in reſtoring him to Life,*

his Diſciples went with him, and much People.

12 Now when he came nigh to the Gate of the City, behold, there was a dead Man carried out, the only Son of his Mother, and ſhe was a Widow: and much People of the City was with her.

13 And when the Lord ſaw her, he had Compaſſion on her, and ſaid unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the Bier, (and they that bare him ſtood ſtill,) and he ſaid, Young Man, I ſay unto thee, Arife.

15 And he that was dead ſat up, and began to ſpeak: and

naum. (See *Lightfoot's Choroq. ad Luc. vii. 11. §. 3.*)—The Circumſtance here recorded might probably happen towards the Evening, at which Seafon Funerals are commonly celebrated.



S^t Luke Ch. VII. ver. 14.

*And he came & touched the Bier and they that bare him stood still
And he said Young man I say unto thee Arise.*

and he delivered him to his Mother.

Life, discovered too the sympathizing Kindness of a Friend, and taking him by the Hand, delivered him to his Mother, in such a Manner, as to express the Pleasure he found, in changing her Sorrow into a Transport of proportionable Joy. SECT. 56.
Luke VII.
15.

16 And there came a Fear on all: and they glorified GOD, saying, That a great Prophet is risen up among us; and, That GOD hath visited his People.

And a religious Dread fell upon all those who were present; and they glorified GOD, saying, Truly a great Prophet is risen up among us; and GOD has again graciously regarded his antient People, who were in former Ages so often distinguished by his Favours. 16

17 And this Rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the Region round about.

And this Report of him, and of this glorious Miracle which he had wrought, went forth, not only through the neighbouring Parts of Galilee; but was soon spread through all Judea, and the whole Region that was round about; and greatly heightened and increased the mighty Expectations from him, which they had long since begun to entertain. 17

I M P R O V E M E N T.

IT surely becomes us likewise, to glorify GOD, on Account of Luke vii. 16,
this great Prophet, whom he has raised up, not only to his antient 17.
People Israel, but to be for Salvation to the Ends of the Earth. (*Acts*
xiii. 47.) Welcome, thou Messenger of the Father's Love! How
illustrious thy Miracles! how important thy Doctrine! how bene-
ficent and amiable the whole of thy Behaviour!

He went from *Capernaum* to *Naim*, still on the same blessed Er- Ver. 11.
rand, to do Good to the Bodies and the Souls of Men. Oh that our
Lives, in their humbler Sphere, might be such a Circle of Virtues
and Graces! that we might thus go about doing Good, and might
learn, by the happiest of all Arts, to make the Close of one useful
and pious Action, the Beginning of another!

Of him may we also learn, the most engaging Manner of con- Ver. 13.
ferring Benefits; that lovely Mixture of Freedom and Tenderness,
which heightens the Sweetness, and doubles the Value, of every Fa-
vour! May our Hearts imbibe the same Temper, and it will diffuse
on our Actions some proportionable Gracefulness! May our Bowels,

Z z 2

like

SECT. 56. like his, *yearn over the Afflicted*, and our Hand be ever ready; thus gently to wipe away their Tears! But, O gracious Redeemer, how impotent is our Pity, when compared with *thine*! with *thine*, which could call back lamented Children from the Grave, and turn the Sorrows of a weeping Parent into a Torrent of Joy! We are sometimes ready fondly to say, "Oh that thou hadst been near, when the Darlings of our Hearts were snatched away from us, and we left them in the Dust!" But thou indeed wast near; for *thou hast the Keys of Death, and the unseen World!* And this we know, that if our beloved Children are sleeping in thee, *thy Voice* shall at length awaken them; and thou wilt deliver them to us, to die no more, and wilt *thyself* graciously take Part in that mutual and lasting Joy, which thou shalt give to us, and to them.

S E C T. LVII.

John the Baptist sends Two of his Disciples to JESUS, to enquire whether he was the Messiah; and JESUS answers them in a convincing, though oblique Manner.

Luke VII. 18,—23. Mat. XI. 2,—6.

LUKE VII. 18.

SECT. 57.
Luke VII.
18.

WE have before mentioned the Imprisonment of John the Baptist, and given some Account of the Occasion of it: (Sect. xxviii. pag. 176, & seq.) Now the Disciples of John had the Courage to resort to him where he was confined, and informed him of what passed; and they particularly gave him an Account of all these Things, which had now lately been performed by Jesus (a);
how

LUKE VII. 18.

AND the Disciples of John shewed him of all these Things.

(a) All these Things, which had now lately been performed by Jesus.] This is a plain Argument, that this Message from John happened quickly after the Miracles, which Luke had recorded in the preceding Part of this Chapter. And therefore, tho' Matthew has mentioned many other Facts and Discourses, before he relates this Message; yet because he asserts nothing at all as to the Order and Connection of it, (see Mat. xi. 2.) I have, with most other Harmonizers, thought myself obliged to follow Luke, on the Principles laid down above. See Note (a), pag. 291.

(b) For

how he had cured the Centurion's Servant at a Distance; and raised the Young Man at Naim to Life, when they were carrying him out to his Funeral.

SECT. 57.
Luke VII.
18.

19 And John [when he had heard in the Prison the Works of Christ,] calling unto him Two of his Disciples, sent them unto Jesus, saying [unto him,] Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? [MAT. XI. 2, 3.]

And when John had thus heard in his Prison the Works of Christ; as the very Persons, that brought him the News of them, seem to have entertained some Doubt concerning Jesus, whether he was the promised Messiah, or no; for their Satisfaction therefore, rather than his own (b), he called Two of his Disciples to him, and sent them in his own Name to Jesus, saying unto him, What dost thou say to this plain Question, Art thou the great expected Messiah, whom we have so long been used to speak of, by the emphatical Title of *He that cometh* (c), or
are

(b) For their Satisfaction therefore, rather than his own.] Mr. L' Enfant, with some others, thinks, (as *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian* did,) that John was so discouraged by his own long Imprisonment, that he began himself to doubt, whether Jesus was the Messiah; and agreeably to this he supposes, that when our Lord afterwards says, *Happy is he, that is not offended in me*, he meant it as a Caution to John, that he should be upon his Guard against so dangerous a Temptation. But considering what clear Evidence John had before received by a miraculous Sign from Heaven, and what express and repeated Testimonies he himself had borne to Jesus, I cannot imagine this to have been possible; especially as he foresaw, and foretold, that he must himself quickly be laid aside. (*John* iii. 30. pag. 172.) — But his Disciples might very probably be offended at this Circumstance, as well as at the Freedom of Christ's Conversation, so different from the Austerity used among them: And therefore he might think it necessary, to put them in the Way of farther Satisfaction: Not to say, that the Warmth of John's Temper might render him something uneasy, at the Reserve which Christ maintained; and that he might imagine it agreeable to the general Design of his own Office, as his Forerunner, thus to urge a more express Declaration. — For these Reasons I chuse to render, and paraphrase it thus; rather than with *Limborch* (*Theol. Christ. lib. iii. cap. 11. §. 14.*) to translate it, *Thou art he that should come, and do we look for another?* that is, We do not expect any Messiah, but thee: So understanding it, as a repeated Testimony, which John bore by *Praxy*, when he could no longer do it in his own Person. All the Spirit of Christ's Answer would be lost, if we were to understand the Message in this Sense.

(c) *He that cometh*: ο ἄρχωνος.] It seems, that by their speaking of the Messiah by this Phrase, (*He that cometh*, or *He that is coming*,) the pious Jews in the most lively Manner expressed their confident Expectation of him, and their eager Longing for his Appearance, as the greatest and most welcome Messenger of God to Man, and the most desirable Person, that ever did, or should come into the World. (See *Mark* xi. 9, 10. and compare *Psal.* cxviii. 26. *Dan.* vii. 13. *Hab.* ii. 3. *Septuag.* *Isa.* lxii. 11. and *Zech.* ix. 9.) — *Bishop Pearson* justly observes, that this, among many other Arguments, proves, that the Notion of Two Messiahs, one suffering, and the other triumphant,

SECT. 47. *are we to expect another* under that Character? Answer the Question as expressly, as I formerly bore my Testimony to thee.

Luke VII.

19.

20

And when the Men who were employed by John to be his Messengers to Jesus upon this important Errand, *were come to him, they delivered their Message with great Exactness; and said, John the celebrated Baptist, whose Courage and Faithfulness in his Ministerial Office have been the Occasion of his Imprisonment, has sent us to thee, saying, Art thou he that cometh, and dost thou own thyself to be indeed the great Messiah, or are we to expect another* under that Character?

21

Now Jesus was determined to return an Answer to their Question, by Actions, rather than by Words; and therefore *in that very Hour*, while they were present with him, and were Eye-Witnesses of what he did, (as the Message was on Purpose delivered before a large Assembly of People, in which, as usual, there were many who came to be healed of various incurable Distempers;) *he exercised the Power that he had of working Miracles, and cured many that were then before him of their Diseases and Plagues (d), and delivered them from the Possession of evil Spirits; and graciously bestowed Sight on many that were Blind (e).*

22

And then Jesus answering their Demand, said unto them, Go, and relate to John the Things, which you yourselves have seen and heard

20 When the Men were come unto him they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?

21 And in that same Hour he cured many, of their Infirmities and Plagues, and of evil Spirits; and unto many that were Blind, he gave Sight.

22 Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your Way, and tell John what Things ye have seen and heard;

umphant, is a vain Dream of the modern Jews, that was altogether unknown to the Antients. See Pearson on the Creed, pag. 183.

(d) *Of their Diseases and Plagues.*] *Messes, Plagues, or Scourges,* may probably signify some of the most grievous Distempers; such as *Leprosies, Palsies, inveterate Fluxes, &c.* (compare *Mark* iii. 10. and v. 29, 34.) and may allude to their being supposed to be such *Corrections, as intimated the great Displeasure of GOD against the Persons, on whom they were sent. Compare John* v. 14. and ix. 2.

(e) *And graciously bestowed Sight, &c.*] *The Original Phrase, εὐχρηστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ,* seems to express, both in how generous, and in how kind and affectionate a Manner, *our blessed Redeemer* performed these Cures.

6

(f) *Happy*

heard; how that the Blind see, the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleansed, the Deaf hear, the Dead are raised, [and] to the Poor the Gospel is preached. [MAT. XI. 4-5.]

heard this Day, as well as those, that you have been informed of by others, who have been Eye and Ear-Witnesses of my Miracles and Discourses: Say in particular, *that the Blind receive their Sight, the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleansed, the Deaf hear, the very Dead are raised*; and observe also, that I do not court the Rich, and the Great, as Impostors are most apt to do; nor do I bear a Commission chiefly directed to them, as some of the Prophets did; but as you see by the Auditory now around me, *the Poor, and even the Meanest of the People, have the Gospel preached to them*; they have the good News of eternal Salvation most freely published among them, and the Blessings of it offered to their Acceptance. And be sure you add farther, that I appear in such Circumstances, that there is Reason to say, *Happy is he, that is not scandalized, or stumbled, at me (f)*; for he must be singularly wise and religious, who is not shocked by the strong popular Prejudices, which lie against me. Let John consider these Things in themselves, and let him compare them with those Prophecies (g), which foretell, that the Messiah should work such Miracles; (Isa. xxv. 5, 6.) that he should preach the Gospel to the Poor; (Isa. lxi. 1.) and that many should despise and reject him: (Isa. viii. 14. liii. 1,—3.) And He, and by a Parity

SECT. 57.
Lukē VII
22.

23 And blessed is he who-
ever shall not be offended
in me. [MAT. XI. 6.]

23

(f) *Happy is he, that is not scandalized, or stumbled, at me.*] This was intended as an awful Admonition to the Disciples of John that they should themselves guard against those Prejudices, which might prevent their receiving Christ; and contains a strong Intimation, that their final Happiness would be determined, by the Regards they should pay to him; as well as that these Prejudices should generally prevail to Mens Ruin. See Note (c) on Mat. v. 29. pag. 248.

(g) Compare them with those Prophecies.] Archbishop Tillotson has largely shewn the Correspondence between the Prophecies and Events, here referred to. See Tillotson's Works, vol. ii. pag. 451, & seq.—Dr. Thomas Jackson has laboured the Point yet more largely, in the second Part of his curious Discourse on this Text. See his Works, vol. ii. pag. 470, & seq.

(b) Without

SECT. 57. Parity of Reason You, and the rest of his
 Disciples, may easily collect a convincing
 Answer to the Question you are come to
 ask, without any more express Declaration
 from me (b).

Luke VII.
23.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Luke vii. 18. **WE** have here in *John the Baptist*, a very edifying Instance of a most candid and pious Temper. How solicitous was he to remove those *Scruples* from the Minds of *his Disciples*, which perhaps their excessive *Fondness for him* might have occasioned? He wisely *sends them* to converse with *Jesus* themselves: And surely, they, who most accurately enquire into the *Credentials* he brings, will be most effectually convinced and impressed by them.

Ver. 19.

Ver. 22.

Let us, when tempted to doubt of the *Truth of Christianity*, recollect the various and unanswerable *Proofs* of it, which are summed up in these comprehensive Words; arising from the *Miracles*, and *Character* of our *Redeemer*, and the *Prophetic Testimony* that was borne to him. Let us particularly rejoice, that *the Poor have the Gospel preached*; and that the *Blessings* of it are offered to enrich the Souls of those, whose bodily *Necessities* we often *pity*, without having it in our Power to *relieve* them,

Ver. 23.

And since our *Lord* pronounces a *Blessing* upon those, *that shall not be offended in him*, let us consider what those Things are, in the *Doctrine*, or *Circumstances of Christ*, which have proved the most dangerous *Stumbling-blocks*, and endeavour to fortify our Souls against those *Temptations*, which may arise from them. So *the Trial* of that *Faith*, which is a *much more valuable Treasure, than Gold which perishes*,

(b) Without any more express Declaration from me.] Nothing could be more apposite, natural, and convincing, than such an *Answer* as this, which took its Rise from what *Christ* was then doing, and rested on the most apparent *Testimony* of God himself in astonishing *Miracles*, to which they knew *their Master* made no Pretences; (see *John* x. 41.) *Miracles* of so beneficent a Nature, that no *Austerities* of a retired Life were by any means comparable to them; and *Miracles* receiving an additional Lustre, from their being foretold by a *Prophet* many Ages before; (see *Note* (i) on *John* ii. 22. pag. 154.) and even by *Isaiab*, the *Prophet* by whom *the Baptist* was so particularly described, that as *he himself* had frequently referred to him, (*Mat.* iii. 3. *Luke* iii. 4,—6. and *John* i. 23.) so *his Disciples* must, no doubt, have made themselves peculiarly familiar with his Writings.—These and many other Particulars, are set in a most beautiful Light, by the masterly Hand of *Bishop Atterbury*, in his *Post-humous Sermons*, vol. i. pag. 41,—50. who has very judiciously abridged what is most material in the large *Discourse* of the learned *Dr. Jackson* referred to in *Note* (g).

rishes, though tried in the Fire, may be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory; (1 Pet. i. 7.) and we, on the whole, may be advanced in our Way, by Incidents, which at first threatened to turn us entirely out of it; as the Faith of these Disciples of John must surely be confirmed by those Doubts, which they had for a while entertained.

SECT. 57.

S E C T. LVIII.

JESUS discourses with the Multitude concerning John, and justly complains of the Perverseness of that Generation. Luke VII. 24,—35. Mat. XI. 7,—19.

LUKE VII. 24.

AND when the Messengers of John were departed, [Jesus] began to speak unto the People concerning John; What went ye out into the Wilderness for to see? A Reed shaken with the Wind? [MAT. XI. 7.]

LUKE VII. 24.

NOW when the Messengers of John were gone away, to inform their Master of the Things which they had seen and heard; Jesus began to speak unto the Multitude that still surrounded him, concerning John the Baptist, and to enquire into the Reason of their having formerly flocked after him, as they had done. I know, (said he,) that many of you were of the Number of his Hearers, and were baptized by him: Now I would seriously ask you, and advise you attentively to ask yourselves, *What went you out into the Wilderness in which he preached, to behold? You did not surely go on any trifling Occasion, or for a mere Amusement: None of you would be so senseless, as to undertake a Journey, to see a Reed, or a Bulrush, shaken by the Wind; nor can you say, you found him wavering in his Conduct, or inconsistent in the Testimony that he bore to me.*

SECT. 58.
Luke VII.
24

25 But what went ye out for to see? A Man clothed in soft Raiment? Behold, they

But what then went you out to see? You could not go with any Expectation to find a Man in such a Place, dressed in soft Garments of the finest Silk, and living in an elegant and sumptuous Way: For behold, they

25

A a a

that

370 *He gives an honourable Testimony to John as a Propbet,*

SECT. 58. *that wear a splendid Dress, and live luxuriously, are to be sought in Royal Palaces, rather than in a rough and barren Wilderness; and you well knew, that John's Manner of Living was plain and austere, such as suited the Message he brought, and illustrated his Integrity in delivering it.*

Luke VII.
25.

26 *But once more I would ask you, what did you then go out to see? Are you not ready to allow, that you went out to see a Propbet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a common Propbet.*

27 *For this is the very Person, of whom it is written, (Mal. iii. 1.) "Behold, O my Son, I send my appointed Messenger before thy Face, who shall prepare thy Way before thee, and in a proper Manner introduce thee into the World."*

Mat. XI. 11. *Wherefore I assuredly say unto you, that among all those that have been born of Women, or the whole Race of Mankind in all former Ages, there hath not arisen a Propbet greater than John the Baptist; for as he is, with regard to his moral and religious Character, one of the best of Men, so he has some peculiar Honours, superior to any Propbet of former Generations (a): Nevertheless, there is a Sense, in which he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven, not only in its final Glories, but even here on Earth, is greater than he: For my Ministers, and People in general, shall receive superior Supplies of the Spirit, and know many important Truths relating to my Gospel, which have not been revealed to John himself.*

they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in Kings Courts. [Mat. XI. 8.]

26 But what went ye out for to see? A Propbet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a Propbet. [MAT. XI. 9.]

27 [For] this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my Messenger before thy Face, which shall prepare thy Way before thee. [MAT. XI. 10.]

MAT. XI. 11. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of Women, there hath not risen a greater [Propbet] than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven, is greater than he. [LUKE VII. 28.]

He

(a) Superior to any Propbet of former Generations.] The obvious Sense of what is here expressed together with the following Words, does plainly limit it to *them alone*. And it might properly be said, that *John was greater* than any of the *antient Propbets*, on Account of his wonderful Conception and Birth, his excellent Knowledge of Gospel-Mysteries, (see especially *John iii. 27, & seq. Sect. 27.*) his express Testimony to the *Messiah*, and his remarkable Success in making Way for him: *John* was also himself the Subject of antient Prophecies, and long expected by the Church.

(b) *AB*

and shews what had been the Effect of his Ministry.

LUKE VII. 29. And all the People that heard him, and the Publicans, justified God, being baptized with the Baptism of John.

He is now laid aside from his Ministry, yet I would have you to reflect upon the Consequences of his Preaching, and to consider the Success of it: *And* you must needs remember, that when he came and preached the Baptism of Repentance, and publickly proclaimed that the Messiah was at hand, *all the People* in general bearing [him] preach (b); and even the Publicans themselves, justified GOD, and testified their Approbation of the Divine Scheme (c) in sending such an Embassador, by professing to fall in with the Design of his Appearance, and being accordingly baptized with the Baptism of John, humbly confessing their Sins, and declaring their Repentance. *But the proud Pharisees, and Doctors of the Law*, to their own unspeakable Detriment, rejected the gracious Counsel of GOD addressed to them, not being baptized by him, when they saw how plainly he dealt with them and their Brethren (d).

SECT. 58.
Luke VII.
29.

30 But the Pharisees, and Lawyers, rejected the Counsel of GOD against themselves, being not baptized of him.

MAT. XI. 12. And from the Days of John the Baptist,

But tho' these great and learned Men despised him, yet the good Effects of his Ministry on others are still apparent; for from the Days of John the Baptist, or from the Time in which he bore his publick Testimony

30

Mat. XI. 12.

(b) *All the People* in general bearing him preach.] The Reader will observe, that (with Grotius,) I take these to be the Words of Christ, continuing his Discourse; whereas our Translation seems rather to intimate, they are the Reflection of Luke, on the Sentiments of those, who were now bearing Christ. I long considered them in this View; but it now seems to me so evident, from the most antient Manuscripts and Versions, that the Words, *And the Lord said*, at the Beginning of ver. 31. were not in the Original, that I could not but connect, and render them thus. Nevertheless, I shall shew so much Regard to the common Reading, as to add (in Note (b) below,) the Version and Paraphrase, in that Sense and Connection; submitting it, on the whole, to the learned Reader, to judge as he shall think proper; but must first desire him to consult Grotius, Dr. Mill, and the Polyglot.

(c) *Justified GOD*, and testified their Approbation, &c.] From the Opposition, between those that justified GOD, and those that rejected his Counsel, it is plain, that to justify here signifies, to approve and vindicate. Compare ver. 35. (at the End of this Section,) Rom. iii. 4. and 1 Tim. iii. 16.

(d) How plainly he dealt with them and their Brethren.] Of this see the Paraphrase on Luke iii. 10. pag. 104.

SECT. 58.
Mat. XI. 12.

ny to an approaching Messiah, *even to the present Time (e)*, the Spirits of Men are so raised and animated by a Desire after *the Kingdom of Heaven*, that it is (as it were) *attacked with Violence*, like a besieged City; Men of all Sorts are pressing to get into it, and *the Violent seize it with Eagerness (f)*: Multitudes are flocking around me to be instructed in the Nature of my Kingdom, and some of most licentious Characters, who have been looked upon as little better than Ruffians and Bravo's, seem resolutely set on securing it; while others of graver and fairer Characters are found to neglect it. (Compare Luke xvi. 16.)

- 13 This is a new, and very wonderful Event; *for till [the Time of] John the Baptist, all the Prophets prophesied, and the Law of Moses, as explained by them, was the only Revelation of God's Will to the People of Israel; which, so far as it related to me, was but an obscure Intimation, of what Men were to expect from my Appearance: But John opened a much more perfect Dispensation. And indeed, (to speak more plainly, than I have commonly done,) if you will hearken*

till, until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence, and the Violent take it by Force.

13 For all the Prophets, and the Law, prophesied until John.

- 14 And if ye will receive it,

14 And if ye will receive it,

(e) *From the Days of John the Baptist,—even to the present Time.*] Sir Isaac Newton (on Prophecy, pag. 159.) urges this as an Argument, to prove that some considerable Time must have elapsed, since John's Imprisonment. But on the common Hypothesis, it might be near a Year; and our Lord might probably include some Time of his Ministry preceding his Imprisonment: So that we cannot be much assisted in our Calculations by this Text.

(f) *The Kingdom of Heaven is attacked with Violence,—and the Violent seize it with Eagerness:—βιασται, ἡ βίασται ἀμαρτωίων αὐτῶν.*] The Words of the Original are very strong and forcible, and the Translation I have given is very literal. — It seems necessary to interpret the latter Clause, as in the Paraphrase, to prevent the Appearance of a Tautology: Yet I did not venture to render βιασται, Ruffians or Bravo's; because I think the Version should be left in as great a Latitude, as the Original; and I was afraid so great a Variation, from what is commonly taken to be the Meaning of this Passage, might have shocked some at the first hearing.—To suppose, as a late ingenious Writer has done, that this refers to the first Attempts made to destroy the Gospel in its Infancy, and that ἀμαρτωίων signifies *tear it to Pieces*, does not appear natural in this Connection; though the Word must be allowed sometimes to have that Import.

(g) This

He assures them, that John was the expected Elias.

it, this is Elias which was for to come.

hearken to my Testimony, and receive [it,] **SECT. 58.**

this John is the *Elijah who was to come* (g), or the Person whom Malachi describes under that Name, as to be sent before the coming of the Day of the Lord. (Mal. iv. 5, 6.)

Mat. XI.

14

15 He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear.

This is so important an Intimation, that I must urge your most attentive Regard to it; and therefore, *He that hath Ears able to hear, let him hear* [it,] and let every one that has a Mind capable of Reflection, reflect seriously upon it: For to understand, and regard the Character and Mission of John aright, will have a most happy Tendency to promote your receiving him, whom John was sent to introduce (b).

15

LUKE VII. 31. And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the Men of this Generation? and to what are they like? [MAT. XI. 16.—]

[*And the Lord Jesus farther said,*] **To Luke VIII.**

31

what then shall I now compare the Men of this Generation? and to what indeed are they like? Reflect upon yourselves, and you will surely see the Justice of the Comparison, which I am going to make.

32 They are like unto Children

They are like a Company of little Children (i), whom you may sometimes have observed, as they

32

were

(g) *This John is the Elijah who was to come.*] How little there is in Mr. Collins's Objection, against thus fixing Malachi's Prophecy of *Elijah* to *John the Baptist*, many of his learned Antagonists have shewn; and I think none in an easier and stronger Light, than Mr. Bullock. See his *Vindication*, Pref. pag. 50.

(b) *Whom John was sent to introduce.*] According to the received Reading, Luke vii. 29, 30. must be introduced here, and may be paraphrased thus. "29. *And all the People that were present, and the Publicans in particular, when they heard [this] Discourse, having formerly been baptized with the Baptism of John, justified and approved the Wisdom of GOD, as illustrated in it.* 30. *But the Pharisees, and Doctors of the Law, in whose Presence it was delivered, disrelished it; and puffed up with a vain Conceit of their own Knowledge and Goodness, rejected the gracious Counsel of GOD towards them; and not having been baptized by him, were displeased to hear so high an Encomium given to John.* 31. *And the Lord, knowing how ready they were to cavil, both at him and his Fore-runner, said with a particular Reference to these Pharisees and Doctors, Whereunto then shall I liken the Men of this Generation? &c.*"—Compare Note (b) in this Section.

(i) *They are like little Children.*] It is plain our Lord's exact Meaning is, that the Men of that Generation, or the Cavillers of whom he was now speaking, were like the Children complained of, and not like those that made the Complaint: But, more especially in Matthew's Style, the Phrase, *it is like*, often signifies only in general, that the Thing spoken of may be illustrated by the following Similitude. And so the Phrase must be understood, Mat. xiii. 24, and 45. xviii. 23. xx. 1. and xxii. 2.

374 *Neither John's austere, nor his free Way would win them.*

SECT. 58.
 Luke VII.
 32.

were sitting in the Market-place, to be so froward and perverse in their Behaviour to each other, that no Contrivance could be found to please them; and some of them you may have heard calling out to their Companions, and saying, What shall we do to please you, and to bring you to join with us in our Diversions? We have tried all the Ways we can think of; sometimes we have piped to you a pleasant Tune, and you have not danced to the Musick; and at other Times we have changed the Ditty, and mourned to you, or played and sung such Dirges as are used at Funerals, and you have not taken your Part, and lamented with us; but are always finding Fault with every Thing we do, and will not be prevailed upon to join with us. Such is that Childish Obstinacy and Perverseness, that appears in you, who think yourselves the Oracles of Wisdom in the present Age; and you discover the same froward Temper in far more important Instances: For *John the Baptist*, of whom I have now been speaking, came with an uncommon Austerity of Behaviour, neither eating Bread, as others do, nor drinking Wine; but living on Locusts and Honey, and Water in the Wilderness; and you say, *He has a Devil*; and acts like a wild distracted Dæmoniack, whom an Evil Spirit drives from the Society of Men. On the other Hand, *the Son of Man is come*, without any of this Severity, eating and drinking, as others do, conversing familiarly among you, and with a temperate Freedom sharing in your Festivals, as well as your common Meals; and you say, *Behold, a gluttonous Man, and a Wine-bibber, a fit Friend and Companion of Publicans and Sinners*: Thus ungratefully do you injure his Character, for that Humanity and Condescension, which you should rather applaud. But nevertheless, true Wisdom has still

Children sitting in the Market-place, and calling one to another, [unto their Fellows], and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept, [or lamented.] [MAT. XI.—16, 17.]

33 For John the Baptist came, neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine; and ye say, He hath a Devil. [MAT. XI. 18.]

34 The Son of Man is come, eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold, a gluttonous Man, and a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners. [MAT. XI. 19.—]

35 But Wisdom is justified

fied of all her Children. still *been justified*, and vindicated by all those, SECT. 58.
 [MAT. XI.—19.] who are indeed *her Children*; and they who are truly Wise and Religious, must needs approve this beautiful Variety in the Conduct of Providence; and see, that the Difference in our Manner of Living suits the Purposes of our respective Appearances, and is adapted to promote the general Design, of GOD's Glory, and Man's Salvation. Luke VII. 35.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

HOW happy would it be, if we could learn to correct the natural *Inconsistencies* of our Temper and Conduct, by wise Reflections and Considerations! How much more improving would our *Attendance* on the Ministrations of GOD's Servants be, were we seriously to ask ourselves, *to what Purpose we attended!* Luke vii. 32. V. 24,—26.

It ought surely to be followed with such Considerations, since it is intended to lead us to *the Kingdom of Heaven*: A glorious Prize! too glorious to be obtained, by faint Wishes, and inactive Desires. There is a Sense, in which it still *suffers Violence*: And how sad is the Degeneracy of our Natures, that we should exert *so little Warmth* in such a Pursuit, and *so much* for every Trifle! Instead of that *holy Ardour*, with which Men should *press into it*, they fold their Hands in their Bosoms, and lose themselves in soft luxurious Dreams, till the precious Opportunity is for ever gone. May Divine Grace display the *Crowns* and *Palms* of Victory before our Eyes, in so awakening a Manner, that we may joyfully *seize them*, whatever *Obstacles* may lie in our Way, whatever must be *done*, or whatever must be *borne* to secure them! Mat. xi. 12.

Let us not, as we love our own Souls, through a proud Self-sufficiency *reject the gracious Counsels of GOD* which are addressed to us, lest we should be another Day *condemned by Publicans and Sinners*. Divine Providence, and Grace, are using a Variety of Methods with us: Let not our Perverseness and Folly, like that of the *Jews*, *frustrate* them all; but rather let us shew ourselves *the Children of Wisdom*, by falling in with its Measures, and improving as well as applauding them. Luke vii. 30. Ver. 35.

S E C T. LIX.

Our LORD laments over the impenitent Cities of Galilee, acknowledges the Divine Sovereignty in the Dispensations of the Gospel, and invites Sinners to come to him. Mat. XI. 20, to the End.

MAT. XI. 20.

SECT. 59. **T**HEN after Jesus had in general re-
 proved the Jews, for the Perverseness
 of their Carriage, under the great Advantages
 that they enjoyed, he began particularly to
 upbraid the Cities, in which most of his Mi-
 racles had been wrought, because they did not
 repent, and believe in him (a): And in
 the most affectionate and solemn Manner he
 declared, how terrible would be the Conse-
 quence of their Impenitence and Unbelief;
 and said, *Woe unto thee, O Chorazin, and Woe
 unto thee, O Bethsaida, where I so often
 have conversed and taught; for surely if the
 Miracles which have been wrought in you, had
 been done in Tyre and Sidon of old, tho' they
 were Places so remarkable for their Luxury,
 Pride, and Contempt of Religion (b), they
 would long ago have repented with Tokens of
 the deepest Humility, covering themselves*
 in

MAT. XI. 20.

THEN began he to up-
 braid the Cities, where-
 in most of his mighty Works
 were done, because they re-
 pent not.

21 *Woe unto thee, Cho-
 razin; Woe unto thee, Beth-
 saida: for if the mighty
 Works which were done in
 you, had been done in Tyre
 and Sidon, they would have
 repented long ago in Sack-
 cloth and Ashes.*

(a) *Because they did not repent, and believe in him.] Our Lord had great Reason thus to upbraid them on this Occasion, considering how much Time he had spent among them, and how many excellent Discourses he had delivered, as well as how many surprizing Miracles he had wrought in these Parts; as may be seen in several preceding Sections.*

(b) *Places so remarkable for their Luxury, Pride, and Contempt of Religion.] This is frequently the Case, with rich trading Cities: And that it was so, with these in particular, may be learnt from many Passages in the Old Testament, as well as from profane Writers. See Judg. xviii. 7. Isa. xxiii. 9. Ezek. xxviii. 2, 5, 17, 22. and Amos i. 9, 10.—May God preserve London in particular, from resembling them in Character, whom in Commerce and Grandeur it so much exceeds!*

(c) *Covering*

and tells them of the aggravated Woe they must expect.

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the Day of Judgment, than for you.

in Sackcloth, and lying in Ashes (c). Wherefore I say unto you, that as they never had such Means of Conviction as you have been indulged with, and have ungratefully abused, the Condition even of Tyre and Sidon, in the Day of the final and univerfal Judgment (d), shall be more tolerable, than yours, who will deservedly be exposed to a much heavier Weight of Vengeance. (Compare Luke x. 13, 14. Sect. 97.)

SECT. 59.
Mat. XI. 22.

23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell: for if the mighty Works which have been done in thee, had been done

in And thou especially, O guilty Capernaum, who hast been (as it were) exalted even to Heaven, not only in Wealth and Magnificence, (compare Dan. iv. 22.) but what is infinitely more valuable, in the Means of Grace, by my long Abode in thee, and continued Labours among thine Inhabitants; such dreadful Defolation is appointed for thee, that thou shalt (as it were) be brought down to Hell, being swallowed up in utter irrecoverable Destruction: (Compare Isa. xiv. 13, 15.) And thy Punishment will be apparently just; for surely if the Miracles, which have been wrought in thee, had been performed even in Sodom itself, licentious and abandoned as that infamous City was (e), it would have been

23

[c] Covering themselves in Sackcloth, and lying in Ashes.] As covering themselves with Sackcloth, (or Hair-cloth, for such it was,) and lying in Ashes, were usual Expressions of Mourning, so they particularly were made use of on Days of publick Fasting and deep Humiliation for Sin; and therefore are justly introduced here, as Expressions of sincere Repentance and Self-Abhorrence. Compare Esth. iv. 1, 3. Job xlii. 6. Isa. lviii. 5. Dan. ix. 3. and Jon. iii. 6, 8.

[d] In the Day of Judgment.] Dr. Hammond understands this Passage, as referring to the Temporal Calamities to come on these Places by the Romans; who did indeed shortly after over-run the whole Country, and made dreadful Ravages in some of these Cities. See Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 6, 7. (al. 5, 6.) & lib. vi. cap. 9. (al. vii. 17.) But there is no Evidence, that the Destruction of these Jewish Cities was more dreadful than that of Tyre and Sidon, and it was certainly less so than that of Sodom and Gomorrha: Besides, our Lord plainly speaks of a Judgment, that was yet to come, on all these Places that he mentions.

[e] Licentious and abandoned as that infamous City was.] It is well known, that those abominable Cities of Sodom and Gomorrha had long since grown into a Proverb for Wickedness and Misery. See Gen. xiii. 13. xviii. 20. Deut. xxix. 23. xxxii. 32.

SECT. 59. been convinced and reformed; so that instead of being consumed by that Shower of flaming Vengeance, it might *have continued* in all its Glory and Beauty *even to this* Day. *Wherefore I say unto you, that the Condition even of the Inhabitants of the Land of Sodom, in the Day of the final Judgment, shall be more tolerable, than yours; for your Condemnation shall rise in Proportion to your more aggravated Guilt, and to those more valuable Mercies and Privileges, which you have abused.*

Mat. XI. 23. *24* Day. *Wherefore I say unto you, that the Condition even of the Inhabitants of the Land of Sodom, in the Day of the final Judgment, shall be more tolerable, than yours; for your Condemnation shall rise in Proportion to your more aggravated Guilt, and to those more valuable Mercies and Privileges, which you have abused.*

24 Day. *Wherefore I say unto you, that the Condition even of the Inhabitants of the Land of Sodom, in the Day of the final Judgment, shall be more tolerable, than yours; for your Condemnation shall rise in Proportion to your more aggravated Guilt, and to those more valuable Mercies and Privileges, which you have abused.*

24 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom, in the Day of Judgment, than for thee.

25 At that Time also, (as well as at another, that will be elsewhere mentioned, Luke x. 21. Sect. 106.) *Jesus took Occasion from the Circumstances which he then observed, to say (f), I ascribe Glory to thee, O Father (g), thou supreme Lord of Heaven and Earth, that while thou hast in the Course of thy wise, though mysterious Providence, hid these great Things of thy Gospel from those who have the Character of Wise and Understanding Persons (h), or from the learned Scribes and refined Politicians of the Age, whom thou hast suffered, through their own Pride and Folly, to reject them with Disdain; thou*

25. At that Time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these Things from the Wise and Prudent, and

Isa. i. 9, 10. iii. 9. xiii. 19. Jer. xxiii. 14. xlix. 18. Lam. iv. 6. Amos iv. 11. Zeph. ii. 9. Mat. x. 15. and Rev. xi. 8.

(f) *Jesus took Occasion to say.*] It is in the Original, *αποκριθεις ο ιησους ειπεν*, which our Translation has literally rendered, *Jesus answered and said*: But when the Words so introduced are not a Reply to any preceding Speech, I apprehend the Version here given expresses the Sense of them, with yet greater Exactness.—The Words [at that Time] seem plainly to prove, that what follows is to be introduced here, and consequently, that *Luke x. 21, 22.* is a Repetition of it, on another proper Occasion.

(g) *I ascribe Glory to thee, O Father.*] This is one proper Meaning of *εξομολογησας*, as appears from comparing *Heb. xiii. 15.* and *Rom. xv. 9.*

(h) *Thou hast hid these Things from Wise and Understanding Persons.*] GOD is often said in Scripture, to do those Things, which he determines to permit; and which he foresees, will be in Fact the Consequence of those Circumstances in which his Creatures are placed, tho' their Wills are laid under no Constraint. (Compare *Exod. vii. 3, 4.* *2 Sam. xii. 11, 12.* *xxiv. 1.* and *1 Kings xxii. 22, 23.*) In this Sense alone could he be said, to hide those Things from the Learned Men of this Age, which he revealed so plainly, that honest and well-disposed Persons, though Children in Understanding, might come to the Knowledge of them. Compare *Mat. x. 34, 35.*

(i) Has

and hast revealed them unto Babes.

thou hast brought the Humble to the Knowledge of them, and hast graciously revealed them to many of the lowest and plainest of Mankind, who, in Comparison of the former, are but as *Infants*. Mortifying as

SECT. 59.
 Mat. XI. 25.

26 Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy Sight.

such a Circumstance might seem, I cordially acquiesce in it, and say, *Be it so, O my Father, since such is thy sovereign Will and Pleasure*, thus to exalt thine own glorious Name, and to lay the Creature in low Abasement before thee.

26

27 All Things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no Man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any Man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

And then turning himself to those that stood near him he said, Do not be led by the Example of your great and learned Men to slight and despise me; for, humble as my Circumstances now appear, *all Things are delivered unto me by my Almighty Father*; who has fully instructed and impowered me, for whatever relates to the Salvation of Men (i): *And* such are the Mysteries and Glories of my Person and Kingdom, that *no one fully knows the Son, but the Father (k)*; *neither does any truly know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son is pleased to reveal him*: For I have that Knowledge of him, to which no Creature can pretend; and it is my great Errand to the World, to discover his Nature and Will, and lead his wandering Creatures into a saving Acquaintance with him;

27

28 Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden,

A Work, which I undertake with the greatest Chearfulness and Delight: *And therefore come unto me by Faith, all ye that labour, and are heavy burt bened*, whether

28

(i) Has fully instructed and impowered me, &c.] I cannot with *Mr. L' Enfant*, confine the Sense of *αὐτὸς μὲν ἀπεκάλυξεν*, merely to the *Instructions* Christ had received from the Father: His Exaltation to supreme Power and Government was so near, and so sure, that *our Lord* might with great Propriety intend the *Phrase* in that more extensive Sense I have given it. Compare *John* v. 22. and *Mat.* xviii. 18.

(k) *No one knows the Son, but the Father.*] These Words evidently declare, that there is something inexplicably mysterious in the Nature and Person of Christ; which indeed appears in the most convincing Manner, from the Account elsewhere given of his Deity in Scripture.

SECT. 59. ther with the Distresses of Life, or with the Sense of Guilt, (see Psal. xxxii. 4. xxxviii. 4.) or with the Load of Ceremonial Observances, which your unmerciful Teachers are so ready to impose; (Mat. xxiii. 4.) and I will ease you of the grievous Burthens, you are sinking under.

laden, and I will give you Rest.

29 Be persuaded then to *take my Yoke upon you, and to learn of me*, as my obedient Disciples; for *I am meek, condescending, and lowly in Heart (l)*, and will impose no unnecessary Hardships upon you: But on such an Application to me, *you shall find that Refreshment to your Souls*, which you in vain would seek elsewhere; that Composure, Satisfaction, and Joy, which nothing but Humility and Meekness, with an entire Subjection to me, can give.

29 Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart; and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls.

30 For such is the Genius of my Gospel, that tho' it will indeed bring you under some Restraints, they are not only tolerable, but on the whole, desirable; and I may truly say, that *my Yoke is easy and gentle*: Or, if there be a Mixture of Difficulty attending it, such Assistances and Encouragements are provided, that with them *my Burthen is light and pleasant (m)* to those, who by Divine Grace are engaged to submit to it. (Compare 1 John v. 3.)

30 For my Yoke is easy, and my Burthen is light.

IMPROVE-

(l) *For I am meek, condescending, and lowly in Heart.*] Some have apprehended that our Lord here intends, peculiarly to recommend the Imitation of his *Humility and Meekness*, as what would especially tend, in the natural Consequence of Things, to promote the *Rest and Tranquillity* of their Minds; and Dr. Watts in a very beautiful Manner has paraphrased the Words thus, in his *Hymns*: (Book i. Hymn 127.) But I apprehend, our Lord chiefly means to remind them, of the general *Lenity* of his Temper, which would engage him to decline all *grievous Impositions, and unnecessary Burthens*, and tenderly to instruct them in the Way to Pardon and Life. Compare Mat. xli. 19, 20. Sect. 51.

(m) *My Burthen is light and pleasant.*] *Ελαφρῶς* properly signifies both *light and pleasant*; and *ῥησως*, *easy*, may be also rendered *gentle and agreeable*; and so with great Propriety may express, that true *Pleasure and Chearfulness*, which are the genuine Result of a sincere *Subjection to Christ's Government*, which is plainly the Meaning of *taking his Yoke*. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. 1 Kings xii. 4. and Isa. x. 27.)—It is observable, that the Word *Yoke* is particularly used for *Ceremonial Impositions*; Acts xv. 10. and Gal. v. 1. and the Word *Burthen* is used in the same Sense, Mat. xxiii. 4. Compare Mat. xvi. 19. and Note (b) there, Sect. 88.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WHAT can we imagine more dreadful, than the Guilt and SECT. 59.
 Condemnation of those, who hear the Gospel only to despise } Mat. xi.
 it! How can we read the Doom of *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Caper-* 21,—24.
naum, without trembling for ourselves, lest we should incur the like
 Sentence! Such have been our religious Advantages and Opportu-
 nities, that, like them, we have indeed been *lifted up to Heaven*:
 The Lord grant, that we may not, by our Misimprovement and Dis-
 obedience, be *cast down to the lowest Hell!* that *Tyre and Sidon*, and
 even *Sodom and Gomorrha*, may not at last *rise up in Judgment* against
 us, and call down on our Heads *a Punishment, more intolerable than*
that which has fallen upon them, or which they must even then feel!

Our vain *Curiosity* may perhaps be ready to ask, Why were *these*
Advantages given to them that *abused* them, rather than to those who
 would have *improved* them better? But let us impose upon our Minds
 a reverential Silence; since the great *Lord of Heaven and Earth* Ver. 26.
giveth not an Account of any of his Matters: (*Job xxxiii. 13.*) It is
so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy Sight!

Still we see the *Gospel hid*, from many who are esteemed the *wisest* Ver. 25.
 and *most prudent* of Mankind; and, blessed be *GOD*, we still see it
revealed to some, who, in Comparison of them, are but *Babes*. Let
 not this *offend us*; but rather taking our Notions from the *Word of*
GOD, let us learn to *honour* these *Babes* as possessed of the truest
Wisdom, and adore the Riches of *Divine Grace*, if we are in their
 Number, while many of *superior Capacities* are left to *stumble at this*
Stone, till they fall into final Ruin.

Whatever *Objections* are brought against *Christ*, and *his Ways*, Ver. 27.
 may we ever adhere to them, *since all Things are delivered to him by*
the Father! From him therefore may we seek the true *Knowledge of*
GOD, as ever we desire everlasting Life!

We have all our *Burthens of Sin*, and of *Sorrow*: While we *la-* Ver. 28.
bour under them, let us with Pleasure hear the *gentle* and melodious
Voice of a Redeemer, thus *kindly inviting us to come unto him, that we* Ver. 29.
may find Rest to our Souls. Let us with Pleasure subject ourselves to
 him, and go on in our holy Course with that *Improvement* and
Chearfulness, which become those, who learn by their own daily
Experience, that *his Commandments are not grievous*, and feel that Ver. 30.
his Yoke is easy, and his Burthen is light.

S E C T. LX.

JESUS accepts an Invitation to dine at a Pharisee's House, and vindicates the Woman who anointed his Feet there. Luke VII. 36, to the End.

LUKE VII. 36.

SECT. 60.
Luke VII.
36.

AND one of the Pharisees, who was present at this Discourse (a), and might feel himself touched by some Insinuations which it contained, under a specious Pretence of Respect to our Lord, tho' as it seemed with an insnaring Design, invited him to eat with him that Day, taking Care to have others of his own Sect present, to observe what passed. And Jesus being willing to express his Condescension and Candour, accepted his Invitation; and entering into the House of the Pharisee, he sat down to Table, without taking any Notice of the Omission of some usual Ceremonies of Respect, which so great a Guest might well have expected.

37 And behold, there was a Woman in that City, who had once been a great and scandalous Sinner, and was still accounted infamous, on Account of the Lewdness and Debaucheries of her former Life: And when she knew that he sat at Meat in the Pharisee's House, she took Encouragement from his late gracious Invitation, and determined to give a remarkable Token of her Reverence and Love, to so glorious and compassionate a Saviour; and for this Purpose she brought an Alabaster Vessel, full of richly perfumed Ointment;

LUKE VII. 36.

AND one of the Pharisees desired him, that he would eat with him: And he went into the Pharisee's House, and sat down to Meat.

37 And behold, a Woman in the City, which was a Sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at Meat in the Pharisee's House, brought an Alabaster-Box of Ointment;

(a) One of the Pharisees, who was present at this Discourse.] Dr. Whitby has abundantly proved this to be a different Story, from that of Mary's anointing Christ's Head a little before his Death. (Mat. xxvi. 6,—13. Sect. 145.) And indeed the Difference is so great and so plain, that it is astonishing so great a Critick, as Grotius, should so confound them, and build so many Remarks on that gross Mistake.

(b) To

a Woman that had been a Sinner washes his Feet with Tears. 383

38 And stood at his Feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his Feet with Tears, and did wipe *them* with the Hairs of her Head, and kissed his Feet, and anointed *them* with the Ointment.

ment; And standing by the Couch, on which our Lord, according to the Custom of those Times, lay down to eat, waiting behind him in the Posture of a Servant at his Feet, her very Heart was melted with such pious Remorse, that in the Presence of the whole Company she was unable to refrain from weeping in such great Abundance, that she began even to water his Feet with a Shower of Tears (b); and observing how wet they were, she wiped them with the fine long Tresses of her Hair (c), which she wore flowing loose about her Shoulders; and then, to shew the Warmth of her Affection, kissed his Feet, and anointed them with the perfumed Balsam she brought with her, as not thinking herself worthy to pour it upon his Head.

SECT. 60.
Luke VII.
38.

39 Now when the Pharisee, which had bidden him, saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This Man, if he were a Prophet, would have known who, and what Manner of Woman this is, that toucheth him; for she is a Sinner.

Now the Pharisee, who had invited him, observing [this,] which according to the Traditions they maintained, appeared to him a very indecent Sight, was so offended, that he said within himself, This Man, if he were really a Prophet, as he pretends to be, would certainly have known who, and what Kind of Woman this vile Creature is, that thus familiarly toucheth him, and would immediately have driven her away with a just Disdain; for she.

(b) *To water his Feet with a Shower of Tears.*] This is the proper Signification of the Word *βουξω*. Compare *Mat. v. 45.*—We are not to imagine, she came with a Purpose thus to wash, and wipe the Feet of Christ; but probably hearing, that the Pharisee, who had invited Jesus to Dinner, had neglected the usual Civility of anointing the Head of his Divine Guest, she was willing to supply the Defect; and as she stood near Jesus, she was so melted with his Discourse, that she shed such a Flood of Tears, as wetted his Feet, which lay bare on the Couch, his Sandals being put off; and observing this, she wiped them with her Hair, which she now wore flowing loose about her Shoulders, as Mourners commonly did; and then not thinking herself worthy to anoint his Head, poured out the Liquid Perfume on his Feet. In this View, all appears natural, and unaffected.

(c) *With the Tresses of her Hair.*] So the Word *βουξω* properly signifies; and the English Word *Tresses* might be derived from it. It is well known, that long Hair was esteemed a great Ornament in the Female Dress; (compare *1 Cor. xi. 15.*) and Women of Pleasure used to nourish and plait it, and to set it off with Garlands and Jewels, to render themselves agreeable to their Lovers.

SECT. 60. *she is such a scandalous and filthy Sinner, that her very Touch is enough to pollute him.*

Luke. VII.

40.

- And Jesus, in Reply to these uncharitable Sentiments, which he discerned at their first Rising in his Heart, said to him, *Simon, I have something to say to thee on this Occasion, which deserves thy Regard. And with an hypocritical Profession of Respect he says, O thou great Teacher (d), I am ready to attend, and whatsoever thou wouldst offer, say [it freely.]* Then Jesus immediately delivered this Parable, as a just, yet mild Reproof to his Host: *A certain Creditor had two Debtors; one of whom owed him five Hundred Denarii, or Roman Pence (e), and the other owed him but fifty: Now as they had not any Thing to pay, so that neither of them could discharge any Part of his Debt, he freely forgave them both the whole of what they respectively owed: And upon this, it may be reasonably expected, that both would have some Sense of his Goodness; say therefore, which of them do you think would love him most? And Simon very readily replied, and said, I suppose, so far as I can judge from the Circumstances thou hast mentioned, that he to whom he forgave most could not but have the greatest Affection for him. And [Jesus] said to him, Thou hast judged very rightly, and the Reflection is evidently suited to the Case that we have here before us.*

And

(d) *O Teacher.*] So *διδασκαλός* properly signifies, and I think expresses something more than the English Word, *Master*, especially in the Sense in which it is now commonly used. Whether this was mere *Hypocrisy*, or whether it was intended as a Sort of *Sneer on our Lord*, who, though he professed himself so great a *Teacher*, would allow this *Woman* to use such Freedoms with him, I pretend not certainly to say.

(e) *Five Hundred Denarii, or Roman Pence.*] It is in the *Original* *δραχμα*, which is well known to have been a *Roman Coin*, in Value about *Seven Pence Half-penny* of our Money; so that *five Hundred* of them were nearly equivalent to *fifteen* of our *Guineas*, and *fifty* to *one Guinea and an half*.—There is no Reason to believe, that there was any *Mystery* intended, in *Christ's* fixing on *these Sums*, rather than any others, that had as great a Difference between them.

(f) *Water*

40 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain Creditor, which had two Debtors; the one owed five hundred Pence, and the other fifty:

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the Woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this Woman? I entred into thine House, thou gavest me no Water for my Feet; but she hath washed my Feet with Tears, and wiped them with the Hairs of her Head.

45 Thou gavest me no Kifs; but this Woman, since the Time I came in, hath not ceased to kifs my Feet.

46 Mine Head with Oil thou didst not anoint; but this Woman hath anointed my Feet with Ointment.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her Sins, which are many,

And turning himself to the Woman, he said to Simon the Pharisee, Thou seest this poor afflicted Woman, and canst not but take Notice of the extraordinary Tendernefs and affectionate Regard to me, that she has now discovered: I came into thine House as a Guest, on thine own exprefs Invitation, [and] thou didst not give me any Water to [wash] my Feet (f), tho' that be so customary and necessary a Refreshment on these Occasions; but she has plentifully watered my Feet with her Tears, and wiped them even with the Tresses of her Hair. Thou didst not give me the usual Respect of a Kifs, when I first came under thy Roof (g); but she, ever since she came in (h), has not ceased, with the greatest Humility and Affection, even to kifs my Feet. Thou didst not so much as anoint my Head with common Oil, tho' few Entertainments fail of being attended with that Circumstance (i); but she, as thou seest, has anointed even my Feet with this precious and fragrant Ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, and openly declare it, both for her Vindication, and for thy Admonition, Her many Sins,

SECT. 60.
Luke VII.
44.

45

46

47

(f) *Water to wash my Feet.*] Drusius supposes, this may be understood, as if our Lord had said, "Thou didst not give me so much as Water to wash my Feet; whereas some Guests have their Feet washed with Wine mingled with Spices." Athenæus does indeed mention such an Extravagance; but to be sure our Lord did not intend the least Insinuation in Favour of it.

(g) *The usual Respect of a Kifs, &c.*] How customary it was for the Master of the House to receive his Guests with such a Salutation, to provide them with Water to wash their Feet, and to anoint their Heads with Oil, or some liquid Perfume, the Reader may see in many other Commentators, and particularly in Calmet's Account of the Jewish Feasts.—It is possible, Simon might omit some of these Civilities, lest his Brethren who sat at Table with him, should think he paid Jesus too much Respect; and if there was any such Slight intended, it might be an additional Reason for our Lord's taking such particular Notice of the Neglect.

(h) *Ever since she came in.*] The Evangelist so expressly tells us, that she heard of Christ's being at Dinner with the Pharisee, before she came in, (ver. 37.) that I make no Doubt of following those Copies, which read it *εως ους, she came in*, rather than *αυτην*, which have *αυτην*, in the first Person, which our Translation follows.

(i) *Anoint my Head with Oil, tho' few Entertainments fail, &c.*] How common this Circumstance was, may be judged, by comparing Deut. xxviii. 40. Mic. vi. 15. Psal. xxiii. 5. civ. 15. and cxli. 5.

SECT. 60.
 Luke VII.
 47.

Sins, which I well know have been exceeding heinous, are graciously forgiven; and therefore, as I have been the Means of bringing her to Repentance and Peace, she has thus testified the high Regard that she has to me, and has loved me much (k), as being persuaded that she never can sufficiently express her Sense of the Obligation: Whereas thou, who art over-confident in thine own Righteousness, lookest but slightly upon me; as he to whom but little is forgiven, or who thinks his Debt was but small, is not so much affected with the Kindness of the Creditor that forgives him, and loveth him but little.

many, are forgiven; for the loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

- 48 *And to renew the kind Assurance of the Pardon that before was granted to the Woman, he says to her, in the Presence of them all, I know the Sincerity of thy Repentance, and therefore now for thy Encouragement under this severe Treatment, I solemnly declare, that thy Sins are forgiven. And they who were at Table with him, began to say within themselves, Who is this arrogant and presumptuous Man, that not only transgresses our Rules by permitting a Harlot to touch him, but even presumes to say, that he forgiveth Sins, which is the peculiar Prerogative of God himself? But far from recalling what he had said, he openly confirmed the Consolation that he before had given, and said to the Woman, Thy Faith has saved thee; and as the Tenderness and Love that thou*

48 And he saith unto her, Thy Sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at Meat with him, began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth Sins also?

50 And he said to the Woman, Thy Faith hath saved thee; go in Peace.

(k) *Therefore she has loved me much.*] As passionately as *Clarius* opposes *this Rendering*, and after all the immense Pains *Grotius* has taken, to find a Sense in *that*, which *our Translation* follows, I cannot but think, the *Connection* evidently requires, that we should render *th*, *therefore*, rather than *for* or *because*, how singular soever such a Sense of the *Particle* may be. And so it is, the *Hebrew Particle* that answers it, is used, in *Hof. ix. 15. All their Iniquity is in Gilgal; for there I hated them: or, therefore there I hated them.* For it cannot be supposed, that *Israel* is said to *sin in Gilgal, because he hated them there*; but on Account of the Iniquity which they committed there, *therefore* it was, that *there he hated them.*—*Our Lord* by this Answer plainly shewed his Knowledge, both of *their Thoughts*, and of *her Character.*

(l) Go



B.L. utti pinx.

And he said unto her, thy Sins are Forgiven thee.

thou hast shewn, have in a convincing, tho' SECT. 60.
 silent Manner, testified thy believing Re- Luke VII.
 regards to me, under the extraordinary Cha- 50.
 racter I bear, *go thy Way in Serenity and*
Peace (1), and enjoy the Comfort of Divine
 Forgiveness, without afflicting thyself for
 the Severity with which uncharitable Men
 would treat thee.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

HOW joyful an Assurance must this be to a Soul, thus bowed Luke vii. 50.
 down and humbled in the very Dust, under a Sense of Sin!
 How light did the *Reproaches of Men* sit upon her, when she heard
 these *reviving Words* from the Mouth of the great *Saviour*, who
 alone had Authority to pronounce them!

Our Hearts surely upbraid us with *many*, and aggravated *Sins*,
 but we hear the Tidings of *Pardon*: Let us gladly embrace it; and
 acknowledging, that not *five hundred Pence*, nor even *ten thousand* Ver. 41.
Talents, are sufficient to express the *Greatness of our Debt*, let us
 retain the *Remembrance* of it, even when we hope that *GOD has* Ver. 42, 43.
forgiven it; and let us labour, that the *Tenderness* of our Love, the
Warmth of our Zeal, and the *Steadiness* of our Obedience, may
 in some Measure be proportionable to it: And, *blessed Jesus*, how
 distinguished must they then be!

Let us with humble Pleasure approach this compassionate *Friend*
of Sinners; who, tho' in one Sense *separate from them*, yet thus
 freely and graciously encouraged *the Chief of them* to apply to him,
 tho' he well knew, *that Condescension* would expose him to the Ver. 39.
Censure of the self-conceited *Pharisees*. May GOD preserve us
 from that arrogant *Confidence in our own Righteousness*, which, while
 it leads us to *despise some*, perhaps much dearer to him than our-
 selves, would proportionably sink our Value for the *Saviour*, and Ver. 47.
 our *Love* to him!

As

(1) *Go thy Way in Peace.*] This was an usual Form of dismissing *Inferiors*, and was
 an Expression of the Friendship and good Wishes of the Person speaking: (*Gen.*
xliv. 17. Exod. iv. 18. 1 Sam. i. 17. 2 Sam. xv. 27. Mark v. 34. Luke viii. 48.
and Jam. ii. 16.) Compare *Luke ii. 29. pag. 67.* There is an apparent *Propriety* in
 the Phrase here, considering what had happened to discompose the tender Spirit of
 this humble Penitent.

SECT. 60.

Ver. 36.

As for what remains, let the *Candour* with which *Christ* accepted this *Invitation*, and the *Gentleness* and *Prudence* with which he behaved at this insnaring Entertainment, teach us to mingle the *Wisdom of the Serpent*, with the *Innocence* and *Sweetness of the Dove* ; and neither absolutely to refuse all *Favours*, nor severely to resent all *Neglects*, from those, whose *Friendship* might at best be very *dubious*, and their *Intimacy* by no means *safe*.

Ver. 39.

To conclude ; let us avoid that very *ill Temper*, which *this Pharisee* shewed, in *upbraiding* this poor humble *Penitent*, with the *Scandals* of her former Life. Where we have Reason to believe, that *Sin* has been lamented and forsaken, and consequently that *GOD* has forgiven it, let us cheerfully receive those, whom *our holy Master* has not rejected ; and if the Remembrance of *former Irregularities* cannot be intirely lost, let it only engage us to magnify the *Riches of Divine Grace* towards such Persons, and to rejoice with them in the Display of it.

S E C T. LXI.

Our LORD attended by some pious Women, takes another Progress, in which he casts out a Dæmon ; and having vindicated himself from the blasphemous Charge of a Combination with Satan, warns the Pharisees of the Danger they were in, of committing the Unpardonable Sin. Luke VIII. 1,—3. XI. 14, 15. 17,—23. Mat. XII. 22,—32. Mark III. 22,—30.

LUKE VIII. I.

SECT. 61.
Luke VIII. 1.

NOW in Pursuance of the great Design, which *Jesus* had been prosecuting in his Ministry, where-ever he had been, it came to pass afterwards, (or after the Events related above,) that he travelled thro' every City and Village in those Parts ; preaching in every Place, and publishing the glad Tidings of the Kingdom of *G O D*, which he was now about to erect among the Chil-

LUKE VIII. F.

AND it came to pass afterwards, that he went throughout every City and Village, preaching, and shewing the glad Tidings of the

the Kingdom of God: and the Twelve were with him:

Children of Men: *And the Twelve Apostles, whom he had lately chosen, were with him; as he thought it proper they should be for some Time, that they might be farther instructed for their Work, and that their having been thus publickly seen in his Train might promote their Reception, when they afterwards came to any of these Places by themselves.* *And there were also some Wo-* SECT. 61.
Luke VIII. 1.

2 And certain Women which had been healed of Evil Spirits and Infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven Devils,

men with him, who had been cured of grievous Disorders, brought upon them by Evil Spirits, and of other Illnesses; [particularly,] Mary, who was called Magdalene, from Magdala, the Place of her Residence (a); a remarkable Person, out of whom had been cast no less than seven Demons (b), who, probably for the Sins of her former Life, were suffered by God to agitate and torment her in such a Manner, as to render her a Spectacle of great Horror. *And there attended* 2

3 And Joanna, the Wife of Chuza Herods Steward, and Susanna, and many others; which ministred unto him of their Substance.

him besides, Joanna, the Wife of Chuza, a Steward in the Court of King Herod; who yet did not think such an Attendance beneath the Dignity of her Family; and one Susannah, and many other [Women;] who being Persons of some considerable Rank and Circumstances in Life, assisted him with their Possessions, which they cheerfully employed to supply him, and his Disciples, with Necessaries, as Occasion required. 3

While

(a) Called Magdalene from Magdala, the Place of her Residence.] As *Ἰησοῦς Ναζαρεθ* is Jesus of Nazareth, or Jesus the Nazarene, so *Μαρια Μαγδαληνη*, which we are used to render Mary Magdalene, might as well be rendered Mary the Magdalene, or Mary of Magdala, which was a Town in Galilee beyond Jordan. See Mat. xv. 39.

(b) Out of whom had been cast seven Demons.] This is supposed by Gregory, to have been only a Proverbial Expression, to signify, that she was a Person of a very bad Character, whom Jesus reclaimed; and Mr. L'Enfant advances the same Interpretation, as agreeable to the Jewish Style: But as so much is spoken of Dispossessions in the proper Sense of the Word by Luke, it is most natural to suppose this to be referred to here. —Some have thought, she was the Sinner mentioned Luke vii. 37. but there is no certain Proof of it. And the Conjecture of those, who suppose her to be the Sister of Lazarus, whose Husband might have lived at Magdala, is rather more improbable; since when Luke and John mention Mary of Bethany, they never intimate, that it was Mary Magdalene. See Calmet's Dictionary.

(c) Then

He dispossesses one that was both Blind and Dumb.

SECT. 61.

Mat. XII. 22.

While he was making *then* this Tour about Galilee and the neighbouring Parts, there was brought to him one possessed by a *Dæmon* (c), who had been rendered by this Means both *Blind and Dumb*; and he immediately expelled the Evil Spirit, and cured him that had been so miserably afflicted by it; so that it came to pass, that when the *Dæmon* was gone out at the Command of Jesus, the Person that but just before was *Blind and Dumb, both spake and saw* (d).

23 And all the Multitude of People round him, perceiving he had healed the poor distressed Creature in an instant, were astonished at the Sight, and said, Is not this the Messiah, the long expected Son of David?

24 But the Pharisees who were with him, and particularly the Scribes, who came down from Jerusalem, and still attended his Progress to make their Remarks on what passed, bearing [this] natural Reflection of the People, and fearing lest their own Credit should sink among them, as that of Jesus advanced, gave the most malicious and unreasonable Turn to the Matter which can be imagined; for they said, This is so bad a [Man], and so notoriously transgresses the Traditions of the Elders, and the Law of God (e), that he

MAT. XII. 22. Then was brought unto him one possessed with a Devil, Blind and Dumb: and he healed him; infomuch that [it came to pass, when the Devil was gone out,] the Blind and Dumb both spake and saw. [LUKE XI. 14.—]

23 And all the People were amazed, and said, is not this the Son of David? [LUKE XI.—14.]

24 But when the Pharisees, [and the Scribes which came down from Jerusalem,] heard it, they said, This Fellow

is

(c) Then there was brought to him one possessed by a *Dæmon*.] This Miracles appears to have been performed on the Morning of that Day, on which Christ delivered the Parables of the Sower, &c. (compare Mat. xiii. 1, & seq. Sect. 65.) and on the Evening of which, he crossed the Sea, stilled the Tempest, and went into the Country of the Gadarenes, where he dispossessed the Legion. (See Mark iv. 35, & seq. Sect. 69.) This is the Reason of introducing it here, as most Criticks do; and no other Story, not yet inserted, can claim a Place before it; therefore Matthew, and Luke, in their different Order, are transposed, to agree with Mark, on that grand Foundation laid down in Note (k), on Mark i. 18. pag. 213.

(d) The Blind and Dumb both spake and saw.] We have before observed, that *κωφός* often signifies, both Deaf and Dumb; (see Note (k) on Luke i. 22. pag. 19.) but as it is not said, that Christ gave this Man his Hearing, it is plain he was not Deaf. And indeed, it appears worthy of Remark, that we hardly ever meet with entire Blindness and Deafness in the same Person.

(e) So notoriously transgresses the Traditions of the Elders, and the Law of God.] There is sufficient Reason to conclude, that the Pharisees must go on this Principle, in this

low [hath Beelzebub, and] doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub, the Prince [LUKE or the Chief] of the Devils. [MARK III. 22. LUKE XI. 15.]

is certainly himself possessed by Beelzebub, and does not cast out Dæmons, but only by a secret Combination with Beelzebub; who being the Prince [or] Chief of the Dæmons (f), with a View to confirm his own Interest, expells other inferior Spirits under his Command, at the Word of this Jesus, who therefore deserves to be put to Death as a Magician, (Exod. xxii. 18.) rather than to be thus extolled as the Messiah.

SECT. 61.
Mat. XII.
24.

25 And Jesus knew their Thoughts, [and he called them unto him,] and said unto them, [in Parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?]

Every

And Jesus knowing their Thoughts, tho' he was not within Hearing of these Reflections, called them to come near him, and said to them in the following Parabolical Expressions, before all the People, How can you possibly imagine, that in such Circumstances as these, Satan should cast out Satan (g)?

25

It

this Random Charge, which had not the least Shadow of a Proof, and it was usual with them to esteem a Contempt of their Traditions, as equally criminal with the most express Contempt of the Law. It is also well known, that they charged Christ, both with Sabbath-breaking, and Blasphemy.

(f) *Beelzebub, the Prince, or Chief of the Dæmons.* There is no Doubt, but this was spoken by the Jews, not merely in a general Way of *A Prince of the Dæmons*, or of one of their Chiefs, but in particular of him whom they considered as *The Prince of the Powers of Darkness*: For in *Mark* it is τῷ ἀρχόντῳ, tho' *Matthew* and *Luke* express it *without the Article*; and the following Words shew, he was supposed to be the same with *Satan*, the grand Adversary. One of the Titles given him was *Beelzebub*, or *Baal-zebub*; and a *Philistine Idol*, who had his Temple at *Ekron*, (and is supposed by some to answer to the *Grecian Pluto*; *Jurieu, Hist. des Dogmes, pag. 631.*) was plainly called by this Name, (see *2 Kings i. 2, 3.*) which is well known to signify the *Lord of Flies*; this Idol being worshipped, as some tell us, under the Figure of a *Fly or Beetle*, as defending People from these Insects; tho' others think it may allude to the vast Multitude of *Flies*, with which the Slaughter of their Sacrifices was infested in the *Heathen Temples*, while (as the Jews report,) no *Fly* was ever seen to come upon the *Flesh of any Sacrifice in the Temple at Jerusalem.* (See *Selden. de Diis Syris, Syntag. ii. cap. 6.*) But why the Jews should speak of him under this Title as the *Chief of the Devils*, it is difficult to say; unless (as *Heinsius* conjectures, rather than proves,) the *Hebrew Word* זבוב, *Zebub*, signified a *deadly Kind of Insect*, whose Sting was mortal, and which was therefore looked upon as a fit Emblem of the *mischievous Hosts*, commanded by this *Prince of the Power of the Air*.—The Title in the *Greek* is βελζεβυβ, *Beelzebub*, which signifies the *Lord of a Dunghill*, and seems to be a contemptuous Change of the former Name, by which it was intimated, that the noblest of the *Heathen Deities* were fitter to dwell on a *Dunghill*, than to be worshipped in a magnificent Temple.

(g) *Satan should cast out Satan.* This Answer of our Lord demonstratively proves, that *Beelzebub*, and *Satan*, are Names for the same Person: and consequently, that *Satan* was considered as the *Prince of those Dæmons*, who were cast out by Christ, and who

SECT. 61. It may surely be laid down as a Maxim, that every Kingdom divided against itself, cannot long subsist in flourishing Circumstances, [but] quickly sinks into Contempt, and is brought to utter Desolation; and every smaller Society, if it be but a City, or a single Family, divided against itself, shall not long stand, [but] falleth into inevitable Ruin.

Mat. XII. 25.

26

And therefore if Satan rise up against himself, as he certainly does, if he join with me to confirm a Doctrine, so evidently opposite to his Nature and subversive of his Kingdom; and if he assist in such a Cause to cast out Satan (b); it will be evident from hence, that he is divided against himself; and how then shall his Kingdom subsist? It plainly follows, that in such a Case he cannot stand, but has contributed himself to put a speedy Period to his own Kingdom. But as you never can suppose, that such a crafty and sagacious Spirit would in so weak a Manner hasten his own Confusion and Defeat, you therefore upon this Account must give up that uncharitable inconsistent Charge, you have been ready to insinuate and urge against me, and must appear to have been guilty of the most extravagant Absurdity, because you scruple not to say, that I cast out Dæmons by the Help of Beelzebub,

27

And if indeed you will be still so obstinate as to assert, that I cast out Dæmons by the

Every Kingdom divided against itself [cannot stand, but] is brought to Desolation; and every City or House divided against itself shall not stand, [LUK. but falleth.] [MARK III. 23, 24, 25. LUKE XI. 17.]

26 And if Satan, [rise up against himself, and] cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his Kingdom stand? [he cannot stand, but hath an End;] [LUK. because ye say, that I cast out Devils thro' Beelzebub.] [MARK III. 26. LUKE XI. 18.]

27

And if I by Beelzebub

who are elsewhere represented as his Angels; so that it must disprove every Hypothesis inconsistent with this Assertion.—It may not be improper to add here, that the Jewish Rabbies call every Dæmon by the Name of Satan, and often use the Name in the Plural Number. So they call Sammael, which is but another Name for Beelzebub, ריש כל השטנים, the Head or Prince of all the Satans. See Casaubon in loc.

(b) In such a Cause to cast out Satan.] It is certain, (as many good Writers have observed,) that the Force of this Argument consists, in a tacit Appeal to the Genius and Design of his Doctrine; which evidently appeared so friendly to the Interest of true Religion, and so destructive to Idolatry and Vice, in which the Kingdom of Satan consisted; that he must really be his own Enemy, and rise up for the Subversion of his own Cause, before he could become an Associate with Jesus. See Archbishop Tillotson's Works, Vol. iii. pag. 545.

but cast out Devils, by whom do your Children cast them out? therefore they shall be your Judges. [LUKE XI. 19.]

28 But if I cast out Devils by [the Finger, or] the Spirit of GOD, then [no doubt] the Kingdom of GOD is come unto you. [LUKE XI. 20.]

29 Or else how can one enter into a Strong Mans House, and spoil his Goods, except he first bind the Strong Man? and then he will spoil his House. [MARK III. 27.]

the Assistance of Beelzebub, you may as well say, that all Miracles of this Kind are thus performed; and I may particularly refer you to determine, by whom do your own Children expell them, who practise Exorcisms (i), and are approved and extolled by you on that Account, tho' some of them do it in my Name? Therefore they shall in this Respect be your Judges, and condemn you of a most partial and unequal Conduct. But if you must allow, that I cast out Dæmons by the Finger, [or] the Power, and Spirit of GOD, then it undoubtedly follows, that the Kingdom of GOD is indeed come unto you, as I assert; and all the Doctrines that I preach, are proved by this to be Divine, and consequently worthy of your most serious and obedient Regard, since it plainly shews my Superiority over all the Infernal Powers.

Otherwise, it is evident I could not do this; for how can any one break and enter into the House of a Strong Man, and plunder his Goods, while he is actually present to guard them (k), unless he first overpower and bind the Strong Man, who will be sure to do all he can to defend them? and then indeed, he may plunder his House of whatever he pleases; but without this, it will be utterly impossible to do it. And therefore it is plain from all these Instances of Dispossessions, that I have Power over Satan to controul and bind him, and consequently that I act by a Divine Commission.

But

(i) By whom do your own Children expell them, who practise Exorcisms, &c.] For the Proof of this Fact, see Acts xix. 13. Mark ix. 38. Luke ix. 49. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. viii. cap. 2. §. 5. pag. 420. Havercamp. and Dr. Whitby's Note, but above all, that of Grotius on this Passage. I do not see, that there is any Need of referring this to the Apostles, who had not yet been sent out, and if they had, they to be sure would be involved in the same Censure with Christ.—It is more natural to suppose, that the Disciples of the Pharisees are here probably meant by their Children.

(k) While he is actually present to guard them.] This the Course of the Argument plainly supposes; and the Case in Question proved the Presence of Satan.

SECT. 61. But still it is not to be thought, the Con-
 Luke XI. 21. test will be carried on without an Oppo-
 sition from the Enemy, nor can it fail of
 giving some Alarm: For *while a Strong
 Man completely armed (l) guards his Castle
 or Palace from Invasion and Attack, his Goods
 are in a profound Peace (m), and his Pri-
 soners, hard as their Situation may be, are
 afraid to make any Attempt to regain their
 Liberty; and such is the Quiet, which there
 seems to be, while Satan reigns without any*

22 Controul. *But when one Stronger than he,
 or of more Power than the Warrior I have
 mentioned, invades his Garrison, and con-
 quers him, he takes away all his complete Ar-
 mory, in which he placed his Confidence, and
 distributes his Spoils among his Followers.
 So shall you see the Infernal Powers yet
 more completely baffled and spoiled by me,
 and my faithful Servants adorned by the
 Trophies won from them.*

Mat. XII. 30. While therefore you are animated by such
 Views, you ought not to allow yourselves,
 even in a State of Neutrality and Indiffe-
 rence; for I must tell you, that *he that is
 not cordially with me as a Friend, is indeed
 against me (n), and will accordingly be treat-*
 ed

LUKE XI. 21. When a
 Strong Man armed keepeth
 his Palace, his Goods are in
 Peace:

22 But when a Stronger
 than he shall come upon
 him, and overcome him, he
 taketh from him all his Ar-
 mour wherein he trusted,
 and divideth his Spoils.

MAT. XII. 30. He that
 is not with me, is against me;
 and

(l) *While a Strong Man, &c.*] The Reader will observe, that (contrary to most others,) I have introduced in *this Section*, Luke xi. 14,—23. as parallel to *Mat. xii. 22,—30.* and *Mark iii. 22,—27.* The Reason is, because as there appeared to me no certain Evidence, that the *Miracle and Discourse* recorded by *Matthew*, were afterwards repeated at another Time; (see *Note (a)* on *Luke xi. 37. Sect. 110.*) so I was not willing to insert so long a Discourse twice: Yet it is not impossible, it might occur again; and if any, on the whole, judge it most probable it did, they may turn back from thence, and read *these Verses* again.—I likewise thought, that *the Discourse* with *the Additions* from *Luke*, appeared most complete and beautiful.

(m) *His Goods are in a profound Peace.*] *Our Lord* here, (as also *Luke x. 17,—20. Sect. 106.*) evidently takes Occasion, from having spoken of *Dispossession*, to turn his Discourse to that grand and complete *Victory over Satan*, of which *these Miracles* were a *Specimen*; and these Words refer, not to *Demoniacks*, who were far from being in *Peace* or *Quiet*, but to the *Cale of Sinners*, who by the Arts of *Satan* are lulled into a State of *Security* and *Confidence*, while in the Hands of their greatest *Enemy*, and in the Way to final Destruction.

(n) *He that is not with me, is against me.*] How this is to be reconciled with *Luke ix. 50.* see the *Note* there, *Sect. 96.*

and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad. [LUKE XI. 23.]

ed as one that is an Enemy to me; *and he that does not set himself according to his Ability to gather Subjects into my Kingdom with me, is but vainly and foolishly scattering abroad,* and however otherwise employed, wastes his Time and Labour in what will at last turn to no solid Account (o). Much more criminal and fatal then, must the Character and Conduct of those be, who with deliberate implacable Malice oppose my Cause, and are resolved at all Adventures, to do their utmost to bear it down, as you are attempting to do by these vile Insinuations, which you have now suggested.

SECT. 61.
Mat. XII. 30.

31 Wherefore [verily] I say unto you, [All Sins shall be forgiven unto the Sons of Men, and Blasphemies, wherewith soever they shall blaspheme;] but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men. [MARK III. 28.]

I therefore give you the most solemn and compassionate Warning of your Danger; for you are on the Brink of a most dreadful Precipice. That Malignity of Heart, which leads you to ascribe these Works of mine to a Confederacy with Satan, may incline you to pass the same impious Sentence on the greatest and fullest Confirmation, which is to be given to my Gospel, by the Effusion of the Spirit on my Followers; and therefore, to prevent, if possible, such Guilt and Ruin, verily I say unto you, that all other Sins shall be forgiven to the Children of Men, and even [all] the other Blasphemies, with which they shall blaspheme; but the Blasphemy against the Spirit of GOD, in this most glorious Dispensation of it (p), shall not be forgiven to those

31

(o) Wastes his Time and Labour in what will at last turn to no solid Account.] This is a more natural Sense, than to take it as if our Lord had said, *He that does not gather Subjects into my Kingdom, disperses them.* According to the Interpretation I have given, it is a most noble Maxim of Divine Wisdom; and happy is the Minister, happy the Man, who attends to it.

(p) The Blasphemy against the Spirit of GOD, in this most glorious Dispensation of it.] After all that Archbishop Tillotson has said, (Vol. i. Sermon. 17.) to prove that the Sin against the Holy Ghost was that, which these Pharisees committed, in ascribing the Miracles of Christ to Satan, I have rather chosen to take the Words in Dr. Whitby's Sense; and must beg Leave to refer to his Paraphrase on the Places above, and to his excellent Dissertation on the Subject, in his fourth Appendix to Matthew, for the Reasons which induced me to such a Judgment.

D d d 2

(g) It

SECT. 61. those impious and incorrigible *Men*, who shall dare to impute to Diabolical Operation, those glorious Works of Divine Power and

Mat. XII. 31.

32 Goodness. *And I add, that whosoever speaks a contemptuous and impious Word even against the Son of Man himself, while here on Earth in this obscure Form, he may possibly be brought to Repentance for it, and so it shall be forgiven him; and consequently even your Case, bad as it is, is not intirely hopeless: But whosoever shall maliciously speak any thing of this Nature against the Holy Spirit, when the grand Dispensation of it shall open, in those miraculous Gifts and Operations, that will be attended with the most evident Demonstrations of his mighty Power, it shall never be forgiven him at all, either in this World, or in that which is to come (q); but he is obnoxious to eternal Damnation, and must irrecoverably sink into it; nor will all the Grace of the Gospel in its fullest Display, afford a Remedy for so aggravated a Crime, or furnish him with Means for his Conviction and Recovery.*

Mark III. 30. This Admonition he gave them with such repeated Solemnity, *because they had maliciously said, He hath an unclean Spirit, and performs these miraculous Works by the Assistance of Beelzebub.*

32 And whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to come; [hath never Forgiveness, but is in Danger of eternal Damnation.] [MARK III. 29.]

MARK III. 30. Because they said, He hath an unclean Spirit.

IMPROVE-

(q) *It shall never be forgiven him at all, either in this World, or in that which is to come.* It is observed both by *Lightfoot*, and *Grotius*, that thro' a fond Imagination of the final Happiness of all the Seed of Abraham, the Jews supposed, there were some Sins, that had not been forgiven here, that would be expiated by Death, and be forgiven after it; and that our Lord designed by this Expression to assure them, that there was no Forgiveness to be had for those that should be guilty of this Sin, either before, or after Death; and that their Expectations of Forgiveness then, would prove no other than a deceitful Dream. (See *Lightfoot's Hor. Hebr. and Grotius, in loc.*) But it is clearly shewn by *Dr. Whitby*, that this was used as a Proverbial Expression, and that it only signified, a Thing should never be, when it was said, *It shall not be, either in this World, or the World to come.*— However, as some think, that it refers to the *Messiah's Kingdom*, which was often called *the Age to come*, I have also hinted at that sense; which is indeed included in the other, but does not seem to me, to be so properly applied here; for if our Interpretation be right, the Sin could not be committed till that Age commenced.

(r) The

I M P R O V E M E N T.

HOW condescending was the Conduct of the Blessed Jesus, while he dwelt among us! Tho' he was Lord of all, he not only waved the pompous Manner of subsisting by continued Miracles, but likewise declined to dwell with the Rich and the Great, with whom he could easily have secured to himself a constant Abode (r). He chose a laborious itinerant Course, and subsisted chiefly on the Bounty of a few pious Women, whose Company and Friendship he did not despise. That Subsistence was most pleasing to him, which was the greatest Testimony of the Respect and Affection of his Hearers, and at the same Time gave the greatest Opportunity to testify his own Humility and Self-denial, and to pursue his Schemes for publick Usefulness. So may his Followers, and especially his Ministers, always judge! and may all the great Things they seek for themselves, be such as lie on the other Side of the Grave, and are to be enjoyed in the Presence of our glorified Master!

SECT. 61.
Luke viii.
1, 3.

We have seen another Triumph of Christ over the Evil Spirit, another of those glorious and delightful Instances in which the great Captain of our Salvation, with superior Strength, bound the Strong Man, and spoiled his Goods. May the Victory still be carried on to Perfection! May his merciful Alarms break that dangerous and fatal Peace, in which the Slaves of Satan are for a while detained, that he may with greater Advantage, and greater Terror, plunge them into final and eternal Ruin! And in such a Contest, may we abhor Neutrality! 'With Pleasure and Zeal let us list ourselves under the Redeemer's Banners, that we may share his Trophies! And while others are throwing away their Time, their Labour, and their Souls, may we by gathering with him, secure to ourselves everlasting Riches!

Mat. xii. 22.
Ver. 29.
Luke xi. 21,
22.
Ver. 23.

We must surely be astonished, to hear of that perverse and malignant Interpretation, which these Wretches put on such convincing Miracles; and it must move our Indignation, to see the Son of GOD maliciously charged as an Associate with Satan. If they have thus called the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more those

Mat. xii. 24.

(r) The Rich, and the Great, with whom he could easily have secured to himself a constant Abode.] Undoubtedly, to mention no more, the Centurion, (who had Wealth and Generosity enough, to erect a Synagogue at his own Charge, Luke vii. 5. pag. 356.) would have been very willing to have received into his House, a single Person, of so extraordinary a Character, so perfectly temperate, and so easy as to the common Accommodations of Life: But Christ came to bring the Gospel to the Poor; and the Purposes of his Mission required frequent Removes.

SECT. 61. *of his Household?* (Mat. x. 25.) Let us learn to imitate that *Meekness of Wisdom*, with which the *Blessed Jesus* pursues his *Vindication*.
 Mat. xii. 25. Oh that *his Followers* had ever traced it! yea, I had almost said, Oh
 Ver. 26. that they had learnt, even from the *Union of Confederate Enemies*, the *Danger* of that *House* or *Kingdom*, which is *unnaturally divided against itself!*

It is Matter of great *Thankfulness*, thus expressly to hear, that *every other Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven*; but *awful* to think,
 Ver. 31, 32. that the *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost* is excepted. Let those, who, while they cannot deny the *Facts of Christianity*, despise and oppose its *Doctrines*, tremble to think how near they approach to the *Boundaries of this Sin*, which is perhaps more *obscurely described*, that we may more *cautiously avoid* all such Approaches. But let not the *humble Soul*, that *trembles at GOD's Word*, meditate *Terror* to itself from such a Passage; which, when viewed in its *due Connection*, cannot with any Shadow of Reason be thought to belong to any, who do not *obstinately reject the Gospel*, and *maliciously oppose it*, when made known to them with its *fullest Evidence*.

S E C T. LXII.

Our LORD goes on to caution the Pharisees of the Danger of such sinful Words; and answers to the Exclamation of the Woman, who extolled the Happiness of his Mother. Mat. XII. 33,—37. Luke XI. 27, 28.

MAT. XII. 33.

MAT. XII. 33.

SECT. 62. **W**HEN our Lord had thus faithfully warned the Pharisees of the Danger they were in of incurring unpardonable Guilt, by Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, he proceeded to inforce the Admonition in the following Manner: Attentively consider what I have offered to you, and either lay aside your vain and hypocritical Pretences to Religion, or quit that Malignity and Wickedness, which render these Pretences insolent and odious: *Either make the Tree good, and*
 Mat. XII. 33. *threw*

EITHER make the Tree good, and his Fruit good; *or*

or else make the Tree corrupt, and his Fruit corrupt: for the Tree is known by his Fruit.

34 O Generation of Vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good Things? for out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh.

35 A good Man out of the good Treasure of the Heart, bringeth forth good Things: and an evil Man out of the evil Treasure, bringeth forth evil Things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle Word that Men

shew it to be so by making *its Fruit* also good (a); or else make, and allow, the Tree to be corrupt, and its Fruit also corrupt, if it in Fact appear to be so: For the Tree is to be known by the Fruit it produces, which is an infallible Proof of what Quality it is. (Compare Mat. vii. 17, 18. Sect. 42.) O ye abominable Brood of Vipers, ye perverse, venomous, deceitful Creatures, how can you, who are so wicked yourselves, speak good Things? It is surely a Force upon Nature, whenever you do it; and you will easily return to such uncharitable and impious Language, as we have now been hearing from you; for the Mouth naturally speaks out of the overflowing Abundance of the Heart. And thus, on the one Hand, a Good Man, out of the good Treasure of the Heart, freely and abundantly produces good Things, and scatters the Seeds of Wisdom and Piety, in the Minds of all with whom he converses: And on the other Hand, a Wicked Man being full of corrupt Affections, and a secret Malignity against Religion, out of the evil Treasure of his Heart, as naturally brings forth evil Things; and even when he labours most artfully to disguise himself and his Character, breaks out like you, in some unguarded Moment, into such Language as betrays the Shame he would conceal. (Compare Luke vi. 43,—45. Sect. 54.)

But take heed, how you suffer your Tongues to run on in this profane and licentious Manner; for I solemnly declare unto you,

(a) *Make the Tree good, &c.*] The Sense I have chosen, is that which seems to agree best with what follows. I could not acquiesce in that of Mr. L'Enfant, who supposes, it is as if he should have said, *Either allow me to be good, or prove the casting out Devils to be evil*;—for that would suppose every one, who cast out Devils, to be a good Man. Zegerus and Grotius understand it, as if our Lord had said, “ Since you cannot but allow, that my Life, and the Tendency of my Doctrine are good, be not so inconsistent with yourselves, as to suppose, I am a Confederate with Beelzebub.” And it is indeed very possible, that *this* may be the Sense.

(b) For

SECT. 62. *you, that in the awful Day of the final and universal Judgment, Men shall give a strict and impartial Account for every unprofitable, and much more for every pernicious Word (b), which they shall speak: And Woe be to them, who have used that noble Faculty of Speech, only to vain, or to wicked Purposes. For let every particular Hearer apply it to himself; it is not by thine Actions alone, but in some Degree by thy Words, thou shalt at last be justified, or by thy Words thou shalt be then condemned (c); as by the Tenor of these the Disposition of thy Heart is shewn, and thy true Character discovered.*

37 Purposes. For let every particular Hearer apply it to himself; it is not by thine Actions alone, but in some Degree by thy Words, thou shalt at last be justified, or by thy Words thou shalt be then condemned (c); as by the Tenor of these the Disposition of thy Heart is shewn, and thy true Character discovered.

Luke XI. 27. *And while he was speaking these Things (d), a certain pious Woman was so transported, with a Mixture of Pleasure at hearing his Words, and Indignation at the unworthy*

Men shall speak, they shall give Account thereof in the Day of Judgment.

37 For by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned.

LUKE XI. 27. And it came to pass as he spake these Things, a certain Woman of

Treat-

(b) *For every unprofitable, and much more for every pernicious Word.] Tho' the Terms inconvenient, and unprofitable, are sometimes applied to Things capable of much worse Epithets; (compare Rom. i. 28. Eph. v. 4, 11. Tit. iii. 9. and Heb. xiii. 17.) yet I cannot think, that our Lord here uses *apros, idle*, merely to signify *mischievous*. We are certainly accountable for *useless*, as well as *wicked Discourses*, and they will be taken into that *last Survey*, which is to determine our Character and State; which they, whose Life is one continued Scene of *Whim*, or *jaeering Raillery*, would do well *seriously* to consider. And it was to our Lord's Purpose to observe it here, as it inferred by the strongest Consequence, the Danger of such vile and criminal Discourses, as those of the *Pharisees* in this Case. But Discourse tending by *innocent Mirth* to exhilarate the Spirits, is not *idle Discourse*; as the Time spent in *necessary Recreation*, is not *idle Time*; nor does a wise and gracious God expect from Men the *Life of Angels*. The *Jews*, about *Kimchi's Time*, had a *Proverb* among them, that a *Scholar may be improved even by the idle Words of his Master*; but I think *Heinsius* had no Reason to value himself so much, as he seems to do, on his Attempt to explain these Words of *Christ*, as an *Allusion to that*.—If any, on the whole, are dissatisfied with the Account of Things here given, I would beg Leave to ask them, whether *unprofitable Talk* be not a *sinful Wasting of Time*; and whether that must not render a Man in some Degree criminal before God.*

(c) *Or by thy Words thou shalt be condemned.] Since both the Clauses in this Verse cannot belong to the same Person, it is plain that *was* here, as the Hebrew Particle *Ve* in many Places, is put for the Alternative *Or*: And agreeably to this we find, that instead of *was*, the Particle *n* is here inserted, in many antient Copies.*

(d) *While he was speaking these Things.] Luke brings in this Story at the End of the Parable of the relapsing Dæmoniack, which was delivered just at the Conclusion of the Discourse before related. And tho' it is uncertain, at what exact Time this Exclamation was made; yet what was now said might be a proper Occasion for it; or, if it be a little transposed, the Reader will excuse it, as it serves for a fit Appendix to this short Section, and likewise prevents the more unequal Length of the following.*

(e) From

of the Company lift up her Voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps which thou hast sucked.

Treatment he met with from his Adversaries, that she could not forbear *lifting up her Voice*; and crying out from amidst the *Croud* (e), she said unto him, O thou Divine Teacher, *Happy is the Womb of her that bare thee, and thrice happy the Breasts, which thou didst suck!* With what unspeakable Delight must thy blessed Mother look on so illustrious a Son!

SECT. 62.

Luke XI.

27.

28 But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they, that hear the Word of GOD, and keep it.

But be modestly and seriously replied, Nay, rather happy are they, who bear the Word of GOD which I preach, and keep it in their Hearts, as a vital Principle of holy Obedience; for they will be entitled to eternal Blessings, infinitely more valuable than any Natural Relation to me could give, or any Opportunities of the most intimate Converse with me, separate from such a practical Regard to my Instructions.

28

IMPROVEMENT.

WHOSE Heart does not echo back the Exclamation of this pious Woman? Yet who does not too frequently forget that weighty and important Answer which succeeded it? Let us not only bear, but keep the Word of Christ; and we shall thus be in a nearer Union with him, than ever could arise from any Natural Relation to him, and shall e'er long have Opportunities of more noble, and more delightful Converse with him, than those with which the Virgin Mary herself was honoured, during the Time of his Abode on Earth.

Luke xi. 27.

Ver. 28.

Let us especially attend to those Instructions we have here received, and judge of ourselves by our Fruits; never flattering ourselves, that our Hearts are good, if our Lives are abominable, and disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate. (Tit. i. 16.) And in particular let us remember, that not our Actions only, but the Fruits of our Lips, are to be brought into the solemn Account, which we must give to the great Judge of all the Earth; and that the Day is coming, when all our

Mat. xii. 33.

Ver. 36.

(e) From amidst the Croud.] So in the original plainly signifies; and it may thus, I think, be very properly connected with the Words which follow it in the Original.

SECT. 62. *our idle and unprofitable Talk, which has proceeded from the evil Treasure of a depraved Heart, will undergo a strict Examination, and we must answer not for our Actions only, but shall be justified, or condemned by our Words. And if foolish and wicked Speeches are to be accounted for in the Day of Judgment, let us set a Watch on the Door of our Lips, to prevent them; and labour daily to use our Tongue so, that it may indeed be, as it is in Scripture called, our Glory. (Psal. xvi. 9. xxx. 12.)*

Ver. 35.

For that Purpose, let it be our great Care, to lay up a good Treasure of Christian Knowledge and Experience in our Hearts; that while too many are poisoning those that are round about them, with erroneous Principles and vicious Discourses, the Opening of our Lips may be of righteous Things; and we may still be ready, upon all proper Occasions, with Freedom, Variety, and Spirit, to bring forth good and profitable Things, from the good Treasure of our Hearts; which may be edifying unto those that hear us, and may go from one Heart to another. So will the Lord himself bearken with Pleasure unto what we speak, and exactly record it in the Book of Remembrance that is written before him; and producing it at last to our publick Honour, will own us for his, in the Day when he makes up his Jewels. (Mal. iii. 16, 17.)

S E C T. LXIII.

Our LORD upbraids the Pharisees with their Perverseness in asking a farther Sign; and delivers the Parable of the Relapsing Dæmoniack. Mat. XII. 38,—45. Luke XI. 16. 24,—26. 29,—32.

MAT. XII. 38.

SECT. 63. *THEN some of the Scribes and Pharisees who were present, hearing how plainly Christ admonished, and how severely he rebuked them, answered him, by diverting the Discourse to another Topick; [and] with a View to try him, demanded of him a Sign from Heaven, saying Master, thou professest thyself a Teacher of extraordinary Authority, and*
we

Mat. XII.
38.

MAT. XII. 38.

THEN certain of the Scribes, and of the Pharisees answered, [tempting him; and sought of him a Sign from Heaven,] saying, Master,

Master, we would see a Sign from thee. [LUKE XI. 16.]

we may justly expect some proportionable Proof of it: Now these supposed Dispossessions which we have lately seen or heard of, are so liable to Fraud and Collusion, that we cannot fully acquiesce in them; but would gladly see a more remarkable and convincing Sign from thee, and particularly some such Celestial Appearance (a) as several of our ancient Prophets gave.

SECT. 63.
Mat. XII. 38.

39 But [when the People were gathered thick together,] he answered, and said to them, [This is] an evil and adulterous Generation, [which] seeketh after a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas. [LUKE XI. 29.]

But when the Multitude was gathered in a Croud about him, eager to hear what Jesus would reply to this Demand, and ready to conclude that he would now perform some wondrous and peculiar Kind of Miracle, he answered and said to them, This is an evil and adulterous Generation (b), a very perverse and degenerate People, [that] amidst such convincing Miracles as I am daily performing in the most publick Manner, still seeks after a farther Sign: But no such Sign, as their bold Curiosity prescribes, shall be given them, unless [it be] that one, yet greater Miracle, which I may not improperly call the Sign of the Prophet Jonab (c), because it bears so great a Resemblance to that miraculous Occurrence, that will be seen hereafter with Respect

39.

(a) Some such Celestial Appearance.] The Words of Luke expressly fix it to this Sense; and Matthew in another Story of this Kind, (Mat. xvi. 1. Sect. 87.) expressly tells us, they demanded a Sign from Heaven. (Compare also Mark viii. 11.) It is not therefore to be understood, of a Sign only of Deliverance from the Roman Yoke, or of the Erection of the Messiah's Temporal Kingdom, as some have supposed; but rather of some Miracle performed in the visible Heavens, where, they seem to have thought, Impostors had less Power than on Earth. (Compare John vi. 30.)—And they might probably conclude, they had the better Excuse for making such a Proposal, as Moses, (Exod. ix. 22,—24.) Joshua, (Josh. x. 12.) Samuel, (1 Sam. vii. 9, 10.) and Elijah, (1 Kings xviii. 36,—38. and 2 Kings i. 10.) had given such Signs. (Compare Isa. vii. 11. and xxxviii. 8.) See Vitring. Observ. Sacr. lib. ii. cap. 16.

(b) Adulterous Generation.] This plainly signifies a spurious Race, degenerated from the Piety of their Ancestors. Compare Isa. lvii. 3, 4. Psal. cxliv. 7, 8. and John viii. 39, & seq.

(c) Unless it be the Sign of the Prophet Jonab.] As the Resurrection of Christ was attended with the Appearance of a descending Angel, it was with greater Exactness, than is generally observed, the very Thing that these Pharisees demanded, a Sign from Heaven.

404 *No Sign shall be given them, but that of the Propbet Jonah.*

SECT. 63. Respect to me. For as *Jonah was a Sign* to the *Ninevites* (d), and was miraculously sent among them by means of an unparalleled Deliverance from the most eminent Danger; so also shall the *Son of Man*, by a yet more surprizing Divine Interposition in his Favour, be made a very illustrious Sign to this Generation. For as *Jonah was three Days and three Nights in the Belly of the great Fish* that swallowed him (e), and yet afterwards came out alive and unhurt; so shall the *Son of Man*, after he has been slain by the Infidelity and Cruelty of those to whom he comes, be Part of *three Days and three Nights* (f) in the *Heart of the Earth*, and on the third Day shall with the Ministry of an Angel in a visible Form descending from Heaven, burst the Bands of Death, and come forth from the Tomb.

Luke XI. 30.

Mat. XII. 40.

LUKE XI. 30. For as Jonas was a Sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of Man be to this Generation.

MAT. XII. 40. For as Jonas was three Days and three Nights in the Whales-Belly; so shall the Son of Man be three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth.

(d) *For as Jonah was a Sign, &c.*] The attentive Reader may easily observe, that some Passages of the *Eleventh Chapter of St. Luke* are transposed in this Section. But I will not insist on the Necessity of doing it; since it is very possible, the same Words might be repeated again: But there is so very small a Variation, and the Discourse is so long, that I chose to unite all the *Three Evangelists* as far as might be, into one compound Text. The Reader who chuses to follow *Luke's Order* exactly, will find a *Memorandum* (Vol. ii. Sect. 110. Note (a),) of the Place, where this Paragraph comes in according to that; and I must, on the whole, leave it among some other Passages in the *Evangelists*, where it is neither possible, nor important, to determine the exact Series.

(e) *In the Belly of the great Fish.*] It is no where said in the *Old Testament*, that *Jonah* was swallowed by a *Whale*; and it is the less probable, as *Whales* are seldom found in the *Mediterranean*, and as the Gullet of a *Whale* is said to be so small, as not to be capable of receiving, even the *Head* of a *Man*. It is therefore much more probable it was a *Shark*, or some other great *Fish*, which, it is said, *the LORD had prepared to swallow up Jonah*: (*Jon. i. 17.*) And the Word *καταβυθου* in *Greek*, as well as *תנין* in *Hebrew*, may signify any large *Fish*, as some of the *Greek Lexicographers* have observed.

(f) *Part of three Days and three Nights.*] It is of great Importance to observe, (as many good Writers have done,) that the *Easterns* reckoned any Part of a Day of twenty-four Hours for a whole Day; and say a Thing was done after three, or seven Days, &c. if it was done on the Third, or seventh Day, from that last mentioned. (Compare *1 Kings xx. 29. 2 Chron. x. 5, 12. and Luke ii. 21.*) And as the *Hebrews* had no Word exactly answering to the *Greek* *νυχθημερον*, to signify, a natural Day of twenty-four Hours, they use *Night and Day*, or *Day and Night* for it. So that to say, a Thing happened after three Days and three Nights, was the same as to say, it happened after three Days, or on the third Day. (Compare *Esth. iv. 16. with v. 1. Gen. vii. 4, 12. Exod. xxiv. 18. and xxxiv. 28.*) See *The Miracles of Jesus vindicated*, pag. 6, — 8.

(g) *Rise*

The Ninevites, and Queen of Sheba will condemn the Jews. 405

41 The Men of Nineveh shall rise in Judgment with this Generation, and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here. [LUKE XI. 32.]

Tomb living and triumphant. And by a natural Consequence, *the Men of Nineveh shall rise up in the final Judgment with this Generation (g),* and by the Circumstances of their Case when viewed together, shall plead against it, and condemn it, as far more inexcusable than they; for they repented in the very Dust at the preaching of Jonas, tho' he made them but a transient Visit, and wrought no Miracle in their Presence to confirm his Mission; and behold, one much greater than Jonas is here, and you reject him, tho' he has been so long among you, and has performed a great Variety of most surprizing Miracles before you.

SECT. 63.
Mat. XII. 41.

42 The Queen of the South shall rise up in the Judgment with this Generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost Parts of the Earth to hear the Wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. [LUKE XI. 32.]

And much more may it be concluded, that *the Queen of Sheba in the South Country shall rise up in Judgment with this Generation,* and by the signal Instance that she gave of her great Desire to improve in Knowledge, shall plead against the Obstinacy and Perverseness of this wicked Age, and condemn it; since great as her Rank, and her Affairs in Life were, she came from the extreme Boundaries of the Earth, even from the remotest Parts of the Arabian Coast, to bear the Wisdom of Solomon, that she might improve by his learned Conversation; (see 1 Kings x. 1, & seq.) and behold, however contemptible he may appear in your Eyes, one much greater than Solomon, both in Dignity, and Wisdom, is here before you, and is daily conversant among you (b).

43.

Take

(g) *Rise up in Judgment with this Generation.*] Some think, there is a Reference in this Expression, to the Custom of Witnesses rising up to give their Testimony; but it was not properly on the Testimony of the Ninevites that these Sinners would be condemned. The plain Meaning is, that the Remembrance of their Case would be considered, as illustrating the Guilt of those that rejected Christ; so that here those are said to condemn others, who furnish out Matter for their Condemnation.

(b) *One greater than Solomon is here.*] Our Lord speaks of himself in such sublime Language, with the utmost Reason, and with perfect Modesty and Decorum. The humble Form of his Appearance, and his necessary Reserve in declaring himself the Messiah in so many Words, made it yet more expedient, that by such Phrases as these

SECT. 63.
 Mat. XII. 43.

Take heed therefore, how you behave to me, lest all your Enquiries after the Kingdom of Heaven, and all your Converse with me, serve only to aggravate your Guilt and Ruin. For if speedy Repentance does not prevent it, I foresee, that (to borrow a Simile from the late Subject of our Discourse,) your Case will be like that of a Dæmoniack, who after a little Respite falls into a more violent Relapse: For as it sometimes happens, that *an unclean Spirit, when he is gone out of a Man, goes about, in a roaming discontented Manner, thro' dry Desarts, and wild uncultivated Places (i), seeking some Rest to his own malignant Nature; and thro' the invisible Restraint of Divine Providence, he*

44 *findeth none: Then he saith, I will return to my Dwelling, from whence I came out; and resolves to make another Attack on the Person he lately quitted: And it may be when he comes to him, he finds as it were*

43 When the unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh thro' dry Places, seeking Rest, and findeth none: [LUKE XI. 24.—]

44 Then he saith, I will return into my House, from whence I came out: and when he is come, he findeth it

an

he should sometimes intimate it: And indeed, his saying he was *greater than Solomon*, that most illustrious of all the Royal Descendants of *David*, was as plain an Intimation as could well be given.—Here is another undoubted Instance, in which *Luke* has plainly inverted the Order of our Lord's Words; for the Connection cannot be secured, without transposing the Verses, as they stand in him. The attentive Reader will observe many more Instances of the same Kind, and see from hence how little Ground there is for what some have supposed, that *Luke's* Account is so exact, that all the Gospels should be regulated by his Order. See Note (g) on *Luke* i. 3. pag. 3.

(i) *Thro' dry Desarts, and wild uncultivated Places.*] Here is a plain Reference to the common Notion, that *Evil Demons* had their Haunts in *Desarts* and desolate Places. (Compare *Isa.* xiii. 21. and *Rev.* xviii. 2.) Some may think, that a Desire of doing Mischief might rather have prompted the *Evil Spirit*, of whom *our Lord* speaks, to have continued in some *City*, or other Place of publick Resort: But as he may be supposed in this Parable to apprehend, that after being driven out, he should for a while be under some extraordinary Restraint, it seems to me a very natural and beautiful Circumstance, thus to represent this malignant Being, as impatient of the Sight of Mankind, and rather chusing to seek his Rest in the Prospect of a sandy Desert, than in the View of any more agreeable Scene, which might renew his Anguish, by presenting to him the Memorials of Divine Goodness to the Human Race.—Another Explication has been given to this Passage, and *Dr. Whitby* and some others interpret it, of the *Devils* being cast out of *Judea*, yet finding no Rest in the Desarts of *Heathenism*, because there also the *Apostles* cast them out, which drove them to return again to the *Jews*, and to make them worse than before: But tho' it is possible that *our Lord's* comprehensive Mind might have some View to this, his Hearers could not understand it thus; and perhaps after all, the Circumstances might be merely parabolical and ornamental.

3

(k) Empty,

it empty, swept, and garnished. [LUKE XI.—24, 25.]

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other Spirits, more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last State of that Man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked Generation. [LUKE XI. 26.]

an Habitation empty of any better Guest, SECT. 63. and even swept, and adorned to receive him. Mat. XII. 44.; that is, he finds the miserable Sinner unaffected with his late Affliction and Deliverance, and still a Slave to those Vices which render him an agreeable Dwelling for Satan: And then by the just Judgment of God on such an incorrigible Wretch, *he goes, and associates with himself Seven other Spirits* which are yet more wicked and mischievous than himself, and entering in, they dwell together there; so that the last Condition of that Man is much worse than the former. Thus also will it be to this wicked Generation (l); instead of growing better, they will grow seven Times worse than before, as both the natural and the judicial Consequence, of their rejecting the Methods of Divine Grace for their Recovery; till, as if they were possessed by a Multitude of Devils, they are madly hurried on to their irrecoverable Ruin, in this World, and the next.

(k) *Empty, swept, and adorned to receive him.*] Mr. Jurieu draws a strange Argument from hence in Favour of Purity, (one would think he meant, of Cleanliness,) that finding his former Habitation swept and adorned, the *Dæmon* could not enter in, without a Confederacy of Seven yet more potent than he. But this is quite wide from the Meaning of our Lord, who hereby strongly suggests, that indulging sinful Habits is like sweeping and furnishing the House, to invite the Abode of Satan there; in the same Manner, as Purity, Devotion, and Love are elsewhere represented, as consecrating the Soul for a Temple to the Holy Ghost. (See 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. vi. 19, 20. Eph. ii. 21, 22. and 1 Pet. ii. 1,—5.)—I know, some judicious Writers have glossed more minutely on these Words, as if the Meaning were, “empty of true Grace, swept from gross Sin, and garnished or adorned with seeming Virtues and Self-Righteousness.” But with all due Submission, especially to one very great Name, by which this Interpretation is patronized, I think, that in this Connection it enervates, rather than illustrates, the Sense and Spirit of this fine Passage. Nor should I be forward to say, that a Reformation of Life without a thorough Change of Heart, tho’ utterly unavailing as to his future State, brings a Man more under the Power of Satan than he was before, or makes him worthy the Punishment of being given over to Seven *Dæmons* instead of one.

(l) *Thus also will it be to this wicked Generation.*] They who have read the sad Account *Josephus* gives of the Temper and Conduct of the Jews, after the Ascension of Christ, and just before their final Destruction by the Romans, must acknowledge, that no Emblem could have been more proper to describe them. Their Characters were the vilest, that can be conceived, and they pressed on to their own Ruin, as if they had been possessed by Legions of Devils, and wrought up to the last Degrees of Madness.

IMPROVE-

I M P R O V E M E N T.

SECT. 63. **L**ET us, to whom the Revelation of the *Gospel* is so clearly made, *fear* lest these dreadful Things should come upon us, and the Abuse of our Advantages should render us an easy Prey to *Satan*, and a fit Habitation for the *Powers of Darknes*. Let those particularly fear it, who having been brought to some serious Impressions, and some external Reformation, are tempted to a *Relapse* into former Vices, which would render their *latter End* far worse than their Beginning. (2 Pet. ii. 20.) GOD has permitted some such awful Instances to occur; and unhappy Wretches, perhaps some of them the Children of Religious Parents too, who were once not far from the Kingdom of GOD, have so abandoned every Principle of Religion, and every Sentiment of Wisdom and Virtue, that it seems as if seven Devils had possessed them, and were driving them headlong to Destruction.

Ver. 38. May we instead of *demanding farther Evidences of Christianity*, than the Wisdom of GOD has seen fit to give us, make it our Care to *bear and obey*, and diligently improve the Light we have received! May we be brought to a sincere and lasting *Repentance* by the *preaching of Christ and his Apostles*, lest the *Ninevites rise up in Judgment against us, and condemn us!* May we own the superior *Wisdom* of this *Divine Teacher*, this better *Solomon*; and say, as the *Queen of Sheba* to the *Jewish Prince*, (1 Kings x. 8.) *Happy are these thy Servants, who stand continually before thee, and bear thy Wisdom!* for thou *speakest, as never Man spake*; (John vii. 46.) and *in thee all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge are hid*. (Col. ii. 3.) But oh, how many are *curious to know* what little concerns them, and are fond of improving their own *Wit*, and trying that of others, by *hard Questions*, while the far more obvious and important Points of Wisdom are neglected, as beneath their *Regard*; as if every thing were more necessary than being *wise to Salvation!* We need not travel to *distant Climates*, to learn this Heavenly Philosophy; no, it is *nigh us, even in our Mouth*; and we are, on that Account, so much the more *inexcusable*, if it be not also *in our Heart*, (Rom. x. 8.)

S E C T.

S E C T. LXIV.

Our LORD declares his Resolution of persisting in his Work, urges the Admission of the Light he was dispersing, and declares his obedient Disciples dearer to him than the nearest Relations could otherwise be. Luke XI. 33,—36. VIII. 19,—21. Mat. XII. 46, to the End. Mark III. 31, to the End.

LUKE XI. 33.

NO Man when he hath lighted a Candle, putteth it in a secret Place, neither under a Bushel; but on a Candlestick, that they which come in may see the Light.

LUKE XI. 33.

OUR blessed Lord in the Conclusion of SECT. 64. this excellent Discourse (a), which was Luke XI. 33. occasioned by the Perverseness of the Pharisees, who had been impiously reflecting on his Miracles, and asking for a farther Sign, assured them, that he was not thus to be diverted from his Work, but notwithstanding all their Opposition to it, yet would he still go on to bear his Testimony to the Truth; and to engage them to a free Admission and Improvement of the Light, which was then shining round them, he addressed the following Exhortation to them: You have indeed endeavoured to oppose me with the greatest Obstinacy and Perverseness, nevertheless you shall not silence me; for *no Man having lighted a Lamp, puts it in a bye Place, or under a Bushel, to conceal its Rays; but rather sets it on a Stand, that they who come in to the House may see the Lustre that it gives: And thus, according to the Charge that I gave formerly to my Disciples, (Mat. v. 16. Sect. 37.) I too will take all Opportunities of publishing the important Message that*

(a) In the Conclusion of this excellent Discourse.] Luke has inserted here the following Passages which are delivered in Words parallel to Mat. v. 15. and vi. 22, 23. (See the Paraphrase, and Notes there, pag. 238, 268.) Yet they appear in this Connection, to have a different Sense, which I have expressed at large.

SECT. 64. that I bring, and making my Light to shine before Men; and do you see, that what I offer to you be received as it ought, and guard against those Prejudices which would lead you to exclude it. For *the Eye is*, as it were, *the Lamp of the whole Body (b)*: *If thine Eye therefore be clear (c)*, and free from any vicious Humour that would obstruct the Sight, *thy whole Body also will be enlightened; but if [thine Eye] be distempered, thy whole Body also will be proportionably darkened*, and no other Part can supply the Defect: And so it is with respect to the Judgment, which is to the Mind, what the Eye is to the Body.

34 Luke XI. 33. See to it therefore, lest that which is as the Light in thee, be itself Darknes; which it will be, if those perverse Maxims be adhered to, on which you now go, in rejecting my Miracles, and the Doctrine confirmed by them. (Compare Mat. vi. 22, 23. Sect. 41.)

35 36 It may indeed cost you some Pains to reform your Judgment, but the Pleasure and Advantage will be an abundant Equivalent for all the Labour that you take in doing it. For tho' the Case, that I but just now mentioned, is so sad, yet on the other Hand, if thy whole Body (d), in Consequence of a clear Eye,

34 The Light of the Body is the Eye: therefore when thine Eye is single, thy whole Body also is full of Light: but when thine Eye is evil, thy Body also is full of Darknes.

35 Take heed therefore, that the Light which is in thee, be not Darknes.

36 If thy whole Body therefore be full of Light, having no

(b) *The Eye is the Lamp of the whole Body.*] Nothing is more common with the finest antient Writers, than by an obvious Figure, to call the Eyes, the Lights of the Body, as our Lord here has done.—I render *λυχνία*, Lamp, because it had been so translated in the Verse before, and it did not seem necessary to change it.

(c) *If thine Eye therefore be clear.*] See Note (b) on Mat. vi. 22. pag. 268.

(d) *For if thy whole Body:* *ἢ ἢ το σωμα σου ολον.*] This is an unusual Rendering of the Particle *ἢ*, but it appeared to me necessary; for this Verse is not introduced as an immediate Consequence from the foregoing, but both of them are collateral Inferences from ver. 34. as the intelligent Reader will easily observe. And if it be admitted that *γὰρ*, for, as well as *ἢ*, therefore, is sometimes used with such a Latitude, as that the former may be understood to introduce a Reason for, and the latter to introduce a Consequence from, something not immediately preceding; as also, that they are sometimes used promiscuously; it will, I think, clear the Connection in some Places, where it will otherwise give us a great deal of Perplexity, and I fear, after all our fine-spun Reasonings, but very little Satisfaction. (See Luke xx. 37, 38. Rom. i. 16, & seq. and Heb. ii. 9, & seq. Greek; and many other Places.) Compare Note (i) on Mat. xii. 8. pag. 325, 326.

(e) *Bring*

no Part dark, the whole shall be full of Light, as when the bright shining of a Candle doth give thee Light.

Eye, and thy whole Mind, by Means of a SUBUNUMU 64. rectified Judgment, *be enlightened, having no Part remaining dark* through Distemper or LUKE XI. 36. Prejudice, (being [thus] all enlightened (e),) the Benefit of it will be such, that it will be, as when a Lamp lights thee by its sprightly Lustre (f), and thou goest on with Security and Pleasure, in those Paths, which would otherwise be full of Uncertainty and Danger.

MAT. XII. 46. While he yet talked to the People, behold [there came then] [LUKE. unto him] his Mother and his Brethren, [and standing without, they sent unto him, calling him, and] desiring to speak with him. [MARK III. 31. LUKE VIII. 19.—]

And as he was yet speaking these lively MAT. XII. and important Things to the People (g), who 46. in vast Multitudes were gathered about him, behold, there came unto him, just then, his Mother, and his Brethren or near Kinsmen, who standing without, and apprehending the Danger to which he exposed himself by such free Remonstrances and Admonitions as these, sent to him, to call him away from so dangerous a Situation, [and] for this End desired earnestly to speak with him, as about some Affairs of Importance. MARK III. 32.

MARK III. 32. — And the Multitude sat about him, [and

Multitude sat round about him, there was no Room for his Relations to get near him; and notwithstanding all that they could urge of a peculiar Interest in him, the People

(e) *Being thus all enlightened.*] By allowing these Words, φωτιστον ολον, to be thus included in a Parenthesis, we prevent the Absurdity of supposing, as our Translation would lead one to imagine, that our Lord says, *If thy whole Body be full of Light,—the whole shall be full of Light.* Else the Clause should be so rendered, as to shew, that the following Words make a Part of what our Lord asserts of the enlightened Body; *it shall be all as full of Light, as when a Lamp, &c.*

(f) *By its sprightly Lustre.*] This seems to be the Force of the Word ασπασθη, which signifies a very strong and vivid Flame, and is indeed most commonly applied to that of Lightning, being here only used in the New Testament for any other Flame. (See *Mat.* xxiv. 27. xxviii. 3. *Luke* x. 18. xvii. 24. and *Rev.* iv. 5. viii. 5. xi. 19. xvi. 18.)—It may perhaps be an oblique Hint of the Celestial Original, and vigorous active Influence of that Lustre, which Christ diffused, to illuminate and guide the Mind.

(g) *And as he was yet speaking, &c.*] Matthew is so express in connecting this Story with the preceding Discourses, (not to insist on Mark's following the same Order too,) that it is absolutely necessary to transpose *Luke* viii. 19, & seq. unless we suppose that it happened twice, and that perhaps on the same Day; for Matthew assures us, that the Parable of the Sower, (to which *Luke* also joins it,) was delivered this Day. *Mat.* xiii. 1,—3.

412 *Those that do the Will of CHRIST, are his Mother and Brethren.*

SECT. 64. *ple were so eager in attending to him, that none of them were willing to give Place, and they could not come at him on Account of*

[and they could not come at him for the Press.] [LUKE VIII.—19.]

Mat. XII. 47. *the Croud. Therefore one of the People said unto him, Behold, thy Mother and thy Brethren stand without at some Distance, enquiring for thee, [and] earnestly desiring to see [and] speak with thee: What therefore must be done? Wilt thou go out to them, or give Orders to the People to make Way for them*

MAT. XII. 47. Then one said unto him, Behold thy Mother and thy Brethren [without seek for thee, and] stand desiring [LUK. to see, and] to speak with thee. [MARK III.—32. LUKE VIII. 20.]

48 *to come hither to thee? But he, to encourage those that were truly serious in their Attendance on his Preaching, answered and said to him that told him, Who do you think is my Mother? and who are those whom you imagine I consider as my Brethren (b)? And looking round on them*

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my Mother? and who are my Brethren? [MARK III. 33.]

49 *that were sitting about him to hear his Word, and stretching out his Hand with an affectionate Regard, especially towards those that were his constant Followers and professed Disciples, he said, What Kindred or Relations have I, that are nearer to me, or more esteemed than these? Behold my Mother, and*

49 And he [looked round about on them which sat about him, and] stretched forth his Hand towards his Disciples, and said, Behold my Mother and my Brethren. [MARK III. 34.]

50 *my Brethren here. For these, that bear the Word of GOD, and practise it, are considered and acknowledged by me, as my Mother, and my Brethren: Nor do I thus regard these only that are now before me, but I declare the same too of all others of their Character; [for] whosoever shall do the Will of GOD my Heavenly Father, even this very Per-*

50 For [LUK. my Mother and my Brethren are these, which hear the Word of GOD, and do it; and] whosoever shall do the Will of [GOD] my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my Bro-

(b) *Who is my Mother? &c.]* To suppose that our Lord here intends to put any Slight on his Mother, would be very absurd: He only took the Opportunity of expressing his Affection to his obedient Disciples, in a peculiarly endearing Manner; which could not but be a great Comfort to them, and would be to Susannah, Joanna, Mary Magdalene, and the other pious Women who sat near him, (Luke viii. 2, 3. pag. 389.) a rich Equivalent for all the Fatigue and Expence, which their Zeal for their Heavenly Master occasioned. And as this seems to have been towards the Beginning of their Progress, it is observable, that our Lord appears to have been peculiarly concerned for their Encouragement. See Luke xi. 27, 28. pag. 401.

I

(i) *This*

Brother, and [my] Sister, and Person, of whatever Place and Family and Station he be, is regarded by me as my Brother, or my Sister, or Mother (i); for this pious Disposition will render such dearer to me, than any of the Bands of Natural Relation, if separate from real Holiness, could possibly do.

SECT. 64.
 MOTHER. [MARK III. 35.
 LUKE VIII. 21.]

Mat. XII.
 50.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

SO may it be our Care to do the Will of GOD, that we may be thus dear to our Redeemer, who ought by so many tender Bonds to be dear to us; and who by such gracious and indulgent Declarations, as these, which we have now been reading, is drawing us as with the Cords of a Man, and with the Bands of Love!

Still does the Light of his Divine Instructions shine with the brightest Lustre, and diffuse itself around us: Let us open the Eyes of our Mind with Singleness and Simplicity, to receive it; and make it our Care to act according to it. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; (Hos. vi. 3.) and thus with Chearfulness shall we reap the Fruit of a well informed Mind, and a well regulated Life!

May we be delivered from all those false Maxims, which would darken our Hearts amidst all this Meridian Lustre, and turn our boasted Light into Darknes! Would to God, there were not renewed Instances of this Kind continually occurring among us; and that we did not daily meet with Persons, whose pretended Wisdom teaches them to forget or despise the Gospel, and so serves only to amuse their Eyes, while it leads their Feet to the Chambers of Death!

(i) This very Person is my Brother, or my Sister, or Mother.] This possibly might be intended as an awful Intimation to some of his near Relatives, to take heed, how they indulged that Unbelief, which so long after prevailed in their Minds: (Compare John vii. 3,—5. Sect. 98.) For in this Case, the Nearness of their Relation unto Christ according to the Flesh, would be no manner of Advantage to them; but those that should be found to do his Will, would be preferred in his Esteem before them, and be considered as united to him in a Relation that should never be dissolved.—This is one of those many Places, in which *nam*, (and,) is put for *et*, (or;) for to be sure our Lord could not speak of the same Person, as his Brother, and Sister, and Mother. See Note (c) on Mat. xii. 37. pag. 400.

S E C T.

S E C T. LXV.

CHRIST *teaching by the Sea-Side, delivers the Parable of the Sower, and assigns the Reason of his speaking to the Multitude in Parables.* Mat. XIII. 1,—17. Mark IV. 1,—12. Luke VIII. 4,—10.

MAT. XIII. 1.

SECT. 65. **O**N that Day (a) Jesus going out of the House, into which at the Importunity of his Friends he had retired for a while, *sate down by the Side of the Sea of Galilee, and* 2 *began again to teach there. And such great Multitudes of People were again gathered together about him, and came in Crouds from almost every City round about to hear him, that they began to press upon him, as they had done before in the former Part of the Day; (see Luke viii. 19. pag. 412.) so that entering into a Ship for the Conveniency of being better heard, and less incommoded by them, he sate down on the Vessel in the Sea, at a little Distance from the Shore; and the whole Multitude stood by the Sea upon the Shore, shewing the utmost Eagerness to hear whatever he should say.*

MAT. XIII. 1.

THE same Day went Jesus out of the House, and sat by the Sea-Side, [and began again to teach.] [MARK IV. 1.—]

2 And great Multitudes [LUK. much People] were gathered together, [LUK. and were come to him out of every City,] so that he went into a Ship, and sat [in the Sea,] and the whole Multitude stood [by the Sea] on the Shore. [MARK IV. —1. LUKE VIII. 4.—]

And

(a) *On that Day.*] Matthew is the only Evangelist, who expressly fixes these Parables to the Day on which the preceding Occurrences happened: I say, fixes them to it; for tho' the Phrases, *εν μια των ημερων*, on a certain Day, and *εν αυταις ημεραις*, in those Days, be very ambiguous in their Signification, (see Mat. iii. 1. and Note (e), pag. 96.) I cannot apprehend any thing more determinate than this of *εν τη ημερα αυτη*, on that Day. The Way in which Luke introduces this Discourse, as if it was delivered at the Beginning of the Progress Jesus made, before the Passages that we have mentioned in the preceding Sections, (Sect. 61. & seq.) is not enough to fix the Time, when this Discourse was made: And we have already shewn in several Instances, that it is no unusual Thing with Luke, to neglect the Order of Time, and sometimes only to relate a Fact, as happening on a certain Day. (See Luke v. 17. and Note (a), pag. 292. and compare Luke viii. 22. vi. 6, 12. xi. 14. and xx. 1.) Matthew might know the Fact we have now before us, more circumstantially than Luke, tho' the latter's Account be exactly true, so far as it goes: A Reflection, which we have frequent Occasion to make, with respect to all the Evangelists.

(b) A

MARK IV. 2. And he [LUK. spake by a Parable, and] taught them many Things by Parables, and said unto them in his Doctrine; [MAT. XIII. 3. — LUKE VIII.—4.]

3 Hearken, Behold, there went out a Sower, to sow [LUK. his Seed:] MAT. XIII.—3. LUKE VIII. 5.—]

4 And it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the Way-Side, [LUK. and it was trodden down,] and the Fowls of the Air came, and devoured it up. [MAT. XIII. 4. LUKE VIII.—5.]

And to make his Instructions the more agreeable to them, and the more deeply to impress them on the Minds of honest and attentive Hearers, he spake to them by a Parable (b) concerning a Sower, which shall be now related; [and] taught them also many other Things in Parables: And beginning with that of the Sower, in the Course of his Teaching this Day, he said unto them:

Hearken with peculiar Attention to what I am now going to say, that you may thus be taught to hear my other Discourses with Improvement, and may not thro' Negligence, Inconstancy, or Carnality of Mind, lose the Benefit of my repeated Instructions (c). Behold, at the Spring of the Year (d), a Sower went forth to sow the Ground with his Seed.

And as the Ground lay near a beaten Path, it happened, that while he was sowing, some of the Seed was scattered, and fell by the Way-Side; and lying there uncovered, it was either trodden under Foot by Passengers, or picked up by the Birds of the Air, who presently came, and devoured it..

And

(b) A Parable.] The Word, according to its Greek Etymology, properly signifies a Comparison or Simile; in which Sense it is used here, and in most other Places; tho' sometimes it appears to be particularly used for an instructive Apologue or Fable. (Compare Ezek. xvii. 2, & seq.) And as these often were expressed in Poetical Language, (see Judg. ix. 7,—15.) the Word Parable sometimes signifies a sublime Discourse, elevated beyond the common Forms of Speech, tho' no Simile be used. (Numb. xxiii. 7. xxiv. 15. Job xxvii. 1. xxix. 1. and Psal. lxxviii. 2.) And as short Parables after grew into Proverbs, or were alluded to in them, hence the Word Parable is sometimes used for a Proverb. Mic. ii. 4. and Hab. ii. 6.

(c) The Benefit of my repeated Instructions.] As our Lord afterwards explains all the Parts of this Parable, I thought it sufficient to give this general Account of its Design, in as few Words as possible. Dr. Clarke by taking the contrary Method in his Paraphrase, (tho' in this he be followed by others,) both renders the Apostles Question as to the Meaning of this Parable very unnecessary, and occasions a needless and disagreeable Repetition.

(d) At the Spring of the Year.] Many Circumstances below make this probable; and indeed I do not find that in Judea they sowed even Wheat sooner: But to conclude from hence, as Sir Isaac Newton does, (in his Discourse on Prophecy, pag. 153.) that this Parable was delivered in the Spring, is very precarious. One might as well argue, from that of the Tares, delivered the same Day, that it was Harvest.

SECT. 65.

Mark IV. 5.

5 And some of it fell on Stony Soil, upon a Rock that lay but just beneath the Surface of the Ground, where it had not much Earth to cover it; and immediately it sprang up, and appeared green, because it had no Depth of Earth to make its Way thro': But its Verdure was very short-lived; for when the Sun shone hot upon it, it was presently scorched by the Warmth of its Beams; and withered away, almost as soon as it was sprung up, because it had no Room for taking Root in such a shallow Bed of Earth, [and] wanted sufficient Moisture to nourish it.

7 And some more of the Seed being thrown near the Hedge, fell among the Briars and Thorns there; and when it began to shoot out of the Ground, the Thorns sprang up with it, and grew so much faster, as not to leave it either Room to grow, or Nourishment to support it; and so they choked it, and it yielded no Fruit.

8 And the rest of the Seed fell on good Ground, and yielded Fruit, which being well rooted and nourished, grew up and increased to its full Proportion; and the Ears filled, and produced a rich and plentiful Increase, some of them thirty, and some sixty, and even some an hundred-fold, for one Grain that had been sown (e).

Luke VIII. 8. And when he had said these Things, he cried out with a louder Voice than before, and said unto them, He that hath Ears to hear these important Truths, let him hear and regard them with the most diligent Attention, and seriously reflect upon that instructive Moral (f), which is contained in the Parable I have now been delivering.

And

(e) An hundred-fold, &c.] Such an Increase, even in those fruitful Countries, was not very common, but however sometimes happened. See Gen. xxvi. 12.

(f) Reflect upon that instructive Moral.] This solemn Proclamation was sufficient to declare, that they also were to regard the following Similes, as intended to convey some useful Instruction, and not as mere Matter of Amusement.

(g) His

5 And some fell on Stony Ground, [LUKE upon a Rock,] where it had not much Earth, and immediately it sprang up, because it had no Depth of Earth: [MAT. XIII. 5. LUKE VIII. 6.—]

6 But when the Sun was up, it was scorched, and [LUKE as soon as it was sprung up,] because it had no Root [LUKE and lacked Moisture,] it withered away. [MAT. XIII. 6. LUKE VIII.—6.]

7 And some fell among Thorns, and the Thorns [LUK. sprang up with it,] and choked it, and it yielded no Fruit. [MAT. XIII. 7. LUKE VIII. 7.]

8 And other fell on good Ground, and did yield Fruit that sprang up and increased, and brought forth some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred [-fold.] MAT. XIII. 8. LUKE VIII. 8.—]

LUKE VIII.—8. And when he had said these Things, he cried, [MAR. and said unto them,] He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear. [MAT. XIII. 9. MARK IV. 9.]

He tells his Disciples, why he spake in Parables.

MARK. IV. 10. And when he was alone, they [the Disciples] that were about him with the Twelve, [came and] asked of him the Parable, [LUK. saying, What might this Parable be?] [and why speakest thou unto them in Parables?] [MAT. XIII. 10. LUKE VIII 9.]

And when the Assembly was broke up, (after Christ had delivered many other Similitudes of this Kind to them, which will be mentioned afterwards,) *when he had parted with the Multitude, and was alone in a retired Place, the rest of his Disciples (g), with the Twelve, who had been with him while he spake these Things, came and asked him [concerning] the Parable of the Sower, saying, We desire thou wouldst more particularly explain to us, what may the Meaning of the several Circumstances of this Parable be? [and] give us leave to ask thee, Why dost thou preach in such a Manner to the Multitude, and speak to them in Parables, which probably so few of them can understand?*

SECT. 65.
Mark IV. 10.

MAT. XIII. 11. He answered, and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given: [LUK. But to others, [to them that are without, all these Things are done] in Parables.] [MARK IV. 11. LUKE VIII. 10.—]

And he replying said unto them, I thus express myself in Parables, because, tho' it is granted, thro' the Divine Goodness, to you whose Hearts are open to receive the Truth in the Love of it, to know and understand the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, which have been long concealed; yet it is not granted to others, who are prejudiced against them, but they are justly suffered to continue unacquainted with them: And therefore to them that are without, and who are Strangers, thro' their own Neglect and Folly, to what they might before have learned, all [these] Things are now involved in Parables and Figures (b); which tho' they affect the Mind of the attentive Hearer, and promote his Edification, are disregarded by the rest,

Mat. XIII. 11.

(g) *His Disciples.*] This is a very just Translation of the Phrase *οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ*, which frequently is used in the best Authors, for the Disciples, or Followers, of the Person it refers to; and as it thus agrees with Matthew, so we may fitly understand it, of those who attended Christ in his Progress with the Twelve Apostles. And in this Way the Style appears more natural and easy, than if we read it as it stands in our Translation, where it sounds somewhat harsh, to speak of those that were about him, when he was alone.

(b) *All these Things are now involved in Parables and Figures.*] Here *γινώσκουσιν* is plainly put for *εἶναι*: I therefore render it, *All Things are in Parables.* See Mat. vi. 16. x. 16. Mark i. 4. Luke ii. 13. xxiv. 19. John i. 6. and elsewhere.

SECT. 65. rest, and only looked upon as an empty Amusement. For to every one who hath

Mat. XIII.
12.

any Talent committed to him, and shews that he hath it by his diligent Improvement of it, yet more shall be given, and he shall have a still greater Abundance of Means for his further Improvement; but even that which be already hath, shall be taken away from the slothful Creature, and be withdrawn from him who acts like one who hath not any Thing to improve. (Compare Luke viii. 18.) Thus Wise Men deal with their Servants; and thus GOD will generally act in dispensing Opportunities of a Religious Nature. And therefore, on this very Principle, do I now speak to them in Parables, whereas I have formerly used the plainest Manner of Discourse; because seeing, they see not, and hearing, they hear not (i), neither do they understand; inasmuch as they do not honestly use the Faculties that GOD has given them, but are like Persons, that have their Eyes and Ears, and yet will

neither see nor hear. So that it is in just Displeasure that I preach to them in this obscure Language, that what has been their Crime may be their Punishment (k); that seeing

12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more Abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath.

13 Therefore speak I to them in Parables; because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand:

MARK IV. 12. That seeing

(i) Seeing, they see not, and hearing they hear not.] This is justly and elegantly paraphrased in the Version of 1727. in a few Words; *They overlook what they see, and are inattentive to what they hear.* Yet I cannot think the *Hebraism* without some peculiar Emphasis. Our Translators have well expressed the Force of it, Gen. ii. 17. Jer. iv. 10. and Zech. vi. 15.

(k) It is in just Displeasure, &c.] A late learned Writer has endeavoured to prove, that *Christ's use of Parables* was not in Displeasure, but in tender Condescension to their Aversion to Truths delivered in a less pleasing Manner: But this is in effect supposing both *Mark*, (chap. iv. 12.) and *Luke* (chap. viii. 10.) to have reported what our Lord says, in a Sense directly contrary to what he intended; for they say in so many Words, it was, that the Multitude might not perceive, nor understand; and it also makes *Mat. xiii. 12.* both foreign, and opposite, to the Purpose for which it was spoken. We must therefore submit to the Difficulties, which attend this natural Interpretation; which are much lessened by considering, that this happened after Christ had upbraided and threatened the neighbouring Places, (from whence, doubtless, the greatest Part of the Multitude came,) which was some Time before this Sermon. (See *Mat. xi. 20,—24. Sect. 58.*) And it is not improbable, that the Scribes and Pharisees, who had so vilely blasphemed him this very Morning, (*Mat. xii. 24. pag. 390.*) might

ing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand: lest at any Time they should be converted, and *their* Sins should be forgiven them. [LUKE VIII.—10.]

seeing my Miracles, they may see the outward Act, but not perceive the Evidence arising from them; and hearing my Discourses, they may indeed bear the Sound of them, but not understand their true Intent and Meaning; lest at any Time they should be converted, and [their] Sins should be forgiven them, which to many of these People they never shall.

SECT. 65.

Mark. IV. 12.

MAT. XIII. 14. And in them is fulfilled the Prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

And thus in them is the Prophecy of Isaiah most exactly fulfilled, (Isa. vi. 9, 10.) which indeed was originally intended to include them, and saith, "By hearing you shall hear, (or you may still go on to hear with Eagernefs,) but you shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, or you may still go on to see, but you shall not perceive (I). For like a Wretch who has besotted and stupified himself with Riot, the Heart or intellectual Faculty of this People is as it were grown stiff with Fatness (m), and they bear with heavy Ears, and draw up their Eyes

Mat. XIII.

14

15

15 For this Peoples Heart is waxed gross, and their Ears are dull of hearing, and their Eyes they have closed; left

might with an ill Purpose have gathered a Company of their Associates and Creatures about Christ, to insnare him; which, if it were the Case, will fully account for such a Reserve.—It signifies little to plead, on the other Side, that these Parables are plain. Their being so to us, is no Proof they were so to these Hearers; and since the Apostles themselves did not understand even that of the Sower, it is no Wonder if the rest were unintelligible to the careless and captious Hearer.—Consistent with all this is what was said of the Advantages attending this Method, to those who were honest and attentive; in the Paraphrase on Mark iv. 2. pag. 415.

(I) Seeing you shall see, but you shall not perceive.] This is a just Translation of the Original, both here, and in Isaiah; and is another considerable Argument for the Interpretation here given of the whole Context.—A pious and learned Friend, by whose kind Animadversions I have been led to insert some Additional Notes in this Work, has urged several Arguments to prove, that this Clause should be rendered, Seeing, &c. you WILL not perceive. But on the maturest Review of this Passage, both in Isaiah, and the several Places where it occurs in the New Testament, I cannot apprehend that it was spoken merely by Way of Complaint, but think it plain that it was intended also as a Prediction: (Compare Mark iv. 12. Luke viii. 10. John xii. 40. Acts xxviii. 26, 27. Rom. xi. 8.) Now in Predictions, we generally render the Future Form, "Such or such a Thing SHALL happen;" tho' we only mean to express the Certainty of the Event, without denying the Freedom of the Moral Agents concerned in it, or detracting from it in any Degree.

(m) Grown stiff with Fatness.] This is the proper English of *παχυωθη*, and alludes to a Notion the Antients had, that a great Quantity of Fat about the Heart stupified both the Intellectual and Sensitive Powers. Compare Deut. xxxi. 20. xxxii. 15. Psal. cxix. 70. and Isa. vi. 10.

SECT. 65.
 Mat. XIII.
 15.

“ Eyes as if they were more than half asleep; so that one would imagine, they were afraid lest at any Time they should happen to be roused, so as to see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Heart, and should be converted, and I should heal and save them. I therefore justly leave them to their own Obstinacy, and direct thee, O *Isaiah*, to Methods which I know will increase it.”

left at any Time they should see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and should understand with their Heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But happy indeed are your Eyes, because they see, and your Ears, because they hear: You have not only greater Opportunities of Instruction than others, but greater Integrity and Seriousness in attending to them: And I congratulate you on so happy an Occasion.

16 But blessed are your Eyes, for they see; and your Ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, that many of the most holy Prophets, and most singularly righteous Men, under the Jewish Dispensation, have earnestly desired to see the Things which you see, and did not see them, and to hear the Things which you hear, and did not hear them; but only had imperfect Intimations of those Mysteries, which are now revealed with much greater Clearness to you, and will thro' the Divine Blessing render you singularly useful in this World, and proportionably happy in the next. (Compare Luke x. 23, 24. Sect. 106.)

17 For verily I say unto you, that many Prophets and Righteous Men have desired to see those Things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those Things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. xii. 12.

LET us hear with Fear and Trembling, these awful Declarations from the Lips of the compassionate *Jesus* himself. Here were Crouds about *Christ*, who indulged such Prejudices, and attended with such perverse Dispositions, that in righteous Judgment he took an *obscurer Method of Preaching* to them, and finally left many of them, under Darkeness and Impenitency, to die in their Sins.

Ver. 13.

Ver. 15.

Let us take heed, lest the Bounties of Divine Providence should be thus abused by us, as a Means of casting us into a *stupid Insensibility* of the Hand and Voice of the *Blessed GOD*: Or we may otherwise

wife have Ground to fear, lest he should leave us to our own *Delusions*, and give us up to the *Lusts of our own Hearts*. And then the Privilege of *Ordinances*, and of the most awakening *Providential Dispensations*, will be *vain*; seeing we shall see, and not perceive; and hearing we shall hear, and not understand. SECT. 65.
Mat. xiii. 14.

It is our peculiar *Happiness* under the *Gospel*, that we see and hear, what *Prophets*, and *Princes*, and *Saints of old*, desired to see and hear, but were not favoured with it. Let us be thankful for our Privilege, and improve it well; lest a *neglected Gospel* by the righteous Judgment of GOD be *taken away*, and our *abused Seasons of Grace*, by one Method of Divine Displeasure, or other, be brought to a speedy *Period*. But if by Grace it is given to us to know the *Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven*, let us learn a Thankfulness, in some Measure proportionable to the corrupt *Prejudices* which have been overborne, and the important *Blessings* which are secured to us. Ver. 16, 17.
Ver. 13.

S E C T. LXVI.

Our LORD explains the Parable of the Sower, and exhorts his Disciples to a diligent Improvement of their Knowledge and Gifts. Mark IV. 13,—25. Mat. XIII. 18,—23. Luke VIII. 11,—18.

MARK IV. 13.

AND he said unto them, Know ye not this Parable? and how then will ye know all Parables?

MARK IV. 13.

AND when the Twelve Apostles in a retired Place, (as we observed above, Mark iv. 10. pag. 417.) asked Jesus the Meaning of the Parable of the Sower, which he had delivered to the Multitude, as he sate in the Ship; he said unto them, Know ye not the Meaning of this easy and familiar Parable, so nearly referring to the Prophetic Language? (See Jer. iv. 3. and Hof. x. 12.) How then will you understand all the other Parables that I have spoken, some of which are much harder than this? SECT. 66.
Mark IV. 13.

MAT. XIII. 18. Hear ye I shall however yield to your Request, and shew myself on all Occasions ready to instruct Mat. XIII. 18.

SECT. 66. instruct you: *Hear ye therefore, according to your Desire, the Explication of the Pa-*

LUKE VIII. 11. *parable of the Sower. Now the Meaning of the Parable is this. It is intended to represent the different Success of the Gospel in the World; for the Seed [which] the Sower I spoke of soweth, is the Word of GOD, which I am employed to preach, and which will e'er long also be committed to you: But too much of our Labour will be lost, on Three bad Kinds of Hearers, whom I described in the Parable by different Kinds of unfruitful Ground.*

MARK IV. 15. *And in the first Place, these are they, whom I described as receiving the Seed by the Way-Side, where the Word is no sooner sown, but the Effect of it is presently lost, and their true Character may thus be represented to you: When any one hears the Word of the Heavenly Kingdom, or of the Gospel of the Grace of GOD, and thro' a careless Inattention understands [it] not; then Satan, that Wicked one, who is the great Enemy of GOD and Souls, flying as eagerly as a Bird to his Prey, comes immediately, and catches away the Word that was sown in his Heart, lest they who have heard it, should believe, and be saved; and as nothing is like to be long remembered, which is not well understood, all Trace of it is quickly lost out of such a Mind, as Grain scattered in the Road: This, I say, is he, that received the Seed by the Way-Side in the Parable.*

16 *And in like manner, in the next Place, these are they, who were described as having received the Seed in Stony Soil, or on a Rock under a very shallow Bed of Earth: Such, I mean, who having heard the Message of Pardon, Life, and Glory, which the Word of the Gospel brings, immediately receive it with a Transport of Joy, and feel their natural Passions elevated and enlarged at the Report*

ye therefore the Parable of the Sower.

LUKE VIII. 11. Now the Parable is this: The Seed [which] the Sower soweth] is the Word of GOD. [MARK IV. 14.]

MARK IV. 15. And these are they by the Way-Side; where the Word is sown, but [when any one heareth the Word of the Kingdom, and understandeth it not, then] Satan [the Wicked one] cometh immediately, and taketh away the Word [which was sown in his Heart, [LUK. lest they should believe, and be saved:] this is he which received Seed by the Way-Side.] [MAT. XIII. 19. LUKE VIII. 12.]

16 And these are they likewise which [received the Seed] on Stony Ground, [LUK. on the Rock;] who when they have heard the Word, immediately receive it with Gladness; [MAT. XIII. 20. LUKE VIII. 13.—]

17 And have no Root in themselves, and so [LUK. believe, and] endure but for a Time; afterward [LUK. in Time of Temptation,] when Affliction or Persecution ariseth for the Words sake, immediately they are offended, [LUK. and fall away.] [MAT. XIII. 21. LUKE VIII.—13.]

Report of such agreeable News; But as they have no Root of deep Conviction, and real Love to Holiness, in themselves, they have no true Impression of the Power of it on their Hearts, and so believe it only in a notional, not a vital Manner, [and] endure in the Profession of it but for a little while; [and] afterwards in a Time of sharp Trial, especially when any domestick Oppression, or publick Persecution arises, on Account of the Word, they are presently offended, [and] apostatise from that warm and eager Profession, which in Times of less Difficulty they were so forward to make.

SECT. 66.
Mark IV. 17.

18, 19 And these are they which [received Seed] among Thorns; such as hear the Word, [LUK. and when they have heard, go forth,] and the Cares of this World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches, [LUK. and Pleasures of this Life,] and the Lusts of other Things entering in, choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful; [LUK. yea, they are choked, and

And in the third Place, these are they, whom I described by telling you, that they received Seed among Thorns: Even such as bear the Word, perhaps with great Constancy, and the Appearance of serious Attention; [but] almost as soon as they have heard [it,] go out of the Assembly, and immersing themselves in secular Affairs, permit the Cares of this World, and the artful Delusion of Riches (a), or perhaps the Pleasures of [this] animal Life, or the Desires of some other Things, which equally tend to alienate the Soul from GOD, to enter [into their Minds,] and take up all their Thoughts and Time to such a Degree, as to choke the Word, and so it becomes unfruitful: [Yea,] they themselves are choked, as it were, with these fatal Incumbrances (b), and

(a) The artful Delusion of Riches.] This Phrase, *artfully to delude*, is very elegant, and admirably expresses the various Artifices, by which People in the Pursuit of Riches excuse themselves from Day to Day, in putting off Religious Cares, and the confounding Disappointment, which often mingles itself with their Labours, and even with their Success. Compare Prov. xi. 28. Luke xviii. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10, 17. 2 Tim. ii. 4. and iv. 10.

(b) They themselves are choked, &c.] So Luke expresses it, perhaps to intimate the uneasy Situation of the Mind, while clogged and straitened with such Incumbrances as these, and rendered, as it were, unfit to breathe its own native Air, and to delight itself with celestial and eternal Objects.—Choking arises from any Thing which straitens the Gullet or Wind-Pipe, and so obstructs the Passage of Food or Air. And thus, young Plants, or Corn, may properly be said to be choked by Thorns, which do not leave.

SECT. 66. *and whatever Purposes, or faint Efforts they may make towards a partial Reformation, they bring no Fruit to Perfection, but remain destitute of every Degree of genuine and prevailing Piety.*

Mark IV. 19.

20 *And once more, these are they, who were said to have received the Seed into good Ground: Even such as do not only bear the Word with Attention and Simplicity of Mind, but understand what is spoken, and receive it without Prejudice and Opposition; and when they depart, are solicitous to retain [it] in an honest and good Heart, bringing forth the good Fruit of substantial Holiness, in various Degrees, with Patience and Perseverance, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold, both to their present Joy, and to their future Glory.*

21 *And he said farther to them, I appeal to yourselves, and urge it as a proper Consideration to engage you to communicate the Light you have to others, Is a Lamp brought into a Room, to be put under a Bushel, or under a Bed? [and] not to be set on a Stand? You know it is not. For no Man of common Sense will even waste a few Drops of Oil so; nor is there any one, that having lighted a Lamp, covers it with a Vessel, or puts it under a Couch (c); but sets it upon a Stand in*

Luke VIII.
16.

and bring no Fruit to Perfection.] [MAT. XIII. 22. LUKE VIII. 14.]

20 And these are they which [received Seed into] good Ground; such as hear the Word, [and understand,] and receive, [LUK. and keep it in an honest and good Heart,] and bring forth fruit [LUK. with Patience,] some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred. [MAT. XIII. 23. LUKE VIII. 15.]

21 And he said unto them, Is a Candle brought to be put under a Bushel, or under a Bed? and not to be set on a Candlestick?

LUKE VIII. 16. No Man when he hath lighted a Candle, covereth it with a Vessel, or putteth it under a Bed; but

leave them Room to grow; and *the Word*, which would exert its vital Power and Principle, is represented as *choked*, when thus pressed with secular Cares prevailing in the Mind.

(c) *Covers it with a Vessel, or puts it under a Couch.*] *Mark* expresses it as a *Question*, and *Luke* as a direct *Negation*. I have given it in *both the Forms*, as what seemed most effectually to secure the Credit of *both the Evangelists*: And I humbly submit it to better Judgments, whether in some of these Instances, *Christ* might not immediately repeat the *Thought* a second Time, in nearly the same Words, in order to fix some very memorable Passage on the Minds of his Hearers, who to be sure needed *Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept*. In this View he will appear, if less like a polite Orator, yet more like a *Father* instructing his Children; and perhaps if more of this familiar and condescending Method was practised in *our Sermons*, tho' the Delicacy of a few might be less amused, the Souls of the People might be more edified; and consequently the End of *Christian Ordinances*, (which is by no means the *Applause* of those who administer them,) might be more effectually answered.

(d) *Nor*

A diligent Improvement should be made of our Gifts.

but setteth it on a Candlestick, that they which enter in may see the Light.

in a conspicuous Place, *that all they who enter in to the House, may see the Light* of it, and guide their Motions by it: (Compare Mat. v. 15. pag. 238. and Luke xi. 33. pag. 409.) And can you think it is fit, that you should waste the precious Oil of my Instructions, which I am pouring into your Minds, to render you the Lamps of my Sanctuary? Be not then backward, as Occasion offers, to communicate to others what you receive from me; *for nothing is now said in secret among us, which shall not be revealed; nor any Thing hid, which shall not be made known and published (d)*; as we are carrying on no Works or Counsels of Darkness among us, but concerting Measures for the publick Instruction and Reformation of Mankind.

17

17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be known, and come abroad. [MARK IV. 22.]

If any Man therefore bath Ears to hear, let him hear; and if you have intelligent Powers, let it be your peculiar Care to exert them to this important Purpose.

24

MARK IV. 23. If any Man have Ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And he said unto them, Take heed [therefore] what [and how] you hear: With what Measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear, shall more be given. [LUKE VIII. 18.—]

And be said also to them, Do you above all take heed therefore, and carefully attend to what you hear from me, [and] how you bear it: For in this Sense I may say, as formerly on another Occasion, (Mat. vii. 2. pag. 275. and Luke vi. 38. pag. 350.) The Measure with which you mete to others, shall be used to you; and to you that attentively bear, more shall be given (e), and those who are most diligent in teaching others, shall be taught

(d) *Nor any Thing hid, which shall not be made known and published.*] Tho' a Prospect of the final Discovery of the great Day, would contain a strong Argument, both in Compassion to others, and from a prudent Regard to their own Happiness, to engage his Disciples to make a faithful Report of the Gospel committed to their Trust; yet I think the Words will contain an important Sense, without supposing them to refer to that. Compare Mat. x. 26, 27. Sect. 75. and Luke xii. 2, 3. Sect. 111. In which two Places the same Words seem, as often elsewhere, to have a different Sense.

(e) *To you that hear, more shall be given.*] I know there may be some Room to doubt, whether these three Verses in Mark, at the Close of this Section, were spoken to the Disciples apart, or to the Multitude; but I think, these Words make the former much more probable.

SECT. 66. taught most themselves. For, as I said
 before in this Discourse, (Mat. xiii. 12. pag.
 Mark IV. 25. 418.) to him that improves what he hath,
 more shall be given; but from him that acts
 as one who hath not, from him shall be
 taken away even that which for the present
 he hath, ([or] seemeth to have (f)); but which
 he shall soon find, was not accurately speaking
 his own, and must be strictly accounted for
 to the real Proprietor.)

25 For he that hath, to
 him shall be given: and he
 that hath not, from him shall
 be taken even that which he
 hath, [or seemeth to have.]
 [LUKE VIII. —18.]

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Luke viii. 18. LET us apply to ourselves *this Charge* of our Blessed Redeemer,
 and take heed how we bear. Especially let us be very careful,
 that we despise not him, that now speaks to us from Heaven; and re-
 member the Authority, which his Exaltation there gives, to the
 Words which he spake in the Days of his Flesh.

Mat. xiii. 18, & seq. Let us attentively hear the Parable of the Sower, and its Interpretation. Still is Christ by his Word, and Ministers, sowing among us

Ver. 19. the good Seed. Still is the great Enemy of Souls labouring to snatch it

Mark iv. 20. away. Let us endeavour to understand, that we may retain it; and

Ver. 19. to retain, that we may practise it. Still do the Cares of this World press us; still do its Pleasures solicit us; still do our Lusts war in our Members; and all unite their Efforts to prevent our Fruitfulness in good Works: But let us remember, that with having our Fruit unto Holiness, Everlasting Life is connected as the End; and that in due Season we shall reap, if we faint not. (Rom. vi. 22. and Gal. vi. 9.)

Ver. 17. Let us therefore be concerned, that the Seed may take deep Root in our Minds; that we may not rest in any superficial Impression on the Passions; but, feeling the Energy of that living Principle, may flourish under the Circumstances which wither others, and may in due Time be gathered as GOD'S Wheat into his Garner. Nor let us repine if we now go forth weeping, bearing this precious Seed, while we have such a Hope of coming again rejoicing, bringing our Sheaves with us. (Psal. cxxvi. 6.)

(f) Seemeth to have.] I know *δοκει εχειν*, seemeth to have, is sometimes a Pleonasm, which signifies to have; yet the Paraphrase shews it is not necessarily so here, which is also favoured by Luke xvi. 12. Sect. 124. (See also I Cor. iii. 18. Gal. vi. 3. and Jam. i. 26.) However, as I confess it may possibly be a Pleonasm, if any chuse to take it thus, then the last Clause, which is included in a Parenthesis, must be left out

S E C T. LXVII.

Our LORD delivers the Parable of the Tares in the Field; and afterwards explains it at large to his Disciples. Mat. XIII. 24,—30. 36,—43.

MAT. XIII. 24.

ANOTHER Parable put he forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a Man, which sowed good Seed in his Field :

25 But while Men slept, his Enemy came, and sowed Tares among the Wheat, and went his Way.

26 But when the Blade was sprung up, and brought forth Fruit, then appeared the Tares also.

27 So the Servants of the Householder came, and said unto

MAT. XIII. 24.

NOW to return to the Story of our Lord's teaching the Multitude from the Ship: He likewise at the same Time proposed another Parable to them, to intimate that Persons of various Characters should come into the Gospel Profession; but that there should be a final Separation between them, in the other World, however they might be blended together in this. And he taught them, saying, the Kingdom of Heaven (a), or the Success of the Gospel Dispensation, may be compared to that which happened to a Man (b), who had sown good Seed in his Ground: But one Night, while the Men who were set to watch it slept, an ill natured Neighbour, who was his Enemy, with a malicious View to spoil the Crop, came and sowed a Quantity of Tares among the Wheat, which had just been thrown into the Ground, and went away without being discovered. But afterwards, when the Blade was sprung up, and produced Fruit, then the Tares also appeared among the Ears of Wheat, in a Manner easily to be distinguished. And the Servants of the Proprietor of the Estate came

(a) The Kingdom of Heaven.] That this is frequently to be understood of the Gospel-Dispensation, has been observed before, in Note (b) on Mat. iii. 2. pag. 97.

(b) May be compared to that which happened to a Man.] Or may be illustrated by the following Similitude. See Note (i) on Luke vii. 32. pag. 373.

(c) The Proprietor of the Estate.] So οικονομος seems to signify in this Connection. He is supposed to be the Master of the Field, and of some Lodge, or Farm-House, in which these Servants dwell.

H h h 2

(d) May

SECT. 67. *came in a Surprize, and said to him, Sir, didst thou not sow good Seed of pure Wheat in thy Field? whence then hath it these Tares, which now appear mingled with the*

Mat. XIII.
27.

- 28 *Crop? And he said unto them, Some ill-natured and malicious Person in the Neighbourhood has undoubtedly done this, taking Advantage of your Absence or Negligence. And the Servants, willing to make the best Amends they could, said to him, Wilt thou then have us go directly, to root them out, and gather them up, before they get any farther Head? But he said, No, I do not think that proper; lest while you endeavour to gather up the Tares, you should, before you are aware, root up some of the Wheat also with them: It will be better to permit both to grow together till the Harvest come; and in the Time of the Harvest I will say to the Reapers, Gather ye together first the Tares, and bind them in Bundles, that they may afterwards be burnt for Fuel (d;) but gather ye the Wheat into my Barn, that it may there be ready for my Use.*

- 36 *Then Jesus, after he had spoke some other Parables (e), having dismissed the Multitude, went from the Vessel, where he had been preaching, into an House, to refresh himself a little before he crossed the Lake (f); and his Disciples, who constantly attended him, came to him, saying, We desire thou wouldst explain to us the Parable of the Tares in the Field,*

unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good Seed in thy Field? from whence then hath it Tares?

28 *He said unto them, An Enemy hath done this. The Servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go, and gather them up?*

29 *But he said, Nay, lest while ye gather up the Tares, ye root up also the Wheat with them:*

30 *Let both grow together until the Harvest, and in the Time of Harvest I will say to the Reapers, Gather ye together first the Tares, and bind them in Bundles to burn them, but gather the Wheat into my Barn.*

36 *Then Jesus sent the Multitude away, and went into the House: and his Disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the Parable of the Tares of the Field.*

(d) *May afterwards be burnt for Fuel.] This plainly proves, that the Word *Σάραι*, which we render *Tares*, does not exactly answer to *that Vegetable* among us, which is a Kind of *Pulse*, too good to be used merely for *Fuel*.*

(e) *After he had spoke some other Parables.] Some of these are contained in the intermediate Verses; (ver. 31,—35.) but I apprehended, the Explication of the Parable would appear with some peculiar Advantage, thus immediately after it.*

(f) *A little before he crossed the Lake.] I am sensible, that Mark iv. 36. may seem some Objection to this; but the Reader may see in my Paraphrase there, Sect. 69. that I apprehend it may be reconciled with this Interpretation, and Order of the Story. yet I acknowledge it possible, that the House here spoken of might be on the other Side of the Lake, and that they might go into it the next Day.*

(g) *Shall*

and he explains the Meaning of it to them.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good Seed, is the Son of Man :

Field, for we do not perfectly understand it. **SECT. 67.**
And he answered and said unto them, He in the Parable that sowed the good Seed, is intended to represent the Son of Man, the great Preacher of the Gospel, which is ordained as the most illustrious Instrument for the Reformation and Happiness of Mankind. **37**

Mat. XIII. 37.

38 The Field is the World: the good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom: but the Tares are the Children of the Wicked one:

The Field is indeed the whole World, in which the Gospel is to be preached, and not to be confined to the Jewish Nation alone: The good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom, or those truly pious Men, who being formed on the Model of the Gospel, and as it were assimilated to it, are the Heirs of future Glory, as well as intitled to the present Privileges of my Church: But on the other Hand, the Tares are wicked Men, who are indeed the Children of the Wicked one, tho' many of them may profess themselves my Disciples, and for their own unworthy Ends, pretend a great Zeal for my Cause and Church. **38**

39 The Enemy that sowed them, is the Devil: the Harvest is the End of the World: and the Reapers are the Angels.

The Enemy that sowed them is the Devil, who studies by all means to corrupt Mens Principles, and debauch their Lives, and puts those on a hypocritical Profession of Religion, who are utter Strangers to its Power. The Harvest I mentioned, is the End of the World, the great Day of Judgment and Retribution: And the Reapers are the Angels, who are to be employed in the Services of that Day. **39**

40 As therefore the Tares are gathered, and burnt in the Fire; so shall it be in the End of this World.

As therefore the Tares in the Parable are ordered by the Owner of the Field to be gathered together, and burnt in the Fire; so likewise shall it be at the End of this World. **40**

41 The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they

The Son of Man shall then send forth his attendant Angels (g), and they in Obedience to his Command **41**

(g) Shall send forth his attendant Angels.] The Reader will observe, how high an Idea our Lord here gives them of himself; when he speaks of the Angels as his Attendants, who were at the last Day to wait on him, and at his Order to assemble the whole World before him.

1

(h) Gnash-

430 *The Wicked shall at last be separated from the Righteous.*

SECT. 67. *mand shall gather out of his Kingdom all Things which have been an Offence to others, even all those that practise Iniquity, and thereby bring a Reproach on their Profession, and lay Stumbling-blocks in the Way of*

they shall gather out of his Kingdom all Things that offend, and them which do Iniquity;

Mat. XIII. 41.

42 *others: And these blessed Spirits, as the Executioners of the Divine Vengeance, shall cast them into Hell, the Furnace of unquenchable Fire: And dreadful indeed will their Condition be; for there shall be Lamentation, and Gnashing of Teeth for ever (b), in the Height of Anguish, Rage, and Despair; a Despair, aggravated by all the Privileges they once enjoyed, and the vain Hope, which, as my professed Disciples, they once entertained. But then shall the Righteous be publickly owned and honoured, and with a joyful Welcome be received into the Heavenly World, where they shall shine forth with divine Radiancy and Glory, like the Sun itself, and be fixed for ever in the Kingdom of their Father, to enjoy the transforming Visions of his Face.*

42 And shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of Teeth.

43 *publickly owned and honoured, and with a joyful Welcome be received into the Heavenly World, where they shall shine forth with divine Radiancy and Glory, like the Sun itself, and be fixed for ever in the Kingdom of their Father, to enjoy the transforming Visions of his Face.*

43 Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father. Who hath Ears to hear, let him hear.

This Misery, or this Felicity, is the End of all the Living; nor can I ever declare a Truth of greater Importance to you. See to it therefore, that you regard it with becoming Attention; and every one who hath Ears to hear, let him hear it, and govern his Life by its extensive Influence.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. xiii. 38. **O**H that these important Instructions might, as it were, be ever sounding in our Ears! It is Matter of great *Thankfulness*, that *this Earth*, which might have been abandoned by God, as a barren *Wilder-*

(b) *Gnashing of Teeth.*] Since what is here spoken of is supposed to pass in a *Furnace of Fire*, it is strange that any should have imagined, that ο βρυγμος των οδοντων signifies the *knocking*, or, as we commonly express it, the *chattering of the Teeth*, thro' Excess of Cold. Yet some have been weak enough to argue from hence, that (according to the *Mahometan* Notion,) the alternate Extremities of *Heat* and *Cold* should constitute the *Torment of the Damned*. See *Archbishop Dawes's Sermons on Hell*, Sermon. iii. p. 14.

Wilderness, is cultivated as *his Field*, and that any *good Seed* is to be found in it ; but *grievous* to think, how many *Tares* are intermingled, so as almost to over-run the Ground, and hide *the Wheat* from being seen. Let not a *forward Zeal* prompt us, like these over-officious *Servants*, to think of *rooting them out* by Violence ; but let us *wait our Master's Time*, and be patient till *the Day of the Lord*. SECT. 67.
Ver. 27, 29:

The *Separation* will at length be made ; nor shall *one precious Grain* perish. Awful important Time ! when *the Angels* shall perform their great Office, with a *Sagacity* too sharp to be eluded, and a *Power* too strong to be resisted ! *Gather not our Souls, O Lord, with Sinners !* but may they be *bound up in the Bundle of Life !* that when *the Day cometh, which shall burn as an Oven*, and when *the Wicked, like Chaff*, shall be thrown in *to be consumed*, we may survey the Execution of the *Divine Judgment*, with awful Triumph ; being owned by *GOD* as *his*, while he is *making up his Jewels, and spared by him as his obedient Children*. (*Mal. iii. 17. and iv. 1.*) Then shall we not only be *spared*, but *honoured* and adorned, and *shine forth like the Sun in our Father's Kingdom* ; for these *wile Bodies shall be fashioned like to the glorious Body of our Redeemer*, (*Phil. iii. 21.*) and our purified and perfected *Spirits* shall be clothed with proportionable *Lustre*, and reflect the compleat *Image* of his Holiness. Amen. Ver. 41.
Ver. 42.
Ver. 43.

S E C T. LXVIII.

Our LORD adds other Parables, relating to the speedy Progress of the Gospel, and the Importance of the Blessings it proposes. Mark IV. 26,—34. Mat. XIII. 31,—35. 44,—53.

MARK IV. 26.

AND he said, So is the Kingdom of GOD, as if a Man should cast Seed into the Ground,

MARK IV. 26.

AND after Jesus had delivered the foregoing Parables, he went on with his Discourse to the Multitude, and farther said, *So is the Kingdom of GOD*, and such the Nature of the Dispensation of the Gospel in its Progress, that it is like the Growth of Vegetables, and may fitly be illustrated by the Case of a Husbandman ; for it is, *as if a Man* SECT. 68.
Mark IV. 26.

The Parable of the Seed growing insensibly.

SECT. 68. *Man should throw his Seed upon the Earth;*

And after it is sown, should take no farther

Thought about it, but sleep by Night, and

rise by Day, and apply himself to other Bu-

siness; and in the mean Time, without his

Thought and Care, the Seed should spring up

28 and increase, he knows not how. For the

Earth, by a certain curious Kind of Mecha-

nism, which the greatest Philosophers cannot

fully comprehend (a), does as it were spon-

taneously, without any Assistance from Man,

carry it thro' the whole Progress of Vegeta-

tion; and produces, first the Blade, then the

Ear, and afterward the full Grain in the

29 Ear. But at the proper Season for it, as

soon as the Fruit is ripe, he immediately puts in

the Sickle, because the Harvest is come; and

all that remains, is to receive the bountiful

Provision, which the great Lord of all has

produced by his own Power. By such

insensible Degrees shall the Gospel gain

Ground in the World, and ripen to a Har-

vest of Glory; and therefore let not my

faithful Servants be discouraged, if the Effect

of their Labours, be not immediately so con-

spicuous as they could desire (b); a future

Crop

27 And should sleep and rise Night and Day, and the Seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28 For the Earth bringeth forth Fruit of herself; first the Blade, then the Ear, after that the full Corn in the Ear.

29 But when the Fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the Sickle, because the Harvest is come.

(a) By a curious Kind of Mechanism, &c.] The Word *αὐτοματῶν*, which is generally in good Authors applied to *artificial Machines*, so naturally suggested this Thought, that I could not forbear hinting at it. The Reader may see a very elegant Illustration of it, in *Dr. Watts's Philosophical Essays*, N^o ix. §. 2.

(b) Let not my faithful Servants be discouraged, &c.] It cannot be the Design of *this Parable*, to encourage private *Christians*, to imagine that Religion will flourish in their own Souls, without proper Cultivation; or to lead *Ministers*, to expect that it will flourish in their People, while they neglect due Application, in private, as well as publick. I hope therefore the Reader will acquiesce with me in the *Paraphrase* given above; supposing that *our Lord* meant to intimate, that *his Apostles*, and other *Ministers*, were not to estimate their Usefulness, merely by their immediate, and visible Success; but might hope, that by their preaching, a Seed would be left in the Hearts of many, which might afterwards produce happy Fruit. On these Principles I doubt not, but *our Lord's preaching* greatly promoted the signal Success of the *Apostles*; (to which he might in part refer, *John iv. 38. pag. 194.*) and I hope the Remark may sometimes be applicable to *our Labours*, especially with respect to those, who having enjoyed a Religious Education, and being restrained from grosser Irregularities, have not been so far as others, from the Kingdom of GOD. There can be no Reason to interpret this, (as *Grotius* and *Dr. Clarke* have done,) of *Christ* only; he does not go

The Parable of the Grain of Mustard-Seed.

30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the Kingdom of GOD? or with what Comparison shall we compare it?

MAT. XIII. 31. Another Parable put he forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a Grain of Mustard-seed, which a Man took and sowed in his Field; [MARK IV. 31.—]

MARK IV.—31. Which [indeed] when it is sown in the Earth, is [the least of all Seeds] that be in the Earth: [MAT. XIII. 32.—]

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all Herbs; [and becometh a Tree,] and shooteth out great Branches, so that the Fowls of the Air may [come and lodge in the Branches, and] under the Shadow of it. [MAT. XIII.—32.]

Crop may spring up, and the Son of Man will in due Time appear to gather it in. SECT. 68.

And he made a Pause in his Discourse, and then said, I am thinking, whereunto shall we compare the Kingdom of GOD? or with what Parable shall we place it in such a Point of Light, as farther to illustrate it.

After which Reflection, he proposed another Parable to them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven, of which I am speaking, or the Interest of the Gospel in the World, is like a Grain of Mustard-seed, which a Man took, and sowed in his Field to raise and propagate the Plant: It is, I say, like this Grain, which indeed when at first it is sown in the Earth, is very small and inconsiderable, and [one of] the least of all the Seeds, that are cast in the Ground (c): But when it is sown some Time in the Earth, it grows up to a surprizing Degree, and becomes greater than all other Herbs; yea, I may even say, it becomes a Tree, and shoots out great Branches, so large and thick, that the Birds of the Air may build their Nests in it, and come and lodge in its Branches (d), [and] harbour under its Shadow. In such a remarkable Manner did our Lord intimate, that his Gospel should prevail amidst all Opposition; and, inconsiderable as its Beginnings were, should spread itself abroad thro' the whole World, so as to afford weary and fearful Souls a grateful and secure Retreat.

Mat. XIII. 31.

Mark IV. 31.

He

away and sleep, and he perfectly knows how the Seed springs up: On the other Hand, every faithful Minister may be said to put in his Sickle, as having his Part in the final Harvest. (See John iv. 36. pag. 193.)

(c) The least of all the Seeds, &c.] Or one of the least, and so small, that it was proverbially used to signify a very little Thing. (Compare Mat. xvii. 20. Sect. 91.) See Lightfoot's Hor. Hebr. on Mat. xiii. 32.

(d) Come and lodge in its Branches.] The Talmud mentions a Mustard-Tree so large, that a Man might with Ease sit in it; and another, one of whose Branches covered a Tent: (See Tremell. Not. in loc. and Lightfoot's Hor. Hebr.) And it is certain, we shall be much mistaken, if we judge of Vegetables, or Animals, in the Eastern and Southern Countries, merely by what those of the same Species are among us. See Raphel. Annot. ex Herodoto, pag. 163.

SECT. 68.

Mat. XIII.

33.

He also spake another Parable to them, to the same Purpose with the former, which, like the rest, was taken from a very familiar Circumstance daily occurring in Life: *The Kingdom of Heaven*, said he, or the Cause of the Gospel, is like a little Leaven, which a Woman took, and covered up in three Measures of Meal; and tho' it seemed lost for a while in the Mass of Dough, it secretly wrought thro' it by a speedy, tho' insensible Fermentation, till at length the whole was leavened. Thus shall the Gospel spread in the World, and influence and assimilate the Temper and Conduct of Men.

- 34 *All these Things Jesus spake to the Multitude in Parables; and with many other such Parables spake he the Word unto them, as they were able to hear and receive [it;] well knowing that so many Enemies were then hovering round him, that had he declared the Mysteries of his Kingdom in plainer Terms, he would have been in continual Danger, and must, without a Series of repeated Miracles, have been cut off by their Malice: And upon this Account, without a Parable he spake not any Thing, in all that he delivered to them on that Day; That so it might be seen, that Passage was remarkably fulfilled in him (e), which was spoken by the Prophet, (Psal. lxxviii. 2.) and that he might with the utmost Propriety adopt those Words that Asaph had delivered, saying, "I will open my Mouth in Parables, I will give vent to dark Sayings of old, even to Things*
- 35 *That it might be fulfilled.] So many Scriptures are thus quoted by Way of Allusion, that I cannot think it necessary to suppose, as some late ingenious Writers have done, that these Words did not originally belong to the seventy-eighth Psalm, but are a Fragment of some other, describing the Manner in which the Messiah was to preach. (See Jefferys's Review, pag. 117.) They have a plain Connection with the following Verses, and might perhaps be a Kind of Preface to all Asaph's Psalms, in which there are some dark Sayings, tho' the greatest Part of the seventy-eighth is very clear.*

MAT. XIII. 33. Another Parable spake he unto them, The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto Leaven, which a Woman took and hid in three Measures of Meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 All these Things spake Jesus unto the Multitude in Parables? [and with many such Parables spake he the Word unto them, as they were able to hear it;] and without a Parable spake he not unto them: [MARK IV. 33, 34.—]

35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, saying, I will open my Mouth in Parables, I will utter Things which have

(f) Fix

The Parables of the hid Treasure, and of the Pearl.

have been kept secret from the Foundation of the World.

“ Things which have been hid from the Foundation of the World.” For thus did Jesus teach important Truths that were before unknown, in a Manner something obscure, tho’ to the attentive Mind peculiarly impressing.

SECT. 68.
Mat. XIII.
35.

MARK IV. — 34. And when they were alone, he expounded all Things to his Disciples.

And after he had sent away the Multitude, and was retired from them, he freely expounded all these Things to his Disciples, when they were alone with him.

Mark IV. 34.

MAT. XIII. 44. Again the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto Treasure hid in a Field; the which when a Man hath found, he hideth, and for Joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that Field.

And when he had given them the fore-mentioned Explication of the Parable of the Tares, he again added some other Parables to the same Purpose, to promote the Diligence, Zeal, and Resolution of his Disciples, in searching into, and teaching these great and important Truths, in which the Glory of GOD, and the Salvation of Souls, were so much concerned. Particularly, he said to them, The Happiness, to which the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Gospel Dispensation, is designed to conduct Men, is like an immense Treasure hid in a Field, which when a Man has found, he hides and covers up again with all possible Care; and in the Transport he is in for Joy of it, goes and sells all that he has, and buys that Field at any Rate, as being sure that it will abundantly answer the Price.

Mat. XIII.
44.

45 Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Merchant-man, seeking goodly Pearls;

Or again, to represent the Matter in a like Instance, that I may fix it yet more deeply on your Minds (f), The Kingdom of Heaven is in this Respect like, or may be illustrated by the Similitude of a Merchant, who goes about from one Country to another, seeking the largest and most beautiful Pearls (g), and other fine Jewels; Who finding one Pearl of an exceeding great Value, offered

45

46

46 Who when he had found one Pearl of great Price,

(f) Fix it yet more deeply on your Minds.] Considering the many Trials they were shortly to expect, it was proper the Thought should thus be inculcated upon them by a Variety of Figures.

(g) Beautiful Pearls.] The Sacred Writers elsewhere compare, and prefer Wisdom to Jewels. See Job xxviii. 15,—19. Prov. iii. 15. and viii. 11.

SECT. 68.
 Mat. XIII.
 46.

offered to him on very advantageous Terms, would by no means slip the Opportunity, but presently *went away, and sold all that he had, and bought it*; as well knowing, he should be a considerable Gainer, tho' he should part with all he was possessed of for it. Thus tho' a resolute Profession of my Gospel may indeed cost you dear, yet it will, on the whole, be infinitely for your Advantage, and richly repay all your Losses.

Price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 But see to it, that you are in good Earnest in your Religion, and do not impose upon yourselves by an empty Profession; for, to add one Parable more, which I shall *again* borrow from an Object, with which some of you have been very conversant: The Success of *the Kingdom of Heaven* in the World, is like that of a Net thrown into the Sea, which gathered in [Fishes] of all Sorts:

47 Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Net, that was cast into the Sea, and gathered of every Kind;

48 Which when the Fishermen perceived that it was full, they dragged to the Shore, and sitting down there, to survey the Draught that they had made, gathered the Good into proper Vessels, but threw away the Bad (b), as not worth their Regard.

48 Which when it was full, they drew to Shore, and sat down, and gathered the Good into Vessels, but cast the Bad away.

49 So mixed and undistinguished here are the Characters of those who profess the Gospel, which, as it is preached promiscuously to all, gathers in Persons of all Sorts, and Hypocrites as well as true Believers are brought into the visible Church: But an exact Survey will finally be taken of the whole; and so it will be shewn at last, how great a Difference there is between them, by the Assignment of their State; for *at the End of the World, the Angels shall come forth in the general Resurrection, and separate the Wicked from among the Just,*
 with

49 So shall it be at the End of the World: the Angels shall come forth, and sever the Wicked from among the Just;

(b) *But threw away the Bad.*] The Word *καμα*, which we render *Bad*, generally signifies *corrupt* or *putrid*, and seems an Allusion to the drawing up some *dead Fish* in a Net with the Living. *Mr. Horberry* justly observes, that this in the strongest Terms represents the hopeless State of Sinners at last. See his *Discourse of Future Punishment*, pag. 29.

50 And shall cast them into the Furnace of Fire; there shall be wailing, and gnashing of Teeth.

with whom they often have been joined before, even in the same religious Society and in the Participation of the same external Privileges; *And they shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire, the Seat of the Damned; where their Torments shall never end, but there shall be incessant wailing, and gnashing of Teeth, for Rage and Despair.*

Mat. XIII. 30.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these Things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

Then *Jesus saith unto them, Have ye with the Key to them, which I before gave you, understood all these Things? They say unto him, Yes, Lord, we clearly understand them. And he said to them, See therefore, that as you understand them, you make a good use of them, for your own Advantage, and that of others: For every Scribe, who is disciplined in the Mysteries, and has attained to the Knowledge of the Kingdom of Heaven, or every faithful Minister who is fit for his Work, is like a Housekeeper, who lays in a Variety of Goods for Use, and keeps them in such Order, that he readily brings forth out of his Store, Things new and old, as the several Occasions of Life require, dispensing them in such a Manner as may best suit the Case of those who are under his Care.*

51
52

52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every Scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a Man that is a Householder, which bringeth forth out of his Treasure Things new and old.

53 And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these Parables, he departed thence.

And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these Parables, which he added to those he had spoken in publick, he departed thence that Evening, to shun the farther Importunity of the People, and crossed the Sea with some remarkable Circumstances, which will be mentioned below.

53

I M P R O V E M E N T.

LET us be concerned to *gather up these Fragments, that nothing may be lost*, and to lay them up in our Memories and our Hearts, that, according to our respective Stations in Life, we may have them *ready for Use.*

Mat. xiii. 52.

Let

SECT. 68. Let us remember, that sometimes the *Growth of Piety in the Heart, is like that of Vegetables in the Earth. The Seed of the Word* may for a while *seem lost*; or when the *Fruit* appears, it may advance and ripen but *slowly*. Let not *Ministers* therefore too confidently conclude, they have *laboured in vain, and spent their Strength for nought*, because *the Fields* are not immediately *white to the Harvest*; but with believing Hope, and humble Patience, let them recommend *the Seed that they have sown* to him, who by the secret Energy of his continued Influences can give at length a sure and plentiful *Increase*.

Mat. xiii.
31, 32.

When *Jesus took to himself his great Power, and reigned, the Gospel*, which had gained so little Ground under his *personal* Ministration, *ran, and was greatly glorified, in the Hands of the Apostles. The Grain of Mustard-seed* shot up, and branched forth into a *spreading Tree*, and *Birds* of every Wing took Shelter there: (Oh that there had been none of the *ravenous* and the *obscene Kind!*) Thus when *the LORD* shall please to *hasten it in his Time, a little one shall become a Thousand, and a small one a strong Nation.* (Isa. lx. 22.)

Ver. 33.

Let us pray, that the triumphant *Progress* of his *Kingdom may come*: In the mean Time, let it be our Desire, that the *Principles of the Gospel* may, like a sacred Kind of *Leaven*, diffuse themselves thro' our whole Souls; that all our Powers and Faculties, that all our Thoughts and Passions, may be, as it were impregnated and elevated by them. Let us remember the *Value* of the Blessings it proposes; and regarding *Christ* as the *Pearl of great Price*, and *Heaven* as that immense *Treasure*, in which alone we can be for ever rich and happy, let us be willing to *part with all* to secure it, if we are called to such a Trial.

V. 47,—50.

It is not enough, that we are *nominal Christians*, or possessed of the common Privileges of the Church: The *Day* of final *Separation* will come, and the *Angels* employed in the Work will not overlook us, but conduct us to the Abodes of the *Righteous*, or the *Wicked*. Oh that we may not then be *cast* with Abhorrence into the *Furnace of Fire!* but now seriously realizing to ourselves this awful *Day*, of which our *Lord* has given such repeated Prospects, may we so *judge ourselves*, that we may not then be *condemned* of him!

SECT.

S E C T. LXIX.

Our LORD having given some remarkable Answer to some, who seemed disposed to follow him, passes over the Lake, and stills a mighty Tempest, as he was crossing it. Mat. VIII. 18,—27. Mark IV. 35, to the End. Luke VIII. 22,—25. IX. 57, to the End.

MARK IV. 35.

AND the same Day when the Even was come, [when Jesus saw great Multitudes about him,] [LUK. he went into a Ship with his Disciples; and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the Lake.] [MAT. VIII. 18. LUKE VIII. 22.—]

36—And when they had sent away the Multitude, they took him even as he was in the Ship.

MARK IV. 35.

NOW in the Evening of the same Day (a), SECT. 69-
Mark IV. 35-
on which the Parables that we have been relating were delivered, when Jesus saw great Multitudes still waiting about him (b), purposing for a little while to retire from them, he came out of the House, and went into a Ship, which stood by the neighbouring Shore, with those of his Disciples, with whom he had just been discoursing; and said unto them, Let us go over unto the other Side of the Lake. And when they had dismissed the Multitude, and had at length persuaded them to withdraw, they took him, just as he was,

36

(a) In the Evening of the same Day.] Or that very Day, when it was Evening; for these are the express Words of the Evangelist; ἐν ἑσπέρῃ τῇ αὐτῇ, ὡς καὶ ἑσπέρης: And indeed they are so express, that I am amazed any Criticks, who do not suppose he was mistaken, can pretend it was not the same Day; which yet Dr. Clarke does, as if the Phrase meant nothing more, than one Day towards Evening. I dare not take so great a Freedom with the Sacred Author, and have therefore been obliged to transpose, tho' not to contradict Matthew.—This indeed appears one of the busiest Days of Christ's Life, as all the Events and Discourses recorded from his miraculous Cure of the Dæmoniack, who was Blind and Dumb, (See. 61. pag. 390.) happened in it; nevertheless I see no Absurdity in supposing, that all these Things might pass in less than twelve Hours. Compare Note (c), on Mat. xii. 22. pag. 390.

(b) Great Multitudes still waiting about him.] They sometimes stayed with, or near him several Days together: (Compare Mat. xv. 32. See. 86.) And it seems, that now they stayed a while after Christ had dismissed them, perhaps with a Prayer or Benediction; (Mat. xiii. 36. pag. 428.) for on his coming down again to the Shore, the Disciples joined with him, in persuading them to disperse, which, when they saw him determined to cross the Sea, they would the more readily do: For so we may conclude from what Mark says above, ver. 36. that just as he took Shipping, they (that is, Jesus and his Disciples,) sent them away. And this appears to me to be the easiest Way, to reconcile this Difference, which is none of the least.

2

(c) They

SECT. 69. *was, in the Ship (c), without any farther Provision for their Passage.*

Mark IV. 36. But before we relate the Particulars of their Voyage, we shall here take Occasion to add two or three little Occurrences, one of which happened at this Time.

Mat. VIII. 19. *And first it came to pass, that as they went in the Way (d) from the House out of which he came, to the Shore where he proposed to embark, a certain Scribe, pleased with his entertaining Parables, and concluding from the Tenor of some of them (e), as well as from the Zeal with which the People flocked about him, that he would soon become a mighty Prince, on declaring himself the Messiah, came with all the Appearance of profound Respect, and said unto him, O thou great Lord [and] Master, who hast another Kind of Authority than we Scribes*

MAT. VIII. 19. And [it came to pass, that as they went in the Way,] a certain Scribe came, and said unto him [Lord, and] Master, I will

can

(c) *They took him, as he was in the Ship.*] This may seem an Objection against the Solution proposed in the *last Note*, but I think the Turn given in the *Paraphrase* may remove it. If any are not satisfied with that Answer, they must suppose, that *Christ's going into an House*, mentioned by *Matthew* was *some Time after*; which seems not so natural a Sense of *Matthew's Words*. (See *Mat. xiii. 36.* with *Note (f)*, pag. 428.) But had that appeared to me the Meaning of them, it would only have occasioned the Alteration of a Clause or two in the *Paraphrase*; for it would have been improper, to have divided the *Explication* of the *Parable of the Tares* from the *Parable* itself.

(d) *As they went in the Way.*] As *this*, and the *next Story*, are inserted by *Matthew* between his Account of *Christ's giving Commandment to cross the Lake*, and his entering into the *Ship* to do it, (see *Mat. viii. 18,—23.*) I cannot but conclude, they both happened at *this Time*; and consequently, that when *Luke* introduces it by saying, it was *as they went in the Way*, his Meaning must be at large, *one Day as Christ and his Disciples were walking*, and not (as *Sir Ihuac Newton* supposes,) *as they went on in that Journey* in which the *Samaritans* had refused him a Lodging. The following Words would indeed have been proper on that Occasion; but they had also a universal Propriety, as *Christ had no House*, or stated Lodging of his own, and was now going over to a *Place*, where we do not find he had any Acquaintance. But if any think *St. Luke's* Expression too strong, to bear *this Interpretation*, they must, if they would not impeach *St. Matthew's* Account of it, conclude that *this little Occurrence* happened twice, as it is very possible it might.

(e) Concluding from the Tenor of some of them.] The *Parables of the Mustard-seed*, and the *Leaven*, were both spoke before the *Multitude*, (*Mat. xiii. 31, 34.* pag. 433, 434.) and they were both so plain, that the *Disciples* did not ask *Christ* to expound them; as indeed one can hardly imagine, how any *Explication* could have made them more intelligible.—The *Scribe's forsaking Christ*, on the Declaration he made of his *destitute Circumstances*, makes it evident he was actuated by these Views.

Another asks Leave first to bury his Father.

will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. [LUKE IX. 57.]

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head. [LUKE IX. 58.]

21 And [he said unto] another of his Disciples, [Follow me: but he] said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my Father. [LUKE IX. 59.]

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the Dead

can pretend to, (Mat. vii. 29. pag. 285.) I beseech thee to give me Leave to attend thee in thy Passage; for I am determined, that *I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*, and devote myself intirely to the Service of thy Kingdom. *And Jesus*, knowing the Motives which engaged him to this Resolution, *saith unto him*, Do not flatter yourself with the Expectation of any Temporal Advantages from such an Attendance; for I plainly tell you, that whereas (not to speak of domestick Animals, which are under the Care of Man,) even *the very Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests*, for themselves and their Young; yet *the Son of Man*, successful as his Kingdom must at length be, does now appear in such low Circumstances, that he *has not* so much as a Place *where he may lay his Head*: He knows not one Day, where he shall find Food and Lodging the next; and his Followers must expect no better a Condition. A Declaration, sufficient to deter a Person, who sought nothing but his present Interest and Advantage.

And to another of his Disciples, who had for some Time attended his Discourses, *he said*, Follow me stately, as these my Servants do, that thou mayst be trained up to take thy Part with them in the Ministry of the Gospel. *But he said unto him*, Lord, I will most gladly do it, yet I beg thou wouldst first permit me to go Home, and bury my aged Father (*f*), to whose Remains I am going to pay my last Duty. *But Jesus*, who thought it proper on this Occasion to make an extraordinary Trial of his Faith and Obedience, *said again unto him*, Follow thou me
imme-

(*f*) To go Home, and bury my aged Father.] Some think, that this Expression only intimates, his Father was so old that he could not live long; but Christ's Answer seems to take it for granted, he was already dead.

SECT. 69.
 Mat. VIII.
 22.

immediately ; and leave the Dead to bury their Dead : Let those who are themselves spiritually dead, perform the Rites of Funeral ; yea, let the Dead remain unburied, rather than disobey my Word, when I give thee so great a Commission ; or than neglect it but one Day, when I say, as I now do, *Go thou and preach* this Gospel of the Kingdom of GOD (g), which thou hast heard, and shalt farther hear from me.

Dead bury their Dead ; [but go thou and preach the Kingdom of GOD.] [LUKE IX. 60.]

Luke XI. 61.

And at a certain Time (b), another also said, Lord, I will presently follow thee ; but permit me first to go and settle the Affairs of my Family, and take my Leave of them which are at my House (i) ; as Elisha was permitted to do, when called in so extraordinary a Manner to the Prophetick Office. (1 Kings xix. 20.) And Jesus said unto him, Take heed, that no fond Affection for any who may stand related to thee, nor any solicitous Concern about thy temporal Affairs, prevent thee from executing the important Purpose thou hast formed of devoting thyself to my Service ; for no Man having once laid his Hand on the Plough, and afterwards looking back,

LUKE IX. 61. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee ; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at Home at my House.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No Man having put his Hand to the Plough, and looking

(g) *Go thou and preach the Kingdom of GOD.*] As our Lord called him now to follow him, we must conclude, that this Commission which he gives him to preach, was not directly to be put in Execution. The Circumstance was plainly extraordinary, and might turn on Reasons unknown to us. Christ might, for Instance, foresee some particular Obstruction, that would have arisen from the Interview with his Friends at his Father's Funeral, which would have prevented his devoting himself to the Ministry ; to which he might refer in saying, *Let the THE DEAD bury their Dead.* I see no Reason to suppose any Regard, to the Priests being forbidden some usual Ceremonies of Mourning, which some have thought to be intended here.

(b) *At a certain Time.*] This probably happened at another Time ; for it would have been very improper to have asked Permission to go and bid his Domesticks farewell, when Christ had just made such an Answer to the former : But the Story is so short, and so much resembles the former, that I chose, (as St. Luke also does,) to join them together. Nor do I think it any Reflection on the Evangelists, that they did not follow the Order of Time, provided they do not assert a Regard to it, where they vary from it.

(i) *Permit me first to settle the Affairs of my Family, and take my Leave, &c.*] In this Latitude I doubt not, but the Phrase, ἀπολαχθῆναι τοῖς ἑς τοῦ οἴκου μου, is to be taken here, tho' it has something of a different Signification, Luke xiv. 33. Sect. 121. Intending to give up his Possessions, he probably designed to order how they should be distributed among his Friends ; as *Heinsius* has very well explained the Passage.

(k) No



*And he was in the hinder part of the Ship a Sleep on a Pillow and they awake him and say unto him. Master carest thou not that we Perish.
Mark. Ch: 4. Verse. 38.*

looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of GOD.

back, is fit for the Service of the Kingdom of SECT. 69. *GOD (k):* As indeed, if the Work of Luke IX. 62. plowing the Ground require, that a Man should look before him, and resolutely mind what he is about, you may easily imagine, that the Duties of a Gospel-Minister will require a much more steady Attention, and more firm Resolution.

MAT. VIII. 23. And when he was entered into a Ship, his Disciples followed him: [LUKE and they launched forth:] [and there were also with him other little Ships.] [MARK IV. —36. LUKE VIII.—22.]

And now, as it was said before, that Jesus MAT. VIII. *was about to cross the Lake, when he was* 23. *entered into the Ship, his Disciples followed him; and they directly launched forth; even as many as could conveniently get a Passage in that Vessel, or any others that were thereabouts; for they were all desirous to attend him, and several other little Ships were also with him.*

24 And behold, [LUK. as they sailed, he fell asleep; and there came down a [great] Storm of Wind on the Lake; and] there arose a great Tempest in the Sea, in so much that the Ship was covered with the Waves; [and the Waves beat into the Ship, so that it was now full;] [LUK. and they were in Jeopardy.] [MARK IV. 37. LUKE VIII. 23.]

And as they were sailing over 24 *the Lake, Jesus laid himself down in the Ship, and being wearied with the various Labours of the Day, he fell asleep; and behold, there came down a violent Storm of Wind on the Lake; and on a sudden it was so tempestuous, that there arose a great and unusual Agitation in the Sea (l), in so much that the Vessel was even covered with the swelling Waves, which beat into the Ship, so that it was now full of Water, and they were in extrem Danger of being cast away.* *And [Jesus]* Mark IV. 38. *in the mean Time, for the Refreshment of his weary Body, as well as for the Trial of their Faith, was asleep on a Pillow in the Stern*

MARK IV. 38. And he was in the hinder Part of the Ship, asleep on a Pillow: [And

(k) *No Man having laid his Hand on the Plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of GOD.*] *Hesiod* has given it as the Character of a good Plowman, that he keeps his Mind intent on his Work, that he may make a straight Furrow, and does not allow himself to gaze about on his Companions. (*Hesiod. Ege. lib. ii. ver. 61,—63.*) Our Lord on the like obvious Principles, may use the Phrase of one that looks behind him, while his Hand is on the Plough, as a Kind of Proverbial Expression, for a careless, irresolute Person, who must be peculiarly unfit for the Christian Ministry. How happy had it been for his Church, had this lively Admonition been regarded, without which it is impossible *ορθολομεν τον λογον της αληθειας*, to divide, or rather direct, the Word of Truth aright! 2 Tim. ii. 15. See *Bos, Observ. cap. vi. pag. 28,—32.*

(l) *A great Agitation in the Sea.*] *Συμφορη μωρας* properly signifies a mighty Agitation; probably it was something of a Hurricane.

K k k 2

(m) Fatigued

SECT. 69. Stern of the Ship, being greatly fatigued with the Labours of the Day (m). And when to all human Appearance they were just sinking, his Disciples came to him, and awakened him, saying with great Surprise and Importunity, *Master, Master, is it no manner of Concern to thee, that we are all of us in the utmost Danger, and hast thou no Regard to what we are exposed to in such a terrible Extremity as this? Lord, save us, for we are just perishing!* And he says to them, *Why are ye so exceeding timorous, O ye of little Faith?* Can you imagine, that GOD would suffer Me to be lost in a Tempest? or that I would consult my own Safety in the Neglect of yours? *Where is your Faith?* and *how is it, that you have no Faith* in Exercise on such an Occasion, when you have had so many signal Evidences, both of my Power, and my tender Care? And then rising up, with an Air of Divine Majesty and Authority, he rebuked the Winds and the Raging of the Water, and said to the Sea, as a Master might do to a Company of turbulent Servants, *Peace, be still: And he had no sooner spoken, but the Wind rested, and there was presently a great Calm.* And the Men that were with him were greatly amazed, and struck with such a reverential Awe that they feared exceedingly, saying to each other, *What a wonderful Person is this, who has not only Power over Diseases, but commandeth even the most tumultuous Elements, the Winds and the Sea; and amidst all their Rage and Confusion, they humbly obey him, and are immediately composed at his Command!*

(m) Fatigued with the Labours of the Day.] This we may reasonably conclude, from a Review of the preceding Sections. See also the latter Part of Note (a), in the Beginning of this Section.

[And his Disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying,] Master, [LUKE Master,] carest thou not, [Lord, save us; we perish.] [MAT. VIII. 25. LUKE VIII. 24.—]

MAT. VIII. 26. And he saith unto them, Why are ye [so] fearful, O ye of little Faith? [LUK. Where is your Faith?] [How is it that ye have no Faith?] Then he arose, and rebuked the Winds, [LUK. and the Raging of the Water:] [and said unto the Sea, Peace, be still; and the Wind ceased,] and there was a great Calm. [MARK IV. 39, 40. LUKE VIII.—24, 25.—]

27 But the Men marvelled, [and they feared exceedingly, and said one to another] What manner of Man is this, that [LUK. commandeth] even the Winds and the Sea, [LUKE and they,] obey him? [MARK IV. 41. LUKE VIII.—25]

IMPROVE-

I M P R O V E M E N T.

HOW great and glorious does our Blessed Redeemer appear, as SECT. 69. having *all the Elements* at his Command, and exercising his Matt. viii. 27. Dominion over *the Winds and Seas*! He stills the very *Tempests*, when they roar, and *makes the Storm a Calm.* (*Psal. cvii. 29.*) He silences at once the Noise and Fury of the tumultuous *Waves*; and in the Midst of its Confusion, says to the raging *Sea, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud Waves be stayed.* (*Job xxxviii. 11.*) Who would not reverence and *fear him*! Who would not cheerfully *commit themselves to him*! Under such a Protection, how courageously may his *Church* ride thro' every *Storm*, and weather every *Danger*! *Christ* is still with her, and she is safe, even while he may seem to be *sleeping.* Blessed *Jesus!* that Power Ver. 24. of thine which here commanded the *Tempest* into a *Calm*, can easily silence all our tumultuous *Passions*, and reduce our Souls to that blessed *Tranquility*, in which alone we can be capable of enjoying thee and ourselves.

May we still be applying to *Christ*, with such importunate Addresses, and sensible how much we need his Help, may we cry out, Ver. 25. *Lord, save us, or we perish!* And may it be the Language, not of Suspicion and Terror, but of *Faith*; of a *Faith* determined at all Adventures to adhere to him, whatever Dangers are to be encountered, or whatever Advantages are to be resigned!

Did his Compassion for us, and his Desire of our Salvation, engage him to submit to such *desolate* and calamitous *Circumstances*, Ver. 20. that when *the Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests, the Son of Man, himself had not a Place where he might lay* that Sacred *Head*, which with infinite mutual Complacency and Delight he had so often reposed *in the Bosom of the Father!* May our Zeal and Love animate us, cheerfully to take our Part in his *Indigence* and *Distress*, if he call us to it! May no Considerations of *Ease* or *Interest*, or even of human *Friendship*, lead us to turn a deaf Ear to the *Calls of Duty*; or suffer us, when we once have *engaged in his Ser-* Ver. 21. *vice*, to think of *deserting it*, lest on the whole we should be judged *unfit for the Kingdom of GOD!* May thy Grace, O *Lord*, animate Luke ix. 62. our Souls, that nothing may prevent our *Faithfulness unto Death*, and so deprive us of that *Crown of Life*, which thy Grace has promised to such a Character! (*Rev. ii. 10.*)

S E C T.

S E C T. LXX.

CHRIST being arrived at the Country of the Gadarenes, dispossesses two Dæmoniacks, and permitting the Evil Spirits to enter into a Herd of Swine, is desired by the Inhabitants to withdraw; and so returns to the Western Side of the Sea. Mat. VIII. 28, to the End. IX. 1. Mark V. 1,—21. Luke VIII. 26,—40.

MARK V. 1.

SECT. 70. **AND** after they were thus delivered from the Danger of the Storm, they came over to the other Side of the Sea of Tiberias, and arrived at the Country of the Gadarenes; a Territory belonging, [or] at least adjacent, to that of the antient Gergesenes, or Girgashites; (see Gen. x. 16. xv. 21. Deut. vii. 1. and Josh. iii. 10.) which is situated over-against Galilee; being that Tract of Land, which fell to the Lot of the Half-Tribe of Manasseh, beyond Jordan, and was afterwards called Trachonitis.

2 And when he was landed out of the Ship, he was no sooner got ashore, but there immediately met him two Men (a) possessed with Demons, coming out of the Sepulchres (b), which

MARK V. 1.

AND they came over unto the other Side of the Sea, [LUK. and arrived at the Country of the Gadarenes, [or Gergesenes,] which is over-against Galilee.] [MAT. VIII. 28.—LUKE VIII. 26.]

2 And when he was come out of the Ship [LUK. to Land,] immediately there met him [Two possessed with Devils, coming out of the Tombs,

(a) There met him two Men.] Mark and Luke mention only One, who probably was the fiercer of the Two; but this is no way inconsistent with the Account that Matthew gives.—I cannot but observe here, that Mark tells this Story in all other Respects so much more circumstantially than Matthew, that it abundantly proves, that his Gospel was not, (as Mr. Whiston maintains in his Harmony,) an Abridgement of Matthew. The same Remark may arise, from comparing Mark v. 22,—43. with Mat. ix. 18,—26. and Mark ix. 17,—27. with Mat. xvii. 14,—18. and some other parallel Passages; not to mention Histories recorded by Mark, and not to be found in Matthew. See Mr. Jones's Vindication of St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. vii. and ix.

(b) Coming out of the Sepulchres.] Grotius supposes, that the Demons chose to drive the Men that they possessed among the Tombs, to confirm some superstitious Notions of the Jews, relating to the Power of Evil Spirits over the Dead. The Heathens had undoubtedly such Notions: But I rather think with Elfsner, the Dæmoniacks chose the Caves

Tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no Man might pass by that Way;] [LUK. a certain Man out of the City,] with an unclean Spirit, [LUK. which had Devils a long Time;] [MAT. VIII.—28. LUKE VIII. 27.—]

3 Who [ware no Clothes, neither abode in any House, but] had his Dwelling among the Tombs; and no Man could bind him, nor not with Chains: [LUK. VIII.—27.]

4 Because that he had been often bound with Fetters and Chains, and the Chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the Fetters broken in pieces; neither could any Man tame him.

5 And always Night and Day he was in the Mountains, and in the Tombs, crying and cutting himself with Stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran, [and fell down before him,] and worshipped him; [LUKE VIII. 28.—]

7 And cried [LUK. out] with a loud Voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus,

which were in a Burying-Place near the City, whither they had fled, as to a Place affording them some Shelter, and suiting their gloomy Imaginations; and they were both of them *exceeding fierce* and *mischievous*, so that no one could safely pass by that Way: And [one of these was] a certain Man of the City with an unclean Spirit, that had been known to be possessed with Dæmons for a long Time; Who was so terribly outrageous that he wore no Clothes, nor would abide in any House, but had his Dwelling sometimes in the Burying-Ground among the Tombs, and sometimes in a Desert, or a Common, that lay near it (c); and was under so strong an Operation of the Diabolical Power, that no one could confine him, even with Chains.

For he had often been bound with Fetters and Chains, yet in a most surprising Manner the Chains were broken asunder by him, and the Fetters were beaten to pieces; and after all the Methods that had been taken with him, no one was able to tame him, either by Force, or Intreaties, or any Kind of Exorcism that had been tried upon him. And he was always Night and Day upon the Mountains, and among the Tombs, crying out in a terrible Manner, and when there was no Body else to spend his Rage upon, cutting himself with sharp Pieces of the Stones he found there.

But when he saw Jesus afar off, the Dæmon that possessed him was so over-awed, that he immediately ran, and fell down upon his Face before him, with all the Appearance of the greatest Reverence, and worshipped him: And crying out with a loud Voice he said, what have I to do with thee, Jesus,

Caves of this Burying-Ground, as a Kind of Shelter; and he has shewn, that Wretches in Extremity sometimes did the like. See *Elshner Obs.* vol. i. pag. 66,—68.

(c) A Desert, or a Common, that lay near it.] So it is said by Luke, ver. 29. that he was driven into the Wilderness.

(d) Art

SECT. 70.
Mark V. 2.

3

4

5

6

7

SECT. 70. *Jesus, thou Son of the most high GOD?*

Mark. V. 7. *I am not come here to enter into any Contest with thee, and I beseech [and] adjure thee by that GOD whose Son thou art, that thou do not exert the Power which thou hast to torment me: I know there will be a Season, when thou wilt have an ample Triumph over me; but art thou come hither to torment us before the Time allotted for our final Punishment (d)?* And this he spoke, as he was acted by the Dæmon that possessed him, who was afraid of being driven away: For Jesus was so moved with Pity and Compassion, at the Sight of such a miserable Spectacle, that he already had commanded the unclean Spirit, [and] said with an Air of Authority, to him, *Come out of the Man, thou unclean Spirit.* For (as it was observed before,) *it had often seized him in a most violent Manner; and notwithstanding he was bound with Chains, and kept under the closest Confinement in Fetters, yet none of them were strong enough to hold him, but he would still break loose; and having broke and torn off all the Bonds that they could fix upon him, he was driven by the impetuous Impulse of the raging Dæmon into the Desert Places, where the Burying-Ground lay.*

Luke VIII. 29.

30 *And Jesus asked the Evil Spirit that was in him, saying, What is thy Name? And he answered, saying, My Name is Legion; for we are many (e).* And this Reply was not without

Jesus, thou Son of the most High GOD? [LUK. I beseech thee,] I adjure thee by GOD, that thou torment me not: [Art thou come hither to torment us before the Time?] [MAT. VIII. 29. LUKE VIII.—28.]

LUKE VIII. 29. (For he had commanded the unclean Spirit, [and said unto him, Come out of the Man, thou unclean Spirit.] For oftentimes it had caught him; and he was kept bound with Chains, and in Fetters; and he brake the Bands, and was driven of the Devil into the Wilderness.) [MARK V. 8.

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy Name? [and he answered, saying, My Name is Legion; for we are many:] because many

(d) *Art thou come hither to torment us before the Time?* Here was such a Reference to the final Sentence, which *Christ* is to pass upon these *Rebel Spirits* in the *Judgment of the great Day*, to which they are reserved, (*Jude ver. 6.*) as could not be dictated by *Lunacy*; and it is much to be questioned, whether either the *Person speaking*, or any of the *Hearers*, but *Christ* himself, understood the Sense and Propriety of it.

(e) *My Name is Legion, for we are many.* There is no Need of concluding from hence, that the *Number* of these *Evil Spirits* was exactly the same, with that of a *Roman Legion*, which was now upwards of *Six thousand*. (See *Pitisc. Lex. de Legion.*) It was a *Phrase* that was often made use of, to express a *great Number*. (See *Lightf. Hor. Hebr. on Mar. v. 9.*)—It is observable, that *Luke* here adds, that *many Dæmons* were entered into him; so that it is evident, he thought it, not a *mere Lunacy*, but a *real*

my Devils were entred into him. [MARK V. 9.]

without some Reason, because the Evil Spirit that possessed the Man had many others with him, and a Multitude of Dæmons had entered into him, and had been suffered to unite their Malice and Power, in harassing and tormenting the wretched Creature.

SECT. 70.
Luke VIII.
30.

31 And they besought him [much,] that he would not [send them away out of the Country, and] command them to go out into the Deep. [MARK V. 10.]

And as they found, that Jesus was determined to dislodge them, they earnestly intreated him, that he would not send them quite away, out of the Country (f); hoping, that if they had Permission to hover still about it, they might do something to obstruct the Progress of the Gospel, against which their chief Efforts were centered: [And] they particularly were importunate, that he would not command them to go out into the bottomless Abyss, the Prison in which many of the fallen Spirits are detained, and to which some, who may, like these, have been permitted for a while to range at large, are sometimes by Divine Justice and Power remanded. (Compare Rev. xx. 1,—3. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude, ver. 6. and see Grotius in loc.)

31

MARK V. 11. Now there was there [a good Way off from them,] nigh unto the Mountains, a great Herd of [many] Swine feeding [LUK. on the Mountain.] [MAT. VIII. 30. LUKE VIII. 32.—]

Now there was there within their View at a considerable Distance from them, on the Mountains, near the Sea-Shore, a great Herd of many Swine feeding on the Mountain; for unclean as those Animals were, the Jews in that Country bred up great Numbers of them, out of Regard to the Gain of such Merchandise, which they sold to the Roman Soldiers, and other Gentiles, who were very nume-

Mark V. 11.

real Possession. Probably a Band of Evil Spirits united in the Vexation of this wretched Creature; but in what Manner, and Order, it is impossible for us to say, who know so little of Invisible Beings.

(f) That he would not send them out of the Country.] It seems from Dan. x. 13, 20. that different Evil Genii preside over distinct Regions, by the Direction of Satan their Prince. These, who perhaps were Spirits of distinguished Abilities, might be appointed to reside hereabouts, to oppose as much as possible the beneficial Designs of Christ; and having made their Observations on the Characters and Circumstances of the Inhabitants, they might be capable of doing more Mischiefs here, than elsewhere; and on that Account might desire Leave to continue on the Spot.

SECT. 70. numerous in these Parts (g). *And all the*

Mark V. 12. *Demons* which had possessed this miserable Creature, (set upon doing all the Mischief that they could, tho' they were under such a sensible Restraint, and desirous to bring an Odium upon Jesus, as the Author of Mischief,) *intreated him* again, *saying* to him, *If thou art determined, after all we have said, that thou wilt cast us out of this Man, send us, [or] give us leave to go away, to the Herd of Swine* which is feeding yonder, *that we may enter into them*; for we have no Power of hurting even them without thy Leave.

13 *And immediately Jesus permitted them to do it*; partly to punish those who dealt in so infamous a Commodity; and chiefly to prove the Reality of a Diabolical Agency in these Cases (h), and to display the Malice of those Evil Spirits: He therefore *said unto them*, You may go, since you desire it, and operate on those Creatures as you please. *And upon this the unclean Spirits went directly out of the Man* whom they had possessed, *and entered into the Herd of Swine*: *And such was the*

12 And all the Devils besought him, saying, [If thou cast us out,] send us [or suffer us to go away] into the [Herd of] Swine, that we may enter into them. [MAT. VIII. 31. LUKE VIII.—32.]

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them Leave; [and said unto them, Go.] And the unclean Spirits went out [LUK. of the Man,] and entered into the [Herd of] Swine: and [behold,] the [whole];

(g) Which they sold to the Roman Soldiers, and other Gentiles, &c.] The Laws of Hyrcanus had indeed prohibited the Jews from keeping Swine, (which shews it had been much practised among them;) but these Gadarenes, who had so many Gentiles in the Neighbourhood, having long been under Heathen Government, (Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xv. cap. 7. (al. 11.) §. 3. & Bell. Jud. lib. i. cap. 20. (al. 15.) §. 3.) and living in the extrem Part of the Country, presumed to do it, scandalous and illegal as the Employment was. See *Miracles of Jesus vindicated*, pag. 34, 35.

(h) To prove the Reality of a Diabolical Agency in these Cases.] The Cavils against this Miracle are equally malicious and weak. Our Lord's permitting the Evil Spirits to enter into the Swine, was not properly sending them into those Beasts: Or if he had done it, the Punishment to the Owners would have been just; or had it been less apparently so, his extraordinary Character as a Prophet, and the Proofs he gave of a Divine-Co-operation, would have set him above our Censure in an Action, the full Reasons of which we might not perfectly have known.—But tho' this Solution, is to me very satisfactory, it is not necessary to have Recourse to it; for this Action evidently appears both wise and gracious; inasmuch as it unanswerably demonstrated at once the Malice of Satan, and the Extent of Christ's Power over him. No Miracles are more suspicious than pretended Dispossessions, as there is so much Room for Collusion in them; but it was self-evident, that a Herd of Swine could not be Confederates in any Fraud: Their Death therefore, in this instructive and convincing Circumstance, was Ten thousand Times a greater Blessing to Mankind, than if they had been slain for Food, as was intended.

[whole] Herd ran violently down a steep Place into the Sea, and were choked in the Sea, [and perished in the Waters:] and they were about Two thousand. [MAT. VIII. 32. LUKE VIII. 33.]

14 And they that fed the Swine, [LUK. when they saw what was done,] fled, and told [every Thing] in the City, and in the Country, [and what was befallen to the Possessed of the Devils.] And they went out to see what it was that was done: [MAT. VIII. 33. LUKE VIII. 34, 35.—]

15 And they come to Jesus, and see [the Man] that was possessed with the Devil, and had the Legion, [out of whom the Devils were departed,] sitting [at the Feet of Jesus,] and clothed, and in

the strange Effect of their Power, that *be-* SECT. 70.
bold, the whole Herd immediately grew mad, Mark V. 13.
and *ran violently down a Precipice into the*
Sea (i), and were all suffocated in the Sea,
and perished in the Waters (k); being in
Number about Two thousand.

And the Swineherds, seeing what was done, 14
fled in great Amazement, some one Way,
and some another, and told all the Story,
both in the City, and Country; and circum-
stantially related what had happened to the Two
Dæmoniacks, and how the Dæmons had been
ejected from them. And when the People
heard it, they were so much impressed with
the Report, that they went out in Crouds to
see what was done, and to satisfy themselves
on the Testimony of their own Senses, as
to the Truth of so unparalleled a Fact.
And when they came to Jesus, and saw the 15
Dæmoniack, (even him that had been tor-
mented by the Legion, and out of whom the
Dæmons were departed,) calmly sitting at
the Feet of Jesus to receive his Instructions,
and now decently clothed and perfectly com-
posed,

(i) *The whole Herd ran violently down a Precipice into the Sea.*] This Story is an unanswerable Demonstration of the Error of the Hypothesis, advanced by the Author of the late Enquiry into the Case of the Dæmoniacks, &c. (mentioned before in Note (c) on Luke iv. 33. pag. 221.) That ingenious Writer is forced, to suppose these Swine frightened by the two Madmen, and so driven down the Precipice: But not to mention the Absurdity, of supposing their Lunacy thus to rage, after Christ had spoke the healing Word; one might venture to appeal to any Body, that has observed what awkward Creatures Swine are to drive, whether it would be possible, without a Miracle, for Two Men to drive Twenty, and much less Two Thousand of them into the Water. It is a pitiable Thing, to see a Writer of such a Character reduced to so hard a Shift. He seems indeed to think the common Notion of Possessions absurd and dangerous, and certainly opposes it with a very good Design: But it is hard to say, how Christ could have encouraged that Notion more, than by his Conduct on this Occasion; and I doubt not, but this extraordinary Occurrence was permitted, chiefly to prove the Reality of these Possessions, and will always be effectual for the Conviction of every impartial Enquirer.

(k) *And were all suffocated, and perished in the Waters.*] The Display of the Magnignity of these Dæmons in this Instance, served to illustrate the Value of every Miracle of this Kind, and to display the Grace, as well as Power of Christ, in every Dispossession; in which View, this Circumstance appears to have been determined with great Wisdom and Goodness, tho' Folly and Perverseness have so strangely disguised it.

SECT. 70. *possed*, as being restored to his right Mind ; they were struck with such a Mixture of Astonishment and Reverence, that *they were afraid* of conversing with so great a Prophet, and dreaded the farther Effects of his Power.

Mark V. 15.

16 (Compare Luke v. 8. Sect. 34.) *And they also who were present and had seen all that passed from the Beginning, gave them a particular Account of [it,] and told them more largely than the Swineherds had done, by what Means the Dæmoniack had been recovered; and also told them concerning the Swine, how they had been so strangely destroyed, by the apparent Agency of those Evil Spirits, by which the Men had before been possessed.*

Mat. VIII.
34.

And behold, all the Inhabitants of the whole City of Gadara (l), as the Rumour increased, came out to meet Jesus; [and] indeed the whole Multitude of the Country of the Gadarenes round about, flocked to see so wonderful a Person: And when they saw him, they presently began with all Submission to intreat him, that he would please to depart from them out of their Coasts; pretending that they, who had so great a Number of Gentiles round them, were not fit to receive so great and holy a Person: For they unreasonably looked on him as the Author of the Calamity which befel the Swine, and were seized with great Fear, lest he should send some farther Judgments upon them, which they were sensible the great Irregularities of their Behaviour well deserved (m): And he, by no means

in his right Mind; and they were afraid. [LUKE VIII. —35.]

16 And they [also] that saw it, told them [by what Means he that was possessed of the Devils was healed,] and also concerning the Swine. [LUKE VIII. 36.]

MAT. VIII. 34. And behold, the whole City came out to meet Jesus [LUKE and the whole Multitude of the Country of the Gadarenes round about;] and when they saw him, they [began to pray him] that he would depart [LUKE from them] out of their Coasts; [LUK. for they were taken with great Fear: and he went up into the Ship, and returned back again.] [MARK V. 17. LUKE VIII. 37.]

(l) *The whole City of Gadara.*] Josephus describes it as a very considerable Place. It was by the righteous Judgment of GOD the first Jewish City, that fell into the Hands of the Romans, in the fatal War under Vespasian, and suffered great Extremities. Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 7. (al. v. 3.) §. 3, 4. See Wisf. de Duem Trib. cap. 8. §. 2.

(m) *Lest he should send some farther Judgments upon them, &c.*] Some have imagined, that they thought Christ a Magician, and feared the Effects of his Art; but the Cause assigned in the Paraphrase seems to me much more decent, and, all Things considered,

The Dæmoniack desires to go with him, but is sent Home. 453

means willing to obtrude his Presence on SECT. 70.
those, who were so insensible as not to desire it, *went into the Ship again, and returned back to the Western Shore of the Sea.*

MARK V. 18. And when he was come into the Ship, he that had been possessed with the Devil, [out of whom the Devils were departed,] prayed him that he might be with him. [LUKE VIII. 38.—]

And when he was come into the Ship, the Dæmoniack, out of whom the Dæmons were now departed, fearing left after this, (as it had been supposed of some, Mat. xii. 43,—

19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but [sent him away, saying, Return to thine own House, and] go Home to thy Friends, and tell them how great Things the Lord [God] hath done for thee, and hath had Compassion on thee. LUKE VIII.—38, 39.—]

45. Sect. 63.) he might be in Danger of a Relapse, and dreading the Terrors of his former Condition, *intreated him that he might be allowed to continue with him, to enjoy the farther Benefit of his Instructions. Yet Jesus did not permit him to do it, but sent him away, saying, Return to thine own House, [and] go to thy Friends and Relations at Home; and fail not particularly to tell them how great Things the Lord GOD of Israel, whose Messenger I am, has by his Almighty Power performed for thee; and how graciously he has had Compassion on thee in those deplorable Circumstances, which rendered thee a Spectacle of Horror to them, and all that saw thee.*

20 And he departed, and began to publish [throughout the whole City, and] in Decapolis, how great Things Jesus had done for him; and all Men did marvel. [LUKE VIII.—39.]

And upon this he went away, and began to publish thro' the whole City of Gadara, in which he dwelt, [and] in all the neighbouring Region of Decapolis, what great and wonderful Things Jesus had done for him: And all Men were amazed at so stupendous a Miracle.

MAT. IX. 1. And he entered into a Ship, and passed over, and came into his own City.

And Jesus having entered into the Ship, departed thence, as soon as the Dæmoniack was dismissed; and leaving those ungrateful People, who had no greater Value for his Presence, he passed over the Sea of Galilee, and shortly after came to his own City of Capernaum, where he had dwelt after his leaving Nazareth. (See Mat. iv. 13. pag. 210.)

considered, more likely. They were probably a licentious Sort of People, and might naturally, from what they saw, fear some farther Chastisement from so holy a Prophet.

And

(n) Gladly

SECT. 70.
 Mark V. 21.

And it came to pass, that when Jesus had passed over again in the Ship to the other Side of the Lake, he was no sooner landed, but a great Multitude gathered to him; [and] the People most gladly received him (n); for they expected his speedy Return, and were all impatiently waiting for him: And he continued some Time on the Sea-coast, teaching and working Miracles.

MARK V. 21. And [it came to pass, that] when Jesus was passed over again by Ship unto the other Side, much People gathered unto him; [and the People gladly received him; for they were all waiting for him:] and he was nigh unto the Sea. [LUKE VIII. 40.]

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mark v. 3.
 13.

FROM the remarkable Story which is here before us, we must surely see the most apparent Reason to adore the good Providence of GOD, which *restrains* the malignant *Spirits* of Hell, from spreading those *Desolations* among *Beasts*, and *Men*, which would otherwise quickly turn the *Earth* into a *Wilderness*, or rather into a *Chaos*. But what Matter of Joy is it to reflect, that all their Fury and Rage is under a *Divine Controul*, and that they cannot hurt even the meanest Animal without Permission from Above!

Ver. 12.

The unhappy Creature, whose State is here described in such lively Colours, is an affecting Emblem of those, who are in a spiritual Sense under the Power of *Satan*. Thus do they *break asunder* the *Bonds* of Reason and Gratitude, and sometimes of Authority, and even of Shame; and thus *driven on* by the Frenzy of their Lusts and Passions, they are so outrageous as to *injure others*, and to *wound themselves*. Human Attempts to moderate and reform them may be vain; but let us remember, that the Almighty Saviour has a *Voice*, which can put this worst Kind of *Demons* to Flight, and restore those that have been agitated by them to their *right Mind*, so as to place them *at his Feet* in holy *Composure*, and in calm rational Attention.

Ver. 4, 5.

Ver. 15.

Ver. 7.

We see here a *Legion of Devils* trembling before the *Son of GOD*, confessing his superior *Power*, howling as it were in their Chains, and *intreating* the *Delay* of their *Torments*. And can human *Pride* stand before him, and *rebellious Mortals* triumph over him? Happy Souls, that are *listed under his Banners*! they shall share the *Victories* of the great *Captain of their Salvation*, and the *GOD of Peace* shall *bruise Satan under their Feet shortly*. (Rom. xvi. 20.)

But

(n) Gladly received him.] This *Grotius* has observed to be the Meaning of the Word *αἰδέσαστο*, and in this Sense it may likewise be understood, *Acts* xv. 4. and xviii. 27.

But oh, how stupid, and how wretched were these *Gadarenes*, SECT. 70. who preferred their *Swine* to their *Souls*, and besought him to depart Ver. 17. out of their Coasts, whose Presence was their Defence and their Glory! May Divine Grace preserve us from a Temper like theirs! And may those of us, who have ourselves experienced the restoring Power of *Christ* and his *Gospel*, be engaged to adhere to our great Ver. 18, 20. Benefactor, and gratefully to devote those Powers to his Service, which he has rescued from Dishonour, Mischiefs, and Ruin!

S E C T. LXXI.

CHRIST being entertained at Matthew's House, justifies his conversing with Publicans and Sinners; and vindicates his Disciples for not keeping so many Fasts, as the Pharisees, and the Disciples of John did. Mat. IX. 10,—17. Mark II. 15,—22. Luke V. 29, to the End.

LUKE V. 29.

AND Levi made him a great Feast in his own House: [MAR. and it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at Meat,]

LUKE V. 29.

NOW after Jesus had continued for a SECT. 71. while on the Sea-Shore, (as was observed, Mark v. 21.) he entered into Capernaum: *And* Matthew, or *Levi*, who dwelt there, and who had some Time since been called from his former Office of a Publican, into the Number of his stated Attendants, (see Sect. 45. pag. 297.) desirous at once to shew his Respects to Christ, and to give his former Companions and Acquaintance an Opportunity of enjoying his instructive Conversation, made a great Entertainment for him in his own House (a): *And it came to pass, that*

(a) *A great Entertainment for him in his own House.*] Nothing has perplexed the Generality of *Harmonies* more, and nothing has thrown the *Authors* of them into greater Inconsistency with the *Sacred Writers*, than their taking it for granted, that *Matthew* made this Entertainment, on the very Day that *Christ* called him to attend upon him. The early *Harmonies* of *Tatian*, and *Ammonius*, very justly separated them: (See *Chemnit. Harm. cap. 43.*) And to the many convincing Arguments, which *Mr. Jones* has brought, to prove that they ought to be separated, (which see in his *Vindication of Matthew*, pag-

SECT. 71. *that as Jesus sate at Table there, behold, a*
 Luke V. 29. *great Number of Publicans and such as*
 had the general Character of *Sinners*, being invited by Matthew, *came, and sate also at the Table with Jesus and his Disciples, and several others* at that Time were present; *for there were many* of the Character above described in Christ's Train, (compare Mat. xi. 12. and Luke xv. 1.) *and they followed him with great Eagerness, being charmed with the Condescension with which he treated them, while many others shunned them with Abhorrence.*

Meat,] [behold,] a great Company of Publicans [and Sinners came, and] [MAR. sat also together with Jesus and his Disciples,] and others; [MAR. for there were many, and they followed him.] [MAT. IX. 10. MARK. II. 15.]

30 *But when the more reserved and stricter Sort of People in that Place, and in particular their Scribes and Pharisees, who pretended to be most exact and scrupulous in their Conduct, saw him thus openly converse and eat with Publicans and Sinners, they were offended, and murmured at his Disciples on that Account, saying, Why do you, who should be Examples to others, eat and drink in such scandalous Company, as this? [and] especially, how is it that your Master, who sets up for such an extraordinary Prophet, will allow himself to do it? For while our Traditions teach even the Students, and much more the Teachers of the Law, to avoid all Commerce with such polluted and infamous Persons, you see that he publicly eats and drinks with a considerable Number of Publicans and Sin-*

30 *But [when] their Scribes and Pharisees [MAR. saw him eat with Publicans and Sinners, they] murmured against his Disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink, [MAR. and how is it that [your Master] eateth and drinketh] with Publicans and Sinners? [MAT. IX. 11. MARK II. 16.]*

ners,

pag. 129,—137.) I will add, that it seems to me very evident, they were not both on the same Day, from this Consideration, (so obvious, that I wonder none should have mentioned it :) So many Things happened before the Calling of Matthew, that the Day must be far advanced, and there could not have been Time to prepare a great Feast, and invite a Number of Guests, at least till Supper; (see Sect. 45.) and so many Things happened after the Feast, (see Sect. 72.) that we cannot suppose them to have been crowded into the little Remainder of the Evening after Supper: On which Account it is certain, the Feast was after the Day of his Calling, perhaps (as it seems by the intermediate Stories,) some Months after, when he had made up his Accompts, and regularly passed his Business into other Hands, which to be sure from a Principle of Justice, as well as Prudence, he would take Care to do.

MARK II. 17. When Jesus heard it, he [LUK. answering] saith unto them, They that are whole, have no Need of the Physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance. [MAT. IX. 12, —13. LUKE V. 31, 32.]

MAT. IX. 13. — But go ye, and learn what that meaneth, I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice.

MARK II. 18. And the Disciples of John, and of the Pharisees, used to fast: And [the Disciples of John] come and say unto him, Why do [we] the Disciples of John, and [LUK. likewise the Disciples] of the Pharisees fast [LUK.

ners, as if there were no Scandal in being ac-
counted their Friend and Companion. SECT. 71.

And Jesus having heard that they were so
offended at [it,] answered them, saying, They
that are in perfect Health, have no Need of
the Converse and Advice of the Physician, but
those that are sick; and therefore out of Com-
passion to their Need of him, he visits and
converses with them, tho' it cannot otherwise
be agreeable to him to do it: And I act on
the same Principles; for I am not come to call
the Righteous, as you arrogantly imagine
yourselves to be, but such poor Sinners as
these, to Repentance and Salvation. But Mat. IX. 13.
if you are offended at it, you may go your
Way, and would do well to set yourselves to
learn the Meaning of that instructive [Scrip-
ture,] (Hos. vi. 6.) which I cited on a former
Occasion, (see Mat. xii. 7. pag. 325.) and
which you Pharisees are so ready to forget,
“ I require Mercy, and not Sacrifice.” For
had you understood this Saying, you would
have seen, that a Ceremonial Institution of
Divine Authority, and much more a mere
Human Tradition, is to give Way to the
great Duties of Humanity and Charity, even
where Mens Bodies, and much more where
their Souls are concerned.

Another Occurrence which happened at Mark II. 18.
the same Time, and bore some Resemblance
to the former, was this. The Disciples of
John the Baptist, who had himself lived so
austere a Life, and was now in a calamitous
State of Confinement, as well as the Disciples
of the Pharisees, used to fast often; and
the latter particularly twice a Week: (Com-
pare Luke xviii. 12. Sect. 129.) Now seeing
Jesus at a Publican's Table on a Festival Oc-
casion, surrounded with so many of his stated
Followers, some of the Disciples of John
come and say unto him, Whence is it that we,
the Disciples of John, and also those of the Pha-
risees,

SECT. 71. *rifees*, have frequently our Days of solemn Devotion, in which we *fast, and make many Prayers and Supplications to GOD* for ourselves and the People? *whereas thy Disciples fast not* at all, that we can perceive; *but*, on the contrary, *eat and drink* freely, tho' thou professest a Righteousness superior to that of the Scribes and Pharisees. (Mat. v. 20. Sect. 38.)

19 *And Jesus said unto them, Can the Children of the Bride Chamber, who are invited to attend the Nuptial Ceremony, with any Decency mourn [and] fast, while the Bridegroom is yet continuing with them? As long as they have the Pleasure of the Presence and Company of the Bridegroom among them, they cannot reasonably be expected to fast, and every one would then account it to be out of Season. Now my Presence and Converse renders this a Kind of Festival to my Disciples; for as John taught you but a little before his Confinement, I am the great Bridegroom of my Church (b); you cannot therefore in Reason expect, I should command them to fast now, or that they should do it without such a Command. But I assure you, the Days will quickly come, when as your Master is separated from you, so even I, the Bridegroom, shall be taken away from them; and then they must expect to undergo a great deal of Hardship, and particularly shall be obliged frequently to fast in those Days; as those whom I have mentioned, might do, if their Festival was interrupted by the Removal of their beloved Friend, whose Joys they were sharing (c). (Compare 1 Cor. iv. 11. 2 Cor. xi. 27.)*

20

[LUK. often, and make Prayers,] but thy Disciples fast not, [LUK. but eat and drink?] [MAT. IX. 14. LUKE V. 33.]

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the Children of the Bride-Chamber [mourn and] fast, while the Bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the Bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. [MAT. IX. 15.—LUKE V. 34.]

20 But the Days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those Days. [MAT. IX.—15. LUKE V. 35.]

Nor

(b) I am the great Bridegroom of my Church.] Some have supposed, there is in this *Similitude* which *Christ* has used, a Reference to the Book of *Canticles*; and it is possible there may. (See *Carpzov. Defence of the Hebrew Bible*, pag. 220, 221.) There is no doubt a Reference, to what *John* had lately said to his *Disciples* so expressly on that Head. *John* iii. 29. pag. 171.

(c) If their Festival was interrupted, &c.] *Our Lord* seems here, with a beautiful Pro-

LUKE V. 36. And he spake also a Parable unto them, No Man putteth a Piece [of new Cloth into an old Garment;] if otherwise, then both the new maketh a Rent, and the Piece that was taken out of the new, [and put in to fill it up,] agreeth not with the old, [MAR. but taketh away from the old, and the Rent is made worse.] [MAT. IX. 16. MARK II. 21.]

Nor do I now think fit to lay such rigorous Commands upon them, because Prudence will require me at present to accommodate their Trials to their Strength: And farther to illustrate this, *he spake also a Parable*, or proposed another Similitude to them, saying, *No Man*, when he is mending Clothes, *will* of Choice *sew a Piece of new Cloth on an old Garment* (d), but rather chuses what is a little worn; for *otherwise* it will be found, that *both the new* being stronger than the other, *makes a Rent* in the Edges of it when it comes to be stretched; and *the Piece that was [taken] out of the new, [and] put in to mend the former Rent and fill it up, agrees not* in Colour and Form *with the old*; and being improperly put together, is of no Service to the Garment, [*but*] *takes away more from the old*, than it adds to it, and thus *the Rent is increased and made worse* than it was before.

SECT. 71.
Luke V. 36.

37 And no Man putteth new Wine into old Bottles; else the new Wine will burst the Bottles, and [MAR. the Wine] be spilled; and the Bottles shall perish: [MAT. IX. 17.—MARK II. 22.—]

And again, on the same Principles, *no wise Man puts new Wine into old Bottles*, where the Leather is weakened, and almost worn out; (compare Josh. ix. 4, 13. and Psal. cxix. 83.) for *else* if he should, the Fermentation of *the new Wine will soon burst the Bottles, and so the Wine will be spilt, as well as the Bottles destroyed*: *But new Wine must be put into new Bottles, and by this means both are preserved*. Now as in the ordinary Affairs of Life, common Sense dictates a Regard to the mutual Agreement

37

38 But new Wine must be put into new Bottles; and both are preserved. [MAT. IX.—17. MARK II.—22.]

and

38

Propriety seldom observed, to suppose some *hostile Invasion* to happen, during the Time of a *Nuptial Feast*, in which the *Bridegroom* should either be slain, or taken Prisoner; which would damp all the Joy of his Friends, and change the Scene into Lamentation, Fasting, and Mourning.

(d) *New Cloth on an old Garment.*] The proper Meaning of the Words *καινοσ αριζον*, by which *new Cloth* is here expressed in the *Original*, is *Cloth* that has not passed thro' the *Fuller's Hands*, and which is consequently much *harsher*, than what has been often washed and worn; and therefore yielding less than that, will *tear away the Edges*, to which it is sewed. This Sense *Albert* has vindicated from Exceptions, not worth mentioning here. See *Albert. Observ. pag. 71,—76.*

M m m 2

(e) As

SECT. 71.
Luke V. 38.

and Disagreement of Things, it is necessary that I should attend to them in my Conduct towards my Disciples ; and as they have not been inured to such Severities, as you, and the Pharisees, have long practised (e), I do not therefore chuse immediately to impose them, lest otherwise, to the great Detriment of the World, they should be discouraged from attending upon me.

39 And you cannot surely blame me for this, when you consider, how difficult it is to alter the Ways of Living, to which People have been accustomed, even in less Things than these now in Question. As for Instance, tho' some may be fond of new Wine, while it is yet fermenting in the Vessel, yet those that have been used to drink another Sort, will have no Liking to it ; *and no Man who has generally drunk good old [Wine,] that is well ripened and refined, will immediately chuse to drink new ; for he says, The old is better,* as being both more pleasant and more wholesome. Judge then how fit it is, that I should not oblige my Disciples to a new Course of Severities at once ; but gradually form their Characters, to what the Honour of their future Profession, and the Usefulness of their Lives, may require.

39 No Man also having drunk old Wine, straightway desireth new : for he saith, The old is better.

(e) As you, and the Pharisees, have long practised.] That the *Pharisees* used to fast twice a Week, is plain from Luke xviii. 12. and no doubt, their young People were trained up to it. But it may be objected, that *John's Disciples* were not so trained up, and consequently might have answered, that the *Disciples of Christ* might as well, and as soon as they, have been brought under such Severities and Restraints. But the Truth is, it was not Divinely required of the one, or the other. The Character and Circumstances of *John* laid them under some Engagements, not common to *Christ's Disciples*, as he intimates ; and considering where, and how, the *Baptist* appeared, it is very probable many of his stated *Disciples* were *Essenes*, who (as it is well known,) were a Kind of *Hermit-Jews*, educated in great *Abstinence*, and more frequent *Fastings*, than any of the rest of them : (See *Prideaux's Connection*, part ii. pag. 358.) And if so, nothing could have been more convincing, than this Reasoning.

IMPROVE-

I M P R O V E M E N T.

THERE is no Reason to wonder, that *Matthew* should gladly embrace so proper an Opportunity of introducing other *Publicans* and *Sinners* into the Presence of that condescending *Saviour*, from whom, tho' he once was numbered among them, he had received *Grace*, and the *Apostleship*. Let us with Pleasure observe, how ready our Blessed *Lord* was to receive them. Surely whatever the Proud *Pharisees* might take on such an Occasion, *Jesus* will appear peculiarly amiable in such a Circle as this. Compassionate Redeemer! thou didst, as the great *Physician of Souls*, willingly converse with Objects, that must have been most hateful to thy pure and holy Nature! May we each of us have a due Sense of the *Malignity of Sin*, that fatal *Disease of the Soul*; that we may with a becoming Temper apply to *Christ* for a *Cure*! May we also, like him, be willing to condescend to the *Meanest* and *Vilest*, if it may be the Means of winning them over to true Religion and Happiness! ever preferring *Mercy* to *Sacrifice*, and chusing rather to govern ourselves by the Dictates of a benevolent Heart, than by the Maxims of proud and censorious Men.

Christ would not discourage his *Disciples* by over-rigorous Institutions; and it is unfit, that his Religion should be burthened with them. He suits the Duties of his People to their Circumstances, and kindly proportions their Work to their Strength, with a tender Regard to their Weakness, till by Degrees they may be fitted for the more difficult and humbling Services. From his *Example*, and the whole Genius of his *Gospel*, let us learn to make all proper Allowances to those about us, that we may teach them, and train them up, as they are able to bear it; not crushing them under any unnecessary Load, nor denying them any Indulgence, which true Friendship will permit us to grant them; lest the good Ways of GOD should be misrepresented, disgraced, and abandoned, thro' our imprudent, tho' well-meaning Severity: A Caution, to be peculiarly observed in our Conduct towards young Persons; and not to be forgotten with Respect to those, who, like the *Disciples* here in Question, are training up for the *Ministerial Office*.

S E C T.

S E C T. LXXII.

CHRIST *having in the Way cured a Woman by the Touch of his Garment, raises the Daughter of Jairus from the Dead; and afterwards performs some other Miracles.* Mat. IX. 18,—34. Mark V. 22, to the End. Luke VIII. 41, to the End.

MAT. IX. 18.—

SECT. 72. **W**HILE he was speaking these Things to them in Matthew's House (a), behold, a very remarkable Circumstance happened, which opened the Way to one of the most signal Miracles, which Christ ever performed: For tho' it was an uncommon Thing for Persons in an elevated Rank of Life to pay any Regard to him, (see John vii. 48.) there came a certain Ruler of the Synagogue in that City of Capernaum, whose Name was *Jairus*; and when he was entered into the Room where Jesus was, and saw him, he fell down at his Feet with the profoundest Humility, and worshipped him in the Presence of all the Company, and intreated him to come immediately to his House: For he had one only Daughter, about twelve Years old, and having in that Bloom of Life been seized with a very dangerous Distemper, she then lay, to all human Appearance, at the very

Luke VIII.
42.

MAT. IX. 18.—

WHILE he spake these Things unto them, behold, there came a certain Ruler [of the Synagogue, *Jairus* by Name, and when he saw him, he fell at his Feet) and worshipped him; [LUK. and besought him, that he would come into his House:] [MARK V. 22. LUKE VIII. 41.]

LUKE VIII. 42.— For he had one only Daughter, about twelve Years of Age, and she lay a dying.

(a) *While he was speaking these Things to them in Matthew's House.*] These Words fix the Order of this Section so plainly, that it is surprising *Mr. Le Clerc* should suppose that many Events happened between the Discourses recorded just above, and this Application of *Jairus* to Christ, which *St. Matthew* so strongly connects. That Critick is driven to the hard Expedient of paraphrasing this Clause thus: "While he discoursed with them on the same Subject, which he had been upon the Beginning of the Year;" which is extremely unnatural, and so far as I can recollect, quite unexampled in any Author, antient or modern. (See *Le Clerc's Harmony*, pag. 197.) Had he thought of what is suggested above, (Sect. 71. Note (a), pag. 455, 456.) to prove *Matthew's Feast* did not immediately follow his Calling, he would have seen this Criticism as unnecessary, as it is forced.

(b) Or

A Woman meets him, as he went, that had a Flux of Blood. 463

MARK V. 23. And he besought him greatly, saying, My little Daughter lieth at the Point of Death, [or is even now dead;] I pray thee come and lay thine Hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live. [MAT. IX.—18.]

very Point of Death. And he applied himself to Jesus with the utmost Importunity, and earnestly intreated him, saying, My dear little Daughter is in the last Extremity, [or] is perhaps, as she was just expiring when I left her, even now dead (b); [I beseech thee] therefore, that thou wouldst be pleased to come, and lay thine Hands on her, that she may recover; and I doubt not, but, extream as the Case is, if thou wilt interpose in her Behalf, she shall live.

SECT. 72.
Mark V. 23.

MAT. IX. 19. And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his Disciples. [LUK. But as he went,] [much People followed him, and thronged him.] [MARK V. 24. LUKE VIII.—42.]

And Jesus arose and followed him, and [so did] his Disciples. Now as he was going to the Ruler's House, much People followed him to see the Event; and they pressed upon him in such a Manner, that he could not walk without some Difficulty.

Mat. IX. 19,

MARK V. 25. And [behold,] a certain Woman [which was diseased with] an Issue of Blood twelve Years, [MAT. IX. 20.—LUKE VIII. 43.—]

And behold, among those that were crouding about him, there was a certain poor unhappy Woman, who had been long afflicted with a grievous Disorder, having laboured under a Flux of Blood for no less than twelve Years: And she had suffered a great deal from the many Physicians she had consulted, by disagreeable Medicines, and uneasy Restraints, as well as by the great Expence she had been at in applying to them; for indeed she had wasted all her Substance, and spent all that she had upon them (c); but her Distemper

Mark V. 25.

26

26 And had suffered many Things of many Physicians, and had spent all [her Living] that she had [upon them, nei-

(b) Or is perhaps,—even now dead.] It is certain from Mark's Expression, *τοχαιωσ* *εξου*, which is literally rendered, *is in the last Extremity*, as well as from the Message relating to her Death, which both he, and Luke, afterwards mention, that the young Lady was not dead, when her Father came out; and consequently, that Matthew's Phrase, *αφη νεκρωσ*, (if not Luke's, *αφη ανωθενωσ*;) is to be taken in this Extent. She had been given over, when her Father left her, and actually was dead before he could return; and he might therefore, when he applied to Christ for his miraculous Assistance, be ready to fear she was by this Time dead, and might accordingly express himself in such a Manner as to intimate his Apprehension of it. Nor is it necessary after all, that we should understand the Phrase in Matthew as implying, she was now actually dead; for *αφη* does not only signify, what is now come to pass, but what is just at hand, (as may be seen in Phavorinus;) and so it may imply no more, than that she was considered as just dead, and that there was no Hope of her Recovery, but by a Miracle.

(c) Spent all that she had upon them.] The ingenious Dr. Freind imagines, that he discovers

SECT. 72. temper was so inveterate, that she could not
 be healed by any; and on the whole, she was

Mark V. 26.

- 27 not at all the better for their Prescriptions, but rather grew worse, and weaker than before: And having heard of Jesus, and the extraordinary Cures he had wrought, being ashamed publickly to mention her Case, she came in the Croud behind him, and touched the Fringe, which, according to the Divine Commandment, (Numb. xv. 38. and Deut. xxii. 12.) he wore upon the *Border of his Garment*. For as she knew that many had before been healed by touching him, (see Luke vi. 19. pag. 342.) she had such a firm Persuasion of the Virtue that was in him, and of his Power to cure her, that she said within herself, *If I may but touch any Part of his Clothes, I shall be recovered* (d). And immediately on her having done it, the Fountain of her Blood that issued from her, was at once stanch'd and dried up; and she felt such an unusual Vigour and Flow of Spirits, that she plainly perceived in her Body, that she was healed of that wasting and dangerous *Distemper*, with which she had been chastised for so long a Time (e).

neither could be healed of any;] and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse; [LUKE VIII.—43.]

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the Press behind, and touched [LUK. the Border of] his Garment: [MAT. IX. — 20. LUKE VIII. 44.—]

28 For she said [within herself,] If I may touch but his Clothes, I shall be whole. [MAT. IX. 21.]

29 And straightway the Fountain of her Blood was dried up; and she felt in her Body, that she was healed of that Plague. [LUKE VIII.—44.]

And

discovers something remarkable in the *Difference* of those seemingly *synonymous Terms*; which *Mark* and *Luke* make Use of upon this Occasion; and pleads, that *δαπανααι* in the former, signifies to *squander away*; whereas *επιουαδωσασα*, in the latter, signifies a more *gradual Consumption* of her Stock, by taking a little at a Time from it. (See *Dr. Freind's History of Physick*, pag. 37.) But with Submission to so great a Name, I am not satisfied of the Justice of the Remark; since, on the one Hand, *δαπανααι* is used in a better Sense, 2 *Cor.* xii. 15. (and *δαπανααι*, in *Luke* xiv. 28. is the *necessary Expence* of building, as a prudent Man would compute it;) and on the other Hand, *επιουαδωσασα* plainly signifies to *destroy*, or *consume*, however that Destruction or Consumption be accomplished. (See *Luke* ix. 54. and 2 *Theff.* ii. 8.) Nor does it seem altogether certain, that a *Tenderness* in speaking of others of the Faculty is any sure *Diagnostick* of a *Physician's Writings*.

(d) *I shall be recovered.*] It is in the *Original*, *σωθησμαι*, *I shall be saved*: And there are many other Places, in which the Word is used in the same Sense; as to be sure, it may with great Propriety be applied to a *Rescue* from any imminent Danger, or pressing Calamity, especially in an extraordinary Way. Compare *Mark* v. 23. vi. 56. *Luke* viii. 36. xvii. 19. xviii. 42. *John* xi. 12. and *Acts* iv. 9.

(e) *Of that Distemper*, with which she had been chastised, &c.] This being the plain

30 And Jesus immediately knowing in himself, that Virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the Press, and said, Who touched my Clothes? [LUKE VIII. 45.—]

And upon this, she would have retired, unobserved; but Jesus, who had secretly performed the Cure by the concurring Efficacy of his Will, immediately knowing in himself, that healing Virtue was gone out of him, thought fit on this Occasion, to shew that it had not escaped his Notice (*f*), as well as to illustrate and commend the Faith of the Patient: and therefore he immediately turned himself about in the Croud, and looking round him said, Who is it, that has just now touched my Clothes? And all the rest that were

SECT. 72.
Mark V. 30.

LUKE VIII.—45. When all denied, Peter, and [his Disciples] that were with him, said [unto him,] Master, [thou seest] the Multitude throng thee, and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? [MARK V. 31.]

near him denying it (*g*), Peter, and his Disciples that were with him, said unto him, Sir (*h*), Thou seest that the Multitude are crowding around thee, and press thee on every Side, and dost thou say, Who has touched me? One might rather ask, Who that has walked near thee, has not done it? or which Way is it possible, in such a Croud as this, to avoid it? And Jesus said, I am well

Luke VIII. 45.

46 And Jesus said, Some Body hath touched me; for I perceive that Virtue is gone out of me.

aware, that some Body here has touched me, not merely by Accident, but on some important Design; for I perceive that a healing Virtue and Efficacy is gone out of me, and am

46

plain Meaning of *μαρτυροῦμαι* here, I did not think it necessary to render it *Plague*, or *Scourge*, as I have done in some other Places.

(*f*) To shew that it had not escaped his Notice.] And perhaps also, to prevent a superstitious Regard to any Thing, which might look like a Relick of his, and from which weak People might without any Warrant have expected Benefit.

(*g*) All denying it.] The Phrase not necessarily implying that the Woman herself denied it, it would be unjust to suppose, she was base or foolish enough, immediately to deny what she had done; especially as the next Moment we find her owning it at large, with all possible Candour.

(*h*) Peter, and his Disciples — said unto him, Sir.] Our English Word, *Master*, which we indifferently apply to almost any Man to whom we speak, whether learned or unlearned, and which modern Usage in common Converse generally appropriates to Inferiors, does by no Means answer, either to the Greek *διδασκαλος*, which signifies *Teacher*, and would be most literally rendered *Doctor*, (a Word just of the same Import in its original Language;) or to *ἐπιστολος*, the Word here used, which denotes at least a presiding Authority. I have therefore here chose to render it, *Sir*; and should think *διδασκαλος* might as well be rendered *Rabbi*, as by any other Word I can recollect. It is no Wonder, that Titles of Honour and Respect, cannot be perfectly translated from one Language into another, considering the Diversity of Ranks, and of Ceremonies in different Nations.

SECT. 72. am not ignorant of the Particulars of the
 Cure it has produced.

Mark V. 32. *And upon this he looked round about again, to see her who had done this; and directed his Eye towards her with some particular*

Luke VIII. 47. *Regard. And when the Woman saw that she was not concealed from his all-penetrating View, knowing (as we before observed,) what a marvellous Work was wrought in her, she came fearing and trembling, lest he should be displeased with this surreptitious Method she had taken, and falling down before him, she candidly told him all the Truth; [and] declared to him before all the People, without any Reserve, for what Reason she had thus touched him, and how she had been immediately healed by that Touch, of the grievous Distemper she had been so many Years afflicted with, which no Force of Medicines could remove or abate.*

Mat. IX. 22. *But Jesus, having thus turned about and seen her, instead of reproving her with the Severity she expected, said to her in a most gentle and condescending Manner, Daughter, take Courage, and be comforted, for I am not offended with thee: I know the Sincerity of thy Faith, in the Regard which thou hast shewn to me, tho' mingled with some Infirmary; and it has made thee well, and fitted thee for a Cure thou couldst not otherwise have received: And therefore go Home in Peace and Cheerfulness; for I dismiss thee with my Blessing, (see Note (I) on Luke vii. 50. pag. 387.) and assure thee, thou shalt continue to be free from any Return of thy Distemper. And accordingly the Woman was perfectly well from that Hour, and the Malady never returned upon her as long as she lived.*

Mark V. 35. *In the mean Time, while he was yet speaking to the Woman, [some] Messengers came from [the House of] Jairus, the Ruler of the Synagogue,*

MARK V. 32. *And he looked round about to see her that had done this Thing.*

LUKE VIII. 47. *And when the Woman saw that she was not hid, she [knowing what was done in her,] came [fearing and] trembling, and falling down before him, she [told him all the Truth, and] declared unto him before all the People, for what Cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. [MARK V. 33.]*

MAT. IX. 22. *But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said [unto her,] Daughter, be of good Comfort; thy Faith hath made thee whole; [go in Peace, and be whole of thy Plague.] And the Woman was made whole from that Hour. [MARK V. 34. LUKE VIII. 48.]*

MARK V. 35. *While he yet spake, there came from the Ruler of the Synagogue's House,*

A Message comes to Jairus, that his Daughter is dead. 467

House, certain which said [to him,] Thy Daughter is dead: Why troublest thou the Master any further? [trouble him not.] [LUKE VIII. 49.]

36 As soon as Jesus heard the Word that was spoken, he saith unto the Ruler of the Synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe, [and the shall be made whole] [LUKE VIII. 50.]

LUKE VIII. 51. And when he came into the [Rulers] House, he suffered no Man [MAR. to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the Brother of James,] and the Father and the Mother of the Maiden. [MAT. IX. 23 — MARK V. 37, 38.—]

Synagogue, whom we mentioned above; and ^{SECT. 72.} they said unto him, *Thy Daughter*, in whose ^{Mark V. 35.} Behalf thou art applying to Jesus, is now actually dead, and consequently beyond the Reach of Prayer and of Help: *Why therefore dost thou trouble the great Master in our Israel to come any farther! Do not trouble him (i)* to come into the House of Mourning, where he can only renew their Sorrows by the Lateness of his Arrival there. *But as soon as Jesus heard the Word which was spoken by these Messengers, in which they related this melancholy News, he says to the afflicted Ruler of the Synagogue, Be not discouraged by these mournful Tidings, and notwithstanding they have brought thee such a sad Account, be not afraid, as if there were no Hope; only believe in the Divine Power and Goodness operating by me, and I will answer for it, that desperate as thy Daughter's Case may now appear to a human Eye, she shall still be recovered.*

And when he came to enter into the Ruler's ^{Luke VIII.} *House, he permitted none of the Company, to* ^{51.} *follow him in, except his three most intimate Friends, Peter, and James, and John the Brother of James, whom he was pleased to distinguish on this, as he did afterwards on other Occasions; and these with the Father and Mother of the deceased Maiden, were the only Persons, whom he permitted to be Eye-Witnesses of the Miracle he was about*
to

(i) *Why dost thou trouble the Master any farther? Do not trouble him.* As several Persons came, one might say, *Why dost thou trouble him?* as Mark has it; and another, as Luke, *Do not trouble him.* I am sensible, the Mention of both together is no Ornament to the Story; and perhaps it might have been as agreeable to our Taste and Manner, had both been expressed by saying, *Messengers came, who would have persuaded him, not to have given Jesus the Trouble of coming.* But I endeavour in this Work, to give the Reader as exact a View as possible, of the (very consistent) Varieties, with which different Evangelists record the same Facts; and it seems an End considerable enough, to excuse some little Inelegancies of Style, which the Execution of such a Design must occasion. This Remark is to be applied to many preceding, and following Passages.

SECT. 72.
 Luke VIII.
 52.

to perform. *And* as she was an only Daughter, *all* their Relations and Friends who were present, *wept* bitterly, *and lamented her*: *And* as soon as Jesus was entered, *he saw the Tumult, and the Croud of People who wept and cried out aloud (k)*; *and* there were also *the Flute-Players*, as usual on such Occasions (*l*), *making a mournful Noise* with their musical Instruments, to soothe the Grief of the afflicted Family. *And when he was come*

Mark V. 39.

in to the House, he says to them, Retire, and make Way that I may see her; [*and*] *do not weep* in this abandoned and inconsolable Manner: For *why do you lament, and make a Noise?* and where is the Need of all *this Hurry and Disturbance?* *The Damsel*, whose Departure you so bitterly bewail, as if her Loss was irretrievable, *is not finally dead, but is fallen asleep*; and if you have a little Patience, you shall see her awakened: (By which he intimated, that this Death should be but like a transient Sleep: See John xi. 11, 13.

40

SECT. 139.) *And they*, not understanding his true Meaning, were so rude, that they *derided him*, as if the Assertion had been altogether wild and ridiculous; well *knowing, that she was really and certainly dead*. *But* he, too wise to enter into a clamorous Debate with

52— And all wept and bewailed her: [MAR. and he seeth the Tumult, [and the People] that wept and wailed greatly,] [and the Minstrels making a Noise.] [MAT. IX.—23. MARK V.—38.]

MARK V. 39. And when he was come in, he saith unto them, [Give Place, and] [LUK. weep not;] Why make ye this ado, and weep? the Damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. [MAT. IX. 24.—LUKE VIII.—52.]

40 And they laughed him to Scorn, [LUK. knowing that she was dead.] But when

(k) *Cried out aloud.*] A late *Version* renders *αυαυαζοντας*, *howling*; which is indeed a Sense that the *Original* will bear, yet it is not always to be so translated: (See 1 Cor. xiii. 1. *Gr.*) And as the Word *howling* is seldom used among us, but in the Case of *Brutes*, or where great *Contempt* is designed; I rather chose to drop a little of the *Emphasis* of the *Word*, than to shock a compassionate Reader, by so harsh an Expression. To *lift up the Voice in weeping* was common in the *Eastern Countries*. See *Gen. xxi. 16. Judg. ii. 4. and 1 Sam. xxx. 4.*

(l) *The Flute-Players*, as usual on such Occasions.] It is well known, that *musical Instruments* were used by the *Jews* as well as the *Heathens*, in their *Lamentations* for the *Dead*, to soothe the Melancholy of surviving Friends by soft and solemn Notes. There were Persons, who made it their Business to perform this Office, and to sing to their Musick. (See *Jer. ix. 17. xlviii. 36. 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.* and the *Notes of Drusius*, and *Walsius*, on this Place.) Many have observed, that *Flutes* were used especially on the Death of *Children*, and larger and louder *Instruments* on the Death of the *Adult*.



Mark V. 40-43.

And he took the Damsel by the Hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted, Damsel (I say unto thee) Arise.

when he had put them all out, he taketh the Father and the Mother of the Damsel, and them that were with him, and entred in where the Damsel was lying. [MAT. IX.—24, 25.—LUKE VIII. 53, 54.—]

41 And he took [her by the Hand, and called, saying] unto her, Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted, Damsel, (I say unto thee,) arise. [LUKE VIII.—54.]

42 — And straightway [LUK. her Spirit came again, and she] arose, and walked; for she was of the Age of twelve Years. [MAT. IX.—25. LUKE VIII. 55.—]

—43 And [he] commanded, that something should be given her to eat. [LUKE VIII.—55.]

LUKE VIII. 56. And her Parents [and they all were astonished with a great Astonishment:] But he charged them [straitly,] that they should tell no Man what was done. [MARK V.—42, 43.—]

MAT. IX. 26. And the Fame

with them, desired them to withdraw; and when he had put them all out of the Way, he takes the Father and Mother of the deceased Maiden, and those three Disciples that were with him, and enters in to the Chamber, where the Damsel lay dead. And ap-

proaching the Bed on which the Corps was laid out, he took hold of her Hand, and to express his Power over Death itself, called with a loud Voice, saying to her, (as if she had indeed been only asleep,) Talitha cumi; which Syriac Expression being translated into our Language signifies, Maiden, (I say unto thee,) rise up. And he had no sooner spoke these

Words, but presently her Spirit came back again, to animate the Body which it had deserted, and she was so perfectly recovered, that she arose and walked; which she was well able to do, for she was twelve Years old.

And as the Life to which she was restored, was not to be supported by a continued Miracle, but must have Food to nourish it in a natural Way, he ordered that something should be given her to eat; which on Account of her late Illness, she had not been able to do for some Time.

And her Parents, and they [all] who were present, were exceedingly astonished, as well filled with Joy and Gratitude: But [Jesus] behaved with his usual Modesty (m), and strictly charged them, that they should tell no Man the Particulars of what was done, nor make it their Business to blaze abroad an Event, which would of itself become more publick than he would have desired. And indeed it soon did so; for such Numbers

SECT. 72.
Mark V. 40.

41

42

43

56.

Mat. IX. 26.

knew

(m) With his usual Modesty.] It is well worth the Reader's Observation, with what perfect Decorum our Lord conducted himself on this Occasion, and how intirely he appears Master of himself, and superior to any Views of human Applause. Dr. Lardner has illustrated this, with a just and lively Spirit of Criticism. See his Answer to Woolston, pag. 89.

(n) Jesus

SECT. 72. knew that she was really dead, and saw her
 Mat. IX. 26. alive again, that *the Fame of it*, as of a most
 illustrious and extraordinary Miracle, *went
 abroad into all that Country*; and being made
 the common Subject of Discourse, greatly
 increased the Reputation, he had before ac-
 quired, by so long a Series of Wonders that
 he had wrought among them.

27 *And as Jesus passed on from thence out of
 the Ruler's House, Two Blind Men*, who had
 heard of his being there, and waited for his
 coming out, *followed him*, as he went thro'
 the Street, *crying out with great Importuni-
 ty, and saying, O thou Son of David, have
 Compassion upon us* in the miserable Dark-
 ness that distresses us, and restore to us that pre-
 cious Sight which we have lost.

28 *And he took no Notice of them, as he walked on;
 but when he was come into the House to which
 he was going, the Two Blind Men by his
 Permission came unto him: And Jesus says
 to them, Do you indeed seriously believe, that
 I am able to do this? They say unto him,
 Yes, Lord, we have not the least Doubt of
 it. Then he touched their Eyes, and said,
 Since you have that Persuasion, be it unto
 you according to the Sincerity of your Faith.*

30 *And immediately they both found, that their
 Eyes were opened, and they saw strongly and
 distinctly. And Jesus gave them a strict
 Charge, that they should not report it publick-
 ly abroad, and should tell no Man (n) of the
 Cure they had received. But they were
 so transported at what he had done for them,
 that when they were gone out, they were*

31 *not*

Fame hereof went abroad
 into all that Land.

27 And when Jesus de-
 parted thence, Two Blind
 Men followed him, crying,
 and saying, Thou Son of
 David, have Mercy on us.

28 And when he was
 come into the House, the
 Blind Men came to him:
 and Jesus saith unto them,
 Believe ye that I am able to
 do this? They said unto
 him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their
 Eyes, saying, According to
 your Faith, be it unto you.

30 And their Eyes were
 opened; and Jesus straitly
 charged them, saying, See
 that no Man know it.

31 But they, when they
 were

(n) *Jesus gave them a strict Charge, that they should tell no Man.*] Our Version is more literal, but the Sense is perfectly the same. I intended the Variation only as a Specimen of several of the like Kind, which I think might be made, in a Manner which would better suit the Genius of our Language, tho' (perhaps thro' an Excess of Tendernefs,) I have not often ventured to take, even such little Liberties as these. See Mr. Pope's Note on Homer's Iliad, vol. ii. book vi. ver. 665.

And cures a Possessed Person that was Dumb.

471

were departed, spread abroad his Fame in all that Country.

32 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a Dumb Man, possessed with a Devil.

33 And when the Devil was cast out, the Dumb spake: and the Multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out the Devils through the Prince of the Devils.

not able to refrain from publishing the Miracle, but immediately began to spread his Fame over all that Country.

And when he had thus cured the Two Blind Men, just as they went out of the House where Jesus was, behold, they brought to him a Dumb Person, who had been for some Time deprived of his Speech by being possessed with a Dæmon. And when by the victorious Word

of Jesus the Dæmon was expelled, the Man who had so long been Dumb spake readily and distinctly: And the Multitudes were astonished, saying, It was never seen so, even in Israel itself (o), tho' it be a People among whom G O D has wrought such unparalleled Wonders. But the Pharisees continued their senseless and blasphemous Charge against him as a Magician; and not being able to deny Facts that were so notorious, in order to prevent the Effect which they might have upon the People, they said, He certainly casts out these inferior Dæmons, by a wicked Confederacy with Beelzebub himself, the Prince of the Dæmons (p), whose Interest gains, far more than it loses, by Dispossession wrought by such a Hand.

33

34

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WE have here a Scene of complicated Wonders, worthy to be had in everlasting Remembrance. Any single Story of this Kind might justly move our *Admiration*; but when we are reading the *Life of Christ*, such a *Constellation of Miracles* rises, that the Number renders us less sensible of the Lustre and Glory of each.

We

(o) *It was never seen so, even in Israel itself.*] This Reflection was perfectly just; for no one of the *Prophets*, that we read of in the *Old Testament*, appears to have wrought so many beneficial *Miracles* in his whole *Life*, as our Lord did in this one *Afternoon*.

(p) *He casts out Dæmons by the Prince of the Dæmons.*] Our Lord had in an unanswerable Manner confuted this base *Calumny* before: (See *Sect. 61. pag. 391, & seq.*) Yet they had the Assurance to advance it again, without any Regard to that *Confutation*. Such were the *Infidels* of those Days, as well as of these.

SECT. 72. We may observe in the Story of the *distempered Woman* a Mixture of *Weakness*, and of *Faith*. She could not reasonably think to *steal a Cure*, without the Knowledge of him, by whom it was wrought; or imagine a *Charm* in the *Garment* that *Christ* wore, which could produce so glorious an Effect, independent on his Agency and Will. Yet she acted, as if she had thought thus; and a compassionate Redeemer commended her *Faith*, and excused her *Infirmity*. Such Candor should we exercise towards those, in whom we find any thing truly valuable; *not despising the Day of small Things*, but ready to encourage and support the Weak, and to commend whatever Good we may discover in them.

We have already beheld *Christ*, frequently giving *Sight to the Blind*, and *casting out Evil Spirits*: But we have here a *second Instance* of his *Power over Death*, and behold one under its Dominion *bearing the Voice of the Son of GOD!* In how majestick, and yet in how gentle a Manner, does he address himself to this admirable Work? *Damsel, I say unto thee, arise*. And immediately she *heard, and obeyed*. Thus shall he, with equal Ease, *call forth Myriads of his Saints*, who now seem *perished in the Dust*: And it may be said with Regard to them also, in Reference to that Day, *They are not dead, but sleep*. The *Maiden*, of whom we here read, *arose* only to a *dying Life*; a Life, which needed the Support of *Food*, and was in no Respect more noble, or more secure, than that of other Mortals: But we look for a *better Resurrection*, in which all the *Infirmities of the Body* shall be left behind in the Grave; and *there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Cryings*. (Rev. xxi. 4.)

Mark v: 39. In Expectation of this, let us restrain *immoderate Sorrow*, when our pious Friends are taken away: Let us not make *too much ado* on the Occasion, nor allow ourselves to be thrown into a *Tumult of Passion*, even when *our Children* are stretched on the *Bed of Death*: But *believing in Christ*, and governing ourselves by his Precepts and Maxims, let us in humble *Resignation*, and submissive, tho' mournful *Silence*, wait the Issues of his Providence and Grace; since he knows how, as in *this Instance*, to over-rule the Calamities of our Families to the Good of our Souls, and even to strengthen our *Faith* by those Exercises, which might seem most likely to overthrow it.

Ver. 36.

Ver. 52.

Ver. 55.

Ver. 54.

Luke viii. 51,
& seq.

Ver. 28.

Mark V. 25,
& seq.

SECT. 72.

S E C T. LXXIII.

CHRIST renews his Visit to Nazareth, where he is again rejected by the Inhabitants; and thence takes a Circuit thro' the neighbouring Country. Mat. XIII. 54, to the End. IX. 35, to the End. Mark. VI. 1,—6.

MARK VI. I.

AND he went out from thence, and came into his own Country, and his Disciples follow him. [MAT. XIII. 54.—]

2 And when the Sabbath-Day was come, he began to teach in the Synagogue: and many hearing him, were astonished, saying, From whence hath this Man [this Wisdom, and these mighty Works?] and what Wisdom is this, which is given unto him,

MARK VI. I.

AND Jesus, when he went out from thence (a), and was departed from Capernaum, where he had raised the Daughter of Jairus, and performed the other Miracles which have just been mentioned, came again into his own Country and Town of Nazareth, and there renewed the gracious Proclamations, which they had several Months before so ungratefully rejected; and his Disciples, as usual, followed him thither.

2 And when the Sabbath was come, he began to teach in the Synagogue, as he had formerly done, tho' they had then attempted in a tumultuous Manner to destroy him on the same Occasion: (Sect. 32. pag. 207.) And many of his Townsmen hearing him, were struck with Amazement, and said, as several had done before (b), From whence hath this Man, whose Birth and Education we know, this Wisdom which he manifests in these excellent Discourses, and the Power of performing these mighty Works? and what supernatural

SECT. 73.
Mark VI. I.

(a) And he went out from thence.] These Words of Mark do plainly shew, that this Visit to Nazareth is to be placed here: I say, to Nazareth, that being called his own Country, by Way of Distinction from the rest of Galilee, and particularly from Capernaum, whence he now went out. See Luke iv. 23. pag. 205.

(b) And said, as several had done before.] Luke plainly asserts, that Visit to Nazareth which he mentions, to have been before many Occurrences, which Mark tells us happened before this. It is evident therefore, they are different Visits; nor is there any Difficulty in supposing, that some now present, who perhaps had not heard him before, might repeat so natural a Reflection as this. Compare Luke iv. 22. pag. 205.

SECT. 73. *pernatural Wisdom is this, which is given to him, that even such amazing Miracles as these,*

Mark VI. 3. *are done by his Hands? Is not this Jesus, the Man who but a while ago wrought among us as a Carpenter (c), and was the Son of Joseph the Carpenter? And is not his Mother, who is called Mary, still living? and [are not] our Neighbours, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas, whom we all know and daily converse with, his Brethren*

Mat. XIII. 56. *or near Kinsmen (d)? And are not all his Sisters, or Kinwomen, here at Nazareth with us? From whence then hath this Man all these extraordinary Things (e), which furnish him for this illustrious Character which he assumes superior to that of the greatest Teachers and Princes of our Nation? And they were offended in him, and stumbled at the Poverty of his Education and Family; so that they paid very little Regard to what he preached.*

Mark VI. 4. *But Jesus said unto them, This is indeed a most unreasonable Treatment, that I meet with from you; but it is obvious even to a Proverb, that a Prophet is no where less esteemed, than in his own Country, and among his nearest Relations, even in his own Family (f); who*

him, that even such mighty Works are wrought by his Hands? [MAT. XIII. --54.]
3—Is not this the Carpenter? [the Carpenter's Son? Is not his Mother called Mary? and his Brethren, James and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?] [MAT. XIII. 55.]

MAT. XIII. 56. And his Sisters, are they not all [here] with us? Whence then hath this Man all these Things? [MARK VI. 3.—]

57—And they were offended in him. [MARK VI. —3.]

MARK VI. 4. But Jesus said unto them, A Prophet is not without Honour, but in his own Country, and among his own Kin, and in his own House. [MAT. XIII. —57.]

(c) Wrought among us as a Carpenter.] The Jews tell us, *he made Rakes and Yokes.* Their Canons required, that all Parents should teach their Children some Trade; and probably the Poverty of the Family engaged Christ, while he was at Home with his Parents, to work at his. See Grotius on Mat. xiii. 55.

(d) His Brethren or near Kinsmen.] Whether they were the Children of Joseph by a former Marriage, or the Children of some Brother or Sister of Joseph or Mary, is not material. Every one knows, that it was common with the Jews, to use the Name of Brethren in a larger Sense, and to apply it to Cousins and near Kinsmen, as well as to those that were Brethren in the proper Sense of the Word.

(e) Whence hath this Man all these extraordinary Things?] This, like many other Things, which have since been objected against the Gospel of Christ, is, as much the Language of Stupidity, as of Infidelity; for the Meanness of Christ's Education was a Demonstration, that his Teaching in so excellent a Manner, must be the Effect of some extraordinary Divine Influence on his Mind.

(f) A Prophet is no where less esteemed, &c.] This is plainly the Sense of the Words, (tho' our Translation is more literal;) for a Prophet may be, and often is affronted, at a Distance from Home; as Christ himself found by frequent Experience. (Compare

John

who form their Judgment of him, by the mean Appearance which they remember he made formerly in private Life, and are regardless therefore of the Excellence of his Doctrine, and of the plainest Evidences of his Divine Authority and Mission.

5 And he could there do no mighty Work, save that he laid his Hands upon a few sick Folk, and healed them; [but did not many mighty Works, because of their Unbelief.] [MAT. XIII. 58.]

And this was verified in their Conduct to him; for notwithstanding all that he had done in other Places, they were so strongly prejudiced against him by the Meanness of his outward Circumstances, that they were openly regardless of the Favour of his Presence, and would not come to him for Help; for which Reason *he could not there* have any Opportunity to exercise his Power, or to do any Miracle of Note (g), excepting only that he laid his Hands upon a few sick People, and cured them; [but] he did not perform many mighty Works among them, on Account of their Unbelief. And he wondered at the

6 — And he marvelled because of their Unbelief.

Continuance of their Infidelity, especially considering the many additional Evidences they had received, of his Divine Power, in his late signal Operations.

MAT. IX. 35. And Jesus went [round] about all the Cities and Villages, teaching

And upon this Jesus left them (h), and departing from Nazareth, went round about to all the neighbouring Cities and Villages, teaching in

John iv. 44. pag. 198. and Luke iv. 24. pag. 206.)—I have rendered the last Words, *was in his own Family*; as was often has such a Signification, and here seems most forcible, if it be so interpreted.

(g) He could not there do any Miracle.] We are not to understand these Words so strictly, as if the Power of Christ was here disarmed; but only, that as they brought but few sick People to him for a Cure, he did not judge it convenient to obtrude his Miracles upon them, and so could not honourably and properly perform them. On the same Principle it is, that Faith in some Cases, tho' not in all, is made the Condition of receiving a Cure: (Compare Mark ix. 23. Mat. ix. 28. and Acts xiv. 9.) And Christ saw it proper to make it so here; as he well might, considering what they must undoubtedly have heard of him from other Places, and what they had confessed themselves but just before, of mighty Works being wrought by his Hands; which shews indeed, that their Unbelief did not so much consist in a Doubt of his miraculous Power, as of his Divine Mission, which to any unprejudiced Person's Mind that Power so abundantly proved. In this View therefore it is hard to say, how he could with Honour and Decency, have lavished away his Favours, on so unworthy a People.

(h) Jesus left them.] So far as we can learn from the Gospel-History, he never after this returned any more to Nazareth.

SECT. 73. *in their Synagogues, and preaching the good News of the Kingdom which GOD was about to erect; and where-ever he came, he gave abundant Testimonials of the Truth of his Doctrine, by healing every Disease, and every Ma-*

Mat. IX. 35.

- 36 *lady, among the People. And beholding the Multitudes which flocked around him, he was moved with tender Compassion for them, because they were faint with the Fatigue of frequent Journeyings, and exposed to continual Danger (i), as Sheep that had no Shepherd, to feed them with spiritual Food, or to watch for the Safety and Edification of their Souls. Then as he intended immediately after this to send out his Twelve Apostles, he says to them and his other Disciples, to quicken their Devotion and Zeal, The Harvest of Souls to be gathered in is indeed great, but the faithful*
- 37 *Labourers who assist in it are few: And therefore let me urge you to make your importunate Supplications to the great Lord and Master of the Harvest, that he would, by the secret, but powerful Energy of his Spirit on Mens Hearts, conquer their natural Disinclination to this excellent Work, and so thrust forth a sufficient Number of active and indefatigable Labourers into his Harvest (k), by whom it may successfully be carried on, to his own greater Glory, and the Edification and Salvation of Souls.*

ing in their Synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every Sickness, and every Disease among the People. [MARK VI.—6.]

36 But when he saw the Multitudes, he was moved with Compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as Sheep having no Shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his Disciples, The Harvest truly is plenteous, but the Labourers are few :

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that he will send forth Labourers into his Harvest.

(i) *Faint and exposed*] Tho' the learned *Elfner* has taken a great deal of Pains to prove, in his *Note* on this Text, (*Observ. vol. i. pag. 49, 50.*) that *σπαρμα* signifies *scattered*, or *wandering*; yet I still chuse to render it, *they were faint*; which Sense of the Word is sufficiently vindicated by *Wolfius*, (*in loc.*) and *Albert*, (*Observ. pag. 76, 77.*) and is established by the Use of it in other Places of the *New Testament*. Compare *Mat. xv. 32. Mark viii. 3. Gal. vi. 9. and Heb. xii. 3, 5.*—But I think *Elfner* has advanced enough, to justify the rendering of *σπαρμα*, *exposed* to every invading Danger, as *Sheep are*, when *thrown up* or *abandoned* by their *Shepherd*.

(k) *Thrust forth Labourers into his Harvest.*] The Word *σπείρειν* so plainly imports this, that I am sorry I retained our less emphatical *Translation* in the *First Edition*. Whoever considers the immense Difficulties and Oppositions, with which every *Minister* of *Christ's Kingdom* was sure to encounter in those early Days of it, will see the Necessity of some unusual *Energy* and *Impulse* on the *Mind* to lead any to undertake it.

IMPROVE-

I M P R O V E M E N T.

SINCE the Blessed *Jesus* vouchsafed to renew his *Visit* to Nazareth, where they had attempted to murder him on his first Preaching among them, let us not be weary of well-doing, nor refuse to renew our Attempts on the most obstinate Sinners, where the Interests of their immortal Souls are concerned. SECT. 73.
Mark vi. 1.

But tho' they were *astonished* at his *Wisdom*, and could not but allow the mighty Works that he had wrought, yet these ungrateful Creatures went on to reject him, and in so doing were condemned out of their own Mouth: Nor can we be at any Loss for Instances of those, who in later Ages have fallen under the like Condemnation. Ver. 2.

He is spoken of as *the Carpenter*; which intimates that he once wrought at that mean Employment. What amazing Condescension was this, in the Son of GOD, and the Heir of all Things, by whom also the Worlds were made! (*Heb. i. 2.*) Yet surely while the Hands of Christ were employed in these daily Labours, his Soul was rising in holy Contemplations, and devout Affections. So may we intermingle pious Meditations, with our secular Cares, and have our Conversation in Heaven, while our Dwelling is on Earth! Ver. 3.

How much did these Nazarenes lose, by their obstinate Prejudices against *Jesus*! How many diseased Bodies might have been cured, how many lost Souls might have been recovered and saved, had they given him a better Reception! May Divine Grace deliver us from that Unbelief, which does as it were disarm Christ himself, and render him a Saviour of Death, rather than of Life, to our Souls! Ver. 5.

Still he continued his gracious Labours, and when rejected in one City, went and preached in another; still surrounded with a Croud of Admirers, whom he viewed with tender Regard. Let his Ministers learn of him, tenderly to pity those who are faint and exposed to Danger, and are as Sheep having no Shepherd. The extream Necessities of his Churches in many Places are but too apparent: Let us earnestly pray, that GOD would behold them with Compassion; that he would graciously provide for their Instruction, and would thrust forth such Labourers among them, as may be diligent and faithful in their Work, and prove the happy Instruments of gathering in Fruit to Everlasting Life. (*John iv. 36.*) Mat. ix. 35.
Ver. 36.
Ver. 37.
Ver. 38.

S E C T.

S E C T. LXXIV.

Our LORD sends forth his Apostles with a Commission, and gives them Instructions to preach the Gospel. Mat. X. 1,—15. Mark VI. 7,—11. Luke IX. 1,—5.

MAT. X. 1.

SECT. 74.

Mat. X. 1.

AND Jesus having called his Twelve Disciples together (a), whom (it has been observed before, Luke vi. 13. pag. 338.) he had chosen some Time since to be his constant Followers and Attendants, and who were named Apostles from their Mission; he endowed them with the Gift of working Miracles, and gave them Power and Authority over all Kinds of Demons, [or] unclean Spirits, to cast them out of those unhappy Persons whom they had possessed, and to cure every Distemper, and every Malady, how malignant and dangerous soever.

- 2 Now the Names of the Twelve Apostles are these: The first of them, who was one of the most early Followers of Christ, and the first that was called to a stated Attendance upon him, (pag. 213.) and whose remarkable Zeal and Piety rendered him a Kind of Leader among them, was *Simon, who is also called Peter* (b), as Christ had honoured him with that Sirname; (see John i. 42. pag. 136.) and *Andrew his Brother*, who was called

MAT. X. 1.

AND when he had called [LUK. together] unto him his twelve Disciples, he gave them Power [LUK. and Authority over all Devils or] unclean Spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of Sickness, and all manner of Disease. [MARK VI. 7.—LUKE IX. 1.]

- 2 Now the Names of the twelve Apostles are these: The first, *Simon, who is called Peter*, and *Andrew his Brother*; *James the Son* of

(a) *Having called his Twelve Disciples together.*] There can be no room to doubt, that this is the proper Place of the Mission of the Apostles, considering its Connection with the preceding Stories, in all the Evangelists that mention it.

(b) *The first, Simon, who is called Peter.*] The Reasons assigned in the Paraphrase are so apparently sufficient, to account for Peter's being named first, that it is strange, any should have attempted to prove from this Text the Authority of Peter over his Brethren, when we never find it declared by Christ, or claimed by Peter, or owned by any of the rest of the Apostles; but rather find so many Scriptures, which appear to look a contrary Way. See Mat. xxiii. 8,—12. Acts xv. 13, & seq. 2 Cor. xii. 11. and Gal. ii. 11.

(c) *Simon*

of Zebedee, and John his Brother;

3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the Publican; James the Son of Alphaeus, and Lebbeus, whose Sirname was Thaddeus;

4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These Twelve Jesus sent forth [by Two and Two,] and commanded them [Luk. to preach the Kingdom of GOD, and to heal the Sick,] saying,

called the same Day with him: James [the Son] of Zebedee the Fisherman, and John his Brother, that beloved Disciple, who were SECT. 74.
Mat. X. 2.

also called at the same Time with the Two former, as they were fishing at the Sea of Galilee: (pag. 214.) Philip of Bethsaida, and Bartholomew: Thomas called Didymus, and Matthew, who had been the Publican: James [the Son] of Alphaeus, and Lebbeus, whose Sirname was Thaddeus, and who was also called Judas or Jude, the Brother of James: Simon the Canaanite, a Native of Cana (c); and Judas Iscariot, or a Man of Carioth, that wicked and miserable Creature, who afterwards even betrayed him, and then laid violent Hands on himself.

These Twelve Disciples Jesus sent forth by Two and Two in Pairs (d), that they might be agreeable Companions and Assistants to each other in their Work; and he commanded them to go into those Places, which he himself purposed shortly to visit (e), and to preach there the Gospel of the Kingdom of GOD, or to proclaim the joyful Tidings of the approaching Kingdom of the Messiah, and in Confirmation of it to heal the Sick, and

(c) Simon the Canaanite, a Native of Cana.] The Reader may see an Illustration of this Title, and that of Lebbeus, Sect. 52. pag. 340. Notes (f) and (g).

(d) By Two and Two.] It is obvious, this would conduce to the confirming of their Testimony, as in the Mouth of Two Witnesses every Word is established; (Mat. xviii. 16.) as well as make their Mission much more comfortable, than if each had been sent alone. Mr. Fleming has taken Pains to shew, that there was great Wisdom in joining them together in such Pairs, as are here intimated, on Account of the Resemblance, or Contrast, of their Characters. The Discourse is very ingenious; but the Memoirs of some of the Apostles are so short, that much of it is uncertain Conjecture, rather than convincing Argument. See Fleming's Christol. vol. ii. pag. 167, & seq.

(e) Which he himself purposed shortly to visit.] Our Lord was now entering at least on the third Year of his Ministry, and therefore purposed to take a larger Tour than he had formerly done; concluding that the Fame of so many Miracles would make Way for his being heard with greater Regard than before. (Compare Sect. 31. pag. 197. and Sect. 36. pag. 229.) The Time they had spent with him in an immediate Attendance on his Ministry, since their first Call to the Work, would, no doubt, conduce much to their Fitness for it; and the Notice taken of them by Multitudes who had often seen them near Jesus, would promote their Acceptance in it. See Mark iii. 13, 14. pag. 339.

(f) Pre-

They are directed to go only to the House of Israel,

SECT. 74. and exert the other miraculous Powers which he had given them. And upon this

Mat. X. 5.

Occasion he made an excellent Discourse to them, *saying*, In this Circuit which I now send you, *do not go into the Way of the Gentiles*, for the glad Tidings of the Gospel are not yet sent to them; *nor enter into [any] City of the Samaritans*, if you should be obliged to pass through their Country; tho' I once did it, and preached among them with considerable Success. (See John

6 iv. 40, 41. Sect. 30.) *But my Message is chiefly to be delivered to the Jews*; (compare Mat. xv. 24. and Rom. xv. 8.) and therefore *go ye rather to them, the poor lost Sheep of the House of Israel*, who are generally wandering in the Paths of Error and Sin; yet they shall receive this farther Token of my Regard, that the first Notices of my Kingdom shall be sent to them. *And*

7 *as ye go from one Place to another, wherever you come proclaim this good News, saying with that Ardor and Zeal which becomes my Heralds (f), The long expected Kingdom of Heaven is approaching*; prepare yourselves therefore to receive the Blessings of it. And that a Declaration of so great

8 Importance may not want suitable Testimonials, and the Meanness of your personal Appearance may not render the Truth of it suspected, (as any proper Occasion offers,) *heal the Sick, cleanse the Lepers, yea raise the Dead (g), and cast out Dæmons*: For such a Power

saying, Go not into the Way of the Gentiles, and into any City of the Samaritans enter ye not: [MARK VI.—7. LUKE IX. 2.]

6 But go rather to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the Sick, cleanse the Lepers, raise the Dead, cast

(f) *Proclaim*—with that Ardor and Zeal which becomes my Heralds.] This is the proper Import of the Word *κηρυσσθη*, which is derived from *κηρυξ*, a Herald. Probably they were to make this Proclamation with a loud Voice, as they passed through the Streets of the Towns they went to; as *Jonah* delivered his Message to *Nineveh*. See *Jon.* iii. 4.

(g) *Raise the Dead*.] Tho' many ancient Copies have not this Clause, and tho' we do not find that the Apostles exerted any such Power whilst *Christ* lived; yet since the oldest Versions have it, and it is certainly much easier to drop, than to insert a Clause by Accident, I chuse with *Dr. Whitby*, to retain it, tho' there are great Authorities

cast out Devils; freely ye have received, freely give.

a Power I have given to you, and see that you exert it in a Manner most honourable to yourselves and me; [and as] you have received it freely, freely give unto others the Assistance which it enables you to impart, and scorn the Thought of making any Gain of those, for whom these Works of Mercy and Power are performed.

SECT. 74.
 Mat. X. 8.

MARK VI. 8. And he commanded them, that they should take nothing for their Journey, save a Staff only: [LUK. and he said unto them,] [Provide] no Bread, no Money, [neither Gold, nor Silver, nor Bras in your Purses;] [MAT. X. 9. LUKE IX. 3.—]

And he commanded them, that they should take nothing for [their] Journey, except only a Staff which they had in their Hands (b): And to prevent any Solicitude as to the Means of their Support, he said unto them, Disburthen yourselves of all anxious Cares on this Occasion, and provide neither Bread, or any other Kind of Food, for your Subsistence, nor Money to purchase Provisions, neither Gold, nor Silver, nor Bras Coin in your Purses (i): Nor even take so much as a Scrip, to carry any manner of Provisions for [your] Journey; nor think it needful you should have two Coats apiece, or any Change of Raiment; nor what might seem more necessary still, even another Pair of Shoes, or any stronger than ordinary, but be shod, just as you are, with Sandals (k); nor

Mark VI. 8.
 Mat. X. 10.

MAT. X. 10. Nor Scrip for your Journey, neither two Coats [LUK. apiece,] neither Shoes, [but be shod with Sandals,]

yet

on the other Side. It is to me very evident, that some Passages in this Discourse refer to Events, which did not immediately take Place. See Mat. x. 18, 21, 23. in the next Section.

(b) Except only a Staff which they had in their Hands.] There is no Difficulty thus to reconcile this Clause, with what is said in Matthew, (ver. 10.) that they should not provide a Staff; (as it is there expressed in the Original, *μὴ εἰσάγουσιν*;) for many Copies read it in the Plural Number, *μὴ εἰσάγουσιν*, nor yet Staves; which Reading is confirmed by Luke, (ver. 3.) where it is so expressed. Nor is there any Need, we should suppose with Heinsius, that *εἰς* is put for *ἐν* here in Mark, as if they were commanded to take nothing with them not even so much as a Staff. For all that Christ intended was, that they should so entirely depend upon the Providence of God, that they should set out with nothing but the Staff in their Hands; and that however common it might be for those who were to travel a long Way, to be provided with Two Staves, as well as with Two Coats, they need not be solicitous to have another ready, in case one should fail.

(i) In your Purses.] The original Word *ζωναι* expresses the Custom they had, of carrying Money in a kind of Fob-Pocket, or Purse, which was made in the Duplication of their Girdles. See Dr. Shaw's Travels, pag. 292.

(k) Nor Shoes, but be shod with Sandals.] I apprehend the Word *παλιμαρια*, Shoes, must here signify a Kind of short Boots, which they used in long Journies, that covered the whole Foot and Small of the Leg; whereas their Sandals were Pieces of strong Leather,

SECT. 74. *yet take any Staves, but only those that you are used to walk with. For the Labourer is* Mat. X. 10. *surely worthy of his Food; and as you may freely accept the necessary Supplies of Life, when offered by those to whom you preach, so you may chearfully trust the Providence of GOD, to take Care of you, while engaged in so good a Cause; and he would rather support you by a Miracle, than suffer you to want what shall be necessary for your Sustainance (1).*

11 *And he farther said unto them, Go forth therefore with a holy Alacrity, and into whatsoever City or Village you enter, make it your first Business to enquire who in it is of a worthy Character for Hospitality and Piety; for I would not have you endanger your own Reputation, by taking up your Lodging in any disreputable Family: And whatever House you thus enter into, continue there till you leave the Place; that you may not seem to have too great a Regard to the little Circumstances of domestic Accommodation, which it is beneath your Character, as my Ministers, to be very solicitous about.*

21 *And as an early Intimation of the friendly Intention of your Visit, when you first enter into any Family, salute it in a courteous and religious Manner; saying, according to the usual Custom of Friends, when they enter the Dwellings of each other, "Peace be*

13 *"upon this House" (m). And if the Family,*

Sandals,] nor yet Staves: for the Workman is worthy of his Meat. [MARK VI. 9. LUKE IX.—3.]

11 And [he said unto them,] Into whatsoever City or Town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and [LUK. whatsoever House ye enter into,] there abide, [till ye depart from that Place.] [MARK VI. 10. LUKE IX. 4.]

12 And when ye come into an House, salute it:

13 And if the House be worthy,

Leather, or Wood, tied under the Sole of the Foot by Strings, and something resembling modern Clogs. See Calmet's Dictionary, vol. ii. pag. 615. on the Word Sandals; and Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. on Mat x. 10.

(1) He would rather support you by a Miracle, &c.] Our Lord intended this Mission in Part, as an Initiation into their Apostolic Work; and it was, no doubt, an Encouragement to them during all the Remainder of Life, to recollect the singular Care which Providence now took of them, tho' they had abandoned their Families, and with them the Means of Subsistence, and went out wholly unfurnished for such an Expedition. In this View Christ leads them to recollect it, Luke xxii. 35. See: 173.

(m) Peace be upon this House.] This Custom of saluting Friends after this Manner

is

worthy, let your Peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your Peace return to you.

family be worthy the Divine Regard, your good Wishes for its Peace and Prosperity shall come upon it (n), and I will make the Blessing that you pronounce effectual: But if it be not worthy, even then your kind Wishes for its Peace and Happiness shall not be lost, but shall return unto you in Blessings on your own Heads, as being the genuine Workings of that pious and benevolent Temper, which GOD always approves and rewards.

SECT. 74.
Mat. X. 13.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your Words; when ye depart out of that House, or City, shake off the [Luk. very] Dust of your Feet, [for a Testimony against them.] [MARK VI. 11.—LUKE IX. 5.]

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor in an obedient Manner, hearken to your Words, as for such unhappy Persons, when you come out of that House or City, in which they dwell, shake off the very Dust of your Feet, as a Testimony against them (o); or as a Token that you look upon them as devoted by GOD to Destruction, and therefore desire to separate yourselves entirely from them, that you may not be Partakers of their Plagues. (Compare Rev. xviii. 4. and Acts xviii. 6.)

14

15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrhah, in the Day of Judgment, than for that City. [MARK VI.—II.]

And indeed you have Reason to do it; for verily I say unto you, that whatever Profession they may make of their Regard to the true GOD, and however they may continue to boast of their National Privileges, it shall be more tolerable not only for the Generality of Gentile Sinners, in the Day of final Judgment, but even for the Natives of the Land of

15

P p p 2 Sodom

is still retained among the Turks, and other Eastern Nations; and I thought it not improper to express it, for the Illustration of what follows.

(n) *Your Peace shall come upon it.*] This is one of those many Passages, in which (as the Grammarians speak,) the Imperative is put for the Future; that is, *Let it come, for It shall come.* (So 1 Cor. xvi. 22.) And perhaps many seeming Imprecations in the Old Testament may most easily be accounted for, by such an Explication, as Prophetick Predictions of what should happen to the Enemies of GOD and his People.

(o) *Shake off the very Dust of your Feet, &c.*] The Jews thought there was something of so peculiar an Holiness in the Land of Israel, that when they came Home from any Heathen Country, they stopped at its Borders, and wiped the Dust of it from their Shoes, that the sacred Inheritance might not be polluted with it; nor would they permit Herbs to be brought to them from their Neighbours, lest they should bring any of the Dust of their Land upon them. So that the Action enjoined to the Apostles here was a lively Intimation, that when the Jews had rejected the Gospel, they were no longer to be regarded as the People of GOD, but were on a Level with Heathens and Idolaters. See Mr. Fleming's *Christol.* vol. ii. pag. 160.

SECT. 74. *Sodom and Gomorrah*, those Monsters of unnatural Wickedness, who were consumed with Fire and Brimstone from Heaven, than for the Inhabitants of *that* wretched City: For the People of Sodom and Gomorrah never sinned against such extraordinary Light, and such singular Favours, as they.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. x. 1. **W**HAT abundant Reason is there for humble Thankfulness, that the *Embassadors of Christ* were thus sent forth to preach the Gospel, and that at length their Number was increased, and their Commission enlarged; so that instead of their being thus confined to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel, their instructive Line is gone out thro' all the Earth, and their Words have resounded even to the End of the World. (Psal. xix. 4.) May the Purport of their Message be seriously attended to! since it will so certainly be a Savour of Life or of Death, of eternal Salvation, or aggravated Condemnation and Ruin.

Ver. 5, 6. Let us tremble to think, that it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment, than for those by whom the Gospel is rejected; and let us earnestly pray, that Divine Grace may enable us to receive it in the Love of it, and to obey the Truth, that we may be saved. (2. Thess. ii. 10.)

Ver. 15. They who have the Honour in this Respect to succeed the Apostles, as Ministers of this Gospel, may learn most useful Instructions from this Discourse of our Divine Master. Let them speak, and act, as the Messengers of Peace, and the Friends of Mankind, who cordially wish well to all around them; and gratefully acknowledge the Kindness, which as faithful Labourers they have justly deserved. Let them shew a true Greatness of Mind, in an apparent Superiority to Temporal Interests, and present Gratifications; easy in whatever Accommodations they find, where Providence leads them; and forgetting themselves, to remember their Master, and the Souls he has committed to their Care.

Ver. 12, 13. Let them faithfully warn all around them, of the Importance of their eternal Concerns, and of the unutterable Danger of receiving the Grace of GOD in vain, that whether Men will bear or forbear, they may be clean from their Blood. And while we preserve such a Temper and Conduct, we may cheerfully hope, that GOD will be with us in the Way that we go, and how precarious soever our Circumstances

Ver. 9, &c.

CHRIST warns them of the Dangers they would be exposed to. 485

stances may seem, will give us Food to eat, and Raiment to put on. SECT. 74.
May we all have this Token for Good, that GOD will take Care of our Interests; even the Consciousness of our being faithfully engaged to promote his Glory, and our joyful Readiness to spend and be spent for the Service of Souls! (2 Cor. xii. 15.)

S E C T. LXXV.

Our LORD faithfully warns his Apostles of the Danger, and Opposition, they might expect to encounter in his Service. Mat. X. 16,—28.

MAT. X. 16.

BEHOLD, I send you forth as Sheep in the Midst of Wolves; be ye therefore wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves.

MAT. X. 16.

WHEN our Lord had thus instructed his Apostles as to their Behaviour and Office in general, he went on faithfully to lay before them the Difficulties and Trials they were to expect in the Execution of it; and added, *Behold, I send you out as so many innocent and defenceless Sheep, in the Midst of a whole Multitude of fierce and ravenous Wolves (a), who will not fail to watch every Opportunity to attack, and even devour you: Be ye therefore continually on your Guard against them, and labour to approve yourselves prudent as Serpents, in avoiding unnecessary Dangers (b); but far from imitating the Malignity and revengeful Nature of that Animal, maintain at all Times a holy Simplicity of Soul, and be harmless and inoffensive as Doves, those gentle Creatures, who* are

(a) *As Sheep in the Midst of Wolves.*] So frankly did our Lord warn his Apostles of the Hardships and Dangers, with which they should be surrounded. Nothing could be more fair; nothing more generous.

(b) *Prudent as Serpents.*] Pliny has given us some very remarkable Stories of the Sagacity of Serpents, some of which, I confess, have the Air of Fables: (See Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vii. cap. 23, 27.) But it is certain, there is a peculiar Vivacity in their Eyes; so that to be as sharp-sighted as a Serpent, was a Proverb, both among the Greeks, and Romans. See Erasm. Adag. pag. 580.

(c) *Scourge.*

SECT. 75. are innocent and loving to a Proverb.

But be upon your Guard against the Men of the World, with whom you converse, that you do not by any Inadvertency give them Advantage against you ; for they will seek Occasions of Mischief, and betray you to the Councils, and deliver you up to the Sanhedrim, and other inferior Courts of Judicature, and will also scourge you in their Synagogues (c).

18 *And in some Cases the Prosecution shall be carried yet farther ; for you shall be brought before Governors and Kings on my Account (d), for a Witness to them, and to the Heathen, as this will give you an Opportunity of testifying my Gospel more solemnly both to Jews and Gentiles.*

19 *But when they shall accuse you with the utmost Virulence, and deliver you up to appear before such high Personages, be not anxiously solicitous about your Defence there, how you shall answer for yourselves, or what you shall speak : But cheerfully throw yourselves upon the Divine Assistance, which shall be abundantly sufficient for you ; for it shall be given you in that very Hour what you shall speak ; proper Thoughts and Words shall be suggested to you, and your Minds shall be maintained in that Composure and Dignity, which is necessary for the Honour of the Cause you assert (e).* For indeed,

20 when

17 But beware of Men ; for they will deliver you up to the Councils, and they will scourge you in their Synagogues :

18 And ye shall be brought before Governors and Kings for my Sake, for a Testimony against them and the Gentiles.

19 But when they deliver you up, take no Thought how or what ye shall speak ; for it shall be given you in that same Hour what ye shall speak.

20 For it is not ye that speak,

(c) *Scourge you in their Synagogues.*] Compare *Mat.* xxiii. 34. and *Acts* xxii. 19. This is a Sort of Discipline, which has long since been used in their *Synagogues*, where they keep their *Courts* ; and which the wretched *Acofta* tells us, he himself underwent. See *Acoft. de Vit. Hum. ad fin. Limborch. Coll. pag. 349. Wif. Vit. Pauli, Sect. 1. §. 19,—21. and Vitring. de Synagog. Vet. lib. iii. par. 1. cap. 11.*

(d) *Before Governors and Kings, &c.*] Accordingly the *Apostles* were several of them obliged to appear before *Princes*, and were severely prosecuted by their malicious *Enemies* before *Herod, Agrippa, Felix, Festus, Nero, Domitian, &c.* as we learn from *Sacred or Prophane History.*

(e) *For the Honour of the Cause you assert.*] Persons of so low an Education, as the *Apostles* generally were, might have been much terrified at the Thought of appearing before such great Personages ; and might have feared, left in the Hurry of their Spirits they should have been betrayed into any *Impropriety* of Language or Behaviour, by

Speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

when you appear on these Occasions, and are called to answer for yourselves, *it is not [so much] you that speak, as the Spirit of your Father, that speaketh in you,* in Defence of that Gospel, which it is his peculiar Office to promote in the World.

SECT. 75.
Mat. X. 20.

21 And the Brother shall deliver up the Brother to Death, and the Father the Child; and the Children shall rise up against their Parents, and cause them to be put to Death.

Nevertheless, all the Wisdom and Justice of your Apologies, though Divinely inspired, will not disarm the Malice of your unreasonable Enemies, which shall prevail to such a Degree, as even to triumph over natural Affection, and break asunder the strictest Bonds of social Life: For one Brother shall betray another, not only to some slighter Punishment, but even to a violent and tormenting Death; and the Father shall thus become the Murderer, instead of the Guardian and Protector of the Son; and Children, on the other Hand, forgetting all the Obligations of filial Duty and Affection, shall rise up as Witnesses against their own Parents, and cause them to be put to Death. And

22 And ye shall be hated of all Men for my Name's sake:

you, my Apostles, notwithstanding all the Humanity of your Character, and the benevolent Design of your Office, shall be the Objects of such general Averfion, Censure, and Persecution, that you shall in a manner be hated of all Men for the Sake of my Name (f); when your calling yourselves by it shall appear, to your Enemies themselves, the only Crime chargeable upon you: But
be

by which the Cause of the Gospel might have suffered: So that nothing could have been more suitable, than the Promise, which our Lord here makes them, which was sufficient to prevent a thousand anxious Apprehensions.

(f) *You shall be hated of all Men for the Sake of my Name.*] They who believed the Testimony of the Apostles, as Multitudes did, could not but ardently love them, as their Fathers in Christ: (See Gal. iv. 15.) This therefore is plainly one of those many Scriptures, in which the universal Term *all* is to be taken with great Restrictions. See John xii. 32. Phil. ii. 21. and Rom. v. 18.—As there seems in this Text a peculiar Emphasis in the Phrase, *for the Sake of my Name*, I chuse in this Edition to render it more literally than in the first; tho' (as I had there observed,) it is apparent, that the Name of a Person is sometimes put for the Person himself. See Note (l) on John ii. 23. pag. 154.

(g) Until

SECT. 75.
Mat. X. 22.

be not discouraged at these Trials ; for *he that* courageously endures to the End, shall on the whole be saved ; and whatever Extremities he may suffer in this World, GOD will not only deliver him from the Destruction that shall come upon the Wicked, but will amply repay his Fidelity in the next. (Compare Mat. xxiv. 13. and Rev. ii. 10.)

fake : but he that endureth to the End, shall be saved.

23 *But* I say not this to encourage you to rush upon Martyrdom, before you have a plain and lawful Call to it ; for, on the other Hand, it will rather be your Duty, to prolong such useful Lives to the utmost Limits you lawfully may, and *when they persecute you in one City, to flee to another* : And tho' this may contract the Time of your Abode in each, be not discouraged at that, which may, on the whole, be no Inconvenience ; *for verily I say unto you, you shall not have had Time, to finish [your Progress thro'] all the Cities of Israel, and to preach the Gospel in every Place, until the Son of Man shall come (g) in a yet more awful Appearance, to fulfil your Prediction concerning the Manifestation of his Kingdom, and to take Vengeance on your cruel Persecutors.*

23 But when they persecute you in this City, flee ye into another : for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the Cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come.

24 And as for the unkind Usage I have warned you to expect, you have no Reason to be surprized at it ; for, as I have formerly observed, (Luke vi, 40. pag. 350.) *The Disciple is not above his Teacher, nor the Servant above*

24 The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord :

(g) *Until the Son of Man shall come.*] I do not find, that the Apostles met with any Persecution in this first Progress, from which they soon returned to Christ, and told him all that they had done ; (see Mark vi. 30. and Luke ix. 10. See. 78.) and therefore, as well as for many other Reasons, I cannot understand the Coming of the Son of Man to signify, his overtaking them in this Journey, before they came to the End of it : Nor does it appear natural, with Dr. Sykes, (in his Essay on the Truth of Christianity, pag. 85, & seq.) to refer it to Christ's coming to Judgment. It is rather, as Mr. Whiston observes, (in his Discourse of Prophecy, pag. 63.) to be explained, of their being driven out of Judea by Persecutions, so that they had not Time to visit all the Parts of it, before the Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, which is often called the Coming of the Son of Man. See Mat. xxiv. 27, 37, 39, 44. and Luke xviii. 8.

25 It is enough for the Disciple, that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord: if they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his Household?

above his Lord: It is abundantly sufficient, if the Disciple be as his Teacher, and the Servant as his Lord; and in such a Circumstance, the Disciple, and the Servant, have Cause for Thankfulness, rather than Complaint. If then, as you have already heard and found, they have called me, who am the Master of the Family, Beelzebub, and reviled me as a Magician, whom they should have received as the Messiah, (see pag. 391.) how much more will they be likely thus to abuse his Domesticks, whose Character and Station are so much inferior to his?

SECT. 75. Mat. X. 25.

26 Fear them not therefore: For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

Since therefore you have my Example before you, and suffer in my Cause, fear them not, but courageously sustain the utmost Efforts of their Rage; and assure yourselves that I will support you till you have finished your Testimony: For there is nothing now hid, which shall not be revealed; nor has any Thing passed in secret between us, which shall not be universally made known.

26

27 What I tell you in Darknes, that speak ye in Light: and what ye hear in the Ear, that preach ye upon the House-tops.

See to it then, that you remember to what Purpose, I have admitted you to so great an Intimacy with me, and discoursed so largely concerning my Kingdom; and what I say to you in Darknes, speak [it] in the Light of open Day; and what you hear as it were whispered in the Ear, proclaim publickly with a loud Voice, as from the House-Tops.

27

28 And fear not them which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul: but rather

And tho' the Boldness of your Testimony may indeed at length cost you your Lives, yet be not afraid of them who can only kill the mortal Body, and cannot kill or hurt the immaterial Soul, which will still survive in all its Vigour, while its Tabernacle lies in Ruins (b); but much rather fear, lest by being unfaithful in so important a Trust, you

28

(b) Cannot kill the Soul, &c.] I have paraphrased the Words so, as to illustrate the certain Argument they contain, to prove the Existence of the Soul in a separate State, and its Perception of that Existence; else the Soul would be as properly killed, as the Body. Grotius has an excellent Note here.

SECT. 75. you should incur the Displeasure of *him, who* rather fear him which is
 Mat. X. 28. *is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell,* able to destroy both Soul and
 and has Power to fill the separate Spirit with Body in Hell.
 Anguish, or at the final Judgment to re-unite
 it to the Body, and condemn both to ever-
 lasting Misery in that Infernal Prison.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. x. 28. **H**OW apparently fit is it, that this Eternal and Almighty *GOD* should be the Object of our humble *Fear*, and that in Comparison with him we should *fear nothing else!* All the *Terrors* of the World are disarmed by this; and by this are its *Flatteries* also disarmed. In whatever Stations of Life we are fixed, let this engage us to be faithful to *GOD* in them: So shall we be most truly faithful to ourselves!

The *Apostles* were exposed to peculiar *Dangers* and *Trials*; but all that will live godly in *Christ Jesus*, must expect some Degree of *Persecution*; (2 *Tim.* iii. 12.) let us therefore *arm ourselves with the same Mind*, that we may bear it with a truly Christian Fortitude.
 Ver. 16. May divine Grace teach us, to mingle the *Wisdom of the Serpent*, with the *Innocence of the Dove*, and to shelter ourselves from the ill Usage of a perverse and sinful Generation, so far only as we can do it without offering any Violation to our Consciences!

Ver. 21. It is indeed Matter of great Lamentation, that the Sentiments of *Benevolence* and *Goodness*, which seem so natural to the Human Mind, and are always so ornamental and delightful, should prevail no more: And it is shameful, that the *Name of Religion*, so well calculated to cultivate *these Sentiments*, should be made use of as an Engine to destroy them; and instead of cementing *Kingdoms* and *Families* in closer and more affectionate Bonds, should inspire them even with mortal Animosity. Let us bless *GOD* for our publick Liberties; and earnestly pray, that where *Persecution* reigns in its utmost Terror, *the Wrath of Man* may praise him, and *the Remainder of that Wrath* be restrained! (*Psal.* lxxvi. 10.)

Ver. 24, 25. The *Ill Usage*, which the blessed *Jesus* endured from an ungrateful World, may surely prevent our being surprized or offended, if we meet with some Share of it too. May we be willing to *suffer with him*, that we may at length *reign with him!* (2 *Tim.* ii. 12.) And if by unexpected Revolutions in Providence, we should be called out to the severest Trials, may *the Spirit of Glory and of GOD* rest upon us!
 and

They are encouraged to rely upon the Providence of GOD. 491

and may we not account even our Lives dear unto us, that approving our Fidelity to him, we may finish our Course with Joy! (1 Pet. iv. 14. and Acts xx. 24.)

S E C T. LXXVI.

Our LORD concludes his Charge to his Apostles, with an Assurance of GOD's Providential Care for their Encouragement, and with a Promise of abundant future Rewards to all that should faithfully serve him, or assist others in his Work: And after this they separate from one another, and go to different Parts to preach the Gospel. Mat. X. 29, to the End. XI. 1. Mark VI. 12, 13. Luke IX. 6.

MAT. X. 29.

ARE not two Sparrows sold for a Farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the Ground without your Father.

MAT. X. 29.

AFTER these faithful Warnings of the Dangers, to which the Apostles would be exposed in his Service, our Lord went on to lay before them such Encouragements as might animate their Courage and pious Zeal; and began with reminding them of the universal Extent of the Divine Providence: *Are not two young Sparrows, said he, sold for a single Farthing? yet there is not one of them, that by any Accident shall fall to the Ground and die, without the Observation and Permission of your Heavenly Father (a).* And not

SECT. 76.

Mat. X. 29.

30.

not

(a) *Not one of them shall fall to the Ground, &c.*] Some have supposed, there is a Reference here to the *Two Birds*, which made a Part of the *Lepers Offering*: (Lev. xiv. 4, —7.) As if the Sense of what our Lord expresses were, that Providence determines which of those *Two* insignificant Animals shall live, and which be killed. But as the Words are capable of a more extensive Sense, and our Lord elsewhere mentions *Five Sparrows* just to the same Purpose, (Luke xii. 6. Sect. 111.) I see no Reason for paraphrasing them with any particular View to that Rite. They are a full Proof of the *Universality* of the *Divine Providence*: But the singular Interpositions of it in Favour of good Men, may in a much more convincing Manner be argued, from the *Prayers* and *Praises* offered in *Scripture*, with Regard to particular Events, and the

Q q q 2

Promises

SECT. 76. not only are the more noble and vital Parts
 of your animal Frame regarded by GOD,
 Mat. X. 30. but *even the very Hairs of your Head are all*

30 But the very Hairs of
 your Head are all numbred.

31 *numbered* by him. *Fear not therefore*, that
 you should be overlooked; for even as Men,
 and especially as my Servants and Embassadors,
you are more valuable than many Sparrows,
 or than the whole Species of them;
 and therefore may assure yourselves, that Pro-
 vidence will watch over you.

31 Fear ye not therefore,
 ye are of more Value than
 many Sparrows.

32 And let it be a farther Encouragement to
 you to remember, that whatever you may
 now suffer for your Fidelity to me, it will
 on the whole be most amply rewarded; for
 the Regard that every one expresses to me
 here, shall be publickly remembered and
 acknowledged hereafter: *Whosoever there-
 fore shall courageously confess me before Men*,
 be he ever so mean in the Eyes of the World,
I also will not fail to confess him in all the
 Glories of my final Appearance, not only
before the assembled World, but even in the
 immediate Presence of *my Father in Heaven*,
 to whose everlasting Favour all my faithful
 Servants shall be introduced: *But whoso-
 ever shall renounce me before Men*, as ashamed
 or afraid to acknowledge his Relation to me,
*I also will renounce him before my Father in
 Heaven*, as a mean and unworthy Creature,
 who has forfeited all Claim to my Patronage
 and Favour in that awful Day.

32 Whosoever therefore
 shall confess me before Men,
 him will I confess also before
 my Father which is in Hea-
 ven.

33 But to prevent the mistaken Expectations
 which the Apostles might form of the im-
 mediate Temporal Prosperity of his King-
 dom, our Lord farther added; *Do not sup-
 pose,*

33 But whosoever shall
 deny me before Men, him
 will I also deny before my
 Father which is in Heaven.

34 Think not that I am
 come

34 Think not that I am
 come

Promises of Temporal Blessings made to those that fear and serve God. Nor can I think we are much concerned to determine, how far any of these are miraculous, and how far the Result of general Laws settled in an exact Congruity to the Temper and Conduct of every Individual affected by them, which an Omniscient GOD foresaw, and which his perfect Schemes might easily provide for, by Methods to us unsearchable. It is plain, Homer thought Divine Providence interested itself in the Lives of Brute Animals. See Iliad. lib. xv. ver. 274. See also Grotius, in loc.

come to send Peace on Earth: I came not to send Peace, but a Sword.

pose, that I am come to send and establish SECT. 76.
Peace on the Land in which we dwell (b); Mat. X. 34.

35 For I am come to set a Man at Variance against his Father, and the Daughter against her Mother, and the Daughter-in-Law against her Mother-in-Law:

for tho' the general Purport of my Gospel has so powerful a Tendency to promote it, yet the Prejudices and Lusts of Men will so oppose and pervert it, that it will rather seem from the Event of it, that I came not to send Peace, but a Sword. For a few will indeed embrace it; but they will be so cruelly persecuted even by their nearest Relations, that I may say, I am come to set a Man at Variance against his own Father, and the Daughter against her own Mother, and the Daughter-in-Law against her Mother-in-Law (c), when the Circumstances of the Family were such, that they might otherwise have agreed.

36 And a Mans Foes shall be they of his own Household.

So that the Ties of Blood shall be forgotten, and the Bonds of Friendship violated; and a Man's Enemies, yea oftentimes the most severe and inveterate of them, [shall be] those of his own Family, and it may be, the nearest of his Relations, from whom he might justly have expected the greatest Friendship.

37 He that loveth Father or

Prepare yourselves then for such severe Trials

(b) To send Peace on the Land in which we dwell.] That the Word *in* often signifies some particular Land, and especially *Judea*, rather than the whole Earth, is undeniably plain: (Compare *Mat. xxiii. 35.* and *Luke iv. 25.*) And I have given it that Turn here, because there was no Part of the World, where Christianity occasioned so much Dissention, and none where Peace was so much expected from the Kingdom of the Messiah. Yet how very unjust it is, that any of those Contentions, which the Gospel has accidentally occasioned, should be urged as an Argument against its Divine Authority, the Reader may see in the excellent Sermons of the present Bishop of Winchester on this Subject, in his *Miscellaneous Tracts*. In one Word, the Matter will issue in this; that if Christianity has occasioned more Discord, than any other Religion, the only Reason is, because it animates its Professors to greater Zeal for the Truth, and better proves it to be worth their while to suffer for Conscience sake.

(c) And the Daughter-in-Law against her Mother-in-Law.] The Thought seems to sink here, as it is much more usual for Mothers and Daughters-in-Law in whatever Relation to quarrel, than natural Parents and Children: But if we consider, that our Lord speaks of this as the first Occasion of a Quarrel between them, it may intimate a Supposition, that they were Persons of a friendly Temper, who even in such a Relation might otherwise have lived together on easy Terms: A Thought, which seems to me to enliven the Discourse, and which may lead us to reflect, how often Bigotry intirely transforms a natural Disposition, that in itself was mild and amiable. Compare *Luke xii. 53.* Note (d), Vol. ii. Sect. 115.

(d) He

SECT. 76. Trials as these, by remembering, that *he who loves his Father or Mother more than me, and is induced by his Regard to them, to disobey my Precepts, or to renounce my Doctrine, is not worthy of me, nor shall have any Interest in my saving Benefits; and he that loves even his Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of an Interest in me and my Friendship, tho' it should be an only Child, that he prefers to me, and for the Sake of whom he abandons my Gospel.* *And in a Word, he that is so concerned for his own Ease and Safety, that he will not suffer for my Sake, and does not resolutely take up his Cross, when providentially laid in his Way, and follow after me (d), even to die upon it, when the Honour of my Name and Cause requires it, and I, as the Captain of his Salvation, lead him on to it, cannot be owned as my faithful Disciple, and is not worthy of an Interest in me.* (Compare Mark viii. 34. Sect. 89.)

Mat. X. 37.

38

39

Be assured however, that you shall find it to be well worth your while, to endure all these Extremities for my Sake; for *he that finds and saves his Life, by deserting my Cause, shall lose it on the Whole, as he will thus incur a Sentence of final Condemnation and Destruction (e); but he that out of Faithfulness to me loses his Life, and lays it down for my Sake, shall find it in a far more noble State*

or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me:

38 And he that taketh not his Cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his Life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his Life for my Sake, shall find it.

(d) *He that does not take up his Cross, and follow after me.*] This alludes to the Custom, of Persons carrying the Cross to which they were to be fastened; and was a strong Intimation, that he should himself be crucified, and that none could be a sincere Christian, without a Willingness to bear even that shameful and cruel Death for his Sake, if he was called to it. See Grotius, in loc.

(e) *He that finds his Life, shall lose it, &c.*] The Sense that I have given in the Paraphrase, as it is much more general, and more important, appears to me much preferable to that of Dr. Hammond, who interprets the Text, of the Christians saving their Lives by leaving Jerusalem, in the last Siege of that Place by the Romans, and the Jews losing theirs by crowding into it. The Beauty and Energy of Christ's Discourse in a parallel Place, (Mat. xvi. 24,—26. Sect. 89.) would be quite lost by this Interpretation; and indeed many Christians had actually lost their Lives for the Gospel, many Years before that Siege commenced.

(f) Hospi-

State of Being, which infinitely better de-
serves the Name of Life. SECT. 76.

40 He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth n.e., receiveth him that sent me.

And as for you my Servants, let none be afraid of shewing Kindness to you, lest they should share with you in your Sufferings for my Sake; for *he that entertains you, does in Effect entertain me*, whose Ministers you are; and *he that entertains me, does also entertain him that sent me*, and my Heavenly Father will regard it as done to himself; as on the other Hand, all the Sights and Injuries which are offered to you, will be considered as reflecting, not only on me, but on him.

Mat. X. 40.

41 He that receiveth a Prophet, in the Name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets Reward: and he that receiveth a Righteous Man, in the Name of a Righteous Man, shall receive a Righteous Mans Reward.

And did Men truly understand their own Interest, they would rejoice to assist you in that noble Work, in which you are engaging: For *he that hospitably entertains a Prophet (f), in the Name of a Prophet*, or with a pious Regard to the Office he bears, shall receive the Reward of a Prophet himself, or a Reward proportionable to the Worth of the Person he shelters, and accommodates, in a Time of Danger and Difficulty: And *he that entertains [any] Righteous Man, in the Name of a Righteous Man*, or with a cordial Regard to the Virtues of his Character, shall himself receive the Reward of a Righteous Man. Nor shall even the smallest

41

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little Ones, a Cup of cold Water only, in the Name of a Disciple, verily I say

cheapest Favour to the least of my Servants be forgotten; for *whosoever*, being able to do no more, shall give to drink unto one of these little Ones, or to one of these my Followers who makes the meanest Appearance, even so much as *a Cup of cold Water only*, to refresh him in the Fatigue to which he is exposed in my Service, if he shall give it to him *in the Name of a Disciple*, or with a

42

real

(f) Hospitably entertains a Prophet.] The Word *δεξασθε* here plainly signifies to entertain in an hospitable Way, as it does likewise Heb. xi. 31. Jam. ii. 25. and elsewhere; nor can the Gradation in the following Words be understood without such an Interpretation.—The Apostles were, no doubt, regarded, as a Kind of Divinely inspired Prophets; tho' that Title, by way of Distinction, was afterwards appropriated to Persons of an inferior Rank. 1 Cor. xii. 28. and Eph. iv. 11.

SECT. 76. real Affection to him on Account of his Relation to me, *verily I say unto you, he shall by no means lose his proportionable Reward, but shall find himself abundantly repaid both with present, and future Blessings.*

I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his Reward.

Mat. XI. 1. *And it came to pass, after this solemn and instructive Charge had been delivered, that when Jesus had made an End of giving Instructions to his Twelve Disciples, and had prepared them for the Service they were now to undertake, he did not lay aside the Work himself, but still pursued it with an unwearied Diligence and Zeal, and departed thence to teach the Jews, in other Parts, the Doctrines of his Gospel, and to preach in their Cities.*

MAT. XI. 1. And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an End of commanding his Twelve Disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their Cities.

Mark VI. 12. The Twelve Apostles also, in pursuance of the Commission they had now received, set out at the same Time; *and they departed from the Presence of their Master, and went thro' the Towns of Galilee, and the neighbouring Places, and preached the Gospel wherever they came; insisting with great Earnestness upon it, that Men should repent of their Sins, and prepare for that glorious Manifestation of his Presence, which God was about to favour them with. And in Consequence of that miraculous Power, with which Jesus had invested them, they expelled many Demons, and anointed many sick Persons with Oil, as a Signal of Healing which he had been pleased to direct, (compare Jam. v. 14.) and perfectly cured them, whatsoever their Malady was; and this they did every where, as they went on in their Progress.*

MARK VI. 12. And they [departed, and] went out [thro' the Towns,] and preached [the Gospel,] that Men should repent. [LUKE IX. 6.—]

13 And they cast out many Devils, and anointed with Oil many that were sick, and healed them [every where.] [LUKE IX.—6.]

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. x. 37, 38. **J**USTLY may the Blessed Jesus set so high a Value on himself, and on the Blessings of his Grace: Justly may he insist upon our Readiness to *abandon all for him*, who is so just an Equivalent for all.

all. May his Grace teach us, to *love him more* than the dearest of SECT. 76. our *Relations*, and even to be ready for *his Sake* to sacrifice our *Lives!* May it make us willing to *take up*, and bear, any *Cross* for him, who bore his *Cross* and expired upon it for us!

The *Gospel* has indeed been the Occasion of much *Contention* and Mat. x. 34, *Persecution*, not only in *Judea*, but elsewhere: Yet let us not charge 35, 36. it upon any *Malignity*, or any *Deficiency* in that, but on the *Lusts* and *Corruptions* of Men, who have either directly opposed, or grossly perverted it. Let us endeavour to arm ourselves with *Courage* to encounter, and *Resolution* to endure, whatever *Persecutions* or *Injuries*, our *Adherence* to it may cost us; ever confiding in that gracious *Providence*, which extends itself even to the *meanest Creatures*; Ver. 29, 30. reposing ourselves on the *Support* of *Divine Consolations*, and esteeming ourselves happy, even in *losing our Lives* in this World, if we Ver. 39. may find them in that which is everlasting.

In the mean time, may this excellent *Discourse* of our Blessed *Redeemer* animate us to every *Work of Faith*, and every *Labour of Love!* Let not the *Poorest* be discouraged from some charitable Attempt for the Good of others; since the *Munificence* of our Heavenly Master will remember *even a Cup of Cold Water*, given to the Ver. 42. *Least of his Servants*, under that Character. Yet since there will be such a *Variety of Rewards*, proportionable to different Degrees of *Liberality* and *Zeal*, let us indulge a generous *Ambition* of *abounding in the Work of the Lord*, that we may shine with distinguished *Glory*, in the Day of *Retribution*, and have an *abundant Entrance* into his *Kingdom*.

S E C T. LXXVII.

Herod bears of JESUS, and suspects him to be John the Baptist, whom he had lately murdered in a Manner which is here recounted. Mat. XIV. 1, 2. 6,—12.
Mark VI. 14,—29. Luke IX. 7,—9.

MAT. XIV. 1.

MAT. XIV. 1.

At that Time [King] Herod the Tetrarch heard of **N**OW at that Time (a), while the Apostles were making their Circuit about the SECT. 77.
Mat. XIV. 1.

(a) At that Time.] Both Mark and Luke, so expressly connect this, with the preceding Section, that there can be no Room to doubt, that this is its true Place.

SECT. 77. the Country, proclaiming every where the
 Mat. XIV. 1. Glories of their great Master, and working
 Miracles in his Name, *King Herod*, (as the
Tetrarch we mentioned above (b) was generally called,) *heard of the Fame of Jesus*,
 [and] was informed by many of all the marvellous Things that were done by him and his
 Apostles; for by the Account they gave concerning him in their Mission, concurring
 with his own Miracles and Preaching, *his Name was every where spread abroad*, and
 had reached many Places far more distant than the Court of Herod (c).

of the Fame of Jesus, [LUK. and of all that was done by him;] [for his Name was spread abroad:] [MARK VI. 14.—LUK. IX. 7.—]

2 And immediately his own guilty Conscience suggested a Fear, which he could not forbear disclosing to those that were about him; and such was his Surprise and Terror, that *he said even to his own Servants, This is John the Baptist, whom I put to Death; he is undoubtedly risen from the Dead, and for this Reason he appears with greater Honour than ever, and these extraordinary Powers now operate in him, though before he wrought no Miracles.*

2 And [he] said unto his Servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the Dead, and therefore mighty Works do shew forth themselves in him. [MARK VI.—14.]

Luke IX. 7. *And notwithstanding Herod had imbibed the Principles of the Sadducees (d), which were directly opposite to such a Supposition, he was exceedingly anxious (e) on Account of the Reports he heard; for the Notion was not*

LUKE. IX.—7. And he was perplexed, because that it

(b) *The Tetrarch* we mentioned above.] Though he was called *Tetrarch* for a particular Reason, as Heir to only a *Fourth Part* of his Father's Dominions; yet in this District, (which was that of *Galilee*,) he was properly a *King*. See Note (n) on *Mat. ii. 22. pag. 86.* and *Luke iii. 1. pag. 96.*

(c) More distant than the Court of Herod.] The *Letters* pretended to have passed between *Christ*, and *Abgarus, King of Edessa*, and preserved by *Eusebius*, (*Hist. Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 13.*) are probably *spurious*; though *Dr. Cave*, the learned *Dr. Grabe*, (*Spicileg. vol. i. pag. 1,—6.*) and the celebrated *Mr. Addison*, (in his *Discourse on Christianity, Sect. 1.*) seem inclined to receive them. They might however have their Foundation in some *Message* from that Prince to *Jesus*. But the Remark in the *Paraphrase* is much more certainly confirmed by *Mat. iv. 24, 25. pag. 229.*

(d) Herod had imbibed the Principles of the Sadducees.] See Note (g), below.

(e) *He was exceedingly anxious.*] *Δυσωρεσι* strongly expresses a Mixture of *Doubt* and *Fear*, which must necessarily throw the Mind into a very uneasy Situation.

It was said of some, that John was risen from the Dead;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old Prophets was risen again: [and others said, that it is a Prophet, or as one of the Prophets.] [MARK VI. 15.]

MARK VI. 16. But when Herod heard thereof, he said, [John have I beheaded; but who is this, of whom I hear such Things?] It is John whom I beheaded, he is risen from the Dead. [And he

not merely his own, but it was said too by ^{SECT. 77.} some others, that John was risen from the ^{Luke IX. 7.} Dead, and would undoubtedly use his miraculous Power to punish those who had murdered him. And it was also conjectured by some, that Elias had appeared, according to the general Expectation, as the Fore-runner of the Messiah: (compare Mal. iv. 5. Mat. xi. 14. and xvii. 10,—12.) and by others, that one of the antient Prophets was risen again from the Dead: And others also said, It is certainly a Prophet of the former Generations, or [a Person] at least like one of the Prophets (f); for such miraculous Works do as evidently speak a divine Mission, as any of theirs ever did.

8 But in the midst of this Variety of Opinions, when Herod heard what was discoursed [of Jesus,] he was exceedingly distressed, and said with great Anxiety, John I have certainly beheaded, and received the strongest Proofs that the Execution was performed; but who is this, of whom I hear such Things? I would not willingly believe it, yet I cannot but suspect, that whatsoever be the Name he now assumes, it is John, that venerable holy Man whom I beheaded, and greatly fear he is risen from the Dead. And he was so uneasy under the Consciousness of the enormous Crime he had committed in putting him to Death, that licentious as his Principles and Character were (g), he was alarmed and terrified with

(f) A Prophet, or a Person at least like one of the Prophets.] This plainly proves, that by the Word Prophet they generally meant, one of the holy Men whom God had raised up to his People in former Ages; and if the Particle *n* be omitted, as it is in some Manuscripts, the Argument is equally conclusive. See Note (c), pag. 128.

(g) Licentious as his Principles and Character were.] Josephus tells us, that the Sadducean Principles prevailed much among the Rich and Great: (Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 1. (al. 2.) §. 4.) And it is very probable, Herod was of this Sect, as what is called in one Text the Leaven of the Sadducees, is in another called the Leaven of Herod; (compare Mat. xvi. 6. with Mark viii. 15.) not to mention a kind of Hereditary Quarrel, which there seems to have been, between the Herodian Family and the Phari-

SECT. 77. with the Apprehension of his being actually returned to Life; and not knowing what to think of the Reports he heard of Jesus, *he earnestly desired to see him*, that his Doubts might be removed.

he desired to see him. [LUKE IX. 9.]

Mark VI. 16.

17 Thus was his guilty Mind perplexed and tormented, and not without Reason; for as we have before observed (b), *Herod had formerly seized John, and bound him with Chains in Prison, on Account of the Reproof he gave him for his marrying Herodias;*

17 For Herod had—laid hold upon John, and bound him in Prison for Herodias sake:—

18 *Because*, as Herod had seduced her from his Brother Philip, who was still living and had a Daughter by her, *John had said to him with a Freedom that he could not bear, It is not lawful for thee thus to have thy Brother's Wife.* And we had likewise added,

18 For John had said,— It is not lawful for thee to have thy Brothers Wife.

19 that for this Reason *Herodias* also was incensed against him, and *would have put him to Death; but for a long Time she could not*

19 Therefore Herodias— would have killed him, but she could not.

20 compass her Design: For *Herod had so great a Reverence for John*, that he would not yield to her Solicitations. But we must now inform the Reader, that before this Time she had found a Way of accomplishing her cruel Purpose.

20 For Herod feared John.—

21 For as her Heart was filled with Malice, and she was ever watching for an Opportunity to be revenged on John, at length *a convenient Day happened*, of preferring her Petition with unexpected Circumstances of Advantage: A publick Festival was kept, *when*

21 And when a convenient Day was come, that Herod

rises. (See Note (f) on Mark iii. 6. pag. 330.)—But it is no easy Matter to arrive at a steady Belief of so great an Absurdity, as the *Mortality of the Soul*. The *Existence of the Soul* after Death, and a State of *future Retribution*, and other evident Principles of *Natural Religion* connected with both, will even force themselves upon the unbelieving Heart, and wring it with Anguish, which it cannot always, though it may frequently, conceal. This is admirably illustrated by *Bishop Atterbury*, in his *Sermon* on this *Text* and Subject.

(b) As we have before observed.] I have ventured to repeat here a few Clauses of *Mark*, because they seemed to me absolutely necessary to introduce the following Account of *Herod's* beheading *John the Baptist*. These *Verses* are before inserted at large, in *Sec. 28. pag. 177, 178.*

(i) *When*

Herod's rash Oath to the Daughter of Herodias.

Herod on his Birth-Day made a Supper to his Lords, high Captains, and chief Estates of Galilee: [MAT. XIV. 6.—]

when Herod on his Birth-Day (i) made a splendid Supper for the Entertainment of his Lords, and of all the chief Officers of his Army (k), and other Persons of distinguished Rank in Galilee, over which he presided:

SECT. 77.
Mark VI. 21.

22 And when the Daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced [before them,] and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him, the King said unto the Damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. [MAT. XIV.—6.]

And to grace the Solemnity, Salome, the Daughter of the above-mentioned Herodias by Philip her former Husband, a young Lady of celebrated Beauty, coming in publicly among them, and dancing in the Midst of the Assembly; this Instance of Condescension, so unusual in those Days and Countries, especially in Persons of such high Dignity (l), was so exceedingly agreeable and pleasing unto Herod and his Guests, that the King said before them all to the Maiden in a Kind of Transport, Ask of me whatever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And

22

23 And he [promised her with an Oath, and] swore unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the Half of my Kingdom. [MAT. XIV. 7.]

when she seemed surprized at such a Declaration, to encourage her to depend on what he said, he promised her with the Solemnity of an Oath, [and] profanely and foolishly swore unto her more than once (m), I will give thee whatsoever thou wilt ask of me, even though it should be to the [Value of] Half of my Kingdom.

23

24 And she went forth, and

And, young as she was, she perceived, this

24

(i) *When Herod on his Birth-Day.*] Some great Criticks, and particularly Grotius, Heinsius, and Reland, chuse to interpret this, of the Day of Herod's Accession, rather than his Birth, which they think would have been more properly expressed by γενεθλιων, than γενεσιων. (See Elser. Observ. vol. i. pag. 100,—102.) But it is evident, the Seventy use ημερα γενεσιων for a Birth-Day; Gen. xi. 20.

(k) *Chief Officers of his Army.*] Though the Word χιλιαρχος properly signifies one, who had the Command of a Thousand Men, and held a Rank in their Army nearly answering to that of the Colonels in ours, there can be no Reason to imagine that the Entertainment was confined just to that Rank of Officers: I have therefore rendered it in a more general Way.

(l) *This Instance of Condescension, so unusual in those Days, &c.*] Dr. Lardner very justly observes, that it was very unusual for Ladies of a high Rank to appear before the Men, (Esb. i. 10,—12.) and much less to dance at such Banquets as these. See his *Credibility of the Gospel History*, part i. vol. i. pag. 23.

(m) *Swore unto her more than once.*] This may be very well concluded, because both the Evangelists use the Plural οεως. Mat. xiv. 9. and Mark vi. 26.

(n) *Being*

SECT. 77.
 Mark VI. 24.

this was now grown a Circumstance of high Importance, and might be managed to considerable Advantage; *she therefore went out, and said to her Mother, who was not in the Assembly, What shall I ask? And she, struck with this unexpected Opportunity of executing her Revenge, eagerly replied, Ask the Head of John the Baptist, who would have expelled and ruined us both; for nothing in the Power of the King to grant, could give me equal Satisfaction.*

25 *And though at first she hesitated at so shocking a Proposal, yet being thus before urged to it by her Mother, and at length confirmed in the Resolution (n), she immediately, after a very short Absence, came in to the King with Speed in her Motion, and Eagerness in her Countenance, and made her Demand, saying, I desire, that in Accomplishment of thy Promise thou wouldst give me presently the Head of John the Baptist; and that I may be sure the Execution is done, let the Head be brought and delivered to me here in a Charger, or large Dish (o).*

26 *And the King was exceedingly sorry, as well as greatly surprized, that she should prefer so strange a Petition; nevertheless, as she*

and said unto her Mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The Head of John the Baptist.

25 And she [being before instructed of her Mother,] came in straightway with Haste unto the King, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me [here] by and by in a Charger the Head of John the Baptist. [MAT. XIV. 8.]

26 And the King was exceeding sorry; [nevertheless]

(n) *Being before urged to it by her Mother, and at length confirmed in the Resolution.*] So the Word *ἠποκρίθησα* seems to intimate, as *Beza* with his usual Accuracy has observed; and there is indeed much more Reason to wonder, that she was induced to make such a Request at all, than that she made some *Difficulty* for a while of presenting it, considering how savage it seemed, and how many pleasing Views must be sacrificed to it. But at last her *Mother's Remonstrances* seem to have wrought her up to great *Emotion*, which the *Evangelist* well expresses by saying, *She came in ἠδιστα, ἠμαρταν, immediately, and with Eagerness.* The whole Narration of *Mark*, which is by far the most circumstantial, is very much *animated*; as *Mr. Blackwall* has justly observed, in his *Sacred Classics*, vol. i. pag. 383.

(o) *The Head of John the Baptist in a Charger.*] It is well known, that it was, and is customary with Princes in those *Eastern Parts*, to require the *Head* of those they order to be executed to be brought to them, that they may be assured of their Death. The *Grand Signior* does it to this Day. See *Dr. Lardner*, in the Place cited in *Note (l)*, pag. 24, 25.—The Word *ἠναξ* signifies a *large Dish*, which the antiquated Word *Charger* well expresses; for which Reason I chose to retain it.

(p) *One*



And the King sent an Executioner, and commanded his Head to be brought; and he went and beheaded him in the Prison.

Mark VI, 27

His Disciples bury him, and tell JESUS of it.

less] for his Oaths sake, and for their sakes which sat with him [at Meat,] he would not reject her, [but commanded it to be given her.] [MAT. XIV. 9.]

27 And immediately the King sent an Executioner, and commanded his Head to be brought: And he went and beheaded [John] in the Prison, [MAT. XIV. 10.]

28 And brought his Head in a Charger, and gave it to the Damsel: And the Damsel [brought it, and] gave it to her Mother. [MAT. XIV. 11.]

29 And when his Disciples heard of it, they came, and took up his Corps, and laid

she persisted in it, for the sake of his repeated Oaths, and out of Regard to his Guests, in whose Presence they were made, he would not deny her, [but] granted what she asked, and ordered that it should be given her. SECT. 77.
Mark VI. 26.

And immediately the King sent one of his Guards (p) as an Executioner, that very Night, and commanded his Head to be brought into the Assembly: And as soon as the Soldier had received his Orders, he presently went, and without any farther Warning beheaded John in the Prison, 27

And brought his Head in a Charger, and gave it to the Maiden; and the Maiden, forgetting the Tenderness of her Sex (q), and the Dignity of her Rank, with a steady Cruelty, agreeable to her Relation to so ill a Woman, brought [and] delivered it to her Mother with her own Hands. And thus, till the righteous Judgment of GOD overtook them all (r), they gratified themselves in the Indulgence of their Lusts, and triumphed in the Murder of this holy Prophet. 28

And the next Day, his Disciples bearing [of it,] came to the Prison, and having Permission to do it, took up his Corps, and laid it with great Reverence, and due Lamentation, 29

(p) One of his Guards.] So *οικουδολογος* properly signifies, or one who was then standing Centry. There were no Executioners in those Times, whose peculiar Business it was to put Persons to Death.

(q) Forgetting the Tenderness of her Sex.] This may perhaps be intimated, in the Repetition of the Word Maiden. Jerom tells us, that Herodias treated the Baptist's Head in a very disdainful Manner, pulling out the Tongue which she imagined had injured her, and piercing it with a Needle.

(r) Till the righteous Judgment of GOD overtook them all.] Dr. Whitby, after many others, observes, that Providence interested itself very remarkably in the Revenge of this Murder on all concerned. Herod's Army was defeated, in a War occasioned by his marrying Herodias, which many Jews thought a Judgment sent upon him for the Death of John: (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 5. (al. 7.) §. 1, 2.) Both he, and Herodias, whose Ambition occasioned his Ruin, were afterwards driven from their Kingdom with great Regret, and died in Banishment at Lyons in Gaul: (Joseph. ibid. cap. 7. (al. 9.) §. 2.) And if any Credit may be given to Nicephorus, (Hist. lib. 1. cap. 20.) Salome, the young Lady who made this cruel Request, fell into the Ice as she was walking over it, which closing suddenly, cut off her Head.

SECT. 77. mentation, *in a Sepulchre* belonging to some of them, who were willing to pay this last Act of Duty to their Master's Memory: *And then they went, and told Jesus* what had happened, and remembering the repeated Testimony which John had borne to him, continued their Attendance upon him.

Mark VI. 29. laid it in a Tomb; [and went and told Jesus.] [MAT. XIV. 12.]

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mark vi. 14, 16. **H**OW dreadful a Thing is it, to have a guilty and accusing Conscience! and how remarkable was the Force of it, in the Instance before us! *Herod* was a King, yet it addressed him in Language of Terror, and made itself heard and felt, amidst all the Hurries and Flatteries of a Court. Vain was the Power of a Prince; vain the Caresses of a favourite *Mistress*, basely gratified with the Blood of a Prophet; and vain the yet more besotting *Tenets* of a *Sadducee*. In one Instance at least, a *Resurrection* shall be believed; and if a *Prophet* arise in *Israel*, *Herod* shall be among the first to say, *It is John the Baptist, risen from the Dead*; and shall be ready to forebode the sad Effects of his recovered Life, and to prognosticate Evil to himself from the *mighty Works* he performed. Let us make it our Care to preserve a *Conscience void of Offence*, that instead of a continual *Torment*, it may be to us a *continual Feast*!

Ver. 22, 23. And if we really desire to preserve it, let us take heed, that we be not excessively *transported* with the *Entertainments* of Life; or rashly *enter* ourselves into *Engagements*, which perhaps may plunge us into some Degree of Guilt, whether they be performed, or violated.

Ver. 24. We see in this dreadful Instance of *Herodias*, what an implacable Degree of *Malice* may arise in the Hearts of Sinners, on being *reproved* for the most scandalous and mischievous Vices. Instead of owning the *Obligation* to one that would have plucked her *as a Brand out of the Burning*, she *thirsts* insatiably for his *Blood*; and chuses rather to indulge her Cruelty and Revenge in *taking away his Life*, than to gratify her Avarice and Ambition in *demanding a Gift*, that might have been equal to the *Half of a Kingdom*.

Ver. 25, 27. But how *mysterious* was that *Providence*, which left the *Life* of so *holy a Man* in such infamous Hands, and permitted it to be sacrificed, to the *Malice* of an abandoned *Harlot*, to the *Petulance* of a *vain Girl*, and to the *Rashness* of a foolish, and perhaps an intoxicated, *Prince*, who made the *Prophet's Head* the *Reward of a Dance*!

The

The Ways of GOD are unsearchable! But we are sure, he can never be at a Loss to repay his Servants in another World, for the greatest Sufferings they endure in this, and even for *Life itself*, when given up in his Cause. SECT. 77.

We may reasonably conclude, that *Death* could never be an *unseasonable Surprise* to this excellent Saint. When the Executioner came into the Prison by Night, perhaps breaking in upon his Slumbers, and executed his bloody Commission almost as soon as he declared it, a Soul like his might welcome the Stroke, as the Means of Liberty and Glory; assured, that the transient Agony of a Moment would transmit it to a Kingdom, where the Least of its Inhabitants would be in Holiness, Honour, and Felicity, superior to Job in his most prosperous and successful State on Earth. Ver. 27.

His Enemies might a while insult over him, while his Disciples were mingling their Tears with his Dust, and lamenting the Residue of his Days cut off in the Midst. His Death was precious in the Sight of the Lord, and the Triumphant of the Wicked was short. So will he e'er long plead the Cause of all his injured People, and give a Cup of Trembling and Astonishment to those, that have made themselves drunk with their Blood. Let Cruelty and Tyranny do their worst, verily there is a Reward for the Righteous, verily there is a GOD that judgeth in the Earth. (*Psal. lviii. 11.*) Ver. 29.

S E C T. LXXVIII.

When the Apostles were returned from executing their Commission, our LORD passes over the Sea of Tiberias; and finding vast Multitudes had followed him to the Place of his intended Retirement, he instructs and heals them; and, having miraculously fed above Five thousand, retires afterwards to pray. Mat. XIV. 13,—23. Mark VI. 30,—46. Luke IX. 10,—17. John VI. 1,—15.

MARK VI. 30.
AND the Apostles [when they were returned,] gathered

MARK VI. 30.
AND quickly after this awful Event of the Baptist's Death (a), which has been just

(a) After this awful Event of the Baptist's Death.] *Matthew, Mark, and Luke,* Vol. I. N° 22. S s s arc

SECT. 78. just related, *the Twelve Apostles, when they were returned from their Circuit, gathered together unto Jesus, and told him all the Occurrences of their late Journey; recounting to him, both what Miracles they had done by his Divine Assistance, and what Doctrine they had taught according to his Direction.*

31 *And when Jesus heard [of it,] and was informed (as we have just now seen,) of the Death of John, as well as of the Event of the Journey which his Apostles had been making, he said to them, Come ye yourselves privately with me into a solitary Place in the neighbouring Desert, and repose yourselves a while after the Fatigue of your Journey, that we may there indulge such Meditations as are suitable to this awful Dispensation. And it was necessary to give them this Advice, for there were many continually coming and going to and from the publick Place in which they then were, so that they had no Opportunity even to eat without Interruption, and much less had they Leisure for Religious Retirement and Recollection.*

Luke IX. 10. *And accordingly after these Things (b), he took them with him, and retired from the Multi-*

thered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all Things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. [LUKE IX. 10.—]

31 *And [when Jesus heard of it,] he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert Place, and rest a while: For there were many coming and going, and they had no Leisure so much as to eat. [MAT. XIV. 13.—]*

LUKE IX.—10. *And [JOH. after these Things] he*

are all so express in the *Connection of this Story with the foregoing, that there can be no Doubt as to the Propriety and Necessity of placing it here.*

(b) *After these Things.*] I have before observed, (in Note (a) on John v. 1. pag. 299.) that Mr. Manne supposes this sixth Chapter of John ought to be connected with the End of the Fourth; (see his *Dissertations*, pag. 157,—163.) and the rather, because he fancies, one may find a *Connection* between John iv. 54. and vi. 1. the first of which Texts tells us, that *Jesus was in Galilee*; and the latter, that *he went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias*. But I cannot see the least Force in the Argument, considering how often *Christ* changed his Place, and came back again to that which he had formerly visited: Nor can he urge it with any *Consistence*, because, according to his own *Scheme* of the *Harmony*, *Christ* had crossed the Sea to *Gergasa*, and dispossessed the *Legion*, after the Cure of the *Nobleman's Son*, and long before the *passing over the Sea*, that is here referred to, (which was plainly not to *Gergasa*, but to the *Desert of Bethsaida*;) So that there is no Shadow of a Reason for such an unexampled *Transposition*, which has no Copy or *Version* to support it. Besides that this requires another *Change* in ver. 4. which is equally arbitrary, and (as we shall shew in Note (c) of this Section,) most contrary not only to the Faith of all Copies, but to the Reason of Things.

he took them and went aside, [MAR. and they departed [thence] by Ship] privately, into a desert Place, belonging to the City called Bethsaida; [JOH. and Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias.] [MAT. XIV.—13.—MAR. VI. 32. JOHN VI. 1.]

Multitude; and they departed from thence, SECT. 78. (even from the Place where they had been Luke IX. 10. so much crowded and hurried,) and setting out in a Ship privately, they withdrew into a lonely Desert, belonging to the City called Bethsaida, which we have several Times mentioned before. [And] as this Desert was divided from the Place they set out from, by a Creek or Bay of the Sea, Jesus in passing to it went over a Part of the Sea of Galilee, which is also sometimes called [the Sea] of Tiberias (c), because that is the most considerable Place on its Shore.

MARK VI. 33. And [when] the People saw them departing, and many knew him, [and heard thereof,] [JOH. a great Multitude followed him, because they saw his Miracles, which he did on them that were diseased:] and [they] ran afoot thither out of all [the] Cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. [MAT. XIV.—13. LUKE IX. 11.—JOHN VI. 2.]

And when the People, who had been attending on his Ministry, saw them departing, and tho' he was at some Distance, many of them knew him (d), and others thereabout heard of [it,] a great Multitude followed him; because they had seen his Miracles, which he had just before performed on them that were diseased, and struck with the Energy of them, were impatiently desirous still to hear so Divine a Teacher. And therefore, observing how he steered his Course, and guessing right as to the Place at which he intended to land, they ran thither on Foot, and increased their Numbers out of all the Cities by which they passed: And they pursued their Journey with such Eagerness, that they outwent them who had taken Ship, and getting round to the Shore where he was to land, they came together to him, and stood ready to salute him in a large Body.

And

(c) Sometimes called the Sea of Tiberias.] We have before observed, that it had various Names. (See Note (b) on Luke v. 1. pag. 216.)—It is not necessary to suppose, they crossed the Lake: If they did, it was only over the Extremity of it; or possibly they only made a coasting Voyage round some Creek or Bay of it; otherwise it is hard to say, how the People going on Foot could have been there before him, as it is said they were, Mark vi. 33. See Lightf. Hor. Hebr. on Mat. xiv. 13. and Calmet, Dissert. Tom. i. part. 1. pag. 89.

(d) Many knew him.] It should seem that Christ ordered the Vessel to be prepared at some Distance from the Place, where the Multitude was; yet not so far off, but some of the Company could make a Shift to distinguish who he was.

SECT. 78.

Mark VI.

34.

And Jesus, when he came out of the Ship, and saw such a great Multitude of People, who had taken so much Pains to meet him there, was moved with tender Compassion for them; because he perceived they were sadly neglected by those who ought to have been their Spiritual Guides, and were forced to wander from Place to Place, as Sheep having no Shepherd to feed and take Care of them: And with this he was struck to such a Degree, that tho' he had come thither for Retirement, he did not either dismiss or forsake them; but on the contrary, received them in a most condescending and indulgent Manner, and began with renewed Zeal and Fervency to teach them many important Things; and in particular spake to them concerning the Kingdom of GOD which he was now erecting, and healed many of their Sick People, [even all] those that were brought to him and had Need of Healing.

John VI. 3. And in Prosecution of this Design, that he might be heard and seen with the greater Advantage, Jesus went up into a Mountain, and there sat down, with his Disciples and the Multitudes about him. And indeed it was a Season of the Year which admitted it; for the Spring was now so far advanced, that the Passover, a grand Feast of the Jews, was near (e).

34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much People, and was moved with Compassion toward them, because they were as Sheep not having a Shepherd: [LUK. and he received them,] and began to teach them many Things, [LUK. and spake unto them of the Kingdom of GOD, and healed [their Sick, even all] them that had Need of Healing.] [MAT. XIV. 14. LUKE IX.—11.]

JOHN VI. 3. And Jesus went up into a Mountain, and there he sat with his Disciples.

4 And the Passover, a Feast of the Jews, was nigh.

And

(e) *The Passover, a Feast of the Jews, was near.*] Almost all, who have compiled Harmonies of the Gospels, have concluded, that this was at least the Third Passover of our Lord's publick Ministry; and Sir Isaac Newton reckons it the Fourth. (See Note (a) on John ii. 13. pag. 149, 150.) But Mr. Manne advances a most singular Hypothesis, which is, that it was no Passover at all, but was the Feast of Pentecost: (Dissert. pag. 163.) But he has no Authority for making such an Alteration, all the old Manuscripts and Versions agreeing with the received Reading, which therefore should not be changed without urgent Necessity; whereas there is no Necessity at all for it in this Place: Nor is it possible, that this should be, as he supposes, the Feast of Pentecost, following the First Passover of Christ's Ministry; because such Things are expressly said to have happened between that Passover and this Feast, as could not be crowded into the narrow Compass assigned them on this Scheme.—For according to Mr. Manne's Scheme, the Passover happened on April the 2d, the Feast of Pentecost

Christ feeds the Multitude.



Claude Audran inv.

Sherlock sculp.

And Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the Disciples, and the Disciples to them that were set down; & likewise of the Fishes, as much as they would.

John, Ch. VI. v. 11.

His Disciples would have dismissed them in the Evening.

LUKE IX. 12. And when the Day began to wear away, [MAR. and was now far spent,] [and it was Evening;] then [his Disciples] even the Twelve came [MAR. unto him, and said, This is a desert Place, and now the Time is far passed,] send the Multitude away, that they may go into the Towns and Country round about, and lodge, [MAR. and buy themselves Bread,] and get Victuals; [MAR. for they have nothing to eat.] [MAT. XIV. 15. MARK VI. 35, 36.]

And when they had thus spent the Day in a delightful Attendance upon him, and it now began to decline, and indeed was so far spent, that the Evening came on, then some of his Disciples, and particularly the Twelve Apostles, who were now round him, came to him, and said, This is a solitary desert Place, where there is neither Food nor Lodging to be had, and the Time of Day is now far advanced; it will therefore be proper to put an End to thy Discourse, and to dismiss the Multitude, that they may go into the Towns and Country-Places round about us, and find Conveniencies to lodge there, and may have Opportunity to buy themselves Bread and get other Food; for they have fasted all the Day, and can have nothing here to eat.

SECT. 78.
Luke IX. 12.

JOHN VI. 5. When Jesus then lift up his Eyes, and saw

Then Jesus lifted up his Eyes, and seeing a great

John VI. 5.

great

multitude on May the 23d, and this Miracle of feeding the Five thousand at the latter End of April. Now he himself allows, that after the First Passover, [at which he staid long enough to work many Miracles, and to have a Conference with Nicodemus,] Jesus [having, as John tells us, chap. iii. 22. tarried some Time with his Disciples in Judea, and made so many Disciples there, that he alarmed the Pharisees; see John iv. 1.] went through Samaria; and after having spent Two Days at Sichar, [and every Hour in such a Circumstance is important,] came into Galilee, and taught in all their Synagogues; preached the Sermon on the Mount; and then [having, as Luke tells us, chap. iv. 31. dwelt a while at Capernaum, and taught them on the Sabbath Days,] cured Peter's Mother-in-Law: Then having cast out Legion, cured the Paralytick, called Matthew, and [after having kept them with him some Time, as Mark and Luke intimate, Sect. 52. pag. 338.] sent out the Twelve Apostles; and having on one Sabbath vindicated his Disciples for plucking the Ears of Corn, and on another cured the Man with a withered Hand, he then goes to Nazareth, [where he spent at least one Sabbath;] and after many other Miracles, and the Return of the Twelve, goes into the Desert: [John the Baptist in the mean Time having been seized, (for it is directly said he was at Liberty after the First Passover, John iii. 24.) and after frequent Audiences, while Herodias long waited an Opportunity to destroy him, being at length beheaded.] All these Events, except those included in Crotchets, Mr. Manne expressly mentions; (pag. 166,—171.) and those that are so included, the Evangelists in express Words connect with the rest. Now I appeal to any unprejudiced Person, whether it is possible, these Things could happen in a Month. It may rather be doubted, whether Two Years be sufficient for them, and others connected with them in the preceding Sections. On the whole, I cannot recollect any Instance, in which a Person of such distinguished Learning and Abilities, has been betrayed by Love to an Hypothesis, into so palpable an Error.—The Reader will pardon my having been so large in confuting a Scheme, so inconsistent with that laid down above, and will, I hope, perceive, that it is proved, not only to be precarious or unlikely, but even impossible.

(f) For

SECT. 78. *great Company, who, (as was said before,) were come out of all the Cities to him, he says*
 John VI. 5. *to Philip, who being a Native of Bethsaida was acquainted in that Country, (John i. 44. pag. 138.) How and whence shall we buy Bread for the Entertainment of all these People, that they may eat with me before we*
 6 *part? (And this he said only to try him, and to give him an Opportunity of observing what followed more attentively; for he himself very well knew what he was about to do,*
 7 *and had determined how to proceed.) But Philip, forgetting what had been done of this Kind by Elijah and Elisha, Prophets so far inferior to Jesus, (1 Kings xvii. 14,—16. and 2 Kings iv. 4,—6. 42,—44.) and even by Jesus himself at Cana in Galilee, (John ii. 6,—11. Sect. 23.) was surprized that he should mention such a Thing, and answered him, Two hundred Pennyworth of Bread, or as much as could be purchased for Two hundred Denarii (f), which is at present all our little Stock, is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little Refreshment, and much less would it furnish them with a full Meal; it will be necessary therefore immediately to dismiss them, that they may have Time to shift for themselves.*

Mat. XIV.
16.

But Jesus said to him, and to them that stood near him, who had but just now made the same Proposal, They have no Need to go away fasting, nor am I willing to dismiss them so, without any Supply; and therefore, let them have Food for their Refreshment here, and instead of sending them away to provide for themselves, do you make ready for them, and give ye them [something]
 to

saw a great Company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy Bread, that these may eat?

6 (And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.)

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred Pennyworth of Bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

MAT. XIV. 16. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart, give ye them
 to

(f) For Two hundred Denarii.] This amounts to about *Six Pounds, Five Shillings of our Money.* The Mention of *that Sum* seems to intimate, (as in the *Paraphrase*,) that their whole Stock amounted to so much.

(g) There

and orders them all to sit down on the Grass.

to eat. [And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy Two hundred Pennyworth of Bread [LUK. and Meat for all this People,] and give them to eat?] [MARK VI. 37. LUKE IX. 13.—]

to eat. *And they say unto him, Shall we then go to any neighbouring Place, and buy Two Hundred Pennyworth of Bread [and Meat for all this Multitude of People, and give [it] them to eat,* that it may go as far as it can? If such be thy Pleasure, we shall not offer to dispute it, whatever be the Consequence as to ourselves.

SECT. 78.
Mat. XIV. 16.

MARK VI. 38.—He saith unto them, How many Loaves have ye? go and see.

But as he purposed in himself to entertain the Multitude out of the little Store of Provisions they had, Jesus says to them, How many Loaves have you here already? go and see that, and there will be no Need of buying any more. Upon which *one of his*

Mark VI. 38.

JOHN VI. 8. One of his Disciples, Andrew, Simon Peters Brother, saith unto him,

Disciples, namely, Andrew, who was Simon Peter's Brother, went to inquire; and soon returning back with an Account of what they had, he says unto him, I find there is a Lad here, that has five coarse Barley Loaves, and two small Fishes, which he would let us have; but we have no more to offer them, either of Bread or Meat; [and] what are they among so many, to satisfy the Hunger of so great a Company? And he said to them, Do you be under no Concern about the Scantiness of your Provisions; but bring them hither to me, for even these shall suffice.

John VI. 8:

9 There is a Lad here, which hath five Barley Loaves, and two small Fishes: but [LUK. we have no more, and] what are they among so many? [MAT. XIV. 17. MARK VI.—38. LUKE IX.—13.]

MAT. XIV. 18. He said, Bring them hither to me.

9

Mat. XIV. 18.

19—And he commanded the Multitude to sit down [upon the green Grass;] [LUK. and he said to his Disciples,] [Make them all sit down by Companies.] [JOH. Now there was much Grass in the Place.] [MARK VI. 39. LUKE IX. 14.— JOHN VI. 10.—]

And when they were brought to him, he commanded the Multitude to sit down upon the green Grass, which at that Season of the Year was pretty high: And that the Distribution of the Food might be more orderly, and the Number of Persons be the better observed, he said to his Disciples, Let them be placed in Order, and cause them all to sit down by Companies in Rows. Now there was then much Grass in the Place (g), in which

19

(g) *There was much Grass in the Place.*] It is also said, (Mark vi. 39.) that the Grass was green; as it was before the Passover, but not near the Feast of Pentecost, when

SECT. 78. which they might sit down with Ease and
Pleasure.

Luke IX. 15. *And his Disciples would no more dispute the Matter with him ; but they did so as the Lord had commanded them, and caused them all to sit down, tho' they could not see how they were to be fed. The Men therefore sate down by themselves in Rows, which there was Room to pass between, by Hundreds and by Fifties, in a long Square, containing an Hundred in Rank, and Fifty in File (b) : And they were about Five Thousand in Number, not to mention the Women and Children, who were placed apart.*

Mark VI. 41. *And Jesus taking the five Loaves and the two Fishes, looked up to Heaven with great Reverence and Affection, and having given Thanks to his Heavenly Father for the Bounties of his kind Providence, and the extraordinary Instance of Divine Favour now to be manifested, he in a solemn Manner blessed them, commanding upon the Provisions before him that singular Blessing, by which they were to be multiplied in the Distribution ; and then he brake the Loaves in Pieces, and distributed them to his Disciples, that they might set [them] before the Multitude, who were set down upon the Grass, as he had ordered them : And accordingly the Disciples [gave them] round, to all the Multitude,*

LUKE IX. 15. And they did so, and made them all sit down. [JOH. So the Men sat down] [in Ranks, by Hundreds, and by Fifties,] [JOH. in Number about Five thousand.] [MARK VI. 40. LUKE IX. — 14. JOHN VI. — 10.]

MARK VI. 41. And when [JOH. Jesus] had taken the five Loaves, and the two Fishes, he looked up to Heaven, and [JOH. when he had given Thanks, he] blessed [LUK. them,] and brake the Loaves, and [JOH. distributed] them to his Disciples [LUK. to set before the Multitude] [JOH. that were set down,] [and the Disciples gave them to the Multitude,] and

when even the *Corn Harvest* was concluded. Tho' they sate thus on the Ground, under no Canopy but the Sky, and had only *Barley Bread*, and as it seems, cold or dried *Fishes* to eat, and probably nothing but *Water* to drink ; yet, as *Mr. Henry* truly and beautifully observes, on *Mat. xiv. 19.* “ There was more real Grandeur displayed by the Master of this Feast, than by *Abasuerus* in that *Royal Feast*, which was intended to shew the Riches of his glorious Kingdom, and the Honour of his excellent Majesty. See *Esh. i. 4, — 7.*”

(b) An Hundred in Rank, and Fifty in File.] That this is the proper Import, is abundantly proved by *Mr. Pierce*, in his *Fifth Dissertation*, annexed to the *Hebrews*. This was the shortest and exactest Way of ranging them, and reconciles *Mark's* Account above, with *Luke's*, who only speaks of their sitting down by *Fifties*. Thus disposed, they would wait more patiently, till they were served in their Turns ; the Number would appear at once ; and they would see that *Christ* knew it.

Twelve Baskets are filled with the Fragments.

and [JOH. likewise] the two Fishes divided he among them all, [JOH. as much as they would.] [MAT. XIV. —19. LUKE IX. 16. JOHN VI. 11.]

42 And they did all eat, and were filled. [MAT. XIV. 20.—LUKE IX. 17.—]

JOHN VI. 12. When they were filled, he said unto his Disciples, Gather up the Fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve Baskets with the Fragments of the five Barley Loaves, [MAR. and of the Fishes,] which remained over and above, unto them that had eaten. [MAT. XIV. —20. MARK VI. 43. LUKE IX.—17.]

MAT. XIV. 21. And they that had eaten [of the Loaves,] were about five thousand Men, beside Women and Children. [MARK VI. 44.]

JOHN VI. 14. Then those Men, when they had seen the Miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a Truth that Prophet that should come into the World.

titute, with believing Hearts, and unsparing Hands: And he likewise divided the two Fishes among them all, and gave them by the Hands of his Disciples to the whole Company, supplying them with as much as they would take. And so wonderfully were the Provisions increased by passing under his creating Hand, that they did all eat of them, till they had every one enough, and were all fully satisfied.

And when they were all sufficiently filled, he says to his Disciples, Let there be no Waste made of any Part of the Divine Bounties, but gather up the broken Pieces that remain, that so nothing may be lost. The Disciples therefore, in Obedience to his Word, went through the several Ranks of the whole Company, and picking up the Pieces that were left, they gathered them together, and filled no less than Twelve Baskets, with the very Fragments of the Five Barley Loaves, and of the Two Fishes, which remained over and above to them that had eaten: A Quantity vastly larger than they had at first.

And yet they who had eaten of the Loaves and Fishes, (as by the Disposition of the Multitude in Rows the Number of them might be easily computed,) were about Five Thousand Men, besides Women and Children, who sat by themselves, and might almost amount to an equal Number.

The Men therefore, who were present upon this Occasion, and were thus miraculously entertained, having seen the Miracle which Jesus wrought, after all the preceding Wonders of the Day, were so mightily struck with it, that they said, Truly this is the great Prophet who was to come into the World, and has so long been impatiently expected by us; even the Messiah himself, whom God has appointed to rule, as well

514 *The People thinking to make him King, he sends them away.*

SECT. 78. as to teach his People. (Compare Deut. xviii.

18. and see also 1 Mac. xiv. 41.) And concluding that the same miraculous Power could make itself victorious over all Opposition, and easily could subsist and maintain an Army (*i*) in the greatest Extremity, they began to enter into Measures for proclaiming his Title to the Kingdom of Israel, and fixing him on the Throne of David his Father.

John VI. 14.

15 *Jesus therefore knowing that they would quickly urge this Proposal, and that their Hearts were so much set upon it, that they were ready to come and seize him by Force, to make him King, was determined immediately to part with them, lest he should give Umbrage to the Jealousy of the Romans, and lead the People that followed him into Inconvenience and Ruin: He therefore immediately obliged his Disciples to get into the Ship in which they had come thither (k), and to go before him to the other Side of the Creek to the City of Bethsaida (l), while he dismissed the Multitude, who upon seeing his Dis-*

15—When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by Force, to make him a King, [MAR. straightway he constrained his Disciples to get into the Ship, and to go [before him] to the other Side unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the People.] [MAT. XIV. 22. MARK VI. 45.]

(*i*) Concluding that the same miraculous Power could subsist and maintain an Army.] It is certain, that an Army of less than *Five Thousand Men* might, under such a Leader, have accomplished the greatest Events, and have obtained even *universal Empire*, had he been pleased to exert his Power to such Purposes. They probably remembered, how vast an Host had been defeated by *Gideon* with only *Three hundred Men* with their *Trumpets* and *Lamps*; (*Judg. vii. 22.*) not to mention *Samson's* slaying a *Thousand* with a *Jaw-bone*, (*Judg. xv. 15.*) and other extraordinary Events of this Kind, recorded in the *Old Testament*. (See *2 Kings* iii. 21,—24. *2 Chron.* xx. 22,—25. and compare *Lev. xxvi. 8.*) They also knew, that the whole Body of the *Jewish Nation* was then highly spirited with these Sentiments; and might reasonably expect, that *Legions* of them would soon pour in, to the Standards of such a Leader.

(*k*) *Obliged his Disciples, &c.*] This Phrase may intimate, that *they*, who plainly appear to have been too fond of *Secular Views*, were rather inclined to *stay*, and quitted the Multitude with some *Reluctance*, in what they thought so favourable a Conjunction. But it was certainly the highest *Prudence* in *Christ*, considering what his Purposes were, to order them away, and to dismiss them and the Multitude, before any thing happened which could alarm or offend even the most jealous *Spies*, who might perhaps herd among the Croud.

(*l*) *And to go before him to the other Side of the Creek to Bethsaida.*] It was observed before, (*Luke ix. 10. pag. 507.*) that they were now in a *Desert Place* belonging to *Bethsaida*; which probably was divided from it by some *Bay* or *Creek*, that run into the

MARK VI. 46. And when he had sent them away, [and the Evening was come,] he departed [JOH. again,] [and went up [JOH. himself alone] into a Mountain to pray.] [MAT. XIV. 23. JOHN VI.—15.]

Disciples go aboard, would be more easily prevailed upon to go away. *And when he had accordingly dismissed the Multitude, and sent them off as well as his Disciples, and the Evening was now come, he again withdrew according to his frequent Custom, [and] ascended up by himself alone to a Mountain in those Parts, to pray, to his Heavenly Father, in which delightful Exercise he spent the greatest Part of the Night.*

SECT. 78.
Mark VI. 46.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

SO evidently true is it, that *Man liveth not by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of GOD!* (Mat. iv. 4.) How wonderful did the *Power of Christ* appear, in thus *multiplying the Food!* and how amiable his *Compassion*, in his affectionate *Concern for the Relief* of his necessitous Followers! It is to be esteemed a great Happiness, when the *Ministers of the Gospel* have it in their *Power*, to assist Men in their *Temporal*, as well as *Spiritual Necessities*; and it is peculiarly incumbent upon them, thus to do *Good and communicate*; for with such *Sacrifices* from their Hands *GOD is peculiarly well pleased*, and the *Success* of their *Ministry* may be greatly promoted by them. (Heb. xiii. 16.)

The *Disciples received from the Hand of Christ the Food they delivered to the People*: And so should *Ministers* be concerned, that they may receive from *Christ*, what they dispense to others as the *Bread of Life*; and that they also at the same Time may live upon it, as the *Support of their own Souls*. How great an Honour is it to be employed as *Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD!* Let not immoderate *Secular Cares*, let not the *Desire of Worldly Riches or Greatness*, interrupt us in this blessed Work! *Christ withdrew from those, who would have made him King*: Ill therefore does it become his *Disciples*, to pursue *Earthly Grandeur*; and most unworthy is it of his *Ministers*,

T t t 2 to

the Land: And *Christ now only ordered his Disciples to pass over this Creek to the City of Bethsaida*, where he might afterwards have joined them, when he had sent away the *People*. But in their Passage thither a *great Storm* arose, and they were driven by a *contrary Wind* into the *Midst of the Sea towards Capernaum*. This reconciles the Place before us with the Beginning of the next Section, where, notwithstanding the Direction *Christ had given them to go before him to Bethsaida*, we find them going to *Capernaum*, which lay on the other Side of the Lake. Compare Note (a), pag. 517.

SECT. 78. *to act as if his Kingdom were of this World. May we learn in every State to be content! (Phil. iv. 11.) In Want, may we cheerfully trust Providence! In Plenty, may we not wantonly abuse it! but learn,*

Ver. 12.

by his Command of gathering up the Fragments even of this miraculous Feast, a wise Frugality in the Use of our Enjoyments; that nothing may be lost, nor a Reserve be wanting, by which the Streams of future Liberality may be fed!

Mat. xiv. 23.

When the Day had been thus employed, Christ retired to a Mountain to pray. Thus must secret Devotion attend our publick Labours for the Instruction and Salvation of Men, if we would secure that Divine Blessing, without which neither the most eloquent Preaching, nor the most engaging and benevolent Conduct, can command or promise Success.

S E C T. LXXIX.

As the Disciples were upon the Lake, they are overtaken by a Storm, and CHRIST comes to them walking on the Sea, and stills the Tempest. Mat. XIV. 24, to the End. Mark VI. 47, to the End. John VI. 16,—21.

JOHN VI. 16.

SECT. 79.
John VI. 16.

IT was before observed, that after the miraculous feeding of the Five thousand, Christ ordered his Disciples to depart, and go before him to Bethsaida; and accordingly, *when the Evening was come, his Disciples went down to the Sea—[Side;] And having entered into the Ship which waited for them, and put off from Land, they quickly met with a cross Wind that changed their Course, and were soon driven farther from the Shore than they designed, so that instead of getting to Bethsaida, they were going to the other Side of the Sea towards Capernaum (a):*
And

17

JOHN VI. 16.

AND when Even was *now* come, his Disciples went down unto the Sea; [MARK VI. 47.—]

17 And entred into a Ship, and went over the Sea towards Capernaum: and it was

(a) *Were going to the other Side of the Sea towards Capernaum.] This exactly expresses*

was now dark, [MAR. and the Ship was in the Midst of the Sea:] and Jesus was not come unto them, [MAR. but was alone on the Land.] [MAT. XIV. 24.—MARK VI.—47.]

And Night coming on, it was now dark, and the Ship was in the Midst of the Sea, they did not exactly know where. Now Jesus was not yet come to them (b), [but was] still where they left him, by himself alone on the Land, employed in secret Devotion, on the Mountain to which he retired.

SECT. 79.
John VI. 17.

18 And the Sea arose, by reason of a great Wind that blew, [and the Ship was tossed with Waves; for the Wind was contrary] [MAR. unto them.] [MAT. XIV. —24. MARK VI. 48.—]

In the mean Time they were in Circumstances of great Danger and Distress, for the Sea arose in a very tempestuous Manner, by reason of a violent Storm of Wind which blew hard upon it; and the Vessel was tossed by the swelling Waves; for the Wind was contrary to them, and had driven them far out of their intended Course.

18

19—So when they had rowed about five and twenty, or thirty Furlongs, [in the fourth Watch of the Night, Jesus]

So when they had rowed about Twenty-five or Thirty Furlongs, or something more than a League (c), in the Beginning of the fourth Watch of the Night, or about Three o' Clock in the Morning (d), Jesus who knew

19

presses what is said in the Original; *αρχὴν ὡραίων τῆς θαλάσσης Καπερναύμ*: And I cannot but look upon it as an Argument, that *Bethsaida* lay on the East Side of the Sea of Tiberias, (tho' most of our Maps have placed it in a different Situation;) since *Capernaum* is allowed by all to have been situated on the Western Shore, and is here represented as lying on the opposite Side to *Bethsaida*, from which they were driven over the Sea to *Capernaum*. (Compare Note (l) in the preceding Section, pag. 515.) This Situation of *Bethsaida* is likewise confirmed by *Josephus*, (*Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 9.* [al. 8.] §. 1.) who calls it by the Name of *Julias*; which *Pliny* also speaks of, as on the Eastern Side of the Lake of *Gennesareth*. See *Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. v. cap. 15.* and *Lightfoot. Cent. Chorog. in Mat. cap. 93.*

(b) *Now Jesus was not yet come to them.*] It is a great Imperfection of our Language, that we have no proper Copulative Particle, but [and]; which is here so much the more unhappy, as in laying together the whole Narration of the Evangelists, the Use of that Particle is much more frequent, than it would have been in any single one. I chuse therefore here, and in some other Places, to change it for the Word [now,] which in this Connection signifies almost, if not entirely, the same Thing.

(c) *When they had rowed about Twenty-five or Thirty Furlongs.*] Probably when they found the Wind so violent, they were afraid of being shipwrecked, if they came near the Shore; and therefore, having perhaps sailed a while before the Wind, they now rowed out to Sea: For as they must have been several Hours at Sea, one can hardly imagine, that with so brisk a Gale they made no more Way in all this Time than a little above a League; unless we impute it to their having laboured all they could to avoid crossing the Sea, and to get to *Bethsaida*.

(d) *In the fourth Watch of the Night.*] The Jewish Night was divided into four Watches, each containing about three of our Hours, especially so near the Equinox. The first began at Six in the Evening, the second at Nine, the third at Midnight, and the

SECT. 79. knew the Distress they were in, *perceiving* that they were weary with rowing, and in vain attempted to weather the Storm, came to them walking on the Sea (e), by his miraculous Power rendering his own Body lighter than usual, or strengthening the Waves to bear it: And, farther to exercise their Faith and Courage, he seemed, at first, as if he would have passed by them. And when

Mat. XIV. 26.

the Disciples by that little Light, which the Reflection of the Moon on the Water afforded them (f), saw him walking on the Sea, and passing near the Ship, not perfectly discerning who it was, they were much terrified, saying, It is certainly an Apparition, for no human Body could thus be supported by the Water: And they had such a Dread of what might be the Consequence, that they

Mark VI. 50. cried out aloud for Fear: For they all saw him, and notwithstanding the miraculous Power that he had lately given them over Evil Spirits, (Mat. x. 1. pag. 478.) yet were they greatly troubled. And therefore to deliver them from that Anxiety, he immediately spoke to them, and said, Take Courage, for it is I, your Lord and Master: Be not afraid of me, who am your Friend, nor of the violent Tempest, which cannot hurt you while under my Protection.

Mat. XIV. 28.

Then, as they knew his Voice, they presently began to lay aside their Fears; and Peter, whose natural Temper was remarkably

Jesus] [MAR. saw them toiling in rowing, and cometh unto them walking upon the Sea, and would have passed by them.] [MAT. XIV. 25. MARK VI.—48.]

MAT. XIV. 26. And when the Disciples saw him walking on the Sea, [JOH. and drawing nigh unto the Ship,] they were [JOH. afraid,] saying, It is a Spirit; and they cried out for Fear. [MARK VI. 49. JOHN VI.—19.]

MARK VI. 50. For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and said unto them, Be of good Cheer, it is I, be not afraid. [MAT. XIV. 27. JOHN VI. 20.]

MAT. XIV. 28. And Peter

the Fourth at Three in the Morning. (See Godwin's *Moses and Aaron*, book iii. chap. 1.) F. Ca'met, (in the *Word Hours*,) thinks they learnt this Division from the Romans. See *Veget. de Re militari*, lib. iii. cap. 8. and *Pitisc. Lexic. in Vigil.*

(e) *Walking on the Sea.*] This was thought so impracticable, that the Picture of two Feet walking on the Sea, was an Egyptian Hieroglyphic for an impossible Thing. And in the Scripture it is mentioned as the Prerogative of GOD, that he alone treadeth upon the Waves of the Sea. Job ix. 8.

(f) By that little Light, &c.] It is well known, that it is never entirely dark on the Water; not to urge that the Moon might perhaps now be in the last Quarter, as it must have been, if this was about three Weeks before the Passover.

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And beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

S^t Mat. Ch. XIV. ver. 30.

But Peter attempting it, is ready to sink.

ter answered him, and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the Water.

ably warm and forward, immediately answering, said unto him, Lord, if it indeed be thou who art walking on the Sea, as I now apprehend it is, I am so far from being afraid of the Tempest in thy Presence, while I continue in the Ship, that I am willing thou shouldst, if thou pleasest, command me to come to thee even upon the Water, and I will immediately venture to do it.

SECT. 79.
 Mat. XIV. 28.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the Ship, he walked on the Water, to go to Jesus.

And Jesus, that he thus might exercise his Faith, and by convincing him of his Weakness, might give a Check at the same Time to his excessive Confidence, complied with his Proposal, and said to him, If thou hast Faith and Courage to attempt it, come then, and make the Trial: And Peter, being now assured it was indeed his Master, came down from the Ship, and fully satisfied that he was able to uphold and bear him up, walked on the Water for a while, to come unto Jesus:

29

30 But when he saw the Wind boisterous, he was afraid: and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

But soon perceiving that the Wind was very strong, and the Sea raging with great Violence, he was afraid of being lost; and his Faith failing him, he presently began to sink (g), and cried out in a great Consternation of Spirit, saying, Lord, save me, or I shall be swallowed up in a Moment.

30

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his Hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

And immediately Jesus stretching out his Hand laid hold on him, and to remind him of his Unbelief, said to him, O thou of little Faith, why didst thou doubt of my Protection, when I was so near; when thou hadst my Commission to make the Trial, and hadst in Part experienced my Power in supporting thee thus far on the Waves?

31

And

(g) He began to sink.] He probably could swim, as most Fishermen can; (compare John xxi. 7.) and perhaps he might venture on the Attempt he now made, with some secret Dependence on his Art, which God for wise Reasons suffered to fail him. The Word καταπορεύσθαι is very expressive, and may intimate, that he felt himself sinking with such a Weight that he had no Hope of recovering himself, and expected nothing but that he should go directly to the Bottom of the Sea.

(b). Into

JESUS comes into the Ship, and the Wind ceases.

SECT. 79.
 Mark VI. 51.

And taking Peter with him, he ascended to them into the Bark (b); and when they were come aboard, they that were there received him with the utmost Pleasure, as the great Pledge of their common Safety. And they quickly found the happy Effects of his Presence, for all the Fury of the Wind now ceased at once; and what was yet more surprising, the Ship was immediately at the Point of Land to which they were going. And they were all exceedingly amazed in themselves and astonished beyond Measure (i), as if they had never before seen any Exertion of his miraculous Power. For their Heart was so hardened, and their Mind so insensible, that they considered not the yet more wonderful and glorious [Miracle of the] Loaves, which but the Day before they had seen multiplied in so extraordinary a Manner, as to display even a creating Power (k).

Mat. XIV.
 33.

Then they that were about him, even all that were in the Ship, came and worshipped him; as in a Rapture of Wonder, Devotion, and Joy, falling down at his Feet with the utmost Reverence, and saying, We are now con-

MARK VI. 51. And he went up unto them into the Ship; [and when they were come into the Ship,] [JOH. they willingly received him,] and the Wind ceased: [JOH. and immediately the Ship was at the Land whither they went:] and they were fore amazed in themselves beyond Measure, and wondered. [MAT. XIV. 32. JOHN VI. 21.]

52 For they considered not the Miracle of the Loaves, for their Heart was hardened.

MAT. XIV. 33. Then they that were in the Ship, came and worshipped him, saying,

(b) *Into the Bark.*] Though the Evangelists generally use the Word *πλοιοι*, which signifies any Vessel in which Men sail on the Sea, I have sometimes varied it a little, in order to prevent that ill Effect, which the Repetition of it so frequently as it occurs, would have on the Ear in reading; and have here called it a *Bark*, that it may not be imagined like our modern Ships. Accordingly John calls it, *πλοιαριον*, or a little Vessel; chap. vi. 22. Compare John xxi. 3, 8.

(i) *Exceedingly amazed—and astonished beyond Measure.*] The Words *λαον εν περιουσι εξετασθη, και θαυμαζον*, are too emphatical, to be exactly rendered; but this is plainly the Sense of them: And the accurate Reader will observe, that I suppose the Words *λαον εν περιουσι* to be equally connected with *θαυμαζον* and *εξετασθη*.

(k) *As to display even a creating Power.*] Had not this been done, it is hard to imagine how twelve Baskets full of Fragments could have been taken up: It was therefore in itself, (as the Evangelist plainly intimates,) a more certain and glorious Miracle, than the ceasing of the Wind immediately on his coming into the Ship. Their speedy Landing after this, must also have increased their Astonishment.—Considering this Instance, and that of Philip, Acts viii. 39, 40. we have Room to admire the Condescension of Christ, in submitting so often to the Fatigues of journeying on Foot from one Place to another, when he could at Pleasure have commanded Angels to transport him. With equal Ease he could have walked ashore from the Waves of the Sea, but with a most edifying Modesty he avoided the Ostentation of it.

(f) T.



S^t. Matt. Ch. XIV. v. 24. 35. 36.

— And brought unto him all that were diseased; And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment, and as many as touched were made perfectly whole. —

saying, Of a Truth thou art the Son of God.

convinced, that *thou art indeed the Son of* SECT. 79. *GOD,* and hast an unlimited Power over the whole Creation.

34 And when they were gone over, they came into the Land of Gennesaret, [and drew to the Shore.] [MARK VI. 53.]

And when they had thus passed over the Mat. XIV. *Lake, they came to a Part of the Land of* 34. *Gennesareth, and put to Shore* not far from Capernaum (1), to which, it was observed before, (pag. 516.) their Course was tending. *And when they came out of the Vessel,* Mark VI. 54.

MARK VI. 54. And when they were come out of the Ship, straightway they knew him.

as it was a Place where Jesus had often been, *they* that were present when he landed, *immediately knew him*; and though it was so early in the Morning, the News of his Arrival quickly spread through all the neighbouring Parts. For they were ready to inform each other of his Coming; and

55 [And when the Men of that Place had Knowledge of him, they sent out,] and ran through that whole Region round about, and began to carry about in Beds those that were sick, [and brought unto him all that were diseased,] where they heard he was. [MAT. XIV. 35.]

the Men of that Place who knew him, no sooner were apprised of his Arrival, but presently *they sent out, and ran to every Place in all that Country round about,* to give Notice to their Neighbours that Jesus was there, and that they now again should have the Privilege of his Preaching, and working Miracles among them: *And they began to carry about the Sick in Beds, and brought unto him all that were diseased, to the Place where they heard he was.* And this was indeed the

56 And whithersoever he entered, into Villages, or Cities, or Countrey, they laid the Sick in the Streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were but the Border of his Garment: and as many as touched him, were made

general Custom *where-ever he came:* As soon as he was entered into any Towns, or Cities, or Country [Villages,] they laid the Sick in the most publick Streets through which they expected he would pass, and intreated him that they might at least touch the Fringe of his Garment; and as many as touched him, believing

(1) To the Land of Gennesareth, and put to Shore not far from Capernaum.] The Land of Gennesareth was a large Tract of Ground on the Western Shore of the Lake, in Part of which Capernaum appears from hence to have been situated. For though Matthew and Mark only speak of their coming to the Land of Gennesareth, and putting to Shore there, it is plain from John's Account, that Jesus at his landing came to Capernaum; for it was there the People found him, that followed him in the Morning from the other Side of the Sea. Compare John vi. 22, 24, 25. in the next Section, and ver. 59. Sect. 82.

SECT. 79. *believing in his Power and his Readiness to* made [perfectly] whole.
 heal them, *were perfectly recovered*, how ex- [MAT. XIV. 36.]
 Mark VI. 56. *stream soever their Illness had been.*

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- John vi. 17,
18. **T**HUS it still pleases *Christ* to exercise the *Faith* of his People, that he may strengthen their Dependance on him, and demonstrate at once his Compassion, and his Power. Thus are *Storms* permitted oftentimes to rise around them, and for a while they are *left in Darknes*, and are *tossed with Tempests*: But he is *near* at hand, even when they think him at the remotest Distance; and when he
- Mark vi. 48. seems to be *passing by them*, as regardless of their Danger and Distress, he has Designs of Grace and Mercy to them, and acts in such a Way, on Purpose to quicken and excite them to a greater Earnestness and Fervor in their Applications to him. Happy would the *Christian* be, could he always *discern his Lord*, and always conceive of him *aright*! But alas, how often does he appear to the disordered Mind, as the Object of *Terror*, rather than of *Confidence*! and in a Day of *Darknes*, while he may seem to treat his suffering People with Neglect, instead of seeking him with a more earnest Impor-tunity, how are they ready to be overwhelmed with *Fears*, and to conclude *he has forgotten them*!
- Ver. 49. At the *Command of Jesus*, *Peter* ventured to go to him on the Sea. And through what Storms and Dangers may we not safely venture, if we are sure that *our Lord calls us*! Yet the *Rebuke* which he suffered, may warn us, not rashly to throw ourselves on *unnecessary Trials*, lest our Excess of *Confidence* end in *Fear* and *Disgrace*. Modesty and Caution will adorn our other Virtues, and render us amiable in the Eyes of the humble *Jesus*.
- Ver. 30. In how many Circumstances of Life does the *Christian* appear to his own Imagination, like *Peter beginning to sink* in the Waves! But in the Time of our Distress, like him, let us *cry to Jesus for Help*; and while we are lifting up the Hands of *Faith* and *Prayer*, we may humbly hope, that *Christ* will *stretch forth his* omnipotent *Arm* for
- Ver. 32, 33. our Rescue. Let every Experience of this Kind, and all the season-able Aid he is from Time to Time imparting to us, establish our *Dependance* on him, and inforce our *Obedience* to him, as the *Son of*
- Mark vi. 52. **GOD**. May Divine Grace deliver us from that *Hardness of Heart*, that Stupidity and Insensibility of Mind, which sometimes remains
uncon-

The People in the Morning see that JESUS was gone. 523
unconvinced in the Midst of Evidence, and unaffected under the most SECT. 79.
moving Illustrations of his Abilities and Willingness to help us!

S E C T. LXXX.

Our LORD being followed by the Multitude to Capernaum, cautions them against those Worldly Views with which they sought him, and declares himself to be the Bread of Life. John VI. 22,—40.

JOHN VI. 22.

THE Day following when the People which stood on the other Side of the Sea, saw that there was none other Boat there, save that one whereinto his Disciples were entred, and that Jesus went not with his Disciples into the Boat, but that his Disciples were gone away alone :

JOHN VI. 22.

IN the mean Time, while Jesus was thus SECT. 80.
charitably employed in healing those ^{John VI. 22.}
who were brought to him in the Places near the Shore, from whence he soon went forwards to Capernaum, *on the Morrow* after he had fed the Five Thousand, great Search was made for him by those whom he had sent away the Night before : For they were so affected with the miraculous Entertainment he had given them, that there were many of *the Multitude, who* though they might withdraw to a little Distance on his dismissing the Assembly, (Mark vi. 46. pag. 515.) yet still *continued on the other Side of the Sea* that Night, hoping to have another Interview with him in the Morning ; and as they saw there was no other Vessel there on the Coast, but that one into which his Disciples entered when they departed in the Evening, and knew that Jesus did not go with his Disciples into the Vessel, but that his Disciples went away by themselves, leaving him there to spend the Night alone, they made no Question of his being still on that Side of the Sea. But in the Morning 23
they perceived that he was gone, and presently determined to go after him ; and though
U u u 2 there

23 (Howbeit there came other

SECT. 80. there were no Vessels there the Night before, yet were they quickly furnished with an Opportunity of following him; for *there came other Vessels very early from Tiberias, and put to Shore nigh to the Place where they had eat the Bread and Fishes, after the Lord had given Thanks, and commanded such a miraculous Blessing upon them.*

John VI. 23.

- 24 *The Multitude therefore, when they saw, that neither Jesus nor his Disciples were there on that Side, went also themselves immediately aboard the Vessels that were now arrived, as many of them as could, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus with all the Appearance of the most eager Importunity. And when they had found him on the other Side of the Sea, in the Synagogue of Capernaum, (see ver. 59.) as soon as the Worship was over, and before they quitted the Place, they accosted him with the greatest Respect, and said unto him, Rabbi, when and how camest thou hither? For as thou didst not go last Night with thy Disciples, we expected to have found thee on the other Side of the Sea, and know not when thou couldst come, or what imaginable Way thou couldst have of crossing the Water.*

- 26 *But Jesus modestly waving the Recital of those extraordinary Circumstances which attended his Passage, diverted the Discourse to a yet more important and edifying Subject; and knowing by an intimate Penetration of their very Hearts, that they were governed only by carnal Motives in this Attendance upon him, humble and zealous as it might appear, he answered them with great Solemnity, and said, Verily, verily I say unto you, You seek me, not because you have seen the Miracles that I perform, and are convinced by them that I am a Divine Teacher, but because you have eaten of the Loaves, and were filled, and have from thence concluded*

other Boats from Tiberias, nigh unto the Place where they did eat Bread, after that the Lord had given Thanks :)

24 When the People therefore saw, that Jesus was not there, neither his Disciples, they also took Shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

25 And when they had found him on the other Side of the Sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the Miracles, but because ye did eat of the Loaves, and were filled.

27 Labour not for the Meat which perisheth, but for that Meat which endureth unto everlasting Life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

ed, that you shall make yourselves rich and great by following me. But these are mean, and may be fatal Views; and I would form you to nobler and wiser Sentiments: *Labour not* therefore so much to procure the Meat which perishes, and can only support the mortal Part of your Nature (a); but rather be solicitous to obtain Divine Knowledge and Instruction, that Meat which endures to eternal Life, and will nourish your Souls to endless Felicity: This is that, which the Son of Man will most readily give you; for him has GOD the great Father of all, in Mercy to his Creatures sent into the World for this blessed Purpose, and sealed with this miraculous Power, which he daily displays (b), as an authentic Proof of his Divine Mission.

SECT. 80.
John VI. 27.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the Works of GOD?

They therefore, that they might appear willing to receive his Instructions, as well as his Bounties, said unto him, *What must we do, that we may so work the Works of GOD,* as to secure his Favour to eternal Life?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the Work of GOD, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

Jesus replying said unto them, Think not of meriting the Divine Favour by any Thing you can do yourselves; for *this is the great Work of GOD,* which he requires above all Things, and which he will be ready to accept, *that you believe on him whom he has sent,*

(a) *Labour not to procure the Meat which perishes.*] Hardly any one can imagine, our Lord intended to prohibit Men's labouring for the Subsistence of their Bodies. Most of those who attended him, probably had no other Support than their Labour: But his Intent was plainly, to declare how much the Interest of the Soul was to be preferred to that of the Body. (See Note (h) on Mat. xii. 7. pag. 325.)—*Ἐργάζεσθαι βρωμῆς* is to labour to procure Meat.

(b) *Him has GOD the Father sealed.*] Some have ingeniously conjectured, that this may allude to a Custom, which Princes might have, when making grand Entertainments, to give a Commission under their Hand and Seal, or perhaps to deliver a Signet, to those whom they appointed to preside in the Management of them: (See *Elfenr*, vol. i. pag. 311, 312.) Though it may possibly be sufficient to say, that *to seal* is a general Phrase, for authorizing by proper Credentials, whatever the Purpose be for which they are given; or for marking a Person out, as wholly devoted to the Service of him, whose Seal he bears.

(c) Some

SECT. 80. *sent*, crediting his Message, and venturing
 your Souls upon his Power and Grace.

John VI. 30.

Then, though they just before had seen such an astonishing Miracle, and several of them lived in the Neighbourhood of Capernaum, where he had so long multiplied those Wonders, yet some of them were so unreasonable, that *they said to him*, after all the Miracles that he had wrought (c), If thou wouldst have us to regard thee as invested with so high a Character, that far exceeds whatever has been claimed by any one before, thou shouldst produce some signal Evidence of a superior Kind to all that has been done by others: *What Sign therefore shewest thou from Heaven, that we may see [it,] and believe thee? What dost thou perform more than others, or even equal to what Moses did, that we should treat thee with so ex-*

31 *traordinary a Regard? Thou didst indeed Yesterday feed some Thousands of us in an extraordinary Manner with Barley Bread; but our Fathers, who were incomparably more numerous than that Assembly, did under the Conduct of Moses eat Manna, a far more delicious Food, in the Wilderness, even Forty Years; as it is written, (Psal. lxxviii. 24.) "He gave them Bread from Heaven to eat;" and when thou shalt give us as glorious a Demonstration of thy Mission, we will pay thee an equal Regard.*

32 *Then Jesus said to them again, Verily, verily I say, and affirm it unto you, how strange soever it may appear, Moses gave you not that Bread from Heaven, which best deserves*

30 They said therefore unto him, What Sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? What dost thou work?

31 Our Fathers did eat Manna in the Desert; as it is written, He gave them Bread from Heaven to eat.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Moses gave you not that Bread from Heaven; but

(c) Some of them were so unreasonable, that *they said to him*.] The Sentiments of those that speak to *Christ* in this Discourse, are so various, (compare *ver.* 34, 41, 42.) and the *Evangelist* so expressly declares, that there was a *Debate* between some and others of them, *ver.* 52. that I think it would be wrong, to imagine these to have been the perverse and ungrateful Sentiments of the *whole Multitude*, who had followed him with so much Eagerness from Place to Place for several Days.

(d) *That*

but my Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven.

deserves so honourable a Name; but this you are supplied with by my Father, who sending Me among you, as your Instructor and Redeemer, giveth you now the true and most excellent Bread from Heaven. For that is indeed the Bread of GOD, and may most justly claim the Title, which descendeth from the highest Heaven (d); whereas Manna fell only from the Clouds or the inferior Region of the Air; and which giveth Life and true Happiness to the whole World of Believers, whereas what Moses gave only relieved the temporal Necessities of one particular Nation.

SECT. 80.
John VI. 32.

33 For the Bread of GOD is he which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World.

33

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this Bread.

34 They therefore, when they heard him speaking of so excellent a Gift, were presently desirous to obtain it; and though as yet they did not fully understand what he intended by this Bread, some of the wiser and better Part of them (e) had such a Notion of its Excellence, that they said to him, Lord, give us evermore this Bread, on which our Life depends, and let us always live upon this Heavenly Manna.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life:

35 Then, for a farther Explication of this important Truth, Jesus said to them, I am indeed the Bread of Life (f), nor is Bread so

(d) That is indeed the Bread of GOD, which descendeth from Heaven.] It is necessary to translate ο ναιλαβανω, &c. in this ambiguous Manner, that we may not supersede the Explication which our Lord gives, in ver. 35. Dr. Clarke has justly observed this; and it is of great Importance to apply it to many other Passages, where too clear and full a Paraphrase of what is explained professedly in some subsequent Verses would only serve to flatten the whole. Compare Note (c) on Mark iv. 3. pag. 415.

(e) Some of the wiser and better Part of them.] See before, Note (c) on ver. 30.

(f) I am the Bread of Life.] Though indeed it is very usual with the Sacred Writers to represent Divine Instructions as the Food of the Soul, and to compare them to delicious and nourishing Diet; (see Psal. xix. 10. cxix. 103. Prov. ix. 5. Job xxiii. 12. Jer. xv. 16. and Heb. v. 12, 14.) yet I can recollect no Instance, in which the Instructor himself, as such, is called Food, or any are said to eat him; much less in which, as below, they are exhorted to eat his Flesh, and drink his Blood: So that Dr. Clarke's laboured and ingenious Criticism on this Passage (in the xiiith of his Seventeen Sermons) is far from being satisfactory; and however clear it may be of any such Design, I fear it has misled many to a Neglect of that great Doctrine of Christ's Atonement, to which there seems in this Context to express a Reference.

SECT. 80. so necessary to the Support of your Bodies, as
 a believing Regard to Me is to the Life of
 John VI. 35. your Souls : *He therefore that comes to me,*

and makes his Application aright, shall never hunger ; and he that truly believes in me, shall never thirst any more ; but may depend upon it, that he shall find the most restless Desires of his Soul satisfied, and conscious of the noblest Refreshment and Nourishment already received, shall grow up to a State of everlasting compleat Satisfaction and

36 *Enjoyment. But valuable as these Blessings of my Grace are, You are little disposed to pursue and accept them ; for I have already told you, (ver. 26.) that you have even seen me, and beheld the Miracles that I perform, and yet are so perverse and obstinate, that you believe not [in me,] and will not be prevailed upon to come to me for Life and Happiness. Nevertheless, tho' You*

37 *reject me, yet I shall not be universally rejected, nor shall the Purposes of my Mission be intirely frustrated ; for all that the Father has graciously chosen to himself, and whom he giveth to me in Consequence of a peculiar Covenant, to be sanctified and saved by me, will certainly at length come to me (g) : And on the other Hand, if any of you find yourselves disposed to such a believing Application to me, you have no Reason to be terrified*

Life : he that cometh to me, shall never hunger ; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst.

36 But I said unto you, that ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37 All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me ; and

(g) *All that the Father giveth me, will come to me.] I have given that Sense of this celebrated and important Text, which, on serious, and I hope, impartial Consideration, appeared to me most agreeable to the Words themselves, and to the general Tenor of Scripture. (See especially John xvii. 2, 6, 9, 11, 24.) Mr. Le Clerc's Glos upon them appears to me unnatural, and Dr. Whitby's frivolous.—I do not mean in these Notes to enter largely into any Kind of Controversy ; but dare not suppress, or disguise, what I am in my Conscience persuaded to be the Sense of Scripture, merely because it is not agreeable to the general Taste of the Age to take it in that View.—I render *ergo, will come*, because the Word does not necessarily imply any thing more than the Certainty of the Event ; and I would not lead any, merely in Dependance on a Translation, to build a weak Argument on the Word SHALL, which it is well known has sometimes been done.*

And whoever comes, he will by no means cast him out.

and him that cometh to me,
I will in no wise cast out

terrified with any Suspicion, that you are
excluded from Hope by any secret Trans-
actions between the Father and Me; for I
declare it to you, as an universal Truth, and
perfectly consistent with the former, that
him that cometh to me, whoever he may be,
I will by no means cast out (b), nor shall he
be rejected or refused on any Consideration
whatsoever. And you have sufficient
Reason to believe this, *because I came down*
from Heaven into this lower World, not to
do my own Will, or to seek any separate In-
terest of my own, but to do the Will, and
to seek the Glory, of him that sent me. And
this is the Will of the Father who sent me,
that of all the whole Body of my People
whom he has given me, and committed to
my Care, I should lose none, not even the
meanest Member, but should assuredly raise
it up at the last Day in compleat Glory and
Happiness. Or, to express it in more
general Terms, *even this is the Will of him*
that sent me, that every one who views the Son
with an attentive Eye (i), and in Conse-
quence of that View cordially believes on
him, receiving him by Faith, and trusting in
him as an all-sufficient Saviour, should have
eternal

SECT. 80.
John VI. 37.

38 For I came down from
Heaven, not to do mine own
Will, but the Will of him
that sent me.

38

39 And this is the Fathers
Will which hath sent me,
that of all which he hath
given me, I should lose no-
thing, but should raise it up
again at the last Day.

39

40 And this is the Will
of him that sent me, that
every one which seeth the
Son, and believeth on him,
may have everlasting Life:
and

40

(b) *And him that cometh to me, whoever he may be, I will by means cast out.*] To limit this latter Clause by the former, is not only missing, but contradicting the Design of Christ, and destroying the wise and beautiful Turn of this Text; than which I think few more important, for stating some great Doctrines of the Gospel, which have unhappily been the Foundation of much eager and uncharitable Dispute.—The Expression *οὐ μὴ ἐκβάλω αὐτόν*, is extremely beautiful and emphatical. It represents an humble Suppliant, as coming into the House of some Prince, or other Great Person, to cast himself at his Feet, and to commit himself to his Protection and Care. He might fear, his Petition might be rejected, and he thrust out of Doors: But our Lord assures him to the contrary. His House and Heart are large enough, to receive, shelter, and supply all the Indigent and Distressed. GOD only knows, how many Thousand Souls have been sensibly supported by these gracious Words.

(i) *Every one who views the Son with an attentive Eye.*] Thus the Words, *οὐδεὶς ἴδεν τὸν πατέρα ἢ τὸν υἱόν, ὃν ἠθέλησεν ὁ πατήρ ἵνα ὁ υἱὸς ἐκδηλώσῃ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἑαυτῷ ἰσοπέτατον ἑαυτῷ ἰσοπέτατον ἑαυτῷ ἰσοπέτατον* should undoubtedly be rendered. There are many other Places, where *θεωρεῖν* signifies to view with Attention. Compare *Mat. xxvii. 55. Luke x. 18. xxi. 6. John xvii. 24. Acts iii. 16. and Heb. vii. 4.*

SECT. 80. *eternal Life*; and I will accordingly raise *him up at the last Day*, and make him completely happy, both in Soul and Body, in the Enjoyment of a glorious Immortality: Nor are there any secret Purposes and Decrees of GOD inconsistent with the Sincerity of such a Declaration.

and I will raise him up at the last Day.

John VI. 40.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

John vi. 32, 33. **H**OW gratefully should we acknowledge the Divine Goodness, in giving *this true Bread from Heaven, for the Life of the World*; and how solicitous should we be, that by a true *Faith* we may *feed upon it*! In the Midst of so many insnaring Circumstances, let us be strictly watchful over ourselves, that the Vigour of our Pursuits and *Labours* may not be laid out on *the Meat which perishes*, to the Forgetfulness of *that which endures to eternal Life*: But acknowledging those authentic *Seals*, by which *Christ* is marked out to that important Trust, may we apply to him as *sent of GOD the Father*, to be the Author of eternal Salvation, and come to him to be Partakers of his saving Benefits!

Ver. 27.

Ver. 40.

Ver. 37.

It must surely grieve us, to observe the Neglect and Contempt with which he is too frequently treated; but it may comfort us, that there yet remains *a Remnant according to the Election of Grace*. (*Rom. xi. 5.*) *All that the Father giveth him, will come to him*; and blessed be GOD, that this appears to be no inconsiderable Number. *Secret Things belong to the Lord our GOD*; (*Deut. xxix. 29.*) let it therefore be our Care, to *make first our Calling*, and then by a happy Consequence *our Election sure*. (*2 Pct. i. 10.*) Whatever Discouragements may arise in our Way, may we fly to cast ourselves at the Foot of *Christ*; and then we may be sure, he will never on any Consideration *cast us out*, but will receive us in the Arms of his Almighty Compassion, and having sheltered and maintained us in his House on Earth, will at length conduct us safely to the Presence of his Glory, and to the blessed Abodes of compleat Felicity!

S E C T.

S E C T. LXXXI.

CHRIST having represented himself as the Bread of Life, enlarges on the Necessity and Benefit of feeding upon him as such. John VI. 41,—58.

JOHN VI. 41.

THE Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the Bread which came down from Heaven.

JOHN VI. 41.

THUS did our Lord declare himself to be the Bread of Life, which GOD had given them from Heaven; but then, as this

SECT. 81.

John VI. 41.

agreed not with their worldly Views, the Jews who were about him were so far from receiving the Declaration with a becoming Regard, that, on the contrary, they took Offence and murmured at it, because he said, I am the Bread which came down from Heaven, to feed and support the Divine Life in the Soul.

42 And they said, Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph, whose Father and Mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from Heaven?

And being Strangers to the Doctrine of his miraculous Conception and Divine Nature, they said among themselves, Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph, whose Father and Mother we have long known (a), having lived many Years in the Neighbourhood? How is it therefore, that this Man should claim so high a Character? or how does he presume to say, that I came down from Heaven?

42

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

Jesus therefore, who well knew all their secret Suspicions, how artfully soever they might be whispered and concealed, replied and said unto them, Do not murmur among yourselves on this Occasion; but rather set yourselves seriously to reflect on your present State,

43

(a) Whose Father and Mother we have long known.] Dr. Wells argues from hence, that Joseph was yet alive; but it may signify only, we know who his Father and Mother were. It is at least certain, that Joseph died quickly after; for if he had been living, Jesus when dying on the Cross, would not have consigned his Mother to the Care of John. John xix. 26, 27. (Compare Note (b) on John ii. 1. pag. 143. and Mat. xiii. 55. pag. 474.)

SECT. 81. State, and your true Interest. I know indeed, that your Prejudices against me are strong, and without the Influences of Divine Grace will prove invincible and fatal: For such is the moral Blindness and Degeneracy of Human Nature, that *no Man can* by a saving Faith *come* and make his Application *to me, unless the Father who has sent me draw him* by the sweet, but powerful Influences of his Holy Spirit on the Heart (b); and [then] *I will raise him up at the last Day*, and finally make him a Partaker of the compleat Felicity and Blessedness of my Kingdom.

45 For so it is written in the Prophets, (Isa. liv. 13. and Jer. xxxi. 34.) “*And they shall all be taught by GOD (c),*” “*by Divine Influences on their Minds;*” and there are many other Passages much to the same Purpose: (See Isa. ii. 2,—5. Mic. iv. 1,—4, &c.) *Therefore every one, who has not only been instructed in the true Nature of GOD, but has both heard and learned from the Father himself, by virtue of these internal and efficacious Teachings of his Grace, comes unto me, and cordially receives me*

44 No Man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last Day.

45 It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of GOD. Every Man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

(b) *Unless the Father who has sent me draw him.*] The Sense I have given in the Paraphrase seems so natural, from a View of the Words themselves, and of their Connection, as well as so agreeable to the whole Tenor of Scripture, that I wonder so many learned and ingenious Men should have laboured to disguise it by other Interpretations. Dr. Clarke explains it as an Intimation, that to be well grounded in Natural Religion, is the best Preparative for receiving the Christian Religion. But this, though an apparent Truth, falls far short of the Sense of the Passage; especially considering what is afterwards said, of being taught by GOD, and not merely of him, ver. 45.—The Doctor observes here, that when in Scripture one Person is said to draw another, the Word may signify, either the Action of the Person said to draw, or of the Person drawn; and unhappily produces John xii. 32. Jer. xxxi. 3. and Hof. xi. 4. all which lie strongly against such a Sense. The Truth is, GOD's drawing does not exclude our Consent to follow, and our Activity in doing it; but it always includes a Divine Agency. Compare Judg. iv. 7. (See Dr. Clarke's Sermons, Vol. iii. N^o 3.)

(c) *Taught by GOD: διδάσκω το Θεο.*] The Word properly signifies, they shall be the Disciples, or Scholars of GOD, who shall humbly sit down, as it were, at his Feet, and receive Instructions from him. This in the latter Text referred to in the Paraphrase, is expressly distinguished from human Instructions relating to the Nature of GOD. Compare 1 Theff. iv. 9.

(d) *Which*

Their Fathers did eat Manna, and are dead.

46 Not that any Man hath seen the Father, save he which is of GOD; he hath seen the Father.

me under the Character I profess. I speak **SECT. 81.** this of an inward Divine Teaching, and *not* to insinuate, *that any one on Earth has seen the Father*, and been taught by him, as one Man is by the Converse of another: No one has enjoyed such an Honour, *except it be he, who is come to Men as the great Embassador from GOD: He* indeed, being stately resident with him, and inseparably united to him, *has seen the Father*, and conversed with him to a Degree of Intimacy and Indearment, which no Creature can pretend to have known. In virtue then of those ample Instructions I have received from him, *Verily, verily I say unto you*, and testify it as a most sure and important Truth, that this is the only Method of Salvation; and *that it is he*, and he alone, *who believes in me*, and reposes himself *on me*, that *hath everlasting Life*. Remember therefore, that it is in this Respect I tell you, *I am the Bread of Life*; not only as a Teacher of Truth, and a Messenger from GOD to Men; but as the great Redeemer, whom you must receive into your Hearts, and on whom you must, as it were, feed by Faith, if you indeed would have your Life to be supported and secured.

John VI. 46.

47 Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, hath everlasting Life.

47

48 I am that Bread of Life.

48

49 Your Fathers did eat Manna in the Wilderness, and are dead:

49

50 This is the Bread which cometh down from Heaven, that a Man may eat thereof, and not die.

50

SECT. 81. **Condemnation and Ruin, to which the Breach of GOD's righteous Law has subjected every Offender.**

John VI. 51. Thus then I plainly tell you, how incredible soever you may think it, that *I, who came down from Heaven* for this gracious Purpose, *am the living Bread*, or a Principle of Divine Life and eternal Happiness to all who shall faithfully receive me: So that if *any one eat of this Bread*, in spite of Death and the Grave, *he shall live for ever*: And that you may more distinctly conceive this important Truth, and see the Propriety of this Language, I add, that *the Bread which I will give* to such a one, *is my own Flesh, which I will give* as an atoning Sacrifice for the forfeited *Life of the whole World* of Jews and Gentiles (*d*), of which every true Believer shall partake.

52 But *the Jews*, whose Stupidity often occasioned them to mistake, and whose Per-
verseness led them to wrest his Words, did not, or would not, understand him; and *therefore contended with each other*, the Generality of them *saying* (*e*), as if what he had said was to be taken in a literal Sense, *How can this Man possibly give us [his] Flesh to eat?* What a monstrous and unintelligible Doctrine is this?

53 Then Jesus replied in the same figurative Language he had used before, and without condescending to any farther Explication *said to them*, However you may censure it as unintelligible and absurd, yet *verily, verily*

51 I am the living Bread, which came down from Heaven: if any Man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever: and the Bread that I will give, is my Flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World.

52 The Jews therefore strove amongst themselves, saying, How can this Man give us *his* Flesh to eat?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto

(*d*) Which I will give for the Life of the whole World, &c.] There seems to be a beautiful Gradation in this Verse, compared with ver. 31. They had insinuated, that *feeding a few Thousands with the five Loaves* was an inconsiderable Thing, when compared with what *Moses* did, when he *fed the whole Camp of Israel*; but *our Lord* declares the Purposes of his Grace and Bounty to be far more extensive, as reaching the *whole World*, and giving *Life, immortal Life*, to all that should believe in him.

(*e*) The Generality of them *saying*.] Had this been the Language of *all*, there could have been no *Contention* between them, which yet is expressly asserted.

(*f*) *Eat*

His Flesh is Meat indeed, and his Blood drink indeed.

unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you.

rily I say unto you, There is no Truth more certain in itself, and more important to you; for unless by a cordial Dependence on the Atonement I shall make, and by the powerful Influences of Divine Grace upon your Hearts, you eat, as it were, the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood (f), you have no Principle of spiritual Life in you, and can have no Claim to eternal Happiness. For this is so important, a Part of Faith in me, that to declare the Necessity of it, I may say, (with such an Alteration of my former Words, ver. 40.) He alone, that eats my Flesh, and drinks my Blood, hath eternal Life; and I will most assuredly raise him up at the last Day, and shew by his compleat Deliverance, how just a Confidence he has reposed in me, amidst all the Contempt with which you treat me. For my Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed (g); and nothing deserves the Name so well, as nothing is worthy of being called Life, in Comparison of that which is hereby supported. For this feeding upon me is such, that he who thus eats my Flesh, and drinks my Blood, abides in me by an intimate and inse-

SECT. 81. John VI. 53.

54 Who so eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood hath eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the last Day.

54

55 For my Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed.

55

56 He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood,

56

(f) Eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood.] This Phrase naturally expresses a lively and habitual Regard to Christ, as the great Support of the spiritual Life. The Mention of his Blood, naturally leads to the Thought of his Atonement; as we are elsewhere told, We have Redemption through his Blood, (Eph. i. 7.) and Boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus. (Heb. x. 19.) The Sacrament of the Eucharist is plainly intended to affect our Minds with a Sense of these important Truths, and our Lord might probably think of that intended Institution, while he spoke; but as this was a future Thing, and utterly unknown to his Hearers, it seems to me unwarrantable to interpret this Text, as chiefly referring to that Ordinance; and nothing can be more precarious, than many Consequences, which have been drawn from it in that View, though some of them be authorized by very great Names. (g) My Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed.] It might more literally be rendered, is truly Meat, and is truly Drink; but the Sense, in which the Word [indeed] is often used, gives a Kind of Paraphrase on the Words. Just in this Sense, the true Light, is the most excellent Light; (John i. 9.) the true Vine, is the most noble Vine; (John xv. 1.) and the true Bread, is the most excellent and nourishing Bread. See above, ver. 32.

(b) Abides

SECT. 81. inseparable Union, and I abide in him (b) Blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.
 by the unalienable Tokens of my Favour and Love to nourish the Divine Life in his Soul :

John VI. 57. I say by the unalienable Tokens of it; for as the living Father, the great Source of Life, has sent me into the World, and I live by the Protection and Care of the Father (i), who is continually dwelling in me, and communicating of his Spirit in the richest Abundance to me; so be that thus eateth me, even he shall live by me, through the Spirit, which

58 I will also communicate to him. And if you attend to these important Hints that I have given, you may in general know what I meant, by saying as I have done, *This is the Bread that came down from Heaven*; and by adding (ver. 49, 50.) that it is not in this Case, as it was with your Fathers, who did eat Manna in the Wilderness, and yet are dead (k), without having found any Efficacy in it to communicate a spiritual, or secure an eternal Life; [but] be that eats this Bread, shall live for ever.

57 As the Living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that Bread which came down from Heaven: not as your Fathers did eat Manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this Bread, shall live for ever.

(b) *Abides in me, and I in him.*] After these Words the *Cambridge Manuscript*, and one of *Stephens's*, add, *As the Father is in me, and I in the Father, verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye receive the Body of the Son of Man, as the Bread of Life, ye have no Life in you.* Dr. Mill (in his Notes here,) seems to approve the Addition; but I think Dr. *Whitby* has so fully proved it to be spurious, that I content myself with referring the Reader to him, (see his *Examen Millii*, pag. 49.) and to *Wolfius* on this Text. (*Cur. Philol.* vol. i. pag. 865, 866.)

(i) *I live by the Protection and Care of the Father.*] The *Human* and derived Nature of *Christ* had, no doubt, the same Dependance on the Providence and Influence of *God*, that other Creatures have: And though *Christ*, as *Mediator*, has *Life in himself*, (as it was said before, *John* v. 26. pag. 312.) yet was it given him of the Father, and it is he that qualifies *Christ* by his Spirit for the great Work, for which he sent him into the World: and he accordingly is elsewhere represented as upholding him in it. *Isa.* xlii. 1.—Compare *John* viii. 29. and xvi. 32.

(k) *Not as your Fathers did eat Manna, and are dead.*] This Version of the Words is perfectly agreeable to the Original; *ὡς καὶ οἱ πατέρες ἐσθίουσιν τὸ μᾶζα καὶ ἀποθνῄσκουσιν*. But I should not, perhaps, have took too great a Liberty, had I avoided the Ellipsis in the Greek, and ventured to reduce it to a plainer Form, by rendering it, *Not like that Manna which your Fathers did eat, and are dead.* So *Grotius* has explained this Passage; and though it does not so exactly answer to the Greek, and cannot pass for a *Literal Translation*, it plainly expresses the Sense of the Place, and the Words run more natural and easy. See *Grotius in loc.*

IMPROVE-

I M P R O V E M E N T.

THE Hearers of Christ murmured, and perversely objected SECT. 81.
against his Doctrine. Let not Ministers now wonder, if the John vi. 41, 52.
 like capricious Humour sometimes prompts *their Hearers* to seek
 Occasion of Offence, where there is none: Let them learn of their
 great Master, in Meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves, if
 GOD peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging
 of the Truth. (2 Tim. ii. 25.) Our Lord expressly asserts the Necessi- Ver. 44, 45.
 ty of being taught and drawn by the Father, in order to our know-
 ing him, and coming to him. Let us therefore humbly seek these
 Influences ourselves, and fix our Dependance upon them in all our
 Attempts upon others, for their Conversion and Edification.

Christ here gives us *Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept,* Ver. 48, 51, 53, 54.
 to illustrate and inforce this important Doctrine of the Necessity of
 regarding him as the *Bread of Life*, and of feeding by Faith on
 his *Flesh and Blood*, which he has given for the Life of the World.
 Let us, as we desire any Part in his saving Blessings, most thank-
 fully receive *his Flesh as Meat indeed, and his Blood as Drink indeed.* Ver. 55.
 May GOD be merciful to those that call themselves *Christians*, and
 yet are Strangers to such a believing Intercourse with *Christ*, and to
 the Derivation of *spiritual Life* from him! If this be *Enthusiasm*, it Ver. 56, 57.
 is the Enthusiasm of *Scripture*; and the Denial, or Forgetfulness, of
 these important Doctrines, is like a fatal *Palsy* to the Soul, which
 chills, as it were, all its Nerves, and destroys at once its Sensibility
 and Vigour, its Pleasure and Usefulness.

To represent and inculcate these great Truths, our Lord after-
 wards instituted the *Sacrament of his Supper*, in which we not only
 commemorate his Sufferings, but our own Concern in them. It is
 the Language of every intelligent Approach to it, that we acknow-
 ledge *the Life of our Souls* to depend on the *Merit of his Atonement*,
 and the *Communications of his Grace*. This is *eating his Flesh*, and
drinking his Blood: May we be nourished by it to *eternal Life!* Ver. 58.
 Then though this mortal Part of our Nature drop into the Dust,
 our *Souls will live* and triumph; nor shall our *Bodies* finally perish,
 but be *raised up by Christ* in the Great Day, to take their Part in
 the full *Joy of our Lord*. There these *intermediate Ordinances* shall
 cease, and copious uninterrupted Streams of *Divine Teachings*, and
Divine Influences, shall sweetly flow in upon our ever improving,
 active, rejoicing Minds!

S E C T. LXXXII.

CHRIST *having declared, that the foregoing Discourse was to be taken in a spiritual Sense, is forsaken by many of his Disciples; and while the Apostles assure him of their continued Fidelity, he intimates the Treachery of Judas. John VI. 59, to the End.*

JOHN VI. 59.

SECT. 82. **T**HESE Things, which had been now delivered by our Lord, *he spake before all* John VI. 59. *Sorts of Hearers in the Synagogue, as he was teaching at Capernaum (a): And for wise Reasons he involved a Part of his Discourse in figurative and mysterious Language; as in particular, that which related to eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood.*

60 *Many therefore of those who followed him as his Disciples, having heard [it,] said, This is a difficult and strange Discourse; and who can bear or understand it? In its literal Sense it is plainly absurd, and we know not what other Interpretation to give it.*

61 *But Jesus knowing in himself, that his Disciples murmured about it, though they did not speak out their Objections and Scruples, said unto them, Does this which you have just now heard, so much offend you? and do you stumble at it as incredible?*

62 *[What] then if ye shall see the Son of Man ascending up into Heaven, where he was before?*

JOHN VI. 59.

THESE Things said he in the Synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

60 Many therefore of his Disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard Saying, who can hear it?

61 When Jesus knew in himself, that his Disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 *What* and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?

(a) *As he was teaching at Capernaum.*] Probably, (as was hinted above, ver. 25. pag. 524.) the foregoing Discourses were introduced, after the Reading of the Law, and Prayer. We are not to wonder at the *Dialogue*, which passed here: There are many other Instances of *Disputes*, which either *Christ*, or his *Apostles* had, with the *Jews in their Synagogues*. See *Mat. xii. 9, & seq. Sect. 50. Luke xiii. 10, & seq. Sect. 117. Acts xiii. 44, & seq. and xvii. 17.*

(b) *Ascend-*

63 It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing: the Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life.

fore. (b) ? would you then understand, what was meant by the Bread of Life coming down from thence, as the Food of the World ? Or would you then believe, that I came from Heaven, notwithstanding the Objection you have made as to the Mean-ness of my Parentage (c) ? Thus our Lord intimated his intended Ascension; and in the mean Time, as a Key to his former Discourse, he added, As in the human Frame it is the indwelling Spirit that quickens every Part of it; and the Flesh, how exactly soever organized and adorned, if separate from that, profits nothing, but is an insensible and inactive Corps; so also the Words which I speak unto you, are Spirit, that is, they are to be taken in a spiritual Sense, and then you will find they are Life to your Souls; whereas to take them in a literal Sense, would be most unprofitable and monstrous.

SECT. 82. John VI. 62.

63

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the Beginning, who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

It is indeed strange, that you should think of it; but I know there are some of you who believe not, and would shelter your Infidelity under these mean and disingenuous Cavils. This he plainly told them; for Jesus knew from the Beginning, who they were that believed, and who did not; and even knew the very Person, who it was that at last should so basely betray him.

64

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no Man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

And he farther said, For this Reason I told you, (ver. 44.) that no Man can come unto me, except it be given him of my Father (d); because

65

(b) Ascending up into Heaven, where he was before.] A very celebrated Writer thinks this refers to the Son of Man appearing to Daniel in the Clouds of Heaven: But his appearing to him thus in Vision, was no more an Argument of his being there at the Time of that Appearance, than the Appearance of the Symbols of the Greek and Roman Empires was an Argument of their Existence at that Time.

(c) Would you then believe, that I came from Heaven? &c.] What Christ here says of his Ascension, may be farther intended to intimate, the Necessity of taking his Discourse in a figurative Sense, as it would so soon be evidently impossible to eat his Flesh, which was to be received into Heaven.

(d) Except it be given him of my Father.] To be drawn by the Father, (ver. 44.) and

SECT. 82. because I know, that the Prejudices of corrupt Nature lie strongly against such a Doctrine as I publish, and that nothing but Divine Grace will subdue them.

John VI. 65.

66 *From this Time many* who had borne the Name of his Disciples, abusing and misrepresenting what he had now delivered, as if it had been either absurd, or utterly unintelligible, *went back and walked no more with him ;* plainly perceiving, that their true Character was now discovered, as well as that their secular Views were disappointed.

66 From that *Time* many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 *Jesus therefore said unto the Twelve Apostles, Will you also go away?* The Multitude are gone, and will you also follow them, and leave me entirely alone? Chuse for yourselves; for I desire not to detain you against your Will.

67 Then said Jesus unto the Twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 *Then Simon Peter with his usual Zeal answered him, Lord, to whom should we go, if we were really disposed to quit thee? or what Advantage could we expect by it? Thou hast the Words of eternal Life, and hast even now been directing us in the Way to it; and God forbid, that any other Hopes and Views should ever be preferred by us to these!* However others may be governed by their carnal Prejudices, and a deluded Multitude may treat thee with Contempt, *we firmly believe, and assuredly know* on the most convincing Evidence *that thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living GOD ;* in which Persuasion we are determined to hazard all in thy Service, and to sacrifice even our Lives to thee.

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the Words of eternal Life.

70 *Jesus then answered them, Such a Resolution might reasonably be expected from you all; for have I not chosen you Twelve to the Honour*

69 And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living GOD.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you Twelve,

and to have Faith given him by the Father, are evidently *synonymous* Terms; which plainly vindicates the Interpretation given above, and shews how far the loose and general Glosses of *Dr. Clarke*, and *Dr. Clagget*, are, from expressing the true and determinate Sense of *our Lord's* Words.

(e) *Have*

Twelve, and one of you is a Devil?

Honour of a peculiar Intimacy with me, and to a Station of the most distinguished Eminence and Importance in the Church (e)? And yet I know, that *one of you is a Devil*, and under the Influence of that malignant Spirit of Darkness will turn my Accuser and Betrayer (f).

SECT. 82-
John VI. 70.

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot, the Son of Simon; for he it was that should betray him, being one of the Twelve.

This he spake concerning Judas Iscariot, [the Son] of Simon; for it was he who at that Time began to harbour in his Breast this execrable Purpose, and had then Thoughts of betraying him (g), though he was one of the Twelve Apostles, and therefore under peculiar Obligations to Fidelity and Duty.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WE have, through the Divine Goodness, been made acquainted with those *Gospel-Truths*, in their full Evidence, and mutual Connection, which were more obscurely hinted to those who attended on *Christ's* personal Ministry: May we therefore hearken to the *spiritual Sense* of this sublime and excellent Discourse! And as the credible Account of his *Ascension into Glory* is now added to the rest, let us receive the whole of his Doctrine with the most humble Submission; earnestly intreating the Influences of Divine Grace, that we may not only be *drawn to Christ*, but be so *firmly attached* to his

John vi. 60.
Ver. 63.
Ver. 62.
Ver. 65-
Inter-

(e) *Have I not chosen you Twelve? &c.*] I see not the least Reason, with *Elfner*, to expunge the *Note of Interrogation*, and render it, *I have not chosen you all*; which would entirely enervate the Spirit of the following Clause.

(f) *My Accuser and Betrayer.*] According to *Mr. Locke*, our Lord intimates, that this was the Reason, why he had not more plainly declared himself to be the *Messiah*, because he knew *Judas* would have accused him of *Rebellion* against the *Romans*; (for so the Word *δολος* does sometimes signify, a *false Accuser*; see *1 Tim.* iii. 11. *2 Tim.* iii. 3. and *Tit.* ii. 3.) But I can see no Proof, that *Judas*, from the Beginning, intended to *betray Christ*. It is more probable, he at first engaged with him in Expectation of secular Advantage; and finding those Views disappointed, he might now begin to form that detestable Scheme, which he afterwards executed. If this was the Occasion on which he first entertained the Thought, (as I think it probably might,) one would imagine, that such an Intimation of his secret Wickedness must have struck him to the Heart.

(g) *Had Thoughts of betraying him.*] The Words *μελλον αυτον παραδιδωαι*, may properly, though not necessarily, import thus much; and I think had not this been actually the Case, *Christ* would not have said *he is a Devil*, but rather that he would become one.

- SECT. 82. Interest, that whoever else forsake him, we may never go away. On the contrary, may we rather collect an Argument from their Ingratitude and Folly, more strenuously, and more affectionately to adhere to him! Indeed to whom should we go, but to him? He has the Words of eternal Life. From him therefore in all lowly Subjection of Soul, may we learn those Lessons on which our everlasting Happiness depends!
- Ver. 67.
- Ver. 68.
- Ver. 70. May we never, like Judas, conceal a treacherous and disaffected Heart, under the specious Appearance of Piety and Goodness! This would be only imposing on ourselves; for his penetrating Eye can never be deceived. May we approve the Integrity of our Souls in his Sight, and repose an unlimited Confidence in him, as one whom we believe, and know, to be a Divine Saviour, CHRIST the Son of the living GOD!
- Ver. 64, 71.
- Ver. 69.

S E C T. LXXXIII.

Our LORD vindicates his Disciples in neglecting the Traditions of the Pharisees, and condemns those corrupt Teachers for preferring such Traditions to the Precepts of the Divine Law. Mat. XV. 1,—9. Mark VII. 1,—13.

MARK VII. 1.

SECT. 83. **T**HE Miracles which Jesus wrought, and which have been mentioned above (a), being reported at the ensuing Passover (b), gave a farther Alarm to the Jews,

Mark VII. 1.

MARK VII. 1.

THEN came together unto [Jesus] the Pharisees and

(a) Which have been mentioned above.] As both *Matthew* and *Mark* introduce the following Discourse, immediately after his *crossing the Sea to Capernaum*, when he but just before had *fed the five Thousand*, and *John* determines the *Debates* in the *preceding Sections* to that Time, there can be no reasonable Doubt about placing *this Section*, and several more that are expressly connected with it, in this *Order*.

(b) At the ensuing Passover.] That a *Passover* followed quickly after the Events before related, is expressly determined: (See *John* vi. 4. and the *Note* there, pag. 508. and compare *chap.* vii. 2.) But the *Evangelists* do not exactly determine, whether *Christ* did, or did not, attend it. If he did not, we may conclude he had proper Reasons for not doing it: But to be sure such numerous and publick *Miracles* as he had

The Disciples are blamed for eating with unwashed Hands.

and certain of the Scribes, which [were of, and] came from Jerusalem. [MAT. XV. 1.]

Jews, and especially to their established Teachers; so that to obviate the Effect of them, and to prevent the Success of his Ministry, there were then gathered unto Jesus the Pharisees, and some of the Scribes, who were stated Inhabitants of Jerusalem, [and] came [from thence] on purpose to watch, and if possible to insnare him. SECT. 83.
Mark VII. 1.

2 And when they saw some of his Disciples eat Bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashed) Hands, they found Fault.

And as they looked on all his Actions with a most malignant Eye, they soon found an Opportunity to cavil; for seeing some of his Disciples eat Bread with what they counted polluted (that is, with unwashed) Hands, they found Fault with them among themselves.

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their Hands oft, eat not, holding the Tradition of the Elders.

For this was a favourite Tenet of the Pharisees, on which they laid a particular Stress, and indeed almost all the Jews pay a considerable Regard to it (c), that they do not allow themselves to eat, without washing their Hands often with Abundance of Exactness (d), and particularly just before their Meals: And this they observe, not in Consequence of any express Divine Command, but as holding the Tradition of the Elders, who thought this scrupulous Care, a decent Expression and Memorial of their Concern to keep themselves free from whatsoever might

had lately performed, would be the Subject of a great deal of Discourse at Jerusalem. Compare John vii. 11, 12. and xi. 56.

(c) Almost all the Jews pay a considerable Regard to it.] Their Rabbies carried this to a most ridiculous Height; one of them determining the Neglect of washing, to be a greater Sin, than Whoredom; and another saying, it would be much better to die, than to omit it. Many Instances of this Kind may be seen in Dr. Whitby, and Dr. Hammond in loc. and in Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. xi. pag. 236. It is plain, that other Nations commonly used to wash before their Meals. See Athenæus, pag. 408. Edit. Casaub. 1675. and Elfner. Observ. vol. i. pag. 73.

(d) Washing their Hands often.] The Word *συνίτηναι* is ambiguous, being very seldom used. Theophylact's Gloss would incline one to render it, as L'Enfant does, up to the Elbow; and Beza translates it, with the Fist. (See Godwyn's Moses and Aaron, lib. i. cap. 10. pag. 39.) Not being able certainly to determine the Point, I thought it sufficient to add in the Paraphrase, with Abundance of Exactness. Camero, and Lud. Cappellus, (in loc.) explain it of holding up their Hands closed, while the Water was poured upon them; and I have nothing to object to the Reasons they give for that Interpretation.

SECT. 83. might pollute them. *And especially [when they come] from the Market, or any other Place of publick Concourse, lest they should without their Knowledge have touched any Thing unclean, they eat not, till they have washed their Hands at least, if not their whole Body. And there are many other Things, besides the washing of their Hands, which they in like Manner receive and maintain by the Authority of the same Tradition, [as] the washing of Cups and Pots in which their Food is put, and of the brasen Vessels made use of in preparing it, and even of the very Couches on which they lie at their Meals.*

Mark. VII.
4.

5 *Then the Pharisees and Scribes, after they had censured the Disciples of Christ among themselves, (as was observed before,) came to Jesus, and asked him, Why do not thy Disciples walk and behave themselves according to the Tradition of the Elders, as other pious and regular Jews do; but transgress [it] in a very obvious and material Instance, for they eat with unwashed Hands (e)? Can they be so ignorant, as not to know the Traditions that forbid it? Or are they so profane, as not to regard them?*

Mat. XV. 3. *And he answering, said unto them, Nay, but I may with much greater Reason ask you, Why do you also transgress what is infinitely more sacred, even the Command of GOD himself, out of Regard to your own*

Mark VII. 9. *vain and superstitious Tradition? And this in several Instances you run to such a Length, as that you fairly make void the Command of GOD, and render it insignificant, that you may observe your Tradition; though you*

4 *And when they come from the Market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other Things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of Cups and Pots, brasen Vessels, and of Tables.*

5 *Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked him, Why walk not thy Disciples according to the Tradition of the Elders, but [transgress it, for they] eat Bread with unwashed Hands? [MAT. XV. 2.]*

MAT. XV. 3. *But he answered and said unto them, Why do you also transgress the Commandment of GOD by your Tradition? [MARK VII. 9.—]*

MARK VII. — 9. *Full well ye reject the Commandment of GOD, that ye may keep your own Tradition.*

(e) *For they eat with unwashed Hands.] It is in the Original, eat Bread; and I have sometimes retained the Hebraism, but did not think it necessary always to do it. Every attentive Reader must have observed, that Food in general is called Bread, in a Multitude of Places; and Bread is sometimes put even for the Provisions of a Royal Table. 2 Sam. ix. 7, 10. and xii. 20.*

MAT. XV. 4. For GOD [by Moses] commanded, saying, Honour thy Father and [thy] Mother : and, He that curseth Father or Mother, let him die the Death. [MARK VII. 10.]

MARK VII. 11. But ye say, [Whosoever] shall say to his Father or Mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a Gift, by whatsoever thou mightest

you consider not perhaps from whence it comes, or may easily know that it was derived only from a fallible Man. I will

give you one notorious Instance of it, which you cannot dispute : For you well know, that GOD has commanded [by] Moses, saying, " Honour thy Father and thy Mother : "

A Precept written with his own Finger on the Tables of Stone, and guarded by that awful Sanction, " Whoso curseth his Fa-
" ther, or his Mother, let him surely die
" without Mercy." (See Exod. xxi. 17.

Lev. xx. 9. and compare Prov. xx. 20. and Deut. xxvii. 16.) Now for any one to suffer his Parents to languish in Want of the necessary Supplies of Life, must certainly be a yet more aggravated Wickedness, than an impious Word, which may possibly escape a Man's Lips in a sudden Transport of Passion (f).

But what you teach is contradictory to this Divine Command, and an ungrateful Child may justify himself in the Neglect of it, in Consequence of your Tradition ; for you assert, [that] any one may say to his Father or Mother, [Let that be] Corban, that is to say, let it be reckoned as a devoted Thing, or be considered as a Gift dedicated to the Altar (g), by which thou

mightest

(f) In a sudden Transport of Passion.] Dr. Lightfoot (in his *Hor. Hebr. in loc.*) has well observed, that it is probable a Child must be in a Transport of very undutiful Passion, when he made the rash Vow afterwards mentioned, that he would never in any Instance relieve his Parent, so that it was a Kind of cursing him : But had it been said ever so coolly and deliberately, the Argument here suggested would have taken Place, and would have justified the Connection.

(g) Any one may say, [Let that be] Corban, that is to say, a Gift.] So I chuse with Elshner, (*Observ. vol. i. pag. 74.*) to render the Words in Matthew, *as ay uwwn*, though I confess not without some Doubt. But I think, it is best to leave as little as possible to be supplied, in order to make up the Sense ; and on that Principle, I should prefer the Addition in our own Translation of this Place, *he shall be free*, to that which Sir Norton Knatchbull proposes, who would render it, *You say, [a Man honours his Parents,] if he say, It is Corban, &c.* thus supposing the Passage to imply a Repetition from the Verse before. But such a Construction seems to me quite unparallelled, and very unnatural.—Grotius makes *nan*, redundant, and would render it, *You teach, that whosoever shall say to his Father or Mother, It is a Gift, &c.—let him not honour his Father*

SECT. 83. mightest otherwise receive Advantage from me (b), and he shall then be free from the Command, and not be under any Obligation to honour and relieve his Father or his Mother.

Mark VII. 11.

12 *And in this Manner out of Regard to such a rash and impious Vow, you not only suppose, he may innocently omit this evident Duty of Natural, as well as Revealed Religion, but will no more permit him to do any Thing for the Relief even of his Fa-*

Mat. XV. 6. *ther or his Mother. And [thus] then it is evidently to be seen, according to the Charge which I advanced against you, that through a gross and impious Superstition, you have even invalidated the Word, [and] as it were annihilated the Command of GOD, by Means of your Tradition, which you have delivered as a Rule of Life, to be observed with the most scrupulous Exactness: And it were easy to be shewn, in other Instances, that many such like Things you do.*

7 Yet these are the Things in which you vainly pride yourselves, as Proofs of your Religion; but, O you Hypocrites, well did *Isaiab*

mightest be profited by me, [and honour not his Father or his Mother,] *he shall be free.* [MAT. XV. 5, 6.—]

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his Father or his Mother.

MAT. XV.—6. Thus have ye made the [Word and] Commandment of GOD of none Effect [through your Tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like Things do ye.] [MARK VII. 13.]

7 Ye Hypocrites, well did *Esaïas*

and Mother: But in the Way that I have rendered it, the Sense is in Effect the same, and the common Sense of ~~me~~ is retained.—Some considerable Criticks, particularly Drusus, (de Tribus Sæctis, lib. ii. cap. 17.) and Godwyn, (Moses and Aaron, lib. vi. cap. 6.) give a very elegant Turn to the following Words, ~~δὲ ποτὸ οὐκ ἔστιν ὀφείλημα~~, and would suppose them to be an Oath expressed in the Elliptical Manner, which was very common among the Hebrews: If so, they should be rendered, I swear by Corban, or the sacred Treasury, thou shalt receive no Benefit from me. But as both the Evangelists insert the Particle ο, which in this Construction has no Force, I cannot wholly approve this Version, and therefore did not insert it. Perhaps some of these pretended Vows of theirs amounted to no more, than an Obligation to leave some Proportion of the Overplus of their Estates to the Temple Treasury after their Death, which might in a thousand Instances be made the Cloak of Avarice and Cruelty. The indeterminate Manner of speaking, it must be owned, would lead to such a Supposition.—Cappellus with immense Labour, (and I think, beyond all farther Controversy,) has asserted the Interpretation of this Text, as given in the Paraphrase; and has produced a vast Variety of Passages from the Talmud, to shew the superstitious Regard the Jews had to such rash and unnatural Vows, as well as the ridiculous Ways they sometimes took to evade them. See Lud. Cappell. in Mat. xv. 5.

(b) *Advantage from me.*] Sir Nerton Knatchbull would render ~~ἐξ ἐμοῦ~~, of my Substance, or Possession: But had this been the exact Rendering, it would have been ~~ἐκ τῶν ἐμῶν~~, of which Instances occur in Greek Authors.

and taught Doctrines, that were only Human Injunctions.

Esaias prophesy of you, saying, [as it is written,] [MARK VII. 6.—]

Isaiab prophesy of such as you, and very fitly may those Words which he delivers in the Name of GOD be applied to you, where he is saying of the superstitious Jews of his own Time, what may be evidently seen to agree to you, (as it is written, Isa. xxix. 13.)

SECT. 83. Mat. XV. 7.

8 This People draweth nigh unto me with their Mouth, and honoureth me with their Lips; but their Heart is far from me. [MARK VII.—6.]

“ This People draweth near to me with their Mouth, and honoureth me with their Lips; they make a pompous Profession, and pretend to a great deal of Devotion and Piety; but it plainly appears, that their Heart is far estranged from me.”

8.

MARK VII. 7. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men. [MAT. XV. 9.]

Notwithstanding all your Talk then of Strictness in Religion, yet as this appears to be expressive of your real Character, the Doom of Hypocrites belongs to you; and GOD may justly affirm of such, (as it is added there,) “ In vain do they worship me, while they teach Doctrines or Lessons [that are] merely Human Inventions and Injunctions (1), being only the Precepts of Men, that have no Stamp of the Divine Authority upon them,” which yet they would insist upon as necessary Parts of Religion, and would impose them on the Consciences of others.

Mark VII. 7.

8 For laying aside the Commandment of GOD, ye hold the Tradition of Men, as the washing of Pots and Cups: and many other such like Things ye do.

And this, (as I have said,) you may be charged with, not in one single Instance only, but in many; for leaving the Commandment of GOD, you maintain the Tradition of Men, [relating to] the washing of Pots and Cups: And many other such like Things you do, with a Zeal by no

8

Means

(1) While they teach Doctrines, that are Human Injunctions.] So I render διδασκαλιαι δαδουαδαι, ιλαδουαλα ανδρουων. The Words seem to allude to Isa. xxix. 13. where though the present Hebrew Copies read the Text agreeable to our Translation of the Place, Their Fear towards me is taught by the Precept of Men, Grotius has shewn, how a small Variation in the Original might justify the Seventy in that Version of theirs, which the Evangelist here follows, the Sense of which is much the same with what we retain in that Place.—I would only observe farther, that διδασκαλια in general signifies any Lesson, and not merely (as Bishop Hopkins contends,) a Doctrine of Faith; and that the Purpose to which our Lord here applies it, plainly shews, that it must refer to Ritual Injunctions. See Bishop Hopkins's Works, pag. 150, 151.

SECT. 83. Means required, and on which at best you
 lay a very disproportionable Strefs.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- Mat. xv. 9. **H**OW miserable is the Case of those, who while they earnestly contend for the *Forms of Divine Worship*, are losing both the Improvement and Reward, which might be expected from a regular Attendance upon it! This is the Case of all, who *draw near to*
- Ver. 8. **GOD** with their Lips, while their Hearts are far from him. May we abhor the Vanity of such hypocritical Behaviour in the Presence of him, who *searches the Heart, and tries the Reins of the Children of Men!*
- Ver. 3, 7. Let us learn from this just and severe Sentence which our Lord passes on these superstitious *Pharisees*, to avoid the Temper he condemns in them. It much less becomes us as *Christians*, and especially as *Protestants*, to impose on our Brethren with rigorous Severity those *Doctrinal Decisions*, or those *Ritual Observances*, which have not their express Foundation in the *Word of GOD*, to which we so constantly appeal, as to our common Rule. Happy had it been for the *Church* in all Ages and Nations, had Men exerted that Zeal for the *Truths* and the *Institutions* of God, in the Beauty and Glory of their native Simplicity; which has carried them on to defend and propagate their *own Inventions*, till Religion itself has almost sunk under the Weight of the Ornaments in which they have dressed it, and the unwieldy Armour which they have hung about it!
- Ver. 4,—6. Let *Children* learn from the *Command* which *Christ* has vindicated, to *honour their Parents* by a tender Care of them in their declining Days; remembering, that as no filial Duty and Gratitude can ever fully repay our Obligations to such Friends, so an affectionate Regard to them is a proper and necessary Expression of our filial Piety to the great *Father of our Spirits*. Justly may he esteem his *Temples prophaned*, rather than *adorned*, by the most costly *Gifts*, which are the *Spoils of Nature*, and the *Trophies of Inhumanity*.

S E C T.

S E C T. LXXXIV.

CHRIST pursues his Discourse against the Pharisees, and inculcates the Necessity of inward Purity. Mat. XV. 10,—20. Mark VII. 14,—23.

MARK VII. 14.

AND when he had called all the People unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand. [MAT. XV. 10.]

MARK VII. 14.

NOW when our Lord had thus condemned the Pharisees to their Face, for the unwarrantable Strefs they laid on their vain and precarious Traditions, he took this Opportunity to undeceive the People, and to let them see how insignificant this outward Strictness was, on which the Pharisees insisted; and having called all the Multitude together to him, he pursued his Discourse, and said to them, Let me charge every one of you attentively to hearken to me in what I now deliver, and give all Diligence that you may understand it; lest for Want of doing it, out of Regard to your admired Teachers, you impose on your own Souls in a Matter of the greatest Importance. There is nothing which enters into a Man from without, that can really pollute him in the Sight of GOD: It is not, I say, that which is originally from without, and goes into the Mouth, that renders him polluted (a); but the Things which come out of a Man, are those that actually defile him, [even] that which comes out of [his] Mouth. And I would have you to observe, that much is comprehended in these few important Words; remember them there-

SECT. 84.
Mark VII.
14.

15

16

15 There is nothing from without a Man, that entering into him, can defile him: [not that which goeth into the Mouth,] but the Things which come out of him, those are they that defile the Man, [even that which cometh out of the Mouth.] [MAT. XV. 11.]

16 If any Man have Ears to hear, let him hear.

(a) Not that which goes into the Mouth, &c.] Though it is very true, a Man may bring Guilt upon himself, by eating what is pernicious to his Health, or by Excess in the Quantity of Food and Liquor: and a Jew might have done it by presumptuously eating what was forbidden by the Mosaic Law, which still continued in Force; yet in all these Instances, the Pollution would arise from the Wickedness of the Heart, and be just proportionable to it; which is all our Lord asserts.

(b) Cor-

SECT. 84. therefore, and think of them ; and if any one of you has Ears to hear, and a Heart to consider, let him bear these Things, and reflect seriously upon them.

Mark VII.
16.

17 *And when he was come into the House apart from the Multitude, his Disciples came to him, according to their usual Custom, [and] asked him concerning the Meaning of this Parable, or sententious, and to them ob-*

Mat. XV. 12. *scure Saying. And they likewise said to him at the same Time, Knowest thou, and art thou sufficiently aware of it, that the Pharisees, who heard this Saying, were highly offended at it, as what appears to strike directly, (as they represent the Matter,) both at the Authority of the Oral, and of the Written Law ?*

13 *But he answered and said, As for their Displeasure, I am very little concerned about it, nor shall I ever labour to ingratiate myself with Persons of their Character ; for I consider them as a Set of Men doomed to Destruction : And indeed every Plantation, which my Heavenly Father has not planted, and every Thing in Religion, which, like the vain Traditions they advance, is not founded in Divine Institution, but Human Invention, shall sooner or later be rooted up, and cast out of the Vineyard, as an Incumbrance to it.*

14 *Let them alone, and do not trouble or concern yourselves about their Censures ; they are blind Guides of the blind Populace, that implicately commit themselves to their Conduct : And it is very easy to foresee the Consequence ; for if the Blind shall undertake to lead the Blind, they will both fall into a Ditch together, and incumber, instead of helping each other ; (compare Luke vi. 39. pag. 350.) and so will these perverse Pharisees, and their careless Followers, perish together.*

15 *But Peter answering said unto him, We would desire thee however to explain more clearly*

17 And when he was entered into the House from the People, his Disciples [came, and] asked him concerning the Parable ; [MAT. XV. 12.—]

MAT. XV.—12.] And said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this Saying ?

13 But he answered and said, Every Plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone ; they be blind Leaders of the Blind : And if the Blind lead the Blind, both shall fall into the Ditch.

15 Then answered Peter, and

and said unto him, Declare unto us this Parable.

clearly to us what is the Meaning of this Parable, which they are so much offended at; for even we ourselves are at a Loss to reconcile it, not only with the Pharisaic Traditions, but with the Injunctions of the Law of GOD, which hath so expressly enjoined a Difference of Meats.

SECT. 84.
Mat. XV.
15.

MARK VII. 18. And [Jesus said] unto them, Are ye [also yet] so without Understanding? Do ye not [yet] perceive, that whatsoever Thing from without entreth into the Man, it cannot defile him? [MAT. XV. 16, 17.—]

And Jesus said to them, Are you likewise still so void of Understanding, as not to apprehend the Sense of what I said? by which, you might have easily perceived, that I did not intend immediately to supersede any Precept of the Law, relating to the Distinction of clean and unclean Food; but only to declare, that it is the Temper of the Mind which GOD regards, and that no external Accident, separate from this, can render a Man offensive to him: And after all the Instructions I have given you, do you not yet perceive, that it must needs be so, that whatsoever enters from without into a Man, cannot defile him?

Mark VII.
18.

19 Because [whatsoever entreth in at the Mouth,] entreth not into his Heart, but [goeth] into the Belly, and [is cast out] into the Draught, purging all Meats. [MAT. XV.—17.]

And that for this obvious Reason, because whatsoever enters in at the Mouth, enters not into his Heart or Mind, in which Sin or Holiness is seated, and which alone is capable of moral Excellence or Pollution; but goes into the Belly, and passing thro' the Bowels, by the Course of natural Digestion and Evacuation, is thrown off into the Vault, a Place which cleanses, as it were, and carries off the grosser Dregs of all the Food that a Man eats.

19

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the Man, that defileth the Man: [for those Things which proceed out of the Mouth, come forth from the Heart, and they defile the Man.] [MAT. XV. 18.]

But said he, It is indeed that which comes out of a Man, that really defiles a Man, and makes him sinful in the Sight of GOD, as it originally proceeds from within; [for] the Things proceeding out of the Mouth, come forth from the Heart, and these are they that actually defile a Man, as they may thus be tainted with a great deal of moral Guilt and Malignity.

20

21 For from within, out of the Heart of Men, proceed

For from within, out of the Heart of Men, proceed all such corrupt and

21

The Evils from within are what defile a Man.

SECT. 84.
 Mark VII.
 21.

and *evil Reasonings* (b), as those of the Pharisees which you have now been hearing, and all those self-invented Sophisms which exclude Wisdom at the first Entrance; and from hence also proceed *Adulteries*, and *Fornications*, and all Sorts of Sensuality and Uncleaness; all Acts of Violence, and Murders; And *Thefts*, and *insatiable Desires*, and *malevolent Affections* of Inhumanity and Cruelty to Mankind; the Injuries arising from *False Witnessings*, and *Deceit*; the vile Abominations of *Lasciviousness* and Intemperance, an *evil* envious grudging *Eye*, and that odious Temper which discovers itself by such a Look; (compare Prov. xxiii. 6. xxviii. 22. and xxii. 9.) the horrid Outrages of *Blasphemy*, and *Pride*; and in a Word, all Kind of *Folly* (c), wild Imaginations, ungoverned Passions, and many other moral Irregularities. *All these Evils*, and many more which I might mention, *come from within, and these are the Things which do indeed pollute a Man*, and render him an Object odious to the infinite Purity of the Divine Nature: *But* the bare undesigned Violation of a Ceremonial Precept cannot do it; and much more evident it is, that *to eat with unwashed Hands*, which has no moral Impurity in it, and no Authority but a vain Tradition to forbid it, *does not,*

ceed evil Thoughts, Adulteries, Fornications, Murders, [MAT. XV. 19.—]

22 Thefts, Covetousness, Wickedness, [False Witnessings,] Deceit, Lasciviousness, an evil Eye, Blasphemy, Pride, Foolishness: [MAT. XV.—19.]

23 All these evil Things come from within, and [these are the Things which] defile the Man: [but to eat with unwashed Hands defileth not a Man.] [MAT. XV. 20.]

(b) Corrupt and *evil Reasonings*, *οι διαλογισμοι οι κακοι*.] I chuse to render it, [*evil Reasonings*,] rather than merely *evil Thoughts*, as better suiting, both the *Original*, and the *Occasion*, and as containing a more universal and important Truth; for those Thoughts only *defile the Heart*, which it willingly admits, and does as it were hold a Parley and Converse with. And I fear, there are Multitudes in the present Age, like these *Pharisees*, who are contracting immense Guilt by those corrupt and sophistical *Reasonings*, on the Subtilty of which they may highly value themselves and each other.

(c) All Kind of *Folly*.] I apprehend that *αφροσυνη* here stands directly opposed to *σωφροσυνη*, or *Sobriety of Thought and Discourse*; and therefore does particularly signify the *wild Sallies* of the Imagination, and extravagant Passions and Appetites; and consequently must include a great many *Immoralities*, not touched on in the preceding Enumeration.

not, and cannot defile a Man : And it must have a very bad Tendency, to teach People to place Religion in things so intirely foreign to it. SECT. 84.
Mark VII.
23.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

MAY we be all taught of GOD, to maintain a constant Watch over our own Hearts, as remembering, that from thence are the Issues of Life, and from thence the Sources of Sin and Death ! (Prov. iv. 23.) All the secret Motions and Sentiments of them are open to the Divine Examination and Inspection. There then may we begin our Cares, to purify ourselves from all Filthiness both of the Flesh and Spirit, as ever we would perfect Holiness in the Fear of GOD. (2 Cor. vii. 1.)

We see what secret Abominations, our Lord has here discovered, and marked out. It is a Matter of much Lamentation, that our corrupted Nature abounds with such poisonous Productions : Let us earnestly pray, that they may be rooted out by Divine Grace, lest we ourselves be rooted out of GOD's Vineyard, as at once incumbering, and deforming it !

May the Blessed Spirit of GOD create in us a clean Heart, and implant in our Souls a Temper opposite to all these Enormities ! May Candor and Purity, Integrity and Tenderness, Piety and Generosity, Humility and Wisdom, prevail in our Hearts, and shine in our Conduct ! and, in a Word, whatsoever Things are true and honest, just and pure, lovely and of good Report, if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, let us think on these Things, and practise them ! (Phil. iv. 8.)

Let those who are employed to guide others, be especially solicitous to know and pursue the right Way themselves ; lest instead of saving themselves, and those that bear them, they both of them at last perish together. We are in Danger of it, if, like these Pharisees, we inculcate on our Hearers a Zeal for the Circumstantials and Appendages of Religion, while its Essentials are neglected ; and perhaps some of the greatest Enormities of the Mind are consecrated under an honourable Name, and profanely listed under the Banner of the GOD of Holiness and Love.

S E C T. LXXXV.

JESUS withdraws to the Coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and there expells a Dæmon from the Daughter of a Canaanitish Woman; and afterwards in his Return to Galilee, cures a Man who was Deaf, and had an Impediment in his Speech. Mat. XV. 21,—29. Mark VII. 24, to the End.

MARK VII. 24.

SECT. 85.
Mark VII.
24.

AND Jesus arose from thence, and withdrew from the Place where these invidious Enemies were continually lying in wait for him, to the Borders [or] Coasts of Tyre and Sidon: And when he was come into those Parts, he entered into a House as privately as he could, and would have had no one know [it] that he was there; but he had so many Eyes upon him where-ever he went, that he could not long be concealed in that Retirement.

25 Yea, an Occurrence quickly happened, that spread the Fame of his Arrival there thro' all the Neighbourhood; for behold, a Canaanitish Woman came out of those Coasts, to whom, tho' an Alien from the Commonwealth of Israel, he displayed his Power and Goodness in a very remarkable Manner. Now this was one, whose young Daughter, for whom she had a most tender Affection, was possessed by an unclean and malignant Spirit, which often threw her into violent Agonies: And as the Fame of Jesus, and of the Miracles that he had wrought, was known in all those Parts, the afflicted Mother was no sooner told of his Arrival, but having now an Expectation of Relief from the great Things she had heard of him, she

came

MARK VII. 24.

AND from thence [Jesus] arose, and [departed] into the Borders [or Coasts] of Tyre and Sidon, and entred into an House, and would have no Man know it; but he could not be hid. [MAT. XV. 21.]

25—For [behold, a Woman of Canaan out of the same Coasts,] whose young Daughter had an unclean Spirit, heard of him, and came,

A Woman of Canaan begs his Help for her Daughter. 555

came, [and cried unto him, saying, Have Mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my Daughter is grievously vexed with a Devil.] [MAT. XV. 22.]

came immediately to the Place where he was, **SECT. 85.** and cried unto him at some Distance with **Mark VII.** the most humble Importunity, saying, **25.** *Have Mercy upon me, O Lord, thou Son of David (a),* consider my distressed Case, and extend thy Compassion to me, tho' a Stranger; for my poor unhappy *Daughter is grievously tormented by a cruel Dæmon,* that delights in the Misery of my Child; and I well know, that thou art able to cure her.

26 (The Woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by Nation;) and she besought him that he would cast forth the Devil out of her Daughter.

Now it is here to be observed as somewhat **26** singular, that (as we just now hinted,) *the Woman was not a Jew, but a Greek, a Native of Syrophenicia (b),* or of that Tract of Canaan in which they now were: *And therefore, tho' she thus earnestly besought him to cast out the Dæmon from her Daughter,* and the Case seemed so compassionate, our Lord thought it proper not to take such immediate Notice of it, as he had commonly done in the like Instances: *But turning from her,* **Mat. XV.** *as if he were regardless of her Case, he answered her not a Word.* **23.**

MAT. XV. 23. But he answered her not a Word. And his Disciples came, and besought him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us,

And his Disciples came to him on the Occasion, and intreated him, saying, Dismiss her with the Grant of her Request, for she is so overwhelmed with her Affliction, that she crieth after us where-ever she sees us (c); and not only gives us Trouble, but is like to make thy Abode here more publick than thou

(a) *O Lord, thou Son of David.*] Some have argued from this Expression, that she was a *Profelyte*; but perhaps she might have learnt it from some of the *Jews*, (either immediately, or by Report,) and might use it as a *Title of Respect* without thoroughly understanding its Meaning.

(b) *A Native of Syrophenicia.*] This Part of *Phœnicia* was so called, as it had been formerly conquered by the *Syrians*.

(c) *For she crieth after us, where-ever she sees us.*] As *Mark* tells us, that *Christ* was entered into a *House*, and that the Application of *this Woman* to him prevented his being concealed, as he desired to have been; it should seem, that she having learnt that *Jesus* was there, watched for the *Disciples* as they went in and out; and having cried after them some Time, she at length got Admittance into the *House*, and with the profoundest Respect accosted him at first from some Distance, and then drew near, and threw herself at his Feet. Compare *Mat. xv. 25.* and *Mark vii. 25.*

SECT. 85. thou wouldst have it. *But he replying said, I am not sent, but to seek and recover the lost Sheep of the House of Israel, and am charged with no immediate Message to the Gentile Nations, to whom you all know this Woman belongs.*

Mat. XV.
24.

25 *Then perceiving her Case was the Subject of their Discourse, she came nearer, and fell down at his Feet in a most importunate Manner, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, I beseech thee to help me, tho' a Stranger; for surely none ever needed thy Help more.*

Mark VII.
27.

But Jesus said to her, (yet farther to exercise and illustrate her Faith,) Let the Jews, the Children in God's Family, first be satisfied; for it is not proper to take the Children's Bread, and throw it to the Dogs; and such, you know, that you Gentiles are commonly deemed by our Nation, on Account of those Impurities and Abominations that prevail among you.

28 *And she replied and said to him, True, Lord, it would not be fit to put both on a Level; yet even the Dogs under their Master's Table are allowed to eat the Children's Crumbs which fall from it (d): May I not then humbly hope, that unworthy as I am, I may also receive some Fragments of that Mercy, which is so liberally bestowed on the Jews, and may have been in some Instances wantonly abused?*

Mat. XV.
28.

Then Jesus answering said unto her, O Woman, great is thy Faith; and it was my Design to illustrate, rather than to overbear it: Now therefore for this lively Saying, which argues so much Humility and Piety, go thy Way with the kindest Answer thou couldst

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent, but unto the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.

25 Then came she, [and fell at his Feet,] and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. [MARK VII. —25.]

MARK VII. 27. But Jesus said unto her, Let the Children first be filled; for it is not meet to take the Children's Bread, and to cast it unto the Dogs. [MAT. XV. 26.]

28 And she answered and said unto him, [Truth,] Lord; yet the Dogs under the Table eat of the Children's Crumbs [which fall from their Masters Table.] [MAT. XV. 27.]

MAT. XV. 28. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O Woman, great is thy Faith: [for this Saying go thy Way, and] be it unto thee

(d) *True, Lord, yet the Dogs, &c.* Both *Matthew* and *Mark* use the Word *yes*, which we have rendered in the former, *Truth*, and in the latter, *Yes*. It is sometimes a Form of *assenting*, and sometimes of *intreating*. Compare *Philem. ver. 20.* and see *Blackwall's Sacred Classics, vol. i. pag 143.*

(e) *He*

But on her urging her Request, he cures her Daughter.

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thee even as thou wilt: [the Devil is gone out of thy Daughter.] And her Daughter was made whole from that very Hour. [MARK VII. 29.]

MARK VII. 30. And when she was come to her House, she found the Devil gone out, and her Daughter laid upon the Bed.

MAT. XV. 29. And [again] Jesus departed from thence [from the Coasts of Tyre and Sidon,] and came nigh unto the Sea of Galilee [through the Midst of the Coasts of Decapolis,] and went up into a Mountain, and sat down there. [MARK VII. 31.]

MARK VII. 32. And they bring unto him one that was Deaf, and had an Impediment in his Speech: and they beseech him to put his Hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside from the Multitude, and put his Fingers into his Ears, and he spit, and touched his Tongue:

couldst wish, [and] be it unto thee, even just as thou wilt: Thy Desire shall be accomplished in all its Extent, for the *Dæmon* is already gone out of thy Daughter, and I assure that he shall torment her no more. And accordingly her Daughter was cured from that very Hour. And returning back to her House, fully persuaded of the Accomplishment of what Jesus had told her, she found the *Dæmon* was gone out, and her Daughter was lying on the Bed composed and quiet, which of late she had very seldom been.

And Jesus after this departed again from thence, even from the Coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and came near to the Sea of Galilee, passing thro' several Places in his Way that lay in the Midst of the Coasts of Decapolis, from whence his Fame had formerly brought Multitudes to follow him: (See Mat. iv. 25. Note (I), pag. 230.) And on a certain Day in his Journey, he went up to the Top of a Mountain, and sat down there, to rest himself, and to teach the People, who in great Multitudes resorted to him to attend upon his Preaching, and brought their Sick to be healed by him.

And among many other Diseased Persons, they brought him one who was very Deaf, and had so great an Impediment in his Speech, that he was almost Dumb too; and making known his Case to Jesus, they besought him, that he would lay his Hand upon him, as he had done in many other Cases, making no Doubt that he would upon this be perfectly restored to his Hearing and Speech. And taking him aside from the Multitude, which was very numerous, he put his Fingers into his Ears, where there was a great Obstruction, which hindered him from hearing distinctly; and spitting on his Finger, he touched

SECT. 85.

Mat. XV. 28.

Mark VII. 30.

Mat. XV. 29.

Mark VII. 32.

33

SECT. 85. *touched his Tongue (e): And looking up, as to his Father in Heaven, he groaned, in Token of his earnest Desire that these Disorders might be removed; and then said unto him, as with a Voice of Divine Authority, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.*

35 *And immediately the Word had its Effect; and his Ears were accordingly opened, and the String of his Tongue, which had hindered it from moving freely, was loosed, and he spoke distinctly and in an articulate Manner, which from his Birth he had never done before. And he charged the Man himself, and them that were near, that they should tell no one of it; but the more he charged them to conceal it, the more they were charmed with his Modesty and Humility, and consequently so much the more abundantly did they proclaim [the Cure:]*

37 *And all they who heard of it were struck with exceeding Astonishment, and said, He has done all Things well, and performed the most extraordinary Cures in the most amiable and graceful Manner; making in this, and many other Instances, both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak.*

Mark VII.
34.

34 And looking up to Heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35 And straightway his Ears were opened, and the String of his Tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

36 And he charged them, that they should tell no Man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it,

37 And were beyond Measure astonished, saying, He hath done all Things well; he maketh both the Deaf to hear, and the Dumb to speak.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mat. xv. 23. **I**F there be any Thing in the whole History of our Lord, which might have a Tendency to discourage and terrify the humble Peni-

(e) *He put his Fingers into his Ears, and spitting touched his Tongue.*] If any should ask, Why our Lord used these Actions, when a Word alone would have been sufficient; and such Means, (if they may be called Means,) could in themselves do nothing at all to answer the End? I frankly confess, I cannot tell, nor am I at all concerned to know. Yet I am ready to imagine, it might be intended to intimate in a very lively Manner, that we are not to pretend to enter into the Reasons of all his Actions; and that where we are sure, that any Observance whatever is appointed by him, we are humbly to submit to it, tho' we cannot see why it was preferred to others, which our Imagination might suggest. Had Christ's Patients, like Naaman, (2 Kings v. 11, 12.) been too nice in their Exceptions on these Occasions, I fear they would have lost their Cure; and the Indulgence of a curious, or a petulant Mind, would have been but a poor Equivalent for such a Loss.

Penitent, it would surely be *his Treatment* of this poor *Canaanitish* SECT. 85.
Woman, when she made so humble, and so affectionate an Applica-
tion to him; first *keeping Silence*; then intimating in Words a *Cold-* Ver. 24.
ness, not to say an *Aversion*; and at last representing her but as a
Dog in Comparison of the *Jews*. Surely such an *Answer* had almost Ver. 26.
broke her Heart, had it not been secretly supported by *his Grace*,
while *his Conduct* seemed so *unkind*. Happy are they, that, like her,
(who tho' a *Gentile*, did in this Instance approve herself a true *Daugh-*
ter of Abraham;) can *against Hope believe in Hope!* (*Rom. iv. 18.*)
Happy they, who can thus extract *Arguments*, even from *Discou-*
ragements (*f*)! They will finally conquer and triumph, as this
pious *Woman* did; and the Honours of their *Faith* will be comme- Ver. 28.
morated even by *Christ* himself, who soon indulges the overflowing
Tenderness of his Heart in the *Applause* he bestows upon her,
and the ample *Grant* he makes her of all that she asked in its ut-
most Extent.

The Story of the *Deaf Man*, whose *Ears were opened*, and *his Tongue* Mark vii. 32.
loosed, is one additional Instance among many more, of *Christ's Hu-* & seq.
mility, as well as of his *Power*. He *retired* from the admiring *Mul-*
titude; he *used Means*, when he could easily have wrought without Ver. 33.
them; he solemnly *addressed his Heavenly Father*, virtually acknow- Ver. 34.
ledging while he *looked up to Heaven*, that as Man he *derived* his mira-
culous *Power from above*; and he was so far superior to the
Sentiments of *Vanity*, that he *commanded Men to conceal* the most Ver. 36.
glorious and benevolent *Actions*. May all his Followers, and espe-
cially his Ministers, *learn of him*, who was thus *meeke and lowly!*
(*Mat. xi. 29.*) neither acting as in *their own Strength*, when they
attempt a *spiritual Cure*; nor proclaiming *their own Praises*, when
they have effected it. Then will they likewise *do all Things well*; Ver. 37.
and there will be *that Beauty* in the Manner, which no wise
Man would entirely neglect, even in *those Actions*, which are in
themselves most excellent and great.

(*f*) Happy are they, &c.] The pious, moderate, and eloquent *Bishop Hall* has a
fine Contemplation on this Subject, to which I refer the Reader with Pleasure; and
take this Opportunity of observing, that (allowing something for the Peculiarities of
the Age in which he lived,) I have met with no *Devotional Writings* on the *Historical*
Part of *Scripture*, which have generally given me so much Entertainment as his.

S E C T. LXXXVI.

Our LORD, after many amazing Miracles, feeds above Four Thousand with Seven Loaves and a few small Fishes; and then goes over to Dalmanutha. Mat. XV. 30, to the End. Mark VIII. 1,—10.

MAT. XV. 30.

SECT. 86.

Mat. XV. 30.

31 **A**ND while Jesus was seated on the Mountain, to which he went up, (Mat. xv. 29.) *there came to him, besides the Deaf Man of whom we have just been speaking, great Multitudes, having brought along with them Persons who were Lame, or Blind, or Dumb, [or] Maimed by the Loss of a Limb, and many others who had different Complaints; and they cast them at the Feet of Jesus, intreating his Compassion which failed not to operate on such Occasions, and he healed them all.* And so many, and various, were the Displays of his miraculous Power in the Cures he wrought, *that the whole Multitude was perfectly amazed, when they beheld the Dumb speaking forth the Praises of God and of their great Deliverer; the Maimed made whole by the Recovery of Hands and Arms, which they had lost, or which were grown quite useless to them (a); the Lame walking with Vigour and Agility,*
and

MAT. XV. 30.

AND great Multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were Lame, Blind, Dumb, Maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus Feet, and he healed them:

31 Infomuch that the Multitude wondered, when they saw the Dumb to speak, the Maimed to be whole, the Lame

(a) *The Maimed made whole.*] The Word *κωλυος*, which we render *maimed*, does in the strictest Propriety, (as *Festus* observes,) signify *one whose Hand or Arm has been cut off*; (see *Mark ix. 43.*) but it is sometimes applied to those, who only were disabled in those Parts. (See *Beza*, and *Casaub. in loc.*) And tho' in some rare Instances it may be used to signify *a Lameness in the Feet*, (see *Elfner. Observ. vol. i. pag. 77.* and *Albert. Observ. pag. 109.*) yet as it is here opposed to *χωλις περιπατης*, *the Lame walking*, it must undoubtedly be limited, as in the *Paraphrase*.—It is reasonable to suppose, that among the many *Maimed* who were brought on such Occasions, there were some whose *Limbs had been cut off*; and I think, hardly any of the *Miracles of our Lord* were more illustrious and amazing, than the Recovery of such.

Lame to walk, and the Blind to see: and they glorified the GOD of Israel.

and the Blind seeing every Object distinctly, and immediately bearing, without any Inconvenience, the full Force of unaccustomed Light (b); and struck with such various and pleasing Wonders, they glorified the GOD of Israel, who had raised up so illustrious a Prophet to his People, and sent Help to so many afflicted Creatures whom no Human Power could have restored.

SECT. 86.
Mat. XV.
31.

MARK VIII. 1. In those Days the Multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his Disciples unto him, and saith unto them, [MAT. XV. 32.—]

This Concourse of People continued with him much longer than could have been imagined; and the Season being favourable, they were so intent on hearing Christ, and seeing his Miracles, that they lodged two Nights together in the Fields (c): And therefore in those Days, the Multitude being very great, and having spent the Provision they had brought out with them, so that now on the third Day they had nothing to eat, Jesus having called his Disciples to him, says unto them, I cannot but have Com-

Mark VIII.
1.

2 I have Compassion on the Multitude, because they have now been with me three Days, and have nothing to eat: [MAT. XV. —32.—]

passion on the Multitude of my Hearers, who flock thus eagerly about me, and express such Zeal in their Attendance, as to expose themselves thereby to many Inconveniencies; for they have continued with me now three Days, and I well know, that they have nothing left to eat; And therefore I will

2

3 And [I will not] send them away fasting to their own Houses, [lest they faint] by the Way: for divers of them came from far. [MAT. XV.—32.—]

not send them away fasting to their own Houses, lest if I do, they should some of them faint by the Way: For our Lord knew, that several of them came from a considerable Distance, and

3

(b) Bearing—the full Force of unaccustomed Light.] So far as we can judge by all the Stories of the Blind restored to Sight, which occur in the Gospels, this was universally the Case; and I could not forbear pointing out so wonderful a Circumstance.

(c) They lodged two Nights together in the Fields.] This we may infer from the next Verse. The Season of the Year was pleasant, it being, as we have observed, quickly after the Passover. (See Sect. 83. Note (b), pag. 542.) And besides, that the great Number of Cures which had been wrought but just before might animate them, perhaps they might conclude, that the miraculous Power of Christ, which was displayed in so many glorious Instances around them, would either preserve their Health from being endangered by the large Dews which fell in the Night, or restore them from any Disorder they might contract by their Eagerness to attend on his Ministry.

562 *He feeds Four thousand with seven Loaves and a few Fishes:*

SECT. 86. and were but ill furnished for procuring Accommodations abroad.

Mark VIII.
4.

And his Disciples, not reflecting on the Miracle he had lately wrought for the Relief of the Five Thousand, or not imagining he would repeat it, answered him, From whence can any one hope to satisfy these Men with Bread and other Food here in this Desert Country, if he had ever so much Money to spare for the Purpose? [And] especially whence should we, whose Stock is so small, have so much Bread in the Wilderness, as might suffice to fill so great a Multitude, whose Appetites are many of them sharpened by so long a Fast? We cannot but wonder to hear thee mention such a Design.

5 *And he asked them, How many Loaves are you provided with, or what have you at hand to eat? And they said, We have only Seven Loaves among us all, and a few little Fishes, which is a very Trifle to the present Purpose.*

6 *And having ordered them to bring out what they had, he commanded the Multitude to sit down in Ranks on the Ground, that they might be served, as before, in an orderly Manner (d); and then having took the Seven Loaves, and solemnly given Thanks to his Heavenly Father, acknowledging his Goodness as the great Author of all Mercies, when he had blessed them before them all, he brake them into proper Pieces, and gave [them] to his Disciples to set before them; and they accordingly set them before the People.*

7 *And as they likewise had a few small Fishes, he took them also in the same Manner; and having blessed [them,] as he had done the Bread,*

4 And his Disciples answered him, From whence can a Man satisfy these Men with Bread here? [Whence should we have so much Bread in the Wilderness, as to fill so great a Multitude?] [MAT. XV. 33.]

5 And he asked them, How many Loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, [and a few little Fishes.] [MAT. XV. 34.]

6 And he commanded [the Multitude] to sit down on the Ground: and he took the seven Loaves, and gave Thanks, and brake, and gave to his Disciples to set before them: and they did set them before the People. [MAT. XV. 35, 36.]

7 And they had a few small Fishes; and he blessed, and

(d) That they might be served, as before, in an orderly Manner.] See Note (b) on Mark vi. 40. pag. 512. Probably here they might sit, an Hundred in Rank, and Forty in File, by which Means the Four thousand Men would be exactly disposed, as the Five thousand had been.

And dismissing the People, goes to the Coasts of Magdala.

and commanded to let them also before them.

8 So they did [all] eat, and were filled: And they took up of the broken Meat that was left, seven Baskets [full.] [MAT. XV. 37.]

9—And they that had eaten were about Four thousand Men, besides Women and Children.] [MAT. XV. 38.]

MAT. XV. 39. And he sent away the Multitude: [and straightway he entered into a Ship with his Disciples,] and came [into the Parts of Dalmanutha,] into the Coasts of Magdala. [MARK VIII.—9, 10.]

Bread, he commanded his Disciples to set them SECT. 86. also before [the Multitude.]

So they did all eat, and were abundantly Mark VIII. 8. satisfied: And the Disciples afterwards collected what was left, and they took up no less than Seven Baskets full of what remained of the Fragments; which Jesus ordered them to gather up, that he might thus convince them in the strongest Manner of the Greatness of the Miracle, and teach them also at the same Time to use a prudent Frugality in the Midst of Plenty.

And they who had eaten of these Loaves and Fishes were about Four thousand Men, besides a considerable Number of Women and Children, who were there in Company with them, and all partook of the same Entertainment.

And the Repast being over, he dismissed Mat. XV. 39. the Multitude: And immediately after this, entering into a Ship with his Disciples, he crossed the Sea, and came into the Parts of Dalmanutha, (which, with several neighbouring Cities, stood in the Coasts of Magdala, not far from Gadara, on the Eastern Shore of the Sea of Galilee;) and there he had an Interview with some Pharisees, which will be related in the next Section.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

WITH what a Circle is our Blessed Lord surrounded (e) Mat. xv. 30, 31. Let us pause a little, and endeavour to paint him to our Imagination on this Mountain, where the astonished Multitudes so justly extolled all these mingled Wonders of Power, and of Grace.

4 B 2

Let

(e) With what a Circle is our Blessed Lord surrounded!] As this Story of feeding the Four thousand is so very much the same, with what we had in Sect. 78. I refer the Reader to the Improvement of that Section, (pag. 515.) for practical Reflections on the greatest Part of this; and chuse here to indulge a devout Meditation, on the Number and Variety of those Cures which Christ performed, which constitutes the whole of this Improvement, having been elsewhere but transiently touched upon.

SECT. 86. Let us reflect on the *Dumb speaking*, the *Maimed made whole*, the *Lame walking*, the *Deaf hearing*, and the *Blind seeing*, that with Mat. xv. 30, them *we may glorify the GOD of Israel.*

31.

But who can describe the Sentiments of these happy Creatures, who without any dangerous or painful Operation, found themselves in a Moment restored, beyond all the Efforts of Nature, and beyond all the Prospects of Hope? With what Pleasure did the *Ear*, which had just been opened, listen to the pleasing Accents of his Instructive Tongue! How did the *Lame* leap around him for Joy! and the *Maimed* extend their recovered Hands in grateful Acknowledgments of his new creating Power! While the Voice of the *Dumb* sang forth his Praises in Sounds before unknown; and the Eye of the *Blind* checked the Curiosity, which would have prompted it to range over the various and beautiful Objects of unveiled Nature, to fix its rapturous Regards on the gracious Countenance of him that had given it the Day!

Let us farther reflect, with what correspondent Pleasure must *our Lord* survey these grateful and astonished Creatures, while his benevolent Heart took its Share, in all the *Delight* which he gave! *These Trophies of his Greatness!* how unlike to *those of the Field*, the Monuments of Desolation and Slaughter! *Trophies*, for which the *Hera* must have struggled with the *Man*, and might sit down and weep over his own Success!

Whose Heart is so insensible, as not to feel an *humane*, as well as *devout Pleasure*, in the History of these, and the like *Miracles*, tho' the Subjects on which they were wrought are long since mouldering in the Dust? But let us farther recollect, that our *Divine Leader* has other, yet more noble, and more permanent *Trophies*; those immortal *Spirits*, which he has *redeemed*, and *sanctified*, and *saved*. So may our transported Souls, *O Blessed Jesus*, in the Consciousness of *Health, Vigour, and Salvation*, behold thee as *our Deliverer!* So mayst thou view us with *Satisfaction*, as *the Travail of thy Soul*, in that *Mountain of GOD*, where we hope to offer thee nobler Praises, and for ever to consecrate to thy Service *those Powers*, which thou hast recovered from *Weakness, Dishonour, and Ruin!*

S E C T.

S E C T. LXXXVII.

The Pharisees again demand a Sign, and CHRIST upbraids them with Hypocrisy in doing it; and having crossed the Lake again, he cautions his Disciples against their Leaven, and that of the Sadducees. Mat. XVI. 1,—12. Mark VIII. 11,—21.

MAT. XVI. 1.

THE Pharisees also with the Sadducees, came, [and began to question with him,] and [tempting him] desired him that he would shew them a Sign from Heaven. [MARK VIII. 11.]

MAT. XVI. 1.

AND when Jesus was landed on the opposite Shore of the Sea of Galilee in the Coasts of Magdala, the Pharisees and Sadducees, notwithstanding the Difference of their Principles, and the Alienation of their Affections from each other, agreed to join in an Attempt upon him: And accordingly they came, and began to examine him, in a very crafty and insnaring Manner; and to try him yet farther, desired him that he would shew them a Sign from Heaven (a); pretending that they could not acquiesce merely in such Miracles as he had wrought upon Earth, where there was much more Room for Artifice and Deceit, and Evil Spirits might have some greater Influence, than in the upper Regions. (Compare Mat. xii. 38. pag. 403.) But he answering said unto them, It is most apparent you ask this out of a Desire to

SECT. 87.
Mat. XVI. 1.

2 He answered and said unto

(a) *Desired him that he would shew them a Sign from Heaven.*] On the whole, I am ready to think, the Two Things mentioned in Note (a) on Mat. xii. 38. pag. 403. are to be united; and that what they here demanded was the very Thing, which Josephus tells us (*Bell. Jud. Lib. ii. cap. 13. [al. 12.] §. 4.*) Impostors of those Times promised they would shew them from GOD; under the Character of *σημια υπερβυρα*, Signs of Liberty, or some miraculous Appearance from Heaven to assure them of Deliverance from the Roman Yoke. And on these Principles they continued their Demands in the Apostles Time, (1 Cor. i. 22.) tho' so many Signs from Heaven had then been given; in the Voice from thence; in the preternatural Darkness at our Lord's Crucifixion; in the Descent of Angels in repeated Instances; and in that of the Holy Spirit, in a visible Form, as well as in most sensible Effects. See Dr. Lardner's *Credib. Book i. chap. 5. §. 2. Vol. i. pag. 291.*

SECT. 87. to cavil, rather than to learn the Divine Will; for in other Cases you take up with Mat. XVI. 2. Degrees of Evidence far short of those, which you here reject: As for Instance, you readily *say in an Evening, [It will be] fair Weather To-morrow, because the Sky is this Evening* 3 *of a bright and fiery Red: And in the Morning, [It will be] tempestuous Weather (b) To-day, for the Sky is red and lowring. O ye Hypocrites, you know how to distinguish the Face of the Heavens, and to form from thence probable Conjectures concerning the Weather; and can you not [distinguish] the Signs of the present Times, and see by the various Miracles which are daily performed among you, and the other Tokens which attend mine Appearance, that this is indeed the Period which you profess to desire with so much Eagerness, and which you might discern with much less Sagacity?*

Mark VIII. 22. *And sighing deeply, as being touched in his own Spirit with a most compassionate Sense of their Guilt and Misery, he said, Why does this Generation seek after a farther Sign? Verily, as I said once before on this Occasion, (Mat. xii. 39. pag. 403.) I now say it again to you, This is an evil and adulterous Generation which demands a Sign, and no such Sign as it requires, shall be given it, unless it be the Sign of the Prophet Jonah, who lay three Days and Nights in the Belly of the great Fish, and then came out alive; to which a most remarkable Resemblance will be quickly manifested in the Resurrection of the Messiah on the third Day, that will moreover be attended with the Appearance of an Angel coming down from Heaven.*

And

(b) Tempestuous Weather.] So $\chi\alpha\lambda\iota\upsilon\tau\alpha$ properly signifies. Dr. Lightfoot justly observes, that the Jews used to value themselves highly on their Skill in prognosticating the Weather: And Grotius has well observed in his Note on this Place, what a Variety of Signs marked out that Time for the Arrival of the Messiah.

(c) Be

unto them, When it is Evening, ye say, *It will be fair Weather, for the Sky is red.*

3 *And in the Morning, It will be foul Weather To-day; for the Sky is red and lowring. O ye Hypocrites, ye can discern the Face of the Sky, but can ye not discern the Signs of the Times?*

MARK VIII. 12. *And he sighed deeply in his Spirit, and said, Why doth this Generation seek after a Sign? Verily I say unto you, [A wicked and adulterous Generation seeketh after a Sign, and there shall no Sign be given unto it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas.] [MAT. XVI. 4.—]*

The Disciples are cautioned against their Leaven.

567

13 And he left them, and entering into the Ship again, departed to the other Side. [MAT. XVI.—4.]

And having said this, he staid no longer to debate the Matter with Persons of so perverse and disingenuous a Temper, but left them; and entering again into the Ship which brought him over the Sea, he departed to the other Side of the Lake.

SECT. 87.
Mark VIII. 13.

MAT. XVI. 5. And when his Disciples were come to the other Side, they had forgotten to take Bread, [neither had they in the Ship with them more than one Loaf.] [MARK VIII. 14.]

And when his Disciples were come to the other Side of the Sea, they were concerned to find, that they had forgotten to take any Bread; and having used all the Fragments which they carried over with them in the Baskets, they had now no more than one Loaf with them in the Ship.

Mat. XVI. 5.

6 Then Jesus [charged them, saying,] Take heed and beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, [and of the Leaven of Herod.] [MARK VIII. 15.]

And Jesus willing to improve this Circumstance, considering what had lately passed, gave them a solemn Charge, saying, Be very cautiously on your Guard (c) against the Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and particularly take heed of the Leaven of Herod (d); intending thereby to caution them against those corrupt Mixtures, which these Sects had introduced to the depraving of Religion; which tended, like Leaven, to overspread and sour, and puff up the Mind, and so to prevent the Efficacy of Divine Instruction upon it.

6

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no Bread. [MARK VIII. 16.]

But the Slowness of their Understanding shewed itself on this Occasion, as it had done on many others; and they debated privately among themselves, saying, [It is] surely because we have taken no Bread with us, that our Lord thus cautions us against the Leaven of these Men, as if they polluted whatever they touched.

7

8 Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye

[Which] when Jesus perceived, as he knew all the secret Workings of their Minds, he said unto them, O ye of

8

(c) *Be very cautiously on your Guard.*] This sufficiently expresses the Sense of the Words, *οεατε ναυ αφοορυαλι*, which are repeated in the *Original*, to urge the Caution with the greater Force and Emphasis.

(d) *Leaven of Herod.*] Those *Sadducees*, who were also *Herodians*, might with peculiar Propriety be singled out by our Lord, to caution his Disciples against them. See *Grotius*, in *loc.* and *Note (f)* on *Mark* iii, 6. pag. 330.

(e) *How*

SECT. 87. *of little Faith, why do you reason in this Manner with yourselves? and why is it that you are under such Concern, because you have*

Mat. XVI. 9. *brought no Bread? Do you not yet consider, after all that you have seen and heard, nor understand what has so lately passed before your Eyes? [and] have you still your Hearts so hardened, and your Minds so stupefied, as not to draw so easy a Consequence from such repeated Miracles, as to be free from any anxious Concern on this Account,*

Mark VIII. 18. *because you have but one Loaf? Are you like so many senseless Images? Having Eyes, do you not see with them? and having Ears, do you not hear? and with those natural Powers of Memory and Reflection, do you not remember what you were Witnesses to*

19 *but a few Days ago? Let me refresh your Memories, and ask you, When I broke the five Loaves, and you with your own Hands distributed them among the Five thousand Men, till they were all satisfied, how many Baskets full of Fragments took ye up? They say unto him, We well remember that we took up Twelve. And, added he,*

20 *when in like Manner [I divided] the seven [Loaves] among the Four Thousand, and fed them to the full, how many Baskets full of Fragments did you then take up (e)? And they said, Lord, we know we took up Seven.*

21 *And he farther said to them, Since you remember these Facts, how is it that you do not under-*

stand ye of little Faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no Bread? [MARK VIII. 17.—]

9—Do ye not yet perceive, [neither] understand? [have ye your Hearts yet hardened?] [MARK VIII. —17.]

MARK VIII. 18. Having Eyes, see ye not? and having Ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? [MAT. XVI.—9.—]

19 When I brake the five Loaves among Five thousand, how many Baskets full of Fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. [MAT. XVI.—9.]

20 And when the seven among Four thousand, how many Baskets full of Fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. [MAT. XVI. 10.]

21 And he said unto them, How is it that you do not understand,

(e) *How many Baskets full of Fragments did you take up?* The learned Dr. Daniel Scott on Mat. xvi. 10. with his usual Accuracy has observed, that Two different Words are used in this and the preceding Verse for Baskets, *κοφινος*, and *συνδακ*. The former signifies larger Baskets; and therefore is translated *Paniers* by the French: We have borrowed the Word from them, and it seems from its Etymology first to have been given them, from their being used by *Bakers* to carry about large Quantities of Bread. The other seem to have been smaller Baskets with Handles, and such as consequently might easily be carried on the Arm. It is observable, that our Lord did not affect to rise in the Circumstances of the Two Miracles here mentioned. The latter, tho' in some Particulars inferior to the former, was equally a Demonstration of the Divine Power of Christ, and therefore equally to the Purpose for which it is here mentioned; not to urge, that it was of the Two the more fresh in their Memories.

derstand, [that I spake it not to you concerning Bread, that ye should beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees?] [MAT. XVI. 11.]

understand by them, *that I did not speak to you concerning Bread*, so as to blame you for having brought no more Bread, but meant *that you should be on your Guard against the Leaven of those erroneous Notions and corrupt Principles, which are so common among the Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees?*

SECT. 87.
Mark VIII. 21.

MAT. XVI. 12. Then understood they, how that he bade *them*, not beware of the Leaven of Bread, but of the Doctrine of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees.

Then they were sensible of their Mistake, and understood, that he did not charge them to beware of the Leaven of Bread; but that he intended to warn them of the evil Doctrine and Example of the Pharisees and Sadducees, against which so many of his Discourses were most justly levelled.

Mat. XVI. 12.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

SO evident is it, that the Circumstances of a *Scripture Story* may be remembered, where the Design of it is overlooked or forgot! It is much to be wished, that those, which we have been surveying, may not increase the Number of such Instances.

Mark viii. 18, 21.

In all those Cases, wherein the *Arm of the Lord* has been made bare in our Favour, let us seriously reflect on the *Divine Power and Goodness*, and learn from past Experience, to trust it for the Time to come. Never let us fall into the perverse Suspicions of the *Israelites*, Can GOD furnish a Table in the Wilderness? (Psal. lxxviii. 19.) But let us be strong in Faith, giving Glory to GOD, and cheerfully repose ourselves on his Care, who can never want Wisdom to judge aright of the Necessities of his People, or Power to relieve them, even in the greatest Extremities.

Ver. 19, 20.

Mat. xvi. 8.

We see a new Instance of the Perverseness of these *Scribes and Pharisees*. They tempted Christ by unreasonable Demands; and he justly suffered them to go away, without the additional Demonstration they sought. It is not for us to prescribe to GOD, what Degrees of Evidence he shall give us. Let us impartially pursue, and improve what we have; and be very careful, that our Sagacity, and Openness to Conviction in other Matters of much less Importance, may not condemn our Stupidity, or Obstinacy, where the Truths of GOD, and the Salvation of our Souls, are concerned.

Ver. 1.

Ver. 4.

Ver. 2, 3.

It is our Concern to beware of erroneous Principles in Religion, and of every corrupt Leaven, which might be ready to insinuate itself

Ver. 6, 12.

SECT. 87. into our Minds ; especially of that, which, like the *Leaven of the Pharisees*, would exalt our Confidence in ourselves ; or, like *that of the Sadducees*, would impair our Persuasion of a future Judgment, and our solicitous Concern to live as in the Views of it. May the *Oracles of Divine Truth* ever appear to our Minds, as the *Rule* by which all Doctrines are to be tried ! and let us, in the Spirit of Love, contend earnestly for that *Faith*, which we believe to have been *once delivered to the Saints* ; that both our Sentiments, and Actions, may finally be found blameless, unto *Praise, and Honour, and Glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ*. Amen.

S E C T. LXXXVIII.

CHRIST gradually heals the Blind Man at Bethsaida ; and owns to his Disciples that he is the Messiah, applauding Peter for expressly acknowledging him under that Character. Mark VIII. 22,—30. Mat. XVI. 13,—20. Luke IX. 18,—21.

MARK VIII. 22.

SECT. 88.
Mark VIII.
22.

AND when our Lord had thus crossed the Sea, he came to Bethsaida ; and his Fame being well known there, as soon as he entered the Place, they brought him a Blind Man, and entreated him that he would be pleased only to touch him, as being well assured, that this would be sufficient for the Recovery of his Sight. And as he chose to work this Miracle in private, he took bold of the Blind Man's Hand, and led him out of the Town (a) in the most tender and condescending Manner ; and having spit upon his Eyes,

MARK VIII. 22.

AND he cometh to Bethsaida, and they bring a Blind Man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

23 And he took the Blind Man by the Hand, and led him out of the Town ; and when he had spit on his Eyes, and

(a) And led him out of the Town.] Grotius thinks, it was an Intimation of his just Displeasure against the Inhabitants of Bethsaida, for their Ingratitude and Infidelity, that he would not permit them to be Eye-witnesses of this Miracle, or even suffer the Person who received the Cure, to go back thither to proclaim it. Compare Mat. xi. 21. pag. 376.

(b) I see

and put *his* Hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought.
 24 And he looked up, and said, I see Men as Trees walking.

Eyes, and laid his Hands upon him, he asked him if he saw any Thing. And looking up, he said, I do indeed discern the Forms of Things, in an imperfect Manner, and see Men walking before me, but it is so obscurely, as that I am hardly able to distinguish them from Trees, any otherwise than by their Motion (b). Then he laid his Hands again upon his Eyes, and caused him to look up a second Time; and upon this he found his Sight was perfectly restored, so that he saw every Man and Thing about him clearly and distinctly. And he sent him away directly to his own House, which lay in some neighbouring Village; and said unto him, Enter not into the ungrateful Town of Bethsaida, to proclaim what has now been done for thee, neither tell the Circumstances of it to any Man dwelling in the Town, for they are unworthy the Knowledge of such a Miracle; but content thyself with returning thy Acknowledgments to God for his Favour to thee; for I assure thee, that in what I do I am animated only by a sincere Regard to the Glory of him that sent me, and to the Relief of afflicted Creatures.

SECT. 88.
 Mark VIII.
 24.

25 After that he put *his* Hands again upon his Eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every Man clearly.

Then he laid his Hands again upon his Eyes, and caused him to look up a second Time; and upon this he found his Sight was perfectly restored, so that he saw every Man and Thing about him clearly and distinctly. And he sent him away directly to his own House, which lay in some neighbouring Village; and said unto him, Enter not into the ungrateful Town of Bethsaida, to proclaim what has now been done for thee, neither tell the Circumstances of it to any Man dwelling in the Town, for they are unworthy the Knowledge of such a Miracle; but content thyself with returning thy Acknowledgments to God for his Favour to thee; for I assure thee, that in what I do I am animated only by a sincere Regard to the Glory of him that sent me, and to the Relief of afflicted Creatures.

25

26 And he sent him away to his House, saying, Neither go into the Town, nor tell it to any in the Town.

And he sent him away directly to his own House, which lay in some neighbouring Village; and said unto him, Enter not into the ungrateful Town of Bethsaida, to proclaim what has now been done for thee, neither tell the Circumstances of it to any Man dwelling in the Town, for they are unworthy the Knowledge of such a Miracle; but content thyself with returning thy Acknowledgments to God for his Favour to thee; for I assure thee, that in what I do I am animated only by a sincere Regard to the Glory of him that sent me, and to the Relief of afflicted Creatures.

26

27 And Jesus went out, and his Disciples, into the Towns of Cæsarea Philippi: And [LUK. it came to pass] by the Way, [when Jesus came

And Jesus, with his Disciples, went out from the City of Bethsaida, in the Neighbourhood of which this Miracle had been performed, and came into the Towns belonging to a City in the Northern Part of Canaan, (near Mount Lebanon,) which had formerly been called Laish, but now bore the Name of Cæsarea Philippi, having lately been rebuilt by Philip, the Tetrarch (c). And it

27

(b) *I see Men walking, as Trees.*] Probably they might not be far from the *Way-side*, and these might be *Passengers* who happened then to be going by; for it seems by the Story, that *our Lord* when he took him out of the Town, permitted none of his Company to attend him.

(c) *Cæsarea Philippi, &c.*] *Philip the Tetrarch* called the Chief City of this Tract of Land *Cæsarea*, in Honour of *Tiberius Cæsar*; and *Philip's* own Name was added,

SECT. 88. *it came to pass by the Way, as they were on their Journey, when Jesus was just come into [those] Parts, he retired a while for Devotion; and when he had been praying with his Disciples apart, he enquired of them, saying, Whom do Men say, that I, who have so long conversed among them as the Son of Man, am? What Notions do you find, that Men generally form of me?*

Mark VIII. 27. *And they replying said, Some [say, that thou art] John the Baptist risen from the Dead, with an additional Power of working Miracles; but others [say,] that thou art Elijah the Prophet, who art come to prepare the Way of the Messiah; and others say, that thou art Jeremiab (d); and others in a more general Way, that one of the antient Prophets is risen again.*

Mark VIII. 29. *And after they had told him what were the Thoughts of others, he then said to them, for the Trial of their Faith, But tell me truly and plainly your own Sentiments; whom do you yourselves think and say that I am? And Simon Peter immediately answered, with his usual Zeal and Forwardness, and said to him in the Name of the rest, Lord, we well know, that thou art the great expected Messiah; and art not only the Son of Man, the worthy Heir of that glorious and extensive Kingdom promised to him; but art in a proper and incommunicable Sense, the Son of*

came into the Coasts of it,] [LUK. as he was alone praying, his Disciples were with him, and] he asked his Disciples, saying unto them, Whom do Men say that I [the Son of Man] am? [MAT. XVI. 13. LUKE IX. 18.]

LUKE IX. 19. They answering said, [Some say that thou art] John the Baptist; but some say Elias; [and others Jeremias,] and others say, that one of the old Prophets is risen again. [MAT. XVI. 14. MARK VIII. 28.]

MARK VIII. 29. And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And [Simon] Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ [the Son of the living God.] [MAT. XVI. 15, 16. LUKE IX. 20.]

to distinguish it from that other *Cæsarea*, so often mentioned in the *Acts*, (*chap. viii. 40. ix. 30. x. 1. xii. 19. xxi. 8. xxiii. 23, 33. and xxv. 4, 13.*) which was a fine Port on the *Mediterranean Sea*, and had been rebuilt by *Herod the Great*, and named in Honour of *Augustus Cæsar*.—*Josephus* gives *Philip* so good a Character, that some have thought, *our Lord* retired into his Territories for Security from the Insults of his Enemies elsewhere. See *L'Enfant's Introduction*, pag. 27.

(d) *Others say, that thou art Jeremiab.*] *Mr. Cradock* has observed, that the *Jews* seem to have had a Tradition among them, that *Jeremiab* the Prophet would appear among them, when the *Messiah* came, to recover the *Ark of the Covenant*, which they fancied he had hid: *2 Mac. ii. 5.* (See *Cradock's Harmony*, Part ii. pag. 12.) And *Dr. Whitby* imagines, they might farther encourage themselves in that Notion, from *Jer. i. 5, 10.* (See his Note on *Mat. xvi. 14.*)

(e) Upon

of the ever living GOD; and we believe in thee as such, and adore thee under that Divine Character. SECT. 88.

MAT. XVI. 17. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.

And Jesus replying said unto him, Thou hast confessed a Truth, and a Truth of the utmost Importance; Blessed art thou therefore, O Simon Bar-Jonas, (or the Son of Jonas,) in being brought thus firmly to believe it: For Flesh and Blood hath not revealed [it] to thee, thou hast not learnt it by Human Report, or the unassisted Sagacity of thine own Mind; but my Father in Heaven has discovered it to thee, and wrought in thy Soul this cordial Assent in the Midst of those various Prejudices against it, which present Circumstances might suggest. Mat. XVI. 17.

18 And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church; and the Gates

as thou hast been so ready to make this Acknowledgment, I also in Return say to thee, Thou art indeed Peter, (see John i. 42. pag. 136.) thou art, as thy Name signifies, a substantial Rock; and as thou hast shewn it in this good Confession, I assure thee that upon this Rock I will build my Church (e); Faith in me as the Son of God shall be its great Sup- 18

(e) Upon this Rock I will build my Church.] I look upon this, as one of those Scriptures, the Sense of which might be most certainly fixed by the particular Tone of Voice and Gesture, with which it was spoken; and therefore have paraphrased it with a Latitude, which an intelligent Reader will easily observe.—If our Lord altered his Accent, and laid his Hand on his Breast, it would shew that he spoke, not of the Person, but of the Confession of Peter, (as most Protestant Divines have understood it,) and meant to point out himself as the great Foundation. Compare 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11.—But if he turned to the other Apostles, and pointed to Peter, that would shew, he meant to intimate the Honour he would do him, in making him an eminent Support to his Church. This is the Sense, which Grotius, Le Clerc, Dr. Whitby, Dr. Clarke, and L'Enfant defend, and it seems to suit best with the Connection. (See Whitby in loc.) But to be a Foundation in this Sense, was not his Honour alone: His Brethren shared with him in it, (see Eph. ii. 20. and Rev. xxi. 14.) as they did also in the Power of Binding and Loosing. (See Mat. xviii. 18. and John xx. 23.)—On the whole, how weak the Arguments are, which the Papists draw from hence, to support the Supremacy of Peter in their wild Sense of it, is sufficiently shewn by Bishop Burnet on the Articles, pag. 180. Calvin, Institut. lib. iv. cap. 6. Dr. Barrow on the Creed, Sermon. xxviii. Dr. Patrick in his Sermon on this Text, and a Multitude more, whom I need not name.—There seems a Reference in this Expression to the common Custom, of building Citadels upon a Rock.

(f) The

SECT. 88.
 Mat. XVI.
 18.

Support, and I will use thee as a glorious Instrument in raising it: Yea, so immoveable and firm shall its Foundation be, and so secure the Superstructure, that tho' Earth and Hell unite their Assaults against it, and Death in its most dreadful Forms be armed for its Destruction, *the Gates of Hell*, or the unseen World, *shall not finally prevail against it* to its Ruin (f); but one Generation of Christians shall arise after another, even to the very End of Time, to maintain this Truth, and to venture their Lives and their Souls upon it, till at length the whole Body of them be redeemed from the Power of the Grave. In the mean Time, I will raise thee, O Peter, and thy Brethren, whose Faith herein agrees with thine, (compare John xx. 23.) to distinguished Honours in my Church; and I will give unto thee in particular, *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, and make thee the Instrument of opening it both to the Jews and Gentiles (g): Yea, so fully

Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever

(f) *The Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it* to its Ruin.] It is most certain, that the Phrase here used *ωντας αδς*, does generally in the Greek Writers signify, *the Entrance into the invisible World*; as *Ellner*, (vol. i. pag. 77, 78.) and *Albert*, (*Observ.* pag. 111, 112.) have abundantly proved. So the *Seventy* use it, *Isa.* xxxviii. 10. and *Job* xxxviii. 17. (Compare *Wisd. of Sol.* xvi. 13.) So that it is equivalent to *the Gates of Death*, *Psal.* cvii. 18. and elsewhere. The plainest and fullest Sense seems to be, what I have given in the *Paraphrase*; for the Vindication of which, see *Dr. More's Theological Works*, pag. 110. and *Dr. Whitby's Note* on this Place. *Grotius* also supposes, it refers to the final *Triumph of the Saints over the Grave*, at the general Resurrection. This does indeed imply a *Victory over the Power and Policy of Infernal Spirits*; but I cannot apprehend a Reference to *this* to be chiefly intended; as it is certain, that the Greek Word *αδς* [*Hades*] does very seldom signify the *State of the Damned*, but generally (as *אולם* in Hebrew,) the *invisible World* in general. See *Mr. How's Works*, vol. ii. pag. 61, 62.

(g) *I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, &c.*] As *Stewards* of great Families, especially of the *Royal Household*, bore a *Key*, probably a *Golden one*, (as the *Lords of the Bedchamber* do,) in Token of their Office, the Phrase of *giving a Person the Key* naturally grew into an Expression of *raising him to great Power*: (Compare *Isa.* xxii. 22. and *Rev.* iii. 7.) And this seems more natural and certain, than *Bishop Burnet's* Supposition, that *Christ* refers to the Custom of *giving a Key* to the *Jewish Rabbies*, when they were admitted into their Office, in Token of the *Power* given them to *expound the Scripture*. (See *Grotius* on *Luke* xi, 52. and *Bishop Burnet's four Discourses*, pag. 241, 242.) *Peter's opening the Kingdom of Heaven*, as being the first that

He charges his Disciples not to tell that he is the Messiah.

575

soever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.

fully shalt thou be instructed in my Will, and in the Constitution of my Kingdom, that *whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shalt be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven* (b); that is, thou shalt have Authority to declare what Precepts of the Mosaic Religion are superseded, and what are continued, and what Things are allowed or forbidden to my Disciples; and I will myself confirm those Decisions, whether general or personal, as made by the Influences of my unerring Spirit communicated to thee, and thy Brethren, and will determine Men's final State in a Manner agreeable to them.

SECT. 88.
Mat. XVI.
19.

LUKE IX. 21. And he *straitly charged* [his Disciples,] and *commanded them* to tell no Man that Thing [MAR. of him.] [that he was Jesus the Christ.] [MAT. XVI. 20. MARK VIII. 30.]

And upon this he strictly charged and commanded his Disciples, that they should tell no Man at present this Thing concerning him, which he had so expressly acknowledged to them, that he was Jesus the Messiah, and that he actually professed and owned the Title; because he knew it was like to be interpreted in a very unjust and unnatural Manner, which might

Luke IX. 21.

that preached it, both to the Jews, (*Acts* ii.) and to the Gentiles, (*Acts* x.) may be considered as an Illustration of *this Promise*; but I apprehend it more fully explained, by the *Power of Binding and Loosing* afterwards mentioned.

(b) *Whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; &c.*] A Power to bind and loose, may signify in general, great Authority in a Family or State; which Sense it plainly has, both in *Josephus* and *Plutarch*. (See *Elfner, Observ. vol. i. pag. 80.*) When applied to Judges in Criminal Cases, it signifies to *absolve*, or *condemn*; (see *Raphel. Annot. ex Herod. pag. 169.*) and when used of Teachers, especially in the Jewish Language, it refers to their *Explications of the Law*; and thus *to bind*, is to oblige a Person to do, or forbear, any Thing in Question, or to declare a Thing commanded or forbidden; and *to loose*, is to declare the Thing to be indifferent, or the Person at Liberty with Respect to it. (See *Lightf. Hor. Hebr. in loc.*)—The learned *Selden* has endeavoured to shew, that the Clause before us must be interpreted in this Sense; (see *Seld. de Synod. lib. ii. cap. 7.*) and many of the greatest Character for Criticism, in our own Country, and Abroad, have followed him; and among the rest, the present celebrated *Bishop of Winchester*, in his glorious Controversy on the Subject of *Church Authority*. I have included that Sense, and taken the Words in a yet greater Extent, as the learned *Puffendorf* also does; (*De Habitu Relig. Christ. &c. §. 22, — 25.*) and I shall with great Pleasure submit to those *Ecclesiastical Rulers*, who shall prove, as the *Apostles* did, their *Power to explain the Laws of Christ* in a decisive Way, and their *Authority efficaciously to absolve, or condemn Men*, according to the Sense they give of them.

SECT. 88. might have rendered him and his Followers
 Luke IX. 21. obnoxious to the Romans, who would unreasonably look on such a Profession as a Claim to Regal Power, and utterly inconsistent with the Rights of Cæsar.

I M P R O V E M E N T.

- Mat. xvi. 16, 18. **W**E here behold the *great Foundation* of our Faith and Hope, even *Jesus the Rock of Ages, the same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever,* (Heb. xiii. 8.) who is *Christ the Son of the living G O D.* *Other Foundation can no Man lay:* (1 Cor. iii. 11.) On him may our Souls rest, and the fiercest Tempests shall rage in vain!
- Ver. 18. Our *Lord* foretold, that *the Gates of Hell should not* be able to prevail against his Church as thus founded; and behold, even to this Day, the Accomplishment of the Prediction. As *Christians* of one Age have sunk into their Graves, a new Harvest has sprung up in the next; and in Spite of all the Artifices of *Satan* to pervert *young Minds,* and all the Advantages with which he attacks them, *instead of the Fathers* have been *the Children,* to be accounted to the **L O R D** for a Generation. (Psal. xlv. 16. and xxii. 30.)
- Ver. 19. Let us thankfully adore the Divine Goodness herein; and be very sensible how much we are indebted to that Goodness, in those Powers communicated to the *Apostles,* on whom, as subordinate Foundations, we are built. (Eph. ii. 20.) As they received so ample a Commission, and obtained Grace from the Lord to be faithful to it, let us pay the humblest Regard to their Teachings; as well knowing, that what they have *bound on Earth is bound in Heaven,* and what they have inculcated, was solemnly confirmed by a Divine Authority.
- Ver. 17. If we have listened with Attention to those immortal Writings of theirs, by which *being dead they yet speak;* and have found them the effectual Means of revealing *Christ* in our Hearts, in all his Divine Glories and saving Powers; let us remember, that we owe it *not to Flesh and Blood,* or the most excellent *Human Instruments* alone, but to the Influences of *our Father in Heaven.*
- Mark viii. 23, 25. That efficacious Grace is freely exercised, and operates in various Methods; on some, in a more *instantaneous* Way; on others, like the Power of *Christ* on the *Blind Man,* of whom we have been reading, by more *gradual* Advances. Let us be thankful for whatever Light we receive, and press on to brighter Discoveries; and join

S E C T. LXXXIX.

CHRIST *propheſies of his approaching Sufferings, rebukes Peter for being offended at them, and exhorts his Diſciples to Self-Denial, and a Readineſs for Martyrdom in his Cauſe.* Mat. XVI. 21, to the End. Mark VIII. 31, to the End. IX. 1. Luke IX. 22,—27.

MAT. XVI. 21.

FROM that Time forth began Jeſus to [teach and] ſhew unto his Diſciples, how that he, [the Son of Man,] muſt go unto Jeruſalem, and ſuffer many Things, [and be rejected] of the Elders and chief Prieſts and Scribes, and be killed, and [after three Days] be raiſed again the third Day. [MARK VIII. 31. LUKE IX. 22.]

MAT. XVI. 21.

NOW when Jeſus had applauded the Confession of Peter, (as recorded above,) and thereby expreſly declared to all the Apoſtles that he was the Meſſiah, he *from that Time began* more plainly than ever, to teach [and] ſhew to his Diſciples, that he, the Son of Man, who was indeed the Chriſt of God, muſt in a few Months more go to Jeruſalem; and there, inſtead of being owned under the Royal Character he bore, and ſubmitted to by Princes and People, muſt ſuffer many moſt injurious Things, and be diſdainfully rejected by the Elders, and chief Prieſts, and Scribes of their Nation, and be killed in a moſt cruel and outrageous Manner: But he went on and added, to encourage them under this gloomy Proſpect, that *after having lain Part of three Days* under the Power of Death, he ſhould be raiſed again on the third Day.

SECT. 89.
 Mat. XVI.
 21.

MARK VIII. 32. And he ſpake that Saying openly. And

And as he now ſpake that Saying plainly and freely (a), whereas he had before only given

Mark VIII.
 32.

(a) Plainly and freely.] So *manifeste* evidently ſignifies, and is often rendered in our Verſion; (compare *John* x. 24. and xi. 14.) and in this Senſe it is oppoſed to ſpeaking in Proverbs: *John* xvi. 25, 29. *Chriſt* had before given *obſcure Hints* of this, *John* ii. 19. iii. 14. vi. 51. *Mat.* x. 38. xii. 40. and elſewhere,
 VOL. I. N^o 25. (b) Took

SECT. 89. given distant and obscure Hints of it, they were exceedingly surprized and troubled: *And Peter*, elevated with what our Lord had before been saying, and unable to reconcile it with what he now heard, *took him* [by the Hand (b),] *and began*, with a Mixture of Tendernefs and Surprize, *to chide him* for this melancholy Discourse, *saying, GOD* in his infinite Mercy *forbid* (c), that thou, O Lord, shouldst ever be thus treated! *This Injury and Violence, I persuade myself, shall not by any Means be done unto thee.*

Mark VIII.
32.

33 *But* [Jesus,] *when he had turned about, and looked round him on his other Disciples*, whose Sentiments he knew to be much the same, *rebuked Peter* with an unusual Severity, *and said to him, Get thee behind me, Satan* (d), for *thou* attest the Part of a Devil,

And Peter took him and began to rebuke him, [saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.] [Mat. XVI. 22.]

33 But when he had turned about, and looked on his Disciples, he rebuked Peter, [and said unto him,] Get thee behind me, Satan, [thou art an

(b) *Took him by the Hand.*] So I render the Word *ἔλαβεν αὐτὸν*. Compare *Rom. xv. 7.* Gr. which may help to illustrate the Sense of it.

(c) *GOD in his infinite Mercy forbid!*] *Dr. Fuller* supposes, that *Deus* *non* should be rendered, *May GOD have Compassion upon thee!* (See *Fuller's Miscel. Sacr. lib. ii. cap. 2.*) *Heinsius*, *Grotius*, and *Le Clerc* give the same Interpretation; which is also asserted at large by the learned *Mr. Wasse*. (*Biblioth. Liter. vol. i. pag. 30.*) And the accurate *Dr. Scott* renders it, *Mercy on thee!* which is more literal than any of the rest. I think the *Phrase*, as used by the *Seventy*, generally signifies *GOD forbid*, or, as we render it, *Far be it from thee!* (See *1 Sam. xiv. 45. 2 Sam. xx. 20. 1 Kings xxi. 3. 1 Chron. xi. 19.* and compare *1 Mac. ii. 21.*) But as the accurate *Criticks* I have mentioned above, suppose, there is a particular Tendernefs in their Interpretation, I have endeavoured to preserve it in the *Paraphrase*.—Some would render it, *Have Compassion on thyself*; but I cannot recollect any Place, where it has that Sense; tho' *2 Sam. xxiii. 17.* and *Gen. xliii. 23. Septuag.* have been especially alledged as Instances of it. See *Elsner. Observ. vol. i. pag. 81.*

(d) *Get thee behind me, Satan.*] Compare *Luke iv. 8. pag. 123.*—The Word *Satan*, which is originally *Hebrew*, and has from thence been taken into several Languages, is often used in the *Old Testament* to signify an *Adversary*; (see *Numb. xxii. 32. 2 Sam. xix. 22. 1 Kings v. 4. and xi. 14.*) and the Expression has appeared so harsh to some, as coming from the Mouth of *Christ* to one of his *Apostles*, that they have rather chosen to translate it, *O mine Adversary*. But as the *Evangelists* have both made use of the Word *Σαταν*, which must be owned to have a Sound as odious in the *Greek*, as it has now with us, we may conclude that it was used by *Christ*, or his *Rebuke to Peter* would have been otherwise expressed by some *Greek Word* that signifies an *Adversary*. Nor can the Word appear at all too harsh, when we consider, that the Tendency of *Peter's* Saying, tho' it was spoken out of a singular Affection to his Master, was to obstruct the great Design for which he came into the World, and none but *Satan* could desire to prevent what he was ready to submit to for the Salvation of

lost

an Offence unto me ;] for thou savourest not the Things that be of GOD, but the Things that be of Men. [MAT. XVI. 23.]

Devil, rather than a Friend, and art a Scandal to me, in thus endeavouring to obstruct the great End of mine Appearance in the World ; for by this it plainly appears, that thou dost not regard and relish the Things of GOD, but those of Men (e), and lovest thy Zeal for the Divine Glory, and the Salvation of Souls, in a mean Solitude for the Enjoyments of this Temporal Life, and the Grandeurs of an Earthly Kingdom, of which thou art vainly dreaming.

SECT. 89.
Mark VIII.
33.

34 And [then] when he had called the People unto him, with his Disciples also, he said unto them [LUKE all,] Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross [LUKE daily,] and follow me. [MAT. XVI. 24. LUKE IX. 23.]

Then having called the Multitude, with his Disciples, to him, he said unto them all, You must not only expect to see me suffer, but to share with me in my Afflictions and Sorrows, if ever you would hope to obtain a Part in the Glories of my Kingdom : If any one therefore is willing to come after me, and to attend me as a faithful Servant and Disciple, let him learn to deny himself in the dearest Pleasures and Interests of this present Life, and habituate himself daily to take up his Cross ; let him submit to whatsoever Trial Providence may lay before him, and be ready to follow me, even to Crucifixion itself ; for till he is taught a Readiness to meet Death, even in that dreadful Form, for my Sake, he has attended my other Instructions in vain. (Compare Mat. x. 38. pag. 494.)

34

35 For whosoever will save his Life, shall lose it ; but

And it is well worth your while, to submit even to this ; for whosoever will attempt to save his Life from Persecution, by forsaking

35

lost Sinners.—Dr. Young (in his Sermons, vol. ii. pag. 137.) rendering *these our, Favour thyself*, supposes that our Lord calls Peter, Satan, because he now fell on that Advice, which Satan uses the most successfully of all his Artifices to undo Men ; that of Self-Indulgence : And so makes this Scripture an Introduction to his Discourse on Self-Denial.

(e) Thou dost not regard and relish the Things of GOD, &c.] To relish, or savour, is plainly included ; but I did not think it proper to limit it by such a Version ; for the Word *σπουδῆς* often signifies, to fix a governing Regard on any Thing, so as to make it the chief Object of our Pursuit ; which seems the plain Sense of it here. Compare Rom. viii. 5. Phil. iii. 19. and Col. iii. 2.

4 D 2

(f) If

SECT. 89.
 Mark VIII.
 35.

faking me and my Gospel, shall find he has taken the surest Way to lose it; as he will another Day incur the Sentence of the second Death, and meet a far more dreadful Punishment from GOD, as an Apostate, than he could have borne from Men as my Servant: But whosoever shall lose or expose his Life, for my Sake and the Gospels, shall find it with far greater Advantage in the future State, [and] so shall have Reason to acknowledge that he took the truest Method to save it. (Compare Mat. x. 39. pag. 494.)

but whosoever shall lose his Life for my Sake and the Gospels, the same shall [find and] save it. [MAT. XVI. 25. LUKE IX. 24.]

36 And therefore on these Principles it will be certainly your highest Wisdom to forego the greatest Advantages, or to bear the utmost Extremities, rather than to forsake me; for it is a Kind of Proverb among you, *What would it profit a Man, if he should gain the whole World, and be punished with the Loss of his Life (f)?* and so may I say, What would all that Gain, added to his present Security, signify, if he thereby bring a Sentence of Death on his Soul, [and] so lose himself, or be finally cast away? Or what shall a Man give as a Ransom for his Life (g)? what Gains would he not be willing to resign, to quit.

36 For what shall it profit a Man, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul, [LUK. that is, lose himself, or be cast away?][MAT. XVI. 26.—LUKE IX. 25.]

37 Or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul? [MAT. XVI.—26.]

37 Or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul? [MAT. XVI.—26.]

(f) *If he should gain the whole World, and be punished with the Loss of his Life?* ἢ ἂν ἐπιμαθῆναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ. Tho' the Force of this Maxim, taken by itself, appears best, by rendering ψυχήν, Soul, which it does undoubtedly on the whole signify here; yet as the same Word had been rendered Life, ver. 35. and its Meaning is sufficiently plain from what follows, I thought it better to retain the same Version here likewise; which taken in its Connection has (as Dr. Tilloson observes, Vol. iii. pag. 528, 529.) an additional Spirit, which consists in the Application of a Proverb, relating to the Worth of Life, (compare Job ii. 4.) to the Soul, which is in the highest Sense the Life of the Man, or the Man himself. (Luke ix. 25.) — τὴν ψυχὴν ἐπιμαθῆναι does not merely signify to lose the Life, which might be applied to a Man who accidentally met Death in the Pursuit of Gain, (as a Merchant, who should be lost in his Voyage;) but it properly imports undergoing a Capital Execution, which is an Idea of much greater Terror, as well as of much stricter Propriety in the present Case: And would to GOD, it might seriously be considered in this awful View! See *Rappel. Annot. ex Herod. pag. 171.*

(g) *As a Ransom for his Life.* So the Word ἀλλάγμα properly signifies: and in this Connection leads us to reflect, how willing a condemned Malefactor would be, to give all he had got by his Crimes, to buy his Pardon; and how vain the Attempt would in this Case be.

(b) In

quit himself of that foolish Bargain, by which he had sold it? Yet in this Case, what would be accepted as an Equivalent for it? "Its Redemption is precious, and it ceaseth for ever. (Psal. xlix. 8.)" SECT. 89.
Mark VIII. 37.

38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my Words, in this adulterous and sinful Generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh [in his own Glory, and] in the Glory of his Father, with the holy Angels. [LUKE IX. 26.]

Now assure yourselves, that this Thought may with the utmost Propriety be applied to the Case before us; *for whosoever is ashamed of me and of my Words, in this adulterous and sinful Generation, shall find to his Cost, that of him also will the Son of Man be ashamed,* and him will he with Scorn disown, and with inexorable Justice condemn, *when he comes in his own Glory,* (that is, in all the Pomp and Grandeur in which he was of old represented to the Prophets,) *and shall appear upon his Throne invested with the Glory of his Father (b),* as commissioned by him, to be the great Executor of his Judgment, as well as the Dispenser of his Grace, attended with the bright Retinue of *the holy Angels,* who shall wait on him as his Servants to grace the Solemnity of that awful Day. 38

MAT. XVI. 27. For the Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father, with his Angels; and then he shall reward every Man according to his Works.

For Mat. XVI. 27. you may certainly depend upon it, that howsoever he be now despised and rejected of Men, there is a Day appointed, when *the Son of Man shall thus come in his Father's Glory,* and be incircled in the most pompous Manner, *with his holy Angels; and then shall he convene the whole World before him,* that he may determine the final Happiness or Misery of each, and *recompense every Man according to his Actions.*

And

(b) *In his own Glory, and the Glory of his Father.*] How these are distinguished, it is not easy to say. Mr. Bragge explains it, of the Lustre of his own glorified Body, surrounded with such a Circle of Fire, as that, in which (according to him;) GOD the Father had appeared particularly on Mount Sinai. (Bragge on the Parables, vol. ii. pag. 181.) I think it sufficient to say, that besides the Glory which the Human Nature of Christ habitually wears in Heaven, some additional Splendor shall now be given to him by the Father, when he sends him with his Commission, on so august an Occasion, as the universal Judgment.

(i) The

SECT. 89. *And he said farther to them, Verily I tell it*
 you as a most certain Truth, that there are
 Mark IX. 1. *some of them who stand here among us, that*
 shall live to see a most awful Emblem of this
 important Day; for some that now hear me
 shall not taste of Death, that is, they shall not
 die, till they have seen the Kingdom of GOD
 come to be established far and near, with a
 divinely efficacious Power; [and] have beheld
 so eminent an Appearance of Providence to
 promote the Triumphs of my Gospel, and
 to avenge the cruel Injuries I shall receive
 from this ungrateful Nation, that they may
 be said, even to see *the Son of Man coming*
in his Kingdom (i), and leading on his victo-
 rious Armies, against those who would not
 admit him to reign over them.

MARK IX. 1. And he
 said unto them, Verily,
 [LUK. I tell you of a
 Truth,] that there be some
 of them that stand here,
 which shall not taste of
 Death till they have seen the
 Kingdom of GOD come
 with Power, [and the Son
 of Man coming in his
 Kingdom.] [MAT. XVI.
 28. LUKE IX. 27.]

I M P R O V E M E N T.

Mark viii.
 33.

AL A S, how prone are our foolish Souls, to *relish and regard*
the Things of Men, rather than those of GOD! How just-
 ly do we deserve the Rebuke of our Lord, who while he speaks
 to Peter with such Abhorrence, after all the Encomiums he had
 just been giving him, shews us with what Indignation we should
 reject every Motion, that would lead us to prefer our own Ease,
 or Temporal Interest, to the Glory of GOD, and the Happiness
 of Man.

We

(i) *The Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.*] Raphelius, (*Annot. ex Polyb. in loc.*) and
 Albert. (*Observ. pag. 113, 114.*) have indeed proved, that *ερχομαι* is sometimes used
 for *απερχομαι*, and *υ* for *ε*; (compare *John v. 4.*) and therefore they, with some
 other Criticks, would render this Text, *Some here present shall not die, till they see the*
Son of Man going into his Kingdom, that is, *ascending to Heaven*, which the Apostles
 did; see *Acts i. 9.* But it increases the Difficulty, to suppose both these uncommon
 Senses of the Words in Question to occur together; nor will *Luke xxiii. 42.* be al-
 lowed as an exact Parallel. I chuse therefore to adhere to our received Version,
 which may include a Reference to the *giving the Spirit*, and *propagating the Gospel*,
 but chiefly refers to that providential Appearance of Christ for the Destruction of Jeru-
 salem, so often called the *Coming of the Son of Man*, (*Mat. xxiv. 3, 27, 30, 37.*) and
the Day in which he shall be revealed: (*Luke xvii. 24, 26, 30.*) This Sense is the more
 natural here, especially as our Lord's Manner of speaking intimates, that most of the
 Company should be dead before the Even referred to; yet his *Ascension* happened in
 a few Months after this.

We shall never act so mean a Part, if we cordially digest the Lectures, which *Christ* hath here taught us, and consider of how much greater Importance the *Salvation of the Soul* is, than the *Gain of the whole World* when opposed to it. Let us steadily pursue *this Maxim* of Divine Wisdom, and with Chearfulness sacrifice every other Interest to the Views of an Eternal Felicity. SECT. 89.
Ver. 36.

Does *Jesus* call us to *deny ourselves* for him? What Difficulties should we not be ready to submit to, what Pleasures should we not renounce *for him*, who *pleased not himself*, that he might shew his Love to us; and *took upon him the Form of a Servant*, that he might *make us Kings and Priests unto GOD!*—Does he require us to *take up our Cross and follow him*? What Sufferings should we not be willing to endure *for him*, and whither should we not consent to *follow him*, who has borne *the Cross for us*, and willingly expired on it for our Sakes! Ver. 34.

A Sense of *Gratitude* for past Favours might bear us triumphantly thro' all the Opposition, we might be called to encounter in his Cause; how much more then may we be animated by the pleasing *Hope*, that we shall another Day be *confessed by Christ in the Presence of his Father, and of his holy Angels*. Let us represent to ourselves that august *Presence*, that awful *Day*, whenever a Regard to an *adulterous and sinful Generation*, would lead us to *be ashamed of Christ, and of his Words*. So shall we certainly be brought to *see the Kingdom of GOD in its Glory*; and if it opens to us in the *Visions of the future State*, we shall have no Reason to be anxiously solicitous, though *Death* should remove us from these lower Regions, before the *Gospel* hath that universal *Triumph*, which the Word of GOD encourages his Church to expect. Ver. 38.
Mark ix.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

