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A
COLLECTION

OF

MISCELLANIES:

Consisting of

POEMS, ESSAYS,
DISCOURSES and LETTERS

Occasionally Written.

By JOHN NORRIS, M. A. late
Rector of Bemerton near Sarum.

Carefully Revised, Corrected, and Improved
by the Author.

The NINTH EDITION.

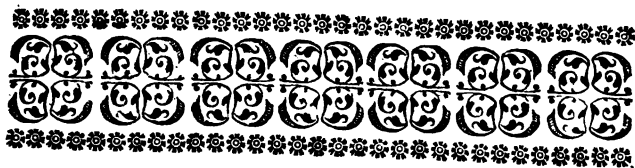


L O N D O N :

Printed for EDMUND PARKER, at the *Bible*
and *Crown* over against the New Church in
Lombard-Street. 1730.

Fragment of text from the adjacent page, including the letters 'A' and 'B'.





ADVERTISEMENT from the Author to the Reader.

As it cannot be thought strange, that having by this Edition an opportunity of revising this Book, I should comply with it; so neither can it, that when I did so, I should find many things in it, (being a juvenile composition) which my now riper, and as I presume better judgment, cannot so well approve of. I have indeed found many things that were not as they should be; some as to notion, some as to fact, and some as to manner of expression; and accordingly what I have observ'd of this kind, at least in the most considerable instances, I have endeavour'd to rectifie, leaving out what was incorrigible, and making some improvements up and down as occasion offered: And though I cannot say it is now so correct as if it were the present production of my pen, yet I think is indifferently so. And accordingly, this Edition is the Edition which I would commend to posterity, not owning the former, any farther than they agree with this. In
A 2 like

like manner as St. Austin says of his imperfect Book upon Genesis, written when he was young, which he would have measured by what he wrote afterwards upon the same subject, when he was a Bishop. Breviter admoneo ut illi duodecem libri legantur, quos longe postea Episcopus feci, & ex ipsis de isto judicetur. The same with due accommodation say I here, designing as I have opportunity, to revise my other writings, and to correct what is amiss in them: In the mean while, all that I have farther to say upon this occasion is, that if there be any thing in the verse part, that shall appear offensive in strictness of notion, as perhaps there may, this line in particular,

But sure he coveted to have thee there.

I would not have it taken as offered for theological or philosophick truth, but only as a stroke of Poetry, which with equitable Readers I hope will find allowance.



T O



TO THE
READER.

OF all the tedious things in the world, I was ever the least friend to long Prefaces ; and therefore I shall only commend to your hands this Collection of Miscellanies, occasionally composed at several times, as my humour and leisure serv'd me, with a brief account of my design, as to both parts of the Collection.

Not to trouble you with a pompous discourse of the nature of Poetry, its measures of Criticism, its variety, antiquity, its great use and excellence, and the like, which have been at large set forth by many curious pens ; I have only leisure at present to observe, that Poetry is of late mightily fall'n from the beauty of its idea, and from its ancient majesty and grandeur, as well as credit and reputation.

It may appear strange indeed, that in such a refining age as this, wherein all things seem ready to receive their last turn and finishing stroke, Poetry should be the only thing that remains unimprov'd. And yet so it happens, that which we generally have now a-days, is no more like the thing it was formerly, than modern religion is like primitive christianity.

'Tis with this as with our Musick. From grave majestick, solemn strains, where deep instructive
A 3 sense

To the READER.

sense is sweetly convey'd in charming numbers, where equal address is made to the judgment and the imagination, and where beauty and strength go hand in hand; 'tis now for the most part dwindled down to light, frothy stuff, consisting either of mad, extravagant rants, or slight witticisms, and little amorous conceits, fit only for a Tavern entertainment; and that too among Readers of a *Dutch* palate.

The truth is, this most excellent and divine art has of late been so cheapned and depreiated by the bungling performances of some who thought themselves inspired, and whose readers too have been more kind to them than their planets, that Poetry is almost grown out of repute; and men come strongly prejudiced against any thing of this kind, as expecting nothing but froth and emptiness; and to be a Poet, goes for little more than a Country Fidler.

But certainly he had once another character, and that in as nice and wise an age as this. If we may believe the great *Horace* he was one,

—*Cui mens diviniior, atque os*

Magna locuturum—

He had then his Temple surrounded with a divine glory, spoke like the Oracle of the God of Wisdom, and could describe no Hero greater than himself. Poetry was once the mistress of all the arts in the circle, that which held the reins of the world in her hand, and which gave the first, and (if we may judge by the effects) perhaps the best institutes for the moralizing and governing the passions of mankind.

The design therefore of the present undertaking, is to restore the declining genius of Poetry to its pri-

To the R E A D E R.

primitive and genuine greatness. to wind up the strings of the Muses lyre, and to shew that sense and gracefulness are as consistent in these as in any other compositions. I design here all the masculine sense and argument of a dissertation, with the advantage of poetick fineness, beauty and spirit; and accordingly I have made choice for the most part of divine and moral subjects; and if I meddle with any other sort, I commonly turn the stream another way, as particularly in those two Poems call'd Beauty and Love, which I have rescued from those sordid abuses they have hitherto suffer'd.

I confess 'tis a difficult province to make substantial massy sense yield to the softness of Poetry; and accordingly we find there are few Poems after the divine and moral way, but what are stiff, flat and insipid; but without this mixture, Poetry is nothing worth; and when it has it, it has all it can have, and is withal so divine a thing, that even *Plato*, I fancy, would give it entertainment in his Commonwealth.

I need not make any other apology for my conversing with the Muses; for I do not think it an employment beneath the character of a scholar; and tho' I have, in a manner, now set up my outmost pillar, yet I can't find in my heart to repent me of those few blank hours bestow'd in this exercise. For I have the example of some of the greatest and wisest in all ages to warrant me; and the greatness of *Solomon* is seen as much in his divine pastoral, the *Canticles*, as in his *Proverbs* or *Sermons*; and the wise *Ben-Sirach*, among other characters of his Heroes, puts in this among the

To the READER.

rest, that they were *such as found out musical tunes,*
and recited verses in writing, Eccelus. xlv. 5.

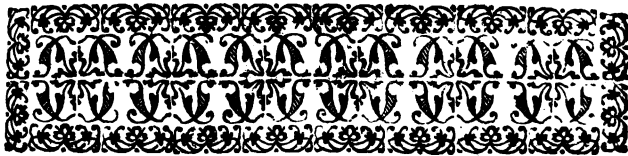
And thus much for the verse part. Concerning the Essays and Discourses, I have only this to say, that I design'd in them as much brevity and clearness as are consistent with each other, and to abound in sense rather than words: I wish all men would observe this in their writings more than they do. I'm sure the multitude of books, and the shortness of life require it; and sense will lye in a little compass, if men would be persuaded to vent no notions but what they are masters of; and were Angels to write, I fancy we should have but few Folio's

This is what I design'd and endeavour'd in the whole. Whether I have attain'd it or no, I submit to the judgment of the candid and indifferent Reader.

All Souls Coll.
June 1. 1687.

J. NORRIS





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The



The Passion of our BLESSED
SAVIOR, represented in
a Pindarique Ode.

-----*Quis talia fando*
Temperet a lacrymis?-----

I.

SA Y, bold licentious Muse,
What noble subject wilt thou chuse ;
Of what great Hero, of what mighty thing,
Wilt thou in boundless numbers sing ?
Sing the unfathom'd depths of love,
(For who the wonders done by love can tell,
By love, which is it self all miracle ?)
Here in vast endless circles may'st thou rove,
And like the travelling planet of the day
In an orb unbounded stray.
Sing the great miracle of love divine,
Great be thy genius, sparkling every line,
Love's greatest mystery rehearse :
Greater than that,
Which on the teeming Chaos brooding fate,
And hatch'd with kindly heat, the Universe.
How God in mercy chose to bleed, and dye,
To rescue man from misery :
Man, not his creature only, but his enemy.

II. Lo,

II.

Lo, in *Gethsemane*, I see him prostrate lye,
 Press'd with the weight of his great agony.

The common fluxes of the eyes
 To vent his mighty Passion won't suffice,
 His tortured body weeps all o'er,
 And out of every pore

Buds forth a precious gem of purple gore:
 How strange the power of afflictions rod
 When in the hand of an incensed God!

Like the commanding wand
 In *Moses's* hand,

It works a miracle, and turns the flood
 Of tears into a Sea of blood.

See with what pomp sorrow does now appear!
 How proud she is of being seated here!

She never wore
 So rich a dye before.

Long was he willing to decline
 Th' encounter of the wrath divine.

Thrice he sent for his release
 Pathetick embassies of peace :

At length, his courage overcame his doubt,
 Resolv'd he was, and so the bloody flag hung out.

III.

And now the tragick scene's display'd,
 Where drawn in full Battalia are laid

Before his eyes,

That numerous host of miseries
 He must withstand, that map of woe

Which he must undergo.

That heavy wine-press which must by him be trod,
 The whole artillery of God.

He saw that face, whose very sight
 Cheers Angels with its beatifick light,
 Contracted now into a dreadful frown,

All

All cloath'd with thunder, big with death
 And showers of hot burning wrath,
 Which shortly must be poured down.
 He saw a black and dismal scroll,
 Of sins past, present, and to come,
 With their intolerable doom,

Which would the more oppress his spotless soul ;
 As th' elements are weighty proved,
 When from their native station they're removed.
 He saw the foul ingratitude of those,
 Who would the labours of his love oppose ;
 And reap no benefit by all his agonies.

He saw all this,

And as he saw, to waver he began,
 And almost to repent of his great love for man.

IV.

When lo, a heavenly form all bright and fair,
 Swifter than thought, shot thro' th' enlighten'd air.

He who sat next th' imperial throne,
 And read the counsels of the great Three-one,
 Who in Eternity's mysterious glass,
 Saw both what was, what is, and what must come

He came with reverence profound, [to pass ;
 And rais'd his prostrate Maker from the ground ;
 Wiped off the bloody sweat

With which his face and garments too were wet :

And comforted his dark benighted mind,
 With sovereign cordials of light refin'd.

This done, in soft addresses he began

To fortifie his kind designs for man :

Unseal'd to him the book of God's decree,

And shew'd him what must be :

Alledg'd the truth of prophecies,

Types, figures, and mysteries ;

How needful it was to supply,

With humane race, the ruins of the Sky.

How

How this would new accession bring
 To the celestial quire ;
 And how withal, it would inspire
 New matter for the praise of the great King.
 How he should see the travail of his soul, and bless
 Those sufferings, which had so good success.
 How great the triumphs of his victory,
 How glorious his ascent would be,
 What weighty bliss in Heaven he should obtain
 By a few hours of pain ;
 Where to eternal ages he should reign.
 He spake, confirm'd in mind the Champion stood ;
 A Spirit divine
 Through the thick veil of flesh did shine :
 All-over powerful he was, all-over good.
 Pleas'd with his successful flight,
 The officious Angel posts away
 To the bright regions of eternal day ;
 Departing in a track of light.
 In haste for news, the heavenly people ran,
 And joy'd to hear the hopeful state of man.

V.

And now that strange prodigious hour,
 When God must subject be to humane power ;
 That hour is come,
 The unerring clock of fate has struck ;
 'Twas heard below down to Hell's lowest room,
 And strait th' infernal powers th' appointed signal
 Open the scene, my Muse, and see [took.
 Wonders of impudence and villany ;
 How wicked mercenary hands,
 Dare to invade him whom they should adore ;
 With swords and staves, encompass'd round he
 stands,
 Who knew no other guards but those of Heaven
 before.

Once

Once with his powerful breath he did repel
The rude assaults of Hell.

A ray of his divinity
Shot forth with that bold answer, I am He :
They reel and stagger, and fall to the ground ;
For God was in the found.

The voice of God was once again,
Walking in the garden, heard :
And once again, was by the guilty hearers fear'd :
Trembling seiz'd every joint, and chilness every vein:

This little victory he won,
Shew'd what he could have done.
But he to whom as chief was given,
The whole militia of Heaven,
That mighty he,
Declines all guards for his defence,
But that of his inseparable innocence ;
And quietly gives up his liberty.

He's seiz'd on by the military bands,
With cords they bind his sacred hands :
But ah! how weak, what nothings would they prove,
Were he not held by stronger ones of love.

VI.

Once more, my weary'd Muse, thy pinions try,
And reach the top of *Calvary*.

A steep ascent : But most to him who bore
The burthen of a Cross this way before.
(The Cross ascends, there's something in it sure
That moral is and mystical ;
No heights of fortune are from thee secure,
Afflictions sometimes climb, as well as fall.)

Here breathe a while and view
The dolefull'st picture sorrow ever drew :
The Lord of life, Heaven's darling Son,
The great, th' Almighty one,

B

With

With out-stretch'd arms, nail'd to a curf'd tree;
 Crown'd with sharp thorns, cover'd with infamy :

He who before

So many miracles had done,
 The lives of others to restore,

Does with a greater, lose his own.

Full three long hours his tender body did sustain,
 Most exquisite and poignant pain.

So long the sympathizing Sun his light withdrew,
 And wonder'd how the Stars their dying Lord could

VII.

[view.

This strange defect of light,

Does all the sages in Astronomy affright,

With fears of an eternal night.

Th' intelligences in their courses stray,

And travellers below mistake their way ;

Wond'ring to be benighted in the midst of day.

Each mind is seiz'd with horror and despair,

And more o'erspread with darkness than the air.

Fear on, 'tis wondrous all, and new ;

'Tis what past ages never knew.

Fear on, but yet you'll find,

The great Eclipse is still behind.

The lustre of the face divine,

Does on the mighty sufferer no longer shine.

God hides his Glories from his sight,

With a thick skreen made of Hell's grossest night.

Close-wrought it was, and solid, all

Compacted and substantial ;

Impenetrable to the beatifick Light :

Without complaint, he bore

The tortures he endur'd before ;

But now, no longer able to contain,

Under the great hyperbole of pain,

He mourns, and with a strong pathetick cry,

Laments the sad desertion of the Deity.

Here

Here stop, my Muse, stop and admire,
 The Breather of all Life does now expire :
 His milder Father summons him away ;
 His breath obediently he does resign :
 Angels to Paradise his soul convey ;
 And calm the relicks of his grief with hymns divine.

A N N O T A T I O N S.

THIS Ode is after the Pindarick way ; which is the highest and most magnificent kind of writing in verse ; and consequently fit only for great and noble subjects ; such as are as boundless as its own numbers : The nature of which is to be loose and free ; and not to keep one settled pace ; but sometimes like a gentle stream, to glide along peaceably within its own channel ; and sometimes, like an impetuous torrent, to roll on extravagantly, and carry all before it. Agreeable to that description of *Horace* :

*Nunc pace delabentis Hetruscum
 In mare, nunc lapides adefos,
 Stirpesque raptas & pecus & domos
 Volventis una, non sine montium
 Clamore vicinaque sylvæ.*

And this may serve to explain the introduction of the Poem.

And hatch'd with kindly heat the Universe.

Love, in the gentile Theology, as a certain writer observes, is made the most antient of the Gods, and the Sire of all things. Agreeably to what *Plutarch*, as he says, tells us, that for this reason *Hesiod* made Love the most antient of the Gods, *ἡ ἀγάπη δὲ ἐκείνων μετὰ τὴν γένεσιν*. And it is described,

bed, he says, by *Simmias Rhodius*, in a pair of wings ; which suited well with the symbolical representation of the Chaos by an Egg, which was brooded and hatch'd under these wings of Love. To which also *Aristophanes*, as he notes, in some measure alludes in his *Cosmogony*. The plain and undisguised meaning of all which is this ; That the creation of the world was the effect of the divine Love. The end which God had in it being not the acquisition of any good to himself, but only the communication of his own goodness and happiness. According to that of *St. Austin*, *Qua non ex indigentia fecisti, sed ex plenitudine bonitatis tuae*. Confes. lib. 13. c. 4.

As th' elements are weighty proved,

When from their native station they're removed.

This is according to the *Aristotelian* hypothesis, that the elements are not heavy in their own places ; which whether it be true or no, I shall not now dispute. However, it serves for an illustration, which is sufficient for my present purpose.

He saw the foul ingratitude of those, &c.

The bitter ingredients of our Lord's cup mention'd hitherto, were taken from things relating to his own personal concern. But this last motive of his sorrow, proceeds wholly on the behalf of others ; of whose final impenitence he is supposed to have a foresight. This I take to be a good and proper insinuation of the excellency of our Blessed Lord's temper, his exceeding great Love and Philanthropy, when among the other ingredients of his Passion this is supposed to be one, That there would be some, who, by their own default, would receive no benefit from it.

Unseal'd

Unseal'd to him the book of God's decree, &c.

Whether the Angel used these topicks of consolation or no, is a thing as indifferent to my purpose, as 'tis uncertain. In the Scripture it is only said in general, *That there appeared an Angel from Heaven strengthening him.* However, these arguments are such as are probable and pertinent ; and that's sufficient.

*In haste for news the heavenly people ran,
And joy'd to hear the hopeful state of man.*

It is highly reasonable to believe, that those blessed and excellent Spirits, who out of their compassionate love and concern for mankind, ushered in the news of our Saviour's Nativity, with Anthems of praise and thanksgiving; and are said likewise to rejoice at the conversion of a sinner; were also mightily transported with joy, when they understood that our Saviour, notwithstanding the reluctancy of innocent nature, was at length fully resolved to undertake the price of our Redemption.

*Full three long hours his tender body did sustain,
Most exquisite and poignant pain.*

It is observed to have been the opinion of the ancient Fathers, that the sufferings which our Blessed Saviour underwent in his body, were more afflictive to him than the same would have been to another man, upon the account of the excellency and quickness of his sense of feeling : And this opinion I take to be as reasonable, as 'tis pious. For since, according to the principles of Philosophy, the sense of feeling arises from the proportion of the first qualities ; it follows, that the better the complexion or temperament of any man

is, the better his feeling must needs be. Now 'tis very reasonable to believe, that that man who was to be substantially united to the Godhead, and who was begotten by the miraculous overshadowings of the Holy Spirit, should have a body endow'd with the best complexion, and most noble harmony of qualities that could be, that so it might be a suitable organ for his excellent soul. And if so, then it follows, that the flesh of our Lord's body was so soft and tender, and his feeling so exquisitely quick and sensible, as never any man's was before: And consequently, the severe usages which he underwent, not only at his Passion, but throughout his whole life, must needs be in a singular manner afflictive to him. And hence appears the vanity of their opinion, who are little or nothing affected with the consideration of our Lord's Passion, because they think it was made light to him, by reason of his union with the Godhead. 'Twas easy for him (some inconsiderate persons are ready to say) to suffer this, or this; for he was God, and not mere man, as we are. True, he was so; but his being God did no way lessen the punishment he underwent as man, but only supported him in his Existence under it, in the same manner as God is supposed, by an act of his Almighty power, to preserve the bodies of the damn'd, incorruptible among the everlasting burnings. But this I think is no kindness to them. Neither did the society of the divine nature any more diminish the sufferings of our dearest Lord; nay, in one respect, it proved an accidental aggravation to them, because upon the account of this noble union, he had given him a body of a most admirable complexion and harmonious temperature, and consequently of a flesh exceeding tender,

der, and most exquisitely perceptive of the least impressions.

*So long the sympathizing Sun his light withdrew,
And wonder'd how the Stars their dying Lord could
view.*

The Eclipse which accompany'd the Passion of our Saviour was so remarkable and miraculous, that 'twas taken notice of by the Gentile historians. There are three things which made this Eclipse so very remarkable; the time of its appearance; the time of its duration; and the degree of it. 1. For the time of its appearance; it was at full Moon, when the Moon was not in conjunction with, but in opposition to the Sun. And this appears not only from the testimony of *Dionysius*, who is observed to affirm, that he saw it at that time, but also from the time of our Lord's Passion, which, according to the relation of the Evangelist, was at the celebration of the Passover. Now the *Jews* were bound to celebrate the Paschal solemnity always at full Moon; as is to be seen in the twelfth of *Exodus*. This was no time therefore for a natural Eclipse, because 'twas impossible that the Moon should then interpose betwixt us and the Sun. 2. For the time of its duration; it was full three hours; which is another Evidence that this was no natural Eclipse: For the natural Eclipse of the Sun can never last so long, both because of the great disproportion between the Sun's magnitude, and that of the Moon, and because of the swift motion of the latter. 3. For the degree of it, it was a total Eclipse: The Sun was so darkned, that (as an eminent historian is said to report, writing of that Eclipse) the Stars appear'd. And that is another argument that it was no natu-

ral Phænomenon, it being impossible that the body of the Moon, which is so infinitely less than that of the Sun, should totally eclipse it. Now all these three remarkables are compris'd in the compass of these two verses. For in that it is said, that the Sun withdrew his light, it is intimated that the light of the Sun was not intercepted by the ordinary conjunction of the Moon, but that by an extraordinary commission from the God of nature, the Sun rein'd in his light, and suspended the emission of his beams. And this denotes the time of its appearance, (*viz.*) when the Moon was not in conjunction. The time of its duration is implied by the words, *so long*. And lastly, the degree of it is implied in the last verse, where the appearance of the Stars is not directly express'd, but only insinuated and couch'd, for the more elegancy of the thought.

And calm the relics of his grief with Hymns divine.

It is here supposed, that the Passion of our Saviour was now over, and his Father's wrath wholly appeas'd. For whatever becomes of the doctrine of Christ's local descent into Hell, concerning which I am not minded at present to move any dispute, I cannot think that he went thither, there to suffer any torment or punishment. His own words upon the Cross, *It is finish'd*, do apparently contradict it. But yet, though the bitter cup was wholly drank off upon the Cross, 'tis natural to imagine some little relish of it to remain behind for a time. Though all his sufferings and penal inflictions were ended before his death, yet, I suppose, (and I think very naturally) some little discomposures of mind, remaining like the after-droppings of a shower, which

which his soul could not immediately shake off, upon her release from the body. In allusion to that of *Virgil*,

*Inter quas Phœnissa recens a vulnere Dido,
Errabat sylva in magna-----*

Where the Poet fancies the ghost of *Dido* being newly releas'd from the pains of love, could not presently forget her shady walks and melancholy retirements: Now these remains of sorrow and after-disturbances of mind which cleav'd to the soul of the holy Jesus, I suppose here to be allay'd by the musick of Angels in his passage to Paradise.



An HYMN upon the TRANSFIGURATION.

I.

HAIL, King of glory, clad in robes of light,
Out-shining all we here call bright:
Hail, light's divinest Galaxy,
Hail, express image of the Deity.
Could now thy amorous spouse thy beauties view,
How would her wounds all bleed a-new!
Lovely thou art all o'er and bright,
Thou *Israel's* glory, and thou *Gentile's* light.

II.

But whence this brightness, whence this suddain day?
Who did thee thus with light array?
Did thy Divinity dispense
T' its consort a more liberal influence?
Or did some curious Angel's chymick art
The spirits of purest light impart,
Drawn from the native spring of day,
And wrought into an organized ray?

III.

III.

Howe're 'twas done, 'tis glorious and divine,
 Thou dost with radiant wonders shine.
 The Sun with his bright company,
 Are all gross meteors if compar'd to thee.
 Thou art the fountain whence their light does flow,
 But to thy Will thine own dost owe.
 For (as at first) thou didst but say, [day.
Let there be light, and strait sprang forth this wond'rous

IV.

Let now the *Eastern* Princes come and bring
 Their tributary offering.
 There needs no Star to guide their flight,
 They'll find thee now, great King, by thine own light.
 And thou, my soul, adore, love, and admire,
 And follow this bright guide of fire.
 Do thou thy Hymns and praises bring,
 Whilst Angels with veil'd faces, Anthems sing.



The PARTING

I.

Depart! The sentence of the damn'd I hear;
 Compendious grief, and black despair.
 I now believe the Schools with ease,
 (Tho' once an happy Infidel)
 That should the sense no torment seize,
 Yet pain of loss alone would make a Hell.

II.

Take all, since me of this you Gods deprive,
 'Tis hardly now worth while to live.
 Nought in exchange can grateful prove,
 No second friendship can be found
 To match my mourning widow'd love;
Eden is lost, the rest's but common ground.

III.

III.

Why are the greatest blessings sent in vain,
 Which must be lost with greater pain ?
 Or why do we fondly admire
 The greatest good which life can boast ?
 When fate will have the bliss expire,
 Like life, with painful agonies 'tis lost.

IV.

How fading are the joys we dote upon,
 Like apparitions seen and gone :
 But those which soonest take their flight,
 Are the most exquisite and strong.
 Like Angels visits, short and bright ;
 Mortality's too weak to bear them long.

V.

No pleasure certainly is so divine,
 As when two souls in love combine ;
 He has the substance of all bliss,
 To whom a virtuous friend is given,
 So sweet harmonious friendship is,
 Add but Eternity, you'll make it Heaven,

VI.

The minutes in your conversation spent,
 Were festivals of true content.
 Here, here, an ark of pleasing rest,
 My soul had found that restless dove,
 My present state methought was best,
 I envy'd none below, scarce those above,

VII.

But now the better part of me is gone,
 My Sun is set, my turtle flown,
 Tho' here and there of lesser bliss,
 Some twinkling Stars give feeble light,
 Still there a mournful darkness is,
 They shine but just enough to shew 'tis night.

VIII.

VIII.

Fatal divorce! What have I done amiss,
 To bear such misery as this?
 The world yields now no real good,
 All happiness is now become
 But painted and deluding food :
 As mere a fiction as *Elysium*.

IX.

Well then, since nothing else can please my taste,
 I'll ruminate on pleasures past.
 So then with glorious visions blest,
 The waking Hermit finds no theme
 That's grateful to his thoughtful breast,
 He sweetly recollects his pleasing dream.



To a Lady, supposed to ask, What Life was?

TIS not because I breathe and eat,
 'Tis not because a vigorous heat
 Drives round my blood, and does impart
 Motion to my pulse and heart :
 'Tis not such proofs as these can give
 Any assurance that I live :
 No, no, to live is to enjoy ;
 What marring our bliss does life destroy ;
 The days which pass without content,
 Are not liv'd properly, but spent.
 Who says the damn'd in Hell do live ?
 That word we to the blessed give :
 The summ of all whose happiness
 We by the name of Life express.
 Well then if this account be true,
 To live is still to live with you.

The

The third Chapter of JOB paraphrased.

I.

CURS'D, ever curs'd be that unhappy day,
 When first the Sun's unwelcome ray
 I saw with trembling eyes, being newly come
 From the dark prison of the womb.
 When first to me my vital breath was lent,
 That breath which now must all in sighs be spent.

II.

Let not the Sun his chearing beams display
 Upon that wretched, wretched day ;
 But mourn in fables, and all over shroud
 His glories in a sullen Cloud.
 Let light to upper regions be confin'd,
 And all below as black as is my mind.

III.

Curs'd be the night which first began to lay
 The ground-work of this House of clay :
 Let it not have the honour to appear
 In the retinue of the year.
 Let all the days shun its society,
 Hate, curse, abandon it as much as I.

IV.

Let melancholy call that night her own,
 Then let her sigh, then let her groan :
 A general grief throughout all nature spread,
 With folded arms, and drooping head.
 All harps be still, or tun'd to such a strain
 As fiends might hear, and yet not ease their pain.

V.

Let neither Moon nor Stars, with borrow'd light,
 Chequer the blackness of that night :
 But let a pure unquestion'd darkness rear
 Her sooty wings all o're the air ;

Such

Such as once on th' abyfs of Chaos lay,
Not to be pierc'd by Stars, scarce by the edge of day.

VI.

Why was there then, ah, why a passage free
At once for life and misery ?

Why did I not uncloyster'd from the womb
Take my next lodging in a tomb ?

Why with such cruel tenderness and care,
Was I nurs'd up to sorrow and despair ?

VII.

For now in sweet repose might I have lain,
Secure from any grief or pain :
Untouch'd with care, my bed I should have made
In death's cool and refreshing shade.

I should have slept now in a happy place,
All calm and silent as the empty space.

VIII.

There, where great Emperors their heads lay down,
Tir'd with the burthen of a crown.

There, where the mighty, popular and great,
Are happy in a dear retreat ;

Enjoy that solid peace which here in vain,
In grotts and shady walks they sought t' obtain,

IX.

None of Hell's agents can or dare molest
This awful sanctuary of rest.

No prisoners sighs, no groanings of the slave,
Disturb the quiet of the grave.

From toil and labour here they ever cease,
And keep a Sabbath of sweet rest and peace.

X.

Why then does Heaven on mortals life bestow,
When 'tis thus overtax'd with woe ?

Why am I forc'd to live against my will,
When all the good is lost in ill ?

My sighs flow thick, my groans sound from afar,
Like falling waters to the traveller.

SE-

SERAPHICK LOVE.

I.

TIS true, frail Beauty, I did once resign
 To thy imperious charms this heart of mine :
 There didst thou undisturb'd thy scepter sway,
 And I methought was pleas'd t' obey.
 Thou seem'st so lovely, so divine,
 With such sweet graces didst thou shine,
 Thou entertain'st my amorous sense
 With such harmonious excellence,
 That credulous and silly I,
 With vain, with impious idolatry,
 Ador'd that Star which was to lead me to the Deity.

II.

But now, thou soft enchantress of the mind,
 Farewel, a change, a mighty change I find;
 The empire of my heart thou must resign,
 For I can be no longer thine.
 A nobler, a diviner guest,
 Has took possession of my breast.
 He has, and must engross it all,
 And yet the room is still too small.
 In vain you tempt my heart to rove,
 A fairer object now my soul does move,
 It must be all devotion, what before was love.

III.

Through contemplation's Opticks I have seen
 Him who is fairer than the sons of men :
 The source of good, the light *Archerypall*,
 Beauty in the original.
 The fairest of ten thousand, He,
 Proportion all and harmony.
 All mortal beauty's but a ray :
 Of his bright ever-shining day ;

A

A little feeble twinkling Star,
Which now the Sun's in place must disappear ;
There is but one that's good, there is but one that's
IV. [fair.

To thee, thou only fair, my soul aspires,
With holy breathings, languishing desires.
To thee m' inamour'd, panting heart does move,
By efforts of *Ecstasick* love.
How do thy glorious streams of light
Refresh my intellectual sight !
Tho' broken, and strain'd through a screen
Of envious flesh, that stands between !
When shall m' imprison'd soul be free,
That she thy native uncorrected light may see,
And gaze upon thy beatifick face to all eternity ?



The RETIREMENT.

I.

WELL, I have thought on't, and I find,
This busy world is nonsense all ;
I here despair to please my mind,
Her sweetest honey is so mixt with gall.
Come then, I'll try how 'tis to be alone,
Live to my self a while, and be my own.

II.

I've try'd, and bless the happy change ;
So happy, I could almost vow,
Never from this retreat to range,
For sure I ne'er can be so blest as now.
From all th' allays of blifs I here am free,
I pity others, and none envy me.

III.

III.

Here in this shady lonely grove,
 I sweetly think my hours away,
 Neither with business vex'd, nor love,
 Which in the world bear such tyrannick sway :
 No tumults can my close apartment find,
 Calm as those seats above, which know no storm nor

IV.

[wind.

Let plots and news embroil the state,
 Pray what's that to my books and me ?
 Whatever be the Kingdom's fate,
 Here I am sure t' enjoy a Monarchy.
 Lord of my self, accountable to none,
 Like the first man in Paradise, alone.

V.

While the ambitious vainly sue,
 And of the partial Stars complain,
 I stand upon the shore and view
 The mighty labours of the distant main,
 I'm flush'd with silent joy, and smile to see
 The shafts of fortune still drop short of me.

VI.

Th' uneasy pageantry of state,
 And all the plagues to thought and sense
 Are far remov'd ; I'm plac'd by fate
 Out of the road of all impertinence.
 Thus, tho' my fleeting life runs swiftly on,
 'Twill not be short, because 'tis all my own.



The I N F I D E L.

I.

Farewel fruition, thou grand cruel cheat,
Which first our hopes does raise and then defeat.
Farewel thou midwife to abortive bliss,
Thou mystery of fallacies.

Distance presents the object fair,
With charming features, and a graceful air,
But when we come to seize th' inviting prey,
Like a shy ghost, it vanishes away.

II.

So to th' unthinking boy the distant Sky
Seems on some mountain's surface to rely ;
He with ambitious haste climbs the ascent,

Curious to touch the Firmament :

But when with an unweary'd pace
Arriv'd he is at the long-wish'd-for place,
With sighs the sad defeat he does deplore,
His Heaven is still as distant as before.

III.

And yet 'twas long e'er I could throughly see
This grand impostor's frequent treachery.
Tho' often fool'd, yet I should still dream on
Of pleasure in reversion.

Tho' still he did my hopes deceive,
His fair pretensions I would still believe.
Such was my charity, that tho' I knew
And found him false, yet I would think him true.

IV.

But now he shall no more with shews deceive,
I will no more enjoy, no more believe.

Th' unwary juggler has so often shewn
His fallacies, that now they're known.

Shall

Shall I trust on? the cheat is plain,
 I will not be impos'd upon again.
 I'll view the bright appearance from afar,
 But never try to catch the falling Star.



*On a MUSICIAN supposed to be mad
 with Musick.*

I.

Poor dull mistake of low mortality,
 To call that madness which is ecstasy.
 'Tis no disorder of the brain,
 His soul is only set t' an higher strain.
 Out-soar he does the sphere of common sense,
 Rais'd to diviner excellence;
 But when at highest pitch, his soul out-flies,
 Not reason's bounds, but those of vulgar eyes.

II.

So when the mystick Sibyl's sacred breast
 Was with divine infusions possess'd,
 'Twas rage and madness thought to be,
 Which was all oracle and mystery.
 And so the soul that's shortly to commence
 A spirit free from dregs of sense,
 Is thought to rave, when she discourses high,
 And breathes the lofty strains of immortality.

III.

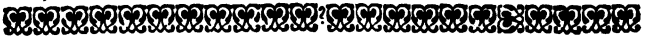
Musick, thou generous ferment of the soul,
 Thou universal cement of the whole;
 Thou spring of passion, that dost inspire
 Religious ardours, and poetick fire,
 Who'd think that madness should b' ascrib'd to thee,
 That mighty discord to thy harmony?
 But 'twas such ignorance that call'd the gift divine
 Of various tongues, rage, and th' effects of wine.

C 2

IV.

IV.

But thou, seraphick soul, do thou advance
 In thy sweet ecstasy, thy pleasing trance :
 Let thy brisk passions mount still higher,
 Till they join to the element of fire.
 Soar higher yet, till thou shalt calmly hear
 The musick of a well-tun'd sphere :
 Then on the lumpish mass look down, and thou
 shalt know
 The madness of the world, for groveling still below.

*The* CONSOLATION.

I.

I Grant 'tis bad, but there is some relief
 In the society of grief.
 'Tis sweet to him that mourns to see
 A whole house clad in sorrow's livery.
 Grief in communion does remiss appear,
 Like harsher sounds in consort, which less grate the

II.

Men would not curse the Stars, did they dispense
 In common their ill influence. [ear.
 Let none be rich, and poverty
 Would not be thought so great a misery.
 Our discontent is from comparison ; [own.
 Were better states unseen, each man would like his

III.

Should partial seas wreck my poor ship alone, -
 I might with cause my fate bemoan.
 But since before I sink, I see
 A numerous fleet of ships descend with me,
 Why don't I with content my breath resign ?
 I will, and in the greater ruin bury mine.

The

The CHOICE.

*Stet quicumque volet potens
Aula culmine lubrico, &c.*

I.

NO, I shan't envy him, whoe'er he be,
That stands upon the battlements of state;
Stand there who will for me,
I'd rather be secure than great.
Of being so high the pleasure is but small,
But long the ruin, if I chance to fall.

II.

Let me in some sweet shade serenely lye,
Happy in leisure and obscurity!
Whilst others place their joys
In popularity and noise.
Let my soft minutes glide obscurely on,
Like subterraneous streams, unheard, unknown.

III.

Thus when my days are all in silence past,
A good plain country-man I'll dye at last.
Death cannot chuse but be
To him a mighty misery,
Who to the world was popularly known,
And dies a stranger to himself alone.



The MEDITATION.

I.

IT must be done (my soul) but 'tis a strange,
 A dismal and mysterious change,
 When thou shalt leave this tenement of clay,
 And to an unknow'n somewhere wing away ;
 When time shall be eternity, and thou
 Shalt be thou know'st not what, and live thou
 know'st not how.

II.

Amazing state ! No wonder that we dread
 To think of death, or view the dead.
 Thou'rt all wrapt up in clouds, as if to thee
 Our very knowledge had antipathy.
 Death could not a more sad retinue find,
 Sicknes and pain before, and darkness all behind.

III.

Some courteous ghost, tell this great secrecy,
 What 'tis you are, and we must be.
 You warn us of approaching death, and why
 May we not know from you what 'tis to dye ?
 But you, having shot the gulph, delight to see
 Succeeding souls plunge in with like uncertainty.

IV.

When life's close knot by writ from destiny,
 Disease shall cut, or age untye ;
 When after some delays, some dying strife,
 The soul stands shivering on the ridge of life ;
 With what a dreadful curiosity
 Does she launch out into the sea of vast Eternity !

V.

So when the spacious globe was delug'd o'er,
 And lower holds could save no more,

On

On th' utmost bough th' astonish'd sinners stood,
 And view'd th' advances of th' encroaching flood.
 O'ertopp'd at length by th' element's increase,
 With horror they resign'd to the untry'd abyss.

The IRRECONCILABLE.

I.

I Little thought (my *Damon*) once, that you
 Could prove, and what is more, to me, untrue.
 Can I forget such treachery, and live?
 Mercy it self would not this crime forgive.
 Heaven's gates refuse to let apostates in,
 No, that's the great unpardonable sin.

II.

Did you not vow by all the powers above,
 That you could none but dear *Orinda* love?
 Did you not swear by all that is divine,
 That you would only be and every mine?
 You did, and yet you live securely too,
 And think that Heaven's false as well as you.

III.

Believe me, love's a thing much too divine
 Thus to be ap'd, and made a mere design.
 'Tis no less crime than Treason here to feign,
 'Tis counterfeiting of a royal coin.
 But ah! hypocrisy's no where so common grown
 As in most sacred things, love and religion.

IV.

Go seek new conquests, go, you have my leave,
 You shall not grieve her whom you could deceive.
 I don't lament, but pity what you do,
 Nor take that love as lost, which ne'er was true.
 The way that's left you to befriend my fate,
 Is now to prove more constant in your hate.

The A D V I C E.

*Prudens futuri temporis excitum
Caliginosa nocte premit Deus.* Hor.

I.

WHAT's forming in the womb of Fate
Why art thou so concern'd to know?
Dost think 'twou'd be advantage to thy state!
But wiser Heaven does not think it so.
With thy content thou would'st this knowledge buy,
No part of life thoud'st pleasant find
For dread of what thou seest behind, [dye.
Thou would'st but taste of the inlightning fruit and

II.

Well then, has Heaven events to come,
Hid with the blackest veil of night;
But still in vain if we forestal our doom,
And with prophetick fears our selves affright:
Grand folly! whether thus 'twill be or no
We know not, and yet silly Man
Secures his evils what he can, [blow.
And stabs himself with grief, lest Fate should miss the

III.

Be wise, and let it be thy care
To manage well the present hour;
Call home thy ranging thoughts and fix them here,
This only mind, this only's in thy power:
The rest no settled, steady course maintain,
Like rivers, which now gently slide
Within their bounds, now with full tide
O'erflow, whom houses, cattel, trees, resist in vain.

IV.

IV.

'Tis he that's happy, he alone
 Lives free and pleasant, that can say
 With every period of the setting Sun,
 I've lived, and run my race like him to day.
 To-morrow let the angry Heavens frown,
 Or smile with influence more kind,
 On chance depends what's yet behind,
 But sure what I have seiz'd already's all my own.

V.

Fortune, who no diversion knows
 Like disappointment, laughs to see
 How variously she can her gifts transpose ;
 Sometimes to one, sometimes t'another free.
 Be sure to enjoy her while she's pleas'd to stay :
 But if for flight she does prepare,
 Don't you at parting drop a tear,
 But hold your virtue fast, for that alone you may.



TO HIMSELF.

I.

NOT yet convinc'd ? Why wilt thou still pursue
 Through Nature's field delusive bliis ?
 'Tis false, or else too fugitive if true ;
 Thou may'st as soon thy shadow overtake as this.
 The gaudy light still dances in thy eye,
 Thou hot and eager in the chase
 Art drawn through many a thorny rugged place,
 Still labouring and fighting, but canst ne'er come nigh.

II.

Give o'er, my soul, give o'er, nor strive again
 This treacherous chymick gold to find.
 Tell me, why should'st thou fancy, there remain
 Days

Days yet to come more sweet, than those thou'ft left
A wifer Chymift far than thou, t'obtain [behind?

This jewel all his treasures fpent ;
But yet he fail'd in's grand experiment,
And all be gain'd was this, to know that all was vain.

III.

Forbear, and at another's coft be wife,
Nor longer this coy miftrefs woo.

He's mad that runs where none can win the prize,
Why fhould'ft thou lofe thy miftrefs, and thy labour
Heaven does but fport with our fimplicity [too?

By laying jewels in our way,
For when we ftoop to feize the glittering prey, [eye.
They're fnatcht away again, and baulk our greedy

IV.

'Tis fo, the choicelt good this World can give,
Will never ftand fruition's teft.

This all by experience find, yet few believe,
And in the midft of cheats, hope they fhall once be
Strange Magick this. So witches tho' they find [bleft.

No comfort from their airy meat,
Forget at next cabal their flender treat,
And greedily again fall to their feaft of wind.

V.

But thou, my foul, thy ftrong conviction fhew,
And never reach at blifs again.

Our beft good here is Nature's bounds to know,
And thofe attempts to fpare, which elfe would be in
Here then contain thy felf, nor higher good [vain.

In this enchanted place purfue.
And pity thofe fhort-fighted fouls that do ;
This World is beft enjoy'd, when 'tis beft underftood.

The REFUSAL.

I.

THINK not to court me from my dear retreat;
 No, I protest 'tis all in vain.
 My stars did never mean I should be great,
 And I the very thought disdain.
 Or if they did, their will I'll disobey,
 And in my little orb remain as fix'd as they.

II.

Honour, that idol, which the most adore,
 Receives no homage from my knee.
 Content in privacy, I value more
 Than all uneasy dignity.
 How should that empty thing deserve my care,
 Which virtue does not need, and vice can never bear?

III.

Shall I change solid and unenvy'd joys
 Of a serene, tho' humble state,
 For splendid trouble, pomp, and senseless noise?
 This I despise, as well as hate.
 Poor gain of that condition, which will be
 Envy'd by others, and as much dislike'd by me.

*H Y M N to DARKNESS.*

I.

HAIL thou most sacred venerable thing!
 What muse is worthy thee to sing?
 Thee, from whose pregnant universal womb
 All things, even light, thy rival, first did come.
 What dares he not attempt that sings of thee,
 Thou first and greatest mystery?

Who

Who can the secrets of thy essence tell ?
 Thou, like the light of God, art inaccessible.

II.

Before great love this monument did raise,
 This ample theatre of praise.
 Before the folding circles of the Sky
 Were tun'd by him, who is all harmony.
 Before the morning Stars their hymn began,
 Before the council held for man.

Before the birth of either time or place, [space.
 Thou reign'st unquestion'd monarch in the empty

III.

Thy native lot thou didst to light resign,
 But still half of the globe is thine.
 Here with a quiet, but yet awful hand,
 Like the best Emperors thou dost command.
 To thee the Stars above their brightness owe,
 And mortals their repose below.
 To thy protection fear and sorrow flee,
 And those that weary are of light, find rest in thee.

IV.

Tho' Light and Glory be th' Almighty's throne,
 Darkness is his pavilion.
 From that his radiant Beauty, but from thee
 He has his Terror and his Majesty.
 Thus when he first proclaim'd his sacred law,
 And would his rebel subjects awe,
 Like Princes on some great solemnity, [thee.
 H' appear'd in's robes of state, and clad himself with

V:

The blest above do thy sweet umbrage prize,
 When cloy'd with Light, they veil their eyes.
 The vision of the Deity is made
 More sweet and beatifick by thy shade,
 But we poor tenants of this orb below
 Don't here thy excellencies know ;

Till

Till death our understandings does improve,
And then our wiser ghosts thy silent night-walks love.

VI.

But thee I now admire, thee would I chuse
For my religion, or my muse.

'Tis hard to tell whether thy reverend shade
Has more good Votaries or Poets made ;
From thy dark caves were inspirations given,
And from thick groves went vows to Heaven.
Hail then thou muse's and devotion's spring,
'Tis just we should adore, 'tis just we should thee sing.



The INVITATION.

*Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field,
let us lodge in the villages, Cantic. vii. 11.*

I.

COME, thou divinest object of my love,
This noisy region don't with us agree ;
Come, let us hence remove,

I cannot here enjoy my self, or thee.

Here vice and folly keep their court,
Hither their chiefest favourites resort,
Debauchery has here her royal chair,

This is her great metropolis,
What e'er we see or hear contagion is ;
Their manners are polluted like the air.

From both unwholsom vapours rise
And blacken with ungrateful steams the neighbour-
[ing skies.

II.

Come, we'll e'en to our country feat repair,
The native home of innocence and love.

There we'll draw purer air,
And pity monarchs sitting in our grove.

Here

Here virtue has her safe retreat,
 Abandon'd by the many and the great.
 Content does here her peaceful scepter sway ;
 Here faithfulness and friendship dwell,
 And modesty has here her humble cell :
 Come, my beloved, come, and let's away,
 Be thou my Angel, good and kind,
 And I'll ne'er look at *Sodom* which we leave behind.

III.

In fields and flow'ry meadows, woods and groves,
 The first and best delights of human kind,
 There we'll enjoy our loves,
 All free, and only to our selves confin'd.
 Here shall my eyes be fixt on thee,
 Till every passion be an ecstasy.
 Each hour to thee shall be canonical ;
 The sweets of nature shall not stay,
 My soul, but only shew to thee the way ;
 To thee, thou beauty's great original.
 Come, my beloved, let's go prove
 These sweet advantages of peace, content, and love.



Sitting in an ARBOUR.

I.

THUS ye good powers, thus let me ever be
 Serene, retir'd, from love and business free ;
 The rest of your great world I here resign
 To the contentions of the great ;
 I only ask that this retreat,
 This little tenement be mine.
 All my ambition's to this point confin'd ;
 Others enlarge their fortunes, I my mind.

II.

II.

How calm, how happy, how serene am I!
 How satisfy'd with my own company!
 To few things foreign my content I owe;
 But in my self have almost all
 Which I dare good or pleasing call,
 Or (what's as well) I fancy so.
 Thus I affect an independent state,
 And (as a creature can) in self I terminate.

III.

Pleas'd with a various scene of thought I lie,
 Whilst an obliging stream slides gently by,
 Silent and deep as is the bliss I chuse,
 All round the little winged quire,
 Pathetick, tender thoughts inspire,
 And with their strains provoke my muse.
 With ease the inspiration I obey,
 And sing as unconcern'd, and as well pleas'd as they.

IV.

If ought below deserve the name of bliss,
 It must (whate'er the great ones think) be this.
 So once the travelling patriarch doubly blest
 With dreams divine from Heaven sent,
 And his own Heaven of content,
 On's rocky pillow took his rest.
 Angels stood smiling by, and said, Were we our bliss
 To change, it should be for a state like his.

V.

'Tis strange, so cheap, and yet so great a good
 Should by so very few be understood.
 That bliss which others seek with toil and sweat
 For which they prodigally waste
 Their treasures, and yet miss at last,
 Here I have at an easie rate.
 So those that costly physick use in vain,
 Sometimes by cheap receipts their health obtain.

The

The COMPLAINT.

I.

WELL 'tis a dull perpetual round
 Which here we silly mortals tread ;
 Here's nought, I'll swear, worth living to be found,
 I wonder how 'tis with the dead.
 Better I hope, or else ye powers divine
 Unmake me, I my immortality resign.

II.

Still to be vex'd by joys delay'd,
 Or by fruition to be cloy'd ?
 Still to be wearied in a fruitless chase,
 Yet still to run, and lose the race ?
 Still our departed pleasures to lament
 Which yet when present, gave us no content ?

III.

Is this the thing we so extol,
 For which we would prolong our breath ?
 Do we for this long life a blessing call
 And tremble at the name of death ?
 Sots that we are to think by that we gain
 Which is as well retain'd as lost with pain.

IV.

Is it for this that we adore
 Physicians, and their art implore ?
 Do we bless nature's liberal supply
 Of helps against mortality ?
 Sure 'tis but vain the Tree of Life to boast,
 When Paradise, wherein it grew, is lost.

V.

Ye powers, why did you man create
 With such insatiable desire ?
 If you'd endow him with no more estate
 You should have made him less aspire.
 But now our appetites you vex and cheat
 With real hunger, and phantastick meat.

*A PASTORAL upon the Blessed Virgin,
gone from Nazareth to visit Elizabeth.
Wherein the sadness of the country Na-
zareth is described during the absence of
the Virgin.*

Translated out of *Rapin*.

The Speakers are Asor, Alphæus and Zebede.

Asor. **A**ND why, *Alphæus*, in this sweet shade
dost thou

Make songs, which are not seasonable now,
Since we of fair *Parthenia* are bereft !

Parthenia has our fields and mountains left.

Alph. Ay something 'twas my pipe was t'other day
So strangely out of tune, and in so hoarse a key.

Zeb. And I too this misfortune might have known
By some late signs, had my thoughts been my own.

My little goats as I to pasture led
When the grass rises from its dewy bed,
I wonder'd why the new born flowers hung down
Their languid heads, as if scorch'd by the Sun.

The lilly and the rose to droop were seen,
And so did the immortal Evergreen,

Parthenia (alas) was gone——

For thee, sweet Maid, lilly and rose did grieve,
The Evergreen thy absence did perceive.

Asor. There grows a shady elm in our yon grove
Where *Philomel* wou'd constantly repair,
Sweet *Philomel* of all the joy and love,
And with melodious accents fill the air
When *Parthenis* was here, this shady tree
Was never, never from her musick free.

D

But

But now divine *Parthenia* is gone,
 Silent and sad she wanders up and down,
 And among thorns and lonely hedges makes her }
 moan.

Alph. Whilst thou, fair Nymph, didst bless us
 with thy stay,

Each grove was sprightly, every wood was gay.
 The boughs with birds, the caves with swains did ring,
 And the shrill grasshopper about the field did sing.
 But now each wood is silent as the grave,
 Nor does the shepherd whistle in his cave,
 Nor does the bird sit chirping on the bough,
 Nor is the grasshopper to be heard now. [made,

Zeb. The fields with living springs were fruitful
 And every spring had his refreshing shade.

Sweet flowers to the bees were ne'er deny'd,
 The fold with grass was constantly supply'd.

Now *Parthenis* is gone, the industrious bee
 Can't flowers procure with all his industry :
 The folds want grass, the fields their living springs,
 Nor have the fountains now their shady coverings.
 Divine *Parthenia* ! with thee we've lost
 All the delights our rural life could boast.

Afor. My little goats were boldly wont to go
 And climb the desert hills, my sheep would do so too.
 Then happy sheep, the wolf the fold did spare,
 The heat the infant trees, the rain the ripen'd ear.

Alph. Thou now perhaps, sweet Nymph, art
 travelling o'er
 Some craggy hills, unknown to thee before,
 Whilst we sit here among the shady trees,
 And swallow down each cool refreshing breeze.

Zeb. Say, you sweet western blasts that gently
 And you fair rivers that as swiftly flow, [blow,
 You who so often have been vocal made
 By swains that pipe and sing under the shade ;

Say,

Say, now while *Phœbus* holds the middle Sky
 Under what rock does sweet *Parthenia* lye?
 Or through what coasts may I her wandrings trace?
 Or in what fountain sees she now her lovely face?
 Ah! Tho' our way of life be plain and course,
 Yet don't thou like thy country e'er the worse,
 Since 'thas thy happy parent been and nurse.

Afor. Ah! where's that sweet retreat can thee detain,

If thou thy native country dost disdain?
 Here are pure springs, and o'er the springs are
 bowers,

Fine woods and fruit-trees, and a world of flowers.

Alph. But why, fair Nymph, wouldst thou be
 absent now,

When the sweet strawberry raises up his head,
 Like morning sun all delicately red,
 And odorous blossoms spring from every bough?

Zeb. Don't you, my sheep, that yonder bank
 come near,

'Tis to *Parthenia* sacred all that's there,
 Nor wou'd the grass be touch'd by any but by her.

Afor. Before fierce *Boreas* blow with's boisterous
 mouth,

Or rainy weather come on from the south,
 Be sure, *Parthenia*, to return again,
 Left by the cold thou suffer or the rain.

Alph. In a choice garden is reserv'd for thee,
 Sweet marjoram, and a lagre myrtle tree;
 Myrtles thou always lov'st, come then if now
 Thou still lov'st flowers, as thou wert wont to do.

Zeb. Ripe apples now hang dangling on the tree
 Ready to drop, and only stay for thee.

The fig of thy delay too does complain,
 The tender fig, but let them both remain
 Till thou to thy dear *Nazareth* return again.

Afor. Return, sweet Nymph, and with thee thou shalt bring

All the delights and beauties of the spring.
 Fresh grass again shall on the mountains grow,
 The rivers shall with milk and Nectar flow.
 The woods shall put on their green livery,
 And nature in her pomp shall wait on thee.
 The country swains shall flowers and presents bring,
 And I a violet garland for my offering.
 With me shall *Azarias* come along,
 Who with a smooth wrought pipe shall play the song,
 The song that *Israel's* Shepherd as he stood
 By *Jordan's* bank, play'd to the list'ning flood.

Alph. But if thou longer shouldst our hopes deceive,

With rushes I'll a basket for thee weave ;
 Here thy own *Nazareth* I'll represent,
 How all things here thy absence do lament ;
 The little goats thou wandring here shalt see
 Mournful and sad, and all for want of thee.
 The rivers which before flow'd swift and clear,
 As glad the image of thy face to bear,
 Shall move benum'd and slow, whilst on each hand
 Appears the thirsty and forsaken sand.
 The corn shall droop and languish in the field,
 The meadows no fresh grass or herb shall yield,
 The fir-tree which with stately pride before,
 Her curious shady locks towards Heaven spread,
 Shall now with down-cast boughs, and pensive head,
 Thy absence mourn, and thy return implore.
 Thou round about shalt all things weeping see,
 If tears in rush-work may decipher'd be.

Zeb. Preserve, ye powers, if you don't us disdain,
 The Nymph, whilst she runs panting o'er the plain.
 And while she's absent since she once had love
 For these our fields, take care, ye powers above,
 That

That neither rivers do their banks o'erflow,
Nor storms the pastures spoil, or ripen'd corn o'er-
throw.

Afor. From night-fires let our stalls (sweet
Nymph) be free,
Defend from heat the rose, from cold the myr-
tle-tree,

While rose and myrtle are belov'd by thee.
That if you chance to cast a longing eye
Back on these fields, now naked and forlorn,
We may have still some flowers left to supply
Garlands t'express our joy, and dresses you t'adorn.

Alph. Haste not, if through rough ways thy jour-
ney lye,

Haste not, the heat will prove an injury.
Let not the sun thy brighter beauties spoil :
Ah! why wilt thou undo thy self with too much toil?
Take pleasing shelter in some gentle shade
'Till the day slacken, and the heat b'allay'd.

Zeb. Parthenia, why dost thou our hopes prolong ?
Perhaps too, some ill pipe, and worser song
Now grate thy ears, whilst thy poor country swain
On the deaf winds bestows sweet lays in vain.
Hang there, my pipe, till she return, and be
A silent monument of my misery.

For what are songs or mirth without her company?

Afor. Our hills shall mourn while distant coasts
you blefs,

Anamis shall not dance nor *Sabaris*.
The fields, the naked fields no song shall know,
And brooks their discontent by murmuring streams
shall shew.

Thus did the swains the absent Nymph lament,
The neighbouring woods to Heaven their doleful
accents sent.

The Tenth Ode of the Second Book of
H O R A C E, translated.

I.

TIS much the better way, believe me 'tis,
 Not far to venture on the great abyſs,
 Nor yet from ſtorms thy veſſel to ſecure,
 To touch too nigh upon the dangerous ſhore.

II.

The golden mean, as ſhe's too nice to dwell
 Among the ruins of a filthy cell,
 So is her modeſty withal as great
 To baulk the envy of a princely ſeat.

III.

Th' ambitious winds with greater ſpite combine
 To ſhock the grandeur of the ſtately pine.
 The height of ſtructures makes the ruin large,
 And clouds againſt high hills their hotteſt bolts
 diſcharge.

IV.

An even well-poiſ'd mind, an evil ſtate
 With hope, a good with fear does moderate.
 The ſummer's pride, by winter is brought down,
 And flowers again the conquering ſeaſon crown.

V.

Take heart, nor of the laws of fate complain,
 Tho' now 'tis cloudy, 'twill clear up again.
 The bow *Apollo* does not always uſe
 But with his milder lyre ſometimes awakes the muſe.

VI.

Be liſe and ſpirit, when fortune proves unkind,
 And ſummon up the vigour of thy mind.
 But when thou'rt driven by too officious gales,
 Be wiſe, and gather in the ſwelling ſails.

The

The DISCOURAGEMENT.

I.

WHAT wou'd the wise men's censure be,
 I wonder, should they hear me say
 I was resolv'd to throw my books away ?
 How wou'd some scorn, and others pity me !
 Sure he's in love, 'tis for some charming *Eve*
 That he like *Adam* Paradise does leave.

This only difference would be
 Between my great grandfire and me,
 That I my paradise forego
 For want of appetite to know.

II.

'Tis not that knowledge I despise ;
 No, you misconstrue my design ;
 Or that t' enthusiasm I incline,
 And hope by inspiration to be wise.
 'Tis not for this I bid my books adieu,
 No, I love learning full as well as you,
 And have the arts great circle run
 With as much vigour as the sun
 His *Zodiac* treads, till t'other day
 A thought surpris'd me in my way.

III.

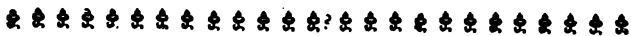
Thought I, for any thing I know,
 What we have stamp'd for science here,
 Does only the appearance of it wear,
 And will not pass above, tho' current here below ;
 Perhaps they've other rules to reason by,
 And what's truth here, with them's absurdity.
 We truth by a refracted ray
 View, like the sun at ebb of day :
 Whom the gross, treacherous Atmosphere
 Makes where it is not, to appear.

IV.

Why then shall I with sweat and pain
 Dig mines of disputable oar ?
 My labour's certain, so is not my store,
 I may hereafter unlearn all again.
 Why then for truth do I my spirits waste,
 When after all I may be gull'd at last ?
 So when the honest Patriarch thought
 With seven years labour he had bought
 His *Rachel's* love, by morning light,
 He found the error of the night.

V:

Or grant some knowledge dwells below,
 'Tis but for some few years to stay,
 Till I'm set loose from this dark house of clay,
 And in an instant I shall all things know.
 Then shall I learn t'accumulate degrees,
 And be at once made master of all sciences.
 What need I then great sums lay out,
 And that estate with care forestall,
 Which when few years are come about,
 Into my hands of course will fall ?



*The 63d Chapter of ISAIAH paraphrased
 to the 6th Verse.*

A PINDARIQUE ODE.

I.

STrange scene of glory ! am I well awake ?
 Or is't my fancy's wild mistake ?
 It cannot be a dream, bright beams of light
 Flow from the visions face, and pierce my tender sight,
 No common vision this, I see
 Some marks of more than human Majesty.

Who

Who is this mighty Hero, who?
 With glories round his head, and terror in his brow?
 From *Bozrah* lo he comes, a scarlet die
 O'er spreads his cloaths, and does outvie
 The blushes of the morning sky,

Triumphant and victorious he appears,
 And honour in his looks and habit wears:
 How strong he treads, how stately does he go!

Pompous and solemn is his pace,
 And full of Majesty, as is his face.

Who is this mighty Hero, who?
 'Tis I who to my promise faithful stand,
 I who the powers of death, hell, and the grave,
 Have foil'd with this all-conquering hand,
 I who most ready am, and mighty too to save.

II.

Why wear'st thou then this scarlet die?

Say, mighty Hero, why?

Why do thy garments look all red
 Like them that in the wine-fat tread?

The wine-press I alone have trod,

That vast unweildy frame, which long did stand
 Unmov'd, and which no mortal force could e'er com-
 That ponderous mass I ply'd alone [mand,
 And with me to assist were none;

A mighty task it was, worthy the Son of God,
 Angels stood trembling at the dreadful sight,
 Concern'd with what success I should go through

The work I undertook to do;

Inrag'd I put forth all my might

And down the engine press'd, the violent force
 Disturb'd the universe, put nature out of course.
 The blood gush'd out in streams, and chequer'd o'er
 My garments with its deepest gore;
 With ornamental drops bedeck'd I stood,
 And writ my victory with my enemy's blood.

III.

III.

The day, the signal day is come
 When of my enemies I must vengeance take ;
 The day when death shall have its doom,
 And the dark Kingdom with its powers shall shake.
 Fate in her kalendar mark'd out this day with red,
 She folded down the iron leaf, and thus she said,
 This day if ought I can divine be true,
 Shall for a signal victory
 Be celebrated to posterity :

Then shall the Prince of light descend,
 And rescue mortals from th' infernal fiend, [due,
 Break through his strongest forts, and all his host sub-
 This said, she shut the adamantine volume close,
 And wish'd she might the crowding years transpose ;
 So much she long'd to have the scene display,
 And see the vast event of this important day.

IV.

And now in midst of the revolving years,
 This great, this mighty one appears :
 The faithful traveller the sun
 Has number'd out the days, and the set period run.
 I look'd, and to assist was none,
 My angelick guards stood trembling by,
 But durst not venture nigh :
 In vain too from my Father did I look
 For help, my Father me forsook.
 Amaz'd I was to see
 How all deserted me.

I took my fury for my sole support
 And with my single arm the conquest won,
 Loud acclamations fill'd all Heaven's court,
 The hymning guards above,
 Strain'd to an higher pitch of joy and love,
 The great Jehovah prais'd, and his victorious Son.

The

The ELEVATION.

I.

TAke wing (my soul) and upwards bend thy flight,
 To thy originary fields of light.
 Here's nothing, nothing here below
 That can deserve thy longer stay ;
 A secret whisper bids thee go
 To purer air, and beams of native day.
 Th' ambition of the tow'ring lark out-vy,
 And like him sing as thou dost upward fly.

II.

How all things lessen which my soul before
 Did with the groveling multitude adore !
 Those pageant glories disappear,
 Which charm and dazle mortals eyes :
 How do I in this higher sphere,
 How do I mortals, with their joys despise !
 Pure, uncorrupted element I breathe,
 And pity their gross atmosphere beneath.

III.

How vile, how sordid here those trifles shew,
 That please the tenants of that ball below !
 But ha ! I've lost the little sight,
 The scene's remov'd, and all I see
 Is one confus'd dark mass of night,
 What nothing was, now nothing seems to be ;
 How calm this region, how serene, how clear ;
 Sure I some strains of heavenly musick hear.

IV.

On, on, the task is easie now and light,
 No steams of earth can here retard thy flight.
 Thou needst not now thy strokes renew,
 'Tis but to spread thy pinions wide,

And

And thou with ease thy seat wilt view,
 Drawn by the bent of the ethereal tide.
 'Tis so I find ; how sweetly on I move, [bove!
 Not lett by things below, and help'd by those a:
 V.

But see, to what new region am I come ?
 I know it well, it is my native home.
 Here led I once a life divine,
 Which did all good, no evil know :
 Ah ! who wou'd such sweet blifs resign
 For those vain shews which fools admire below ?
 'Tis true, but don't of folly past complain,
 But joy to see these blest abodes again.

VI.

A good retrieve : But lo, while thus I speak,
 With piercing rays th' eternal day does break.
 The beauties of the face divine
 Strike strongly on my feeble sight :
 With what bright glories does it shine !
 'Tis one immense and ever-flowing light.
 Stop here, my soul ; thou canst not bear more blifs,
 Nor can thy now rais'd palate ever relish less.

A N N O T A T I O N S.

THE general design of the precedent poem is to represent the gradual ascent of the soul by contemplation to the supreme good, together with its firm adherency to it, and its full acquiescence in it. All which is done figuratively, under the allegory of a local elevation from the feculent regions of this lower world.

Pure

*Pure uncorrupted element I breathe,
And pity their gross atmosphere beneath.*

By pure uncorrupted element is meant the refined intellectual entertainments of the divine life, which are abstracted from all corporeal allays. *Ἡδύται τὰ ἐαυτῶ*, as *Plato* is I think observ'd to call them, those pleasures which are proper to man as such. By gross atmosphere is meant the more drossy gratifications of the animal life, which comes as short in purity of the divine, as the thick atmosphere does of the pure æther.

No steams of earth can here retard thy flight, &c.

The thing intended in the whole stanza is to insinuate the great facility and pleasure of the divine life to one that is arriv'd to an habit of it. For as the magnetick influence of the earth can have no force upon him that is placed in the upper regions, beyond the sphere of its activity, so (which is the counterpart of the allegory) the inclinations of the animal nature have little or no power over him, who has advanc'd to the heights of habitual contemplation. He looks down upon, and observes the tumults of his sensitive appetite, but no way sympathizes with it; he views the troubled sea, but with the unconcernedness of a stander by, not as one that sails in it. His soul tho' in conjunction with his body, is yet above the reach of its gusts and relishes, and from her serene station at once sees and smiles at its little complacencies. As *Lucan* says of the soul of *Pompey*, when advanced to the ethereal regions.

— *Illic postquam se lumine vero
Implevit, stellasque vagas miratur, & astra
Fixa polis, vidit quanta sub nocte jaceret
Nostra dies, risitque sui ludibria trunci.*

And

And here I cannot chuse but take notice of a difficulty which is very incident to the business in hand, and wherewith I my self was once very much perplex'd when I first applied my thoughts to moral contemplations. 'Tis in short this, we have a receiv'd axiom that the difficulty of the performance commends the merit of a good action. Now if so, it seems to follow that he, who by a long habitual course of piety and virtue his made his duty easy and natural to himself, will be less perfect than another who does hardly abstain from vice, or than himself before the acquisition of that habit. And then that *συνετήα* which *Aristotle* in his ethicks makes only a semi-virtue, because of the difficulty of its performance, will for that very reason become *virtus heroica*; and if so, to make a progress in virtue will involve a contradiction. This I confess appear'd to me no inconsiderable intricacy, when it first occur'd to my thoughts, and I could not presently unwind my self from it.

But in answer to it I consider, *first*, That when the difficulty of the performance is said to commend the action, 'tis not so to be understood as if difficulty did in it self, as an ingredient, add any moment to the excellency of a man's virtue, but only that 'tis a sign of it *a posteriori*. Because were not a man endow'd with such a degree of virtue, he would not be able to conquer the suppos'd difficulty. So that if a man has a stock of resolution sufficient to conquer such a difficulty, his virtue is the same, tho' he never be engaged in it. For all the virtue is absolv'd in the degree of resolution, the difficulty is only a sign or indication of it. And upon this consideration it is, that those whom nature has befriended with such an *εὐνοία* or happy constitution, as carries with it little or no tempta-
tion

tion to vice, may yet be accounted virtuous, because their resolution to virtue may be so firm and peremptory, that they would adhere to it notwithstanding any opposition.

Secondly, I consider that we are to distinguish of a twofold difficulty. *First*, There is a difficulty which arises from the nature of the work it self. And, *secondly*, there is a difficulty which arises from the disposition of the agent. Now 'tis not this later difficulty that commends the excellency of virtue, but only the former, which is no way diminish'd by the habit. For after the induction of the habit, the work remains the same in its own nature, which it was before; the only change is in the agent, who by his habit is render'd more expedite and ready for the performance of what is good. But as for the later difficulty which proceeds from the agent himself, that is so far from commending the worth of any good action, that it derogates much from its commendation. 'Tis easiness of performance that here gives the value. He that abstains from sensual pleasures with great abhorrency, and has set himself at a wide distance from it, discovers more, and has more, of a virtuous resolution, than he, whose mind stands almost in an equipoise, and does but just abstain. For since we become virtuous by a right application of our wills, the excellency of our virtues must be measured by the greater or less strength of our resolutions. And consequently he, who by a strong habit has made his virtue most natural and easy to him, is arrived to the greatest perfection.

Drawn

Drawn by the bent of the ethereal tide ;

This is in allusion to the *Cartesian* hypothesis of *Vortices* or whirlpools of subtil matter. The mystick sense is this, that the higher a seraphick soul advances in the contemplation of the supreme good, the stronger he will find its attractions.

I know it well, it is my native home.

This Verse, with the whole stanza, proceeds upon the *Platonick* hypothesis of præ-existence. I shall not here dispute the problem. Those that desire to be satisfied concerning it, I refer to the works of that oracle of profound wisdom and learning, the excellent *Dr. More*, to an ingenious treatise called *Lux Orientalis*; and to the account of *Origen*. In the mean while I hope the most rigid maintainer of orthodoxy will allow me the liberty of alluding to it as an hypothesis; if not, I'm sure the laws of poetry will. My business here was to imitate nature, and to represent how a soul would be affected in such a case, supposing it true: Which I think I have not done amiss. For so the ingenious platonist *Boethius*,

*Huc te si reducem referat via,
Quam nunc requiris immemor,
Hæc dices, memini, patria est mihi,
Hinc ortus hic sistam gradum.*

'Tis one immense and ever flowing light.

My business was here to give a compendious description of God. Now among all the representations we have of him, I thought none so agreeable to the genius of poetry as a sensible one, and of all those I could not find a better in all the inventory of the creation, than this of light. I shall not here endeavour a parallel; it may suffice to say,

say, that the representation is warranted by authority, both human and divine. The school of *Plato* represents God, under the similitude of light, or lucid fountain; for that, I suppose, *Boethius* may be presumed to mean by his *Fons Boni Lucidus*. And holy scripture goes farther, and says in express terms, that *God is light, and in him is no darkness at all*, 1 John i. 5.



The CURIOSITY.

I.

UNhappy state of mortals here below,
 Whom unkind Heaven does inspire
 With such a constant, strong desire,
 When they've such slender faculties to know!
 And yet we not content to bear the pain
 Of thirst unquench'd and fruitless love,
 With one more curse our ills improve,
 And toil and drudge for what we ne'er can gain.

II.

With what strange frenzy are we all possess'd,
 Contented ignorance to refuse,
 And by laborious search to lose,
 Not the enjoyment only, but our rest!
 Something like oar does on the surface shine,
 We taken with the specious shew,
 With pains dig in the flattering mine,
 But all alas in vain, truth lies more low.

III.

The greatest knowledge we can ever gain
 From studying nature, books or men,
 Serves just t' employ dull hours; but then
 It yields less pleasure than it costs us pain.

E

Besides,

Besides, so short and treacherous is our age,
 No sooner are we counted wise,
 But envious death shuts up our eyes,
 Just as our part is learnt, we quit the stage.

IV.

Could I among the nobler spirits find
 One that would lay aside his state,
 And be my kind confederate,
 That suddainly I might enrich my mind ;
 'Twould be some pleasure this, if happy I
 Could once at ease sit and survey,
 And my great victory enjoy,
 And (not as now) still labour on and dye.



The 114th Psalm paraphrased.

I.

WHEN conquer'd by the plagues of *Moses* rod,
 The *Egyptian* tyrant gave command
 That *Israel* should depart his land,
Israel the chosen family of God.
 Among them dwelt the Holy One,
Juda his sanctuary, and *Israel* was his throne.

II.

The sea beheld this scene, and did admire,
 Each wave stood silently to see
 The power of the Divinity ;
 They saw, and fled the dreadful guide of fire.
 And *Jordan* too divided stood, [ing flood.
 The priests the sacred ark bore through the yield-

III.

Mount *Sinai* with great horror struck and dread,
 Forgot her weight, and in a trance
 Like a light ram, did skip and dance ;
 She fear'd, and fain would hide her palsy head.

The

The hills their mother mountain saw, awe.
The little hills, and like young sheep they stood in

IV.

What made thee to retreat, thou mighty sea ?

Tell me, for never any shore

Knew such a wondrous tide before,

And thou great *Jordan* ; say, what ailed thee ?

Say, sacred mount, what meant thy trance,

And you small under-hills, why did you skip and

V.

[dance ?

You need not think it shame to own your fear ;

What you dismay'd, the same would make

The universal fabrick shake ;

The cause was great, for *Jacob's* God was there :

That God who did the rock subdue,

And made it melt in tears, tho' harder far than you.



The 148th P S A L M paraphrased.

I.

O Come, let all created force conspire,

A general hymn of praise to sing ;

Join all ye creatures in one solemn quire,

And let your theme be Heaven's Almighty King.

II.

Begin ye blest attendants of his seat,

Begin your high seraphick lays,

'Tis just you should, your happiness is great,

And all you are to give again, is praise.

III.

Ye glorious lamps that rule both night and day,

Bring you your allelujahs too :

To him that tribute of devotion pay

Which once blind superstition gave to you.

IV.

Thou first and fairest of material kind,
 By whom his other works we see,
 Subtile and active as pure thought and mind,
 Praise him that's elder, and more fair than thee.

V.

Ye regions of the air, his praises sing,
 And all ye virgin waters there,
 Do you advantage to the consolt bring,
 And down to us the allelujah bear.

VI.

In chaunting forth the great Jehovah's praises;
 Let these the upper consort fill,
 He spake, and did you all from nothing raise;
 As you did then, so now obey his will.

VII.

His will, that fix'd you in a constant state,
 And cut a track for nature's wheel,
 Here let it run said he, and made it fate,
 And where's that power which can this law repeal?

VIII.

Ye powers that to th' inferior world retain,
 Join you now with the quire above.
 And first ye dragons try an higher strain,
 And turn your angry hissings into praise and love.

IX.

Let fire, hail, snow, and vapours that ascend,
 Unlock'd by *Phæbus* searching rays,
 Let stormy winds ambitiously contend,
 And all their wonted force employ in praise.

X.

Ye sacred tops which seem to brave the Skies,
 Rise higher, and when men on you
 Religious rites perform and sacrifice,
 With their oblations send your praises too.

XI. Ye

XI.

Ye trees, whose fruits both men and beasts consume,
 Be you in praises fruitful too ;
 Ye cedars, why have you such choice perfume,
 But that sweet incense should be made of you.

XII.

Ye beasts with all the humble creeping train
 Praise him that made your lot so high ;
 Ye birds, who in a nobler province reign,
 Send up your praises higher than you fly.

XIII.

Ye sacred heads, that wear Imperial gold,
 Praise him that you with power arrays,
 And you whose hands the scale of Justice hold
 Be just in this, and pay your debt of praise.

XIV.

Let sprightly youth give vigour to the quire,
 Each sex with one another vye ;
 Let feeble age dissolv'd in praise expire,
 And infants too in hymns their tender voices try.

XV.

Praise him ye saints who piety profess,
 And at his altar spend your days ;
 Ye seed of *Israel* your great Patron bless,
 'Tis *Manna* this, for Angels food is praise.



A PASTORAL on the death of his Sacred
Majesty King CHARLES the Second.

my Jewish This.

Menalcas, Thyrsis, and Daphnis.

Thyr. **W**HAT, said? *Menalcas*: Sure this pleasant shade

Was ne'er for such a mournful tenant made,
All things smile round thee, and throughout the
Nature displays a scene of joy and love. [grove
But shepherd where's thy flock? —————

Sure they in some forbidden pastures stray
Whilst here in sighs thou numb'rest out the day.

Men. Ah, *Thyrsis*, thou could'st witness heretofore
What strange affection to my flock I bore.

Thou know'st, my *Thyrsis*, the *Arcadian* plain
Could not afford a more industrious swain.

But I no longer now that mind retain.

Thyr. What change so great but what love's power
can make?

Menalcas does his kids, and tender lambs forsake.

So I, when slave to *Galatea's* eyes,

Did neither city nor the country prize,

But all their sports, and my flock too despise.

Hang thou, my pipe, (said I) on yonder tree,

For then (alas!) I had no taste for melody.

Obscurely in thick woods I sat alone,

And sigh'd in consort to the turtles moan.

Men. 'Tis not fond love that causes my distress,

No, *Thyrsis*, you're mistaken in your guess.

The glorious prize I have in triumph born,

I am no longer now *Alexis* scorn.

Or if I were, I now could be unmov'd, [lov'd.

At every scornful glance, nor care where e'er he

A

A nearer grief preys on my spirits now,
 And I beneath a heavier burthen bow.
 The gentle God of the *Arcadian* plains,
Pan that regards the sheep, *Pan* that regards the
 Great *Pan* is dead ——— [swains,

Throughout the fields the doleful tidings ran,
 A swoon seiz'd all the shepherds at the death of *Pan*.
 Of *Pan*——But see the rest that tree will shew,
 Which wears the sad inscription of my woe,
 Where, with the bark my sorrows too will grow. }

Thyr. How, shepherd, is it by fame's trumpet said
 That *Pan* the best of all the Gods is dead?
 Whom oft' w' ador'd, and whom because we knew }
 As good as they, we thought him as immortal too. }

'Tis strange; but omens now I find are true.
 In yonder copse a shady Oak there stood,
 Stately, well rooted, and it self a wood;
 Her branches o'er the inferior trees were spread,
 Who all ador'd her as their sovereign head:
 Hither, when heated by the guide of day,
 While their young wanton goats did skip and play,
 Hither the swains would constantly repair,
 Here sing, and in the ample shade drink fresher air.
 This tree when I my goats to pasture drove,
 While all was clear above, and still throughout
 the grove,

Struck by some secret force fall down I saw,
 The wood-nymphs all were seiz'd with wonder,
 grief, and awe.

Nor had I left this ruin far behind
 When lo (strange sight) a nightingale I find,
 Which from brisk airs, enlivening all the grove,
 Coo'd on a suddain like a mournful dove.
 Amaz'd I stand, and on my pipe essay,
 With some brisk song her sorrows to allay.

But all in vain. She from the lofty tree
Kept on her sad complaint, and mourn'd, and droop'd
like thee.

Men. And why these slighter things dost thou relate?
Nature herself perceiv'd *Pan's* mighty fate.
She fainted, when he drew his latest breath,
And almost sympathiz'd with him to death.

Each field put on a languid dying face, [grafs.]
The sheep not minding food, with tears bedew'd the
The Lyons too in tears their grief confest,
And savage bears, *Pan's* enemies profess.

The nymphs all wept, and all the noble train
Of Deities that frequent the court of *Pan*.
Echo that long by nought but voice was known,
In sounds repeated others woes, but wept her own.
Th' *Arcadians* mourn'd, and press'd beneath the
weighty care,

With cruelty they charg'd the Gods and ever Star.

Thyr. And well they might; Heaven could not
shew a Deity

More mild, more good t' his votaries than he. }
He was all love, all peace, all clemency;
H' allur'd the love, and melted down the hate
Of all: He had no enemy but fate.

Pan kept the fields, from wolves secur'd the stall,
He guarded both the humble shrubs and cedars tall.
The summers heat obey'd *Pan's* gentle hand,
And winter winds blew soft at his command, }
He blest the swains with sheep, and fruitful made
their land.

Weep, shepherds, and in pomp your grief express,
The ground with flowers, your selves with cypress
dress.

Let the *Arcadians* in a solemn train [plain; }
March slowly on, let mournful accents fill the }
Do this at least in memory of *Pan*.

Daph.

Daph. But why this vain expence of tears and breath?

D'ye think *Pan* lost and swallow'd up in death?
He lives, and with a pleas'd and wondering eye
Contemplates the new beauties of the Sky.

Whence on these fields he casts propitious rays,
Now greater than our sorrow, greater than our praise.
I saw (for why mayn't I rehearse the sight)

Just as the Stars were kindled by the Queen of night,

Another new-made milky way appear,

I saw, and wonder'd what event it might prepare.

When lo great *Pan* amaz'd my trembling sight,

As through th' æthereal plains he took his flight,

Deckt round with rays, and darting streams of light.

Triumphant was his march, a sacred throng

Of Gods inclos'd him, *Pan* was all their song,

The Sky still brighten'd as they went along.

Men. Thy vision be all truth —

But who shall now the royal sheep-crook hold,

Who patronize the fields, who now secure the fold?

Daph. Discharge that care; the royal stock does yield

Another *Pan* to patronize the field.

An heir of equal conduct does the sceptre sway,

One who long nurtured in the pastoral way,

In peace will govern the *Arcadian* plains,

Defend the tender flocks, and cheer the drooping swains.

Thyr. Come then, let's tune the pipe t'a brisker key,

Let's with a dance our sorrows chase away,

And to new *Pan* in sports devote the day.

S A T I E T Y.

I.

HAste on, dull time, thy winged minutes haste,
I care not now how soon thou bring'st my last.
By what I've liv'd I plainly know,
The total sum of all below.

The days to come, altho' they promise more,
I know will be as false as those that went before.

II.

The best of life tho' once enjoy'd, is vain,
And why ye powers the self-same o'er again?
The comedy's so dull, I fear
'Twill not a second acting bear.

No, I've enough; I cannot like the Sun [rum.]
Each day the self-same stage, and still unwearied,

III.

What cruel laws are these that me confine,
Thus still to dig in a deceitful mine?

Be just, ye powers, my soul set free,
Give her her native liberty.

'Tis 'gainst the stage's law to force my stay,
I've seen an act or two, and do not like the play.



The R E P L Y.

I.

Since you desire of me to know
Who's the wise man, I'll tell you who:
Not he whose rich and fertile mind
Is by the culture of the arts refin'd;

Who

Who as the Chaos of disorder'd thought
 By reason's light to form and method brought,
 Who with a clear and piercing sight,
 Can see through niceties as dark as night,
 You err, if you think this is he,
 Tho' seated on the top of the *Porphyrian* tree.

II.

Nor is it he to whom kind Heaven
 A secret *Cabala* has given
 T' unriddle the mysterious text
 Of Nature, with dark comments more perplex.
 Or to decypher her clean writ and fair,
 But most confounding puzzling character.
 That can through all her windings trace
 This slippery wanderer, and unveil her face.
 Her inmost mechanism view, [through.
 Anatomize each part, and see her through and

III.

Nor he that does the science know,
 Our only certainty below,
 That can from problems dark and nice
 Deduce truths worthy of a sacrifice.
 Nor he that can confess the Stars and see
 What's writ in the black leaves of Destiny.
 That knows their laws, and how the Sun
 His daily and his annual stage does run ;
 As if he did to them dispense
 Their motions, and there fate supream intelligence.

IV.

Nor is it he (although he boast
 Of wisdom, and seem wise to most)
 Yet 'tis not he whose busy pate
 Can dive into the deep intrigues of state.
 That can the great *Leviathan* controul,
 Manage and rule't, as if he were its soul.

T!

The wisest King thus gifted was,
 And yet did not in these true wisdom place.
 Who then is by the wise man meant?
 He that can want all this, and yet can be content.

My ESTATE.

I.

HOW do I pity that proud wealthy clown,
 That does with scorn on my low state look
 down!

Thy vain contempt, dull earth-worm, cease,
 I won't for refuge fly to this,
 That none of Fortune's blessings can
 Add any value to the man.

This all the wise acknowledge to be true;
 But know I am as rich, more rich than you.

II.

While you a spot of earth possess with care,
 Below the notice of the Geographer,

I by the freedom of my soul
 Possess, nay more, enjoy the whole;
 To th' Universe a claim I lay;

Your writings shew, perhaps you'll say,
 That's your dull way, my title runs more high,
 'Tis by the charter of Philosophy.

III.

From that a firmer title I derive,
 Than all your courts of law could ever give.

A title that more firm doth stand
 Than does even your very land,
 And yet so generous and free
 That none will e'er bethink it me,

Since

Since my possessions tend to no man's loss ;
I all enjoy, yet nothing I ingross.

IV.

Throughout the works divine I cast my eye,
Admire their beauty, and their harmony.

I view the glorious Host above,
And him that made them, praise and love.
The flow'ry meads and fields beneath,
Delight me with their odorous breath.

Thus is my joy by you not understood,
Like that of God, when he said, *All was good.*

V.

Nay (what you'd think less likely to be true)
I can enjoy what's yours much more than you.

Your meadow's beauty I survey,
Which you prize only for its hay.

There can I sit beneath a tree,
And write an Ode or Elegy.

What to you care, does to me pleasure bring,
You own the cage, I in it sit and sing.



The CONQUEST.

I.

IN power or wisdom to contend with thee,
Great God, who but a *Lucifer* would dare ?

Our strength is but infirmity,

And when we this perceive our sight's most clear :

But yet I will not be excell'd, thought I,

In love, in love I'll with my Maker vye.

II.

I view'd the glories of thy seat above,

And thought of every grace and charm divine,

And farther to increase my love,

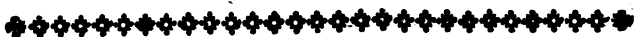
I measur'd all the heights and depths of thine.

Thus

Thus there broke forth a strong and vigorous flame,
And almost melted down my mortal frame.

III.

But when thy bloody sweat and death I view,
I own (dear Lord) the conquest of thy love,
Thou dost my highest flights outdo,
I in a lower orb, and slower move.
Thus in this strife's a double weakness shewn,
Thy love I cannot equal, nor yet bear my own.



The I M P A T I E N T.

I.

WHAT envious laws are those of Fate,
Which fix a gulph (blest souls) 'twixt
us and you!

How 'twould refresh and chear our mortal state,
When our dejected looks confess
The emptiness of earthly bliss, [view!
Could we in this black night your brighter glories

II.

Vain comfort when I thus complain
To hear the wise and solemn gravely say,
Your grief and curiosity restrain,
Death will e'er long this bar remove,
And bring you to the blest above, [stay.
Till then with this great prospect all your longings

III.

But ah the joy peculiar here
Does from the greater excellence arise,
'Twill be worth nothing in an equal sphere.

Let me your noble converse have,
Blest Spirits, on this side the grave,
I shall hereafter be as great as you, as wise.

IV.

IV.

Besides, when plung'd in bliss divine
 I shall not taste, nor need this lesser joy.
 What comfort then does from this prospect shine?
 'Tis just as if in depth of night
 You rob a Traveller of his light,
 And promise to restor't when 'tis clear day.



C O N T E N T.

I.

I Bless my Stars I envy none,
 Not great, nor wealthy, no nor yet the wife,
 I've learnt the art to like my own,
 And what I can't attain to, not to prize.
 Vast tracts of learning I descry
 Beyond the sphere perhaps of my activity,
 And yet I'm ne'er the more concern'd at this,
 Than for the gems that lie in the profound abyss.

II.

Should I my proper lot disdain
 As long as farther good eclipses mine,
 I may t' Eternity complain,
 And in the mansions of the blest repine.
 There shall I numbers vast espy
 Offorms more excellent, more wise, more blest than I.
 I shall not then lament m' unequal fate.
 And why should larger prospects now molest my state?

III.

Where all in equal stations move,
 What place for harmony can there be found?
 The lower spheres with those above
 Agree, and dance as free and briskly round.

Degrees

Degrees of essences conspire,
 As well as various notes, t'accomplish Heaven's quire:
 Thus would I have't below, nor will I care
 So the result be harmony, what part I bear.

Against KNOWLEDGE.

I.

WELL, let it be the censure of the wise,
 That wisdom none but fools despise:
 I like not what they gravely preach,
 And must another doctrine teach.
 Since all's so false and vain below,
 There's nought so indiscreet as this, to know.

II.

The thoughtless, dull, and less discerning mind,
 No flaws in earthly joys can find,
 He closes with what courts his sight,
 All coin will pass by his dim light.
 Though often baulk'd, he hopes for rest,
 Sleeps on and dreams, and is in error blest.

III.

But he that has refin'd and high-rais'd sense,
 Can nothing taste but excellence.
 Nor can he nature's faults supply,
 By fancy's happy imag'ry.
 He sees that all fruition's vain,
 Can't taste the present, nor yet trust again.

IV.

Our joys, like tricks, do all on cheats depend,
 And when once known, are at an end.
 Happy and wise, two blessings are
 Which meet not in this mortal sphere;
 Let me be ignorant below,
 And when I've solid good, then let me know.

Seeing

Seeing a great Person lying in state.

I.

WELL, now I needs must own,
 That I hate greatness more and more ;
 'Tis now a just abhorrence grown
 What was antipathy before :
 With other ills I could dispense,
 And acquiesce in Providence.
 But let not Heaven my patience try
 With this one plague, lest I repine and dye.

II.

I knew indeed before,
 That 'twas the great man's wretched fate,
 While with the living to endure
 The vain impertinence of state ;
 But sure, thought I, in death he'll be
 From that and other troubles free :
 What e'er his life, he then will lie
 As free, as undisturb'd, as calm as I.

III.

But 'twas a gross mistake ;
 Honour, that too officious ill.
 Won't even his breathless corps forsake,
 But haunts and waits about him still,
 Strange persecution, when the grave
 Can't the distressed Martyr save !
 What remedy can there avail,
 Where death the great Catholicon does fail ?

IV.

Thanks to my Stars that I
 Am with so low a fortune blest,
 That whate'er blessings Fate deny,
 I'm sure of privacy and rest.

F

'Tis

'Tis well; thus long I am content,
And rest as in my element.

Then Fate, if you'll appear my friend,
Force me not 'gainst my nature to ascend.

V.

No, I would still be low,
Or else I would be very high,
Beyond the state which mortals know,
A kind of Semi-deity.
So of the regions of the air,
The high'st and lowest quiet are,
But 'tis this middle height I fear,
For storms and thunder are ingendred there.



Second Chapter of the Cant. from Verse
10. to 13.

I.

TWas my beloved spake; [say,
I know his charming voice, I heard him
Rise up my love, my fairest one awake,
Awake and come away.

II.

The winter all is past
And stormy winds that with such rudeness blew,
The Heavens are no longer overcast,
But try to look like you.

III.

The flowers their sweets display,
The Birds in short preludiums tune their throat,
The turtle in low murmurs does essay
Her melancholy note.

IV.

IV.

The fruitful vineyards make
 An odorous smell, the fig looks fresh and gay,
 Arise, my love, my fairest one awake,
 Awake and come away.

*To a Friend in Honour.*

I.

Some thoughtless heads perhaps admire to see
 That I so little to your titles bow ;
 But wonder not, my friend ; I swear, to me
 You were as great before as now.
 Honour to you does nothing give,
 Tho' from your worth much lustre she receive.

II.

Your native glory does so far out-do
 That of the sphere wherein you move,
 That I can nothing but your self in you
 Observe, admire, esteem or love.
 You are a diamond set in gold,
 The curious, the rich stone, not this behold.

III.

All that to your late honour you can owe
 Is only that you're brought in view ;
 You don't begin to have, but men to know,
 Your votaries are increas'd, not you.
 So the Sun's height add's not t' his light,
 But only does expose him more to fight.

IV.

To some whose native worth more dimly shin'd
 Honour might some improvement give,
 As metals which the Sun has less refin'd
 A value from their stamp receive.

But you, like gold, pass for no more
Tho' stamp'd, than for your weight you wou'd before.

A Divine Hymn on the CREATION.

I.

A Wake, my lyre, and thy sweet forces joyn
With me to sing an hymn divine,
Let both our strains in pleasing numbers flow ;
But see, thy strings with tediousness and pain
Arise into a tuneful strain,
How canst thou silent lye ?
The universe is harmony,
Awake, and move by sympathy,
My heart's already tun'd, O why art thou so slow !

II.

Jehovah is our theme, th' eternal King,
Whose praise admiring Angels sing,
They see with stedy and attentive eyes
His naked beauties, and from vision raise
To wondrous heights their love and praise:
We mortals only view
His back-parts, and that darkly too,
We must fall short, what shall we do,
But neither too can they up to his grandeur rise.

III.

No power can justly praise him but must be
As great, as infinite as he,
He comprehends his boundless self alone,
Created minds too shallow are and dim
His works to fathom, much more him.
Our praise at height will be
Short by a whole infinity,
Of all his glorious Deity,
He cannot have the full, and stands in need of none.

IV. He

IV.

He can't be less, nor can he more receive,
 But stands one fix'd superlative.
 He's in himself compendiously blest;
 We, acted by the weights of strong desire,
 To good without our selves aspire,
 We're always moving hence
 Like lines from the circumference,
 To some more in-lodg'd excellence.
 But he is one unmov'd self-center'd point of rest.

V.

Why then, if full of blis that ne'er could cloy,
 Would he do ought but still enjoy?
 Why not indulge his self-sufficing state,
 Live to himself at large, calm and secure,
 A wise eternal epicure?
 Why six days work to frame
 A monument of praise and fame
 To him whose blis is still the same?
 What need the wealthy coin, or he that's blest create?

VI.

Almighty love the fairest gem that shone
 All-round, and half made up his throne,
 His favourite and darling excellence,
 Whom oft he would his royal virtue style,
 And view with a peculiar smile,
 Love mov'd him to create
 Beings that might participate
 Of their Creator's happy state, [pence:
 And that good which he could not heighten, to dis-

VII.

How large thy empire, love, how great thy sway!
 Omnipotence does thee obey.
 What complicated wonders in thee shine!
 He that t' infinity it self is great
 Has one way to be greater yet;

Love will the method shew,
 'Tis to impart; what is't that thou
 O sovereign passion can'st not do?
 Thou mak'st divinity it self much more divine.

VIII.

With pregnant love full fraught, the great Three-one
 Would now no longer be alone.

Love, gentle love, unlockt his fruitful breast,
 And 'woke th'ideas which there dormant lay.
 Awak'd, their beauties they display :

Th' Almighty smil'd to see
 The comely form and harmony

Of his eternal imag'ry ; [blest.

He saw 'twas good and fair, and th' infant platform

IX.

Ye seeds of being, in whose fair bosoms dwell

The forms of all things possible ;
 Arise, and your prolifick force display ;
 Let a fair issue in your moulds be cast

To fill in part this empty waste.

He spake. The empty space
 Immediately in travail was,

And soon brought forth a formless mass,
 First matter came undress'd, she made such haste
 t' obey.

X.

But soon a plastick spirit did ferment

The liquid dusky element.

The mass harmoniously begins to move,

Let there be light, said God; 'twas said and done,

The mass dipt through with brightness shone.

Nature was pleas'd to see

This feature of Divinity,

Th' Almighty smil'd as well as she, [love.

He own'd his likeness there, and did his first-born

XI. But

XI.

But lo, I see a goodly frame arise
 Vast folding orbs, and azure Skies;
 With lucid whirlpools the vast arch does shine,
 The Sun by day shews to each world his light,
 The Stars stand centinel by night.

In midst of all is spread

That pondrous bulk whereon we tread,
 But where is its foundation laid ?

'Tis pompous all and great, and worthy hands divine.

XII.

Thy temple's built, great God, but where is he
 That must admire both it and thee ?

Ope one scene more, my muse, blest and adore,
 See there in solemn council and debate

The great divine triumvirate.

The rest one word obey'd,

'Twas done almost before 'twas said ;

But man was not so cheaply made, [more.]

To make the world was great, but t' epitomize it

XIII.

Th' accomplish'd work stands his severe review
 Whose judgment's most exactly true.

In nature's book, where no errata's found,

All things are good, said God, they answer well

Th' ideas which within me dwell ;

Th' angelick voices join

Their praise to the applause divine,

The morning Stars in hymns combine,

And as they sung and play'd, the jocant orbs danc'd

XIV.

[round,

With this thy quire divine, great God, I bring
 My Eucharistick offering.

I cannot here sing more exalted lays,

But what's defective now I will supply

When I enjoy thy Deity.

Then may'st thou sleep, my lyre,
 I shall not then thy help require,
 Diviner thoughts will then me fire
 Than thou, tho' play'd on by an Angel's hand,
 can't raise.



PLATO'S *two* CUPIDS.

I.

THE heart of man's a living butt,
 At which two different archers shoot,
 Their shafts are pointed both with fire,
 Both wound our hearts with hot desire.

II.

In this they differ, he that lies
 A sacrifice to his mistress eyes,
 In pain does live, in pain expire,
 And melts and drops before the fire,

III.

But he that flames with love divine,
 Does not in th' heat consume, but shine.
 H' enjoys the fire that round him lies,
 Serenely lives, serenely dyes.

IV.

So Devils and damned souls in Hell
 Fry in the fire with which they dwell ;
 But Angels suffer not the same,
 Although their vehicles be flame.

V.

The heart whose fire's divine and chaste,
 Is like the bush that did not waste.
Moses beheld the flame with fear,
 That wasted not, for God was there.

A

A W I S H.

I.

WHatever blessing you my life deny, [dye:
Grant me, kind Heaven, this one thing when I
I charge thee guardian spirit hear,
And as thou lov'st me, further this my prayer.

II.

When I'm to leave this grosser sphere, and try
Death, that amazing curiosity,
When just about to breathe my last.
Then when no mortal joy can strike my taste :

III.

Let me soft melting strains of musick hear,
Whose dying sounds may speak death to my ear ;
Gently the bands of life unty,
Till in sweet raptures I dissolve and dye.

IV.

How soft and easie my new birth will be
Help'd on by musick's gentle midwifery !
And I who 'midst these charms expire,
Shall bring a soul well tun'd to Heaven's quire.

To Dr. MORE. An Ode.

I.

GO, Muse, go hasten to the cell of fame,
(Thou know'st her reverend awful seat,
It stands hard by your blest retreat)
Go with a brisk alarm assault her ear,
Bid her her loudest trump prepare ;
To sound a more than human name,
A name more excellent and great
Than she could ever publish yet ;

Tell

Tell her she need not stay till Fate shall give
 A license to his works, and bid them live,
 His worth now shines through envy's base alloy,
 'Twill fill her widest trump, and all her breath
 employ.

II.

Learning, which long like an enchanted land,
 D'id human force and art defie,
 And stood the virtuoso's best artillery,
 Which nothing mortal could subdue,
 Has yielded to this hero's fatal hand,
 By him is conquer'd, held, and peopled too.
 Like seas that border on the shore
 The Muses suburbs some possession knew,
 But like the deep abyss their inner store
 Lay unpossess'd, till seiz'd and own'd by you :
 Truth's outer courts were trod before,
 Sacred was her recess, that Fate reserv'd for *More.*

III.

Others in learning's chorus bear their part
 And the great work distinctly share :
 Thou our great catholick professor art,
 All science is annex'd to thy unerring chair.
 Some lesser synods of the wise
 The Muses kept in universities ;
 But never yet till in thy soul
 Had they a council œcumenical,
 An abstract they'd a mind to see
 Of all their scatter'd gifts, and summ'd them up in
 thee.

Thou hast the arts whole Zodiack run,
 And fathom'ft all that here is known.
 Strange restless curiosity,
Adam himself came short of thee,
 He tasted of the fruit, thou bear'ft away the tree.

IV, Whilst

IV.

Whilst to be great the most aspire,
 Or with low souls to raise their fortunes higher,
 Knowledge the chiefest treasure of the blest,
 Knowledge the wise man's best request,
 Was made thy choice, for this thou hast declin'd
 A life of noise, impertinence and state;
 And whate'er else the Muses hate;
 And mad'st it thy own business to enrich thy mind.
 How calm thy life, how easie, how secure,
 Thou intellectual epicure.

Thou as another *Solomon* hast try'd
 All nature through, and nothing to thy soul deny'd.
 Who can two such examples shew? [know.
 He all things try'd t' enjoy, and you all things to

V:

By *Babel's* curse, and our contracted span,
 Heaven thought to check the swift career of man.
 And so it prov'd till now, our age
 Is much too short to run so long a stage.
 And to learn words is such a vast delay,
 That we're benighted e'er we come half way.
 Thou with unusual haste driv'st on,
 And dost even time it self out-run.
 No hindrance can retard thy course,
 Thou rid'st the Muses winged horse.
 Thy stage of learning ends e'er that of life be done.
 There's now no work left for thy accomplish'd mind,
 But to survey thy conquests, and inform mankind.



*The Passion of the VIRGIN MOTHER,
beholding the Crucifixion of her Divine
SON.*

I.

Nigh to the fatal, and yet sovereign wood,
Which crouds of wondring Angels did sur-
round,
Devoutly sad the Holy Mother stood,
And view'd her Son, and sympathiz'd with every
wound.

II.

Angelick piety in her mournful face,
Like rays of light, through a watry cloud did shine ;
Two mighty passions in her breast took place,
And like her Son, sh' appear'd half human, half
divine.

III.

She saw a blacker and more tragick scene
Than e'er the Sun before, or then would see ;
In vain did nature draw her dusky screen,
She saw, and wept, and felt the dreadful agony.

IV.

Grief in the abstra& sure can rise no higher
Than that which this deep tragedy did move ;
She saw in tortures and in shame, expire
Her Son, her God, her worship and her love.

V.

That sacred head, which all divine and bright,
Struck with deep awe the votaries of the East,
To which a Star paid tributary light,
Which the (then joyful) Mother kiss'd, ador'd
and blest.

VI. That

VI.

That head which Angels with pure light had
 Where wisdom's seat and oracle was plac'd ;
 Whose air divine threw his traitors to the ground,
 She saw with pointed circles of rude thorns embrac'd.

VII.

Those hands whose soeverign touch werewont to heal
 All wounds and hurts that others did endure,
 Did now the piercings of rough iron feel,
 Nor could the wounded heart of his sad Mother cure.

VIII.

No, no, it bled to see his body torn
 With nails, and deck'd with gems of purple gore,
 On four great wounds to see him rudely born,
 Whom oft her arms a happy burthen found before.

IX.

It bled to hear that voice of grief and dread,
 Which the earth's pillars and foundations shook ;
 Which rent the rocks, and 'woke the sleeping dead,
 My God, my God, O why, why hast thou me for-

X.

And can the tide of sorrow rise more high ?
 Her melting face stood thick with tears to view,
 Like those of Heaven his setting glories dye,
 As flowers left by the sun are charg'd with evening

XI.

But see grief spreads her empire still more wide,
 Another spring of tears begins to flow,
 A barbarous hand wounds his now senseless side ;
 And death that ends the Son's, renews the Mother's

XII.

She sees now by the rude inhuman stroke
 The mystick river flow, and in her breast
 Wonders, by what strange figure th' Angel spoke,
 When amongst all the daughters he pronounc'd her
 blest.

XIII. Thus

XIII.

Thus far did nature, pity, grief and love,
 And all the passions their strong efforts try,
 But still tho' dark below, 'twas clear above,
 She had (as once her Son) her strengthening Angel by.

XIV.

Gabriel the chiefest of th' Almighty's train
 That first with happy tidings blest her ear,
 Th' Archangel *Gabriel*, was sent again,
 To stem the tide of grief, and qualifie her fear.

XV.

A large prospective wrought by hands divine
 He set before her first enlightned eye,
 'Twas hewn out of the Heaven Cristalline,
 One of whose ends did lessen, th' other magnifie}

XVI.

With that his sufferings he expos'd to sight,
 With this his glories he did represent,
 The weight of this made th' other seem but light,
 She saw the mighty odds, ador'd, and was content.

DAMON and PYTHIAS: Or, Friendship in
 Perfection.

I.

Pyth. 'TIS true (my *Damon*) we as yet have been
 Patterns of constant love, I know ;
 We've ituck so close no third could come between :
 But will it (*Damon*) will it still be so ?

II.

Da Keep your love true, I dare engage that mine
 Shall like my soul immortal prove.
 In friendship's orb how brightly shall we shine
 Where all shall envy, none divide our love !

III. *Pyth.*

III.

Pyth. Death will ; when once (as 'tis by fate design'd)

T'Elysium you shall be remov'd,
Such sweet companions there no doubt you'll find,
That you'll forget that *Pythias* e'er you lov'd.

IV.

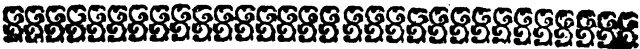
Da. No, banish all such fears ; I then will be
Your friend and guardian Angel too.
And tho' with more refin'd society
I'll leave Elysium to converse with you.

V.

Pyth. But grant that after fate you still are kind,
You cannot long continue so ;
When I, like you, become all thought and mind,
By what mark then shall we each other know ?

VI.

Da. With care on your last hour I will attend,
And lest like souls should me deceive,
I closely will embrace my new-born friend,
And never after my dear *Pythias* leave.



The INDIFFERENCY.

I.

WHether 'tis from stupidity or no,
I know not ; but I ne'er could find
Why I one thought or passion should bestow
On fame, that gaudy idol of mankind.
Call me not Stoick ; no, I can pursue
Things excellent with as much zeal as you :
But here I own my self to be
A very lukewarm votary.

II. Should

II.

Should thousand excellencies in me meet,
 And one bright constellation frame,
 'Tis still as mens phantastick humours hit
 Whethet I'm written in the book of fame.
 So tho' the Sun be ne'er so fair and bright,
 And shine with free, uninterupted light,
 'Tis as the clouds disposed are,
 E'er he can paint his image there.

III.

The world is seldom to true merit just,
 Through envy or through ignorance,
 True worth, like valour, oft lies hid in dust,
 Whilst some false hero's grac'd with a romance.
 The true God's altar oft neglected lies,
 When Idols have perfumes and sacrifice.
 And tho' the true one some adore,
 Yet those that do blaspheme, are more.

IV.

Yet grant that merit were of fame secure,
 What's reputation, what is praise?
 Who'd one day's toil, or sleepless night endure,
 Such a vain *Babel* of esteem to raise?
 Pleas'd with his hidden worth, the great and wise
 Can, like his God, this foreign good despise;
 Whose happiness would ne'er be less,
 Tho' none were made to praise or bless.

V.

Even I who dare not rank my self with those
 Who pleas'd, into themselves retire,
 Find yet in great applauses less repose,
 And do fame less, less than my self admire.
 Let her loud trumpet sound me far and near,
 Th' *Antipodes* will never of me hear.
 Or were I known throughout this ball,
 I've but a point, when I have all.

VI. Then

VI.

Then as for glory which comes after fate,
 All that can then of me be said,
 I value least of all, it comes too late,
 'Tis like th' embalming of the senseless dead.
 Others with pleasure, what me labour cost
 May read, and praise ; but to me all is lost.
 Just as the Sun no joy does find
 In that his light, which chears mankind.

VII.

Or should I after fate has clos'd my eyes,
 Should I my living glories know,
 My wiser, improv'd soul will then despise
 All that poor mortals say or think below.
 Even they who of mens ignorance before
 Complain'd, because few did their works adore,
 Will then the self-same censure raise,
 Not from their silence, but their praise.

VIII.

Or grant 'twou'd pleasure bring to know that I
 After my death live still in fame ;
 Those that admire me too must shortly dye,
 And then where's my memorial, where my name ?
 My fame, tho' longer liv'd, yet once shall have
 Like me, its death, its funeral, its grave.
 This only difference will remain,
 I shall, that never rise again.

IX.

Death and destruction shall e'er long deface
 The world, the work of hands divine ;
 What pillars then, or monuments of brass
 Shall from the general ruin rescue mine ?
 All then shall equal be ; I care not then
 To be a while the talk and boast of men.
 This only grant, that I may be
 Prais'd by thy Angels, Lord, and thee.

G

The

The INFIRMITY.

I.

IN other things I ne'er admir'd to see
 Men injur'd by extremity.
 But little thought in happiness
 There might be danger of excess.
 At least I thought there was no fear
 Of ever meeting with too much on't here.

II.

But now these melting sounds strike on my sense
 With such a powerful excellence ;
 I find that happiness may be
 Screw'd up to such extremity,
 That our too feeble faculties
 May not be said t' enjoy, but suffer bliss.

III.

So frail's our mortal state, we can sustain
 A mighty bliss no more than pain.
 We lose our weak precarious breath
 Tortur'd or tickled unto death.
 As Sprights and Angels alike fright
 With too much horror, or with too much light.

IV.

Alas ! I'm over-pleas'd, what shall I do
 The painful joy to undergo ?
 Temper your too melodious song,
 Your dose of bliss is much too strong ;
 Like those that too rich cordials have,
 It don't so much revive, as make me rave.

V.

What cruelty 'twould be still to confine
 A mortal ear to airs divine ?

The

The curse of *Cain* you have on me
 Inverted by your harmony ;
 For since with that you charm'd my ear,
 My bliss is much too great for me to bear.

VI.

Relieve this paroxysm of delight,
 And let it be less exquisite,
 Let down my soul ; 'tis too high set ;
 I am not ripe for Heaven yet.
 Give me a region more beneath,
 This element's too fine for me to breathe.



The ARREST.

I.

WHither so fast, fond passion, dost thou rove,
 Licentious and unconfin'd ?
 Sure this is not the proper sphere of love ;
 Obey, and be not deaf, as thou art blind.
All is so false and treacherous here,
 That I must love with caution, and enjoy with fear.

II.

Contract thy sails, lest a too gusty blast
 Make thee from shoar launch out too far ;
 Weigh well this ocean, e'er thou make such haste,
 It has a nature very singular.

Men of the treacherous shoar complain
 In other seas, but here most danger's in the main.

III.

Should'st thou, my soul, indulge thy forward love,
 And not controul its headlong course,
 The object in th' enjoyment vain will prove,
 And thou on nothing fall with all thy force.

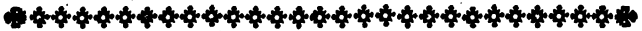
So th' eager Hawk makes sure of's prize,
Strikes with full might, but over-shoots himself
and dies.

IV.

Or shouldst thou with long search on something light
That might content and stay thy mind,
All good's here wing'd, and stands prepar'd for
flight,
'Twill leave thee reaching out in vain, behind.
Then when unconstant fate thou'ft prov'd,
Thou'lt sigh and say with Tears, I wish I ne'er had
lov'd.

V.

Well then, ye softer Powers, that love command
And wound our breasts with pleasing smart,
Gage well your lance, and bear a steady hand,
Lest it run in too deep into my heart.
Or if you're fix'd in your design
Deeply to wound my heart, wound it with love
divine.



To the Memory of my dear Neece, M. C.

I.

BY tears to ease my grief I've try'd,
And philosophick med'cines have ap-
ply'd ;
From books and company I've sought relief,
I've us'd all spells and charms of art
To lay this troubler of my heart ;
I have, yet I'm still haunted by my grief.
These give some ease, but yet I find
'Tis poetry at last must cure my mind.

II. Come

II.

Come then, t'assuage my pain I'll try
 By the sweet magick of thy harmony.
 Begin, my Muse, but 'twill be hard I know
 For thee my genius to screw
 To heights that to my theme are due,
 The weight of grief has set my soul so low.
 To grace her death my strains should be
 As far above mortality as she.

III.

Is she then dead, and can it be
 That I can live to write her elegy?
 I hop'd, since 'twas not to my soul deny'd
 To sympathize in all the pain
 Which she tho' long did well sustain,
 T' have carry'd on the sympathy, and dy'd.
 But death was so o'erpleas'd, I see,
 At this rich spoil, that she neglected me.

IV.

Yet has sh' of all things made me bare,
 But life, nor was it kindness here to spare.
 So when th' Almighty would t' inform mankind
 His eastern Hero's patience try
 With the extreams of misery;
 He gave this charge to the malicious fiend;
 Of all life's blessings him deprive,
 Vex him with all thy plagues, but let him live.

V.

Yet will I live (sweet soul) to save
 Thy name, since thee I cannot from the grave.
 I will not of this burthen life complain
 Tho' tears than verses faster flow,
 Tho' I am plung'd in grief and woe,
 And like th' inspired Sibylls write in pain.
 To dye for friends is thought to be
 Heroick, but I'll life endure for thee.

VI.

'Tis just, since I in thee did live;
That thou shouldst life and fame from me receive.
But how shall I this debt of justice pay?

The colours of my poetry
Are all too dead to copy thee,

'Twill be abuse the best that I can say.
Nature that wrought thy curious frame
Will find it hard to draw again the same.

VII.

In council the Almighty fate
When he did man, his masterpiece create.
His agent nature did the same for thee;
In making thee she wrought for fame,
And with slow progress drew thy frame,
As he that painted for eternity.

In her best mould she did thee cast,
But thou wast over-wrought, and made too fine to
VIII. [last.

Thy soul, the saint of this fair shrine,
Was pure without alloy, and all divine.
Active and nimble as æthereal light,
Kind as the Angels are above,
Who live on harmony and love;
The rays thou shott'st were warm, as well as bright:
So mild, so pleasing was thy fire
That none could envy, and all must admire.

IX.

Sickness, to whose strong siege resign
The best of natures, did but set forth thine.
Wisely thou didst thy passions all controul,
And like a martyr in the fire
Devout and patient didst expire,
Pains could expel, but not untune thy soul.

Thou bor'st them all so moderately — [thee.
As if thou mean'st to teach how I should mourn for
X. No

X.

No wonder such a noble mind
 Her way again to Heaven so soon could find.
 Angels, as 'tis but seldom they appear,
 So neither do they make long stay,
 They do but visit and away.
 'Tis pain for them t' endure our too gross sphere.
 We could not hope for a reprieve,
 She must dye soon, that made such haste to live.

XI.

Heaven did thy lovely presence want,
 And therefore did so early thee transplant.
 Not 'cause he dar'd not trust thee longer here,
 No, such sweet innocence as thine
 To take a stain was too divine,
 But sure he coveted to have thee there;
 For meaner souls he could delay,
 Impatient for thine, he would not stay.

XII.

The Angels too did covet thee,
 T' advance their love, their bliss, their harmony.
 They'd lately made an anthem to their King,
 An anthem which contain'd a part
 All sweet, and full of heavenly art,
 Which none but thy harmonious soul could sing.
 'Twas all Heaven's vote thou shouldst be gone
 To fill th' Almighty's choir, and to adorn his throne.

XIII.

Others when gone t' eternal rest
 Are said t' augment the number of the blest.
 Thou dost their very happiness improve,
 Out of the croud they single thee,
 Fond of thy sweet society,
 Thou wast our darling, and art so above.
 Why should we of thy loss complain,
 Which is not only thine, but Heaven's gain?

XIV.

There dost thou sit in bliss and light,
 Whilst I thy praise in mournful numbers write,
 There dost thou drink at pleasure's virgin spring,
 And find'st no leisure in thy bliss
 Ought to admire below, but this.
 How can I mourn, when thou dost anthems sing?
 Thy pardon, my sweet Saint, I implore,
 My soul ne'er disconform'd from thine before.

XV.

Nor will I now : My tears shall flow
 No more, I will be blest 'cause thou art so.
 I'll borrow comfort from thy happy state;
 In bliss I'll sympathize with thee
 As once I did in misery,
 And by reflection will be fortunate.
 I'll practise now what's done above,
 And by thy happy state my own improve.



The RESIGNATION.

I.

Long have I view'd, long have I thought,
 And held with trembling hand this bitter draught :

'Twas now just to my lips apply'd,
 Nature shrank in, and all my courage dy'd.
 But now resolv'd and firm I'll be,
 Since, Lord, 'tis mingled, and reach'd out by thee.

II.

I'll trust my great Physician's skill,
 I know what he prescribes can ne'er be ill ;
 To each disease he knows what's fit,
 I own him wise and good, and do submit ;

I'll now no longer grieve or pine,
 Since 'tis thy pleasure, Lord, it shall be mine.

III.

Thy med'cine puts me to great smart,
 Thou'lt wounded me in my most tender part ;

But 'tis with a design to cure,
 I must and will thy sovereign touch endure.

All that I priz'd below is gone,
 But yet I still will pray, *thy will be done.*

IV.

Since 'tis thy sentence I should part
 With the most precious treasure of my heart,

I freely that and more resign,
 My heart it self, as its delight, is thine ;

My little all I give to thee,
 Thou gav'st a greater gift, thy Son, to me.

V.

He left true blifs and joys above,
 Himself he emptied of all good, but love :

For me he freely did forsake
 More good, than he from me can ever take.

A mortal life for a divine
 He took, and did at last even that resign,

VI.

Take all, great God, I will not grieve,
 But still will wish that I had still to give.

I hear thy voice, thou bid'st me quit
 My paradise, I bless and do submit.

I will not murmur at thy word,
 Nor beg thy Angel to sheath up his sword,

To my GUARDIAN ANGEL.

I.

I Own (my gentle guide) that much I owe
 For all thy tutelary care and love,
 Through life's wild maze thou'st led me hitherto,
 Nor ever wilt (I hope) thy tent remove ;
 But yet t' have been compleatly true,
 Thou should'st have guarded her life too.
 Thou know'st my soul did most inhabit there,
 I could have spared thee t' have guarded her.

II.

But since by thy neglect, or Heaven's decree,
 She's gone t' encrease the pleasures of the blest,
 Since in this sphere my Sun I ne'er shall see,
 Grant me (kind spirit) grant me this request :
 When I shall ease thy charge and dye,
 (För sure I think thou wilt be by)
 Lead me through all the numerous host above,
 And bring my new-flown soul to her I love.

III.

With what high passion shall we then embrace !
 What pleasure will she take t' impart to me
 The rites and methods of that sacred place,
 And what a Heaven 'twill be to learn from thee !
 That pleasure I shall then, I fear,
 As ill as now my sorrow bear ;
 And could then any chance my life destroy,
 I should, I fear, then dye again with joy.

The

The DEFIANCE.

I.

WELL, Fortune, now (if e'er) you've shewn
 What you had in your power to do,
 My wandring love at length had fix'd on one,
 One who might please even unconstant you.
 Me of this one you have depriv'd
 On whom I stay'd my soul, in whom I liv'd ;
 You've shewn your power, and I resign,
 But now I'll shew thee, Fortune, what's in mine.

II.

I will not, no, I will not grieve,
 My tears within their banks shall stand ;
 Do what thou wilt, I am resolv'd to live,
 Since thee I can't, I will my self command.
 I will my passions so controul
 That neither they nor thou shalt hurt my soul ;
 I'll run so counter to thy will,
 Thy good I'll relish, but not feel thy ill.

III.

I felt the shaft that last was sent,
 But now thy quiver I defy.
 I fear no pain from thee or discontent,
 Clad in the armour of philosophy.
 Thy last seiz'd on me out of guard,
 Unarm'd too far within thy reach I dar'd ;
 But now the field I'll dearly sell,
 I'm now (at least by thee) impassible.

IV.

My soul now soars high and sublime,
 Beyond the spring of thy best bow,
 Like those who so long on high mountains climb
 Till they see rain and thunder here below.

In

In vain thou'lt spend thy darts on me,
 My fort's too strong for thy artillery ;
 Thy closest aim won't touch my mind,
 Here's all thy gain, still to be thought more blind.



SUPERSTITION.

I.

I Care not tho' it be
 By the preciser sort thought popery ;
 We Poets can a license shew
 For every thing we do.
 Hear then my little saint, I'll pray to thee

II.

If now thy happy mind
 Amidst its various joys can leasure find
T' attend to any thing so low
 As what I say or do,
 Regard, and be what thou wast ever, kind.

III.

Let not the blest above
 Engross thee quite, but sometimes hither rove ;
 Fain would I thy sweet image see
 And sit and talk with thee,
 Nor is it curiosity but love.

IV.

Ah what delight 'twou'd be, [me!]
 Would'st thou sometimes by stealth converse with
 How should I thy sweet commerce prize
 And other joys despise !
 Come then, I ne'er was yet deny'd by thee.

V. I

V.

I would not long detain
 Thy soul from bliss, nor keep thee here in pain.
 Nor should thy fellow-saints e'er know
 Of thy escape below,
 Before thou'rt miss'd, thou should'st return again.

VI.

Sure Heaven must needs thy love
 As well as other qualities improve.
 Come then and recreate my sight
 With rays of thy pure light,
 'Twill cheer my eyes more than the lamps above.

VII.

But if fate's so severe,
 As to confine thee to thy blissful sphere,
 (And by thy absence I shall know
 Whether thy state be so)
 Live happy, but be mindful of me there.



The Complaint of ADAM turn'd out of
 P A R A D I S E.

I.

AND must I go, and must I be no more
 The tenant of this happy ground?
 Can no reserves of pity me restore,
 Can no atonement for my stay compound!
 All the rich odours that here grow I'd give
 To Heaven in incense, might I here but live.
 Or if it be a grace too high
 To live in *Eden*, let me there but dye.

II. Fair

II.

Fair place, thy sweets I just began to know,
 And must I leave the now again?
 Ah why does Heaven such short-liv'd blifs bestow?
 A tast of pleasure, but full draught of pain.
 I ask not to be chief in this blest state,
 Let Heaven some other for that place create.
 So 'tis in *Eden* let me but have
 And under-gardiner's place, 'tis all I crave.

III.

But 'twill not do, I see, I must away,
 My feet prophane this sacred ground ;
 Stay then, bright minister, one minute stay,
 Let me in *Eden* take one farewel round.
 Let me go gather but one fragrant bough
 Which as a relique, I may keep and shew ;
 Fear not the tree of life ; it were
 A curse to be immortal, and not here.

IV.

'Tis done; now farewel thou most happy place,
 Farewel, ye streams that softly creep,
 I ne'er again in you shall view my face.
 Farewel, ye bowers, in you I ne'er shall sleep.
 Farewel, ye trees, ye flow'ry beds farewel,
 You ne'er will bless my taste, nor you my smell.
 Farewel, thou Guardian divine,
 To thee my happy rival I resign.

V.

O whither now, whither shall I repair
 Exil'd from this angelick coast?
 There's nothing left that's pleasant, good or fair,
 The world can't recompence for *Eden* lost.
 'Tis true, I've here a universal sway,
 The creatures me as their chief Lord obey ;
 But yet the world, tho' all my seat,
 Can't make me happy, tho' it make me great.

VI. Had

VI.

Had I lost lesser, and but seeming bliss,
 Reason my sorrows might relieve,
 But when the loss great and substantial is,
 To think is but to see good cause to grieve.
 'Tis well I'm mortal, 'tis well I shortly must
 Lose all the thoughts of *Eden* in the dust.
 Senseless and thoughtless now I'd be,
 I'd lose even my self, since I've lost thee.



T O S L E E P .

I.

Break off thy slumber, gentle God,
 And hither bring thy charming rod ;
 The rod that weeping eyes does close
 And gives to melancholy hearts repose ;
 With that my temples stroke, and let me be
 Held by thy soft captivity.
 But do not all my senses bind,
 Nor fetter up too close my mind :
 Let mimic fancy wake, and freely rove,
 And bring th' idea of the Saint I love.

II.

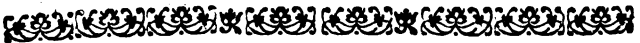
Her lovely image has been brought
 So often to my waking thought,
 That 'tis at length worn out and dead,
 And with its fair original is fled.
 Or else my working over-thoughtful mind
 With much intention is made blind ;
 Like those who look on objects bright
 So long, till they quite lose their sight.
 Ah cruel fates! is't not enough for you
 To take my Saint, but I must lose her image too ?
 III. Thee,

III.

Thee, gentle charmer, I implore
 This my lost treasure to restore ;
 Thy magick virtues all apply,
 Set up again my bankrupt memory.
 Search every cell and corner of my brain,
 And bring my fugitive again.
 To thy dark cave thy self betake
 And 'mong thy dreams enquiry make ;
 Summon the best ideas to appear
 And bring that form which most resembles her.

IV.

But if in all thy store there be
 None (as I fear) so fair as she,
 Then let thy painter's fancy limn
 Her form anew, and send it by a dream.
 Thou can't him all her lively features tell,
 For sure I think thou knew'st her well.
 But if description won't suffice
 For him to draw a piece so nice,
 Then let him to my breast and heart repair,
 For sure her image is not worn out there.



The GRANT.

I.

TWas when the tide of the returning day
 Began to chase ill forms away,
 When pious dreams the sense employ,
 And all within is innocence and joy,
 My melancholy, thoughtful mind
 O'ercome at length to sleep resign'd ;
 Not common sleep, for I was blest
 With something more divine, more sweet than rest.

II. She

II.

She who her fine-wrought clay had lately left,
 Of whose sweet form I was bereft,
 Was by kind fancy to me brought,
 And made the object of my happy thought.
 Clad she was all in virgin white,
 And shone with empyrean light ;
 A radiant glory crown'd her head,
 She stream'd with light and love, and thus she said.

III.

And why this grief and passion for the blest ?
 Let all your sorrows with me rest.
 My state is bliss, but I should live,
 Yet much more happy, would you cease to grieve.
 Dry up your tears (dear friend) and be
 Happy in my felicity.
 By this your wisdom you'll approve,
 Nay (what you'd most of all commend) your love.

IV.

She spake, dissolv'd I lay and overcome,
 And was with extasie struck dumb ;
 But ah the fierce tumultuous joy
 Its own weak being, hasten'd to destroy.
 To see that lovely form appear,
 My spirits in such commotion were,
 Sleep could no more their force controul,
 They shook their fetters off, and freed my unwill-
 [ling soul.]

V.

What bliss do we oft to delusion owe ?
 Who would not still be cheated so ?
 Opinion's an ingredient
 That goes so far to make up true content,
 That even a dream of happiness
 With real joy the soul does bless ;
 Let me but always dream of this,
 And I will envy none their waking bliss.

H

The

The ASPIRATION.

I.

HOW long, great God, how long must I
 Immur'd in this dark prison lye!
 Where at the grates and avenues of sense,
 My soul must watch to have intelligence.
 Where but faint gleams of thee salute my sight,
 Like doubtful moon-shine in a cloudy night.
 When shall I leave this magick sphere,
 And be all mind, all eye, all ear!

II.

How cold this clime! and yet my sense
 Perceives even here thy influence.
 Even here thy strong magnetick charms I feel,
 And pant and tremble like the amorous steel.
 To lower good, and beauties less divine,
 Sometimes my erroneous needle does decline;
 But yet (so strong the sympathy)
 It turns, and points again to thee.

III.

I long to see this excellence
 Which at such distance strikes my sense.
 My impatient soul struggles to disengage
 Her wings from the confinement of her cage.
 Would'st thou, great love, this prisoner once set free,
 How would she hasten to be link'd to thee!
 She'd for no Angels conduct stay,
 But fly, and love on all the way.

The DEFENCE.

I.

THAT I am colder in my friendship grown,
 My faith and constancy you blame,
 But sure th' inconstancy is all your own,
 I am, but you are not the same.

The flame of love must needs expire,
 If you subtract what should maintain the fire.

II.

While to the laws of virtue you were true,
 You had, and might retain my heart ;
 Now give me leave to turn apostate too,
 Since you do from your self depart.

Thus the reform'd are counted free
 From schism, tho' they desert the *Roman* see.

III.

The strictest union to be found below,
 Is that which soul and body ties,
 They all the mysteries of friendship know,
 And with each other sympathize.
 And yet the soul will bid adieu
 T' her much distemper'd mate, as I leave you.

The RETRACTION.

I.

I'VE often charg'd all sublunary bliss,
 With vanity and emptiness :
 Ye woods and streams have heard me oft complain
 How all things, how even your delights were vain.
 Methought I could with one short simple view,
 Glance o'er all human joys, and see them through.

H 2

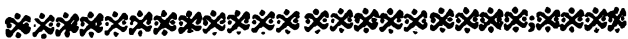
But

But now great preacher pardon me,
I cannot wholly to thy charge agree,
For musick sure and friendship have no vanity.

II.

No, each of these is a firm massy joy,
Which, tho' eternal, will not cloy.
Here may the venturous soul love on, and find,
Grasp what she can, that more remains behind.
Such depths of joy these living springs contain,
As man t' eternity can never drain.

These sweets the truth of Heaven prove,
Only there's greater bliss with Saints above,
Because they've better musick there, and firmer love.



The PROSPECT.

I.

WHat a strange moment will that be,
My soul, how full of curiosity,
When wing'd, and ready for thy eternal flight,
On th' utmost edges of thy tottering clay,
Hovering and wishing longer stay,
Thou shalt advance, and have eternity in sight!
When just about to try that unknown sea,
What a strange moment will that be!

II.

But yet how much more strange that state,
When loosen'd from th' embrace of this close mate,
Thou shalt at once be plung'd in liberty,
And move as swift and active as a ray
Shot from the lucid spring of day?
Thou, who just now was clogg'd with dull mortality,
How wilt thou bear the mighty change, how know
Whether thou'rt then the same or no!

III. Then

III.

Then to strange mansions of the air,
 And stranger company must thou repair!
 What a new scene of things will then appear!
 This world thou by degrees wast taught to know,
 Which lessen'd thy surprise below,
 But knowledge all at once will overflow thee there.
 That world, as the first man did this, thou'lt see,
 Ripe grown, in full maturity.

IV.

There with bright splendours must thou dwell,
 And be what only those pure forms can tell.
 There must thou live a while, gaze and admire,
 Till the great Angel's trump this fabrick shake,
 And all the slumbring dead awake,
 Then to thy old forgotten state must thou retire.
 This union then will seem as strange, or more
 Than thy new liberty before.

V.

Now for the greatest change prepare,
 To see the only great, the only fair.
 Vail now thy feeble eyes, gaze and be blest;
 Here all thy turns and revolutions cease,
 Here's all serenity and peace:
 Thou'rt to the center come, the native seat of rest.
 There's now no farther change nor need there be;
 When one shall be variety.



The RETURN.

I.

DEar contemplation, my divinest joy,
 When I thy sacred mount ascend,
 What heavenly sweets my soul employ?
 Why can't I there my days for ever spend?
 When I have conquer'd thy steep heights with pain
 What pity 'tis that I must down again!

II.

And yet I must; my passions would rebel,
 Should I too long continue here:
 No, here I must not think to dwell,
 But mind the duties of my proper sphere.
 So Angels, tho' they Heaven's glories know,
 Forget not to attend their charge below.

The 137th PSALM Paraphrased to the
 7th Verse.

I.

Beneath a reverend gloomy shade,
 Where *Tigris* and *Euphrates* cut their way,
 With folded arms and head supinely laid
 We sate, and wept out all the tedious day;
 Within its banks grief could not be
 Contain'd, when, *Sion*, we remember'd thee.

II.

Our harps with which we oft' have sung
 In solemn strains the great *Jehovah's* praise,
 Our warbling harps upon the trees we hung,
 Too deep our grief to hear their pleasing lays.

Our

Our harps were sad, as well as we,
And tho' by Angels touch'd, would yield no harmony.

III.

But they who forc'd us from our seat,
The happy land, and sweet abode of rest,
Had one way left to be more cruel yet,
And ask'd a song from hearts with grief oppress'd.

Let's hear, say they, upon the lyre,
One of the anthems of your *Hebrew* quire.

IV.

How can we frame our voice to sing
The hymns of joy, festivity and praise,
To those who're aliens to our heavenly King,
And want a taste for such exalted lays?

Our harps will here refuse to sound ;
An holy song is due to holy ground.

V.

No, dearest *Sion*, if we can
So far forget thy melancholy state
As now thou mourn'st, to sing one chearful strain,
This ill be added to our ebb of Fate ;

Let neither harp nor voice e'er try
One hallelujah more, but ever silent lie.



*The 139th PSALM Paraphrased to the
14th Verse.*

I.

IN vain, great God, in vain I try
T' escape thy quick all-searching eye.
Thou with one undivided view
Dost look the whole Creation through.

The unshap'd Embryo's of my mind,
 Not yet to form or likeness wrought,
 The tender rudiments of thought
 Thou seest, before she can her own conception find,
 II.

My private walks to thee are known,
 In solitude I'm not alone ;
 Thou round my bed a guard dost keep ;
 Thy eyes are open, while mine sleep.
 My softest whispers reach thy ear :
 'Tis vain to fancy secrecy ;
 Which way so'er I turn thou'rt there,
 I am all round beset with thy immensity.

III.
 I can't wade through this depth, I find ;
 It drowns and swallows up my mind.
 'Tis like thy immense Deity,
 I cannot fathom that, or thee.
 Where then shall I a refuge find
 From thy bright comprehensive eye ?
 Whither, O whither shall I fly,
 What place is not possess'd by thy all-filling mind ?

IV.
 If to the Heavenly orbs I fly,
 There is thy seat of Majesty.
 If down to Hell's abyfs I go,
 There I am sure to meet thee too.
 Should I with the swift wings of light
 Seek some remote and unknown land,
 Thou soon would'st overtake my flight,
 And all my motions rule with thy long-reaching
 V. [hand.

Should I t' avoid thy piercing sight,
 Retire behind the skreen of night,
 Thou can'st with one cœlestial ray
 Dispel the shades and make it day,

Not

Nor need'st thou by such mediums see,
 The force of thy clear radiant sight,
 Depends not on our grosser light ;
 On light thou sitt'st inthron'd, 'tis ever day with thee.

VI.

The springs which life and motion give
 Are thine, by thee I move and live.
 My frame has nothing hid from thee,
 Thou know'st my whole anatomy.
 T' an hymn of praise I'll tune my lyre ;
 How amazing is this work of thine ?
 With dread I into my self retire,
 For tho' the metal's base, the stamp is all divine.



To Dr. PLOT, on his *Natural History*
 of Staffordshire.

I.

WHAT strange perversity is this of man !
 When 'twas a crime to taste th' inlightning
 He could not then his hand refrain, [tree
 None then so inquisitive, so curious as he.
 But now he has liberty to try and know
 God's whole plantation below ;
 Now the angelick fruit may be
 Tasted by all whose arms can reach the tree :
 H' is now by licence careless made, [shade.
 The tree neglects to climb, and sleeps beneath the

II.

Such drowsy sedentary souls have they
 Who could to patriarchal years live on,
 Fix'd to hereditary clay,

And

And know no climate but their own :
 Contracted to their narrow sphere,
 Rest before knowledge they prefer,
 And of this globe wherein they dwell
 No more than of the heavenly Orbs can tell ;
 As if by nature plac'd below,
 Not on this earth to dwell, but to take root and grow.

III.

Dull souls, why did great Nature take such care
 To write in such a splendid character ;
 If man, the only thing below
 That can pretend her hand to know,
 Her fair-writ volume does despise,
 And tho' design'd for wisdom won't be wise ?
 Th' Almighty gets no praise from this dull kind,
 The Sun was never worship'd by the blind.
 Such ignorance can ne'er devotion raise,
 They will want wisdom, and their Maker praise.

IV.

They only can this tribute duly yield
 Whose active spirits range abroad,
 Who traverse o'er all Nature's field,
 And view the great magnificence of God :
 They see the hidden wealth of Nature's store
 Fall down, and learnedly adore ;
 But they most justly yet this tribute pay
 Who don't contemplate only, but display ;
 Comment on Nature's text, and to the sense
 Expose her latent excellence,
 Who like the Sun, not only travel o'er
 The world, but give it light that others may adore.

V.

In th' head of these heroick few
 Our learned author here appears in view,
 Whose searching genius like lamp of day
 Does the earth's furniture display,

Nor

Nor suffers to lie bury'd and unknown
Nature's rich talent or his own.

Drake and *Columbus* do in thee revive,
And we from thy research as much receive:
Thou art as great as they, for 'tis all one
New worlds to find, or nicely to describe the known:

VI.

On, mighty *Hero*, our whole isle survey,
Advance thy standard, conquer all the way.

Let nothing but the sea controul
The progress of thy active soul.

Act like a pious courteous ghost,
And to mankind retrieve what's lost;
With thy victorious charitable hand
Point out the hidden treasures of our land.

Envy or ignorance do what they will,
Thou hast a blessing from the *Muses* hill.
Great be thy spirit as thy work's divine, [thine.
Shew thou thy *Maker's* praise, we Poets will sing



The EXCHANGE.

I.

WHEN *Corydon* had lost his liberty,
And felt the tyrant's heavy chain;
He swore, could he but once get free,
He'd never, no, he'd never love again.

II.

But stay, dull *Shepherd*, if you quench your fire,
Too dear you'll buy your liberty:
Let not such vigorous heats expire,

I'll reach thee how to love, and yet be free.

III. Take

III.

Take bright *Urania* to thy amorous breast,
 To her thy flaming heart resign ;
 Void not the room, but change the guest,
 And let thy sensual love commence divine.

IV.

The swain obey'd, and when he once had known
 This foretaste of the joys above,
 He vow'd, tho' he might be his own,
 Yet he would ever, yes, he'd ever love.



The REFINEMENT.

I.

WELL, 'twas a hard decree of Fate,
 My soul, to clip thy pinions so,
 To make thee leave thy pure æthereal state,
 And breathe the vapours of this sphere below ;
 Where he that can pretend to have
 Most freedom, 's still his body's slave.

II.

Was e'er a substance so divine
 With such an unlike consort joyn'd ?
 Did ever things so wide, so close combine
 As massy clods and sun-beams, earth and mind ?
 When yet two souls can ne'er agree
 In friendship, but by parity.

III.

Unequal match ! what wilt thou do,
 My soul, to raise thy plumes again ?
 How wilt thou this gross vehicle subdue,
 And thy first bliss, first purity obtain ?
 Thy consort how wilt thou refine,
 And be again all o'er divine ?

IV. Fix.

IV.

Fix on the sovereign Fair thy eye,
 And kindle in thy breast a flame ;
 Wind up thy passions to a pitch so high,
 Till they melt down, and rarify thy frame.
 Like the great Prophet then aspire,
 Thy chariot will, like his, be fire.



T O M E L A N C H O L Y.

I.

Mysterious passion, dearest pain, [these
 Tell me, what wondrous charms are
 With which thou dost torment and please,
 I grieve to be thy slave, yet would not freedom gain.
 No tyranny like thine we know,
 That half so cruel e'er appear'd,
 And yet thou'rt lov'd as well as fear'd,
 Perhaps the only tyrant that is so.

II.

Long have I been thy votary,
 Thou'st led me out to woods and groves,
 Mad'st me despise all other loves,
 And give up all my passions, all my soul to thee.
 Thee for my first companion did I chuse,
 First, even before my darling Muse ;
 And yet I know of thee no more
 Than those who never did thy shrine adore.

III.

Thou'rt Mystery and Riddle all,
 Like those thou inspirest, thou lov'st to be
 In darkness and obscurity. [call.
 Even learned *Athens* thee an unknown God might
 Strange

Strange contraries in thee combine,
 Both Hell and Heaven in thee meet,
 Thou greatest Bitter, greatest Sweet.
 No pain is like thy pain, no pleasure too like thine.

IV.

'Tis the grave doctrine of the schools,
 That contraries can never be
 Consistent in the high'st degree, [rules.]
 But thou must stand exempt from their dull narrow
 And yet 'tis said, the brightest mind
 Is that which is by thee refin'd.
 See here a greater mystery,
 Thou mak'st us wise, yet ruin'st our philosophy.



The DISCONTENT.

I.

NOT that it is not made my fate [state.]
 To stand upon the dangerous heights of
 Nor that I cannot be possess
 Of th' hidden treasures of the *East*,
 Nor that I cannot bathe in pleasures spring,
 And rifle all the sweets which Nature's gardens bring,
 Do I repine, my destiny,
 I can all these despise as well as you deny.

II.

It shall not discompose my mind
 Though not one Star above to me prove kind.
 Their influence may sway the sea,
 But make not the least change in me.
 They neither can afflict my state, not bless;
 Their greatest gifts are small, and my desires are
 My vessel bears but little sail, [less.]
 What need I then a full and swelling gale?

III. And

III.

And yet I'm discontented too,
 Perhaps, y'aspiring souls, as much as you ;
 We both in equal trouble live,
 But for much different causes grieve ;
 You, that these gilded joys you can't obtain ;
 And I, because I know they're empty all and vain.
 You still pursue in hopes to find,
 I stand and dare not flatter on my mind.

IV.

This Tree of Knowledge is, I see,
 Still fatal to poor man's felicity.
 That which yields others great repast,
 Can't please my now enlighten'd taste.
 Before, tho' I could nothing solid find,
 Yet still with specious prospects I could please my
 Now all the farthest I can see [mind.
 Is one perpetual round of vanity.

B E A U T Y.

I.

BEST object of the passion most divine,
 What excellence can Nature shew
 In all her various store below,
 Whose charms may be compar'd to thine ?
 Even light it self is therefore fair
 Only because it makes thy sweets appear.

II.

Thou streaming splendor of the Face divine,
 What in the regions above,
 Do Saints, like thee, adore or love,
 What excellence is there like thine ?

1

I except not the Divinity ;
That great and sovereign good, for thou art He.

III.

He's Beauty's vast abyfs and boundless sea,
The primitive and greatest Fair,
All his perfections Beauties are,
Beauty is all the Deity.
Some streams from this vast ocean flow,
And that is all that pleases, all that's fair below.

IV.

Divine Perfection, who alone art all
That various scene of excellence
Which pleases either mind or sense,
Tho' thee by different names we call!
Search Nature through, thou still wilt be
The sum of all that's good in her variety.

V.

Love, that most active passion of the mind,
Whose roving flame does traverse o'er
All Nature's good, and reach for more,
Still to thy magick sphere's confin'd.
'Tis Beauty all we can desire,
Beauty's the native mansion of Love's fire.

VI.

Those finer spirits who from the croud retire
To study Nature's artful scheme,
Or speculate a theorem,
What is't but Beauty they admire ?
And they too who enamour'd are
Of virtue's face, love her because she's fair.

VII.

No Empire, sovereign Beauty, is like thine,
Thou reign'st unrivall'd and alone,
And universal is thy throne,
Stoicks themselves to thee resign.

From

From passions be they ne'er so free,
 Something they needs must love, and that is thee.

VIII.

He whom we all adore ; that mighty He,
 Owns thy supreme dominion,
 And happy lives in thee alone,
 We 're blest in him, and he in thee :
 In thee he's infinitely blest,
 Thou art the inmost center of his rest.

IX.

Pleas'd with thy form which in his essence shin'd,
 Th' Almighty chose to multiply
 This flower of his Divinity
 And lesser beauties soon design'd.
 The unform'd Chaos he remov'd,
 Tinctur'd the mass with thee, and then it lov'd.

X.

But do not thou, my soul, fixt here remain,
 All streams of Beauty here below
 Do from that immense ocean flow,
 And thither they should lead again.
 Trace than these streams, till thou shalt be
 At length o'erwhelm'd in Beauty's boundless sea.



L O V E.

I.

IMperial passion ! sacred fire !
 When we of meaner subjects sing,
 Thou tun'st our harps, thou dost our souls inspire,
 'Tis Love directs the quill, 'tis Love strikes every
 string,
 But where's another Deity
 T' inspire the man that sings of thee ?

I

II: W'are

II.

W'are by mistaken Chymists told,
 That the most active part of all
 The various compound cast in Nature's mould,
 Is that which they mercurial spirit call.
 But sure 'tis Love they should have said,
 Without this even their spirit is dead.

III.

Love's the great spring of Nature's wheel,
 Love does the mass pervade and move,
 What 'scapes the Sun's, does thy warm influence feel,
 The Universe is kept in tune by Love.
 Thou Nature giv'st her sympathy,
 The center has its charm from thee.

IV.

Love did great nothing's barren womb
 Impregnate with his genial fire ;
 From this first parent did all creatures come,
 Th' Almighty will'd, and made all by desire.
 Nay more, among the sacred Three,
 The third subsistence is from thee.

V.

The happiest order of the blest
 Are those whose tide of Love's most high,
 The bright seraphick host ; who're more possess'd
 Of good, because more like the Deity.
 T' him they advance as they improve
 Their noble heat, for God is Love.

VI.

Shall then a passion so divine
 Stoop down and mortal beauties know ?
 Nature's great statute law did ne'er design
 That Heavenly fire should kindle here below ;
 Let it ascend and dwell above,
 The proper element of Love.

The

The CONSUMMATION: A Pindarick Ode.

I.

THE rise of Monarchies, and their long
weighty fall,

My Muse outsoars; she proudly leaves behind
The pomps of court, she leaves her little all,
To be the humble song of a less reaching mind.

In vain I curb her tow'ring flight;

All I can here present's too small.

She presses on, and now has lost their sight,

She flies, and hastens to relate

The last and dreadful scene of fate,

Nature's great solemn funeral.

I see the mighty Angel stand

Cloath'd with a cloud, and rainbow round his head,

His right foot on the sea, his other on the land.

He lifted up his dreadful arm, and thus he said.

By the mysterious great Three-one,

Whose power we fear, and truth adore,

I swear the fatal thread is spun,

Nature shall breathe her last, and time shall be no

The antient stager of the day, [more.

Has run his minutes out, and numbred all his way.

The parting *Isthmus* is thrown down,

And all shall now be over-flown.

Time shall no more her under-current know,

But one with great eternity shall grow: [flow.

Their streams shall mix, and in one circling channel

II.

He spake, fate writ the sentence with her iron pen,

And mighty thundrings said, *Amen.*

What dreadful sound's this strikes my ear?

'Tis sure th' Archangels trump I hear,

Nature's great passing-bell, the only call
 Of God's, that will be heard by all.
 The universe takes the alarm, the sea
 Trembles at the great Angels sound,
 And roars almost as loud as he, [ground.
 Seeks a new channel, and would fain run under:
 The earth it self does no less quake,
 And all throughout, down to the center shake,
 The graves uncloset, and the deep sleepers there
 The Sun's arrested in his way, [awake.
 He dares not forward go,
 But wondring stands at the great hurry here below,
 The Stars forget their laws, and like loose planets
 See how the elements resign [stray.
 Their numerous charge, their scatter'd atoms home
 repair,
 Some from the earth, some from the sea, some
 from the air :

They know the great alarm,
 And in confus'd mixt numbers swarm,
 Till rang'd and sever'd by the chymistry divine.
 The Father of mankind's amaz'd to see
 The globe too narrow for his progeny.
 But 'tis the closing of the age,
 And all the actors now at once must grace the stage.

III.

Now, Muse, exalt thy wing, be bold and dare,
 Fate does a wondrous scene prepare ;
 The central fire, which hitherto did burn
 Dull, like a lamp in a moist clammy urn ;
 Fann'd by the breath divine, begins to glow,
 The fiends are all amaz'd below.
 But that will no confinement know,
 Breaks through its sacred fence, and plays more free,
 Than thou, with all thy vast Pindarick liberty.
 Nature does sick of a strong fever lye :

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The fire the subterraneous vaults does spoil ;
 The mountains sweat, the sun does boil ;
 The sea, her mighty pulse, beats high :
 The waves of fire more proudly rowl ;
 The fiends in their deep caverns howl,
 And with the frightful trumpet mix their hideous
 Now is the tragick scene begun ; [cry.
 The fire in triumph marches on ; [Sun.
 The earth's girt round with flames and seems another

IV.

But whither does this lawless judgment roam ?
 Must all promiscuously expire
 A sacrifice in *Sodom's* fire ?
 Read thy commission, Fate ; sure all are not thy due,
 No, thou must save the virtuous few.
 But where's the Angel guardian to avert the doom ?
 Lo, with a mighty host he's come :
 I see the parted clouds give way ;
 I see the banner of the Cross display.
 Death's Conqueror in pomp appears,
 In his right hand a palm he bears,
 And in his looks redemption wears :
 Th'illustrious glory of this scene,
 Does the despairing Saints inspire
 With joy, with rapture and desire ;
 Kindles the higher life that dormant lay within.
 Th'awaken'd virtue does its strength display,
 Melts and refines their drossy clay ;
 New cast into a pure ætherial frame,
 They fly and mount a loft in vehicles of flame.
 Slack here, my Muse, thy roving wing,
 And now the world's untun'd, let down thy high-
 set string.

F R E E D O M.

I.

I Do not ask thee, Fate, to give
 This little span a long reprieve.
 Thy pleasures here are all so poor and vain,
 I care not hence how soon I'm gone.
 Date as thou wilt my time, I shan't complain ;
 May I but still live free, and call it all my own.

II.

Let my sand slide away apace ;
 I care not, so I hold the glass.
 Let me my time, my books, my self enjoy ;
 Give me from cares a sure retreat ;
 Let no impertinence my hours employ, [great.
 That's in one word, kind Heaven, let me ne'er be

III.

In vain, from chains and fetters free,
 The great man boasts of liberty.
 He's pinion'd up by former rules of state,
 Can ne'er from noise and dust retire ;
 He's haunted still by crouds that round him wait,
 His lot's to be in pain, as that of fools t'admire.

IV.

Mean while the swain has calm repose,
 Freely he comes, and freely goes.
 Thus the bright Stars, whose station is more high,
 Are fix'd, and by strict measures move,
 While lower planets wanton in the Sky,
 Are bound to no set laws, but humourfomly rove.

To his MUSE.

I.

Come, Muse, let's cast up our accounts, and see
 How much you are in debt to me :
 You've reign'd thus long the mistress of my heart,
 You've been the ruling planet of my days,
 In my spare hours you've had your part,
 Ev'n now my servile hand your sovereign will
 obeys.

Too great such service to be free,
 Tell me what I'm to have for being thy votary.

II.

You have preferments in your gift, you say,
 You can with gold my service pay ;
 I fear thy boast, your sacred hill I'm told,
 In a poor, curs'd and barren country lies ;
 Besides, what's state to me, or gold,
 These, you long since have taught me to despise.
 To put me off with this, would be
 Not to reward, but tax my ill proficiency.

III.

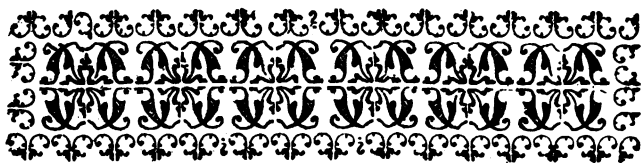
But fame, you say, will make amends for all ;
 This you your sovereign blessing call,
 The only lasting good, that never dies.
 A good, which never can be bought too dear,
 Which all the wise and virtuous prize,
 The Gods too with delight their praises hear.
 This shall my portion be, you say,
 You'll crown my head with an immortal bay.

IV.

Give me a place less high, and more secure,
This dangerous good I can't endure.
The peaceful banks which profound silence keep,
The little boat securely passes by,
But where with noise the waters creep,
Turn off with care, for treacherous rocks are nigh:
Then Muse farewell, I see your store
Can't pay for what is past, and I can trust no
more.



O F



O F T H E

Advantages of THINKING.



MAN being the only creature here below design'd for a sociable life, has two faculties to distinguish him from other creatures, thinking and speaking. The one, to fit him for the society of others; and the other to qualifie him also for his own. As to the latter of these faculties, there's no fear of its gathering rust for want of use. We are rather apt to speak too much; and the most reserv'd have reason to pray with the Psalmist, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.*

But the former, is that which generally lies fallow and neglected; as may be guess'd from the intemperate use of the other. There are few indeed, that are capable of thinking to any great purpose: But among those that are, there are fewer that employ this excellent talent. And for ought I know, however strange it may seem, among the ingenious and well educated, there are as few thinkers as among the herd of the vulgar and illiterate. For either they live a popular life; and then what for business, pleasure, company, visits, with a world of other impertinencies, there's scarce

scarce room for so much as a morning reflection. Or else, they live retir'd, and then either they doze away their time in drowsiness and brown studies; or, if brisk and active, they lay themselves out wholly upon devouring books, and making common places; and scarce entertain their solitude with a meditation, once in a moon.

But it is meerly for want of thinking that they can allow themselves in doing so. For by a little of this they would soon discover, that of all the methods of improvement that can be used, there is none so advantageous as thinking; either for our intellectuals or our morals; to make us wiser, or to make us better. And first, for our intellectuals. 'Tis the perfection of our rational part to know; that is, to be able to frame clear and distinct conceptions, to form right judgments, and to draw true consequences from one thing to another. Now besides, that the powers of the mind are made more bright, vigorous, and active by use, as all other faculties are; there is this farther advantage, that by habitual thinking the object is made more familiar to the understanding; the habitudes and relations of ideas one towards another, by frequent comparing, become more visible and apparent; and consequently it will be more easie to perceive them, and so to divide what ought to be divided, and to compound what ought to be compounded, wherein consists the sum of what belongs to contemplation and science.

Reading is indeed very excellent and useful to this purpose; but thinking is necessary. This may do without the other, as appears in the first inventers of arts and sciences, who were fain to think out their way to the recesses of truth; but the other can never do, without this. Reading without thinking,

thinking, may indeed make a rich common place, but 'twill never make a clear head; it may indeed bring in a great store of Hyle, but 'tis yet without form, and void, till thinking, like the seminal spirit, agitates the dead shapeless lump, and works it up into figure and symmetry.

But of what advantage thinking is to the advancement of knowledge, will farther appear, by considering some of the chief impediments of it; and how they are removed by thinking. And the first that I shall mention, is the prejudice of infancy. We form infinite rash judgments of things, before we duly understand any thing; and these grow up with us, take root, spread and multiply; till after long use and custom, we mistake them for common notions and dictates of nature; and then we think it a crime to go about to unlearn or eradicate them. And as long as we stand thus affected, we are condemn'd to errors and perpetual wandrings. So great reason had the excellent *Des-Cartes* to lay the foundation of his philosophy in an equipoise of mind; and to make the removal of these prejudices the very entrance and beginning of wisdom.

But now when a man sets upon a course of thinking, nothing will be so obvious as to consider, that since we come so late to the perfect use of our reason; among those many judgments we have made; 'tis very likely the major part are false and erroneous. And this is a fair step to the shaking off these infant-prejudices; at least he will be thereby induc'd not to believe any thing, for this reason, because he had given it such early entertainment. From this general reflection he proceeds to examine the things themselves. And now he is a capable judge, can hear both sides with an indifferent ear,

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is determin'd only by the moments of truth ; and so retracts his past errors, and has the best moral security against any for the future.

Another great hindrance to knowledge is the wrong perception of things. When the simple Ideas of our minds are confus'd, our judgments can never proceed without error. 'Tis like a fault in the first concoction, which is never corrected in either of the other. For how can I judge whether the attribute agree to the subject, if my notion of both be confus'd and obscure ; But now, the only cause of the confus'dness of our notions, next to the natural inability of our faculties, is want of attention and close application of mind. We don't dwell enough upon the object ; but speculate it transiently, and in haste ; and then, no wonder that we conceive it by halves. Thinking therefore is a proper remedy for this defect also.

Another great hindrance to knowledge is ambiguity of terms and phrases. This has bred a world of confusion and misunderstanding ; especially in controversies of religion ; a great many of which, if thoroughly sifted and well compared, will be found to be meer verbal contentions ; as may appear from what the excellent *Monsieur Le Blanc* has perform'd in this kind. But now, this is owing meerly to want of thinking. There is a latitude in the phrase ; and one writer not sufficiently attending to that determinate sense of it which his adversary intends, very hastily and furiously denies what the other does not affirm ; and he again as furiously affirms what this does not deny. So that they are really agreed all along, and yet fight on like fools in the dark. And there is no hopes they will ever be reconciled, till either they will
take

take the pains to think themselves, or some body else will be so kind, as to think for 'em.

Another great hindrance to knowledge, is an over-fond and superstitious deference to authority, especially that of antiquity. There is nothing that cramps the parts, and fetters the understandings of men like this strait lac'd humour. Men are resolv'd never to out shoot their fore-fathers mark; but write one after another, and so the dance goes round in a circle; out of which, if some had not the boldness and courage to venture, the world would never be the wiser for being older. The schoolmen are a great instance of this, men of singular abilities, and sharp understandings, capable of the highest improvements, and of penetrating into the deepest recesses of truth, had they but the power of making a free use of their thoughts. But so bound up to authorities, and so devoted to the principles of a philosophy, whose foundation is laid in the false and confused ideas of sense, that their advancements in theory and science, were not answerable to the capacity which they were endued with, the leisure which they enjoyed, and the indefatigable diligence which they used. And all because of the great disadvantage they laboured under, it being confined within the circle of authority, to which, even in this freer age, some have still so servile a regard, that they would rather lose truth, than go out of the road to find it. This also makes men otherwise senseful and ingenious, quote such things many times out of an old dull author, and with a peculiar emphasis of commendation too, as would never pass even in ordinary conversation; and which they themselves would never have took notice of, had not such an author said it. But now, no sooner
does

Does a man give himself leave to think, but he perceives how absurd and unreasonable 'tis, that one man should prescribe to all posterity: That men, like beasts, should follow the foremost of the herd; and that venerable nonsense should be preferr'd before new-sense: He considers, that that which we call antiquity, is properly the nonage of the world; that the sagest of his authorities were once new; and that there is no other difference between an antient author and himself, but 'tis only that of time; which, if of any advantage, 'tis rather on his side, as living in a more refined and mature age of the world. And thus having cast off this intellectual slavery, like one of the brave *Ἐκλεκτοὶ* mention'd by *Laertius*; he addict's himself to no author, sect or party; but freely picks up truth wherever he can find it; puts to sea upon his own bottom; holds the stern himself; and now, if ever, we may expect new discoveries.

There are other notable impediments to the improvement of knowledge, such as passion, interest, fear of being tax'd with inconstancy, scorn of being inform'd by another, envy, the humour of contradiction, and sometimes flattery in applauding every thing we hear, and the like. Now as to the manner how all these are remov'd by thinking, it may suffice to say in general, that they are all obviously absurd and ridiculous; and however unthinking men may be abused by them, yet a free and close thinker must needs quickly perceive that they are so: And there is no better moral way that I know of to be quit of ill habits, than the being convinc'd of their folly and mischief.

But the greatest advantage of thinking is yet behind; that it improves our morals as well as our intellectuals;

intellectuals; and serves to make us better, as well as wiser. This is in a great measure included in the other. All therefore that I shall farther remark concerning it is this, that considering the great influence the understanding has upon the will, there are but two things that are humanly necessary (for I exclude not the Grace of God, tho' I have no occasion here to consider it) to regulate our behaviour, and to preserve us in our duty. First, an habitual theory of what we ought and ought not to do; and of all the motives and engagements to the one and to the other. Secondly, an actual and clear presence of all this to the mind, in every instant of action. And this is for the most part the thinking man's condition. He does not only habitually know, but actually attends both to his duty, and to all the engagements for its performance. He has those considerations almost always present with him, which to others are the principles of repentance; and this keeps him in his duty, which brings others to it; and makes him live like those righteous persons, of whom our Saviour says, that they *need no repentance.*

Of the Care and Improvement of TIME.

TO be careful how we manage and employ our time, is one of the first precepts that is taught in the school of wisdom, and one of the last that is learn'd. The first and leading dictate of prudence is, that a man propose to himself his true and best interest for his end; and the next is, that

that he make use of all those means and opportunities whereby that end is to be attain'd. And betwixt these two there is such a close connexion, that he who does not do the latter, cannot be supposed to intend the former. He that is not careful of his actions, shall never persuade me that he seriously proposes to himself his best interest, as his end; for if he did, he would as seriously apply himself to the regulation of the other, as the means. And so he that is not careful of his time, cannot in reason be supposed to be careful of his actions, for if he were, he would certainly have a special regard to the opportunity of their performance.

But, as I observ'd in the beginning, though this precept be one of the elementary dictates of prudence, and stands written in the first page of the first book of *Wisdom*; yet such is the sottishness and stupidity of the world, that there is none that is more slowly learn'd. And 'tis a prodigious thing to consider, that although among all the talents which are committed to our stewardship, time upon several accounts is the most precious, yet there is not any one, of which the generality of men are more profuse and regardless. Tho' it be a thing of that inestimable value, that 'tis not distributed to us entirely and at once, like other blessings, but is dealt out in minutes and little parcels, as if man were not fit to be trusted with the entire possession of such a choice treasure, yet there are very many that think themselves so overstock'd with it, that instead of husbanding it to advantage, the main business of their thoughts is how to rid their hands of it, and accordingly they catch at every shadow and opportunity of relief; strike in at a venture with the next companion; and so
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the dead commodity be taken off, care not who be the chapman. Nay, 'tis obvious to observe, that even those persons who are frugal and thrifty in every thing else, are yet extremely prodigal of their best revenue, Time; of which alone (as *Seneca* neatly observes) 'tis a virtue to be covetous.

Neither may this censure be fastned only upon the unthinking multitude, the sphere of whose consideration is supposed to be very narrow, and their apprehension short-sighted; but I observe that many of those who set up for wits, and pretend to a more than ordinary sagacity and delicacy of sense, do notwithstanding spend their time very unaccountably, and live away whole days, weeks, and sometimes months together, to as little purpose (tho' it may be not so innocently) as if they had been asleep all the while. And this they are so far from being ashamed to own, that they freely boast of it, and pride themselves in it, thinking that it tends to their reputation, and commends the greatness of their parts, that they can support themselves upon the natural stock, without being beholden to the interest that is brought in by study and industry.

But if their parts be so good as they would have others believe, sure they are worth improving; if not, they have the more need of it. And tho' it be an argument of a rich mind, to be able to maintain it self without labour, and subsist without the advantages of study, yet there is no man that has such a portion of sense, but will understand the use of his time better than to put it to the trial. Greatness of parts is so far from being a discharge from industry, that I find men of the most exquisite sense in all ages were always most curious of their time: Nay, the most intelligent of all
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created

created beings (who may be allow'd to pass a truer estimate upon things than the finest mortal wit) value time at a high rate. *Let me go* (saith the Angel to the importunate Patriarch) *for the day breaketh.* And therefore I very much suspect the excellency of those mens parts, who are dissolute and careless mispenders of their time: For if they were men of any thoughts, how is it possible but these should be some in the number? (*viz.*) " That
 " this life is wholly in order to another, and that
 " time is that sole opportunity that God has given
 " us for transacting the great business of eternity:
 " That our work is great, and our day of working
 " short, much of which also is lost and render'd
 " useless, through the cloudiness and darkness of
 " the morning, and the thick vapour and unwhol-
 " some fogs of the evening; the ignorance and in-
 " advertency of youth, and the diseases and infir-
 " mities of old age: That our portion of time is not
 " only short, as to its duration, but also uncertain
 " in the possession: That the loss of it is irrepara-
 " ble to the loser, and profitable to no body else:
 " That it shall be severely accounted for at the
 " great judgment, and lamented in a sad eter-
 " nity.

He that considers these things (and sure he must needs be a very unthinking man that does not) will certainly be choice of his time, and look upon it no longer as a bare state of duration, but as an opportunity; and consequently will let no part of it (no considerable part at least) slip away either unobserv'd or unimprov'd. This is the most effectual way that I know of to secure to ones self the character of a wise man here, and the reward of one hereafter. Whereas the vain enthusiastick pretenders to the gift of wit, that trifle away their
 time,

time, betray the shallowness and poverty of their sense to the discerning few ; or whatever they may pass for here among their fellow mortals, do most infallibly make themselves cheap in the sight of Angels.



Of SOLITUDE.

IT may perhaps be urged as an objection against the infinite happiness and self-sufficiency of God, that if there were such a perfect and self-sufficient Being, who was completely happy in the enjoyment of himself, he would never have gone about to make a world. Now tho' there be indeed no force in this atheistical objection, (the design of God in creating the world being not to increase his happiness, but to communicate it,) yet it proceeds upon this true supposition, that society is a blessing. It is so, and that not only respectively, and in reference to the present circumstances of the world, and the necessities of this life, but also simply, and in its own nature ; since it shall be an accessory to our bliss in Heaven, and add many moments to the weight of glory. Neither will the truth of this assertion be at all weaken'd by alledging, that no benefit or advantage accrues to God by it ; for that it becomes unbeneficial to him (though a blessing in its own nature) is purely by accident, because God eminently containing in himself all possible good, is incapable of any new accession.

And as society is in its own Nature an instrument of happiness, so is it made much more so by the indigencies and infirmities of men. Man of

all creatures in the world, is least qualify'd to live alone, because there is no creature that has so many necessities to be reliev'd. And this I take to be one of the great arts of providence, to secure mutual amity, and the reciprocation of good turns in the world, it being the nature of indigency, like common danger, to indear men to one another, and make them herd together like fellow-sailors in a storm. And this indeed is the true case of mankind; we all sail in one bottom, and in a rough sea, and stand in need of one another's help at every turn, both for the necessities and refreshments of life. And therefore I am very far from commending the undertaking of those *Asceticks*, that out of a pretence of keeping themselves unspotted from the world, take up their quarters in desarts, and utterly abandon all human society: This is in short (to say no more of it) to put themselves into an incapacity, either of doing any good to the world, or of receiving any from it; and certainly that can be no desirable state. No, this eremetical way of living is utterly inconsistent with the circumstances and inclinations of human nature; he must be a God, self-sufficient and independent, that is fit for this state of absolute and perfect solitude, and in this rigorous sense, *it is not good for man* (tho' in Paradise it self) *to be alone.*

But though society, as 'tis oppos'd to a state of perfect and perpetual solitude, be a blessing, yet considering how little of it there is in the world that is good, I think it advisable for every man that has sense and thoughts enough, to be his own companion, (for certainly there is more requir'd to qualify a man for his own company than for other mens,) to be as frequent in his retirements
as

as he can, and to communicate as little with the world as is consistent with the duty of doing good, and the discharge of the common offices of humanity. 'Tis true indeed (as *Seneca* says,) *Miscenda & alternanda sunt solitudo & frequentia*: Solitude and company are to have their turns, and to be inter-placed. But wise men us'd to dedicate the largest share of their lives to the former, and let the best and most of their time go to make up the canonical hours of study, meditation and devotion. And for this, besides the practice of wise men, we have the authentick example of our blessed Lord himself, who, as 'tis reasonably supposed, (for he had passed the thirtieth year of his life before he enter'd upon the stage of action, and then also sought all opportunities to be alone, and oftentimes purchas'd retirement at the expence of night-watches,) allotted the greatest part of his little time here on earth, to privacy and retirement; and 'tis highly probable, would have liv'd much more reservedly, had not the peculiar business of his function made it necessary for him to be conversant in the world. The inclination of our Lord lay more toward the contemplative way of life, tho' the interest of mankind engaged him oftentimes upon the active. And 'tis very observable, that there is scarce any one thing which he vouchsafed to grace with so many marks and instances of favour and respect, as he did solitude. Which are thus summ'd up by the excellent pen of a very great master of learning and language:

“ It was solitude and retirement in
 “ which Jesus kept his vigils; the de- *The great*
 “ part places heard him pray, in a pri- *Exemplar.*
 “ vacy he was born, in the wilderness,
 “ he fed his thousands, upon a mountain apart he

“ was transfigured, upon a mountain he dyed, and
 “ from a mountain he ascended to his Father. In
 “ which retirements his devotion certainly did re-
 “ ceive the advantage of convenient circumstances,
 “ and himself in such dispositions twice had the op-
 “ portunities of glory.”

Indeed, the satisfactions and advantages of solitude (to a person that knows how to improve it) are very great, and far transcending those of a secular and popular life. First, as to pleasure and satisfaction, whosoever considers the great variety of mens humours, the peevishness of some, the pride and conceitedness of others, and the impertinence of most; he that considers what unreasonable terms of communion some persons impose upon those that partake of their society; how rare 'tis for a man to light upon a company, where, as his first salutation, he shall not presently have a bottle thrust to his nose; he, I say, that considers these and a thousand more grievances, wherewith the folly and ill nature of men have conspir'd to burthen society, will find, take one time with another, company is an occasion of almost as much displeasure as pleasure. Whereas in the mean time the solitary and contemplative man sits as safe in his retirement, as one of *Homer's* heroes in a cloud, and has this only trouble from the follies and extravagancies of men, that he pities them. He does not, it may be, laugh so loud, but he is better pleas'd: He is not perhaps so often merry, but neither is he so often disgusted; he lives to himself and God, full of serenity and content.

And as the pleasures and satisfactions of solitude exceed those of a popular life, so also do the advantages. Of these there are two sorts, moral and intellectual; to both which solitude is a particular friend,

friend. As to the first, it is plain that solitude is the proper opportunity of contemplation, which is both the foundation and the perfection of a religious life. "It is (as the same excellent person fore-cited says elsewhere of a single life) "the huge advantage "of religion, the great opportunity for the retire- "ments of devotion, which being empty of cares is "full of prayers; being unmingled with the world, "is apt to converse with God; and by not feeling "the warmth of a too forward and indulgent na- "ture, flames out with holy fires, till it be burning "like the cherubim, and the most extasy'd order of "holy and unpolluted Spirits." And for this reason it was, that the antients chose to build their altars and temples in groves and solitary recesses; thereby intimating, that solitude was the best opportunity of religion.

Neither are our intellectual advantages less indebted to solitude. And here, tho' I have in a great measure anticipated this consideration, (there being nothing necessarily requir'd to compleat the character of a wise man, besides the knowledge of God and himself,) yet I shall not confine my self to this instance, but deduce the matter farther, and venture to affirm, that all kinds of speculative knowledge as well as practical, are best improv'd by solitude. Indeed there is much talk about the great benefit of keeping great men company, and thereupon 'tis usually reckon'd among the disadvantages of a country life, that those of that condition want the opportunities of a learned conversation. But to confess the truth, I think there is not so much in it as people generally imagine. Indeed, were the souls of men lodg'd in transparent cases,

that we might read their thoughts, would they communicate what they know, were it the fashion to discourse learnedly, it might be worth while perhaps to be sometimes in the company of great men : But when it shall be counted a piece of errant pedantry, and defect of good breeding, to start any question of learning in company ; when every man is as shy of his notions as of a fairy-treasure ; and makes his head not a repository or exchequer of knowledge, but a grave to bury it in : a man may be a constant attendant at the conclaves of learned men all his life long, and yet be no more the wiser for it, than a book-worm is for dwelling in Libraries ; especially when 'tis consider'd what the prejudices of those they call learned men are, how confused are their notions, and what with them passes for learning ; namely, such as consists in an historical knowledge of books, in memory and imagination, and not in any clear intellectual sight of things. And therefore to speak ingeniously, I don't see for my part wherein the great advantage of great conversation lies, as the humours of men are pleas'd to order it. Were I to inform my self in business, and the management of affairs, I would sooner talk with a plain illiterate farmer or tradesman, than the greatest *virtuoso* of the Society ; and as for learning, (which is the only thing they are supposed able to discourse well of,) that in point of civility they decline : So that I find I must take refuge at my study at last, and there redeem the time that I have lost among the learned.

Of

Of COURAGE.

ARISTOTLE in his *Morals*, begins the doctrine of virtues with Courage ; which has found work for his interpreters to assign the reason of his method. But methinks, there is no great need they should either study or differ much about it. For certainly, among all the virtues, this will justly challenge the precedency, and is the most cardinal and fundamental part of morality. This virtue is pre-requir'd to the susception of all the rest. For the very entrance into the school of wisdom and a virtuous course, is a state of discipline, difficulty and hardship. And therefore 'tis *sapere aude*, a great piece of daring and boldness to set up for a good man : Especially, if to the proper difficulties and agonies of a virtuous engagement, we add those calamities and straits it oftentimes exposes us to, through the malice and folly of the world. So that as *Plato* writ upon his school, *Ἀναμάρτητον ἔδειξέ τινα* Let none enter here that understands not *Mathematicks* ; it may be set as a *Motto* upon the school of virtue, *Let none enter here that wants Courage*.

And as 'tis necessarily requisite to the susception of all other virtues, so it is their main support, guardian and establishment. Without this, every other virtue is precarious, and lies at the mercy of every cross accident. Without this, let but a pistol be held to the breast, and the severest chastity will be frighted into compliance, the most heroick friendship into treachery, and the most ardent piety into renunciation of God and religion. There is nothing among all the frailnesses and uncertainties of

of this sublunary World, so tottering and unstable as the virtue of a coward. He has that within him that upon occasion will infallibly betray every virtue he has ; and to secure him from sin you must keep him from temptation. This was the principle the devil went upon in his encounter with *Job*, *Do but put forth thy hand, (says he to God,) and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.* He was right enough in the proposition, tho' mistaken in the application.

Having now seen the usefulness of this great virtue, 'twill be worth while to enquire a little into its nature. And that the rather, because 'tis not only variously and falsely apprehended by the many, but perhaps too confusedly and darkly deliver'd, even by moralists themselves:

That which with the vulgar passes for Courage, is certainly nothing else but stupidity, desperateness, or fool-hardiness ; a brutish sort of knight-errantry, in seeking out needless encounters, and running into dangers without fear or wit ; which is so far from having the fore-mention'd property of Courage, of being a guardian, and security of our virtues, that 'tis in it self a sin.

But are we like to have a better account of it from the moralists ? Why they tell you that it is a mediocrity, between fear and boldness : So *Aristotle* in his *Ethicks*. But then as for defining what this mediocrity is, (wherein the very point of the business lies,) you are as much to seek as ever.

Others perhaps will tell you, that 'tis a firmness of mind in sustaining evils, and undertaking dangers. According to those two assigal parts of Courage, *sustinere* & *aggredi*. But what it is thus firmly to sustain or undertake an evil, or what evils are to be thus

thus sustain'd or undertaken, is the main thing which we want to be made acquainted with.

In order therefore to the settling the point in hand, I consider first in general, that Courage has evil of pain for its object; which in some circumstances is to be chosen or submitted to. Whence I form this general idea of Courage; That 'tis a firm and peremptory resolution of mind to chuse evil of pain in right circumstances, or when 'tis truly eligible. This definition, I confess, runs in general terms, much like one of *Aristotle's*; but I intended it for no other. Only it has this advantage above his, that it lays a foundation for one that is more particular.

For 'tis but here to subjoin when an evil is truly eligible, and the idea of Courage will be sufficiently determinate and express. Now to make a thing eligible, 'tis necessary that some way or other it appear good; evil being no way eligible under its own formality. And to make an evil put on the nature and appearance of good, two things are necessary. First, That it be a lesser evil than some other: And, secondly, that the chusing of it be a necessary medium for the preventing of that other. Then, and in no other case, is evil truly eligible; and consequently we shall not be mistaken in the idea of Courage, if we define it to be such a firm and constant ~~ness~~ or disposition of mind, whereby a man is fix'd and determin'd never to dread any evil, so far as to decline it when the chusing it is the only remedy against a greater. And this is most eminently signaliz'd in the case of martyrdom, when a man submits to the greatest evils of pain, to avoid that much greater one of sin. This is the very summity and perfection of Courage, that which an
Hannibal

Hannibal or a *Scipio* could never equal in all their gallantry and feats of war : And I dare venture to pronounce, that he that would rather die, or part with any worldly interest than commit a sin, can never be a coward.

And here I cannot but take notice of a false notion of Honour and Courage, whereby the world has been generally abused ; especially those men that make the highest pretensions to both. According to these mens measures of things, 'tis sufficient reason to post a man up for a coward if he refuse a duel ; and to merit a badge of honour from the Herald's office, if he accept it. These men would be ready to laugh at me, I know, as a lover of paradoxes, should I tell them that their characters must be quite transposed to make them true. And yet I cannot help it ; so it falls out, that he who declines the duel, is indeed the man of Honour and Courage ; and he who accepts it is the coward. For he who declines it despises the obloquy and scorn of the world, that he may approve himself to God and his own conscience, would rather be pointed and hiss'd at, than be damn'd ; and so chuses a lesser evil to avoid a greater. But he that accepts the duel, so dreads the loss of his credit among those whose good opinion is of no value, that to avoid it, he chuses to incur sin and damnation ; and so chuses a greater evil to avoid a less. And if this be Courage, we must strike it out of the catalogue of Virtues ; for nothing is so, that is not under the direction of prudence ; much less what is downright folly, and the very exaltation of madness.

of

Of SERIOUSNESS.

SINCE I began to consider so far as to make reflections upon my self, the most early and prevailing disposition which I observ'd, was an inclination to Seriousness: And since I consider'd the nature of things, and the circumstances of human life, I found I had reason to thank the kind influence of my birth for making that my temper, which otherwise I must have been at more cost to acquire.

For tho' it be generally reckon'd only as a semi-virtue, and by some as no virtue at all; yet certainly nothing is of greater advantage both as to intellectual and moral attainments, than to be of a serious, compos'd and recollected spirit. If it be not it self a virtue, 'tis at least the soil wherein it naturally grows, and the most visible mark whereby to know those that have it. This is that whereby a man is chiefly distinguish'd from a child, and a wise man from a fool. For (as the son of *Syrach* observes) *a man may be known by his look, and one that has understanding by his countenance, when thou meetest him*, Ecclus. xix. And again, speaking of levity and dissoluteness of behaviour, *A man's attire, excess of laughter and gage shew what he is*; that is, it shews he is none of the wisest. And that this was his true meaning, we may be assur'd from another character of his, where he expressly makes the signs of wisdom and folly to consist in these two properties, (*viz.*) *That a fool lifts up his voice with laughter, but a wise man does scarce smile a little*, Ecclus. xxi.

There is indeed a near relation between Seriousness and Wisdom, and one is the most excellent friend

friend to the other. A man of a serious, sedate and considerate temper, as he is always in a ready disposition for meditation, (the best improvement both of knowledge and manners,) so he thinks without disturbance, enters not upon another notion till he is master of the first, and so makes clean work of it. Whereas a man of a loose, volatile and shatter'd humour, thinks only by fits and starts, now and then in a morning interval, when the serious mood comes upon him; and even then too, let but the least trifling cross his way, and his desultorious fancy presently takes the scent, leaves the unfinish'd and half mangled notion, and skips away in pursuit of the new game. So that altho' he conceives often, yet by some chance or other he always miscarries, and the issues prove abortive.

Indeed nothing excellent can be done without Seriousness, and he that courts wisdom must be in earnest. St. James, chap. i. 7. assures us, that 'tis to no purpose for a wavering and unstable man to pray, because he shall be sure not to speed. And as 'tis in vain for such a one to pray, so is it in vain for him to study. For a man to pretend to work out a neat scheme of thoughts with a maggoty unsettled head, is as ridiculous and nonsensical, as to think to write straight in a jumbling coach, or to draw an exact picture with a palsy hand. No, he that will hit what he aims at, must have a steady hand, as well as a quick eye; and he that will think to any purpose, must have fixedness and composedness of humour, as well as smartness of parts.

And accordingly we find, that those among the philosophick sects, that profess'd more than ordinary eminency in wisdom or virtue, assum'd also a peculiar

peculiar gravity of habit, and solemnity of behaviour; and the most sacred and mysterious rites of religion were usually perform'd with silence; and that not only for decency, but for advantage. Thus the *Italians*, with the gravity of their behaviour, are also remarkable for their more than ordinary politeness and ingenuity, especially for Poetry, Musick and Painting, things which depend not only upon strength of imagination, but require also great justness of thought, and exactness of judgment. And 'tis a known observation of *Aristotle's* concerning melancholy, that it furthers contemplation, and makes great wits. Thus again, the discipline of silence was a considerable part of the *Pythagorick* institution: And we have it storied of our blessed Lord himself, who was the wisdom of his Father, that he never laugh'd.

But because a solemn deportment may sometimes disguise an unthinking mind, and grave, in some men's dictionaries, signifies the same as dull, I shall put the character a little more home, and define more closely wherein the true idea of seriousness consists; or what it is to be in good earnest, a serious man.

And first, I shall remove it from the neighbourhood of those things, which by their symbolizing with it in outward appearance, prove oftentimes the occasion of mistake and confusion. It does not therefore consist in the morosity of a *Cynick*, nor in the severity of an *Ascetick*, nor in the demureness of a *Precisian*, nor in the deadness and fullness of a *Quaker*, nor in the solemn mien of an *Italian*, nor in the slow pace of a *Spaniard*: 'Tis neither in a drooping head, nor a mortify'd face, nor a primitive beard.

'Tis

'Tis something very different, and much more excellent than all this, that must make up a serious man. And I believe I shall not misrepresent him, if I say, he is one that duly and impartially weighs the moments of things, so as neither to value trifles, nor despise things really excellent: That dwells much at home, and studies to know himself as well as books or men: " That considers why he came into " the world, how great his business, and how short " his stay in it; how uncertain 'tis when he shall " leave it; and whither a Sinner shall then betake " himself, when both Heaven and Earth shall fly from " the presence of the judge, *Rev. xx.* That considers " God as always present, and the folly of doing what " must be repented of, and of going to Hell when a " man may go to Heaven. In one word, that knows " how to distinguish between a moment and eternity.

This is to be truly serious; and however the pretender to gaiety and lightness of humour may miscall and ridicule it by the names of melancholy, dulness and stupidity, &c. he that is thus affected, cannot miss of being good and wise here, and happy hereafter. And then 'twill be his turn to laugh, when the others shall mourn and weep.



Of the slightness of all secular, and the importance of minding our eternal interest.

Idleness and impertinence, a doing of nothing, or of nothing to the purpose, are always signs of a vain, loose and inconsiderate spirit; but they are never more so, than where there is some very momentous and weighty business to be done. The

The man that sleeps away his happy retirements, or, with the *Roman* Emperor, spends them in killing flies, betrays a great deal of weakness and in-cogitancy; but should he do the same at the bar, when he's to plead for his life, he would certainly be thought a mere changeling or madman.

And yet this I fear will prove the case of the most of those who style themselves rational. For besides that, the generality of men live at random, without any aim or design at all; and those that propose some ends, seldom take up with any that are important and material; or if they do, they seldom proportion their care to the weight of things, but are serious in trifles, and trifling in things serious: I say, besides all this, there is nothing relating purely to this world that can deserve the name of business, or be worth the serious thoughts of him who has an immortal soul; and a salvation to work out with fear and trembling. The greatest secular affairs and interest, are but specious trifles; and all our designs and employments about 'em, ex-centrical motions, and solemn impertinencies.

And yet this is made the centre of all our studies and endeavours; the great bent of the world points this way: Hence are taken the measures of wisdom and prudence; and religion it self is forced to truckle to worldly policy. Whereas in the mean time, there is an affair of grand importance, and wherein all mankind are deeply concern'd; and such as really deserves all that care and sollicitude which we lavish away upon other things, and infinitely more (tho' perhaps it might be secured with less) and yet this is the thing which by many is utterly neglected, by the most is least cared for, and by none sufficiently regarded. So that considering the general practice of the world, I think

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there are very few in it, to whom that will not be a very proper and seasonable admonition, which our blessed Lord gave to his solicitous and over-busie disciple, *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful.*

To cure therefore (if possible) this great folly, I have two propositions to offer ; First, That no interest relating purely to this present world, is of any great moment or concern to man. Secondly, That to be very careful of our final interest, and to make sure to our selves a happy eternity, is indeed a thing of vast moment and importance.

The first of these, I know, will seem very strange and paradoxical to one that takes a prospect of mankind, and contemplates the great stir and hurry of the world, the plottings of statesmen, the emulations of courtiers, and the ambition of princes ; how busie men are in their severall concerns ; what variety of designs are on foot ; with what trembling eagerness they are prosecuted, and what griet attends our disappointments. Sure after such a scene as this, one would be tempted to think, that there must be something very considerable in human life, and that men had notable interests here at stake, it being a reproach to human nature, that the world should so generally combine to make such ado about nothing.

But yet, that this is their folly ; “ Not to insist
 “ upon that universal vanity which the wise and
 “ great trier of the world has charged upon it, that
 “ *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick,* Prov. xiii. and
 “ yet fruition does not cure it : That we are dis-
 “ appointed in our enjoyments, as well as in our
 “ losses ; and yet that 'tis our hard fate, to weep
 “ at the funeral of our departed pleasures, tho' we
 “ were little the happier for them when we had
 “ them ;

“ them ; that our greatest pleasures are most tran-
 “ sient ; and great mirth always ends in heaviness
 “ and demission of spirit ; that the more we love
 “ and enjoy, the more we venture, and put our
 “ selves farther within the reach of fortune ; that
 “ the greatest men are not always the most con-
 “ tented ; and that they who are most envy’d by
 “ others, think themselves more fit for their pity :
 Not to insist, I say, on these, or the like conside-
 rations, I shall fix only upon one ; whereby I think
 ’twill plainly appear, that there can be no interest
 relating purely to this world, that is of any great
 moment or concern to man ; and that is, the short-
 ness and uncertainty of our abode here.

The life of man, in the book of *Wisdom*, is com-
 pared to a shadow. Now besides that the resem-
 blance holds in many considerable respects, as in
 that it is partly life, and partly death, as the other
 is partly light, and partly darkness ; in that like
 a shadow, wherever it passes it leaves no track be-
 hind it ; in that it seems to be something, when
 indeed it is nothing ; and that ’tis always altering,
 and ends on a sudden ; and when at its full height
 and prime, is often nearest to declension, as a sha-
 dow is, to disappear when at full length. There is
 yet another instance of resemblance, which has a
 more particular aptness to our present purpose.
 The shadow can continue no longer at the utmost,
 than the light of the Sun keeps its residence above
 the horizontal line, which is but a little portion of
 time ; but it may fall much short of that period,
 by the interposition of a cloud ; and when that
 may be is as uncertain as the weather ; and de-
 pends upon a thousand accidents.

And thus ’tis with our lives. No man can leng-
 then out his days beyond that natural term which

is set him by the temperament of the first qualities, which yet are of such jarring and unfociable natures, that they can't dwell long together in a vital amity. But then how far, and how many ways he may fall short of that compass, depends upon so many hidden causes, and so many little accidents, that it may be reckon'd among the greatest of uncertainties. So that there is nothing in all human life so frail and uncertain, as life it self.

A consideration sufficient to depreiate and vilifie all the entertainments and interests of the animal life; and to call off our care from the objects of secular happiness, tho' there were no other vanity in them. For were they never so good and solid in themselves, yet the foundation on which they stand, is so weak and rotten, that 'tis dangerous leaning hard upon them. They would be even upon this supposition, like *Nebuchadnezzar's* statue, made up indeed of rich metal, but founded upon feet of clay. And upon this account they are to be esteem'd as vile and contemptible as they are ruinous.

This is a consideration indeed that has but little effect in the world, and the reason is, because few give any serious heed and attention to it. They know it indeed habitually, and must confess it, if put to the question, but it lies dormant in 'em, and they seldom actually attend to it. And therefore 'tis that the voice bids the Prophet *Isaiab*, Cry and proclaim it aloud, that *all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field*. He is bid to cry aloud, thereby intimating both the importance of the thing, and the general stupidity of men in not considering it.

But

But if men would but often and seriously meditate upon the shortness and uncertainty of Life, I persuade my self they would not set their hearts much upon any thing in it, but would look upon all its pleasures, honours and profits, with the same indifferency that the hasty traveller does upon the spacious fields and meadows which he passes by. For to what purpose, I pray, should man, who holds his tenement here by such a short and unstable tenure, that can't live long, and may dye presently, be so busie and thoughtful about worldly concerns? The antient Patriarchs, tho' their span was so very much longer than ours, thought it hardly worth while to build houses, but contented themselves to grow gray in tents; and what do we mean, who in comparison to them art but *ἑφήμεροι*, people for a day, by plunging our selves so deeply into care and trouble? Is there any thing among the actions of either brutes or madmen, so silly and irrational as this?

But to be a little particular; to what purpose should man, who walketh in a vain shadow, disquiet himself also thus in vain, and be so greedy in heaping up riches, when he can't tell who shall gather them? To what purpose should a man trouble both the world's and his own rest to make himself great; For besides the emptiness of the thing, the play will quickly be done, and the actors must all retire into a state of equality, and then it matters not who personated the Emperor, or who the Slave. To what purpose should a man be very earnest in the pursuit of fame? He must shortly dye, and so must those too who admire him. Nay, I could almost say, to what purpose should a man lay himself out upon study, and drudge so laboriously in the mines of learning? He's no sooner a little wi-

fer than his brethren, but death thinks him ripe for his sickle, and for ought we know, after all his pains and industry, in the next world, an idiot or a mechanick will be as forward as he. To what purpose, lastly, does a tyrant oppress his people, transgress those bounds which wise nature has set him, invade his neighbour's Countries, deprive the innocent and peaceable of their liberty, sack Cities, plunder Provinces, depopulate Kingdoms, and almost put the foundations of the earth out of course; to what purpose is all this? *Thou fool, says our blessed Saviour, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; and then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?*

There is certainly nothing in all nature so strange and unaccountable as the actions of some men. *They see, as the Psalmist speaks, that wise men, also dye and perish together as well as the ignorant and foolish; and leave their riches for others, and yet they think (at least act as if they did) that their houses shall continue for ever, and that their dwelling places shall endure from one generation to another, and call their lands after their own names.*

This they think is their wisdom, but the Psalmist assures them 'tis their foolishness, and such a foolishness too as makes them comparable to the beasts that perish, however their posterity (who should be wiser) may praise their saying. And certainly the learned Apostle was of the same mind, when from this principle, the time is short, he deduces the very same conclusion we have hitherto pleaded for, that we should be very indifferent and unconcern'd about any worldly good or evil, That they that have wives should be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; they that rejoyce as though they

they rejoiced not; they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passes away. It does so, and for that reason there is nothing in this life to be very much lov'd, or very much fear'd; especially if we consider what a grand interest we have all of us at stake in the other world. For as 'tis with the sufferings, so is it with the enjoyment of this present time, they are neither of them *worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed.*

We have seen how frivolous and unconcerning the greatest affairs of this world are, how unworthy to be made the objects of our sollicitude, much more to be the business of our lives; we have weigh'd them in the balance, and they are found wanting. But man is a creature of brisk and active faculties, and is there no employment for him? Yes, as God has furnish'd him with powers, so also has he assign'd him a work; and such a one too as is to be perform'd with fear and trembling. There is a good fight to be fought, there is a whole body of sin to be destroy'd, there are passions to be mortify'd, habits to be unlearn'd, affections to be purify'd, virtues and holy dispositions to be acquired, acts of virtue to be opposed against acts of sin, and habits against habits: In a word, there is a Heaven to be obtain'd, and a Hell to be avoid'd. This indeed is a great work, and of great concernment to be done, and such as calls for our principal, (I could almost say our whole) care and diligence. The great necessity of which, for more distinctness sake, I shall represent in a few considerations.

And first, it highly concerns us to be very careful concerning our final interest, because of the

vast, the infinite moment of the thing. For certainly it can be no less, whether a man shall be damned or saved, eternally happy, or eternally miserable. No man certainly that thinks at all, can think this an indifferent matter; or if he does, he will one day be sadly convinc'd of the contrary, when he shall curse the day of his birth, and wish for the mercy of annihilation. The lowest conception we can frame of the condition of the damn'd, is an utter exclusion from the beatifick presence of God. And tho' the non-enjoyment of this be no great punishment to sensual men in this state and region of exile; who perhaps would be content that God should keep Heaven to himself, so he would let them have the free use of the earth; yet hereafter, when the powers of their souls shall be awaken'd to their full vigour and activity, when they shall have a lively and thorough apprehension of true happiness, and of the infinite beauties of the supreme Good, there will arise such a vehement thirst, such an intense longing in the soul, as will infinitely exceed the most exalted languishments of love, the highest droughts of a fever. The soul will then point to the centre of happiness with her full bent and verticity, which yet she shall find utterly out of her reach; and so full of desire, and full of despair, she shall lament both her folly and her misery to eternal ages. And who is able to dwell even with these everlasting burnings?

But secondly, As an argument for our great care, we may consider, that as the interest is great, so a more than ordinary care is necessary to secure it. And that upon several accounts. 1. Because our redemption by Christ is not our immediate and actual discharge from sin, (as some who are for an easie Christianity seem to conceive of it) but only an

an instating us into a capacity of pardon and reconciliation, which is to be actually obtain'd by the performance of conditions; without which, we shall be so far from being the better for what has been done and suffer'd for us, that our condemnation will be so much the heavier, for neglecting to finish so great salvation. Finish it, I mean, by fulfilling the conditions upon which it depends. So that the greatest care and concern is now necessary, not only that we may be the better for what our Redeemer has done for us, but that we may not be the worse.

2. Because the conditions of our salvation, tho' temper'd with much mercy and accommodation to human infirmity, are yet so difficult, as to engage us to put forth our whole might to the work. A great part of christianity is very harsh to flesh and blood; however, to the habituated discipline, Christ's yoke may be easie, and his burden light. And accordingly, the path that leads to life is call'd narrow; and the gate (tho' open'd by our Saviour) is yet so strait, that we are bid to strive to enter in at it. And the righteous scarcely are sav'd.

Again, because there is a strong confederacy against us among the powers of darkness. We have a very potent and malicious enemy, who envies man should arrive to those happy mansions from whence himself by transgression fell, and accordingly there is a great woe pronounc'd by the Angel against the inhabitants of the earth, because the Devil is come down among them, having great wrath. And this is made by the Apostle himself, an argument for more than ordinary care and circumspection: *Be sober, says he, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

Again,

Again, because we have but a little time for this our great work, and that too very precarious and uncertain. Our glass holds but very little sand, tho' 'twere to be all spent, and drawn out in the running. But there are also several accidental impediments that may intercept its passage: And therefore as this was alledg'd as an argument for indifferency about the things of this world, so for the same reason, it concerns us to be eminently careful, in the grand business of the next. He that duly considers how many persons dye suddenly, how many more may, and that none can engage for it that he himself shall not, must needs confess himself extremely concern'd to improve this short, this uncertain opportunity, this only time of probation; and to work with all his might while 'tis day, before the *night come, when no man work.*

Lastly, It concerns us to use a more than ordinary care and diligence in securing this our great interest; because after all our care and vigilancy, all our strictnesses and severities, we don't know the just and precise measures of qualification; and how much trimming of our lamps is requisite, to fit 'em for the sanctuary of God. For tho' we are well assured in general, from the terms of the evangelical covenant, that if we repent we shall be forgiven, yet there is a great latitude in repentance; and what degree in some cases will be available, is a secret God has kept to himself. For we don't know the full heinousness of our sins, nor how far God was provoked by 'em; nor consequently, by what degrees of sorrow and amendment he will be pleas'd. And 'tis most certain there is a mighty difference. To *Simon Magus* 'twas almost a desperate case; *If peradventure the thoughts of thy heart may*

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be forgiven thee, Acts 8. 22. And some are said to be sav'd with fear, and as it were, pull'd out of the fire. And we know what the great Apostle has said, *I knew nothing by my self, yet I am not thereby justify'd.* All which argues a great latitude and variety, even in necessary preparation; and how to state the matter exactly we don't always know; and therefore as far as we are able, should be sure to do enough; for we may easily do too little, and can never do too much in a matter of such high importance.

From all which I conclude, first, That those who withdraw themselves (as far as is consistent with charity, and the prosecution of the publick good) from the noise, hurry and business of the world, that they may apply themselves more serenely and entirely to a life of devotion and religion, and more freely and undistractedly attend upon the grand concern of another world, act very wisely and prudently. For this is wisdom, to take a right estimate of things; to proportion our care to their value; and to mind that most, which is most concerning. This is what the Apostle commends, *to lay aside every weight, that we may be the surer to win the great prize, and so to run as to obtain.* This, lastly, is the very part which *Mary* chose; and which our Lord assures us shall never be taken away from her.

Again I conclude, That all those, who are either wholly negligent of this their grand interest, or that do not principally regard it; and as our Saviour speaks, in the first place *seek the kingdom of God*; that are more intent upon this world than the next, that will venture to play the knave for a little preferment; that make use of religion as an instru-
ment

ment for secular designs : In one word, that in any kind forfeit their great interest in the other world, for a little in this, are the greatest fools in nature. This measure, I confess, will take in a great many; and some perhaps who would think it a great affront to be reckon'd of the number. But it can't be help'd, the charge is most unquestionably true; and they themselves, however conceited of their wit and parts now, will once be of the same opinion, when they shall say, *We fools thought his life madness.*

God grant we may all so number our days, and so compare our two interests, as to apply our hearts to greater wisdom.





A Metaphysical E S S A Y, towards
the demonstration of a G O D,
from the steady and immutable
nature of Truth.

S E C T. I.

*How difficult a thing 'tis to demonstrate a
God by any new medium; and how far
the present Essay may pretend to do so.*

1. **I**T has been the curious employment of so many and so excellent pens, to demonstrate the existence of a God; and this they have done with such variety of argument, moral, physical and metaphysical, that however easie it may be to contrive new postures, and ring other changes upon the same bells, 'tis yet almost as difficult to find out an argument for the proof of a God, that has not been used already, as to resist the cogency of those that have. So that here, if any where, that of Solomon is more than ordinarily verify'd, *The thing that has been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun,* Eccles. i. 9.

2. The newest indeed that has of late years appear'd to the world, is that of the celebrated *Descartes*, taken from the idea of God, consider'd both absolutely in its self, as including all kinds and degrees of perfection; and consequently, existence; and as 'tis subject'd in the mind of man, which
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(as he contends) could never have had such an idea; were there not something which had all that perfection in it formally or eminently, which is in the idea objectively.

3. Now tho' this procedure of his be extraordinarily fine and subtle, and such as (to the first part at least) will appear no less strong and concluding to any capable and indifferent person, that considers it as 'tis manag'd at large by its ingenious author, yet this was not a notion (at least as to the former part) wholly new, but only revived, with some improvement, by him. For *Aquinas* had before touch'd upon the first part of this argument, under this question, *Utrum Deum esse sit per se notum*, tho' for the reasons there specify'd, he thought it not to be conclusive. The same argument we find also touch'd upon by the subtle Doctor *Duns Scotus*, in his consideration of the same question, *Lib. 1. Distinct. 2. Qu. 2.*

4. I speak not this to diminish one ray from the glory of that incomparable speculatist; that which I remark here, is not the barrenness of his invention, but that of the exhausted subject. The matter had been squeezed before almost to the last drop; and his only fault was, that he was not born sooner. Which might be a sufficient apology, if this procedure of mine prove not entirely new and unblown upon. Whether it be, or no, 'tis not possible (without examining all the books in the world) absolutely to determine. Thus much I believe I may venture to say, that 'tis no where universally receiv'd, nor by any that I know of, industriously and professedly managed: And that lastly, 'tis as new as the matter will now afford; and consequently, as any man in reason ought to expect.

SECT.

S E C T. II.

The various acceptations of Truth; and which that is, which is made the ground of the present demonstration.

1. **H**AVING undertaken to demonstrate the existence of God, from the steady and immutable nature of truth, I am first to distinguish the equivocalness or latitude of the word, and then to point out to that determinate part, which I intend for the ground of my demonstration.

2. The most general partition of truth, is, into truth of the thing, and truth of the understanding; or (according to the language of the schools) truth of the object, and truth of the subject. Both of these again have a double subdivision. For by truth of the object, may be understood either that transcendental verity, which is convertible with *Ens*, and runs through the whole circle of being, whereby every thing is really what it is; which is simple truth. Or else, certain relations and habitudes of things one towards another, whether affirmatively or negatively, which is complex truth.

3. And so again, by truth of the subject, may be understood either a due conformity between the understanding and the object, when I compound what is compounded, and divide what is divided; which is logical truth. Or else a due conformity between the words of the understanding, when I speak as I think; which is moral truth or veracity.

4. Now

4. Now the truth, upon whose immutable nature I build the demonstration of a God, is not that of the subject, but that of the object. Nor that neither according to its simple and transcendental acceptation, but as it signifies certain immutable relations and habitudes of things one towards another, by way of affirmation and negation, which is truth of the object complex.

S E C T. III.

That there are such relations and habitudes of things towards one another ; and that they are steady and immutable.

1. **T**WO things are here asserted, first, That there are relations and habitudes of things towards one another. And secondly, that they are steady and immutable. First, I say, there are certain relations and habitudes betwixt thing and thing. Thus there is a certain habitude between some premisses, and some conclusions ; for any thing will not follow from any thing ; between some objects and some faculties ; between some ends and some means ; between some subjects, and some predicates, and the like.

2. This is as true, as that there is any such thing as truth. For truth is nothing else, but the composition or division of ideas, according to their respective habitudes and relations. And without truth, there can be no such thing as knowledge ; for knowledge is truth of the subject : 'Tis a man's thinking of things as they are ; and that supposes truth of the object. Which whosoever denies, contradicts

tradicts himself, and establishes the proposition which he design'd to overthrow ; and consequently, universal scepticism is the very extremity of nonsense and inconsistency.

3. And as there are certain habitudes and relations between things ; so secondly, some of them are steady and immutable, that never were made by any understanding or will, nor can ever be unmade or null'd by them ; but have a fix'd and unalterable *χρόνῳ*, from everlasting to everlasting. And consequently, there are not only truths, but eternal truths.

4. As first in general, 'tis a proposition of necessary and eternal truth, that there must be ever such a thing as truth, or that something must be true ; for let it be affirm'd or denied, truth thrusts in upon us either way. And so secondly, There are many particular propositions of eternal and unchangeable verity ; as in Logick, that the cause is always before the effect in order of nature ; in Physicks, that all local motion is by succession ; in Metaphysicks, that nothing can be, and not be, at once ; in Mathematicks, that all right angles are equal ; that those lines which are parallel to the same right line, are also parallel to each other, &c. These and such like are standing and irrepealable truths, such as have no precarious existence, or arbitrary dependence upon any will or understanding whatsoever ; and such as all intellectual operations do not make, but suppose ; it being as much against the nature of understanding, to make that truth which it speculates, as 'tis against the nature of the eye, to create that light by which it sees ; or of an image, to make that object which it represents.

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S E C T.

S E C T. IV.

That since there are eternal and immutable verities or habitudes of things, the simple essences of things must be also eternal and immutable.

1. **H**AVING gain'd this point, that there are eternal and immutable verities or habitudes of things ; the next will be, that upon this *postulatum* it necessarily follows, that the simple essences of things must be also eternal and immutable. For as there can be no truth of the subject, without truth of the object to which it may be conformable, (as was before observ'd) so neither can there be truth of the object complex, without truth of the object simple.

2. This will appear undeniably true to any one that attends to the idea of objective truth complex ; which is nothing else, but certain habitudes of respects betwixt thing and thing, as to composition or division. For how can there be any such habitudes or relations, without the simple essences themselves from which they result ? As for instance, How can any mathematical proposition, suppose that of *Euclid*, that if two circles touch one another inwardly, they have not the same common centre, have this habitude, unless there be two such distinct simple essences, as circle and centre ? These habitudes can no more subsist by themselves, than any other relations can ; they must have their simple essences, as the other have their subject and term ; upon the position of which, they immediately result.

3. If

3. If therefore there can be no truth of the object complex, without truth of the object simple; and there can be no habitudes and relations of composition and division, without the simple essences themselves, it follows, that whensoever the one does exist, the other must exist also; and consequently, if the one be eternal, the other must be eternal also; and so (to recur to the former instance) if it be a proposition of eternal truth, that if two circles touch one another inwardly, they have not the same common centre, the two distinct simple essences of circle and centre, must be from eternity also; and consequently, the simple essences of things are eternal and immutable; which was the point to be here demonstrated.

S E C T. V.

That the simple essences of things being not eternal in their natural subsistences, must be so in their ideal subsistences or realities.

1. **F**ROM the eternity of essential habitudes, we have demonstrated the necessity, that the simple essences of things should be eternal. And now, since they are not eternal (as is too plain to need proof) in their natural subsistences, it follows, that they must be eternal in their ideal subsistences or realities.

2. For there are but these two conceivable ways how any thing may be supposed to exist, either naturally or ideally, either out of all understanding, or within some understanding. If therefore the

simple essences of things do exist eternally, but not in nature, then they must exist eternally in their ideas. Again, if the simple essences of things are eternal, but not out of all understanding, it remains that they must have this their eternal existence in some understanding. Without which indeed it is not possible to conceive how they should have any such existence.

S E C T. VI.

That there is therefore an eternal mind or understanding, omniscient, immutable, and endow'd with all possible perfection, the same which we call God.

I. **T**HIS reasonably follows from the conclusion of the foregoing Section, and that according to the double posture in which it is disposed. For first of all, if the simple essences of things do exist eternally in their ideas, then there are ideas, and these ideas are eternal, and these eternal ideas of things naturally lead us to an eternal and universal being, who is infinite in being, and has in himself all the degrees of being, or is indued with all possible perfection, and so has the perfection of all other beings in himself, whereby he becomes universally representative of all other beings, which universal and all-representative being can be no other than that eternal mind which we call God. And so again, if the simple essences of things have a real and eternal existence or being in some understanding (as is most reasonable to be conceiv'd, supposing

posing them to have any such eternal being at all) then what consequence can be more plain, than that there is a mind or understanding eternally existing? An essence can no more eternally exist in a temporary understanding, than a body can be infinitely extended in a finite space. The mind therefore wherein it does exist, must be eternal; there is therefore in the first place, an eternal mind.

2. 'Twill follow also, in the next place, that this mind is omniscient as well as eternal. For that mind which is eternally fraught with the simple essences of things, must needs contain also in it self all the several habitudes and respects of them; these necessarily arising from the other by way of natural result. For as before, the argument was good from the habitudes of things to their simple essences; so is it as good backwards, from the simple essences of things to their habitudes. But these are the same with truth. That mind therefore which has all these, has all truths; which is the same as to be omniscient.

3. 'Twill follow hence also, in the next place, that this mind is immutable as well as omniscient and eternal. For if that mind, which has existing in it self from all eternity all the simple essences of things, and consequently, all their possible *schefes* or habitudes, should ever change, there would arise a new *schefis* in this mind that was not before, which is contrary to the supposition. 'Tis impossible therefore, that this mind should ever undergo any mutation; especially if these eternal ideas and habitudes be one and the same with this mind, as I have abundantly proved elsewhere.

4. Lastly, 'Twill follow, that this mind is not only eternal, immutable, and omniscient, but that in a word, 'tis endow'd with all possible perfection.

For besides that, if it were not endued with all possible perfection, it could not have the perfections of all other beings in it, and so be universally representative, to have and it self to be all the essences and habitudes of things, is to have, and to be all that can possibly be; to be the rule and measure of all perfection; to be supreme in the scale of being; and to be the root and spring of all entity; which is the same as to be God. This mind therefore so accomplish'd is no other than God; and consequently 'tis reasonable to think that there is a God: Which was the thing I undertook to make appear to be reasonable.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I Know but of one place that is liable to any reasonable exception; and that is in the fourth Section. The proposition there maintain'd is this, "That since there are eternal and immutable verities or habitudes of things, the simple essences of things must be also eternal and immutable". Here it may be objected, that these habitudes are not attributed absolutely to the simple essences as actually existing, but only hypothetically, that whensoever they shall exist, they shall also carry such relations to one another. There is you'll say only an hypothetical connexion between the subject and the predicate, not an absolute position of either.

But in answer to this I might plead first, that these habitudes are not (as is supposed in the objection) only by way of hypothesis, but absolutely attributed to the simple essences as actually existing. For when I say, for instance, that every part
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of a circle is equally distant from the centre, this proposition does not hang in suspense, then to be verified when the things shall exist in nature, but is at present actually true, as true as it ever will or can be ; and consequently may I not thence infer, that the things themselves already are, since they are actually related, and since they are eternally related, that therefore they eternally are.

But secondly, Suppose I grant what the objector would have, that these habitudes are not absolutely attributed to the simple essences, but only by way of hypothesis ; yet I don't see what he can gain by this concession. For thus much at least is attributed to the simple essences at present, that whensoever they shall exist, such and such habitudes will attend them. I say, thus much is attributed actually, and at present : But now how can any thing be said of that which is not ? The things therefore themselves really and actually are. There is I confess no necessity they should exist in nature, (which is all that the objection proves) ; but exist they must, since of nothing there can be no affection. There is therefore another way of existing besides that *in rerum natura* ; namely, in the *Mundus Archetypus*, or the ideal world ; where all the *Rationes rerum*, or simple essences of things, whereof there are standing and immutable affirmations and negations, have an eternal and immutable existence, before ever they enter upon the stage of nature.

Nor ought this ideal way of subsisting to seem strange, when even while things have a natural subsistence, the propositions concerning them are not verify'd according to their natural, but according to their ideal subsistences. Thus we demonstrate several propositions concerning a right line,

a circle, &c. and yet 'tis most certain, that none of these are to be found in nature, according to that exactness supposed in the demonstration. Such and such attributes therefore belong to them, not as they are in nature, but as they are in their ideas. And if this be true in propositions, whose subjects are in nature, much more is it in eternal propositions, whose simple essences have not always a natural existence. These can no other ways be verify'd but by the co-eternal existence of simple essences in the ideal world.

One thing I have more to add in the vindication of this Essay; Whereas in the third Section it was asserted, that the nature of truth is steady and immutable, and such as has no precarious existence or arbitrary dependence upon any understanding whatever; and yet in the fifth Section 'tis affirm'd, that it owes its existence to some mind or other; lest one part of this meditation should be thought to clash against another, I thought it requisite to adjust this seeming contradiction. For the clearing of which, we must be beholden to that distinction of a Platonick Author, of the divine mind into *νῦς νοεῖς* and *νῦς νοητῶς*, conceptive and exhibitivē. Truth does by no means depend upon any mind as conceptive, whether human or divine; but is supposed by it; which is the sense of the third Section. But upon mind as exhibitivē, it may and does ultimately depend; so that if there were no God or eternal mind, there could be no truth; which is the sense of the fifth Section. So that here is no contradiction, but all harmony and agreement.

The Christian Law asserted and vindicated: Or a general Apology for the
CHRISTIAN RELIGION, *both*
as to the obligativeness and reasonableness of the institution.

I. **I** Design here to consider two things concerning Christianity:

First, That it is a state of service.

Secondly, that it is a reasonable service.

The evincion of these two propositions, will contain both the assertion of the christian law, and its vindication; and be a plenary justification of its divine author, from the imputation of two sorts of adversaries; those that reflect upon his wisdom, by supposing that he requires nothing to be done by his servants; and those that reflect upon his goodness, by supposing him a hard master; and that he requires unreasonable performances.

2. I begin therefore with the first proposition concerning the christian institution, that it is a service. It is most certain, that the christian religion, according to the genuine sense and design of its divine author, is the most wise and excellent institution that could possibly be framed, both for the glory of the divine attributes, and the best interest of mankind. And without controversie (if we

we take it as 'tis exhibited to us in the inspired writings) *great is the mystery of Godliness*, 1. Tim. v. 16. But if we consult the perverse glosses and comments of some of our Christian Rabbins, and take our measures of the Christian Religion from those ill-favour'd schemes and draughts of it we meet with in some systems; as some christians are the worst of men, so will their religion appear to be the worst of religions, a senseless and ridiculous institution; not worthy the contrivance of a wise politician, much less of him who is the wisdom of the Father. It fares here with christianity, as with a picture that is drawn at so many remote hands, till at length it degenerates from the original truth, and wants an under-title to discover whose it is. And indeed, whatever declamations are made against Judaism and Paganism, the worst enemies of the christian religion, are some of those that profess and teach it. For if it be in reality, as some (who call themselves orthodox) describe it, I may boldly say, that 'tis neither for the reputation of God to be the author of such a religion, nor for the interest of men to be guided by it; and that as *Sin took occasion by the law*, Rom. vii. 11. so may it (and that more justly) by the Gospel too, to deceive and ruin the world; by that Gospel which was intended as the instrument both of its temporal and eternal welfare.

3. For if you look upon christianity as some men are pleased to hold the prospective, it is no way accommodated for the promotion of holiness and virtue; but is rather a perfect discharge from all duty, and a *charta* of licentiousness. For among other misrepresentations of the Gospel, this is one, (and I think the most pernicious one that the sophistry of Hell could ever suggest) that it requires
nothing

nothing to be done by its profelytes. A notion so ridiculous and mischievous, as is fit for none but a profane epicure to embrace; who may be allow'd to make his religion as idle and sedentary, as he does his God. Nay, 'tis not only ridiculous and mischievous, but in the highest measure antichristian. For what greater antichristianism can there be than that, which strikes not only at some of the main branches, but at the very root of christianity; and at once, evacuates the entire purpose and aim of the Gospel?

4. But to set this mark upon the right forehead; there are three sorts of men that come in some measure or other under this charge. The first are the *Antinomians*, who are impudent and ignorant enough in exprefs terms to assert, that the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ does wholly excuse us from all manner of duty and obedience; as if we libertines of the Gospel were so far from being bound to *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*, that we are not to work at all; and as if the design of Christ's coming, were only to satisfy for the transgressions committed against the old covenant; and not at all to introduce a new one; and to discharge us from the obligation of the moral, as well as ceremonial law.

5. Nay, some there are among them that carry the business yet higher, and exclude not only the repentance and good works of men, but even the mediation of Christ himself, at least the necessity of it, by supposing an anticipating justification or pardon from all eternity; which they found upon the secret decree and counsel of God.

6. The next that have a share in the forementioned charge, are those who make christianity a matter of bare speculation; and think all religion
absolv'd

absolv'd in orthodoxy of opinion ; that care not how men live, but only how they teach ; and are so over-intent upon the Creed, that they neglect the Commandments. Little considering, that opinion is purely in order to practice ; and that orthodoxy of judgment is necessary only in such matters, where a mistake would be of dangerous influence to our actions, that is, in fundamentals : So that the necessity of thinking rightly, is derived from the necessity of doing rightly ; and consequently, the latter is the more necessary of the two.

7. I am as ready to grant, as the most zealous stickler for orthodoxy can desire, that our understandings are under obligation in divine matters ; but withal, I think it absurd that the obligation should terminate there ; since then 'twould follow ; First, That all theological science were merely speculative ; Secondly, That we are bound to exact orthodoxy in all speculations, (there being then no reason why in one, and not in another.) And thirdly, (which is the greatest absurdity of all) that we are obliged and tied up to no purpose ; because nothing is effected by it. Whenever therefore we are obliged to soundness of judgment, 'tis purely in order to the regulation of our practice ; and consequently, solitary orthodoxy does not satisfy its own end, much less that of christianity. For to what purpose serves the direction of the compass, if there be neither wind nor sail to carry on the vessel to the haven ?

8. But there are yet another sort of men, who are justly chargeable with expunging all duty from the christian institution ; I mean the *Solidians*, who under a pretence of advancing the merits of the cross, and the freeness of the divine grace, require

quire nothing of a christian in order to his justification and acceptance before God, but firmly to rely on the satisfaction and merits of Christ; and without any more ado, to apply all to himself. And herein they do not only contradict the general design and particular expresses of the Gospel, but trespass against all Logick and common sense. They contradict the Gospel, in requiring nothing but faith, whereas that (as we shall see anon) equally requires obedience. And they contradict common sense in requiring such a faith. For they put the conclusion before the premisses, and make that the first act of faith, which supposes others; and in due order ought to be the last. And besides, they make that act of faith contribute instrumentally towards the effecting of justification, which in order of nature is consequent to it, and supposes it already effected. For I must be first justified, before I can rightly believe that I am so, otherwise I shall believe a false proposition; since (as the most elementary Logician well knows) the certitude of the subject does not make, but suppose that of the object.

9. But I could dispense with the unphilosophicalness of this their hypothesis, were it not withal unchristian, and utterly destructive of all piety and virtue. The great mischief is, they untie the cords of duty, and exclude the necessity of obedience as really and effectually, tho' not so formally and expressly, as the *Antinomians* do. For they require nothing but faith to qualifie a man for pardon; and tho' afterwards for modesty's sake, they come in halting with good works, yet 'tis at such a time, when they might as well have left them out. 'Tis when the grand business (for which alone they could be necessary) is over; when the man in num-
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bred among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints. And to say here, that good works are necessary to salvation, tho' not to justification, is a mystery above my conception; or rather, an absurdity below my farther notice. Nor will it save the matter to say, that they are necessary to declare our justification before men, or to ascertain it to our selves, and the like; for alas, what does such a necessity amount to? No more than this, that they are necessary for such ends which themselves are not necessary. And besides, how can they declare or ascertain our justification, when they are not the conditions of it? So that 'tis plain both from the lateness of the time when, and from the incompetency of the grounds for which they insert good works, that they put them merely out of complaisance; not because they think them necessary, but because they are ashamed to declare expressly, that they are not. Which appears yet farther, from the nature of those works they are at length pleased to insert. They are such (for there is nothing that these men are so much afraid of as meriting) as are much short of that sincerity and perfection which is required by the Gospel. For 'tis notorious, that they set the state of regeneration so low, that 'tis consistent with the dominion and prevalency of sin. A bare reluctancy of the spirit (tho' foil'd in the conflict) against the flesh, is esteemed a sufficient mark of a regenerate person; and this every sinner that has the least remains of conscience, the least twilight of natural light left him, must needs have, for no man loves sin for it self; nay, he hates it as 'tis in its self absolutely an evil, only he chuses and wills it comparatively to avoid (as he then thinks) a greater evil.

10. Thus

10. Thus as the Jewish Doctors did the law, *Mat. xv. 6.* do these men make the Gospel, of none effect by their traditions; and would questionless, were our Lord now on earth, deserve to have a severer woe pronounced against them, as perverters of a more excellent, a more perfect institution. Strange! that man should corrupt and ridicule so admirable a dispensation, and turn so great a grace of God into wantonness! That there should be some *ὑπόκρισις* in the Gospel, which unlearned and unstable men might wrest to their own destruction, is no very hard matter to imagine; but that men should at once pervert the whole scope and design of it, is prodigious, as well as antichristian; a mystery of wonder as well as of iniquity. And have these men the face to declaim against the Papists for leaving out one of the commandments, when as they draw a black stroke over the whole table? Nay farther, have they the face to call themselves christians, and that of the purer sort too, who thus evacuate the mystery of godliness? By the same figure of speech might the Heathen Emperors assume that sacred name, when they endeavoured to persecute it out of the world. Nay, much more plausibly, for they only lopt off the branches, but these strike at the very root of christianity; they applied their forces against the professors of the christian religion, these against the religion it self; and (what aggravates the malice) not as open enemies, but as treacherous friends; under the demure pretence of purity, orthodoxy, and Saintship. They cancel the law of Christ, and at the same time pretend to advance his Kingdom, call him Master, kiss and betray him. And how can it now be expected, that these men should be more forward than they are,

are, to yield obedience to the King, who have found out an expedient to slip their necks out of Christ's yoke, and have made the Gospel in a worse sense, a dead letter than the law ?

11. But certainly the gate that leads to Heaven is much straiter than these men are pleased to make it, otherwise there would be no need of striving to enter in at it, *Luke xiii. 24.* There are things to be done, as well as to be believed and understood under the evangelical dispensation, and christianity is a service as well as a profession. To the clearing and establishing of which proposition, I shall consider the Gospel under a double capacity, first, as a law, and secondly, as a covenant. And first, as a law. 'Tis most certain that Christ was a law-giver as well as *Moses*, only as he was an introducer of a better hope, *Heb. vii. 19.* so he required better and sublimer services. The advantage of christianity, does not consist in having any abatements of duty; for Christ was so far from diminishing or retrenching the moral law, (for 'tis of that I speak) that he improved every part of it to higher senses than the most exquisite of the Jewish Doctors understood, or at least, conceiv'd themselves oblig'd to; as is evident from his divine sermon on the mount, which for the perfection and sublimity of its precepts, may be said rather to eclipse all philosophy, than to be the top and height of it.

12. But to prevent a mistake which men are apt to run into upon this occasion, I think fit here to interpose this caution, that when I speak of Christ's improving the moral law, I do not mean that he made any improvement of natural religion (with which the moral law ought not to be confounded) any otherwise than by setting its precepts in a clearer

clearer light, and by inforcing them by stronger motives, but not by adding any new precepts of morality to it, or by raising its precepts to higher degrees of perfection. For natural religion, as I understand it, is in the reality of the thing no other than right reason; or if you will more explicitly and distinctly, a system of such moral and immutable truths, as the reason of man, if duly used, must needs discern to be truly perfective of his nature, and finally conducive to his happiness. But now this seems to be commensurate to the whole duty of man, and adequate to the full compass and extent of morality, and consequently not to be capable of any addition or improvement. Indeed the Mosaick religion (meaning that part of it which was moral) being only a secondary transcript or extract of this natural religion, may be allow'd to have receiv'd an improvement in the precepts of it by Christ; partly by his adding new precepts to it, that is, such as the letter of the law did not expressly contain, and partly by his raising the old to a higher sense. But as to natural religion it self, the original of this transcript, I do not see how that can admit of any such improvement. Since if what we suppose added to it be not according to right reason, then it cannot be any ways better'd or improv'd by such an addition: But if it be according to right reason, then there is nothing added but what was supposed to be contain'd in it before. And so again there will be no improvement. The religion therefore which our Saviour Christ improved, was not, as I conceive natural religion, or the law of nature, but the moral law as deliver'd by *Moses*, which he improv'd, by bringing it nearer, and making it more conformable to

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the law of nature, as the true standard and measure of its perfections.

13. And that he thus improv'd the law of *Moses*, besides the evidence of comparison, we have his own express word for it, *Mat. v. 17.* *I come not to destroy the law, but to perfect, compleat, or fill it up.* For so the word (*Πληρῶσαι*) properly signifies. The *Σκιαγραφία*, or rude draught, was *Moses* his part; but the *ζωσφόρον πλῆρα*, or the painting to the life, was *Christ's*. *Moses* drew out the main lineaments, the Skeleton of the picture, but 'twas *Christ* that fill'd up all its intervals and vacuities, and gave it all its graces, air, and life-touches. And this is no more than what the analogy of the christian dispensation required. The great end and design of *God* incarnate was, to perfect holiness as well as to retrieve happiness, to advance the interests of the divine life, and make us *partakers of the divine nature*, *2 Pet. i. 4.* *Heb. i. 3.* and accordingly as he himself was the express image of his Father's person, so 'twas requisite he should consign to us an express image, or correct copy of his Father's Will. He was to make us better men, and accordingly, 'twas fit he should give us a better law; a law that could not be satisfied, but by such a righteousness, as should exceed even the strictest among the *Jews*, that of the *Pharisees*. So that we are by no means released, but rather more deeply engaged in duty by the Gospel, as 'tis a law.

14. Nor secondly, are we released by it, as 'tis a covenant. Here indeed begin the abatements of the Gospel, not as to duty and obligation, for the Gospel makes all that our duty which the law did, and more; only (which in short is the true difference between the two covenants) it does not make the

the strict and exact performance of it the measure, the ultimate measure whereby we are to stand or fall ; but admits of pardon, which the law knew nothing of. Not of absolute pardon, for then the Gospel would be a covenant without a condition ; nor of pardon without repentance, and actual reformation of manners ; for then the Gospel as a covenant, would interfere with its self as a law, but upon the sole conditions of faith and repentance. For 'tis a great mistake to think that we are actually justified or pardoned by the satisfaction of Christ ; this wou'd be the most ready expedient to verifie the false charge of the Scribes and Pharisees, and make him in their sense a friend to publicans and sinners ; to encourage all manner of vice and immorality, and to turn the *mystery of godliness*, into a *mystery of iniquity*. No, Christ in this sense has redeemed no man. All that he either did, or could in wisdom do for us as satisfying, was in short, to instate us in a capacity and possibility of pardon and reconciliation, by procuring a grant from his Father, that faith and repentance should now be available to justification ; which without his satisfaction, would not have been accepted to that purpose. Whereby it appears, that he was so far from superseding the necessity of repentance and good works, that he designed only to make way for the success of them ; he did so much, that repentance might not be in vain ; and he did no more, that it might not be needless. And thus does the wisdom, as well as the goodness of God, lead us to repentance, by so ordering the matter, that we may obtain pardon with it, and not without it ; which are the two strongest engagements to action in any concern, that our reason either demands, or our deliberation can suggest.

15. This I conceive to be the true hypothesis and state of christianity, which I might yet farther confirm, by infinite authorities from scripture; which every where presses the necessity of good works, as conditions to our justification and acceptance before God: But I think the more rational and unprejudiced part of the world, are pretty well satisfied in that point, and know how to accommodate St. *James* and St. *Paul*, better than some late reconcilers. And besides, the wisdom of the hypothesis sufficiently approves it self; 'tis such, as becomes the perfections of the divine nature to exhibit to the world, and which the Angels may well desire to look into, 1 *Pet.* i. 12. For 'tis at once, fitted to the necessities of man, and to the honour of God, to the infirmities of the animal life, and to the advancement of the divine, to the relief of the sinner, and to the suppression of sin. Here *Mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other.* The sacrifice of the altar, does not prejudice the balance of the sanctuary; and the divine justice is so satisfy'd, that the necessity of holiness and obedience remains secured. Much is forgiven, and much is to be done; duty continues as fast as ever, and even the law of liberty is a service.

16. And now that this may not be thought a hard saying, and make some of Jesus his disciples to go back, (as once they did) and walk no more with him when they hear of duty, and something to be done; I shall now proceed to demonstrate the reasonableness of that service which christianity requires of us; which was the second general proposition I purpos'd to speak to.

17. Religion is so very agreeable, both to the inclinations and discoursings of human nature, that
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as none is capable of being religious but a rational creature, so 'tis almost impossible for a creature to be endued with reason, and not to be religious. Hence 'tis, that there is no Nation so barbarous and degenerate, but what has some religion or other; and tho' ignorant of the true object as well as manner of worship, yet rather than wholly abstain from religious applications, will adore implicitly, and erect an altar, *'Αγνάστῳ Θεῷ*, to the unknown God.

18. Nay, so great a congruity is there between religion, and the radical notions and sentiments of a human soul, that all mankind, except only some few distorted and anomalous heads (for there are monstrosities in the Soul as well as the body) are unanimously agreed upon the fundamental and substantial maxims of it; which for their correspondence to our rational natures, are usually distinguish'd by the name of natural religion. For there are practical as well as speculative principles; and that he who does no hurt, is to receive none, is as evident a proposition in morality, as that the whole is greater than its part, is in the Mathematicks; or, that nothing can be, and not be at once, is in the Metaphysics.

19. And as religion and natural religion, carry such a strict conformity to our rational faculties, so does revealed religion too. All the lines of this, as well as of the other, point all the way at, and at last centre in the happiness and welfare of mankind. 'Tis a pursuance of the same excellent end, only by more close and direct means. For God in all his intercourses with us, does accommodate himself to our natures; and as he will not forcibly determine us to good, because he has made us free; so neither does he require any thing

from us, but what is good, and consistent with reason, because he has made us rational. And altho' we cannot by this *Candle of the Lord*, Prov. xx. 27. find out some of the great and wonderful things of his law (for herein consists the formal difference between natural and reveal'd religion) yet when they are once proposed to us, they are highly approved by our intellectual relish, and strike perfect unisons to the voice of our reason; so that even he that transgresses the law (for 'tis of him the Apostle there speaks) *consents to the law that it is good*, Rom. vii. 16.

20. And indeed, were it not so, it would be as unfit for God to propose, as hard for man to receive; since even the prudence of a nation, is by no one thing either more justified or condemned, than by the good or ill contrivance of its laws. *Shall not* then the Law-giver of the whole world enact that which is right, *Gen. xviii. 25.* as well as *the judge of all the earth do right*? Shall he not be as wise in the framing of his law, as he is just in the execution of it? God in contriving the mechanism of the material world, display'd the excellency of his divine Geometry, and made all things in number, weight and measure. *He established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his discretion*, Jer. x. 12. And shall he not govern the intellectual world, with as much wisdom as he made the natural one? Questionless he does; and the law which he has prescribed to us, is as perfect and excellent, as that whereby he wrought the beauty and order of the universe. *For the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*, Psal. cxlv. He has accommodated his statutes and judgments, both to the infinite perfection of his own nature, and to the actual perfection and capacity

capacity of ours. *God is a Spirit*, and accordingly (as the Apostle tells us) *the law is spiritual*, Rom. vii. 14. Man is rational; and accordingly, the homage he is to pay him that made him so, is no other than a reasonable service.

21. But to be as compendious, and withal as just and distinct as may be in so copious and plentiful a subject; I consider, that as the whole rational nature of man consists of two faculties, understanding and will, (whether really or notionally distinct, I shall not now dispute) so christianity, whose end is to perfect the whole man, and give the last accomplishment both to our intellectual and moral powers, will be wholly absolved in these two parts, things to be believed, and things to be done. If therefore in both these, it can acquit it self at the bar of reason, the conclusion is evident, that it is a reasonable service.

22. First then, as to the things which are to be believed. Now these are either the authority and truth of the whole christian institution, or the truth of particular mysteries contained in it. The first of these will appear to be a reasonable object of faith two ways; first, from the nature of its design, and its excellent aptness to compass it; and secondly, from extrinsick arguments, and collateral circumstances. And first, 'tis recommended to us by the nature of its design, and its excellent aptness to compass it. It is (according to the precedent representation) a very wise and rational hypothesis, above the reason of man indeed, at first to contrive; but such as when proposed, it must needs approve and acquiesce in, as at once the power and wisdom of God, 1 Cor. i. 24. because (as I first observed, and shall hereafter more plainly demonstrate) 'tis so

admirably fitted to the honour of God, and to the necessities of man; thereby verifying that double part of the angelical anthem at the appearance of its divine Author, and at once bringing *Glory to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men*, Luk.ii.14.

23. And as it appears thus rational in its general idea or structure, and thereby speaks its self worthy of God; so secondly, that it came actually from him no rational person can doubt, that considers that conjugation of arguments, that cloud of witnesses, whereby its divine original stands attested. Such as are the variety of prophecies and prefigurations, their punctual and exact accomplishment in the Author of this Institution, his birth, life, miracles, and doctrine, his passion, death, resurrection, and ascension; with all the wonderful arrear and train of accidents that ensued for the confirmation of Christianity; such as the wonderful sustentation, protection, increase, and continuation of Christ's little flock, the christian church; the miraculous assistances, and miraculous actions of the Apostles; the harmony of the Evangelists; the constancy and courage of his first witnesses and martyrs; the defeat of the infernal powers in the silencing of oracles; the just punishment that lighted upon his enemies; and lastly, the completion of all prophecies that proceeded out of his divine mouth while on earth; which I shall here only point at in general, and leave to the enlargement of every man's private meditation.

24. Then as for the particular mysteries contained in christianity, I know but of three that threaten any disturbance to our philosophy; and those are the three catholick ones, the trinity, the hypostatick union, and the resurrection. Now concerning the two first, I observe, that they are indeed above the
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adequate comprehension of our reason; but not contrary or repugnant to it. For as we cannot conceive how these things can be, so neither do we positively and clearly perceive that they cannot be, as we do in contradictions and things contrary to reason. But as to the last, I don't in the least understand why it should be thought a thing incredible that God (whose very notion involves omnipotence) should raise the dead, *Acts* xxvi. 8. 'Tis true, we may be as ignorant how this can be, as in either of the former articles; but that it absolutely may be, there is much plainer evidence; especially to those who think it reasonable to believe a creation. Which if taken according to strictness of notion, for a production of something out of nothing, is most confessedly a greater and more difficult performance (as to the nature of the work) than the raising of the dead can be. Or if more largely, for producing something out of præexistent, but naturally unapt matter, yet 'tis still at least equal with it. He that with the bare energy of his omnipotent word, could inspirit the dead, stupid, void and formless mass, and make it move into a frame so elegant and harmonious, that the mere contemplation of its beauty and order, has by many philosophers been thought a sufficient entertainment of life, may easily be presumed to be able to do the same in the lesser world; and with effect to say to a rude and disorder'd heap of dust, the chaos of a humane body, stand up and live.

25. But after all, were this article of the resurrection much more thick-set with difficulties than it is, yet would we, before we venture to determine against its possibility, sit a while and consider, that we are nonplus'd at a thousand *phenomena*'s in nature, which if they were not done we should have

have thought them absolutely impossible ; (as for instance, to go no farther, the central libration of the earth) and'now they are, we cannot comprehend 'em ; that we have seen but a few of God's works, and understand yet fewer : And lastly, that as the possibility of the effect is above the comprehension of our reason, so the power of the agent is much more so ; we should discern great reason to be cautious how we set limits to the divine omnipotence ; and should rather support our faith against all objections, with that universal salvo of the Apostle, *I know whom I have believed*, 2 Tim. i. 12.

26. I descend now from the things that are to be believed, to the things that are to be done in the christian religion. And that those may appear to be a reasonable service, I consider first in general that the christian law is nothing else but the law of nature retrieved, explained, and set in a clearer light. Christ indeed, added some new precepts that were not in the law of *Moses*, but not any that were not in the law of nature. That he only restored and rescued from the sophistications of ill principles, and the corruptions of degenerate manners. For the clearer understanding of which proposition, 'tis to be observ'd, that the law of nature was twice retrieved, by *Moses*, and by Christ. *Moses* did it imperfectly, with a shaking hand, and with a rude pencil ; he adopted 'tis true, into his table, as many of nature's laws as were necessary to the present state and capacity of the jewish people ; but he did not exhaust the whole code and digest of nature. For there are many instances and branches of the natural law, which are no way reducible to the Mosaic tables, unless hooked in by long tedious consequences ; which not one of a thousand is able to deduce them from it ; as appears
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in the instances of gratitude to benefactors, love to enemies, forgiveness of injuries, humility, and the like. Which are excellencies of the first magnitude in the imperial constitutions of nature, but not clearly transcribed in the copy and extract of *Moses*, as too refined for the grossness of that age ; for the hardness of the jewish people, and for the infancy of that dispensation.

27. This therefore was reserved for the work of a diviner prophet, who should retrieve the law of nature to the full, and restore it as at the beginning. For he came (as he testifies of himself, *Mat.* v. 17. and as was before observed to another purpose) to fill up *Moses* his law, which implies, that it was imperfect and deficient ; and wherein should its defectiveness consist, but in wanting something of the natural law ? The christian law therefore, is only the law of nature retrieved.

28. This being premised, 'tis but now to consider what the formal notion of the law of nature is ; and we have found out one general measure whereby to judge of the reasonableness of the christian law. Now by the law of nature, I suppose, we all understand certain practical maxims or dictates, the observing or transgressing of which, considering the present system of the universe, have a natural connexion with the well or ill being of man, either as to his private or political capacity. I say, considering the present system of the universe. For no question, God might have so contrived the order and scheme of the creation, as that many of those things which are now for the interest, might have been for the disinterest of mankind ; as he might have so framed the texture of a humane body, that what is now wholesome and sovereign, might have been poisonous and pernicious ; and in
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this respect, I conceive the law of nature may be said to depend upon the arbitrary will of God; and to be mutable at his pleasure. But yet it still remains immutably true in the general, that whatsoever has such a natural ordination to, or connexion with the well or ill being of mankind, is good or evil respectively. This is the standard of morality, and immorality; and the essential difference between virtue and vice. And 'tis as immutably true, that some particular instances should have such a natural connexion, *stante rerum hypothese*, during the present state and order of things. Now whatever has so, is an essential branch of the law of nature; and obliges us to act, or not to act, respectively to the term of its ordination. So that *bonum honestum* is that which in the order of things, is *bonum utile*, and conduces as a natural medium to felicity; which is the end of man.

29. Hence then it follows, that the christian law, which is nothing else but the law of nature retrieved, consists only of such practical maxims, which carry a natural relation to the true interest and well-being of mankind; and consequently, contains nothing in it but what is reasonable, very reasonable to be done. But to evince this more particularly, 'twill be requisite to take a cursory view of the christian law. And this I shall consider, first, as I find it summ'd up in general by our blessed Saviour, in answer to the lawyer's question, what he should do to inherit eternal life. And, secondly, in some of those particular instances of it, which seem most to cross the present interest of mankind.

30. As to the first, the sum which our blessed Saviour gave of it was this: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with*

with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thy self, Matth. xxii. 37. Mark xii. 30. Luke x. 27. These he told him, were the two great commandments; and that there were none greater than these: And certainly, none more reasonable. For since man is not his own end, but has an amorous principle within him, which transports him to good without himself; since he is not a central and self-terminating being, but by the weight of his affections gravitates and inclines to something farther, what is more reasonable than that he fix upon God as his centre, who is as well the end as the author of his being? And since whatever portion of his love is not directed thither, will necessarily light (for it cannot be idle, and must fix somewhere) upon disproportionate and vain objects, which neither deserve it nor can satisfy it, and consequently will but vex and torment him; what can be more reasonable than that he unite and centre all the rays of his Affection, both intellectual and sensitive upon God; and according to the strictest sense of this great commandment, love him with all his heart, soul and mind? vision and love make up the full composition of our celestial happiness hereafter; and they are the nearest approach we can make to it here.

31. Nor is the second great commandment less reasonable than the first. The truest and most effectual way a man can take to love himself, is to love his neighbour as himself. For since man is a necessitous and indigent creature (of all creatures the most indigent) and since he cannot upon his own solitary stock, supply the necessities of his nature, (the want of society being one of them) and since of all creatures here below, none is capable of doing him either so much good, or so
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much harm, as those of his own species ; as 'twill be his best security to have as many friends, and as few enemies as he can ; so, as a means to this, to hate and injure none, but to love and oblige all, will be his best policy. So far is the state of nature from being (according to the elements of the *Leviathan*) a state of hostility and war, that there is no one thing that makes more apparently for the interest of mankind, than universal charity and benevolence. And indeed, would all men but once agree to espouse one anothers interest, and prosecute the publick good truly and faithfully, nothing would be wanting to verifie and realize the dreams of the golden age, to anticipate the millennial happiness, and bring down Heaven upon earth. Society would stand firm and compact, like a mathematical frame of architecture, supported by mutual dependencies and coherencies ; and every man's kindnesses would return again upon himself, in the circle and reciprocation of love.

32. But besides this consideration of interest, there is another which equally contributes to recommend this law of universal benevolence ; and perhaps with more sweetness of insinuation than the former, and that is pleasure. These two are put together by the psalmist, who tells us, *that 'tis both good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity*, Psal. cxxxiii. 1. There is certainly, a most divine pleasure in the acts and expresses of benevolence ; so that if God may be said to take pleasure in any one thing, besides the richness of his own infinity, it must be in the communication of it. Sure I am, no man can do good to another, without recreating and feasting his own spirit ; nay, even the most happy and self-sufficient man, who as to his interest, has the least need to be kind and

and obliging, yet as to his pleasure, has the greatest. For he enjoys his happy state most, when he communicates it, and takes a partner with him into his paradise, and receives a more vigorous joy from the reflection, than from the direct incidency of his happiness.

33. I might here take occasion to shew, the reasonableness of justice and honesty; with other particular branches of this great law: But the necessity of these is so notorious (no society being able to subsist without them) and withall so attested by the common vote and experience of the world (it being the business of all human laws, and the end of all civil government, to engage men to the observance of them) that I shall not need to make any plea in their behalf. Instead therefore of lending any farther light to what shines already so conspicuously by its own, I shall now proceed to justify the christian law in some of those instances which seem most to cross the present interest of mankind.

34. There are some precepts of the christian law which seem directly, and in their whole kind, to be against the Interest of Man. (For as for those which may accidentally and in some junctures of circumstances, I shall consider them afterwards.) Now these I shall derive from that abstract of christian philosophy, the divine sermon on the mount. The first instance shall be in the precept of meekness, which our divine law-giver has extended so far as *μηδὲ πονηρῶν μὴ ἀντιστάσαι*, that we resist not evil, *Mat. v. 39.* which is not to be understood in prejudice either of the civil sword, or of legal prosecutions for the reparation of injuries (for this would be to give the worst of men a continual advantage against the best) nor of public wars between distinct kingdoms (for they being

ing under no common jurisdiction, have no other expedient whereby to right themselves when injur'd) but only as to private persons, who by virtue of this precept are not permitted (unless in apparent danger of life ; for then the law of self-preservation takes place, the benefit of other laws being not at hand ; I say, are not permitted) to retaliate evil, but obliged rather with their divine master, to *give their backs to the smiters, and their cheeks to them that pluckt off the hair*, Isa. 1. 6.

35. Now this may seem a very disadvantageous and inconvenient command, in as much as it may be said by tying up our hands, to expose us to all manner of contumelies and affronts, and invite the ill treatments of rude and disingenuous spirits. But whoever seriously considers the matter will find, that pure and simple revenge is a thing very absurd, and very productive of ill consequences ; and in some respects, worse than the first injury. For that may have some ends of profit and advantage in it ; but to do another man a diskindness merely because he has done me one, serves to no good purpose, and to many ill ones. For it contributes nothing to the reparation of the first injury (it being impossible that the act of any wrong should be rescinded, tho' the permanent effect may) but instead of making up the breach of my happiness, it increases the objects of my pity, by bringing in a new misery into the world more than was before, and occasions fresh returns of malice, one begetting another like the encirclings of disturb'd water, till the evil becomes fruitful, and multiplies into a long succession, a genealogy of mischiefs. And by this time, I think the man has reason to repent him of his revenge ; and to be convinced of the equity of the law which forbids it.

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36. The next instance I shall mention, is that of loving enemies. This runs higher than the former, that being only negative, not to return evil ; but this positive, to do good. A strange precept one would think, and highly contradictory to reason as well as nature. But whoever considers the great usefulness of love and benevolence to the interest of Society, will quickly perceive, that he ought not to be disingaged from the observance of so necessary a duty, upon so slight a ground as another's default in it. I grant, 'tis neither reasonable, nor possible, to love an enemy for being so, (that is no proper motive of love) but yet 'tis very reasonable to love the man notwithstanding his enmity. Because the necessity of charity is so indispensable, that it ought to oblige in all cases. And besides, as by this means all enmity is certainly prevented on one side (which is of very great consideration to the publick peace) so is it the likeliest method to bring over the other. Kindnesses will at length prevail upon him, who is proof against all the sense of duty and conscience, and the coals of fire which are heaped upon his head (when nothing else will do it) will melt him down into love and sweetness.

37. There is one instance more, wherein the christian law seems not to consult the interest of humane life, and that is in the matter of divorce ; which our Saviour allows in no case but that of adultery. Now this also seems to be one of the hard sayings. For the natural propension to procreation is not to be satisfied out of marriage, and marriage by this appendage seems to be such a burthen that the disciples might well say, *if the case of man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry*, Matth. xix. 10. But yet upon consideration, this

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also will appear to be a very reasonable confinement. For first, all the supposable inconveniencies of this restraint may be in a great measure prevented by prudent and wise choice. But suppose they cannot, yet, secondly, as 'twould be most advisable for some men to marry, though with this restraint, so is marriage with this restraint better for society than without it. For were there liberty of divorce upon other grounds, every petty dislike would never want a pretence for a dissolution; and then the same inconveniencies would ensue, as if there were no such thing as the matrimonial institution; such as diminution of affection to children, neglect of their education, and the like; besides the perpetual quarrels and animosities between the parties themselves so divided, and their respective relatives, all which would bring more inconveniencies upon society, than those which are pretended to be avoided by distending and enlarging the licence of divorce.

38. Now if to this apology for the reasonableness of christianity, taken from its conduciveness and natural tendency to the interest of humane life, we farther add, the dominion and right that God has over us, the great benefits wherewith he has already prevented us, and the exceeding weight of glory laid up in reversion for us; and would we farther consider, that holiness has a natural ordination to the happiness of Heaven as well as of earth, that 'tis among the *τὰ ἐχούμενα σωτηρίας*, the things that accompany, or are essentially retaining to Salvation; so that would God in mercy dispense with it as a conditional, yet we could not be happy without it, as a natural qualification for Heaven. Farther yet, would we consider the great easiness as well as manifold advantage of christianity,

christianity, that many instances of duty are agreeable to the inclinations of nature ; and that where there is a law in our members that runs counter to that of the mind, we have the aids and assistances of grace ; that God has requir'd nothing of us but what is substantially within the verge and compass of humane nature ; for to believe, repent and love, are all natural acts ; we believe some stories, we repent of some follies, we love some men ; and God obliges us but to believe him, to repent of follies against him, and to love him. The acts are the same for their substance, though not in their determination. Lastly, would we consider how much all this is confirm'd by the argument of practice and experience ; that the Devil has more apostates than Christ ; that the number of those who leave sin, and come over to virtue, is much greater than of those that leave virtue, and come over to sin, the conclusion would be placed beyond the reach of controversy. That christianity is a reasonable service, and that the precepts of our excellent lawgiver both begin, continue and end with a beatitude.

39. I can now foresee but one objection of any moment, which the argument of this discourse is liable to ; which is, that although virtue and vice have a natural ordination to the happiness and misery of life respectively, yet it may so happen by the intervening of some accidents, that this connexion of things may be broken off ; and that a man may be a loser by virtue, and a gainer by vice, as in the instances of martyrdom and secure theft. And here the question will be, whether it be then reasonable to act virtuously, and unreasonable to do the contrary. To this I answer, first, that it may be justly question'd (notwithstanding

the intervention of any accidents) whether a man may be virtuous to his disadvantage, or vicious to his advantage, even as to this present state, considering the internal satisfaction and acquiescence, or dissatisfaction and molestation of spirit that attend the practice of virtue and vice respectively. But supposing he may; then secondly, I reply, that here come in the rewards and punishments of another life, to supply the natural sanction of the law. Then thirdly, to the second instance I offer this in peculiar, that altho' in some circumstances I might be dishonest to my present gain, yet 'tis very reasonable, that all should be obliged to the law of justice. Because if every one should be permitted to use secret frauds (and all may as well as one) the evil would come about again, even to him whom we just now supposed a gainer by his theft: And as to the publick, 'twould be all one as if there were no property; and then for want of encouragement and security, the final issue of the matter would be, an utter neglect and disimprovement of the earth, and a continual disturbance of the publick peace. So that when all's done, Honesty is the best Policy; and to live most happily is to live most virtuously and religiously. So true is that of the Psalmist, *I see that all things come to an end, but thy commandment is exceeding broad,* Psal. cxix.

40. From what has been hitherto discoursed, I shall now briefly deduce some practical inferences, and conclude. Since then our religion is so reasonable a service, 'twill follow hence in the first place, that there may be a due exercise and use of reason in divine matters; and that whatsoever is apparently contrary to reason, ought not be obtruded as of divine authority, nor be accounted as
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any part of the christian religion. An inference wherein the faith of the Church of *Rome* is not a little concern'd.

41. 'Twill follow secondly, that no man ought to be persecuted, or have any external violence done him for his religion, supposing that by overt acts, he give no disturbance to the publick. For since God has required nothing of us but what is agreeable to our reason, why should man ?

42. 'Twill follow thirdly, that sin is the very height and extremity of folly and disingenuity. Of folly, because it crosses and defeats the excellent end of man, which is to live happily and commodiously. And of disingenuity, because 'tis committed against him, who when he might by virtue of his supreme dominion have imposed upon us arbitrary laws (as that given to *Adam*) or hard and severe ones (as that to *Abraham*) has been graciously pleased to make nothing the condition of our happiness, but what upon other accounts would have been most advisable to be done. This certainly will render sin exceeding sinful, and leave the sinner without the least shadow of an excuse. We commonly derive the aggravations of sin from the greatness of God ; but without question, his goodness will supply us with as many ; and in this sense also 'twill be true to say, *As is his majesty, so is his mercy.*

43. Lastly, hence 'twill follow, that we ought to perform this rational will of God with angelical alacrity and constancy, partly for its own excellency, as 'tis a pursuance of our interest, and partly out of gratitude and generosity to God, for giving us such excellent laws ; in keeping of which there is so great reward. For not only the end of our religion is happiness, but even her very ways

are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Quintilian enquiring why former ages afforded better Orators than the latter, resolves the problem into this; because there were then greater encouragements and rewards. And if greater encouragements will make good Orators, why should they not make good men? Let us then make it our daily endeavour, as we do our daily prayer, that this excellent will of God may be done here on *Earth*, as it is in *Heaven*; and the more we do so, the more we shall still be convinc'd that it is our reasonable service.



A DISCOURSE concerning Perseverance in Holiness.

1. ALL that is of any moment for the full discharging of this subject, will be absolved in these three considerations. First, that man has one way or other sufficient power to persevere in a course of holiness if he will, otherwise all exhortations would be in vain. Secondly, that 'tis also possible for him to fall from a state of holiness; otherwise they would all be superfluous. And lastly, by shewing him what vast encouragements, what infinite engagements he has to stand.

2. I begin with the first, that man has one way or other sufficient power to persevere in a course of holiness if he will. Where by perseverance, I do not understand a continuedly uniform, equal course of

of obedience, and such as is not interrupted with the least act of sin, (for this is a perfection not to be hoped for, under the disadvantages of mortality) but only such a constancy of obedience, as excludes all contrary habits; and likewise all such acts of sin as are said directly to waste the conscience; those I mean, which are committed against the clear and express dictate, either of natural reason, or supernatural revelation. And withal (to compleat the character) such an obedience as is attended with a sedulous care and hearty endeavour to correct and subdue, even those pitiable infirmities, which can never be wholly put off in this state, but will always adhere like spots, to the brightest star in the firmament. This I conceive, to be all one with the disposition of soul, which with more compendiousness we usually call sincerity, in opposition to a perfect and sinless obedience. Now that man has sufficient power to persevere in such a course of life as is here described, (not to call in the assistance of any other argument) seems to me evidently demonstrable from this single consideration, that to be found in the state above-mention'd is the condition of the new covenant, upon the fulfilling of which, all our hopes of pardon and salvation depend. I do not say 'tis the indispensable condition of our salvation, that we persevere uninterruptedly even in this state of evangelical righteousness (it being possible for a man after an interruption of a salvable state, to recover into it again, as is plain from the case of *David*, *St. Peter*, and many others) but that we be found finally in this state, is the condition of our salvation. *For if the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquities and dies in them, the righteousness that he hath done shall*

not be mentioned; in the sin that he hath sinned shall be dye. Well then, if salvation be not to be had out of this state, then it follows, that it must never become impossible to a man without his own fault, to be found in it, since 'tis repugnant to the very nature of a covenant (much more of this great covenant of mercy) to have a condition annex'd to it; which in some circumstances, and that without our fault, may prove impossible.

3. The condition then of this new covenant, must be as possible to man in this state of degeneracy, now his locks are shaven, and his great strength is departed from him, as the condition of the first covenant was to him in his primitive might and vigour. *Do this and live*, is equally common to both; the only difference (except only that in this corrupt state of humane nature, the grace of God is become necessary to enable us to do what he shall accept) lies in this that is to be done, not in the possibility of the performance. Or if there are degrees of possibility, the advantage ought rather to lie on this side, this being (as was hinted before) a covenant of grace and mercy.

4. Well then, if to be found finally in the state above described, be the indispensable condition of our salvation; and if for that very reason (as it has been prov'd) it must not in any circumstance become impossible without our fault, it unavoidably follows, that 'tis also possible to persevere in it without interruption; because otherwise, we having not the disposal of our own lives, it will oftentimes prove impossible for us (and that without our own fault) to be found finally in that state which is the condition of salvation; which is contrary to the supposition. The short is (to speak all in a word) the possibility of being found in a sal-
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vable state cannot be sufficiently secur'd, without a possibility of always persevering in it; and therefore I conclude it possible for a man to do so; which was the thing I undertook to prove.

5. But now left man upon a survey of his natural strength, and of the auxiliaries of the divine grace, should pronounce himself absolutely impregnable, and should begin to say in his heart (as the Psalmist did in another case) *I shall never be remov'd, thou Lord of thy goodness hast made my hill so strong:* 'tis high time to turn the perspective, and give him a more near, full, and distinct view of his condition, that instead of stretching himself upon the bed of security, he may learn to work out his salvation with fear and trembling. Which we shall do, by advancing to the second thing proposed, which is, that although man has sufficient power to persevere if he will, yet 'tis also possible for him to fall from a state of holiness. *Navigat enim adhuc*, for he is still upon the waters; and tho' with the use of diligence and prudent conduct, he may decline both rocks and shallows, yet if he venture to sleep within the vessel which he should govern, upon a groundless presumption that an Angel will be his pilot, and that he shall be infallibly steer'd to the right point by the arm of Omnipotence, he may notwithstanding the past success of his voyage, and his confidence of the future, be shipwreck'd even within sight of the haven.

6. I confess, when I consider with what strength and combination of argument, christianity both as to faith and practice, does approve it self to be the most rational thing in the world. When I consider the nobleness of its original (God being its author) the excellency of its nature, (it being most agreeable to, and perfective of our best faculties) its

its wholesome effects and operations, (the interests of Kingdoms and States as well as of private persons depending upon it,) and lastly, the greatness of its end, which is no less than everlasting bliss and happiness: I say, when I consider all this, I am ready to conclude it the most prodigious thing in nature, that so very few should be in love with the Beauty of Holiness, were I not immediately surpris'd with a greater miracle, which is, that many of those few, after some considerable progress in virtue, retract their best choice; and after the good Angel has brought them within sight of the mountain of safety, look back upon the region of wickedness.

7. This certainly is a condition no less strange than deplorable, and calls for our wonder as well as our pity. 'Tis true indeed, ignorance of the sweets of religion may something lessen the wonder of not embracing it, and the food of Angels may lie neglected on the ground so long, as men wist not what it is; but for those who are once *enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the power of the world to come*, one would think it as difficult for such to fall away, as the Apostle assures us 'tis, to renew them again to repentance.

8. But such is the imperfection and unsteadiness of human nature, that from the beginning of things there have been instances of this kind. Paradise could not preserve man in his innocence, and the garden of the Lord degenerated into a wilderness. Neither is this to be observ'd only in man, who sits in the lowest form of intellectual beings, but the very Angels also, who are greater in power and might, are charged with folly for leaving their
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own habitation, *Job. iv. 18.* Those bright sons of the morning could not long endure to be happy ; but grew giddy with the sublimity of their station, and fell from the heights of glory. And altho' the blessed Inhabitants of that serene and peaceful mansion are now (as 'tis piously believed) fully confirmed in holiness and happiness, yet man, like this sublunary region which falls to his lot to inherit, is still nothing else but a scene of changes and revolutions ; but in nothing so changeable, as in that wherein he ought to be most fix'd, the practice of virtue and religion. 'Tis a narrow and rugged path, and he that treads surest is not secure from falling.

9. This will plainly appear to him that considers, that no habit, tho' contracted by ever so great a repetition of acts, does necessitate the faculty, but only disposes it to act with greater facility ; and consequently, leaves it still indifferent to opposite operations. Whence 'tis easie to conceive, that an habit of holiness may by degrees, be abolish'd by contrary actions. For as this habit was at first begotten by frequent acts, so may it be destroyed by the opposite ones : and (what is more) a contrary habit may be at length produced.

10. This I say is very possible in the ordinary course of things ; and that God should interpose here with an irresistible power to prevent it, we have no grounds from scripture or reason to expect ; and therefore 'twou'd be a most intolerable presumption to rely upon it. *My grace is sufficient for thee,* was the utmost degree of consolation vouchsafed to the chosen vessel ; he had God's faithfulness engaged for it, that he should not be tempted above his strength, but yet notwithstanding this sufficiency, it must have been possible for him to have fallen from

from his own steadfastness, otherwise I cannot imagine to what purpose he should, *κατακαθάρσει τὸ σῶμα, keep under his body, and bring it into subjection,* and all for this reason, lest that by any means when he had preach'd to others, he himself should be a cast-away.

II. What, did the Angels let fall their crowns of glory, and shall man pretend to indefectibility? He is inferiour to them in nature, and shall he become superiour to them by grace? Shall grace set him above the Angels that fell, and make him equal to those that stand? But those that stand, stand by glory, even that of the beatifick vision. The clear and full vision of him who is infinite in goodness, yea the very essence of it, determines them to good, and so renders them impeccabile. And shall grace then be supposed to have an influence equal to that of glory? But not to go so high as this, we need only reflect upon human nature in its best condition, that of innocence and integrity. Man then confess'd the instability of his nature by the abuse of his liberty, and shall he now pretend to that stability which he had not then? If it be said that there is no absurdity in supposing fallen man by grace to have a privilege beyond what innocent man had by nature. I answer, that in some respects this may be true. But as to the present case, 'tis to be remember'd that grace is a supplement to corrupt nature, to remedy its defects, and to help its infirmities. And tho' it be not only a necessary, but also a very powerful remedy, yet it seems not so reasonable to suppose that what was intended as a remedy to human nature in its corrupt and infirm state, should exceed the measures and possibilities of that same nature when it was

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was perfect and entire, at least that it should ordinarily do so.

12. For it may be it is not absolutely to be deny'd, but that to some men who have for a long time given excellent proof of their obedience, and with unwearied resolution fought the Lord's bat-tels, God may at length vouchsafe such a plentiful portion of grace, and so stablish them with his free spirit, that they shall never depart from him, partly to reward their past fidelity, and partly, that they may become burning lamps, to give constant light in the temple of God. For since 'tis confess'd on all hands, that God by way of punishment does withdraw his grace from some obstinate sinners, and give them up after a long abuse of his mercy, to the fulfilling of their own lusts, it may not be unreasonable, to suppose on the other hand, that God may be so favourable to some of his most eminent servants, who have for a long time acquitted themselves in the severest trials, as at length to give his angels a peculiar charge over them, to keep them in all their ways. And this supposition seems not a little countenanc'd from what the spirit says to the Church of *Philadelphia*, *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth*, Rev. iii. 10.

13. But altho' this be granted, yet it makes nothing against our present assertion, as every one must acknowledge that attends to these two considerations. First, That these are extraordinary instances of the divine favour, vouchsafed only to extraordinary persons, and to extraordinary purposes; and consequently, when we treat of God's ordinary dealings with the sons men, must not come

come into computation. And secondly, that even these extraordinary persons whom we suppose to be at length thus highly favour'd, were notwithstanding for a great part of their lives, in a defecible condition; and that they are now no longer so, is supposed to be the reward of their past fidelity; so that they may say with the Psalmist, *This I had because I kept thy commandments*, Psal. 119.

14. What hinders then, but that it be concluded possible for the generality of men at all times, and for all men at some times, to fall from a state of holiness; and after they have tasted the liberty of the sons of God, to become again the servants of corruption? And sure those that assert the contrary, destroy not only the excellency, but the nature of obedience, defeat and evacuate the design of all Scripture exhortation; which would be as impertinent upon their supposition, as to exhort him to continue to live who is immortal, pervert the order of things, arrogating to themselves in this state of probation, the portion of confirm'd Saints: And lastly, assume to themselves as much as in this part may be allow'd to our blessed Saviour himself, and more perhaps than upon the principles of a very learned divine will be allow'd him, according to whom, even Christ himself while on earth was not without a power of sinning. See *Episcopus's* examination of the opinion of *Camero* concerning grace and free-will; as also his answer to his defence. Did our Saviour seem to shrink at the apprehension of his sad hour, and to be at a stand whether he should drink off his bitter cup! Did his danger seem so considerable, that he was fain to betake himself to his great antidote prayer, and borrow courage from the consolation of an Angel? And does mere man sit careless and unconcern'd,

concern'd, secure of the issues of eternity? See the *indecorum*, the Lord is in his agony, and the disciples sleep on, and take their rest. But I think I have said enough to awaken them out of their dangerous slumber, and to convince them that all is not so safe as they dream; and that notwithstanding the present firmness of their station, there is still left a possibility of falling.

15. But now left this possibility of falling be reduced to act, I proceed to consider the vast encouragements, the infinite engagements that he who is holy has, to be holy still. And these I shall chuse to represent to him in these two general considerations. First, that he has made the best choice that he could possibly have made; and consequently, 'tis against all the reason in the world that he should rescind it. Secondly, that if notwithstanding he does rescind it, he will not only lose the advantage of his best choice, but incur an opposite portion of misery; and that in a greater measure than other sinners. These I take to be the most proper considerations to enforce the grand duty of perseverance.

16. The consequence of the first argument proceeds upon this principle, that that choice which is best, is not to be rescinded. This proposition is so evident, that it can hardly admit, much less need any proof; and 'tis practically confess'd by every man throughout the whole tenour of his life. For no man retracts his choice, till he has alter'd the dictate of his understanding, (for otherwise he would chuse evil under the very formality of evil) and has entertain'd other apprehensions of the object, than he had when he first chose it. And this is that which makes up the entire notion of repentance, which is nothing else in its precise idea

idea, when abstracted from particular matter, but a retractation of a former choice, proceeding from the alteration of the particular dictate, disallowing that now, which was before approved. For this a man never does, till he thinks he has reason to do so. And upon this account 'tis, that God is *ἀμεταμέλιτος*, and cannot properly repent, because his understanding being infinite, and reaching out to all the possibilities of things, must needs dictate to his will after one uniform and constant manner; it being impossible he should either discover something afterward which he did not comprehend at first, or lose the apprehension of something which he did. But the understanding of man being finite and imperfect at the best, and oftentimes corrupted and byas'd by his passion, has at several times different apprehensions of things; and being sometimes under, and sometimes out of the cloud, dictates to the will as the Sun shines upon the earth, with a disuniform and unequal light. Whereupon (as it frequently happens in Courts and Senates) many decrees are enacted, which at the next session are repealed again; tho' with this unhappiness, that sometimes her second thoughts are worse than her first; and that she sometimes retracts that which she should persevere in, as well as perseveres in that which she should retract. But whatever the retractation really be, 'twas always thought for the best when made; so that he that repents him of his holiness, as well as he that repents him of his sin, does it upon the change of his practical dictate, judging that not to be best now, which before was so pronounc'd; and consequently, they both own the truth of the foremention'd principle, that that choice which is best, is not to be rescinded.

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17. This being firm, all the business in question now will be, whether he that is holy has made the best choice or no. And if it shall appear that he has, then by the principle just now laid down, he ought not, nay, he cannot be so much a contradiction to himself, as to rescind it. Now to convince him that he has made the best choice, I desire him to consider, first, That he has chosen that which God had chosen for him before; so that his choice stands recommended to him by the authority of infinite and unerring wisdom. And this is foundation enough to warrant a certain (tho' implicit) persuasion, that it must needs be best for him. I say best for him, for God being already possess'd of all possible perfection, cannot act any thing for any self-advantage; and therefore whatsoever he does is for the good of his creatures. For there is this difference between the divine love and created love, that the one springs from indigency, and the other from fulness and redundancy. And therefore as God did not at first speak this world into being, to raise himself a monument of power and divine architecture, so neither does he govern the rational part of it by the precepts of religion, out of any self-design, as if he feasted his nostrils with the perfumes of the altar, or his ears with the accents of an Hallelujah. *For can a man be profitable to God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Or is it gain to him that thou makest thy way perfect?* Job xxii. No certainly, and therefore when he chalk'd out the ways of righteousness and holiness for man to walk in, it could not be for any self-end, but purely for the good of man, and consequently (if infinite wisdom be to be trusted) it must be his best choice to be holy.

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18. Secondly, let him consider, that the practice of religion consults a man's whole interest; and partly of its own nature, and partly by divine constitution, tends to make him happy in all his capacities; and consequently must needs be his best choice. As for impious and unjust practices, if they do at any time promote a man's private and secular interest, yet 'tis always both at the expence of the publick, and of his own eternal welfare; and then, *What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* But now this is the peculiar gain of godliness, that it has the promise both of this life, and of that which is to come; that it conduces to our advantage, both here and hereafter. Interest and duty, are immediately link'd together in this life; and every virtue has a natural sanction of reward and punishment respectively attending it, as might be shewn even with mathe-

Dr. Cumberland.

matick evidence upon the principles of a late writer of our own, which are very capable of such an improvement. All that I shall farther say of that matter is this, that there is a difference in things antecedent to that which is made in them by the law of God. Which difference is this, that some things naturally tend to our hurt, and some to our good, which is the fundamental ground of the distinction of moral good and evil. Those things are morally good which tend to effect our good or to make us happy, and those things are morally evil which have in their natures a contrary tendency: Now God in giving his Laws (like an infinitely wise and good Law-giver) has follow'd this distinction in nature, and has accommodated his laws to this antecedent difference in the nature of things, commanding us those things which are naturally conducive

conducive to our good, and forbidding us the contrary. So that that is made to be the matter of our duty, which in it self is really our interest. And although it happen sometimes through the unreasonableness and injustice of men, that duty and interest interfere, and that virtue be defeated of the portion she is naturally endow'd with, yet she shall recover her own again at the great assize, at the day of the revelation of the righteous judgments of God. And altho' instead of being rewarded, it be our fortune to suffer for righteousness sake, yet we christians know, that it entitles us to one of our Saviour's beatitudes; and we are also well assured from one whose case it was to be so dealt with, that *the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed; and that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us* καὶ ἡ βραχυκαιρία ἡμῶν αἰώνιον βάρους δόξης, *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* So that whatever difficulties and hardships religion may sometimes engage a man in, yet when the whole account is cast up, he will find the practice of religion as gainful, as the belief of it is rational; that to be holy is his best choice; and that he has infinite reason to pray in the words of *Balaam, let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.*

19. And now one would think, that one who has so great and so apparent reason for his choice, as the religious man has, should not easily be brought to retract it, and say with those in *Malachi, it is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that I have kept his ordinances?* But because 'tis observ'd to be the nature of man to be more strongly affected with punishments than rewards, I shall for his better establishment in the purposes of holiness, present him with the second general consideration, which is,

that if notwithstanding the excellency of his choice, he does retract it, he will not only lose the advantages of it, but also incur an opposite portion of misery; and that in greater measure than other sinners.

20. That he will lose the advantages of his first and best choice, is plain from the whole tenour of the Gospel, perseverance to the end, being the express condition of salvation. And that he will incur an opposite portion of misery, is plain from the double sanction of rewards and punishments, where-with God has bound us to the observance of his otherwise sufficiently profitable laws. And altho' this be sufficient in the severest tryals, to preserve us from apostacy; and when flames of fire surround us, to secure our footing in the holy ground, yet thus far is but to dye the common death of sinners, and to be visited after the visitation of the impenitent. *But now if the Lord make a new thing, and the deserter of piety be punish'd in a greater measure than other sinners, then shall ye understand that this man has provoked the Lord.*

21. And that he shall be so punish'd, is the peculiar consideration which I shall now insist upon; and which I prove from the heinousness of his crime, apostasie having in it many degrees of evil beyond the common state of sin. *For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*

22. But to represent the heinousness of apostasie a little more particularly; and that this sin above
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all others may appear to be exceeding sinful, let me desire the unthinking man to consider, first, that he that falls back from a course of holy living, does in a special manner grieve the Holy Spirit of God. He sacrilegiously takes that from him, which he had once most solemnly consecrated to his service; he defiles the seat of his residence, alienates it to profane uses, blots out the tetragrammation of the temple, and suffers it to be no longer holiness to the Lord. He disinherits his God, disturbs his rest, and forces him to leave the habitation whereof he had once said, *this shall be my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.* Add to this affront of the Holy Spirit that resided in him, that he grieves the Angels that attended him, and with much concern and hopes, minister'd to his salvation. Those disappointed and unsuccessful guardians, with sorrow cry out to one another, as the Angels did in the Jewish temple, when thro' many profanations it was no longer fit for their charge *μεταβαλωμεν εστυθιον*, let us depart hence. Neither does he disappoint the tutelar ministers of his salvation only, but causes universal grief in Heaven. Those kind and compassionate spirits, who before rejoyc'd at his repentance and conversion, and began to reckon upon the new accession they should have to the quire of Heaven, now tune their harps to the strains of sorrow, and lament the disappointment of their hopes.

*Josephus de Bell.
Jud. lib. 7.*

23. Consider secondly, that to the sin of apostasie is added the circumstance of inexcusableness. The man has enter'd within the veil, has seen the inner beauties of the holy place, and has been taught the secrets of the Kingdom; his understanding has been instructed, and his will has been entertain'd; he

has given proof of his powers and abilities, and has conquer'd the steepest part of the mount; his difficulties lessen, and his strength increases; so that if now he retreat, and slide back to the bottom of the hill, he has nothing whereby to excuse himself either before God or man; but stands in the highest sense of the phrase, *Αυτοκατακριτος*, self condemn'd. We generally make some allowances for the miscarriages of those who were never enlightened, and have had no acquaintance with the substantial delights of religion, and the satisfaction of sober counsels, because indeed they knew no better; but when we are told, that the wisest of men, after a censure of vanity, pass'd upon the whole creation, and a long application of his mind to the excellent theories of moral and divine knowledge, was yet towards the evening of his life, when the sun drove hard, and the shadows encreas'd, drawn aside by strange women; and that his wisdom departed from him like the dream wherein it was given him, this indeed we may lament, but cannot excuse.

24. Consider thirdly, that he who falls from a state of holiness, must needs do strange violence to his reason. If he be a new convert, he cannot sure without great reluctance, defile that temple which he has so lately swept and garnish'd. And if he be a saint of some considerable standing, sure he must be the more unwilling to break off a long dated innocence, for the unsatisfying pleasure of a moment. For tho' men of desperate and bankrupt fortunes have little regard to their expences, because should they save them, the tide of their estates won't rise much the higher; and so they think it impertinent to be frugal, when there's no hopes of being rich, Yet they that see their heaps begin to swell, and that they are within the neighbourhood of wealth, think

think it worth while to be saving, and improve their growing stock. But then after a long thrift and sparing, to throw away the hard purchase of many years in one nights gaming, is one of the prodigies of folly and indiscretion. And yet this is the very case of him that lets go his integrity.

25. Consider fourthly and lastly, that the apostate has the greatest ingratitude imaginable to aggravate his folly. Indeed, every sinner is a very ungrateful person, because he trespasses against his best friend and benefactor, against him that made him, against him that died for him, and against him that follows him with the daily offers of his grace; and lays stratagems of mercy for his reformation. But the back-sliding man sins against greater mercies, endearments and obligations yet. He has liv'd in the service of his Lord, has receiv'd the earnest of his spirit, he has been of his family; nay more, he has been call'd his friend, he has eaten with him at his table, he has dwelt under the endearments of familiär converse, he has been with him in his banqueting house, where the banner that was over him was love, he has plighted his faith, given his heart, and said with passion, *my beloved is mine and I am his*; so that to turn renegade now, is the greatest baseness and ingratitude conceivable; 'tis to betray his Lord and Master after the obligations of intimacy and discipleship; 'tis to break the tables of his law, after he has been with him on the mount, and seen the back parts of his glory.

26. Since therefore the apostate has so many peculiar circumstances to aggravate his crime beyond the guilt of common sinners, *of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who has thus trodden under foot the Son of God; and has counted the*

blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing; and has done despite to the spirit of grace? which was the last general consideration.

27. What now remains, but that upon a serious consideration of the premisses, he that is holy think himself highly concern'd to be holy still. *That he lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees; that he hold fast that which he has, that no man takes his crown; that he unravel not his holy vows, nor put himself back in the accounts of eternity; that he be not frightened or laught out of his religion, since 'tis his best and wisest choice, and will be found to be so in spite of all the prophane drollery of supposed wits, in the day when wisdom shall be justified of all her children. For then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours. And they shall say within themselves, this was he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach; we fools counted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbred among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints! Wherefore again, let him that is holy, be holy still. Let him but maintain his station during his short warfare here on earth, and he shall be hereafter confirm'd both in holiness and happiness; and be fix'd in that centre where he shall for ever rest. For so says the Spirit to the churches, him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, Rev. 3. 12.*



*A Discourse concerning HEROICK
PIETY; wherein its notion is stated,
and its practice recommended.*

1. **S**INCE the practice of religion in general, is not only the natural instrument of our present happiness, but also the only and indispensable condition of our future; one would think there were but little left for the orator to do here; the naked efficacy of self-love, and a serious consideration of our true and main interest, being sufficient to engage us upon religious performances. But he that shall undertake to recommend the practice of heroick piety, has a much heavier task, not only because he persuades to higher degrees of virtue, but because he is to address himself wholly to a weaker principle. For since our interest is secured by the performance of necessary duty, there remains nothing but a principle of generosity to carry us on to the higher advances, the more glorious achievements in religion. And what small probability there is that it will often do so, may appear from the ill success of the former and more prevailing principle. For if the greatest interest imaginable can prevail with so very few to perform what is indispensably necessary to secure it, sure there is little hopes that generosity, which is a much weaker principle, should engage many upon greater performances.

2. But yet, notwithstanding these discouragements, since our blessed Saviour has taught us to pray, not only for the performance of God's will in general, but that it be *done on earth as it is in Heaven;*

Heaven; that is, with the greatest zeal, readines, and alacrity, with all the degrees of seraphick ardency that frail mortality is capable of, I think a persuasive to heroick piety may be a proper and useful undertaking; it being very reasonable, we should make that the object of our endeavours, which our Saviour thought fit to make the matter of our prayers.

3. In discoursing upon this subject, I shall proceed in this method. 1. I shall state the notion of heroick piety, and shew what I mean by it. 2. I shall demonstrate that there is such a thing. 3. I shall offer some persuasives to recommend the practice of it.

4. The notion of heroick piety will be best understood by considering what the moralists mean by heroick virtue. For the one carries the same proportion in religion, that the other does in morality. Now not to trouble our selves with an etymological account of the name, which is well known to be of an heathen extraction, by heroick virtue, I suppose, the moralists do generally mean such a vehement and intense pursuance of a man's last and best end, as engages him upon such excellent and highly commendable actions, which advance him much above the ordinary level of humane nature; and which he might wholly omit, and yet still maintain the character of a good man. *Aristotle* in his ethicks, l. 7. c. 1. calls it, *ἡ ἄρετή ἡ ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς ἀρετή*, that virtue that is above us. By which I suppose, he does not mean that it is above our reach, and unattainable, but either that it is above our obligation, or rather that when it is attain'd, it will elevate us above our selves.

5. In proportion to this notion of heroick virtue, I understand by heroick piety those excellent degrees and eminences of religion, which, tho' to
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arrive at be extremely laudable, yet we may fall short of them without sin, God having not bound them upon us as parts of duty, or made them the conditions of our salvation, but only recommended them by way of counsel, and left them as instances of generosity. This heroick piety consists rather in the degrees than in the kinds of christian virtue, and they are such degrees as are most eminent and excellent in themselves, and that tend highly to the perfection of the nature of man; but are not bound upon him by any positive and exprefs law of God, and so may be left undone without any disobedience to it, and therefore when done are the more commendable and rewardable. So that in short they are not acts of strict indispensable duty; but instances of extraordinary and uncommanded perfection. According to that saying, (I think of St. Jerom) *non cogo, non impero, sed propono palmam, premia ostendo.*

6. Thus far of the notion of heroick piety. I come now to my second undertaking, which was to shew, that there is such a thing. Tho' universality and sincerity of obedience be indispensably required of every christian, and consequently every part of religion obliges under the penalty of damnation as to its kind; yet that there may be some degrees, to the attainment of which we are not so obliged, would evidently appear from the proof of this one single proposition, that every one is not bound to do what is best. The reasonableness of which proposition may be argued from the very nature of the thing; for since that which is best is a superlative, it necessarily supposes the positive to be good: And if so, then we are not bound to that which is best; for if we were, then that which is only good would be evil, (it being short of what we are bound to) which is contrary to the supposition. 7.

7. But lest this argument should not be thought satisfying, as indeed I am not fully satisfy'd with it, I farther consider ; that the Scripture consists of counsels as well as commands. Now if some things are matter of counsel only, 'tis obvious to conclude two things. 1. From their being counsell'd, that they are good (nothing being matter of counsel but what is so ;) and 2. from their being only counsell'd, that they do not oblige ; and consequently, that there are some degrees of good that we are not obliged to.

8. It is farther observable, that in Scripture there is mention made of a threefold will of God, *Rom. xii. 2.* τὸ θέλημα τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον, *that will which is good, that which is well-pleasing, and that which is perfect.* The first of these denotes absolute duty, the two last the various degrees of perfection and heroick excellence. Thus for *St. Paul* to preach the Gospel to the *Corinthians*, was an act of strict duty, which he could not leave undone, without incurring that woe which he annexes to the omission of it, *1 Cor. ix. 16.* τὸ δὲ ἀδαπάναις κηρύσσειν προαιρέσει φιλοτιμία, καὶ διὰ τούτο καύχημα ἐστίν. “ But to preach without charging them was an instance of generosity, and in that respect there was room for boasting, as *Dr. Hammond* quotes from *Theophylact*. Thus again, for a *Jew* to allot the tenth part of his revenue every third year toward the relief of the poor, was an act of express duty ; and in doing of that, he would but satisfy the obligation of the law : But now if in his charitable contributions he should exceed that proportion ; according to the degrees of the excess, so would the degrees of his perfection be. Thus again in the matter of devotion, daily prayer is generally

ly concluded to be a duty ; and by some criticks, that it be twice perform'd, in proportion to the returns of the Jewish sacrifices, morning and evening : But now if a more generously disposed christian should add a third time, or out of abundance of zeal should come up to the psalmist's resolution of (*seven times a day will I praise thee*) this will be a free-will offering, well pleasing and of sweet favour, but not commanded.

9. From these and many other instances, which if necessary, I could easily produce, it plainly appears that religion does not consist in an indivisible point, but has a latitude, and is capable of more and less ; and consequently, there is room for voluntary oblations, and acts of heroick piety, as seems sufficiently plain from the whole state of *St. Paul's* determination as to the lawfulness of marriage, and the preference of a single life before it as a state of greater excellencé and perfection.

10. If it be objected here, that what is supposed to be thus heroically perform'd, is inclusively enjoin'd by virtue of those comprehensive words, (*thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, &c.*) To this I answer, that whether by the love of the text we understand a sincere love of God, in opposition to that which is false and hypocritical, or an intire love of God in opposition to that which is partial and divided, still there will be a latitude in this precept of loving God, as well as in other instances of religion ; it being very possible for two persons to love God sincerely, and with their whole soul, and yet in different measures (which is observ'd even among the Angels, the Seraphins having their name from their excess of love ;) nay, for the same person always to love God sincerely, or intirely, and yet at some times to exceed himself ;
and

and with his Saviour (who to be sure never fail'd of necessary duty) to pray yet more earnestly.

11. There is another objection yet behind, which I think my self concern'd to answer, as well in my own defence, as that of my agument. Some perhaps may be so weak to imagine, that by asserting such a thing as heroick piety, and that a christian may do more than he is commanded, I too much favour the doctrine of supererogation. But I consider, for a man to do more than he is commanded; is an ambiguous expression, and may denote either that he can perform the whole law of God and more; or that, tho' he fail of his duty in many instances, and consequently with the rest of mankind, is concluded under sin; yet in some others he may exceed it, by pressing forward to some degrees of excellency he is not obliged to. I do not assert the former of these, but the latter, that there are certain degrees in religion, which we are not obliged to under pain of sin; and consequently, that he who arrives so far, does (according to the later notion of the phrase) do more than he is commanded.

12. Having in the foregoing periods stated the notion of heroick piety, and shewn the reasonableness of the thing; I proceed now to my third and last undertaking, which was, to offer some persuasives to recommend the practice of it. First then, I consider that religion is the perfection of a man, the improvement and accomplishment of that part of him wherein he resembles his Maker, the pursuance of his best and last end, and consequently his happiness. And will a man set bounds to his happiness? Will he be no more happy than he is commanded, no more than what will just serve to secure him from a miserable eternity? Is not happiness desirable for it self, as well as for the avoid-
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ing of misery? Why then do we deal with it as with dangerous physick, weighing it by grains and scruples, and nice proportions? Why do we drink so moderately of the river of paradise, so sparingly of the well of life? Are we afraid of making too high advances to the state of Angels, of becoming too like God, of antedating Heaven? Are we afraid our happiness will flow in too thick upon us, that we shall not bear up against the tide, but sink under the too powerful enjoyment? Hereafter indeed, when we are blest with the Beatifick Vision, and the glories of the divine brightness shall flash too strong upon our souls, so that our happiness begins to be in danger of being lessen'd by its greatness; We may then, with the Angels that attend the throne, veil our faces, and divert some of thee too exuberant blessedness: But now in this region, we are far enough from being under the line; there is no danger of such extremity, but rather the contrary; and therefore it would be now most advisable for us to be as happy, and to that end, as religious as we can.

13. Secondly, I consider, that since God, out of the abundance of his overflowing and communicative goodness, was pleas'd to create and design man for the best of ends, the fruition of himself in endless happiness; and since he has prescribed no other conditions for the attainment of this happiness, but that we would live happily here in this state of probation, having made nothing our duty but what would have been best for us to do whether he had commanded it or no; and has thereby declared, that he is so far only pleas'd with our services to him, as they are beneficial to our selves; this must needs be a most indearing engagement to one that has the least spark of generosity or ingenuity,

ty, to do something for the sake of so good a God, beyond the measures of necessity, and the regards of his main and final interest. This is the only tribute of gratitude we are capable of paying God, for giving us such good, such reasonable and righteous laws. Had the conditions of our eternal welfare been never so hard, arbitrary, and contradictory to our present happiness, yet mere interest would engage us to perform necessary duty; and shall we do no more out of a principle of love to our excellent Lawgiver, for making our present happiness the condition of our future? Shall the love of God constrain us to do no more than what we would do merely for the love of our selves; Shall we stint our performances to him, who sets no measures to his love of us? Can our generosity be ever more seasonably employ'd, than in endeavouring to please him in extraordinary measures, whose pleasure is to see us happy, even while we please him? For so is the will of the wise and good Governour of the world, that in serving him we should serve our selves; and like *Adam* in his dressing and cultivation of paradise, at the same time discharge the employment which God sets us about, and consult our own convenience: So that it fares with us in our religious exercises, as with the votary that sacrifices at the altar, who all the while he pleases and serves his God, enjoys the perfumes of his own incense.

14. Thirdly, I consider, that every man has a restless principle of love implanted in his nature, a certain magnetism of passion, whereby he continually aspires to something more excellent than himself, either really or apparently, with a design and inclination to perfect his being. This affection and disposition of mind all men have, and at all times.

times. Our other passions ebb and flow like the tide, have their seasons and periods like intermitting fevers. But this of love, is as constant as our radical heat, as inseparable as thought, as even and equal as the motions of time. For no man does or can desire to be happy more at one time than at another, because he desires it always in the highest degree possible. 'Tis true, his love, as to particular objects, may increase or decrease, according to the various apprehensions he has of their excellencies; but then, like motion in the universe, what it loses in one part, it gains in another; so that in the whole it remains always alike, and the same. Now this amorous principle, which every man receives with his soul, and which is breath'd into him with the breath of life, must necessarily have an object about which it may exercise it self, there being no such thing in love (if in nature) as an element of self-sufficient fire. For tho' we may easily and truly frame an abstract notion of love or desire in general, yet if we respect its real existence, we shall as soon find first matter without form, as love without a particular object. And, as 'tis necessary to the very being of love that it have an object, so is it to our content and happiness, that it be a proportionate and satisfying one; for otherwise, that passion which was intended as an instrument of happiness, will prove an affliction and torment to us. Now there is but one such object to be found, and that is God. In the application of our passions to other things, the advice of the Poet is exceeding necessary,

Quicquid amas cupias placuisse nimis. Martial.

That we should be very cautious how far we suffer our selves to be engaged in the love of any thing, because there is nothing but disappointment in the
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enjoyment, and uncertainty in the possession. We must needs therefore be miserable in our love, unless God be the object of it. But neither is our happiness sufficiently secured by making God the object of our love, unless we centre our whole affections upon him, and (in the strictest sense of the phrase) *love him with all our heart, and with all our soul*. For otherwise, whatever portion of our love does not run in this channel, must necessarily fix upon disproportionate and unsatisfying objects; and consequently, be an instrument of discontent to us. 'Tis necessary therefore, to the compleating of our happiness, that that object should engross all our affections to it self, which only can satisfy them; and (according to the comparison of an ingenious

Marfilius Ficinus,
Tom. 2. pag. 315.

Platonist) that our minds should have the same habitude to God, that the eye has to light. Now the eye does not only love light above other things, but delights in nothing else. I confess, such an absolute and entire dedication of our love to God as this, is not always practicable in this life. It is the privilege and happiness of those confirm'd spirits, who are so swallow'd up in the comprehensions of eternity, and so perpetually ravish'd with the glories of the divine beauty, that they have not the power to turn aside to any other object. But tho' this superlative excellence of divine love, be not attainable on this side of the thick darkness, it being the proper effect of open vision, and not of contemplation; yet however, by the help of this latter, we may arrive to many degrees of it; and the more entire and undivided our love is to God, the fewer disappointments and dissatisfactions

factions we shall meet with in the world ; which is a very strong engagement to heroick piety.

15. Fourthly, I consider, that the degrees of our reward shall be proportionable to the degrees of our piety : We shall reap as plentifully as we sow ; and at the great day of retribution, we shall find, that besides the general collation of happiness, peculiar coronets of glory are prepared for eminent Saints. Indeed, all hearty and sincere lovers of God and religion, shall partake of the glories of the Kingdom ; but some shall sit nearer the throne than others, and enjoy a more intimate perception of the divine beauty. All the true followers of Jesus shall indeed feast with him at the great supper ; but some shall be placed nearer to him than others, and still there shall be a beloved disciple that shall lean on his bosom. I know this doctrine concerning different degrees of glory, is (and indeed what is there that is not) very much question'd by some, and peremptorily deny'd by others ; but since it is so highly agreeable to the goodness and bounty of God, and to the catholick measures of sense and reason, and is so mightily favour'd, if not expressly asserted in many places of Scripture, I shall not here go about to establish the truth of it ; but taking it for granted, do urge this as another consideration of great moment, toward encouraging the practice of heroick piety.

16. Fifthly and lastly, I consider, that we have indeed but very little time to serve God in. The life of man at longest is but short ; and considering how small a part of it we live, much shorter. If we deduct from the computation of our years (as we must do, if we will make a true estimate of our life) that part of our time which is spent in the incogitancy of infancy and childhood, the impertinence

nence and heedlessness of youth, in the necessities of nature, eating, drinking, sleeping, and other refreshments; in business and worldly concerns, engagements with friends and relations, in the offices of civility and mutual intercourse, besides a thousand other unnecessary avocations; we shall find that there is but a small portion left, even for the retirements of study, for our improvement in arts and sciences, and other intellectual accomplishments. But then, if we consider what great disbursements of our time are made upon them also, we shall find, that religion is crowded up into a very narrow compass; so narrow, that were not the rewards of Heaven matter of express revelation, 'twould be the greatest presumption imaginable, to hope for them upon the condition of such inconsiderable services. Since then our time of serving God is so very short, so infinitely disproportionate to the rewards we expect from him, 'tis but a reasonable piece of ingenuity, to work with all our might, and do as much in it as we can: To supply the poverty of time by frugal management, and intenseness of affection; to serve God earnestly, vigorously, and zealously; and in one days devotion, to abbreviate the ordinary piety of many years. 'Tis said of the Devil, that he prosecuted his malicious designs against the church with greater earnestness and vigour, because *he knew he had but a short time*, Rev. xii. 12. And shall not the same consideration prevail with a generous soul, to do as much for God and religion, as the Devil did against them? 'Tis a shame for him that has but a short part to act upon the stage, not to perform it well, especially when he is to act it but once. Man has but one state of probation, and that of an exceeding short continuance; and therefore, since he cannot

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not serve God long, he should serve him much, employ every minute of his life to the best advantage, thicken his devotions, hallow ever day in his kalender by religious exercises, and every action in his life by holy references and designments ; for let him make what haste he can to be wise, time will out-run him. This is a consideration of infinite moment to him that duly weighs it ; and he that thus numbers his days, will find great reason to apply his heart to more than ordinary degrees of wisdom.



Contemplation and Love: Or, the methodical assent of the Soul to G O D, by the steps of Meditation.

C O N T E M P L A T I O N I.

That 'tis necessary Man should have some end.

1. **I**N the depth of solitude and silence, having withdrawn my self not only from all worldly commerce, but from all thoughts concerning any thing without my own sphere ; I retire wholly into my self, and there speculate the composition of my intellectual nature.

2. And here, besides that faculty of perception whereby I apprehend objects, whether material or immaterial,

immaterial, without any material species; (which in the *Cartesian* dialect I call pure intellect) and that other of apprehending objects as present, under a corporeal image or representation; (which I distinguish from the other power of perception by the name of imagination) I say, besides these two, I observe an appetitive faculty, whereby I incline to apparent good; and that either by a bare act of propension, or endeavour to unite with the agreeable object; which answers to pure intellect, and may be call'd will, (or rather volition) or by such a propension of the soul, as is also accompany'd with a commotion of the blood and spirits; which answers to imagination, and is the same with the passion of love.

3. And of this I farther meditate, and by self-reflexion experiment; that altho' the perceptive faculty be not always in actual exercise, or at least not in the same degree of it: (For, if according to the *Cartesian* hypothesis there be no intermission of cogitation, yet 'tis most certain, that its applications are not always equal and uniform) though this I say, be true as to the perceptive; yet, I find by attending to the operations of my nature, that the appetitive faculty is not only always in act, but in the same degree of intention and application. As it never has any total intermission, so neither is it subject (as indeed every thing else in man is) to ebbs and flows, but acts uniformly as well as constantly. This amorous bias and endeavour of the soul, is like that stock of motion which the *French* Philosopher supposes the universe at first endowed with, which continues always at the same rate, not to be abated or increas'd. Not that this equality of love is to be understood in reference to particular objects, any more than that of motion in reference

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to particular bodies; but only, that it gains in one part, as much as it loses in another; so as in the whole, to remain equal and uniform.

4. For however various and unconstant I may be in my love of particular objects, according to the various apprehension I have of their respective excellencies; yet certainly, I pursue happiness in general with the same earnestness and vigour; and do not love, or wish well to my self, more at one time than at another.

5. And indeed, since all my inconstancy in the prosecution of particular objects proceeds from the variety of my apprehensions concerning their excellency; and the only reason why I withdraw my affection from this, or that thing, is, because I discern, or suspect, that happiness not to be there which I expected, it is hence plainly argued *a posteriori*, that I stand at all times equally affected towards happiness it self. As he that is therefore only variously affected towards the means, according as he variously apprehends their serviceableness to the end, may be truly said, to affect the end it self always alike.

6. Nor can it possibly be otherwise, than that I should thus point at happiness with an equal verticity: Because I always affect it in the highest degree that is possible, which admits of no latitude. For I consider my self here, as a necessary agent; and accordingly as such, can neither suspend the whole act, nor any one degree of it, but must needs operate to the utmost stretch of my power. This spring of my soul (my appetitive faculty) is always at its full bent; and accordingly, presses and endeavours with its whole elasticity.

7. For since good or happiness is the utmost object of my appetitive, it must needs employ its whole

whole power ; otherwise, so much of it as is not in act, will be for ever incapable of being so ; (there being nothing left beyond that to bring it into act) and consequently, will be planted in me in vain, which I think absurd to admit ; and therefore find it necessary to conclude, that my appetitive is wholly employ'd in the love of happiness ; or that I always love it to the utmost capacity of my faculty.

8. Since therefore, I find in my self an appetitive faculty, which is always in actual exercise, and that after an even and equal measure ; and not only so, but also in the very height of activity and invigoration ; I am by the clue of meditation farther led to conclude, that there must be some centre for this weight, some object or other, either within or without me, of such ample, copious, and solid excellence, as may answer to the full extent of my desires, bear the whole stress of my inclining soul, and such as may well deserve to be call'd the end of man.

9. For I cannot think it any way consistent with the goodness of that great being, which call'd me out of the womb of nothing to what I am, to plant in me such an amorous principle, which at no time lies dormant, but is always equally awake, and acting with the utmost plenitude of its vigour ; supposing there were no proportionable object in the whole latitude of entity for it to fix and bottom upon. It being only a greater preparation and qualification for misery, to have enlarged faculties and appetites, when there is nothing to afford them agreeable satisfaction. Which however some may be justly subjected to for their after-demerit, can yet never be reasonably supposed to be the antecedent will of God.

10. And

10. And this I am farther induced to believe, when I consider how the great Author of nature, has made provision for the entertainment of our animal faculties, and particular appetites : All our senses, seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching, have their proper objects, and opportunities of pleasure respectively. Which makes it very unlikely, that our great and general appetite of being happy, should be the only one that is disinherited and unprovided for. Especially, considering that the enjoyment and indulgence of any of the rest is then only, and in such instances and circumstances restrain'd, when the greater interests of happiness are thereby cross'd and defeated. Which argues that the true happiness of man is the thing chiefly regarded by God; and consequently, that there is a provision for that great appetite of his being happy, as well as for any of the rest.

11. Which is yet farther confirm'd to me, when I consider, that there is an exemplification of it in the material part of the universe; the most ponderous body that is, has its centre, towards which it always presses, and in which it settles with full acquiescence. Now since there is something in spiritual beings which corresponds to weight in bodies, (according to that of St. *Austin*, *Amor tuus est pondus tuum*) the analogy of the thing persuades me to think, that there is also something which shall be to them in the nature of a centre.

12. And as the contrary is inconsistent with the divine goodness, so neither can I reconcile it to the wisdom of him who made all things in number, weight and measure, to be so much out in his proportions, as to create an appetite too high, vigorous, and craving, for the excellency and fulness of any object. This would be like making a body too heavy

heavy for the central poise ; or, as if the spring of a watch should be made too strong for the wheel ; or any other such disproportionate operations, which neither comports with the geometry of the divine mind, nor with the exact harmony of his other works.

13. The conclusion therefore from these premises is, that man is not as a body for ever rolling on in an infinite vacuity ; or as a needle continually trembling for an embrace : But that he has his proper end and centre, to which 'tis possible for him to arrive ; and in which, as impossible for him when once arrived, not fully to acquiesce.

The P R A Y E R.

MY God, my Creator, who by that active principle of love and immense desire thou hast interwoven with my nature, hast given me fair grounds to conclude, that there must be some end on which I may fix and centre with the full stress of my faculties ; point out to me by the guidance of thy spirit this my true end, direct me in the pursuit, and bring me to the attainment of it. Let me neither mistake my true centre, nor by any irregular or oblique motion, decline from it. But as thou hast appointed me for happiness, and furnished me with natural capacities of receiving it, so let it be thy good pleasure to possess my soul with such a serious and diligent concern for my great interest, that I may not by any default of mine, fail of that excellent good which will fill all the emptinesses of my soul ; leave no desire unsatisfy'd, and no trouble I can undergo in the quest of it, unrewarded. O
suffer

suffer me not to be disappointed of that excellent, that only good : But as thou hast made me aspire towards it infinitely, so grant I may enjoy it eternally, for thy great love and goodness sake.

Amen.



CONTEMPLATION II.

That 'tis impossible Man should be his own end.

1. **B**EING from my yesterdays contemplation of my intellectual nature, and the flock of desires therein implanted, led to this conclusion; that 'tis necessary man should have some end; I now consider, that 'tis but to carry on the thread of the same contemplation a little farther, and 'twill as evidently appear, that 'tis impossible man should be his own end.

2. For while I stand fix'd in the contemplation of my self, I observe, that I have this appetitive principle, not only in such a manner as answers to weight in bodies, but also so as to be analogous to gravitation, that is to weight not only *in actu primo*, but in *actu secundo*, as it denotes such an inclination of body, whereby not only one part presses against another, but whereby the whole leans, and endeavours to something beyond the bounds of its own circumference.

3. For, besides acts of self-complacency, whereby I delight and please my self in the perfections of my nature, and turn as it were upon my own axis;

axis ; I find in me a great deal of extatical love, which continually carries me out to good without my self ; which I endeavour to close and unite with, in hopes of bettering my present state, and of supplying from without what I seek, but cannot find within.

4. Hence therefore I conclude, that I am not (whatever complacencies I may sometimes, take in my self) a central or self-terminative being ; it being as impossible that what is so, should love any thing without, (as love is taken for desire or aspiring to good) as that a body should gravitate in the centre. That which loves any thing without, wants something within. If therefore I gravitate, I am off from the centre ; consequently, not my own centre.

5. And that I cannot ever centre in my self, and be my own end, is yet farther evidenc'd to me, when I contemplate the great disproportion between my appetitive and all my other perfections, whether of body or of mind. I desire both more kinds of pleasure than they all can afford, and more degrees of pleasure in the same kind. Which must necessarily be, because my desires are extended to all possible good, but my real endowments and perfections are infinitely short of that extent. And by consequence, my desires cannot be cramp'd within the narrow bounds of my own sphere, but will of necessity run out farther, even as far as there is good without it.

6. And as there is a manifest disproportion between my stock of self-perfection and my appetitive, as to its objective latitude, (*viz.*) the kinds and degrees of happiness, so is there no less as to the intenseness of its acts. This appetitive of mine (as was remark'd in the preceding contemplation)

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is always in an equal invigoration, and burns with an even and uniform heat; but I have not within my self fuel enough to maintain this flame in an equal height. I always equally desire, but I am not always equally desirable; partly because I am sometimes (even in my own partial judgment) in a condition of less excellence both as to my morals and intellectuals, than at other times; and partly, because the stock of my perfections, tho' twere possible they could be always alike as my desires are, yet being both finite in nature, and few in number, cannot bear a long and uninterrupted enjoyment, and appear still equally grateful under it; any more than a short poem, tho' in it self equally excellent, can please equally after a million of repetitions.

7. Hence it comes to pass, that I do not always take an equal complacency in my self, but am oftentimes (especially after long retirements) apt to be melancholy, and to grow weary of my own company; so that I am fain to lay aside my own self (as it were) for a while, and relieve the penury of solitude with the variety of company, and so wher my appetite toward my self as I do toward my meat, by fasting and abstemiousness.

8. Since therefore, I always desire equally, but not my self: (being not upon the two accounts before-mention'd always equally desirable) it follows, that the steadiness and evenness of this my flame, must depend upon some other fuel, good which is without me. And consequently, I do not terminate in my self, and so am not my own end. Which indeed is the sole and incommunicable prerogative of the infinitely great and blessed God, and such as no creature, how elevated soever, can possibly be capable of.

The

The P R A Y E R.

MY God, my Creator, who hast in thy great wisdom furnish'd me with desires too large and vehement for the other perfections of my nature; and hast thereby made it impossible that I should ever be my own end; grant me effectually to consider the barrenness and insufficiency of my own nature, and how unable I am upon my own solitary stock, to satisfy the importunity of my soul; that so I may not be transported with vain complacencies, nor endeavour to bottom my self upon such a centre, as will moulder away under me, and deceive me. Let me ever weigh my self in a true balance, and be as observant of my imperfections, as of my excellencies. Let me be ever thankful for the one, and humble for the other. Whatever else I am ignorant of, O grant me a true understanding of my self; that I may not to the vanity of my nature, add levity of spirit, nor become despicable in thy eyes, by being too precious in my own. *Amen, Amen.*



C O N T E M P L A T I O N III.

That 'tis impossible that any other created good should be the end of man.

I. **H**A V I N G by the light of contemplation discover'd the necessity of man's having some end, and the utter impossibility of his ever being his own end; I am now concern'd to look
beyond

beyond the orb of my own perfections, and to consider, whether the whole latitude of the creation, can afford any good that will terminate the amorous bent of my soul, and wherein I may sweetly and securely rest, as in my end or centre.

2. And this I am the more induced to enquire into, first, because I observe that the generality of men, and those some of the most sagacious, thinking, and inquisitive, do pursue many interests in this visible and sublunary world (which yet is the most cheap and inconsiderable part of the creation) with as much fervency, vigour and assiduity, as they could possibly do, were it the true end of man. So that one would think by the quickness of their motion, they were nigh the centre.

3. Secondly, Because I observe concerning my self, that there are some few things in the world which I love with great passion, and delight in with something like satisfaction and acquiescence. Such as are conversation with select friends, or men of harmonical and tunable dispositions; reading of close and fine-wrought discourses, solitary walks and gardens, the magnificence of the Heavens, the beauty of the spring; and above all, majestick and well composed musick. Which last, could I enjoy it in its highest perfection, and without interruption, would, I am apt to fancy, terminate my desires, and make me happy; at least, I am well assured, I should pity more than I should envy.

4. Thirdly, Because I consider, that the great Author of nature is brought in by *Moses*, commending upon a deliberate review, all the works of his hands. That which before the divine incubation was solitude and inanity, after the spirit had moved upon the waters, he pronounced superlatively good. So very superlatively good, that even the glory of
Solomon

So *omon* in the judgment of him who was both greater and wiser than he, was not comparable to one of nature's meanest flowers. And if the beauty and variety of the creature was so considerable, as to merit approbation from him that made it, what is there of our love and complacency that it may not challenge? That which can but please God, may well be suppos'd, able to satisfy man: That wherein the Creator delights, the creature, one would think, might fully rest and acquiesce in.

5. By such considerations as these, when solely attended to, I have been sometimes almost prevail'd upon to think, that there is good enough in the creation of God, if amass'd together, and fully enjoy'd, to employ the whole activity of my love, and fix the entire weight of my soul. But yet, when I consider experience, and compare the aspirations of my nature with the goodness of the creation, I am driven to conclude, that altho' the creatures of God (whatever the *Manichees* say to the contrary) are all good enough to afford matter for entertainment and praise; yet they cannot detain, and give anchorage to the soul of man. The motion of the appetite may be somewhat resisted by created good, and its force a little broken, but it will soon sink through, like a stone through a watry *medium*. Some repast may be found in the creature; but as for complete satisfaction, and termination of desires, *the sea saith it is not in me, and the depth saith it is not in me*. All that God ever did, or ever can make, will prove insufficient for this purpose; and come under that decretory sentence of the wise preacher, *vanity of vanities, all is vanity*.

6. And this is first confirm'd to me from experience; and that not my own only, but of all mankind. For as the weight of my affections (as was observ'd

observ'd in yesterdays contemplation) is extatical, and inclines to good without my self; so does it press beyond that which is created too; and consequently argues, that the creation without me, can no more be my centre, than I can be to my self:

7. For not to insist upon the great emptiness of fruition, that every flower in this paradise of God shrinks as soon as touch'd; that whatever reversions and prospects of happiness we may have, 'tis yet seldom known that any man pronounces himself tolerably happy in the present; that men are not pleas'd with that themselves, for which they envy another: Not to insist, I say on these, and the like, did ever any man, tho' never so fortunate in his designs, and never so well pleas'd at his attainments, find himself able to confine his desires within the sphere of that good he was possess'd of? 'Tis true indeed, he may desire no more of the same; he may have so much of riches, as to desire no more riches; so much of honour, as to desire no more honour; but he cannot have so much of any thing, as not simply to desire on farther, That is in short; he may be satiated, but not satisfy'd:

8. And this we have confirm'd by the ingenious confession of one, who dug as low for his treasure as ever man did or could; that ransack'd the whole creation, and seem'd to make it his profess'd business, to extract, if possible, this divine elixir; not only perhaps as a voluptuary, but as a philosopher; for experiment and curiosity, as well as for sensuality and pleasure. But what was the issue? Why, after the chargeable operation, the deluded chymist sits down, recounts his gains, and finds this to be the sum of them, that his judgment indeed was inform'd, but not that his desires were satisfy'd: That he had with all his cost, bought only this piece of wisdom,

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to know the vanity of the creation so far, as to give o'er all farther search, and lose no more time, cost and labour, in a fruitless experiment.

9. And that what this great enquirer after happiness experimented is every man's case, I am farther assured, when I contemplate, that the greatest favourites of fortune, those who have had the world at command, and could enjoy all that is good in it, with almost as little trouble as 'twas created, at a words speaking, have yet all along been subject to melancholy, especially after some notable enjoyment; as the Grecian hero wept when he had conquer'd the world. Now what should the cause of this be but that they find themselves empty in the midst of their fulness; that they desire farther than they enjoy; that however every sense about them be feasted to the height, yet there remains a general appetite, that of being happy, which is not satisfy'd; and not only so, but because they suspect withal (as indeed they have very good reason, having tasted the utmost of natures entertainment) that it never shall be. And from this desire and despair, proceeds their melancholy and dejection of spirit. And to this purpose, I call to mind a very remarkable story recorded by *Eusebius Nierembergius*, in his book *de arte voluntatis*, concerning an eastern
Lib. 6. p. 537. Emperor, who was minded to try the same experiment upon his son, as *Solomon* did upon himself; and to see how far the accommodations of life, might go towards true felicity. He accordingly, train'd him up from his infancy in magnificent apartments, studiously remov'd from him all pitiable objects, that he might not have so much as a notion of misery, humour'd him in every punctilio, and furnish'd him with whatsoever he either did wish for, or might be suppos'd to take pleasure in;

in; till at length, the unfortunately happy young man, observing himself to be still in desires, and that in a state of all possible worldly affluence, could no longer flatter himself with imaginary prospects, but concluded, that no condition would ever mend the matter; and so fell into extreme melancholy and despair.

10. Now I consider, that if mean persons only were subject to melancholy, the desire from whence it proceeded might be accounted for another way; namely, from their not having so much of created good, as if possess'd, might be thought sufficient to satisfy. But when men that sit on the top of fortune's wheel, and drink at the head fountains of nature are yet liable to melancholy dejections, 'tis to me a plain argument, that the cause of this melancholy, their desires, proceeds from a deficiency in the things themselves; not that they are straitned in their possessions, but that the things which they possess, are weigh'd in the balance, and found wanting.

11. Thus far is this truth attested to by experience. But I am yet farther assured of it, when I compare the aspirations of my nature with the goodness of the creation; for when I do so, I find they are very disproportionate. It may pass for good mythology to inquire, what is the strongest thing, what the wisest, and what the greatest; Concerning which it may be thus determin'd, that the strongest thing is necessity, the wisest is time, and the greatest is the heart of man. And well may that be call'd the greatest thing, whose capacity can take in the whole creation, and yet like the immense space, remain still an un replenish'd emptiness.

12. For my desires are circumscribed with no limits, but run on indefinitely to all possible good. But now the good of the creation, like the creation it self, is bounded; the very notion of a creature

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involving

involving imperfection, as much as body does circumscription and termination. Hence therefore I conclude, that not only all the good of the creation though collected together into extract and spirit by the chymistry of its great author, would be insufficient to afford me perfect satisfaction; but that 'tis not in the power of him that is omnipotent, to create any good that can satisfy my desires, any more than to create a body that shall fill immense space: And consequently, that 'tis impossible that any created good should be the end of man. If against all this it be objected, that that may be the end of man, which can quiet his will, and fill its capacity. But that which is finite may be sufficient to do this, since the capacity of the will is finite, and a finite object is proportionable to a finite capacity, so as to be able to fill it. To this I answer, that the capacity of the will is indeed subjectively finite, as every thing in man is, being a created being. But yet however at the same time it is objectively infinite, as tending to the fruition of an infinite good. For as the object of the understanding is being, according to the common reason of being; so the object of the will is good according to the common reason of good. And therefore (as an acute school-man remarks) nothing can simply terminate the capacity of the understanding and will objectively, unless it has in some manner the reason of all being, and of all good. And whatever is so is infinite. See *Durandus, Lib. I Distinct. I Qu. 2.*

The P R A Y E R.

MY God, my creator, who hast made all things for the present entertainment, but nothing for the end of man; grant I may ever justly discern
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between the goodness and the vanity of thy creatures, that I may not either by not heeding to the former, become unthankful, or by not heeding to the latter, become idolatrous. O keep this conviction still awake in me, how insufficient all created good is towards true felicity; that I may not any longer with the mistaken votaries of thy Son's sepulchre, seek the living among the dead, light in the regions of darkness; and that I may no longer labour for that which is not bread. Let me not add care, labour and toil to the misery of unquench'd thirsts, and unsatisfy'd desires; but since I am certain never to find rest in the bosom of thy creation, grant I may be so wise at least, as not to weary my self more in the fruitless pursuit of it. Withdraw, I beseech thee, my expectations of happiness from all the works of thy hands; and fix them there only, where there is no disappointment or delusion, even in the true centre of all desire; for the sake of thy tender compassions. *Amen.*



C O N T E M P L A T I O N I V.

That God who is the author of man, is likewise his true end and centre.

1. **W**HEN I contemplate the nature of man, and consider how the desire of happiness is interwoven with it; that *love is strong as death, and importunate as the grave*; that there is a vehement and constant verticity in the soul towards perfect good, which begins as soon, and is as immortal as her self; and withal, how disproportionately this

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amorous

amorous disposition of thee soul is gratify'd by any entertainment, whether domestick or foreign, she can meet with in the circle of created good : I find it necessary to conclude, that the great being who commanded me to exist, is so every way perfect and all-sufficient, as to answer that vast stock of desires our natures come fraught withal into the world ; since otherwise (which is absurd to suppose) of all the creatures in it, man would be the most miserable.

2. For what man of thoughts is there, who after a through conviction, that he can neither get rid of his desires, nor among the provisions of nature have them fully gratify'd, would not immediately throw up his title to immortality, if he thought himself arriv'd to the meridian of his happiness, and and that he must never expect to be in a better condition than he is? For to have his desires enlarg'd, and nothing to satisfy them, is such a contrivance for misery, that 'tis thought by some, to be the portion of hell, and to make up the very formality of damnation.

3. But to our great consolation, 'tis wholly in our own power, whether it shall be always so with us, or no. There is a being, whose perfections are answerable to our desires. He that made us, can satisfy every appetite he has planted in us ; and he that is happy in reflecting upon himself, can make us so too, by the direct view of his glory. He can entertain all our faculties ; our understandings, as he is truth ; and our wills, as he is goodness ; and that in the highest degree, because he is infinite in both. He can more than employ all our powers in their utmost elevation ; for he is every way perfect, and all-sufficient, yea he is altogether lovely.

4. But

4. But to evince more particularly and distinctly, that God is the true end of man, I shall consider, whether the conditions requisite to his being so are found in him. Now these can be no other than these two in general. *1st*, that he be absolutely good and perfect in himself, so as to be able to fill and satisfy the whole capacity of our desires; and *2dly*. that he be willing that man shall partake of this his transcendent fulness, so as actually one time or other to fix the weight of his appetite, and become his centre. If therefore these two conditions are found in God, he has all that is requisite to make him our end. And that they are, is now to be made appear.

5. First then, That God is absolutely good and perfect in himself, so as to be able to fill and satisfy the whole capacity of our desires. There are several topicks in the metaphysics from whence I might infer this, but I shall confine my present speculation to this one, that God is the first being. This is a very reasonable *postulatum*; it being too obvious to need any proof, that there is a first being, or, that by the first being is meant God. It remains therefore, that we try what advantage may be made of it.

6. When therefore I consider God as the first being, I am from thence in the first place, led to conclude, that he has eminently, and in a most excellent manner in himself, all kinds and degrees of perfection, that exist loosely and separately in all second beings. And that, not only because the effect cannot possibly exceed the virtue of the cause, any more than it can proceed from no cause, (which is the ground *Cartesius* builds upon, when he proves the existence of God from the objective reality of his idea) but because I farther observe, that in the scale

of being all ascension is by addition, and, that what is dispers'd in the inferior, is collected, and that after a more excellent manner, in the superior: Thus in vegetables there is bare life; in sensitives, vegetative life, and sense; in rationals, vegetative life, sense and reason; and all this either formally or eminently with intelligence in Angels. And since there is such an harmonical subordination among second beings, so that the superior contains all the perfection of the inferior, with a peculiar excellence of its own superadded; I think I have fair grounds to conclude, that the absolutely first being has in his rich essence, all the scattered excellencies of the subordinate ones, in a more perfect manner than they themselves have, with some peculiar excellence of his own besides.

7. Now tho' a being thus accumulatively perfect and excellent, would be beyond all conception, great and glorious, and would employ an eternity, in contemplation and love; we have yet seen but an arm of this sea of beauty, and been enlightned only with the back-parts of his glory. For if God be the first being, as is here supposed, I may farther conclude, that he is also the first good: (good and being being convertible, and every thing having so much good in it as it has of entity, and no more) and if he be the first good, I cannot see how this conclusion can be avoided, that he is infinitely good.

8. For I consider, that the first good can have no cause of that goodness which it has: otherwise it being necessary that the cause of good should be good, it would not be the first. And if the first good can have no cause of its goodness, it can likewise have no cause of the termination of it; since what has no cause absolutely and simply, cannot have a cause in any particular respect; and if it has
no

no cause of its termination, it must necessarily be interminate or infinite, and consequently God, who is the first good, is infinitely good.

9. And now breath a while, my soul; and consider what a rich mine of good thou hast sprung. Thou hast found out a being, who is not only the ideal as well as efficient cause of all created excellence; but who is infinitely good and excellent. This is he whose great perfection not only contains and infinitely exceeds, but eclipses, and quite extinguishes all the beauty of the creature; so that (as the express image of this great excellence informs us) *there is none good, but one, which is God.* This is he whose good is incomprehensible by the understanding, and inexhaustible by the will and affections of man. This is the celebrated *Ἀυτάρκεια* of Aristotle, the *ἰδέα τῆς Ἀγαθῆς* of Plato, and the *El Shaddai* of the Hebrews. This is the great *πάνω πληρομα*, the universal plenitude, whose happiness is consummated within his own circle; who supports himself upon the basis of his own all-sufficiency, and is his own end and centre.

10. And now what is there more requisite to qualify him for being mine also but this only, that he be willing that man shall partake of this his transcendent fulness, so as actually one time or other to fix the weight of his appetite; which was the second condition.

11. And that this is also found in God, I think I have sufficient assurance from these two things; the absolute perfection of his nature; and those express revelations he has made of his will, as to this particular. As for the nature of God, it involves, as in notion and conception, so likewise in truth and reality, (as was above demonstrated) absolute and infinite perfection; and consequently, includes

a beneficent and communicative disposition ; this being a perfection.

12. Nor does the superlative eminency of the divine nature, only argue him to be communicative, but to be the most communicative and self-diffusive of all beings. For, as all kinds, so all degrees of excellency must of necessity be included in a being absolutely and infinitely perfect, such as God is. Whence it will also follow, that he is not only the most communicative of all beings, but that he will also communicate himself : and not only so, but in such an ample and liberal measure too, as entirely to satisfy the most aspiring and reaching appetite of man ; since otherwise, some degrees of communicativeness, and consequently, of excellence, would be wanting ; which is absurd to suppose in a being absolutely perfect. Especially considering, that those importunate desires of human nature are of his own planting ; which as it firmly assures us of his being able, so is it no less cogent an argument for his being willing to be our centre ; it being incredible, that so infinite an excellence should plant in man such desires, as either he could not, or would not satisfy.

13. And of this willingness of God that man should partake of his fulness, so far as to bottom upon it, and acquiesce in it ; there is yet farther assurance from many express revelations of his good pleasure to that purpose. Which consist of two kinds, express words, wherein he professes himself passionately desirous of the salvation and happiness of man ; and two very notable and signal acts ; namely, the consigning to the world a copy of his will, as a chart to direct us to the true haven of rest and anchorage ; and the sending his beloved Son from the mansions of glory, to dislodge the angry guardian

dian of paradise, and re-open for us an entrance into the joy of our Lord. By both which kinds of revelation he has given us the highest assurance imaginable, that he designs not to ingross and monopolize the perfections of his rich essence; but that he is heartily willing to admit man to a participation of that excellent good, wherein he himself is happy; to give him (as the psalmist expresses it) *everlasting felicity, and make him glad with the joy of his countenance.*

14. To which considerations I might farther add, that this excellent communicativeness of the divine nature is typically represented, and mysteriously exemplify'd by the *Porphyrian* scale of being. For as there the lower degrees are determin'd and contracted, but the higher more common and extensive, so is it in the real scale of being. The inferior, which are either matter, or complicated and twisted with matter, are more contracted, narrow, selfish and illiberal; but the superior, as they are less immers'd in, and allay'd with matter, so are they more open, diffusive and free. For indeed, all contraction and confinement is from matter; but 'tis form and spirit that is the root of all freeness and enlargement. And thus we see in bodies; the more of kin they are to spirit in subtilty and refinement, the more spreading are they and self-diffusive. Whereupon light, which of all bodies is nearest ally'd to spirit, is also most diffusive and self-communicative. God therefore, who is at the very top of all being, who is an absolute, mere and spiritual act, and who lastly, is such a pure light, as in which there is no darkness at all, must needs be infinitely self-imparting and communicative; and consequently, wants nothing to qualifie him to be the true end and centre of man.

The

The P R A Y E R.

MY God, my happiness, who art as well the end as the author of my being; who hast more perfection than I have desire, and art also seriously willing to quench my great thirst, in the ocean of thy perfection; I beseech thee shew me thy glory. Withdraw thy hand from the cleft of the rock, and remove the bounds from the mount of thy presence, that I may see thee as thou art face to face, and ever dwell in the light of thy beauty. I have long dwelt with vanity and emptiness, and have made my self weary in the pursuit of rest. O let me not fail at last, after my many wandrings and disappointments, to be taken up into this true and only ark of repose and security, where I may for ever rest, and for ever bless the author of my happiness. In the mean time strike, I beseech thee, my soul with such lively and ravishing apprehensions of thy excellencies, such bright irradiations of thy divine light, that I may see enough to love thee infinitely, to depend on thee for my happiness entirely, to live upon holy hopes and comfortable expectations, and to bear up my spirit under the greatest aridities and dejections with the delightful prospect of thy glories. O let me sit down under this thy shadow with great delight, till the fruit of the tree of life shall be sweet to my taste. Let me stay and entertain my longing soul with the contemplation of thy beauty, till thou shalt condescend to *kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth*, till thou shalt bring me into thy banquetting-house, where vision shall be the support of my spirit, and thy banner over me shall be love. Grant this, O my God, my happiness, for the sake of thy great love, and of the Son of thy love, *Christ Jesus*. Amen.

C O N.

CONTEMPLATION V.

Two Corollaries hence deduc'd: The first whereof is ; that God is therefore to be loved with all possible application and elevation of spirit, with all the heart, soul and mind.

1. **A**Mong the perfections of humane nature, the faculty of desiring or reaching out after agreeable objects, is not the least considerable ; and 'tis the peculiar glory of man to be an amorous, as well as a rational being. For by this he supplies the defects of his nature, not only enjoys the good he unites with, but digests it as it were into himself, and makes it his own ; and relieves his domestick poverty by foreign negotiation.

2. But tho' the pathetick part of man be one of the noblest perfections he is furnish'd with, yet so generally faulty are we in the due applications and direction of this noble faculty, that to be pathetically and amorously dispos'd, is look'd upon by some not as a perfection, but as a disease of the soul, and is condemn'd by a whole order of men, as inconsistent with the character of wisdom, according to that stoical aphorism, *amare simul & sapere ipsi Jovi non datur.*

3. But certainly, *Eve* was intended as a help for *Adam*, tho' in the event she prov'd the instrument of his seduction ; and our passions were given us to perfect and accomplish our natures, tho' by accidental misapplications to unworthy objects, they may

may turn to our degradation and dishonour. We may indeed be debased, as well as innobled by them ; but then the fault is not in the large sails, but in the ill conduct of the pilot, if our vessel miss the haven. The tide of our love can never run too high, provided it take a right channel ; our passion then will be our highest wisdom : and he was no stoick that said, *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God, Psal. 42.* And again, *My soul is athirst for God.* And again, *My soul breaketh out for fervent desire.* And again, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparision of thee. Psal. cxix. Psal. xxiii. 24.*

4. Being therefore from the foregoing periods arrived to this conclusion, that God is the true end and centre of man, I think I ought now to loose the reins of my affections, to unbay the current of my passion, and love on without any other boundary or measure, than what is set me by the finiteness of my natural powers.

5. 'Tis true indeed, whenever we turn the edge of our desire towards any created good, 'tis prudence as well as religion, to use caution and moderation, to gage the point of our affections, lest it run too far ; there being so much emptiness in the enjoyment, and so much hazard in the possession. When we venture to lean upon such objects, we are like men that walk upon a quagmire, and therefore should tread as lightly as we can, lest it give way and sink under us.

6. But how excellent a virtue soever moderation may be in our concernments with other objects, we have nothing to do with it in the love of that being who is our end and centre. There is here, danger but of one extrem ; and that is, of the defect. We can

can love but finitely, when we have lov'd our utmost ; and what is that to him who is infinitely lovely ? Since therefore our most liberal proportions will be infinitely short and scanty, we ought not sure, to give new retrenchments to our love, and cut it yet shorter by frugal limitations.

7. For if God be our end and centre, he must necessarily have all that good in him which we can possibly desire ; and if so, then he is able to stay and satisfy all our love ; and if so, then nothing so reasonable, as that he should have it all. We are therefore to love him with all possible application and elevation of spirit, with all the heart, soul and mind. We should collect and centre all the rays of our love into this one point, and lean towards God with the whole weight of our soul, as all that is ponderous in nature, tends with its whole weight toward the centre. And this we should do as directly as may be, with as little warping and declension toward the creature as is possible. For so also 'tis to be observ'd in nature, that not only all weight or *pondus* tends toward the centre, but that also it moves thither as nigh as it can, in a direct and perpendicular line.

The P R A Y E R.

MY God, my happiness, *who art fairer than the children of Men*, and who thy self art very love, as well as altogether lovely, *draw me and I will run after thee.* O wind up my soul to the highest pitch of love that my faculties will bear, and let me never alienate any degree of that noble passion from thee its only due object. Quench in me all terrene fires and sensual relishes, and do thou wound

wound me deep, and strike me through with the arrows of a divine passion, that as thou art all beauty and perfection, so I may be all love and devotion. *My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready* for a burnt-offering; send down then an holy fire from above to kindle the sacrifice, and do thou continually fan and keep alive, and clarify the flame, that I may be ever ascending up to thee, in devout breathings, and pious aspirations, till at length I ascend in spirit to the element of love, where I shall know thee more clearly, and love thee more seraphically, and receive those peculiar coronets of glory thou hast reserv'd for those that eminently love thee. *Amen.*



CONTEMPLATION VI.

The Second Corollary: That therefore God is ultimately to be referred to in all our actions; and that he is not to be used by us, but enjoyed.

1. **A**S there is nothing of greater and more universal moment to the regular ordination of human life, than rightly to accommodate the means and the end, and to make them uniform and symbolical; so is there nothing wherein men are more universally peccant and defective, and that not only in practice, but also in notion and theory.

2. For although to do an ill action for a good end, and to do a good action for an ill end, are generally acknowledg'd alike criminal; yet concerning this latter,

latter, 'tis observable, that men usually think the morality of their actions sufficiently secured, if the end proposed be not in its own nature specifically evil. Whereas indeed, there is yet another way whereby an end may become evil, namely, by being rested in, when 'tis not the last, without any farther respect or reference. By this undue and ill-plac'd acquiescence, an end that is otherwise in its own intrinseck nature good, upon the whole commences evil. For tho' it be good to be chosen, it is yet ill to be rested in.

3. For indeed 'tis against the order and œconomy of things, as well as against the perfection of religion, that any end should be ultimately rested in, but what is truly the last. Now the last end of action, can be no other than that which is the last end of the will, which is, the spring of action. This therefore being God, (as appears from what I have already contemplated) it follows, that he ought to be the ultimate end of all our actions; that we ought not in any of our motions to stop short of this centre, but in all our actions, to make a farther reference, either actual or habitual; and according to that of the Apostle, *Whether we eat or drink, to do all to the glory of God.*

4. For what can be more absurd and incongruous, than to turn the means into the end, and the end into the means; to enjoy what ought to be only used, and to use what ought to be enjoyed? God is our last end, and therefore must not be desired for any thing but himself, nor used as a means to accomplish any other design. Which also, concludes against all those who make religion a point of secular interest, and a tool of State-policy, whereas that ought to prescribe, and not to receive measures from any human affairs.

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The

The P R A Y E R.

MY God, my happiness, who art the last end of my desires, the very utmost of all perfection, and beyond whom there is no good ; be thou the last end of my actions too, and let them all meet and unite in thee, as lines in their centre. Grant, I may set thee before me in all my thoughts, words and actions ; let my eye of contemplation be always open ; and whatever intermedial designs I may have, let my last aim be thy glory. And, O let me never be so low sunk, base and wicked, as to make religion an instrument of worldly policy, nor to dishonour thee and my own soul, by such a mercenary piety. But do thou always possess my mind with such a due value for thy infinite excellency, that I may refer all things to thee, and thee and thine to nothing, but love and embrace thee for thy own self, who in thy self alone art altogether lovely.
Amen, Amen.

A DISCOURSE upon *Rom. xii. 3.*

-----*Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think ; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

1. **T**HERE is nothing wherein men are so much divided from one another, as in opinions ; and nothing wherein they more unanimously conspire,

spire, than in thinking well of themselves. This is a humour of so catholick a stamp, and universal empire, that it may seem to challenge a place among those elements of our constitution, those essentials of our nature which run throughout the whole kind, and are participated by every individual. For should a man *take the wings of the morning* and travel with the sun round the terrestrial globe, he would hardly find a man either of a judgment so difficult to be pleas'd, or of accomplishment so little to recommend him, that was not notwithstanding sufficiently in love with himself, however he might dislike every thing else about him ; and without question, that arrogant and peevish Mathematician who charged the grand Architect with want of skill in the mechanism of the World, thought he had play'd the artist well enough in himself ; and as to the harmony of his own frame, acquitted the Geometry of his Maker.

2. And as men are thus naturally apt to think well of themselves in general, so there is nothing wherein they indulge this humour more, than in the opinion they have of the goods of the mind ; and among these, there is none which has so great a share of their partiality, as their intellectual faculty. The desire of knowledge is not more natural, than the conceit that we are already furnish'd with a considerable measure of it ; and tho' a particular sect were characteriz'd by that appellation, yet all mankind are in reality *Gnosticks*. For (as 'tis ingeniously observ'd by the excellent *Cartesius*) nothing is more equally distributed among men than the intellectual talent, wherewith every one fancies himself so abundantly stock'd, that even those who have the most unsatiable de-

Dissert. de Method. p. i.

fires, and whom providence could not satisfy in any one thing else, are notwithstanding, as to this dispensation of Heaven, well enough content, complain not of the dull planet that influenc'd their nativity, or wish their minds more richly endow'd than they are. And altho' there are a generation of men who use to be very eloquent in setting out the degeneracy of human nature in general, and particularly in decyphering the shortness of our intellectual sight, and the defects of our now diminish'd understanding, yet should a man take them at their word, and apply that verdict to themselves in particular, which they so freely bestow upon the whole species, I dare not undertake that he shall not provoke their resentment: And perhaps notwithstanding the liberal, tho' otherwise just complaints of the corruption of human nature, could all mankind lay a true claim to that estimate which some pass upon themselves, there would be little or no difference betwixt laps'd and perfect humanity; and God might again review his image with paternal complacency, and still pronounce it good.

3. Nor is it at all to be wonder'd, that self-conceitedness should be of such an unlimited and transcendental nature, as to run through all sorts and classes of men, since the cause of it, self-love, has such an universal jurisdiction in our hearts. 'Tis most natural and necessary for every man (and indeed for every intelligent being) to be a lover of himself; and to covet whatsoever any way tends to the perfection of his nature. And as 'tis necessary for every man to be thus affected towards himself, so is this the only disposition of mind wherein man acts with constancy and uniformity. Our other passions have sometimes their total intermissions, and at best their increases and decreases;

ses; but this is always at full, and stands drawn out to the utmost stretch of its capacity. No man loves himself more at one time than at another, and that because he always loves himself in the highest degree that is possible. More than all good he cannot wish to himself, and less than all he will not; nay, I had almost pronoucd it impossible for Omnipotence it self, which stays the proud waves of the ocean, and blocks up its violent efforts with bars and doors, to say unto this passion, *Hitherto shalt thou come but no farther*, Job xxxviii. 10. or to set any other bounds to it besides those of all possible good.

4. Now man being such an infinite lover of himself, is easily brought to believe that he is really master of many of those excellencies and perfections which he so passionately wishes among the inventory of his possessions. For there is this notorious difference betwixt self love and the love of others, that whereas the love of others supposes an opinion of their excellency, the love of our selves begets it. We love others because we think well of them, but (so preposterous is the method of self-love) we think well of our selves because we first love our selves. So that now upon the whole, considering how necessarily and vehemently every man is carried on to the love of himself, and what a natural product self-conceit is of self-love, 'tis much to be fear'd, that as we cannot set any bounds to the love of our selves, so we shall hardly set due ones to our opinions of our selves, and consequently, the most mortify'd and resign'd man of us all, has no reason to think himself unconcern'd in this admonition of the Apostle, — *Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly,*

according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

5. 'Tis supposed that the Apostle in these words, had respect to the then prevailing heresie of the *Gnosticks*, a sort of men that pretended to great heights of divine knowledge; and upon that presumption grew so haughty and insolent, as to *despise dominions, and speak evil of dignities*; and withal so careless and secure, as to *defile the flesh*, and indulge themselves in all manner of sensuality; as you may see their character in the Epistle of St. *Jude*. Nay, of such turbulent ungovernable principles, and profligate manners were these men, that some of the learned (and particularly an eminent

Divine of our own church) have
Dr. Hammond. adventured to write upon their foreheads *Mystery*, and to place them in the chair of *Antichrist*. As an antidote therefore against this poison, the Apostle (2 Cor. xii. 7.) who through the *abundance of Revelation* had himself been in danger of being *exalted above measure*, and experimentally knew how prone human nature is to swell and plume upon a conceit of its own excellencies, thought it expedient to advise his charge at *Rome* (the place which *Simon Magus*, the author of that sect had made choice of to be the scene of his magical operations) to moderate and sober thoughts of themselves; and being to teach them a lesson of humility, he modestly ushers it in with a preface of his commission and authority. *For I say* (says he) *through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly, &c.*

6. The discourse which I design upon these words shall be comprised within these limits.

First,

First, I observe, that we are not at our own liberty, to entertain what opinions we please concerning our selves; but that we ought to regulate them by some standard. Which I collect from the former part of the text. *Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly.*

7. Secondly, I observe, that the standard whereby we are to regulate our opinions concerning our selves, are those excellencies and perfections which we are really endow'd with; which I collect from the latter part of the text, *According as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

8. And in the third place, I shall consider the absurdities and ill consequences of transgressing this standard; whereby it shall appear how highly reasonable this admonition of the Apostle is; and so conclude with a practical application of the whole in relation to our selves, and the present occasion.

9. I begin with the first proposition, that we are not at our own liberty to entertain what opinions we please concerning our selves; but that we ought to regulate them by some standard.

10. The acts of the understanding may be thought as free from all law, as the acts of the will are from all necessity. And accordingly, men may fancy they have a toleration to abound in their own sense, and (provided their actions be conformable to the rule) to think what they please. Now since a man cannot be accountable for an opinion of himself in particular, unless it be first granted that he is under a law, as to the acts of his understanding in general, before I can proceed any farther, I find it necessary to lay down this preparatory position, that we are under an obligation as to the acts of our understanding, or (which is all one) that we are accountable for them. Nay, perhaps I may

venture higher, and affirm, that the understanding is not only under obligation, but that 'tis the primary and immediate subject of it. For that must be the primary and immediate subject of all obligation which is so of liberty. Now that this cannot be the will, I suppose will be acknowledg'd a clear consequence, if the will necessarily follows the practical dictate of the understanding. And that it does so, seems not to be denied.

11. 'Tis an unquestionable Axiom, that the object of the will is apparent good: Now apparent good in other words, is that which is apprehended or judg'd to be good; and if so, then it follows, that the will cannot but conform to the dictate of the understanding; because otherwise, something might be the object of the will that is not apprehended good; which is contrary to the supposition. In short, the will (as *Aquinas* has well expressed it) is the conclusion of an operative syllogism; and follows as necessarily from the dictate of the understanding, as any other conclusion does from its premises; and consequently, cannot be the immediate subject of liberty; and consequently, not of obligation,

12. But then are we not involv'd in the same difficulty as to the understanding? Does not that act with equal (if not more) necessity than the will? So I know it is ordinarily taught. But if this be absolutely and universally true, it will not be easy to save the notion of morality, or religion. For since 'tis evident, both by reason, and from experimental reflection, that the will necessarily acts in conformity to the dictates of the understanding, if those very dictates are also wholly and altogether necessary, there can be no such thing as a *πῶτερον* *ἀνάγκη*, the man is bound hand and foot, has nothing left

left whereby to render him a moral agent, to qualify him for law or obligation, virtue or vice, reward or punishment. But these are absurdities not to be endur'd; and therefore I conclude, according to the rules of right reasoning, the principle from which they flow to be so too.

13. To clear up then the whole difficulty with as much brevity and perspicuity as in a matter of this intricacy is possible, I shall no longer consider the understanding and will as faculties really distinct from the soul, but that the soul does immediately understand and will by it self, without the intervention of any faculty whatsoever. And that for this reason, because in the contrary hypothesis, either judgment must be ascribed to the will, and then the will immediately commences understanding, or the assent of the will must be blind, brutish, and accountable; both which are as great absurdities as they are true consequences. This being premised, I grant, that as the soul necessarily wills as she understands, so likewise does she necessarily understand as the object appears. And thus far our sight terminates in fatality, and necessity bounds our horizon. That then that must give us a prospect beyond it, seems to be this, that altho' the soul necessarily understands or judges according to the appearance of things, yet that things should so appear (unless it be in propositions that are self-evident, as that the whole is greater than any one part, or the like) is not alike necessary, but depends upon the degrees of advertency or attention, which the soul uses; and which to use, either more or less, is fully and immediately in her own power. And this indifferency of the soul, as to attending or not attending, perhaps will be found to be the only *τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῶν*, the bottom and foundation into which the

the morality of every action must be at length resolv'd. For a farther illustration of which hypothesis, let us apply it to a particular case, and try how well it will answer the *Phænomena*. In the case then of martyrdom, I look upon sin as an evil; and not only so, but (while I attend fully to its nature) the greatest of evils. And as long as I continue this judgment, 'tis utterly impossible I should commit it; there being according to my present apprehension, no greater evil for the declining of which I should think it eligible. But now the evil of pain being presented before me, and I not sufficiently attending to the evil of sin, this latter appears to be the lesser evil of the two; and I accordingly *pro hic & nunc*, so pronounce it; and in conformity to that judgment necessarily chuse it. But because 'twas absolutely in my power to have attended more heedfully, there was liberty in the principle, the mistake which influenc'd the action was vincible; and consequently, the action it self imputable. This hypothesis, tho' not wholly without difficulty, seems yet the more recommendable to our approbation as a refuge from those absurdities which attend the ordinary solutions. The sum is according to this account, the morality of human actions are at length resolv'd into an immediate power the soul has of attending or not attending to what is proposed to her. And if this be true, we are not only under obligation as to the acts of the understanding, but all obligation will begin there.

14. But whether the understanding be the root of liberty, and so the primary subject of obligation or no (which I propose rather as an hypothesis to be farther consider'd, than as an absolute assertion) yet that we are under obligation as to the acts of our

our understanding, I think is very plain upon these two accounts. First, because the acts of our understanding are very much in our power. For tho' we cannot think of things otherwise than they appear to us, and oftentimes have it as little in our power to alter that appearance (as in things that are extremely clear and evident) yet there are many cases again wherein things will appear differently to us, and so we may conceive otherwise of them, according to the different degree of attention which we bestow upon them. And so we may be convinc'd of the falshood of some things which we took before for truths, and of the truth of other things which we look'd upon before as false and absurd, or else we should not have it in our power to become wiser. Secondly, because the acts of our understanding do very much influence the will ; which as it follows the other necessarily in all its practical dictates as to this or that particular action, so it is very apt to be inclin'd and detirmined by the general thoughts and sentiments of the other, whose immediate light is its rule, and whose general notions are its byafs. And therefore it cannot be imagin'd that that part of the mind should be wholly at our liberty, and unrestrain'd by any law, upon which our practice so much depends.

15. Having thus clear'd the way by the proof of this preparatory position, that we are under obligation as to the acts of the understanding in general. I may now proceed to consider, that our opinion of our selves, is one of those acts of the understanding which are subject to law ; or in other terms, that we are not at our own liberty to entertain what opinions we please concerning our selves, but that we ought to regulate them by some standard. Now the general reason of this is, because

cause 'tis of great moment and influence in relation to our practice, what opinion we entertain concerning our selves. Indeed, there are many acts of the understanding which tho' originally free, yet fall under no obligation by reason of the indifferency of the matter ; as in things of pure and naked speculation. These are the unforbidden trees of the garden ; and here we may let loose the reins, and indulge our thoughts the full scope. Thus there is no danger of heresie in asserting or denying the *Antipodes* ; nor is orthodoxy concern'd, whether the moon be habitable. But although to mistake a star be of no consequence to the theorist that sits immur'd in his study, yet it may be to the pilot, that is to steer his course by it. There are other things which have a practical aspect ; and here 'tis not indifferent what we think, because 'tis not indifferent what we do. Now among these the opinion of our selves is to be reckon'd, as having a great influence upon our well or ill demeaning our selves respectively ; as will more minutely and particularly appear, when we come in the third and last place, to consider the absurdities and ill consequences of transgressing the standard prescribed ; and therefore I shall defer the farther prosecution of it till then ; and in the mean while, proceed to the second observable, namely,

That the standard whereby we are to regulate our opinions concerning our selves, are those excellencies and perfections which we are really endow'd with. Which is collected from these words, *according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

16. In the former part of the text there was indeed a restraint laid upon our opinions concerning our selves ; but it was general only, and indefinite.

But

But here the ground is measured out, and the boundaries precisely set. *Μέτρον πίστεως*, that's the great ecliptick line, which is to bound the career of our most forward and self-indulging opinions. If we keep within this compass, our motion is natural and regular, but if we slide never so little out of it, 'tis unnatural and portentous. Or to speak with greater simplicity, he that judges of himself according to those excellencies, whether moral or intellectual, which he really has, does *φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ ἴσχυρον*, think soberly; and he that thinks himself indow'd with any kind or degrees of excellence which really he has not, does *ὑπερφρονεῖν παρ' ὃ δέει φρονεῖν*, think of himself more highly than he ought to think.

17. Here then are two things to be considered.

First, that we may proceed so far as this standard.

And secondly, That we may not go beyond it.

First, that we may proceed so far.

18. The masters of spiritual mortification had need be fairly interpreted in some expressions relating to the mystical death and annihilation of the soul, since the low and mean opinion we ought upon many accounts to have of our selves, cannot reasonably oblige us to be utterly insensible and unconscious of any excellency or perfection in our selves. For tho' it may, and oftentimes is, required of a man to think the truth, yet he can never be under an obligation to be mistaken. Besides, 'tis hard to conceive how any man (especially one that dwells much with himself, and heedfully reflects upon the actings of his own mind) should be master of any considerable excellency, and yet not be conscious of it. And besides, that very degree of attention, which is required, that a man should not think himself more accomplish'd than indeed he is, will also infallibly hinder him from thinking he is less.

less. 'Tis true indeed, *Moses* knew not that his face shone, after he had been conversing with God on the mount. He saw not the glory that stream'd from him; and might well wonder what it was that made him so dreadful to the people. But 'tis not so with the soul, whose reflective faculty will not fail to give her information of her most retir'd and reserv'd accomplishments. 'Tis not with the lesser, as with the greater world, where whole tracts and regions (and those some of the best too) lye undiscover'd. No, man cannot be such a stranger to his own perfections, such an *America*, to himself. For *who can know the things of a man, if not the spirit of man which is in him?* And accordingly, we find, that the ignorance of our selves, with which mankind has been hitherto so universally tax'd, runs quite in another chanel, and does not consist in over-looking any of those endowments which we have; but in assuming to our selves those which we have not.

19. I confess (were it possible) I should think it advisable for some persons to be ignorant of some of their excellencies, and like the sun, not to reflect home to their own sphere of light: Not that I think it unlawful to be conscious of ones own worth; but only I consider, that some men have not heads strong enough to indure heights, and to walk upon spires and pinnacles. But if they can stand there without growing vertiginous, they need not question the lawfulness of the station; they are still within the region of humility. For 'tis not every thinking well of ones self, that is to be blamed; but when there is more of opinion than there is of worth, or when that worth is gloried in as originally our own, without regarding our dependence upon God. 'Twas this that was the condemnation of

of the apostate Angel, not that he took a just complacency in the eminency of his station, but that he vainly arrogated to himself what was not his due, in that he said, *I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit upon the sides of the north, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most High*, Isa. xiv. 13. 'Twas for this that the Angel of death drew upon *Herod*, not because he was pleased with the fineness and success of his oratory, but because he was not so just to God as the people were to him, but look'd upon himself as the head fountain of his own perfections, and so *gave not God the glory*, Acts xii. 23.

20. But now if we take care to proportion our estimation of, and our complacencies in our selves to the measure of our endowments, and if we look upon those very endowments not as originary and independent, but as derivative from the Father of lights, *from whom every good and perfect gift descends*, Jam. i. 17. and accordingly refer all to God's glory, and with the elders of the Revelations, take off our crowns from our heads, and cast them at the foot of the throne, we have not only the express words of the text, but likewise, all the reason in the world to warrant the sobriety of our opinions. For, this is but to have a right and exact understanding of ones self. And why may not a man be allowed to take a true estimate of himself, as well as of another man? Or, why should a man think an excellency less valuable, because 'tis in himself? The happiness of God consists in seeing himself as he is; he reflects upon the beauty of his essence, and rejoices with an infinite complacency. Now certainly, that wherein consists the happiness of the creator, cannot be a sin in the creature. Besides, I would fain know why a man may not as lawfully think well of himself

himself upon the score of his real worth, as desire that others should think well of him for the same reason? And that he may do the latter, is confessed as well by the practice, as by the common suffrage of mankind. For otherwise what becomes of that good reputation which *Solomon* says, *is rather to be chosen than great riches*, Prov. xxii. 1. and of which the best and wisest men of all ages, had ever such a tender, such a sensible regard? Nay, 'tis look'd upon as a very commendable thing to be so affected; and the contrary is censured as the mark of a dissolute and unmoraliz'd temper. Only there is a μέτρον τῆς καλόν to be observ'd in this as well as in the former; and as we are not to stretch out our selves beyond our measure, 2 Cor. x. 13. so must we take care with the great Apostle, not to give others occasion to think of us above that which they see us to be, 2 Cor. xii. 6. Besides, if we may not be allow'd to take the height of our own excellencies, how shall we be able to give God thanks for them? The elders must know they wear crowns, before they can use them as instruments of adoration; and *Herod* must be conscious of the right genius of his oratory, before he can give God the glory. Again, in the last place, if a man may not have leave to take cognizance of his own deserts, and to value himself accordingly, what will become of that *Ἐυειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν*, which the Apostle speaks of, the answer of a good conscience towards God, 1 Pet. iii. 21. which is nothing else but a sentence of approbation, which a man passes upon himself for the well managing of that talent of liberty which God has entrusted him with? Now this is the reward of virtue, and therefore certainly not contrary to it.

21. Neither is this self-esteem only the reward of virtue but also the cause of it too; and consequently 'tis

'tis not only allowable, but also highly needful, that we should think honourably of our selves. 'Tis to be observ'd that most, if not all the sins which men commit, proceed from want of a due sense of the dignity of their nature. And consequently, a due reflection upon a man's own worth, must needs be a strong preservative against whatsoever would stain its glory. *Shall such a man as I flee?* was the powerful consideration that buoy'd up the sinking spirits of *Nehemiah*. And 'tis one of the capital precepts of *Pythagoras's* morals (and perhaps one of the best too that was ever given to the world) —
Πάντων ἡ μάλιστα αἰχρῆσο *ἑαυτῶν*. Above all things reverence thy self. And 'twas the saying of another of the sons of wisdom, *let not the reverence of any man cause thee to sin*. Which it certainly will do, unless we observe the former rule, and reflect with due reverence upon our own worth and dignity.

22. From these considerations (not to urge any more) it seems to me very evident, that 'tis not only lawful, but in some respects expedient, that we should not be altogether ignorant of those perfections which we are really endued with, that we may be able to judge of our selves with the greater exactness, and may also think our selves obliged to return to the Father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift comes, a more full tribute of praise, love and obedience, as considering that to whom much is given, much shall of him be required. We may then proceed so far as this standard.

23. But secondly, we must not go beyond it. For all beyond this is pride, or the principle of it. Pride, that turn'd the Angels out of Heaven, *Adam* out of paradise, and levell'd the great King of *Babylon* with the beasts that perish; and which is, or arises from an intemperate opinion of our selves, which
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consists either in assuming to our selves any excellency which we have not, or in over-rating what we have. Tho' indeed, in strictness of notion, this latter falls in with the former : For to over-rate what we have, is indeed to assume some degree of good which he have not. Here then begins our restraint, the reasonableness of which will appear from the absurdities and ill consequences which attend the transgressing of this standard ; and which in the third and last place, I come now to consider.

24. I shall observe only the most notorious ; and these I shall reduce to these three general heads.

First, That it unqualifies us for the performance of many duties.

Secondly, That it betrays us into many sins.

And Thirdly, That it frustrates all methods of reformation. Of these very briefly.

25. First, An excessive opinion of our selves (and that is so which surpasses the measure of our real worth) unqualifies us for the performance of many duties ; and that both in relation to God, our neighbour, and our selves.

First, In relation to God.

26. As folly leads to atheism, so does an overweening opinion of our own wisdom, or any other excellency, to profaneness. For as *the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God*, so it is said in another place, that the *ungodly is so proud that he careth not for him*, Psal. x. 4. Pride then is altogether inconsistent with that subjection, honour and veneration which we owe to God. For how can he submit his passions to the authority of the divine will, who has made a law of his own ? And as it indisposes us for all active, so likewise for all passive obedience ; for how can he suffer that with patience, which he thinks he does not deserve in justice ; Or how can he

he submit with resignation to the seeming unevenness of providential dispensations, the equality of which because he cannot discern, he must in honour to his own understanding deny? And upon the same ground, it unqualifies us for faith in many of the divine revelations. For how can he captivate his understanding to mysteries, who thinks it a dishonour to own any, and is resolv'd to believe no farther than he can comprehend?

27. Lastly, it unqualifies us for gratitude towards God, and consequently, puts a bar to all those good actions which we would otherwise perform upon that principle. And by this it becomes a multiplied, a legion evil. For how can he acknowledge an obligation passed upon him by God's favours, who calls them not by that name, but esteems them as rewards and payments, and inverting the protestation of the good Patriarch, Gen. xxii. 16. thinks himself worthy of the greatest of his mercies.

28. Then Secondly, In relation to our neighbour, it unqualifies us for obedience to civil government. For how can he submit to the wisdom of his superiors, and pay an implicit deference to the occult reasons of state, who thinks himself wiser than a whole senate, and disputes even the ways of providence? Pride was ever observed to be the mother of faction and rebellion; and accordingly St. Jude makes it part of the character of the proud Gnosticks, *to despise dominions, and speak evil of dignities.*

29. Again, it unqualifies us for those acts of justice which consist in a due observation of our neighbour's merits, and a deference of external respects proportionable to that observation. For how can he be at leisure to take notice of another's worth, who is so wholly taken up in the contemplation of his own? Let the reputation of his best

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friends

friends (if it be possible for a proud man to have any) be in never so great danger, he, like *Archimedes*, is so overbusie in admiring the creatures of his own brain, those draughts and ideas which he has formed of himself there, that he regards not the ruin that is about him. Or if he does, he is so far from appearing in their defence (as in justice he ought) that he rather rejoices at their spots as accessions to his own brightness.

30. Again, It unqualifies us for the offices of humanity, and civil behaviour, and all kinds of homilitical virtue: For how can he treat those with any tolerable civility, whom he looks down upon as a whole species below him?

31. Lastly, It unqualifies us for gratitude toward our benefactors. For how can he think himself obliged by man, who counts God his debtor.

32. Then thirdly, In relation to our selves, here is this grand ill consequence of an immoderate self-esteem, that it unqualifies us not only for higher attainments, but even for the very endeavours of improvements, and so cuts short, and bedwards all our excellencies. 'Tis the observation of *Cicero*, that many would have arrived at wisdom, if they had not thought themselves already arrived thither. The opinion of the proud man has so far got the start of the real worth, that the latter will never overtake the former.

33. And as the immoderate esteem of our selves, unqualifies us for the performance of many duties; so does it also, in the second place, betray us into many sins.

34. First, Into all those sins which are contrary to the forementioned virtues respectively. And besides them, into many more; such as are presumption and security, vexation and discontent, contempt
of

of others (tho' at the same time it exposes us to theirs) anger and contention, malice and revenge. For the proud man is not content to be his own private admirer, but quarrels with all others that are not of his persuasion; and with the tyrant of *Babylon*, kindles a fire for those who will not *fall down and worship the Image which he has set up.*

35. Neither does the leprosie stop here. But as it betrays us into many sins, so in the third and last place (which is the most dismal consequence of all) it frustrates all methods of reformation. God's judgments will but exasperate and inrage him, because he thinks he does not deserve them; and his mercies will not endear him, because he thinks he does. Advice he thinks he does not need, and reproof he cannot bear. Besides, he thinks so well of himself already, that he wonders what you mean by advising him to become better; and therefore as he does not endeavour after any of those excellencies which he thinks he has, so neither can he dream of mending those faults which he thinks he is not guilty of: Thus is the man seal'd up to iniquity, and deeply lodg'd in the strong holds of sin, where nothing that has a salutary influence can come nigh him. And in this he resembles the first precedents of his folly, who from Angels transform'd themselves into Devils, and fell beyond the possibilities of recovery.

36. These are some of the fruits of this root of bitterness; and though more might be named, yet these I think sufficient to justify this admonition of the Apostle to every man, *not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith;* Let us then all endeavour to conform our opinions concerning our selves to this standard. Let us not stretch our selves beyond our natural dimensions

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but learn to entertain modest and sober thoughts of our own excellencies and endowments, and mortifie our understandings as well as our sensitive affections. And thus shall we compleat our Lent exercise, by joyning the mortification of the spirit to that of the flesh, without which the greatest austerities where-with we can afflict the latter, will not be such a fast as God has chosen. For what will it avail to macerate the body, while the principal part, the soul, remains unmortified? The humility of *Moses* must conspire with his forty days fasting, to qualifie a man for divine intercourses, to make him the joy of Angels, the friend of God. Thus then let us accomplish the refinings of our souls, and fill up the measure of our mortifications. To which end, let us add this one farther consideration to what has been already said, that humility, in the judgment even of the High and Lofty One that inhabits eternity, is a virtue of such great excellency, and singular advantage to the happiness of mankind, that our blessed Saviour came down from Heaven to teach it; that his whole life was one continued exercise of it, and that he has dignified it with the first place among his beatitudes. Let us then, as many as profess the religion of the humble and crucify'd Jesus, make it our strict care, that we neglect not this his great commandment, nor omit to copy out this principal line, this main stroke of the pattern he has set us. Especially let us of this place, who are set among the greater lights of the firmament, and whose profession and business is to contemplate truth, and to think of things as God made them in number, weight and measure, labour in the first place to take just and true measures of our selves, that our knowledge puff us not up, nor our height become our ruin.

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Considerations upon the nature of sin ;
accommodated to the ends both of
speculation and practice.



S E C T. I.

Of the division of sin into material and formal ; and of the reality and necessity of that distinction.

1. **T**O make this our discourse about sin more clear and distinct, before we enter upon its nature, 'twill be requisite to premise something concerning the double acceptation of the word. For nothing can be defined, before it be distinguished.

2. I observe therefore, that sin may be considered either abstractedly, for the bare act of obliquity ; or concretely, with such a special dependence of it upon the will, as renders the agent guilty or obnoxious to punishment. I say, with such a special dependence of it upon the will ; for not every dependence of an action upon the will, is sufficient to make it imputable, as shall be shewn hereafter. The former of these, by those that distinguish more nicely, is call'd *transgressio voluntatis* ; the latter, *transgressio voluntaria* ; or according to the more ordinary distinction, the former is the material ; the latter, the formal part of sin.

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3. This distinction is both real and necessary. *1st.* It is real : And that because the things distinguish'd are plainly distinct. The act of sin is one thing, and that special dependence of it upon the will, that renders him that commits it accountable for it, is another thing. As may appear, *First,* from the different notions and conceptions that we have of these things, whenever we consider them, or discourse about them. And secondly, From the separability, and even actual separation of one of these from the other. For 'tis plain, that nothing can be separated from it self. And therefore, tho' wherever there is distinction, there is not always separation, yet wherever there is separation there must of necessity be a true distinction. But now this is the case here. For the material part of sin, may actually exist without the formal. That is, there may be an act of obliquity, or an irregular act, without any guilt deriv'd upon the agent ; or to speak more strictly, without that special dependence of the act upon the will, which is the foundation of that guilt. This is evident in the case of fools and mad men, who may do a great many things materially evil, or evil in themselves, which are not formally so, or evil to them.

4. And as this distinction is real, so also is it very useful and necessary. *First,* In the notion, to prevent ambiguities and fallacies, that might arise from the use of the word [sin.] As when *St. John* says, *He that commits sin is of the Devil,* John iii. 8. certainly 'twould be a fallacy to argue hence, that every mere act of obliquity is diabolical, because a sin ; since not material but formal sin, was the thing intended in *St. John's* proposition. Not that all formal sin argues him that commits it to be of the Devil, but that no other does so but what is such.

5. Secondly,

5. Secondly, In the thing, for the honour and vindication of the divine attributes. Particularly, from the damning of infants merely for the corruption of nature, commonly call'd original sin; it being repugnant to the measures of justice, and the dictates of common sense, that the bare doing an irregular act, or the bare having an irregular propension should be punishable with eternal damnation; as it must be, if every dependence of an action upon the will, be enough to render it imputable; that is, if every material be also a formal sin. This, I say, would be very unjust, because such irregular acts are no more a man's own, than those committed by another man.

6. But it is certain, that God does not proceed by such measures; as may be gathered from the oeconomy of his severest dispensation, the law. For when he forbid murder with such strictness and severity, as to order the murderer to be taken from his altar, and put to death; yet he provided cities of refuge for the security of those, who ignorantly or unwillingly had shed human blood, *Deut. xix.* Which may be also added as a farther confirmation, that every dependence of an irregular act upon the will, is not such as derives guilt upon the willer; and consequently, that there is a real distinction between material and formal sin.

7. Note also, that this distinction of material and formal may be applied to good as well as to bad actions, some of which are only materially and others also formally good, so as to denominate him good or virtuous that does them. And that by the latter term of this distinction, *viz.* formal, we may understand also the manner and circumstances of an action, with the motives and ends of doing it, as well as that special dependence of it upon the will,

will, as renders it imputable to the doer. And that this distinction thus consider'd will be of great use towards the clearing and composing a controversy, which without it will be much easier disputed, than decided. And that is the great question concerning the good actions done by Heathens, whether they were properly virtues, or only a kind of well-favour'd sins, *splendida peccata*, as some have thought fit to call them. To which it may now be distinctly answer'd, that no doubt but that many of their actions were truly good, if by good you mean materially good, as being for the substance of them conformable to right reason. But if by good you mean formally good, so it seems most reasonable to think that for the generality at least they were not, as not being done in a right manner, from due motives, and for a right end, &c. But whether there be an absolute necessity that it should be so, or whether *de facto* it always was so, is another question. The instance of the *Canaanitish* woman, whose faith our Lord so commended (*Mat xv.*) deserves here to be consider'd, as also the note of a learned person upon it, *Dr. Whitby*. Whence we may learn, that the faith of *Gentiles* is not not only pleasing to God, but sometimes more excellent than that of those to whom the promises belong; *viz.* when upon a lesser motive it brings forth equal fruits. And in this I express my self a little more warily and justly than I did formerly concerning the same matter in the preface to the translation of *Heracles*; wherein (as being a childish work, written when I was young) there are several crude and faulty passages, and such as stand not with the approbation of my now riper judgment. Particularly, where 'tis argued against the necessity of acting out of an intention for God's glory to make our actions good;

good; and that for this reason, because to constitute the nature of sin which is contrary, 'tis not required that there be an intention of offending God. Which argument tho' borrow'd from a great man, *Episcopus*, I think not to be at all concluding, there being a great disparity between our good actions and our bad ones, since all circumstances must concur to make our actions good, whereas to render them evil, the least defect is sufficient. According to the maxim, *Bonum ex causâ integrâ, malum ex quolibet defectu*. But to return to the point in hand.

8. This distinction, I confess, is sometimes otherwise used, where the material of Sin is taken for all that is substantial and positive in the act, not including the obliquity, and the formal for the obliquity, not including that special dependence of it upon the will which makes it imputable. Thus I remember the Angelical Doctor distinguishes upon the definition which *St. Austin* gives of Sin, that it is *Dictum, factum vel concupitum contra legem Dei æternam*, Prim. Secund. Quæst. 71. Art. 6. Here, says he, *St. Austin* points out both the matter and the form of sin. The matter in the Substance of the act, the form in the obliquity, its contrariety to the law.

9. But it may be considered that *Aquinas* here, and all those that so use the phrase, by the matter of sin, intend only that which is equally common both to good and bad actions, the *substratum commune*, as the schools call it; and by the form, that which specifies the act otherwise indifferent, and gives it the first difference of sin: And this indeed, is according to propriety as well as the other. For the material part of sin is compleat sin in its kind; and consequently, must also consist of its matter and form. But when sin is considered according to its full

full latitude, then the whole irregular act, substance and obliquity goes for the material, and that special dependence of it upon the will which derives guilt upon the agent for the formal part of sin. And in this sense I now consider it.



S E C T. II.

A more particular and explicit consideration of material sin, and what it adds to the general nature of evil.

1. **A**fter our distinction of sin into material and formal, and our justification of that distinction, it follows, that in the next place, we give some more particular and explicit account of the nature of material sin. That it is an irregular act in general, was intimated before; but to speculate its nature more thoroughly, we must set it in a clearer light, and define what it is that makes an action irregular. And the account which I shall give of this, I shall ground upon that definition of *St. John*, who tells us, that *Sin is a transgression of the law*. So that transgression of the law, is the irregularity of an action, and is more explicitly, the material part of sin.

2. Thus far in general. But now to make transgression of the law fully adequate, and commensurate to material sin, so as to extend to all kinds of it; it concerns us in the next place to enquire, what is here to be understood by [law] and upon the right stating of this, will depend the whole theory of material sin.

3. By

3. By law therefore, in the first place, is to be understood that which is positive ; that is, any rule of action prescribed to us by God, consider'd only as prescribed. Any action so prescribed, be it otherwise never so indifferent for the matter, puts on the force of a law from the authority of the prescriber ; and every transgression of such a rule is sin.

4. But the transgression of law in this narrow sense of the word, will not comprehend all the kinds of material sin. For altho' positive law creates the first difference in some things, yet it does not in all. For had God never made any positive law, yet the doing of some actions would have been sin ; nay, there was sin where there was no positive law, as may be probably collected from the fall of Angels. But where there is no law, there is no transgression. There must be therefore some other law, besides positive law.

5. By law therefore, secondly, is to be understood the law of reason, that candle of the Lord that lights every man that comes into the world in his passage through it. There are two ways of considering this. For first, by the law of reason may be understood, that stock of practical principles which men bring with them into the world, as originally impressed upon their natures, according to the hypothesis of those who are for innate notions. For as the animal nature is not only supposed to be furnish'd with sense and perception, but also with certain connatural instincts and impressions, whereby animals are directed and inclined to sensible good. So for the better guardianship and security of virtue, some may be apt to imagine, that God has furnish'd the rational nature, not only with the faculty of reasoning, but also with certain common principles and notions, whereby 'tis directed

rected and inclined to the good of the reasonable life. And this perhaps is what most men mean by the law of nature.

6. Or else secondly, by the law of reason may be understood certain practical conclusions or moral truths, which a man, either upon the first application of his mind to them, apprehends or perceives; or by the due use of his rational powers, by thought and reflection, finds out or discovers, upon the consideration of the nature of things. In short, that practical sentence which the mind gives concerning the fitness or unfitness of a thing to be done.

7. If the law of reason be taken the first way, for principles of morality impressed upon the soul; and brought with it into the world; besides the unphilosophicalness, and indeed unintelligibility of the supposition of any such original impressions; there is this farther inconvenience in it, that this will be but another branch of positive law. For this inward impression will be as much a divine revelation, as outward scripture; and neither of these can be the ultimate reason into which the morality of our actions is to be resolv'd.

8. But if the law of reason be taken the latter way, for that sentence which the mind gives upon either an intellectual view, or a rational consideration of things, concerning what is reasonable or fit to be done, this will of necessity lead us higher; namely, to consider that there are certain, antecedent, and independent aptnesses or qualities in things; with respect to which, they are fit to be commanded or forbidden by the wise Governour of the world, in some positive law; whether that of internal, or external revelation, or both.

9. We are therefore in the next place, to resolve these antecedent aptnesses of things, into their proper

per ground ; or to assign what that is which makes an action fit to be commanded, or forbidden. Which when we have done, we are advanced as high as we can go ; and have found out that supreme, eternal and irreversible law, which prescribes measures to all the rest, and is the last reason of good and evil.

10. That therefore which makes an action fit to be commanded or forbidden by the wise Governour of the world, can be nothing else in general, but its respective tendency to promote, or hinder the attainment of some certain end or other, which that Governour proposes. For all action being for some end, and not the end it self ; its aptness to be commanded or forbidden, must be founded upon its serviceableness or disserviceableness to some end. So much in general.

11. I farther consider, that this end must be that which is simple and absolutely the best and greatest. For no other is worthy of God. Now certainly, there is none better or greater, than the universal Good of the whole system of things ; which is therefore to be regarded, and prosecuted to the utmost, both by God, and all other intelligent beings.

12. And hence arises this first and great canon or law ; that whatever naturally tends to the promotion of the common interest, is good, and apt to be commanded : And whatever naturally tends to the disinterest of the publick is evil, and apt to be forbidden. This is the great basis of morality ; the fix'd and immutable standard of good and evil ; and the fundamental law of nature.

13. And because there are some actions *in specie*, which with relation to the present systeme both of the material and intellectual world, have such a
natural

natural connexion with the furtherance or prejudice of this great end; therefore these by way of assumption, under the two general propositions, are intrinsically and naturally good or bad; and are thereby differenc'd from those that are made so only by arbitrary constitution. Though yet in one respect, these are arbitrary too, in as much as they depend upon such a particular hypothesis of the world which was it self arbitrary; and which if God should at any time change, the relations of actions to the great end might change too; that which now naturally makes for the common advantage might as naturally make against it; and consequently, that which is now good, might have been then evil. But still the two great hinges of morality stand as fix'd and as unvariable, as the two poles; whatever is naturally conducive to the common interest, is good; and whatever has a contrary influence, is evil. These are propositions of eternal and unchangeable verity, and which God can no more cancel or disannul, than he can deny himself.

14. So that now to analyze the immorality of any action into its last principles: If it be enquired, why such an action is to be avoided, the immediate answer is, because 'tis sin; if it be ask'd, why 'tis sin; the immediate answer is, because 'tis forbidden; if why forbidden, because 'twas in it self fit to be forbidden; if why fit, because naturally apt to prejudice the common interest: If it be ask'd, why the natural aptness of a thing to prejudice the common interest, should make it fit to be forbidden; the answer is, because the common interest is above all things to be regarded and prosecuted: If farther, a reason be demanded of this, there can no other be given, but because 'tis the best and greatest end; and consequently, is to be desired and prosecuted,

secuted, not for the sake of any thing else, but purely for it self.

15. So that now the last law whereof sin is a transgression, is this great and supreme law concerning the prosecution of the common interest. And every sin is some way or other, directly or indirectly, a transgression of this law. Those against any moral precept, directly; and those against a precept merely positive, indirectly; because 'tis for the common good, that the supreme authority be acknowledged and submitted to; let the instance wherein obedience is required, be in it self never so indifferent.

16. If it be now objected, that according to these measures there will be no difference between moral and physical evil, contrary to the common distinction between *malum turpe*, and *malum noxium*; the one as opposed to *bonum utile*, and the other as opposed to *bonum honestum*; I answer, that I know of no good or evil, but of the end, and of the means. Good of the end, is what we call *bonum jucundum*; good of the means, is what we call *utile*. Evil of the end there is properly none; but that only is evil, which is prejudicial to it. Indeed the old masters of morality seem'd to discourse of moral good and evil, as of absolute natures; as of essential rectitudes, and essential turpitudes. But I think it greater accuracy to say, that moral good and evil are relative things; that *bonum honestum* is one and the same with that which is truly *utile*; and that *malum turpe*, is that which is naturally against the profit of the community. And herein I assert no more than what the great master of the Latin philosophy and eloquence, professedly contends for in the third book of his offices. And therefore, instead of evading the objection, I freely own its charge; and

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affirm,

affirm, that there is no difference between moral and physical evil, any otherwise, than that physical evil extends to all things in nature which obstruct happiness; whereas moral evil is appropriated to actions that do so.



S E C T. III.

The second part of the discourse which briefly treats of formal sin; with the requisites necessary to its constitution. Where also 'tis enquired, whether the nature of sin be positive or privative.

1. **WE** are now come to the second part of our discourse, where we are to treat of the nature of formal sin, that is, of sin consider'd not abstractedly for the mere act of obliquity, but concretely, with such a special dependence of it upon the will, as serves to render the agent guilty, or obnoxious to punishment.

2. And here, the first thing to be observ'd is, that altho' material sin does neither in its notion, nor in its existence, include formal sin; yet formal sin (as taken for that special dependence of an action upon the will) does always include the other. Tho' there may be a transgression of the law without formal sin, yet the latter always supposes the former; and as St. John says, *Whosoever committeth sin, transgresses also the law*, 1 John iii. 4.

3. But that which formal sin adds over and above to material, and under whose respect we are now to consider it, is the connotation of that special dependence

dependence of it upon the will, which derives guilt upon the agent. So that for a definition of formal sin we may say, that it is an irregular action, or a transgression of the law; so depending upon the will, as to make the agent liable to punishment. This is in the phrase of St. *John*, ἔχειν ἀμαρτίαν to have sin; that is, so as to be accountable for it; for he speaks of that sin which upon confession, God is faithful and just to forgive; and consequently not of material, (for where there is no guilt, there can be no remission) but of formal sin.

4. From this general notion of formal sin, proceed we to enquire, what that special dependence is that makes an irregular action formally a sin. And here 'tis in the first place supposed, that not every dependence of an action upon the will, is sufficient to make it imputable. And with very good reason. For otherwise, the actions of infants, fools and madmen, would be imputable; for these (as indeed all actions) have some dependence upon the will; at least, as a physical principle.

5. To be positive therefore, that an irregular action may so depend upon the will, as to derive guilt upon the agent, 'tis necessary first, that it proceed from the will as from a free principle; free not only in opposition to coercion, (for so all the actions of the will are free) but in opposition to necessity, or determination to one part of the contradiction. That is, in one word, 'tis necessary to the imputableness of an action, that it be avoidable. To this purpose is that saying, *Nemo peccat* (that is, *formaliter*) *in eo quod vitare non potest*: And great reason, for he that cannot avoid transgressing the law, is not so much as capable of being obliged by it; (because no man can be obliged to what is impossible) and if he be not obliged by it, certainly

he cannot morally and formally break it. A thing which the patrons of physical predetermination would do well to consider.

6. But when I make it necessary to the imputableness of an action, that it be freely exerted, I would not be understood of an immediate freeness. For certainly those rooted and confirmed sinners, who have by long use reduced themselves under a necessity of sinning, are never the more excusable for the impotence they have contracted. If there be liberty in the principle 'tis sufficient.

7. The next requisite, and that which gives the last and finishing stroke to formal sin, is, that it proceed from the will, sufficiently instructed by the understanding. That is, to make a man sin formally, 'tis requisite that he has not only a power of avoiding that action which is a transgression of the law; but that he also know it to be a transgression of the law; at least, that he be in a capacity so to do; that so he may be induced to exert that power. And 'tis also necessary, that he know that he commits it; that is, he must have, or at least be in a capacity of having, both *notitia juris*, and *notitia facti*.

8. The former of these depends upon that common principle, that laws do not oblige till they are publish'd; according to that known maxim, *Leges constituuntur cum promulgantur*; and that other, *Leges quæ constringunt hominum vitas, intelligi ab omnibus debent*. And the latter also depends upon the equity of the same principle, tho' somewhat more remotely; for without this, the law with relation to that particular instance, cannot be said to be properly known. For altho' I know such a species of action (suppose adultery) to be a transgression of the law, yet if I know not that by such a particular instance

I commit it, I cannot be said to know that this my action is a transgression of the law; and consequently, (supposing this my ignorance invincible) am wholly excusable; as appears in the case of *Abimelech*, when he took *Abraham's* wife. *Gen. xx.*

9. So that to the constitution of formal sin these two things are required; First, That the transgressor have a power either immediately, or at least in the principle, of not doing that action which is a transgression: Secondly, That he either do or may know that act to be a transgression of the law; and likewise, that he know when he commits it. To the committing of which every man is tempted not by God, nor it may be always by the Devil; but by the sensual inclinations of his own corrupt nature. Which inclinations are of themselves rather a state of temptation to sin, than actual or formal sins. Then they become so when consented to; whether it be as to the desires themselves, or as to the execution of them. And if the consent to the latter be compleat, then is the sin in a moral estimation fully consummated, whether the outward act follow or no. And thus have I shewn the rise, progress, and maturity of sin; I have presented to view both the imperfect embryo, and the full proportion'd and animated monster. All which I shall briefly comprise in that compendious description of *St. James*, *Lust when it is conceiv'd bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death*, *James i. 15.*

10. There is one thing behind, relating to the nature of sin in common; which I shall briefly consider; and that is, whether its nature be positive or privative. For the clearer consideration of which matter, we are to distinguish between sin abstractly, and sin concretely taken; or in other words, between that action, which is sinful, and the sinfulness of

that action. As for the action which is denominated sinful, there is no doubt but that we may safely allow that to be of a positive nature, as being either some motion of the body, or some thought of the mind, which are physical realities. But now as to the very sinfulness of the action, or sin as sin as they call it; this cannot, with the leave either of philosophy or of religion, be maintain'd to be positive, upon the account of the intolerable absurdities that will follow upon that position. These two especially; 1. That if sin as sin were any thing positive and real in nature, then God would be the author of it. 2. That upon that supposition it would be good, and not evil, which would be a contradiction to suppose. Which things being too absurd to be admitted, and too inseparable to be avoided, it is necessary that we say with *St. Austin*, *mali nulla natura est, sed amissio boni mali nomen accepit*, that there is no such thing as any nature in evil, but that what we call evil is the loss of good. *De civ. dei. lib. 11. c. 9.* Or as the schoolmen a little more distinctly express it, that evil is not positive, but privative: Meaning by evil, not evil as concretely, but evil as abstractly taken, or evil as evil. For we are not here considering evil at large, as it takes in the thing that is evil (in which respect indeed it includes something positive) but the very precise formality of evil as such, or malice in the abstract as it is sometimes call'd, which by the consent of the schools is well made to be privative; that is, to consist in the want of some perfection due to, or convenient to a thing or action. Which matter is well expressed by *Durandus* in these words, *formalis ratio mali est ratio privativa, Lib. 2. Distinct. 34. Qu. 2.* only we must make a difference between that which is only evil in it self, and that which is evil to another,

another, *malum in se*, and *malum alteri*, as it is in *Suarez*. The evil of that which is evil in it self, is the privation of some convenience to the thing it self; the evil of that which is evil to another is the privation of convenience of one thing to another. But they have this in common, that privation is the formal reason of them both.

11. Against this it was once to me an objection among other things, that even sins of omission, which bid the fairest for privation, seem yet to be positive, because their irregularity is not properly the not willing to do what ought to be done, but the willing not to do it. But to this I now answer in the first place, that it is both. For the omission may be consider'd either *ex parte actûs*, or *ex parte objecti*. If it be *ex parte actûs*, then the omission is the not willing what ought to be will'd, which is plainly privative in the very notion of the thing. But if it be *ex parte objecti*, then the omission is indeed not the not willing, but the willing not; which tho' privative as to the object, is yet positive as to the act, as positive in that respect as any sin of commission is. But then to this I answer secondly, That tho' sin of omission in this sense, as 'tis taken for a man's willing not to do what ought to be done, does include something positive, *viz.* the act of the will so willing; yet the formality of the sin does not lie there, that is in the act it self, which for the substantial and positive part of it is good, at least indifferent; but in a certain defect attending that act with relation to the undueness of the object, *viz.* the not doing what ought to be done, otherwise call'd the obliquity of the act, which bespeaks a privation of some perfection which it ought to have; if not in it self, yet at least with relation to its object. That which is the object of

it, being an undue one, as it is in sins of commission. So that in short, tho' the act of sin be positive, yet that which is properly the sin of the act is always privative.

12. From whence it will follow, that God may be concern'd in all that is real and positive (since the sin lies not there) relating to the motions of our concupiscence, without being the author of sin. And that not only as to the evil determinations of our will, according to the doctrine of divine concurrence, as 'tis stated in the schools, which supposes such determinations as to the substance of them, to depend upon the first cause as well as the second; but also as to our sensations, even those which vicious men have in their unlawful indulgencies. For since those sensations are not in themselves evil, as to the substance or physical entity of them, as being positive modifications of the soul, or the soul it self existing after a different manner; but only in regard of the undueness, or want of right order in the circumstances wherewith they are attended; it is plain to any one that will consider, that *there* can be no absurdity or inconvenience in supposing God to be the author of them. Nor can this be seriously urg'd as an objection against God's being the author of our sensations that some of them are inordinately applied, without great ignorance of philosophy, and of the true nature of things. But as to the other part, tho' it be no harm to suppose all that is positive in an evil action to depend upon God in the way of concurrence, because God would not be then concern'd in the malice of the action; yet, (which may deserve to be well consider'd) if God should be the cause why the action supposed sinful, should be an action of such a species, that is, if he should determine the will to the action,

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as specify'd by such circumstances of disorder as make it unlawful, I see not then how he could be absolv'd from being the author of sin.



SECT. IV.

Corollaries deduced from the whole. The foulness and deformity of sin represented. That it is the greatest of evils. That no formal sin can be in its self venial. That in all probability vindicative justice is essential to God, hence deduced. The reconciling of eternal punishments with the divine justice. That he who thoroughly understands, and actually attends to the nature of sin, cannot possibly commit it.

1. **H**AVING thus far carried on the theory of sin, we may now sit down, and take an estimate of its foulness and deformity. And methinks I am affrighted at the ugliness of the face which I have unmask'd, and am ready to start back from the distorted and ill-boding monster. For however the magick of self-love may reconcile men to their own faults, yet if we set the object at a more convenient distance from the eye, and consider the nature of sin irrespectively to our selves; 'twill certainly appear according to the precedent measures, to be the most deform'd, monstrous thing, that can either be found or conceiv'd in nature.

2. For if we consider it in the gross, it is made up of a deform'd object, and of a foolish and unreasonable

sonable choice, than which, what can be imagin'd more monstrous and absurd? If we consider it as a violation of the positive law, what can be more indecorous, than for a creature to violate the commands, and trample upon the authority of that awful excellence to whom he owes his life, his motion, and his very being? If we consider it as a violation of the law of reason, what can be more monstrous and unnatural, than for a man to rebel against the vicarious power of God in his soul? To refuse to live according to that part of him, whereby he is a man; to suffer the ferine and brutish part to get the ascendant over that which is rational and divine; to refuse to be govern'd by those sacred digests, which are the transcripts of the moral nature of God; and to act against the very frame and contexture of his being. Lastly, If we consider it as a transgression against that great and sovereign law of promoting the common happiness, what a monstrous evil must that be which crosses and opposes the best of ends, and which is also proposed by the best of beings; that for the interest of an inconsiderable part (commonly ones self) justles the great wheel of society out of its proper track; that by pursuing a lesser, in prejudice to a greater good, disturbs the order of things, dislocates the frame, and untunes the harmony of the universe!

3. We may also hence conclude, that sin is the greatest evil that is, or that can possibly be. For it is contrarily opposed to the greatest possible good; and consequently, must needs be the greatest evil. And besides, 'tis that which in no case or juncture whatsoever, is to be committed; and therefore must be the greatest evil; because otherwise, it might happen to come into competition with a greater, and so commence eligible; which is contrary to the
supposition

supposition. Moreover, the greatness of this evil above all others, is *à posteriori*, farther confirm'd from the greatness of the sacrifice required for its atonement. God could not, or at least, thought not fit to remit it, without the shedding of blood; and that too, of the blood of God. So great a fool is he, so little does he consider, that makes a mock at sin.

4. Again, It may be hence collected, that no formal sin can be in its own nature venial. For according to the former measures, every formal sin, tho' never so small, is a sin against the greatest charity imaginable. For 'tis against that charity, whereby I ought to promote the ends of God, and prosecute the great interest of the universe. And consequently, cannot be in its own nature venial, or pardonable without repentance.

5. Nay, may I not farther conclude according to the preceding measures, that 'tis very probable, that no sin could have been pardon'd even with repentance, had there not been also satisfaction made for it; and that vindicative justice is essential to the nature of God; For when I consider sin, I find it so diametrically contrary to the essential sanctity of God, and so destructive to that great end which he cannot but propose, that he must needs hate it with an infinite hatred. But how he should do so, and yet not punish for it, is hard to understand.

6. Upon these measures we may also find out a way of reconciling eternal punishments with divine justice. The great objection is, what proportion is there between a transient act of sin, and eternal misery? And if there be none, how is it consistent with divine justice to inflict the one for the other? This has been a great difficulty. But now if we consider sin as contrarily opposed to the greatest possible

possible good, the good of the universe; and consequently, as the greatest possible evil, its demerit will be such, that we need not fear 'twill be over-punish'd, even with eternal misery. For if any misery is to be endured, rather than one sin to be committed, 'tis also just that any may be, when it is committed. For the equity of both, depends upon sin's being the greatest evil.

7. The last deduction which I shall make from the premises is this, that he who thoroughly understands, and actually attends to the nature of sin, cannot possibly commit it. For as long as he does so, he must look upon it as the greatest evil, otherwise he cannot be said rightly to understand it. And if he look upon it as the greatest evil, he cannot chuse it, so long as he continues in that judgment; because the then chusing it, would be the *chusing* of all that whereby it exceeds other evils, *gratis*; which is the chusing of evil as evil; which is impossible.

8. Whosoever therefore consents to the commission of sin, passes first a wrong judgment upon it, has the light of his understanding darkned, and intercepted by a cloud of passion, loses the present conviction of sin's being the greatest evil, and so commits it to avoid (as he then foolishly thinks) a greater. So that the cause and origine of all sin, is ignorance, folly, and inadvertence: There is a false proposition in the understanding, before there is any misapplication in the will; and 'tis through the swimming of the head that the feet slip, and lose their station. And yet the sinner is no way excusable for this his deception, because 'tis the ignorance of that which he habitually knows, and he might have attended better; and 'twas his fault that he did not.

9. And

9. And 'tis the recovering and awaking up into this conviction, that is the principle of repentance and reformation of life. When a man by the aid of grace, and the use of due attention, resumes his interrupted judgment of sin's being the greatest evil; he then comes again to himself, forms new resolutions never to commit it, and returns to the wisdom of the just. So great reason had the psalmist to pray, *O grant me understanding and I shall live, Psal. cxix.*

The P R A Y E R.

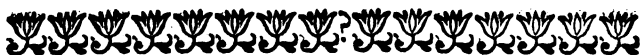
O My God, who art pure light, and in whom there is no darkness at all; who art pure love, and hatest nothing but sin, and hatest that infinitely; give me an heart after thine own heart, that I may also abhor it without measure, and without end. Open thou mine eyes, that I may see those two wondrous things of thy law, the beauty of holiness, and the deformity of sin. Inspire me with that charity which seeketh not her own, that I may ever propose and follow that great and excellent end which thou proposest, that I may ever adhere to that which is simply and absolutely best; and never for any self-advantage, disturb the order of thy creation. O let me never so far abuse those faculties thou hast given me, as to thwart the designs of thy goodness and wisdom, and to interrupt that harmony, wherein thou so delightest. But let all my designs be generous, unselfish and sincere, so as chiefly to rejoyce at the good of thy creation, at whose very material beauty *the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.* Holy Father, 'tis thy will that this thy great family should be prosperous and happy, and the better part of it thy Angels, strictly conform to it; O let this

this *thy will be done here on earth as it is in heaven*; and grant that every member of this great body, may so study the good of the whole, that thou may'st once more review the works of thy hands; and with a fatherly complacency, pronounce them good. Grant this for the sake of him who gave his life for the happiness of the world, thy Son *Jesus*. Amen.

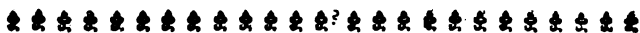
II.

Give me wisdom that sitteth by thy throne; and reject me not from among thy children. That wisdom which was with thee from the beginning; which knoweth all thy works; and was present when thou madest the world; and knew what was acceptable in thy sight, and right in thy commandments. O send her out of thy holy Heavens, and from the throne of thy glory; that being present, she may labour with me; that I may know, and throughly consider what an evil it is to affront thy authority, to break through the bounds which thou hast set, to rebel against the most excellent and divine part of my nature, and to oppose that which thou lov'st, and which is of all things the most lovely. O let thy wisdom dwell with me, let my loins be always girt, and this my light always burning, that I may never be deceiv'd through the deceitfulness of sin, nor seek death in the error of my life. Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I might not sin against thee; O grant me understanding and I shall live. Keep I beseech thee, this conviction still fresh and fully awake in me, that sin is the greatest of all evils, that so the fear of none may ever drive me to do the thing which thy soul hates. Consider and hear me, O Lord my God, lighten my eyes that I sleep not in death. *Amen, Amen.*

An



An I D E A of happiness : Enquiring wherein the greatest happiness attainable by man in this life does consist.



By way of Letter to a Friend.



S I R,

1. **T**Hough you have been pleas'd to assign me the task of an Angel, and in that respect, have warrant'd me to disobey you ; yet, since a considerable part of that experimental knowledge which I have of happiness is owing to the delight, which I take in your virtuous and endearing friendship, I think 'tis but reasonable I should give you an idea of that, whereof you have given me the possession.

2. You desire to know of me, wherein the greatest happiness attainable by man in this life, does consist : And here, tho' I see my self engaged in a work already too difficult for me, yet I find it necessary to enlarge it : For, since the greatest happiness, or *summum bonum* of this life, is a species of happiness in general ; and since it is called [greatest] not because absolutely perfect and compleat ; but inasmuch as it comes nearest to that which indeed is so, it will be necessary first to state the notion of happiness in general ; and then to define, wherein that

that happiness does consist which is perfect and complete, before I can proceed to a resolution of your question.

3. By happiness, in the most general sense of the word, I understand nothing else but an enjoyment of any good. The least degree of good has the same proportion to the least degree of happiness, as the greatest has to the greatest; and consequently, as many ways as a man enjoys any good, so many ways he may be said to be happy: Neither will the mixture of evil make him forfeit his right to this title, unless it either equals the good he enjoys, or exceeds it; and then indeed it does: But the reason is, because in strictness of speaking, upon the whole account, the man enjoys no good at all: For if the good and evil be equal ballanc'd, it must needs be indifferent to that man either to be, or not to be, there being not the least grain of good to determine his choice: So that he can no more be said to be happy in that condition, than he could before he was born. And much less, if the evil exceeds the good: For then he is not only not happy, but absolutely and purely miserable; for after an exact commensuration supposed between the good and the evil, all that remains over of the evil, is pure and simple misery; which is the case of the damn'd: And when 'tis once come to this (whatsoever some mens metaphysics may persuade them) I am very well satisfied, that 'tis better not to be, than to be. But now on the other side, if the good does never so little outweigh the evil, that overplus of good is as pure and unallay'd in its proportion, as if there were no such mixture at all; and consequently, the possession of it may properly be call'd happiness.

4. I know the masters of moral philosophy do not treat of happiness in this latitude, neither is it fit

fit they should: For their business being to point out the ultimate end of human actions, it would be an impertinent thing for them, to give any other idea of happiness than the highest: But however, this does not hinder, but that the general idea of happiness may be extended farther, even to the fruition of any good whatsoever: Neither is there any reason to find fault with the latitude of this notion, since we acknowledge degrees even in glory.

5. In this general idea of happiness, two things are contain'd, one is some good, either real or apparent, in the fruition of which, we are said to be in some measure happy. The other is the very fruition it self. The first of these, is usually called objective happiness; and the latter, formal. Which way of speaking, seems to imply as if these were two sorts of happiness. And so *Eustachius à Sancto Paulo* in his *Ethicks*, seems to divide happiness into these, as distinct species; when speaking of them, he says, *Beatitudo duplex assignatur, altera objectiva, altera formalis*. And again, *de utroque genere felicitatis in hoc tractatu differimus*. And again, *duas disputationes instituemus, priorem de priori specie felicitatis, posteriorem de posteriori, &c.* But this seems to me not so artificial; for they are not indeed two sorts of happiness, but rather two constituent parts of the same, and ought I think to be call'd rather the objective, and the formal part of happiness, than objective and formal happiness. Since they are not subjective parts, that carry the whole along with them, but as it were integral, or rather essential parts, which jointly concur to make up one and the same actual whole: Neither of them are sufficient alone, but they are both equally necessary. That the last of these is a necessary ingredient, I think no doubt can reasonably be made: For what

X

would

would the greatest good imaginable signifie without fruition? And that the former is likewise necessary is no less certain: For how can there be such a thing as fruition, without an object? I grant, 'tis not at all necessary that the object be a real substantial good; if it appear so, 'tis sufficient.

6. From this distinction of real and apparent good, some may be apt to take occasion to distinguish happiness likewise in two sorts, real and imaginary: But I believe upon a more narrow scrutiny into the matter, 'twill be found, that all happiness, according to its proportion, is equally real, and that which they term imaginary, too well deserves the name; there being no such thing in nature: For let the object of it be never so phantastick, yet it must still carry the semblance and appearance of good (otherwise it can neither move the appetite nor please it, and consequently be neither an object of desire nor of fruition;) and if so, the happiness must needs be real; because the formality of the object, tho' 'twere never so true and real a good, would notwithstanding lie in the appearance, not in the reality: Whether it be real or no, is purely accidental: For, since to be happy, can be nothing else but to enjoy something which I desire, the object of my happiness must needs be enjoy'd under the same formality as 'tis desired. Now since 'tis desired only as apparently good, it must needs please me when obtained under the same notion. So that it matters not to the reality of my happiness, whether the object of it be really good, or only apprehended so; since if it were never so real, it pleases only as apparent. The fool has his paradise as well as the wise man, and for the time is as happy in it; and a kind delusion, will make a cloud as pleasing as the Queen of Heaven. And therefore

I think it impossible, for man to think himself happy, and (during that persuasion) not really to be so. He enjoys the creature of his own fancy, worships the idol of his imagination; and the happiest man upon earth does no more; For let the circumstances of his life be what they will, 'tis his opinion only that must give the relish. Without this, Heaven it self would afford him no content, nor the vision of God prove beatifick. 'Tis true, the man is seated at the spring-head of happiness, is surrounded with excellent objects; but alas, it appears not so to him; he is not at all affected with his condition, but like *Adam*, lies fast in a dead sleep in the midst of paradise.

7. The sum of this argument is this; good is in the same manner the object of fruition, as 'tis of desire; and that is not as really good in its own nature, but as 'tis judged so by the understanding: And consequently, tho' it be only apparent, it must needs be as effectual to gratifie the appetite, as it was at first to excite it during that appearance. So long as it keeps on its vizard, and imposes upon the understanding, what is wanting in the thing, is made up by an obliging imposture; and ignorance becomes here the mother of happiness, as well as of devotion: But if the man will dare to be wise, and too curiously examine the superficial tinsel good, he undeceives himself to his own cost; and like *Adam*, adventuring to eat of the tree of knowledge, sees himself naked, and is ashamed. And for this reason, I think it impossible for any man to love to be flatter'd: 'Tis true, he may delight to hear himself commended by those who indeed do flatter him; but the true reason of that is, because he does not apprehend that to be flattery, which indeed is so; but when he once throughly knows it, 'tis impossible

possible he should be any longer delighted with it. I shall conclude this point with this useful reflection, that since every man's happiness depends wholly upon his own opinion, the foundation upon which all envious men proceed, must needs be either false or very uncertain. False, if they think that outward circumstances and states of life, are all the ingredients of happiness; but uncertain however: For since they measure the happiness of other men by their own opinion, 'tis mere chance if they do not misplace their envy; unless they were sure the other person was of the like opinion with themselves. And now what a vain irrational thing is it, to disquiet our selves into a dislike of our own condition, merely because we mistake another man's.

8. Thus far of the notion of happiness in general; I now proceed to consider that happiness which is *ὕγιης καὶ ὁλόκληρης*; sound and entire, perfect and compleat. Concerning the general notion of which, all men, I suppose, are as much agreed, as they are in the idea of a triangle: That 'tis such a state than which a better cannot be conceiv'd: In which there is no evil you can fear, no good which you desire and have not: That which fully and constantly satisfies the demand of every appetite, and leaves no possibility for a desire of change; or to sum it up in that comprehensive expression of the Poet,

Quod sis esse velis, nihilque malis.

When you would always be what you are, and (as the Earl of *Roscommon* very significantly renders it) do rather nothing.

9. This I suppose is the utmost that can be said, or conceiv'd of it; and less than this will not be enough.

enough. And thus far we are all agreed. For I suppose, the many various disputes maintained by philosophers concerning happiness, could not respect this general notion of it; but only the particular causes or means whereby it might be acquired. And I find *Tully Lib. 3. de Fin.* concurring with me in the same observation, *Ea est beata vita (says he) quærimus autem non quæ sit sed unde.* The difficulty is not to frame a conception of a perfectly happy state in the general, but to define in particular wherein it consists.

10. But before I undertake this province, I think it might not be amiss to remove one prejudice; which, because it has gain'd upon my self sometimes, in my melancholy retirements, I know not but that it may be incident to other men also. It is this, whether after so many disputes about, so many restless endeavours after this state of perfect happiness, there be any such thing or no. Whether it be not a mere idea, as imaginary as *Plato's* commonwealth, as fictitious as the groves of *Elysium*. I confess, this suspicion is enough to overcast ones mind with black thoughts, damp ones devotion, and as it were, clip the wings of the most aspiring soul. And one is tempted to fall into it upon a serious reflection on the nature of fruition in the several periods and circumstances of human life. For I observ'd, according to my narrow experience, that I never had in all my life, the same thoughts of any good in the very time of enjoying it, as I had before. I have known, when I have promised my self vast satisfactions, and my imagination has presented me at a distance, with a fair landskip of delight; yet when I drew nigh to grasp the alluring happiness, like the sensitive plant, it contracted it self at the touch, and shrink'd almost to nothing in the

the fruition. And tho' after the enjoyment is past, it seems great again upon reflection, as it did before in expectation, yet should a platonical revolution make the same circumstances recur, I should not think so. I found 'twas ever with me, as with the traveller, to whom the ground which is before him, and that which he has left behind him, seems always more curiously embroider'd and delightful, than that which he stands upon. So that my happiness, like the time wherein I thought to enjoy it, was always either past or to come, never present. Methought I could often say upon a recollection, how happy was I at such a time! Or when I was in expectation, how happy shall I be if I compass such a design! But scarce ever, I am so. I was pretty well pleas'd methought, while I expected, while I hoped, till fruition jogg'd me out of my pleasing slumber, and I knew it was but a dream. And this single consideration is apt to make one, even in the very pursuit after happiness, and full career of our passions, to stop short on this side of fruition; and to chuse rather with *Moses upon Mount-Nebo*, to entertain our fancy with a remote prospect of the happy land, than to go and possess it and then repine. How then shall man be happy, when setting aside all the crosses of fortune, he will complain even of success; and fruition it self shall disappoint him!

II. And this melancholy reflection, may breed in one a kind of suspicion, that for ought we know it may be so in Heaven too. That altho' at this distance we may frame to our selves shining ideas of that blissful region; yet when we come to the possession of it, we should not find that perfect happiness there which we expected, but that it would be always to come as it is now, and that we should

should seek for Heaven, even in Heaven it self. That we should not fully acquiesce in our condition there, but at length affect a change. In favour of which unhappy Scepticism, it may be farther consider'd that a great number of excellent beings, who enjoyed the very quintessence of bliss, who were as happy as God and Heaven could make them, grew soon uneasie and weary of their state, and left their own habitation. Which argues, that their happiness was not perfect and compleat, because otherwise they would not have desired a change; since that very desire is an imperfection. And if happiness be not compleat in Heaven, sure 'tis impossible to be found any where else.

12. Before therefore I proceed to define wherein perfect happiness does consist, I think it necessary to endeavour the removal of this scruple, which, like the flaming sword, forbids entrance into paradise. In order to which, I shall enquire into the true reason why these sublunary good things, when enjoyed, do neither answer our expectations, nor satisfy our appetites. Now this must proceed either from the nature of fruition it self, or from the imperfection of it, or from the object of it, or from our selves. I confess, did this defect proceed from the very nature of fruition (as is supposed in the objection,) 'tis impossible there should be any such thing as perfect happiness, since 'twould faint away while enjoy'd, and expire in our embraces. But that it cannot proceed thence, I have this to offer, because fruition being nothing else but an application, or union of the soul to some good or agreeable object, it is impossible that should lessen the good enjoyed. Indeed it may lessen our estimation of it; but that is, because we do not rightly consider the nature of things, but promise our selves

infinite satisfactions in the enjoyment of finite objects. We look upon things through a false glass; which magnifies the object at a distance, much beyond its just dimensions. We represent our future enjoyments to our selves in such favourable and partial ideas, as abstract from them all the inconveniences and allays, which will really in the event accompany them; and if we thus over-rate our felicities before-hand, 'tis no wonder if they balk our expectations in the fruition. But then it must be observed, that the fruition does not cause this deficiency in the object, but only discover it. We have a better insight into the nature of things near at hand, than when we stood afar off; and consequently, discern those defects and imperfections, which, like the qualities of an ill mistress, lay hid all the time of courtship, and now begin to betray themselves, when 'tis come to enjoyment. But this can never happen, but where the object is finite. An infinite object can never be overvalued; and consequently, cannot frustrate our expectations.

13. And as we are not to charge fruition with our disappointments, but our selves, (because we are accessory to our own delusion, by taking false measures of things) so neither is the unsatisfactoriness of any condition to be imputed to the nature of fruition it self; but either to the imperfection of it, or to the finiteness of the object. Let the object be never so perfect, yet if the fruition of it be in an imperfect measure, there will still be room for unsatisfactoriness; as it appears in our enjoyment of God in this life. Neither can a finite object fully satisfy us, tho' we enjoy it never so thoroughly. For since to a full satisfaction and acquiescence of mind, 'tis required, that our faculties be always entertained, and we ever enjoying: it is impossible a finite

nite object should afford this satisfaction, because all the good that is in it (being finite) is at length run over; and then the enjoyment is at an end. The flower is suck'd dry, and we necessarily desire a change. Whenever therefore our enjoyment proves unsatisfying, we may conclude, that either the object is finite, or the fruition imperfect. But then how came the Angels to be dissatisfy'd with their condition in the regions of light and immortality, when they drank freely of the fountain of life *Rev. xxi. 6.* proceeding out of the throne of God, with whom is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore? Here certainly, there is no room either for the finiteness of the object, or the imperfection of fruition. And therefore, their dissatisfaction can be imputed to no other cause, than the nature of fruition in general, which is to lessen the good enjoyed, as was supposed in the objection. This I confess presses hard; and indeed I have but one way to extricate my self from this difficulty; and that is, by supposing a state of probation in the Angels. That they did not immediately upon their creation enjoy an infinite object, or if they did, yet that 'twas in an imperfect measure. For should it be granted, that they were at first confirmed in bliss, and compleatly happy, both in respect of fruition and object, as we suppose they are now; I cannot conceive it possible they should be dissatisfy'd with their condition. This being repugnant to the idea of perfect happiness.

14. Since then this dissatisfaction must be derived either from the imperfection of the fruition, or the finiteness of the object, and not from the nature of fruition in the general, to infer the possibility of perfect happiness, there needs no more to be supposed, than the existence of a being full fraught with

with infinite inexhaustible good, and that he is able to communicate to the full. There may be then such a thing as perfect happiness. The possibility of which may also be farther proved (tho' not explicated) from those boundless desires, that immortal thirst every man has after it by nature : Concerning which I observe, That nothing does more constantly, more inseparably cleave to our minds, than this desire of perfect and consummated happiness ; This is the most excellent end of all our endeavours, the great prize, the great hope. This is the mark every man shoots at ; and tho' we miss our aim never so often, yet we will not, cannot give over, but, like passionate lovers, take resolution from a repulse. The rest of our passions are much at our own disposal, yield either to reason or time ; we either argue our selves out of them, or at least out-live them. We are not always in love with pomp and grandeur, nor always dazzled with the glittering of riches ; and there is a season when pleasure it self (that is sensible pleasure) shall court in vain : But the desire of perfect happiness has no intervals, no vicissitudes ; it out-lasts the motion of the pulse, and survives the ruins of the grave. *Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it :* And now certainly, God would never have planted such an ardent, such an importunate appetite in our Souls ; and as it were, interwoven it with our very natures, had he not been able to satisfy it.

15. I come now to shew, wherein this perfect happiness does consist ; concerning which, I affirm in the first place, that it is not to be found in any thing we can enjoy in this life. The greatest fruition we have of God here, is imperfect ; and consequently unsatisfactory. And as for all other objects,

jects, they are finite ; and consequently, tho' never so fully enjoyed, cannot afford us perfect satisfaction. No, *Man knoweth not the price thereof : neither is it to be found in the land of the living. The depth saith, it is not in me ; and the sea saith, it is not in me,* Job xxviii. The vanity of the creature has been so copiously discoursed upon, both by philosophers and divines, and withal is so obvious to every thinking man's experience, that I need not here take an inventory of the creation, nor turn *Ecclesiastes* after *Solomon*. And besides, I have anticipated this argument in what I have said concerning fruition, I shall only add one or two remarks concerning the objects of secular happiness, which are not so commonly insisted upon, to what has been there said. The first is this, that the objects wherein men generally seek for happiness here, are not only finite in their nature, but also few in number. Indeed, could a man's life be so contrived, that he should have a new pleasure still ready at hand as soon as he was grown weary of the old, and every day enjoy a virgin delight ; he might then perhaps, like *Mr. Hobbs* his notion, and for a while think himself happy in this continued succession of new acquisitions. But alas, nature does not treat us with this variety. The compass of our enjoyments is much shorter than that of our lives ; and there is a periodical circulation of our pleasures, as well as of our blood.

—*Verfamur ibidem atque insummus usque ;
Nec nova vivendo proceditur ulla voluptas.* Lucret.

The enjoyments of our lives run in a perpetual round, like the months in the calendar, but with a quicker revolution ; we dance like *faries* in a circle,

cle, and our whole life is but a nauseous tautology. We rise like the Sun, and run the same course we did the day before; and to morrow is but the same over again: So that the greatest favourite of fortune, will have reason often enough to cry out with him in *Seneca*, *Quousque eadem?* But there is another grievance which contributes to defeat our endeavours after perfect happiness in the enjoyment of this life; which is, that the objects wherein we seek it, are not only finite and few; but that they commonly prove occasions of greater sorrow to us, than ever they afforded us content. This may be made out several ways, as from the labour of getting, the care of keeping, the fear of losing, and the like topicks, commonly insisted on by others; but I wave these, and fix upon another account less blown upon, and I think more material than any of the rest. It is this, that altho' the object loses that great appearance in the fruition which it had in the expectation, yet after it is gone, it resumes it again. Now we, when we lament the loss, do not take our measures from that appearance which the object had in the enjoyment (as we should do to make our sorrow not exceed our happiness) but from that which it has in the reflection; and consequently, we must needs be more miserable in the loss, than we were happy in the enjoyment.

16. From these, and the like considerations, I think it will evidently appear, that this perfect happiness is not to be found in any thing we can enjoy in this life. Wherein then does it consist? I answer positively, in the full and entire fruition of God. He (as *Plato* speaks) is κλειον ἢ ἀρχιτεκλονιδν τέλει, the proper and principle end of man, the center of our tendency, the ark of our rest. He is the object which alone can satisfy the appetite of the

the most capacious soul, and stand the test of fruition to eternity. And to enjoy him fully, is perfect felicity. This in general, is no more than what is deliver'd to us in scripture, and was believ'd by many of the heathen philosophers. But the manner of this fruition requires a more particular consideration. Much is said by the schoolmen on this subject, whereof, in the first place, I shall give a short and methodical account; and then fix upon the opinion'd which I best approve of. The first thing that I observe, is, that 'tis generally agreed upon among them, that this fruition of God consists in some operation; and I think with very good reason. For as by the objective part of perfect happiness, we understand that which is best and last, and to which all other things are to be referr'd; so by the formal part of it, must be understood the best and last habitude of man toward that best object, so that the happiness may both ways satisfy the appetite; that is, as 'tis the best thing, and as 'tis the possession, use, or fruition of that best thing: Now this habitude, whereby the best thing is perfectly possess'd, must needs be some operation; because operation is the ultimate perfection of every being. Which axiom must not be so understood, as if operation taken by it self, were more perfect than the thing which tends to it; but that every thing with its operation, is more perfect than without it.

17. The next thing which I observe, is, that 'tis also farther agreed upon among them, that this operation wherein our fruition of God does consist; is an operation of the intellectual part, and not of the sensitive. And this I also take to be very reasonable. First, because 'tis generally receiv'd, that the essence of God cannot be the object of any of our

our senses. But secondly, suppose it could, yet since the operation, wherein our perfect happiness does consist, must be the perfectest operation; and since that of the intellectual part is more perfect than that of the sensitive; it follows, that the operation whereby we enjoy God, must be that of the intellectual part only. And therefore says *Duns Scotus*, in the 4 of the *Sent. Distinct. 49. Q. 4. Omnes tenentes beatitudinem consistere in operatione, concorditer tenent quod non consistit nisi in operatione aliqua partis intellectivæ, ut distinguitur contra partem sensitivam, quia sola potentia immaterialis potest per operationem suam attingere perfectum bonum in quo solo, ut in objecto, est beatitudo.*

18. But now whereas the intellectual part of man (as 'tis opposed to the sensitive) is double, viz. that of the understanding, and that of the will; this may lay a ground for a great question, in which act or operation of the mind the fruition of God does consist, whether in an act of the understanding, which is vision; or in an act of the will, which is love. And here not to ingage in the disputes concerning this matter between the *Thomists* and *Scotists*, I shall resolve the perfect and beatifick fruition of God, partly into vision, and partly into love. Tho' perhaps vision may be allow'd to be the radical and principle ingredient of our happiness, according to that of our Saviour Christ (which is the text upon which the great school-divine builds) *This is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Which also seems to be countenanced by that collect of our church, which says, *in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life.* These are the two arms with which we embrace the divinity, and unite our souls to the fair one and the good. These I conceive are both

both so essential to the perfect fruition of God, that the idea of it can by no means be maintained, if either of them be wanting. For since God is both supreme truth and infinite goodness, he cannot be entirely possess'd, but by the most clear knowledge, and the most ardent love. And besides, since the soul is happy by her faculties, her happiness must consist in the most perfect operation of each faculty. For if happiness did consist formally in the sole operation of the understanding, or in the sole operation of the will, the man would not be completely, and in all respects happy. For how is it possible a man should be perfectly happy in loving the greatest good, if he did not know it; or in knowing it, if he did not love it? And moreover, these two operations do so mutually tend to the promotion and conservation of one another, that upon this depends the perpetuity and the constancy of our happiness. For while the blessed do *πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον*, face to face contemplate the supreme truth and infinite goodness, they cannot chuse but love perpetually; and while they perpetually love, they cannot chuse but perpetually contemplate. And in this mutual reciprocation of the actions of the soul, consists the perpetuity of Heaven, the circle of felicity.

19. Besides this way of resolving our fruition of God into vision and love, there is a famous opinion said to be broacht by *Henricus Gandavensis*, who upon a supposition that God could not be so fully enjoy'd as is required to perfect happiness, only by the operations or powers of the soul; fancy'd a certain illapse whereby the divine essence did fall in with, and as it were penetrate the essence of the blessed. Which opinion he endeavours to illustrate by this similitude: That as a piece of iron, red hot

not by reason of the illapse of the fire into it, appears all over like fire; so the souls of the blessed, by this illapse of the divine essence into them, shall be all over divine.

20. I think he has scarce any followers in this opinion; nor do I well know whether he ever had a leader. For as for the old doctrine of the refusion or resorbition of souls into God, the great fountain of them, or as some perhaps would express it, into the *anima mundi*, which in the stoick theology is the same with God himself, tho' in *Plato's*, rather the production or effect of God; this stoical doctrine (for I know of no such doctrine held by *Plato*) seems to be of a nature too different from this illapse, to be reckon'd as the same opinion in another dress. But indeed there is a passage in *Plotinus*, which seems to border very much upon this notion; where describing the happiness of the soul contemplating and enjoying God, he expresses it by its being one with him, and by joyning centre to centre, ἐν ἑστίῳ, ἄσπερον κέντρον κέντρον συνάψας. *Ennead. 6. Lib. 9. Cap. 10.* Which occasion'd his excellent commentator *Ficinus*, to call to mind that of *St. Paul*, *He that is joyned unto the Lord, is one spirit.*

21. That such an intimate conjunction with God as is here described, is possible, seems to me not absolutely incredible from the nature of the hypostatick union; but whether our fruition of God after this life shall consist in it, none know but those happy souls who enjoy him; and therefore I shall determine nothing before the time. This only I observe, that should our fruition of God consist in such an union, or rather penetration of essences, that would not exclude, but rather infer those operations of vision and love as necessary to fruition; but on the other hand, there seems no such necessity of

of this union to the fruition, but that it may be conceiv'd entire without it. And therefore why we should multiply difficulties without cause, I see no reason. For my part, I should think my self sufficiently happy in the clear vision of my maker, nor should I desire any thing beyond the prayer of *Moses*: *I beseech thee shew me thy glory*, *Exod. xxxiii. 18.*

22. For what an infinite satisfaction, happiness and delight it must needs be, to have a clear and intimate perception of that primitive and original beauty, perfection and harmony, whereof all that appears fair and excellent, either, to our senses or understandings in this life, is but a faint imitation, a pale reflection! To see him who is the fountain of all being, containing in himself the perfection, not only of all that is, but of all that is possible to be, *the alpha and omega, the beginning and ending, the first and the last, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty!* *Rev. i. 8.* To see him, of whom all nature is the image, of whom all the harmony, both of the visible and invisible world, is but the echo! To see him, who (as *Plato* divinely and magnificently expresses it) is *πολύ τιμωρ ὁ καλὸς αὐτὸν καθ' αὐτὸν μετ' αὐτῆς μονοειδὲς αἰεὶ ὄν.* The immense ocean of beauty, which is it self, by it self, with it self, uniform, always existing! This certainly will affect the soul with all the pleasing and ravishing transports of love and desire, joy and delight, wonder and amazement, together with a settled acquiescence and complacency of spirit; only less infinite than the loveliness that causes it, and the peculiar complacency of him who rejoices in his own fulness, and the comprehensions of eternity. We see how strangely our sense of seeing is affected with the harmony of colours; and our sense

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of hearing, with the harmony of sounds; insomuch, that some have been too weak for the enjoyment, and have been almost transported beyond themselves with the sublimate of pleasure. And if so, what then shall we think of the beatifick vision; the pleasure of which will so far transcend that of the other, as God, who is all over harmony and proportion, exceeds the sweet melody of sounds and colours; and the perception of the mind is more vigorous, quick and piercing, than that of the senses? This is perfect happiness, this is the tree of life which grows in the midst of the paradise of God; this is heaven, which while the learned dispute about, the good only enjoy. But I shall not venture to soar any longer in these heights; I find the æther too thin here to breath in long, and the brightness of the region flashes too strong upon my tender sense; I shall therefore hasten to descend from the mount of God, lest I grow giddy with speculation, and lose those secrets which I have learnt there, the cabala of felicity.

23. And now (Sir) I come to consider your question, *viz.* Wherein the greatest happiness attainable by man in this life, does consist. Concerning which, there is as great variety of opinions among philosophers, as there is among geographers, about the seat of paradise. The learned *Varro* reckons up no less than 288 several opinions about it; and yet notwithstanding the number of writers who have been so liberal of their thoughts upon this subject to posterity, they seem to have been in the dark in nothing more than in this; and (excepting only a few platonists, who placed man's greatest end in the contemplation of truth) they seem to have undertaken nothing so unhappily, as when they essay'd to write of happiness. Some measure their
happiness

happinefs by the high tide of their riches, as the *Egyptians* did the fertility of the year by the increase of the river *Nile*. Others place it in the pleasures of sense: others in honour and greatness. But these and the like, were men of the common herd, low groveling souls, that either understood not the dignity of human nature, or else forgot that they were men. But there were others of a diviner genius and sublimer spirit.

Quis meliore luto finxit praeordia Titan.

Who had a more generous blood running in their veins, which made them put a just value upon themselves, and scorn to place their greatest happiness in that which they should blush to enjoy. And those were the *Stoicks* and the *Peripateticks*, who both place the greatest happiness of this life in the actions of virtue, with this only difference, that whereas the former are contented with naked virtue, the latter require some other collateral things, to the farther accomplishment of happiness; such as are health and strength of body, a competent livelihood, and the like.

24. And this opinion has been subscribed to by the hands of eminent moralists in all ages. And as it is venerable for its antiquity, so has it gain'd no small authority from the pen of a great modern writer, (*Descartes*) who resolves the greatest happiness of this life into the right use of the will; which consists in this, that a man have a firm and constant purpose, always to do that which he shall judge to be best.

25. I confess, the practice of virtue is a very great instrument of happiness; and that there is a great deal more true satisfaction and solid content

to be found in a constant course of well-living, than in all the soft caresses of the most studied luxury, or the voluptuousness of a *Seraglio*. And therefore, I have oftentimes been exceedingly pleas'd in the reading of a certain passage in that divine moralist *Hierocles*, where he tells you, that the virtuous man lives much more pleasantly than the vicious man. " For (says he) all pleasure is the companion of
 " action, it has no subsistence of its own, but ac-
 " companies us in our doing such and such things.
 " Hence 'tis, that the worse actions are accom-
 " panied with the meaner pleasures. So that the
 " good man does not only excel the wicked man
 " in what is good, but has also the advantage of
 " him even in pleasure, for whose sake alone he is
 " wicked. For he that chuses pleasure with filthi-
 " ness, altho' for a while he be sweetly and delici-
 " ously entertain'd; yet at last, thro' the filthiness
 " annex'd to his enjoyment, he is brought to a
 " painful repentance. But now he that prefers vir-
 " tue with all her labours and difficulties, tho' at
 " first for want of use it sits heavy upon him; yet
 " by the conjunction of good he alleviates the la-
 " bour, and at last enjoys pure and unallay'd plea-
 " sure with his virtue. So that of necessity, that
 " life is most unhappy, which is most wicked; and
 " that most pleasant which is most virtuous.

26. Now this I readily submit to as a great truth, that the degrees of happiness vary according to the degrees of virtue; and consequently, that that life which is most virtuous, is most happy; with reference to those that are vicious or less virtuous, every degree of virtue having a proportionate degree of happiness accompanying it; (which is all, I suppose, that excellent author intends.) But I do not think the most virtuous life so the most happy, but that

that it may become happier, unless something more be comprehended in the word (virtue) than the Stoicks, Peripateticks, and the generality of other moralists understand by it. For with them it signifies no more but only such a firm *ῥῆσις*, or habitude of the will to good, whereby we are constantly disposed, notwithstanding the contrary tendency of our passions, to perform the necessary offices of life. This they call moral or civil virtue; and although this brings always happiness enough with it to make amends for all the difficulties which attend the practice of it: Yet I am not of opinion, that the greatest happiness attainable by man in this life, consists in it. And so that it does not consist in virtue, unless virtue be so largely understood, as to comprehend the contemplative and unitive way of religion, consisting in a devout meditation of God, and in affectionate unions and adherencies to him. And which therefore, to distinguish it from the other, we may call divine virtue, taking the denomination not from the principle, as if it were wholly infused into us, and we wholly passive in it, but from the object; the object of the former being moral good, and the object of the latter, God himself. The former is a state of proficiency, the latter of perfection. The former is a state of difficulty and contention, the latter of ease and serenity. The former is employ'd in mastering the passions, and regulating the actions of common life, the latter in divine meditation, and the extasies of seraphick love. He that has only the former, is like *Moses*, with much difficulty climbing up to the holy mount; but he that has the latter, is like the same person conversing with God on the serene top of it, and shining with the rays of anticipated glory. So that this latter supposes the acquisition of the former, and consequently, has all the happiness pertaining to the other, besides

what it adds of its own. This is the last stage of humane perfection, the utmost round of the ladder whereby we ascend to Heaven; one step higher is glory. Here then will I build my tabernacle, for it is good to be here. Here will I set up my pillar of rest, here will I fix; for why should I travel on farther in pursuit of any greater happiness, since man in this station is but a little lower than the Angels, one remove from Heaven? Here certainly is the greatest happiness, as well as perfection attainable by man in this state of imperfection. For since that happiness, which is absolutely perfect and complete, consists in the clear and intimate vision, and most ardent love of God; hence we ought to take our measures, and conclude that to be the greatest happiness attainable in this state, which is the greatest participation of the other. And that can be nothing else but the unitive way of religion, which consists of the contemplation and love of God. I shall say something of each of these severally, and something of the unitive way of religion, which is the result of both; and so shut up this discourse.

27. By contemplation in general (*θεωρία*) we understand an application of the understanding to some truth. But here in this place, we take the word in a more peculiar sense, as it signifies an habitual, attentive, steady application or conversion of the spirit to God, and his divine perfections. Of this the masters of mystick theology, commonly make fifteen degrees. The first is intuition of truth; the second is a retirement of all the vigour and strength of the faculties into the innermost parts of the soul; the third is spiritual silence; the fourth is rest; the fifth is union; the sixth is the hearing of the still voice of God; the seventh is spiritual slumber; the eighth is extacy; the ninth is rapture; the

the tenth is the corporeal appearance of Christ and the Saints ; the eleventh is the imaginary appearance of the same ; the twelfth is the intellectual vision of God ; the thirteenth is the vision of God in obscurity ; the fourteenth is an admirable manifestation of God ; the fifteenth is a clear and intuitive vision of him, such as St. *Austin* and *Tho. Aquinas* attribute to St. *Paul*, when he was rapt up into the third Heaven. Others of them reckon seven degrees only, (*viz.*) taste; desire, satiety, ebriety, security, tranquillity ; but the name of the seventh (they say) is known only to God.

28. I shall not stand to examine the scale of this division ; perhaps there may be a kind of a pythagorick superstition in the number. But this I think I may affirm in general, that the soul may be wound up to a most strange degree of abstraction, by a silent and steady contemplation of God. *Plato* defines contemplation to be λύσις καὶ χωρισμὸς τῆ ψυχῆς ἀπὸ σώματος, a solution, and a separation of the soul from the body. And how far it may be possible for a man by mere intention of thought, not only to withdraw the soul from all commerce with the senses (which in part is a thing of common experience) but even really to separate it from the body, to untwist the ligaments of his frame, and by degrees to resolve himself into the state of the dead, I leave to be consider'd from what is reported concerning the abstractions of *Duns Scotus*. The Jews express the manner of the death of *Moses* by *osculum oris Dei*, calling it the kiss of God's mouth ; which perhaps may signify that he breath'd out his soul by the mere strength and energy of contemplation, and expired in the embraces of his maker. A happy way of dying ! How ambitious should I be of such a conveyance, were it practicable ? How

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passionately

passionately should I join with the church in the canticles : *φιλησάτω με ἀπὸ φιλημάτων στόματι αὐτοῦ*, *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth*, Cant. 1. 2.

29. But however this be determin'd, certain it is, that there are exceeding great measures of abstraction in contemplation ; so great, that sometimes, whether a man be in the body, or out of the body, he himself can hardly tell. And consequently, the soul in these præludiums of death, these neighbourhoods of separation, must needs have brighter glimpses, and more beatifick ideas of God, than in a state void of these elevations ; and consequently, must love him with greater ardency ; Which is the next thing I am to consider.

30. The love of God in general, may be considered either as it is purely intellectual, or as it is a passion. The first is, when the soul, upon an apprehension of God as a good, delectable, and agreeable object, joyns her self to him by the will. The latter is, when the motion of the will is accompany'd with a sensible commotion of the spirits, and an estuation of the blood. Some perhaps may think, that 'tis not possible for a man to be affected with this sensitive love of God, which is a passion ; because there is nothing in God which falls under our imagination ; and consequently (the imagination being the only medium of conveyance) it cannot be propagated from the intellectual part to the sensitive : That none are capable of this sensitive passionate love of God, but christians, who enjoy the mystery of the incarnation, whereby they know God has condescended so far as to cloath himself with flesh, and to become like one of us. But 'tis not the sophistry of the cold logicians, that shall work me out of the belief of what I feel and know, and rob me of the sweetest entertainment of life,
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the passionate love of God. Whatever some men may pretend, who are strangers to all the affectionate heats of religion, and therefore make their philosophy a plea for their indevotion, and extinguish all holy arduours with a syllogism; yet I am firmly persuaded, that our love of God may be not only passionate, but even wonderfully so, and exceeding the love of women. 'Tis an experimental, and therefore undeniable truth, that passion is a great instrument of devotion; and accordingly we find, that men of the most warm and pathetick tempers and affectionate complexions, (provided they have but consideration enough withal to fix upon the right object) prove the greatest votaries in religion. And upon this account it is, that to highten our love of God in our religious addresses, we endeavour to excite our passions by musick, which would be to as little purpose as the fanatick thinks 'tis, if there were not such a thing as the passionate love of God. But then as to the objection. I answer with the excellent *Descartes*, that altho' in God, who is the object of our love, we can imagine nothing, yet we can imagine that our love, which consists in this, that we would unite our selves to the object beloved, and consider our selves as it were a part of it. And the sole idea of this very conjunction, is enough to stir up a heat about the heart, and so kindle a very vehement passion. To which I add, that altho' the beauty or amiableness of God, be not the same with that which we see in corporeal beings, and consequently, cannot directly fall within the sphere of the imagination; yet it is something analogous to it; and that very analogy is enough to excite a passion. And this I think sufficient to warrant my general division of the love of God into intellectual and sensitive.

31. But

31. But there is a more peculiar acceptation of the love of God proper to this place. And it is that which we call seraphick. By which I understand in short, that love of God which is the effect of an intense contemplation of him. This differs not from the other in kind, but only in degree; and that it does exceedingly, in as much as the thoughtful contemplative man (as I hinted before) has clearer perceptions, and livelier impressions of the divine beauty, the lovely attributes and perfection of God, than he whose soul is more deeply set in the flesh, and lies groveling in the bottom of the dungeon.

32. That the nature of this seraphick love may be the better understood, I shall consider how many degrees there may be in the love of God. And I think the computation of *Bellarmino, lib. 2. de monachis, cap. 2.* is accurate enough. He makes four. The first is to love God proportionably to his loveliness, that is, with an infinite love; and this degree is peculiar to God himself. The second is to love him, not proportionably to his loveliness, but to the utmost capacity of a creature; and this degree is peculiar to Saints and Angels in Heaven. The third is to love him not proportionably to his loveliness, nor to the utmost capacity of a creature, absolutely consider'd; but to the utmost capacity of a mortal creature in this life. And this (he says) is proper to the religious. The fourth is to love him not proportionably to his loveliness, nor to the utmost capacity of a creature, consider'd either absolutely, or with respect to this life, but only so as to love nothing equally with him or above him. That is, not to do any thing contrary to the divine love. And this is absolute indispensable duty, less than

than which will not qualifie us for the enjoyment of God hereafter.

33. Now this seraphick love which we here discourse of, agrees most to the third degree: When a man, after many degrees of abstraction from the animal life, many a profound and steady meditation upon the excellencies of God, sees such a vast ocean of beauty and perfection in him, that he loves him to the utmost stretch of his power; *When he sits under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to his taste.* Cant. ii. 3. When he consecrates and devotes himself wholly to him, and has no passion for inferior objects. When he is ravished with the delights of his service, and breathes out some of his soul to him in every prayer. When he is delighted with anthems of praise and adoration, more than with marrow and fatness, and feasts upon *Allelujah*. When he melts in a calenture of devotion, and his soul *breaketh out with fervent desire*, Psal. cxix. When the one thing he delights in, is to converse with God in the beauty of holiness; and the one thing he desires, is to see him as he is in Heaven. This is seraphick love, and this with contemplation makes up that which the mystick divines style the unitive way of religion; It is called so, because it unites us to God in the most excellent manner that we are capable of in this life. By union here, I do not understand that which is local or presential, because I consider God as omnipresent. Neither do I mean an union of grace, (as they call it) whereby we are reconciled to God; or an union of charity at large, whereof it is said, *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 John iv. 16. The first of these being as common to the inanimate things, as to the most extasy'd soul upon earth. And the two last being common to all good men,

men, who indeed love God, but yet want the excellency of contemplation, and the mystick union. That union which consists in the most intimate adhesion of the soul to God, by the most affective and vital operations of the will, upon a clear and illuminated sense of his superlative excellence, with a full rest and acquiescence in his infinite greatness and goodness. Here the happy soul reposes her self, and says, *It is good to be here.* Here she dyes, and here she lives; here she loses, and here she finds her self. And in this state, as being a certain pre-gustation of glory, the greatest happiness of this life may reasonably be supposed to consist. Which state is thus represented by the excellent Bishop *Taylor*: “ It is (says he) a prayer of quietness
 “ and silence, and a meditation extraordinary; a
 “ discourse without variety; a vision and intuition
 “ of divine excellencies; an immediate entry into
 “ an orb of light, and a resolution of all our faculties into sweetness, affections, and starings upon
 “ the divine beauty. And is carried on to extasies,
 “ raptures, suspensions, elevations, abstractions, and
 “ apprehensions beatifical. *Great Exemplar.* p. 60

34. I make no doubt, but that many an honest, pious soul arrives to the heavenly *Canaan*, who is not fed with this *Manna* in the wilderness. But though every one must not expect these antepasts of felicity that is virtuous, yet none else must. Paradise was never open but to a state of innocence. But neither is that enough. No, this mount of God's presence is fenced not only from the profane, but also from the moderately virtuous. 'Tis the privilege of angelical dispositions, and the reward of eminent piety, and an excellent religion, to be admitted to these divine repasts, these feasts of love. And here I place the greatest happiness attainable

attainable by man in this life, as being the nearest approach to the state of the blessed above, the outer court of Heaven.

35. These (Sir) are my thoughts concerning happiness. I might have spun them out into a greater length, but I think a little plat of ground thick sown, is better than a great field, which for the most part of it lies fallow. I have endeavour'd to deliver my notions with as much perspicuity, and in as good method as I could, and so to answer all the ends of copiousness, with the advantage of a shorter cut. If I appear singular in any of my notions, you are not to ascribe it altogether to an affectation of novelty; but the reason may be, because in the composing of this discourse (part of which, I think, had its birth in a garden) I consulted my own experimental notices of things, and private reflections as much, if not more than the writings of others. So that if sometimes I happen to be in the road, and sometimes in a way by my self, 'tis no wonder. I affect neither the one nor the other, but write as I think. Which as I do at other times, so more especially when I subscribe my self,

S I R,

All-Souls College,
Apr. 18. 1683.

Yours most affectionately,
J. N.

A Resolution relating to a passage in the foregoing Treatise.

By way of Letter.

S I R,

1. **T**HE kind entertainment which you gave my *Idea of Happiness*, does not only encourage, but

but oblige me to endeavour the satisfaction of that scruple, which the perusal of it has occasion'd.

2. You say you should like my notion concerning the reality of that which is usually call'd imaginary happiness, that is, (as you well explain both your own and my meaning) that altho' the object may be an imaginary good, yet the happiness which consists in the fruition of that object, will not be imaginary too, but real; and consequently, that 'tis impossible for a man to seem to himself to be happy, and not to be really so, all happiness consisting in opinion. This notion, you say, you should like rarely well, could you free your self from one difficulty which it engages you upon; (*viz.*) That hereafter, in the state of glory, either one Saint shall think himself as happy as another, or not; if not, this must needs occasion envy or discontent; but if one shall think himself as happy as another, then, according to my hypothesis, that opinion is the measure of happiness, 'twill follow, that he will already be so; and this brings in equality of happiness, which you look upon (*and I think justly too*) as another absurdity.

3. I confess, Sir, this argument is pretty subtle and surprizing; but I conceive the knots of it may be untied by this answer. First, it may be justly question'd, whether the first part of your dilemma be necessarily attended with the appendant absurdity. 'Tis true indeed, not to think ones self as happy as another, is the spring of envy or discontent, among men in this world; but whether this be the genuine and constant effect of that consideration, or whether it ought not rather to be ascribed to the present infirmities and imperfections of human nature, may admit dispute. Nay, I rather think that so indeed it must be accounted for, and that

that such a consideration would not be productive of such an effect in Heaven, considering the perfect charity of the Saints, and their as perfect submission to the divine will. But in case this absurdity should inseparably cleave to the first part, then I betake my self to the latter, that in Heaven one Saint shall think himself as happy as another. Then, according to my own notion (say you) it will follow, that he is really so. No, I deny the consequence, the invalidity of which will plainly appear, by distinguishing the ambiguity of the phrase. For this expression, one Saint thinks himself as happy as another, may be taken in a double sense; either that he thinks himself as happy as he himself thinks that other; or, that he thinks himself as happy as that other thinks himself. I grant, should one Saint think himself as happy as another in this latter sense of the phrase, he would, according to my hypothesis, really be so; so that this would bring in equality. And therefore in this sense, I deny the proposition; and that without the least danger of splitting upon the first absurdity. But for the former sense, that has no such levelling quality; for to say that I think my self as happy as I think another, amounts to no more than this, that in my apprehension another does not exceed me in happiness: But tho' he does not in my apprehension, yet he may in reality; for tho' my opinion gives measures to my own happiness, yet it does not to another man's. So that one Saint may be said to think himself as happy as another in the former sense, without equalling the happiness of the blessed; tho', I confess, I should much rather adhere to the contrary proposition, (*viz.*) That one shall not think himself as happy as another, in case such an opinion be not necessarily attended with envy or discontent,

discontent, as I think it is not. Because it seems unreasonable to make them ignorant of the degrees of one another's blifs, unless that ignorance be necessarily required to prevent the alledg'd absurdities. But I determine nothing in this point; my business was only to break the force of your dilemma, and to shew that my notion does not involve you in the difficulty suppos'd. This, Sir, is all that I think necessary to say to a person of your apprehension; and therefore I end these nice speculations with this profitable reflection, that although the notion of happiness be intricate and obscure, yet the means of attaining it are plain; and therefore 'twould be most advisable both for you and me, chiefly to apply our selves to the latter here; and and we shall understand the former with the best sort of knowledge, that of experience, hereafter.

Yours,

J. N.

An Account of P L A T O's Ideas, and of
Platonick Love.

By way of Letter.

*Tanta vis in Ideis constituitur, ut nisi his intellectis,
sapiens esse nemo possit. S. Aug.*

S I R,
I. **W**ERE not I as well acquainted with your singular modesty, as I am with your intellectual accomplishments, I should readily conclude,

clude, that your directing your enquiries to me, proceeded not so much from a curiosity to improve your own knowledge, as to try mine. But when I consider, that you are ignorant of nothing so much as of your own worth and abilities, I begin to think it possible that you may propose these questions, even to me, out of a desire to be inform'd. Which way soever it is, I acknowledge my self to be obliged to you for affording me an opportunity of serving you, especially in such an instance, where I cannot gratifie your request without humouring my own genius at the same time. For indeed to my apprehension, there is not a finer or more sublime piece of speculation in all *Plato's* philosophy, than that of his ideas, and that of his love; tho' it has undergone the same hard fate with many other excellent theories; first to be either ignorantly misunderstood, or maliciously misrepresented; and then popularly vilify'd. and decry'd.

2. To do right therefore to the name of this great man, as well as to satisfy your demands, I shall first propose the general mistake, and then rectifie it; first, present you with the supposed opinion of *Plato*; and then with the true and genuine one. I begin with his ideas, by which 'tis taken for granted by the generality of writers, especially those of the Peripatetick order, that he understood universal natures, or abstract essences, subsisting eternally by themselves, separate both from the mind of God and all singular beings; according to which, as so many patterns, all singulars are form'd. As for instance; that a man, not this or that in particular, but an universal man, or a man in general, should exist by it self eternally, according to which all particular men were made. And accordingly it is gravely advanced, that universals are not Platonick
 Z ideas,

ideas, or certain real forms separated from particular things, and that because there are no such separate forms, since nothing exists in nature, but what is particular, as if *Plato* had ever held that there did. Sir, I suppose you can hardly forbear smiling at the oddness of the conceit; but as ridiculous as you may think it, 'tis said to be maintained by no less a man than *Plato*; and has been thought of that moment too, that multitudes of great men have set themselves very seriously to confute it, as a dangerous Heresie; and have opposed it with as much zeal, as ever *St. Austin* did the *Manichees*, or the *Pelagians*.

3. But now, that this opinion was not only for its absurdity and contradictiousness unworthy of the contemplative and refin'd spirit of *Plato*; but was also apparently none of his, I presume any capable person will be convinc'd, that shall heedfully and impartially examine and compare the works of *Plato*; and it can hardly be supposed that *Aristotle*, who had been his auditor for twenty years, should be ignorant of this; so that perhaps *Plato* might have too much reason for complaining as he does of his scholars disingenuity in these words, ἄριστος ἡμᾶς ἀπελάκτισε καθάπερ εἰ τὰ πωλάκια ἤσκηθ' ἴνα ἴ μὴ ἴσῃ; as is recorded by *Laertius* in the life of *Aristotle*.

4. And now, that the grossness of this abuse may the more fully appear, I will in the next place present you with another sense of *Plato's* Ideas; and such, as by some little acquaintance with the principles of the Platonick philosophy, I have reason to think, to be the true and genuine one. Know then, that *Plato* considering the world as an effect of an intellectual agent, and that in the operations of all other artificers or rational efficient, there must be some form in the mind of the artificer presupposed to

to the work (for otherwise, what difference will there be between a fortuitous effect, and an intended one; and how comes the effect to be of this species rather than another?) thought it necessary to suppose eternal forms, models or patterns, of all the species of being in nature, existing in the mind of God. And these he calls ideas. I say, existing in the mind of God: For as for ideas subsisting separately by themselves out of the divine mind or essence, I know no good reason to believe, that *Plato* ever maintain'd any such spectres and ghosts of entity. But what he really thought concerning this matter himself, he is best able to inform us. In his *Timæus*, which is *Plato's* book of *Genesis*, where he professedly treats of the nature of things, and gives an account of the origin of the world; he first of all enquires whether it was always, or whether it began from some principle? To which having answered *γένεσεν*, that it was made, &c. he next enquires, according to what pattern or exemplar, whether according to that which is always one and the same, or according to that which is made. To which his answer is, that since the world is fair, and the Maker of it good, it is manifest that he had regard to that exemplar which is eternal. *Περὶ τὸ αἰδίων ἔβλεπεν*. For, says he, the world is the fairest of effects, and God the best of causes. *Ὁ μὲν γὰρ, κάλλιστος τῶν γινόμενων, ὁ δὲ θεὸς αἰτίων*. And thereupon he concludes again, that the world was made according to an exemplar, that was always one and the same, or eternal; and that was contain'd in reason and wisdom; *λόγῳ and φρονήσει περιληπθῆν*. Now what should this be, but those ideal reasons or patterns of things which are in the divine nature? But that it must needs be so, appears plainly from the answer he makes to the next enquiry, which is concerning

the impulsive cause which moved God to make the world. To which his answer is, that he that made the world was good, and that he that is so, cannot be capable of envying at any thing. And that therefore being free from all envy, he would have all things made as like, or as near approaching to himself as might be. *Παρεπλήσια αὐτῷ.* So that 'tis plain, that himself was the idea or exemplar of them. Which he must also be presumed to mean, when he speaks of time, and the Heavens being made according to the exemplar of the eternal nature, *καὶ τὸ ἄχρονον ἔστιν αἰώνιος φύσις.* But what eternal nature is there besides God? And accordingly, speaking of some forms of things, he says (as his interpreter *Serranus* renders him) that they were so made, as God had from eternity described in himself. *Ὅσπερ ἀπεικάζειτο.* To the like purpose, in his *Timæus Locrus*, he has this memorable passage concerning the world, that it remains always incorruptible; and that it is the best of the things that are generated, because it was made by the best cause, proposing to himself, or regarding, not exemplars made by hands, but an idea, and intelligible essence. *Ἀφορῶσι θεοὶ εἰς τὴν ἰδέαν καὶ τὴν νοητὴν ἕσταν.* At the end of which book, he has this remarkable passage concerning the animals of the world, that they were made according to the best image of the eternal and intelligible form, according to the interpretation of *Serranus*. And these ideas in the Platonick philosophy, are *τὰ πρῶτα νοητὰ*, the first intelligibles, and *τὰ ὄντων μέτρα*, the measures of the things that are; and that because as all things were form'd according to these intelligible platforms, so their truth is to be measur'd by their conformity to them. And in this sense must be taken that common axiom of the schools, that the truth of a thing is its conformity with

with the divine intellect ; for it is in no other sense intelligible, as you will discern by and by.

5. But now, lest you should imagine that this Platonick hypothesis of ideas existing in the divine mind, should ill comport with the simplicity of God, or clasa with that approved doctrine of the schools, *nihil est in Deo quod non sit Deus* ; you are to understand, that *Plato* by his ideas, does not mean any real essence distinct from the divine essence, but only the divine essence it self, as it is variously imitable or participable by created beings ; and consequently, according to the multifariousness of this imitability, so are the possibilities of being. And this will serve to help us out with another difficulty ; for whereas the divine ideas are not only the exemplary causes of things, but also (which is consequent to the former) the measure of their truth ; this may seem to fall in with their opinion, who make all truth dependent upon the speculative understanding of God ; that is, that God does not understand a thing so, because it is so in its own nature, but that a thing is therefore so, because God is pleas'd so to understand it. Which is an opinion full of mischief and absurdity, as you may see compendiously, and yet evidently demonstrated in *Dr. Russ's* little discourse of truth. Now for the clearing this difficulty, 'tis to be observed, that the intellect of God, as a Platonist of note remarks, may be distinguish'd into *vũs vovẽdũs*, and *vũs vovẽtũs*, the counterpart whereof in English, is conceptive and exhibitivè. By the mind of God exhibitivè, is meant the essence of God, as thus or thus imitable, or participable by any creature ; and this is the same with an idea. By the mind of God conceptive, is meant a reflex act of God's understanding upon his own essence as exhibitivè, or as thus and thus imitable. Now if you

consider the divine understanding as conceptive or speculative, it does not make its object, but suppose it ; (as all speculative understanding does) neither is the truth of the object to be measured from its conformity with that, but the truth of that from its conformity with its object.

But if you consider the divine understanding as exhibitivè, then its truth does not depend upon its conformity with the nature of things ; but on the contrary, the truth of the nature of things depends upon its conformity with it. For the divine essence is not thus or thus imitable, because such and such things are in being ; but such and such things are in being, because the divine essence is thus and thus imitable ; for had not the divine essence been thus imitable, such and such beings would not have been possible. And thus are they to be understood who found the truth of things upon their conformity with the divine ideas ; and thus must the schools mean too, by that foremention'd axiom concerning transcendent truth, if they will speak sense, as I noted above.

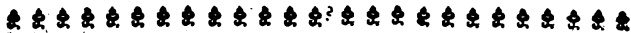
6. And now, Sir, from *Plato's* ideas thus amiably set forth, the transition methinks, is very natural to love. And concerning this, I shall account in the same method : First, by pointing out the popular misapprehension about it ; and then by exhibiting a true notion of it. Platonick love is a thing in every bodies mouth ; but I scarce find any that think or speak accurately of it. By platonick love seems generally to be meant, a love that terminates in it self ; I do not mean, that has no object, but that does not proceed to the enjoyment of its object. And accordingly, he is said to love platonically, or to be a platonick lover, that does *casto delectamine amare*, that loves at a distance ; not proceeding

ceeding to the fruition of the object, but chusing to dwell in the suburbs, reposing himself in his love, and pleasing himself with remote prospects, with the entertainments of expectation, and so makes a mistress of his own desire. Indeed the continual disappointment of fruition, and the vanity of all created good, where the expectation is always so much greater than the actual enjoyment, may perhaps serve with too much reason to plead for, and recommend such a sort of love as this is. But why this should be call'd by the name of platonick love, the best reason that I know of, is because people will have it so. That dialogue wherein *Plato* treats of love, is indeed very mystical and allegorical; where under the veil of figures and similitudes, after the manner of the old philosophers and poets, he represents a great deal of philosophick truth. But if his interpreter *Serranus* understands him rightly, the main of his notion seems reducible to these two things. First, he considers the nature of love, by which he means the same as the appetite of happiness, or the desire of self-preservation, or that inclination which all creatures naturally have of obtaining their own proper good; which indeed is the most general and adequate notion of love. Then having described the nature of love, he comes next to explain its office, and to shew (as he does at large) how many, and how great advantages arise to us from it. Of which the last and the greatest is this, how we may gradually ascend from the many fairs to the chief fair, that is to God, in whom is true felicity. That these fairs which are exposed to our eyes, are so to be look'd upon and loved, not that we should stick in them; but that by them, as by so many steps, we should ascend to him who is the very idea of beauty, and who is the cause of all

that is fair, that is to God, the chief good. So that the thing principally intended by *Plato* in his love, and consequently that which we are chiefly to understand by what we call *Platonick* love, is the ascent of the soul to God by the steps of inferior and subordinate beauties; which steps, according to *Plato's* own account, are thus disposed. From the beauty of bodies to the beauty of the soul, from the beauty of the soul to the beauty that is in the offices of life and laws, and from thence to the beauty that is in the sciences; and lastly, from the beauty of the sciences, to the immense ocean of beauty, that is God, of whom he gives a very noble and magnificent description, calling him, *αὐτὸν ἰδὲ αὐτὸ μετ' αὐτῶ, μονοειδὲς αἰεὶ ὄν*, magnifying the happiness of him that shall enjoy him. Nor ought it to be thought strange, that so great a philosopher should inculcate so much the love of beauty, since how mean a passion soever the love of beauty may be, as it is accompanied with a desire of corporal contact; yet certainly, beauty it self abstractly consider'd, is a thing of a very refin'd and exalted excellence, not unworthy of the most philosophical regard, as consisting in harmony and proportion, and being an emanation of the divine brightness, a ray of God. *Plato* indeed does not (as I know of) so call it, but he says, what is equivalent to it, when he makes all other fairs to be so by participation from God. *Τὰ ὅ ἀλλα πάντα καλὰ ἐκείνῃ μετέχοντα*. Sir, I might enlarge upon these things, but I think it will be for your better entertainment to be remitted to your own thoughts, some of which I hope will be, that I am entirely at your service and devotion.

J. Norris.

A



A Letter concerning Love and Musick.

S I R,

1. **T**O the first of your enquiries concerning the true idea of love, and particularly that between man and woman, and wherein it stands distinguish'd from lust, my answer in short is this, that love may be consider'd either barely as a tendency toward good, or as a willing this good to something capable of it. If love be taken in the first sense, 'tis what we call desire; if in the second, 'tis what we call charity, or benevolence.

2. Then as to desire, there is either an intellectual or a sensual desire, which denomination is not here taken from the faculty, (since in that respect all desire is intellectual) but from the quality of the object. That I call here an intellectual desire, whose object is an intellectual good; and that a sensual desire, whose object is a sensual good. And this is that which *Plato* either meant, or should have meant, by his two loves, or *Cupids*, the celestial and the vulgar. The latter of these is what we call lust.

3. But then this again signifies either abstractly and indifferently, *viz.* a bare desire of corporal pleasure, or else concretely and immorally, *viz.* a desire or longing after corporeal pleasure in forbidden and unlawful instances.

4. These things being thus briefly premised, my next resolution is this: That the ordinary passion of love, that which we mean when we say, such a man, or such a woman is in love, is no other than plain lust, if lust be taken according to the first signification; namely, for a sensual desire, or a tendency

dency toward a sensual good. But if lust be taken in the latter sense, as a desire of corporeal pleasure in unlawful instances, that which our Saviour meant when he said, *He that looks upon a woman to lust after her, &c.* Then 'tis not necessary that the passion we here speak of should be lust; because then 'twould be a sin to be in love, and consequently, there would be a necessity of sinning in order to marriage; because no man is supposed to marry, but whom he thus loves.

5. And now to your second enquiry, whether musick be a sensual or intellectual pleasure: Before this can be determin'd, the idea of a sensual and intellectual pleasure must be stated.

6. For the better conceiving of which it is here to be consider'd, that since matter is not capable of thought, it must be the soul only that is the proper subject both of pleasure and pain. And accordingly it will be necessary to say that the true difference between intellectual and sensual pleasure does consist not in this, that intellectual pleasure is that which is perceiv'd by the soul, and sensual that which is perceiv'd by the body; for the body perceives not at all. Nor yet (as I once represented it in this very account) in this, that sensual pleasure is when the body is primarily affected, and the soul secondarily, or by participation; and that intellectual pleasure is when the soul is primarily affected, and the body secondarily, or by participation; (the soul being the only true percipient in both) but rather in this, that sensual pleasure is that which the soul perceives by the mediation of the body, upon the occasion of some motion or impression made upon it; whereas intellectual pleasure is that which the soul perceives immediately by it self, and from her own thoughts, without any such occasion from the body.

7. Now

7. Now according to this measure it seems most reasonable to define the pleasure of musick to be properly intellectual. For tho' sound singly and absolutely consider'd (which is the material part of musick) be a sensation, that is, a sentiment in the soul resulting from some movement of the body, and so the pleasure that arises from the hearing it be accordingly a sensual pleasure, as truly, tho' not so grossly, as smelling or tasting is; yet the harmony and proportion of sounds (which is that wherein musick formally consists) is an abstract and intelligible thing, and the pleasure of it arises not from any bodily movement, (as the other does) but from the soul it self contemplating the beauty and agreement of it. To which beauty and agreement, that it is in sounds is purely accidental, since the soul would be pleas'd with the same proportion wherever it finds it. Nor is it proper to say that we hear musick; that which we hear is only the sound, which is a sensation in our selves; but the musick part we properly think and contemplate as an intelligible beauty, in like manner as we do the beauty of truth. And consequently, the pleasure of it must be as much intellectual as that of the other is. To all which it may be added in the last place, that musick consisting formally in proportion, and proportion pleasing only as understood; the pleasure of it must needs be intellectual, as resulting from thought and understanding, as all other intellectual pleasures do.

8. And thus, Sir, you have my sentiments, with as much brevity and clearness as I could use, and it may be, as the matters would bear. I have now nothing farther to add, but to renew the assurances of my being

Your Friend and Servant,

J. N.

A



A Letter concerning Friendship.

S I R,

1. **T**O your question, whether in propriety of speaking, there may be a strict friendship between a man and his wife? I answer first, that the solution of this question depends upon another, *viz.* What are the requisites essentially necessary to the exercise of friendship? And this question likewise depends upon another, *viz.* What is the true notion or idea of friendship? This being rightly stated, 'twill be easy to discern what are the essential requisites; and consequently, whether man and wife are capable terms in this relation or no?

2. Now as to the idea of friendship, I answer first in general, that friendship is nothing else but benevolence or charity, under some certain modifications, or accidental circumstances. Accidental I mean as to charity, though necessary and essential to friendship. But now what these certain modifications are, is next to be consider'd. 'Twould be too tedious a work to insist here upon other mens opinions; and therefore I shall only briefly deliver my own, which is, that all the modifications of charity necessary to the constitution of friendship, may be well enough reduced to these three: 1. That it be in a special manner intense. 2. That it be mutual; and 3. That it be manifest, or mutually known. Charity, when clothed with these three modifications, immediately commences friendship. More than these it need not have, but of these not one may be spared, as will easily appear, if you examine them severally.

3. Now

3. Now from this idea of friendship 'tis very obvious to deduce what are the requisites necessary to friendship, not in reference to its idea (for that's already stated) but in reference to its existence and actual exercise; that is, in one word, what are those dispositions or aptnesses in the subject, whether as to person, state, or condition, which may render it capable of friendship, according to the fore-mention'd idea. Now, I say, what these are may be easily collected from the Idea it self, as will appear, if we consider it distinctly, according to those three modifications. For First, whereas friendship is said to be charity in a special manner intense; hence I collect first, that it cannot be but between good men, because an ill man cannot have any true charity, much less such an intense degree of it, as is requisite to friendship. So that virtue in general is one requisite. Secondly, Hence I collect, that a friend must not be only according to the character *Lucan* gives of *Cato*—*rigidi servator honesti*, rigidly virtuous and honest; but he must be also *χρησδς ἀνής*, a man of a liberal, sweet, obliging temper; one of those good men of whom 'tis said in Scripture, (by way of contradistinction to the righteous, or rigidly honest) that some would even dare to dye for them. For tho' I may have common charity; nay more, a great esteem for a man of plain honesty and integrity, yet I can never love him with that special intenseness of affection which belongs to friendship, unless he be also of a beneficent, kind and obsequious temper. So that good nature is another requisite. Thirdly, hence I collect, that there must be also (at least in a competent proportion) an agreeableness of humours and manners; for unless the materials be of an apt and correspondent figure, the building can neither be compact nor lasting; so that

that likeness of disposition is another requisite. 4. Hence I collect, that true friendship cannot be among many. For since our faculties are of a finite energy, 'tis impossible our love can be very intense when divided among many. No: the rays must be contracted to make them burn. So that another requisite is, that the terms of this relation be few in number.

4. These are all the requisites that I can think of at present, deducible from the first part of the idea, (*viz.* Charity in a special manner intense :) As for fidelity in retaining secrets, constancy of adherence, and the like, I think they are virtually included in the first requisite; it being hardly conceivable how a man can be good and virtuous that wants them. But if you think the reduction not so obvious, you may if you please, add them here in the *fifth* place as distinct requisites; 'twill be all one. Thus far of the requisites deducible from the first part.

5. To proceed. Whereas it is farther said, that friendship is a benevolence that's mutual, there is but one general requisite deducible from this, *which* is, that all the other be found in both (or if more) in all the persons supposed to be friends. The third of which importing relation, will of necessity be so; for all similitude is mutual. Lastly, Whereas 'tis said that friendship is a benevolence mutually known, all that will be requisite upon this head is, that the persons who are to be confederated in this union, have such opportunities of converse or correspondence, that they may be satisfy'd of the degree and reality of each others love.

6. Having thus stated the idea of friendship, and from thence deduced all the necessary qualifications in the subject for its entertainment, I think I may now from the premisses, venture to affirm, that there
may

may be strict friendship between man and wife. For, which of these requisites is it that they must necessarily want ? As for your objection taken from their inequality, I grant equality is wanting both as to sex, and as to conjugal relation ; but neither is all equality necessary. 'Tis not absolutely necessary that friends should stand upon a level, either in respect of fortune, state or condition. This sort of equality, I grant, is a good preparative for a more easie introduction of friendship ; and 'tis also advantageous to the lastingness of it ; but yet 'tis dispensable. 'Tis like levelling the ground betwixt two rivers, it makes way for a more easie union ; but yet 'tis possible from earthquakes, floods, or other contingencies, they may be united without it. The only equality that is necessary, is an equality of dispositions, an harmony of affections ; but this may be in persons of unequal fortunes and conditions. I confess, there can be no such thing as friendship between persons of different quality, if the superior takes advantage of his preheminance or authority : for then 'tis true what the Poet says, *Si vis Sexte coli, non amabo.*

7. But then 'tis not the being invested with superiority that is inconsistent with friendship, (for then Kings, who have no equals but those of other Kingdoms, with whom they cannot intimately converse, would be the miserablest creatures alive) but the habitual use and exercise of it, and the standing upon its privileges.

8. But there is no necessity that it should be so. Friendship may level those whom fortune has made unequal ; and the greatest monarch in the world may find opportunities to descend from the throne of majesty to the familiar caresses of a dear favourite ; and unking himself a while for the more glorious

rious title of friend. 'Tis but to apply this to the particular case in hand, and you have a solution to your question. And now, Sir, from the theory of friendship, I shall most readily descend to the practice of it, whenever you please to employ the service of

(Dear Sir)

Your most real Friend and Servant

J. NORRIS.



The Extract of a Letter written upon the occasion of the Death of a Friend.

I Consider first, that grief (unless it be for our sins) is the most absurd and senseless of all the passions, yea, of all the things in the world, and utterly unbecoming a creature that makes the least pretension to reason. Because 'tis resolvable into no rational principle; for whatever is so, must be, or at least appear to be either an end or a means: But this can pretend to neither. Not to be an end, for nothing is so but what is good; but this is in no respect good, and in many respects evil. Not to be a means, because it affects nothing, but is altogether vain and fruitless. And indeed it cannot but be so, because 'tis of a thing past, which even to Omnipotence it self is impossible to be alter'd. Our other passions are to some purpose, and aim at some end. Love, to enjoy; anger, to revenge; fear, to avoid; and the like: But this passion, grief, serves to no end or purpose in the world; and it cannot

cannot be its own end, because (as I said before) it is in no respect good. It is therefore utterly absurd and unreasonable.

Again I consider, that suppose grief were not so vain and ineffective a thing as 'tis, but that it could make some alteration in things; yet it cannot alter any one event for the better; and therefore to what purpose should I indulge it? For since we acknowledge a being of an infinite wisdom, power and goodness to sit at the helm of the universe, it must be consequently acknowledg'd, that the course of this world is steer'd to the best advantage of the whole; and however ignorant we may be how to justify particular *Phænomena's*, yet we must (if we will be consistent with our former concession) at least implicitly believe that all things are as well as they can possibly be. Certain it is (whatever some malecontents may think) the world is govern'd with as much wisdom as 'twas made; and as the natural world stood the test of the Divine Criticism, so will the moral one too. God upon review would pronounce this as good as he did the other, and why should not we? Yea, we should, if we could see the excellent *Drama* from end to end as he does: We should then discern that all those dispensations, which separately taken, appear harsh and unequal, yet in concatenation and together conspire to the beauty and interest of the whole. This will be our portion hereafter; in the mean time, 'twill be our greatest wisdom to trust that of God, and believe that implicitly as to the thing, which we cannot discern as to the manner. And this I take to be the most rational foundation of resignation and acquiescence in the divine pleasure, which is grounded upon a consideration of his infinite wisdom and goodness. When we resolve our wills into his, merely

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for this reason, because we pay so much deference to his perfections, as to think, that if we knew as much as he, we should not wish things to be otherwise than they are. And this is highly specify'd in the Saints in Heaven, who through that near and intimate view which they have of God's perfections, are so entirely conformable to his will, that they can dispense not only with the eternal loss, but damnation of their friends, without the least grief or resentment. I confess, this eminency of resignation is no more attainable in this life, than any other part of celestial happiness; but yet an heedful and attentive meditation of this argument may do much towards it: And however difficult it be to reduce it to practice, yet 'tis most certain in the theory, that granting the superintendency of an infinite and unprejudic'd understanding; and that every calamity is *Συμφορῆς διήλασις*, sent from God; to grieve at any misfortunes is to grieve that things are as they should be. Which is, one would think, too absurd for him to be guilty of who is defined to be a rational creature.

Again I consider, that as that which I call an affliction is (as certainly as God is wise and good) for the best in reference to the whole system of things; so for all that I know, it may be most conducive to my interest in particular. In as much, as by it I may either obtain a greater good, or avoid a greater evil. Thus a shipwrack made *Zeno* a philosopher, and the messenger of Satan proved an antidote to the great Apostle against pride and vanity of spirit. And perhaps there was in me some evil and unmortify'd quality or other, of so malignant a nature, that it could not be cured by a less severe application. For certainly, God is not so ill a physician, as not to weigh the ingredients

dients of his bitter cup, before he mingles it into a draught, that it may be proportionable to the strength of the disease, as well as of the patient.

Again I consider, that as this affliction may be one of the arrows of love, and in the designation of God be intended for my particular good; so 'tis most certain, that by wise conduct I may extract good out of it if I will, and turn it to my greater advantage. We are in the world (says Bishop Taylor) like men playing at tables; the chance is not in our power; but to play it is: And when it is fallen, we must manage it as we can, and let nothing trouble us, but when we do a base action, or speak like a fool, or think wickedly. Indeed it is well said; and yet as well as it is, there is room for some improvement: For the life of man may be aptly compared to a game at tables upon a farther consideration. For as there, what cast we shall have is not in our power; but to manage it well, that is in our power, as well as to chuse whether we will play: So is it with man in the concerns and accidents of life. 'Twas not in my power whether this affliction should befall me or not; but 'tis in my power to manage it for my advantage now it has befall'n me. I can use it as an opportunity of shewing my virtue, as an occasion of withdrawing my affections from the world, considering the uncertainty of the best objects of it, of increasing my love to God, and his love to me here, and his rewards to me hereafter. And to this purpose I consider the story of *Abraham*, who for his readiness to part with his beloved son at the demand of God, became the favorite and friend of his Maker, and obtain'd this emphatical promise from him, *in blessing I will bless thee.*

Again I consider, that although by the loss of my friend, a great breach be made upon my happiness, yet the remainder of what I enjoy is much greater than the evil which I suffer; so that upon the whole, the scale weighs down for happiness. My condition is still better than that of many others, who yet think themselves happy. And therefore for me to pine and lament, because I am not so happy as I was, or may be, becomes neither the philosophy of a scholar, nor the humility of a christian; and upon the same principle I may continue to lament even when I am in Heaven. Rather let me adore the bounty of God for filling my cup so full, than be discontented because it does not run over.

Again I consider with the great Apostle, that the time is short, and that therefore I should weep as if I wept not. The time indeed is short, and yet we complain of its tedious length, devise arts to pass it away, and spend and lose it as if it would never be done. But it goes fast enough of itself, and we need not drive it, and it will not be long e'er it will go no more, but end all its motion in the fix'd point of eternity. The life we live, and the world we live in, will both shortly conclude in death and ruine: And 'twill not be long e'er we hope to enjoy the beatifick sight of him, in knowledge of whom stands our eternal life, and (if after that the fruition of any creature can be of any moment) the society even of our dear friends and relations. In the mean time, the hope of a better and more enduring substance in the life to come, should deaden the sense of present evils: and as prosperity should not corrupt us, so neither should adversity sink and dispirit us. To which purpose, I have one artifice more whereby to solace my self, and that is, by entertaining the same apprehension of

of what I enjoy, as I should do if I did not enjoy it. Which I do by supposing the latter, and by representing to my imagination the consequence of that deprivation. I think with my self, how miserable should I be if I wanted several of those blessings which I have, particularly, if I had not been bred a scholar, and thereby been qualified to be my own comforter. And by virtue of this consideration, I set a higher value upon what I enjoy, and consequently find the less miss of what I do not.

This is my *consolatio philosophica*, whereby I allay and fix the fermentation of my passions. To which I might add many popular arguments, as that 'tis as natural to die as to be born ; that 'tis incident not only to man, but to the whole creation, *the fashion of this world passes away* ; that 'tis envious to think that our loss, which is our friend's gain ; that occasions of grief in this world are many, and therefore not singly to be much lamented ; that 'tis a shame for reason not to be able to conquer that which must at length yield to time, and the like. But these I shall be content only to mention, partly because I don't fancy much to be topical, and partly because I think my other supports strong enough to bear the stress of the most weighty sorrow.

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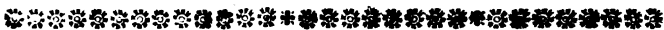
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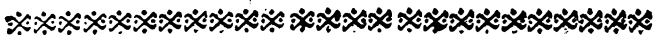
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