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REMARKS

ON

Lord BOLINGBROKE's

LETTERS

ON THE

STUDY and USE of HISTORY :

So far as they relate to the

HISTORY of the OLD TESTAMENT ;

And especially to the

CASE of NOAH, denouncing a Curse
upon CANAAN,

In a Letter to a LADY of QUALITY.

By JAMES HERVEY, A. M.
Rector of Weston Favel, Northamptonshire.

Merses profundo, pulchrior evenit.

Hor.

LONDON:

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Church-yard. MDCCLII.

6.



P R E F A C E.

TH E Reader will see, from the *Date* of the following Letter, that it was written a considerable Time ago. From which Circumstance He will probably conclude, that it was not intended for Publication. A Conjecture, which is perfectly just. The Publication is owing to the *right honourable* Personage, whose Name, though it would grace and recommend his Papers, the Author is not allowed to mention. Her Ladyship's Commands, which would admit of no Excuse, drew the Remarks from his Pen ; and her Desire, which with Him will always have the Force of a Command, has brought them to the Press.---

P R E F A C E.

It will give Him the highest Pleasure, if, while He is paying the Debt of Obedience and Gratitude to a noble Friend, He may support the Dignity of the Divine Word ; may raise its *Esteem*, and promote its *Study* among Men. Because then, He may reasonably hope, to promote the *best Interests* of his Fellow-creatures; and subserve that grand Designation of the almighty Majesty, expressed by the Psalmist---*Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name.* *

* Psalm cxx iii. 2.



M A D A M,



S you was pleased to ask my Opinion, concerning LORD BOLINGBROKE'S Remarks on the *Scriptural History*, I have procured the Book; have perused what relates to the Subject; and submit to your Judgment, the Thoughts which occurred. Assuring your Ladyship, that, though many might discuss the Point, much more clearly and satisfactorily, than the Person you favoured with your Commands; yet, no one can think it a greater Honour to receive them, or a greater Pleasure to execute them.

“ The Old Testament, it is alledged,
“ is no sufficient Foundation for *Chrono-*
“ *logy* from the Beginning of Time.”^a —
To enter upon the *Niceties* of Chronology,
would, perhaps, be too *difficult* a Research;

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^a See *Lord Bolingbroke's Letters*, on the Study and Use of History, Vol. I. Pag. 98.

at least, it would require from your Ladyship a more *painful* Attention, than I should chuse to occasion by any of my Letters. And I very frankly own, that I am by no means Master of the Argument, nor equal to the Task. Others, I don't doubt, whose Inclination has disposed, and whose Genius has fitted them for this particular Study, will undertake to decide the Question; and give the Honour, where the Honour is due. — This, however, from a very scanty Survey of the Case, I can easily discern; That the Chronologer will no where find such *memorable* Events, for fixing his *Æras*; nor such *early* and *substantial* Aids, for computing his Time; as from the Mosaic Monuments, and the sacred Annals.

From the Beginning of the World to the Flood, we have an *orderly Gradation* of Time, marked out by the Lives of ten eminent Patriarchs. — From the Flood, we may proceed to that glorious Promise of a Redeemer, made to *Abraham*; *In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed.* — From this Promise, to the miraculous Deliverance of the *Israelites* from *Egyptian* Bondage. — From thence, to the Building of *Solomon's* Temple; which was an illustrious Type ^a of that divine
Person,

^a Gen. xxii. 18. John ii. 21.

Person, *in whom dwells all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily.*—From the Building of this magnificent Structure, to the Demolition of it by the *Babylonian* Monarch.—From thence, to the Conquest of *Babylon* by *Cyrus the Persian.*—And from the Reign of *Cyrus*, to that grand, that most important of all Transactions, the Death of *Messiah the Prince*: when He *finished the Transgression, and made an end of Sins, and made Reconciliation for Iniquity, and brought in everlasting Righteousness.*^a

The *intermediate* Space, between each of these very distinguished Periods, may, I believe, be ascertained, to a considerable Degree of Exactness, from the sacred Volumes. If so, this will constitute a more comprehensive and perfect System of Chronology, than can be derived from the *Olympiads* of the *Grecians*, or the *Hegira* of the *Mahometans*; from the *Persian*, the *Roman*, or any other *Epocha*.

But the *History* of the Old Testament is much more necessary to be known, and much more easy to be understood. Yet this, my Lord suggests, is not a *complete* History of the first Ages.^b—We allow the Suggestion. It neither is, nor has Ma-

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terials

^a Dan. ix. 24.^b Pag. 83.

terials for, a complete universal History. It pretends to nothing more, than to relate the Affairs of *one* particular Family; in which the *Church* of GOD was to subsist, and from which the SAVIOUR of *Men* was to spring. Nevertheless, so many *collateral* Incidents are touched upon; so many Branches of this main Stream are occasionally pursued; as present Us with a Collection of the most *ancient*, the most *curious*, and most *instructive* Facts.

Here, we are brought acquainted with the *Creation* of the World, and the Formation of Man. The *Origin* of *Evil*, both natural and moral, is discovered in the Fall of our first Parents; and the Displeasure of GOD against Sin is manifested, by the Waters of a general Deluge.—Here, we see the Preservation of our Species in the Ark, and Re-peopling of the Earth by *Noah*; the Invention of polite Arts,^a and the Rise of useful Manufactures;^b the Establishment of Nations, and the Founders of their principal Kingdoms.^c Not to add; that these Records are the royal Archives,

^a Gen. iv. 21.

^b Gen. iv. 20, 22.

^c Gen. Chap. x. Which, though but little adverted to, is the noblest Piece of *geographical Antiquity*, extant in the World. It shews Us, how the whole Earth, from the three Sons of *Noah*, was overspread, inhabited,

Archives, in which, the *Charter* of our *Sovereignty*^a over the Creatures, is preserved; and the original *Draught* of the *Covenant* of Grace^b, deposited.—Here then, may we not challenge *any*, or *all* the Books, written in every Language under Heaven? What *Memoirs* go *so far back* into Antiquity? What *Memoirs* are *so interesting* to all Mankind?—Had they been transmitted to us by any *Grecian* or *Roman* Author, how would they have been admired and valued! How lavishly, and indeed how justly, praised!

Another Excellency of these Writings (and peculiar to these alone) is, That they not only reach backward, as far as the *very Birth* of Things; but proceed forwards, even into the *remotest Futurity*.—They foretold the Ruin of *Babylon*,^c the noblest, the best fortified, and most commodiously situated, Metropolis in the Universe. Who said, and no one would have suspected it to be a vain Boast, *I shall be a Lady for ever*.^d Yet, the Scriptures pronounced her utter *Destruction*;^e and
speci-

bited, and denominated. It discovers the *true* Source of the several Nations; about which, profane Authors either say nothing at all, or else say what is *chimerical, precarious, false*.

^a Gen. i. 28. ^b Gen. iii. 15. ^c Isaiah xiii. 19, &c. xvi. 23, 24. ^d Isaiah xlvii. 7.

^e Isaiah xiii. 19, 20, &c. Isaiah xvi. 23, 24.

specified the *Person*, who should bring about this great Catastrophe.—They pointed out the Place of his *Abode*.^a—They described him, by several *distinguishing* Circumstances.^b—They particularized the Genius of his *warlike* Enterprizes.^c—
They

^a Isaiah xlv. 11.

^b That He should besiege and take the most impregnable of Cities, Isaiah xlv. 1, 2.—That He should enrich himself with immense Spoils, Isaiah xlv. 3.—That He should not be a Tyrant, but a *Shepherd* to the captive *Jews*; should release them from their Captivity, and both permit and promote the Rebuilding of their Temple, Isaiah xlv. 28.

^c He is called a *ravenous Bird*, Isaiah xlv. 11. Denoting his *Speed*, *Activity*, and great *Expedition*. Which were more like the Flight of a *swift-winged* Bird, (this is the exact Sense of the original ציף) than the March of an Army with all its Encumbrances. This is acknowledged by *Tigranes*, in his fine expostulatory Discourse with *Cyrus*: Ταχὺ δὲ τοσούτοι περιεγεύθη αὐτῷ, ὥστε προεῖθαι ἐφθασας εἰθῶν σὺν πολλῷ σὸλῳ, πρὶν τῶν τῆν παρ' αὐτῷ δυνάμειν ἀθροισθῆαι. *You so far exceed the King of Armenia in the Swiftness of your Motions, that, before He could get together the few Forces quartered in his Neighbourhood, you are come from a distant Country, and have surrounded Him with a large Army.* Xenoph. *Cyropæd.* Lib. III.—Thus *Alexander*, whose Marches and whose Victories were almost incredibly swift, is beautifully and exactly characterized by the Prophet *Daniel*. *As I was considering, behold! an He-goat came from the West on the Face of the whole Earth, and touched not the Ground.* Chap. viii. 5. No Orator, with all the Powers of Language, could more beautifully have described the Rapidity and the Extent of the *Macedonian* Conquests. Nor could any *Historian*, though writing after the Accomplishment of the Events, have described them more *exactly*.

They mentioned his very *Name*.^a—All this, some Hundreds of Years, before the Event took Place, or the Conqueror was born.

They foretold the *Rejection* and *Calamities* of the disobedient *Jews*; who are the chief Subject of their History. (And this, surely, could not be with a View to aggrandize their Nation, or to answer any sinister Design.) That they should be subdued by their Enemies, lose the Favour of their GOD, and the Possession of their native Land. Yet not be *settled*, as a *Colony*, in some particular Tract of the Victor's Dominions, but be *scattered abroad* under the whole Heavens.^b—This was threatened by their J E H O V A H,——this is recorded in their Books,——and this is, even *now*, so remarkably fulfilled, as to be a Fact of the utmost Notoriety. Go into the most polite or most barbarous Countries, the nearest or most distant Parts of the World; you will, every where, find *living Evidences* of this scriptural Prediction.

The Scriptures speak in the most explicit and peremptory Terms, with regard to
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^a Isaiah xlv. 28. xlv. 1.

^b Deut. xxviii. 64. Amos ix. 9.

the *Restoration* of the *Jews*.^a—This Restoration could not be effected, at least could not be observed, if they had been blended and incorporated with the Inhabitants of other Climes. Therefore, to be a *presumptive Proof* of its Accomplishment; and to render it, when accomplished, the *most observable* of all Revolutions; they have subsisted a *distinct* People, amidst all the Regions, whither they have been driven.—A most singular and astonishing Circumstance! How soon were the *Danes*, the *Saxons*, and the *Normans*, mingled with the *Britons*! And how *entirely*

^a Ezek. xi. 17. Amos ix. 14, 15. Zechar. xiv. 10, 11. I have not ventured to determine, whether this Restoration of the Jews, is to be understood of a Return to *their own Country*, or of their Conversion to the *Faith of CHRIST*. Though I think, the *latter* is the Meaning of the Holy Spirit; will be no less wonderful than the former; and seems to be supported by such Passages as the following.—*They shall look on ME, whom they have pierced, and mourn.* The Gift of *Repentance*, not the Circumstance of *Place*, is the material Point, Zech. xiii. 10.—*When it shall turn,* not the Tribes of Israel to Jerusalem, but the Heart of the Israelites *to the LORD*, 2 Corinth. iii. 16.—*Then all Israel shall be saved,* Rom. xi. 26. shall be made Partakers of the Gospel, of its sacred Privileges, and its great Salvation. In which they will enjoy all, more than all the Blessings, which *Canaan* could afford. Of which, that goodly Land, in its utmost Fertility, Affluence, and Glory, was but a Type.

tirely are they all melted down and lost, among the natives of our Isle ! But the *Jews*, like a Drop of Oil on the Water, have continued a *separate* Community ; and, though *dispersed* into *all* Nations, are not, through the long Course of seventeen hundred Years, *embodied* with *any*.—This is such a *Peculiarity* in the Dispensations of Providence, as I can never sufficiently admire : and is, I think, an *undeniable voucher* to the Authenticity of the Scriptures ; held forth, as it were by the Hand of Omnipotence, in the Sight of all the World.

Such Events the antient Scriptures foretell, and *such* Facts they relate. Facts of incomparable *Grandeur*, and Events of the greatest *Importance*. All which are delivered in such a *majestic Simplicity* of Style, as nothing can equal but their precise *Veracity*.—Yet *these* Books Lord Bolingbroke disparages ; and, at the same Time, extols the writings of *Tacitus*.—The Remains of *Tacitus*, He tells us, “ are precious Remains.”^a Those of the *Holy Scripture*, “ are dark and imperfect Accounts.”^b In *Tacitus*, “ History preserves her Integrity and her Lustre.”^c In the *Holy Scripture*, in-

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^a Pag. 161.^b Pag. 168.^c Pag. 161.

stead of History, you have “ an Heap of
 “ Fables; which can pretend to nothing
 “ but some inscrutable Truths, and there-
 “ fore useless to Mankind.” ^d — Every
 Line of *Tacitus* has Weight, ^e and cannot
 be mentioned without Admiration. Where-
 as, the *sacred History* is put upon a Level
 with the Extravagancies of *Amadis of Gaul*,^f
 and “ can never gain sufficient Credit from
 “ any reasonable Man.” ^g

*Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, said
 David, that He should defy the Armies of the
 living GOD?* ^h And who is this *Tacitus*,
 would I ask, this darling Author, that *He*
 should be raised to the Skies, while the *di-
 vine* Historians are trodden to the Dust?
 — If your Ladyship is un-acquainted
 with his Character, let me give it in the
 Words of a most elegant and masterly
 Critic.

^d Pag. 121. ^e Pag. 161. ^f Pag. 121.

Pag. 118. — If, in the Pages I have referred to,
 and the Sentences I have quoted, my Lord does not
 aim at the *Scriptural Records*, I shall very willingly,
 nay, *most gladly* acknowledge myself mistaken. To
 me, after a repeated and attentive Perusal of the Pas-
 sages, He appears to mean *those*, and those *principally*.
 He means, according to his own Profession, *such an-
 tient History as He had been describing* (See Pag. 118):
 and I am very sure, the principal Subject of the pre-
 ceding Sheets, was the *sacred*. — But why should not
 his Lordship speak his Sentiments *plainly*? Is it for
 Want of Ingenuity? Or owing to Diffidence in the
 Cause?

^h 1 Samuel xvii. 26.

Critic. “ Having considered the principal
 “ Qualities of *Tacitus* as a Writer and an
 “ Historian ; I cannot help thinking,
 “ that there is a false sublime and Affec-
 “ tation in his Description : a Scurrility
 “ and satyrical Vein, with too Epigram-
 “ matical a Conciseness in his Wit ; an
 “ Acuteness, but too speculative, and a
 “ Policy over refined in his Observations ;
 “ a malignant and ill-natur’d Turn in his
 “ Characters ; a Philosophy too abstracted
 “ and elevated in his Reasoners, and a
 “ Vanity in his Learning. In short, that
 “ He is in Antiquity a Pedant ; in the
 “ Philosophy of Nature a Sceptic ; in
 “ Morals loose ; in Description gaudy and
 “ pompous ; in Politics subdulous, re-
 “ fined and knavish.”¹

Yet *this* is the Writer, that must be placed in such great Superiority to *Moses*, *Joshua*, and *Samuel*. *This* the History (rise Criticism, and resent the Indignity!) that is spoken of with Applause and Rapture, even while the sacred Annals are treated with Disrespect and Obloquy.

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¹ The Treatise, which furnishes me with this Extract, is written by Mr. *Hunter* ; is entitled *Observations on Tacitus* ; and, if my Reader has not perused them, I dare venture to assure Him, that He has one of the *highest* Entertainments in polite Literature yet to come. See pag. 184,

I might recount the glorious *Privileges*, exhibited in this blessed Book; the inestimable *Promises*, made to the Righteous; the tenderly compassionate *Invitations*, addressed to Sinners; the refined and exalted Displays of *Morality*; with many other noble Particulars——which it is the Prerogative of *Scripture*, to contain——the Wisdom of Mankind, to believe —— and the only Felicity of our Nature, to be interested in them, and influenced by them.

But my Lord is ready to agree on these Topics. He expresses, in some Places at least, no Dislike of the *doctrinal* and *prophetical* Parts. Nay, He has contrived an Expedient, to rescue them from the Dishonour, which He would bring upon the *historical*. He allows the former, to be written under the Inspiration of the holy and un-erring Spirit. The latter, He affirms, are “purely human, and therefore fallible.”^k —— Proceeding upon this Supposition, He scruples not to represent them, as the Devices of Craft, or the Blunders of Ignorance.^l

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^k Pag. 96.

^l That *this* is no *aggravated* Imputation, every attentive Reader of his Lordship's Letters will easily perceive: and I believe, it will appear too plainly from the Passages, to be produced in the Sequel of this Epistle.

I must beg Leave to observe, that such a *Distinction* is without the least Ground of Reality, to *support* it: and would, if admitted, be an effectual method to *subvert* the Whole of Revelation. For, if it could be proved, that the Authors of this History were so *weak*, as to fall into palpable Errors, where a common Degree of Sagacity would have secured them from mistaking: or, if they were so *treacherous*, as to palm upon the World a multiplicity of Forgeries; so *impious*, as to ascribe their Falsehoods to the GOD of Truth: this would at once ruin their *Character as Men*, and destroy their *Credit as Writers*. At this rate, who could depend upon their Testimony in *any Point* whatever?

Besides; many of the doctrinal Parts of Scripture *refer to*, and are *derived from*, the historical. If the latter were a Parcel of Impositions and Mistakes, what Degree of Veracity or Dignity could the former claim? If the Foundation is a Bubble, how can the Superstructure stand?—Whether his Lordship, by such a specious Pretence of *erving* the Interests of true Religion, intended secretly to *undermine* it, I will not presume to say. But this I may venture to declare, that his Scheme is very shrewdly calculated to compass such an End. Grant what his Lordship asks; and what all
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the Enemies of Christianity wish, will unavoidably follow.

Farther, Madam—Such a Distinction is contrary to the express Declaration of the new Testament: which positively asserts, that *ALL Scripture is given by Inspiration of GOD.*^m—Our blessed LORD, who was very well qualified to *discern Truth*, and equally zealous to *maintain it*, makes no such Difference. He says in general, *Search the Scriptures;*ⁿ the *whole Collection of sacred Writings.*—*Whatsoever Things*, adds St. Paul, not some particular Passages only, but *WHATSOEVER THINGS were written afore-time, were written for our Learning.*^o And must therefore have been under such a divine Superintendency, as secured them from all Possibility of Error. Otherwise, they might be written, not for our *Learning*, but for our *Deception.*—So that St. Paul's Direction, is as contrary to Lord Bolingbroke's Distinction, as the East is opposite to the West. We may as soon bring those two Points of the Hemisphere together; as reconcile his Lordship's *Refinements*, with the Apostle's *Religion.*

I believe, it will be equally difficult, to render his Lordship *consistent* with Himself.

^m 2 Tim. iii. 16.
^o Romans xv. 4.

ⁿ John. v. 39.

self. His *Concession* overthrows his *Distinction*. Admitting the doctrinal Parts of the Scripture to be true, the Veracity of the historical is, by *necessary Consequence*, and beyond all Contradiction, established. They are *indissolubly* connected: they mutually bear on, and mutually sustain each other: and must stand or fall *together*. They are like an *Arch* most exactly finished; not a Stone of which can be taken away, without disconcerting the whole Structure: and like an Arch, firmly founded, as well as correctly finished, the more they are *pressed*, the *stronger* they will appear.

My Lord says indeed, That “CHRIST
 “ came not to consecrate all the written
 “ Traditions of the *Jews*.”^p He *says* it,
 but where or how does He *prove* it?—
 By written Traditions of the *Jews*, I suppose,
 we are to understand all the *Hebrew*
Scriptures. The Drift of the Discourse,
 leads us to this Sense. Now it is apparent,
 that our Saviour has *actually* consecrated,
 has set the Seal of Authenticity and Infallibility
 to *the Law of Moses*, to *the Psalms*,
 and to *the Prophets*.^q By appealing to
 them as *decisive*, and by allowing them to
 be

^p Pag. 94.

^q Luke xxiv. 44.

be *predictive*, He has acknowledged them to be divinely inspired; to be unquestionably true. And a very little Acquaintance with *Jewish* Antiquities will inform us; that, in these *three* Partitions, *the whole* Body of the Hebrew Scriptures is comprehended. — What then becomes of his Lordship's Assertion? Or to whose Discredit does it tend? That of the *Jewish* Scriptures, or that of *his own* Knowledge?

I must desire your Ladyship to take Notice of the *Expression* in this Passage. It is somewhat singular, and deserves a particular Regard. *Written Traditions* is the Phrase. Every one knows, that we explode, and very justly, those *superstitious* Whimsies of the *Jews*, which pass under the Denomination of Traditions. Yet my Lord thinks proper, to call the Histories of the Old Testament, by this *disreputable* Name: only He admits one Difference, that whereas the former were transmitted by Strength of *Memory*, the latter are committed to *Writing*. — But is this an *honest* Representation? Is this free from all *malignant* Disguise?

Let us put the Matter to the following Trial. The word *Legend*, when applied to any *modern* Story, raises the same contemptible and absurd Idea, as the word *Tradition* excites, when applied to any *Jewish* Notion.

Notion. Would my Lord, or would his Friends think, that due Honour or common Justice was done, to his *Sketch of the History and State of Europe*, if it should be styled in our public Papers, Lord Bolingbroke's *written Legends*? — The Impropriety and the Malevolence of such a Title, would be undeniable and odious? Who then can vindicate the Propriety of his Lordship's Language, or clear it from being a most injurious Mis-representation of the sacred Records? Which, however some of the Facts might come down, in a traditi-
onary Channel, to the Writers; by passing through *their* Hands, receive the Stamp of undoubted Certainty; and are no longer *Traditions*, but *Oracles*.

I wish, this had been the *only* Instance of Artifice and Imposition, used in the Letters under Examination. Why are so many idle Tales, and scandalous Stories, raked together, and exposed to View? — Why? but to put a Cheat upon the in-attentive Reader, and depretiate^b the
Dignity

^a See pag. 85, 86, 88. — 102. — 108, 109.

^b I would by no means indulge a petulant or censorious Humour. Yet I cannot forbear thinking, that the Scriptures are too often depretiated in his Lordship's Performance: sometimes by *Sneer*: sometimes by *Cavil*: and sometimes even by *languid* Approbation, or a *counterfeit* sort of Praise. Such as
— " If

Dignity of the divine Word? Depretiate it, much in the same manner, as its most illustrious Object and Author was formerly dishonoured; not only by the *false Accusations*, with which He was charged; but also by the *infamous Company*, with whom He was numbered.——Did my Lord imagine, that these Tales were really believed, even by the warmest Advocates for Holy Writ? No: He must know in his Conscience, that they never were received by the Generality of Divines; neither are mentioned by Authors of Discernment, unless it be to *confute* and *reject* them.——However, be they credited or not, it was apprehended, they might serve a Purpose. But whether it be the Purpose of

——“*If the Foundations of Christianity have been laid in Truth.*” Pag. 123. ——“*Passages which seem favourable to the Doctrine of the Trinity.*” Pag. 98. ——Though I should be loth to reject *any* Testimony, in Favour of Christianity: still more loth to give up so *eminent* a name as Lord B——e, to the deistical Party: yet I cannot prevail upon myself to acknowledge, that we are much, if at all obliged to Him, for these poor, jejune, cold Compliments. Such a Testimony and such Compliments, are just as serviceable to the momentous Cause, as *a broken Tooth* is serviceable to the Eater, or *a Foot out of Joynt* to the Walker. Prov. xxv. 19. They are, in Truth, mere *δωρα αδωρα* ——or, as Mr. Pope more strongly expresses the Sentiment;
They *damn with faint Praise.*

of Integrity, Impartiality, and Truth, I leave to the Determination of others.

Still it is urged, That these Scriptures are “ full of Additions, Interpolations, “ and Transpositions.”^c — That they are *full* of Additions, is more easily asserted, than evinced. I can find but *one* Instance, specified by his Lordship. Which is the Account “ of the Death and Sepulture of “ *Moses*, with a sort of funeral Panegy- “ ric,”^d recorded in the last Chapter of *Deuteronomy*. Here, it is taken for granted, that we are reduced to a terrible Dilemma——either to own, that this Paragraph was written by *Moses himself*; and then we may expect to hear of Impossibility and Absurdity——or else, that it is all *supposititious*; and then the Scriptures must have passed through tampering Fingers, and suffered Adulteration?—But suppose this small Appendix was made by *Joshua*: a Man, whose Mind was illuminated, and his Hand guided, by the Spirit of the most High? Does *such* an Addition deserve to be branded with an *ignominious*, or even brought into Disesteem by a *suspicious* Character? — Or, what if some other Prophet, whose Name is unknown,

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super-

^c pag. 95, 96.^d pag. 102.

super-added this valuable Anecdote? Is the Concealment of the Penman's Name sufficient, to impeach the Genuineness, or invalidate the Authority, of the Passage? Especially, since it has been approved by other *inspired* Writers, and received the *Imprimatur* of the Holy Ghost? — I know not *who* is the Printer of his Lordship's two Volumes; yet, though ignorant of this Circumstance, for other *very satisfactory* Reasons, I have no Doubt but they are the genuine Productions of his Pen.

My Lord would have done well to consider—Whether it was a probable or a practicable Thing, to *interpolate* a set of Books, which were studied with so much Accuracy, and kept with so much Vigilance. The *Number* of whose Verses, especially in the Pentateuch, was computed; and the *Arrangement* of the very Letters known. Whether, after the Coming of Christ, the jealous Eye which the Jews and Christians had on each other, was not an unsurmountable Bar against any Innovations or material Alterations.—As for *Transpositions*, they are used by the most approved Historians. When used with Judgment, they redound to the Reputation of the Writer, and encrease the Pleasure of the Reader. And would his Lordship make *that* a Disparagement of the sacred Narrative,

Narrative, which is a Recommendation of any ordinary Composition?

But my Lord imagines, that He has found out a substantial Reason for the aforementioned Distinction — has detected such *Improprieties* in the sacred *Narrative*, as “contradict all our Notions of Order and of Justice.”^c He produces, by way of *Specimen*, the Case of *Noah*, denouncing a Curse upon *Canaan*. — This, it seems, is the *capital* Absurdity; this the *glaring* Error; which, He concludes, is sufficient to un-canonize the Histories of the old Testament, and degrade their Writers from the Class of Inspiration. — This therefore, if your Ladyship pleases, we will *examine* a little more particularly.

The Charge in general is thus expressed. “One is tempted to think, that the Patriarch was still drunk; and that no Man in his Senses, could hold such Language, or pass such a Sentence.” — Was I at Leisure to criticise upon Words, I should be tempted to observe, that the Diction “no Man could *bold* such Language,” may be *French*, but is scarcely *English*. However, from the Expression I pass to the

^c pag. 110.

the Sentiment. — This, for *Candour* and *Solidity*, is much like the Reflection of the Jews, on the memorable Day of Pentecost. When the Apostles addressed the Inhabitants of various Countries, each in his own native Tongue; some of their Hearers ascribed this *miraculous* Ability—to what? we are amazed, when we read ———to the *intoxicating* Power of Wine.^f Strange! that excessive Drinking, which incapacitates other People for talking *common* Sense, should enable the Disciples of CHRIST to speak *all Kinds* of Languages! ———Is it not equally strange, that a drunken Disorder should enable the Patriarch to deliver Prophecies, and foretell *future* Events? Which (as I hope to prove) was the real Import of the Speech.

Perhaps, this Curse may seem to be the Effect, if not of disorderly Indulgence, yet of *intemperate Passion*. And how incompatible is this, with the Character of a Preacher of Righteousness? Surely *Noah* should not have been so forward, to *call for* the Thunderbolts of Vengeance. Any benevolent Man, much more a pious Progenitor, would rather have *deprecat*ed the Blow. — I wonder, his Lordship did not start this Objection. Which would have been

^f Acts. ii. 13.

been much more plausible, and much less shocking. To this, in Case it had been started, we might reply;——That *Noah* acted as the Oracle of GOD. This and many other such Passages, which seem to be *Imprecations*, are really *Predictions*. Holy Men spoke, as they were influenced by the Spirit; and uttered, not the Suggestions of their own Minds, but the Will of Almighty GOD.——Which inclines me to think, it might be no less proper, and much more suitable to the prophetic Style, if we translated such Passages, as *Indicatives*, rather than *Imperatives*; making them declaratory of what is decreed in the Cabinet of Heaven, and will as certainly take Place, as if it already existed. Cursed *is*, rather than *be*, *Canaan*. Blessed of the LORD *is*, instead of *be*, his Land. Deut. xxxiii. 13. Thus *Isaiab*, foretelling the Incarnation of that wonderful and adorable Person, whom He styles *The mighty GOD*, says, To us a Child *is* born. * So, *calling the Things that are not, as though they were*. ——Such a Manner of speaking, would remove from this particular Passage, all that sounds *barsh*, or seems *uncharitable*: and would, in the general, impart an *unequaled*

* Isai. ix. 6.

equalled Majesty^h to the Language of Scripture.

It was GOD then, and not Man, from whom this avenging Sentence came. And GOD, to shew his utter Detestation of all Iniquity; to manifest his singular Delight in all Virtue; frequently takes Occasion to denounce Vengeance, or promise Happiness, when some notorious Evil is committed, or some laudable Good performed. And was there not a most notorious Evil committed Here? ——— *Charity*, says the Apostle, *covereth all Things*:ⁱ draws a Veil over the various Infirmities of every *common* Neighbour. But this Man (Man shall I say? rather Monster of Ingratitude) sees the Shame of a *Father*--an aged^k Father,--a *pious* Father; and instead of concealing, *when He cometh forth, He telleth*

^h *Blessed be*, is what any holy Person might say, and comprehends no more than a *supplicatory* Benediction. *Blessed is*, suits only the Mouth of a Prophet, and implies an *authoritative* Blessing.

ⁱ Corinth. xiii. 7. *πάσα σκεπτε*. This is one Article in the finest Display of *social* Virtue, that ever was exhibited to the World. And should, I think, be translated (not *beareth*, but) *covereth* or *concealeth all Things*. The natural Import of the Word justifies, and the Context evidently requires, this Sense. Otherwise, the first and last Clauses of the Verse, will co-incide in their Meaning; or rather make an un-meaning Tautology.

^k Levit. xix. 32.

et it.—*Fools* they are, abandoned Profligates, that *make a Mock at Sin*. What Name then can be bad enough, for a profane and un-natural Wretch; who makes Sport with a Parent's Folly, a Parent's Sinfulness, a Parent's Misery? — Surely this was a most flagrant Violation of filial Reverence, filial Love, and filial Duty.¹ Which not only implied so many *particular* Offences, each attended with its *respective* Guilt, but indicated the Offender to be destitute of *all* Piety. For, to argue in the Apostle's Strain; How could this Man venerate a Father in Heaven, whom He had
had

¹ The Turpitude and Immorality of this Offence, will appear in blacker Colours, if we consider the *very peculiar* Reverence; which, in those Days of primitive Simplicity, was paid to *any* aged Person, much more to an aged *Parent*.

*Credebant hoc grande nefas, & Morte piandum
Si Juvenis Vetulo non assurrexerat, & si
Barbato cuicumque Puer.*

Juven. Satyr. XIII.

We may see, from that awful Threatning, Prov. xxx. 17. with what extreme Detestation the most holy GOD resents such un-natural Behaviour. *The Eye that MOCKETH AT HIS FATHER, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagle shall eat it.* Nay, it should seem from this Text, as though all Nature was ready to testify its Abhorrence of such a Crime; and, rather than it should escape condign Punishment, the most insensible Animals would rise up to execute Vengeance.

had not seen? If he was so irreverent to a Father on Earth, whom He had seen?

But supposing the Turpitude and Immorality of the Action to be very enormous, and such as deserved some signal Vengeance: the Vengeance, it is objected, was misapplied. For, “*Ham* alone offended: *Canaan* was innocent.”—My Lord is not sure, that *Canaan* was innocent; though He asserts it pretty confidently. The contrary Notion has obtained among the Jews. They apprehend, that *Canaan* was first in the Transgression; and, instead of being reprov’d, was imitated by his Father. Bishop *Patrick*, Mr. *Pool*, and other eminent Commentators, think this to be no improbable Opinion.

If his Lordship was un-acquainted with the *Hebrew*, He will scarcely be thought qualified to pronounce so peremptorily, concerning a Case related in that Language. If He was acquainted with the *Original*, He acts somewhat unfairly in saying; “This Notion is not only “with-
“out, but against the express Autho-
“rity of the Text.””^m For He must know, that it receives some Countenance even from the Text itself. I would by no means

^m pag. 111.

means offend your Ladyship's Eyes, with any rugged Figures, or uncouth Quotations. But you may venture to believe me, when I assure you, That the most exact Translation of Verse 24th is, Noah *knew what his Son had done to Him, the or that little one.*" *Ham* could not so properly be styled *The little one*; since He was the middlemost, and is always placed in that Order: *Shem, Ham, Japheth*. But the Description agrees perfectly well with *Canaan*, the Grandson of *Noah*: and it was customary among the Jews, to call the Grandchildren, the *Sons* of their Grand-Father.^o

Canaan, it is added " was alone cursed."

—The *Words* would run smoother, if transposed in this manner, *Canaan* alone was cursed. As for the *Fact*, that wants some better Confirmation, than my Lord's bare Assertion. To me it is evident, that *Ham* was not exempted from the Curse,

E 2

What ?

ⁿ Though it would have been very unpolite, to quote *Hebrew* in writing to a *Lady*: it may be judged proper, perhaps be thought necessary, now the Letter is made public, to produce the original Expression. That, where an Argument is derived from the *precise* Signification of the Phrase, the *learned* Reader may examine and determine for Himself. — בְּנוֹ הַקָּטָן
Gen. ix. 24. The word קָטָן is used of *Benjamin*, *Jacob's* youngest Son, and translated *a little one*; Gen. xlv. 20.

^o Gen. xxix. 5. 1 Chron. i. 17.

What? If it did not fall upon Him in Person? yet, to be punished in his Offspring, must be very *affecting*, and no less *afflicting*.

But hold——my Lord has forestalled us in this Reply. Instead of waiting for it, or acquiescing in it; He plays it upon us, with an Air of Triumph. “ Will it “ be said——this has been said——That “ *Ham* was punished in his Posterity.”* ——It has: and with his Lordship’s Leave, I will venture to say it again. Nor should I, in case Lord Bolingbroke was alive, have went farther than *his own* Breast, for a *Proof* of my Assertion. Would *He*, with all his exalted Ideas of *Liberty*, have thought it no Punishment on Himself, provided He had been the Father of Children, to have hear’d them doomed to a State of *Slavery*; nay, to be, as He very rightly explains the sacred Phrase, “ the vilest and worst of “ Slaves?” ——Especially if, like *Ham*, He was appointed, in the Course of Providence, to be the Father of several *Nations*? —— And if the Doom had been pronounced by a Person, of whose *prophetic* Spirit there was so incontestable an Evidence, as the universal Inundation was of *Noah’s*?

Since

* Pag. cxi.

Since my Lord has no more Communi-
 cation with us or our Affairs, I appeal to
 any, to every *parental* Heart. Let Na-
 ture——fond, compassionate, yearning
 Nature speak——Whether the Infliction
 of such a Penalty on the Son, (perhaps, a
 favourite Son, like *Joseph*) the Son's Sons,
 and the latest Posterity——Whether *this*
 be not *properly* a Punishment of the Fa-
 ther? Whether the Father must not feel by
 Anticipation, what his wretched Progeny
 must endure in Reality?——Nature once
 spoke to such a Query, and this was her
 Language: *O my Son Absalom! my Son,*
my Son Absalom! Would GOD I had
died for Thee! O Absalom my Son, my Son!
^b Did History ever record, or Poetry ever
 invent, so melancholy a Moan? It breathes
 the very Soul of Woe; and *exemplifies* the
 Sentiment, which his Lordship would *ex-*
plode.

David, it is plain, was punished in the
 calamitous Exit of this young Prince; in
 the Disasters sustained, and the Disorders
 committed, by his other Children. ^c *Adam*
 thought Himself punished in the Ruin
 which He brought upon the human Race;
 and laments it, in the most pathetic Terms,
 as the severest Distress attending his Apo-
 stacy.

^b 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

^c 2 Sam. xii. 10.

stasy. ^d — One wiser than *Adam*, One greater than *David*, whose Judgment is always according to Truth, is evidently of the same Opinion: and, for that Reason, has formed the Sanction of a most sacred Commandment, upon this very Principle; *He will visit the Iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate Him.* — What GOD has so expressly threatened, He has actually done: not on this only, but on various other Emergencies. Thus *Esau* suffered in his Descendants; ^e *Jebu* in his Family; ^f and *Hezekiab* in his Children. ^g Who all, like the *Canaanites*, were Children of their Father's Disobedience: ^h Inheritors of their Sin, as well as of their Name. — But

^d See the whole of *Adam's* disconsolate Complaint; Part of which are the following Lines.

————— *Yet well, if here would end
The misery; I deserv'd it, and would bear
My own Deservings; but this will not serve,
All that I eat, or drink, or shall beget
Is propagated Curse. O Voice! once hear'd
Delightfully, Increase and Multiply;
Now Death to hear!*

Parad. Lost. Book x. 725.

^e Compare Gen. xxvii. 40. with 2 Sam. viii. 14. *Thou shalt serve thy Brother*: Here, is the Sentence. *All they of Edom became David's Servants*: Here, its Execution.

^f Hosea i. 4.

^g Isai. xxxix. 6, 7.

^h *Morum quoque Filii.*

Juvenal Satyr. XIII.

—But this would anticipate the Reply to another Objection.

Where is the Equity of cursing a People, that are yet *unborn*? Does not this “contradict all our Notions of Order and “of Justice?”—It may be contrary to *our* Notions, at least it would be unjustifiable in *our* Practice. But is quite otherwise, with regard to the all-seeing GOD. Is it not agreeable to the strictest Rules of Justice, for a Magistrate, when He has heard the Witnesses, summed up the Evidence, and found the Prisoner guilty—Is it not agreeable to the strictest Rules of Justice, to pass Sentence upon *such* a Criminal? The Question can admit of no Doubt. Yet it is equally certain, that *this* was the very Case, with Reference to the supreme Judge, and those Sinners the *Canaanites*.—They practiced the grossest and most inhuman Idolatries. They abandoned themselves to the most horrid Immoralities: such as violated Nature; confounded all Order; and such as it would be shocking even to mention. —Now all these provoking Crimes, were *present* to the View of HIM, by whose Inspiration *Noah* spake. He saw them with the same circumstantial Exactness, as if they had
had

¹ Levit. xviii. 24

had been already perpetrated.——Let us take these very important Particulars into Consideration, the *excessive Wickedness* of those Nations, and the *all-foreseeing Discernment* of JEHOVAH, and then who will dare to *insinuate*? That the everlasting Sovereign acted unjustly. That He launched the Lightenings of his Indignation, in an arbitrary manner, or upon an innocent People.——Who will be so precipitate, as to affirm with my Lord? That “no other Writer but a Jew, could impute to the Economy of divine Providence the Accomplishment of such a Prediction; nor make the supreme Being the Executor of such a Curse.”*

The former of those Circumstances will set in a proper Light, what his Lordship calls, “the Cruelties committed by *Joshua* “in the Conquest of the *Canaanites*.” It will make them appear to be acts of *righteous Vengeance*; a much-needed and most desirable Extirpation of a *pestilent* People: altogether as serviceable to the Public, as it was formerly, to destroy the *Wolves* from our Island; or as it is, at present, to deliver over some *flagitious* Malefactors to the Sentence of the Law.——Yet the Execution of this Vengeance was delayed, Year after Year, Century after Century. The seed of *Abraham*, for several Ages, were

* Pag. 110.

were not permitted to enter upon the Possession of their destined Inheritance; because *the Iniquity of the Amorites*, which was the Cause of their Extermination, *was not yet full.* — Does it then, bespeak the Man of *Integrity*, to represent those Proceedings of *Joshua*, under the *abhorred* Image of Cruelties; which were Acts of a Justice, exemplary, salutary, and greatly to be *re-
vered*. Is it becoming an *honest* Inquirer after Truth, to suggest, without the least Shadow of Proof, a *selfish* and *malignant* Reason, for the Destruction of the *Canaanites*; when a Reason, the most *equitable* in its Nature, the most *beneficial* in its Consequences, is expressly and repeatedly assigned by the sacred Historian? — This

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^s Gen. xv. 16.

^t Gen. xv. 16. Deut. ix. 5. *FOR THE WICKEDNESS of those Nations, the LORD thy GOD doth drive them out from before Thee* — See also Levit. xviii. 25. Where the sacred Writer describes their execrable and un-paralleled Vileness, by one of the strongest and boldest Figures imaginable. So vile they were, that the very Country loathed them; was weary to bear them; and acted like a disgusted nauseating Stomach, when oppressed with foul and offensive Food: *the Land itself vomiteth out her Inhabitants.* — Let no *squeamish* Critic betray his *false* Taste, and *worse* Temper, by carping at the Expression. But let all be astonished at the *outrageous* Impiety of the *Canaanites*; and adore the *vindictive* Arm of JEHOVAH; and acknowledge, that such horrible Mis-

creants

F

I refer to your Ladyship's Decision. Who, I am sure, will not err on the uncharitable Extreme. Yet I believe, will find it difficult, with all your *Good-nature*, to acquit the Author of these Letters from the Charge of *Dis-ingenuity*.

May I not add?— This Way of *fore-telling*, yet *respiting* the Punishment, is gracious both in itself, and in its Consequences.— *In itself*: because, a Reprieve is always reckoned an Alleviation of the Sentence, even though it be not the Forerunner of a Pardon.— *In its Consequences*: because, it afforded large Space for Recollection, and should have awakened the Offenders to a Sense of their Guilt. It should have incited them to use all possible Diligence to avert the Doom, both by a personal Reformation, and by educating their Families religiously. Why did they not act, as King *Abab* acted, " and argue as the Men of *Nineveh* argued; " in a following Age, but on a like Occasion? — Instead of this; instead of betaking themselves to Consideration and Prayer,

to

creants were (not for some Reasons of State, as my Lord is pleased to insinuate, *deemed* only, but were) *really*, & on the most *substantial* Principles of Justice, *an accursed Race*. Pag. 112.

▪ 1 Kings xxi. 27, 29.

• Jonah iii. 9.

to Repentance and Amendment, they ran to the *same*, to *greater* Excess of Ungodliness.

So that these People, being evidently Inheritors of their Father's sinful Nature, and obstinately persisting in their Father's sinful Ways, were *most deservedly* Partakers of his Curse. And though GOD is that uncontrollable Sovereign, *who giveth not*, is under no Obligation to give, *Account of any of his Matters*; ^a though He often has Reasons for his Dispensations, absolutely unsearchable by any Mortal; yet, *Here* He is clearly vindicated even before Men—— even before the Sinners themselves. They themselves must confess the Justice of their Doom; and own, That *GOD hath done righteously, but they have done wickedly*. That GOD has shewed all Long-Suffering; and given full Warning, before the Blow fell. Whereas they, notwithstanding this Forbearance and this Admonition, have continued incorrigible; and without any other Change, but that of becoming more consummately vile.

Agreeably to all this, and conformably to the most acknowledged Rules of Equity, it is declared by the sacred Historian, That the *Amorites*, the Descendants of *Canaan*, suffered not, till they had filled

^a Job xxxiii. 13.

up the Measure of *their* Iniquities; ^b *their own*, as well as their Father's.—All which, I should imagine, is sufficient, not only to *justify* the Counsels, but to *glorify* the Judgments, of the great JEHOVAH. Sufficient also to *satisfy* any Inquirer, who is (as my Lord very handsomely expresses Himself) “ candid but not implicit, willing to be informed yet curious to examine.”

My Lord's *Curiosity to examine*, shall I say? Or his Resolution to be dissatisfied? proceeds still farther. Accordingly He adds; “ who does not see, that the Curse “ and the Punishment, in this Case, fell “ on *Canaan* and his Posterity, exclusively “ of the rest of the Posterity of *Ham*?”^c ———The Particle *of*, so frequently repeated, in a single Sentence, can hardly be admired as an *Elegance*^d of Speech. But, taking *no more* Notice of such little Blemishes, I shall consider the Weight, not the Polish, of his Lordship's Arguments. — As for *this* Argument, I verily think, when

^b Gen. xv. 16.

^c Pag. 110, 112.

^d This, and one or two preceding Remarks of the same Nature, are scarcely worth our Notice. Neither should I have mentioned them, had they not *fall in my way*; and were it not to put a *Query* upon the popular Notion, That his Lordship's *Style* is so correct, elegant, and

when laid in the Ballance of Impartiality and Candour, it will *be found wanting*. For, admitting the Objection in its full Scope, what follows? Why, that the righteous GOD pardoned *some* Criminals, when He might justly punish *all*. And if it should have pleased the Supreme Judge, to *repeal* the Sentence, and *remit* the Penalty, with regard to some Offenders, who shall arraign his Conduct? Who shall censure his Providence? To exercise Mercy is his great Prerogative: an Act not of Debt, but of royal Bounty, which He exercises, *when* and to *whom*, it seemeth good in his Sight: *I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy,*^c is his high and holy Resolve.

I might therefore answer his Lordship's Question, by asking another. Which I might propose, in the *plain* but *solemn* Words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. "If
 " *these* are spared, while *those* are punish-
 " ed, *what is that to Thee? Is thine Eye*
 " *evil, because GOD is good?*" — But I shall rather reply to the Objection, by denying

and noble, as to be a *Standard for fine Writing*. It cannot, in my Apprehension, justly claim this Honour. If others think differently, I leave them to enjoy their Opinion; and shall not (though it would be easy enough to multiply Proofs) add a Word more upon the Subject.

^c Rom. ix. 16.

nying the Fact. The Punishment was not confined to *Canaan* and his Posterity. It reached the other Descendants of *Ham*; *Misraim* Himself, the Father of the *Egyptians* (as will be shewn in a proper Place) not excepted. *Canaan*, 'tis true, is *particularly mentioned*.——Because, He was (as from this very Circumstance is extremely probable) an *Accomplice*° with *Ham*, in the Breach of filial Duty.——Because, this Branch of the Family was more than ordinarily corrupt, nay, *beyond Measure* vicious.——Because the *Canaanites* were, in the *first* Place, and in the *fullest* Manner, to feel the Effects of the Curse.——And *Moses*, being charged with a Commission to execute the Vengeance on this People *only*, had no Occasion to concern Himself with any *other*. Just as the Sheriff of a County, demanding the Body of a condemned Malefactor, produces the dead Warrant for *his* Execution; without inter-meddling, or thinking Himself under any Necessity to inter-

° This is rendered still more credible, by that *Particularity* of Style, which the Scripture uses in speaking of *Ham*. *Ham the Father of Canaan*. Gen. ix. 18, 22. Why of *Canaan* so especially? Had He not other Children, other Sons?——Several other.—But this Distinction seems to be a Brand of *Infamy*, set upon the Offender; and intimates, that He who was Father of *Canaan* by Blood, was his Partner, was his Brother in Iniquity.

inter-meddle, with the other Prisoners in the Jayl.—This leads me to a new, and, if I judge right, by far the most important Inquiry; namely, whether the Curse was *executed*, as well as *pronounced*.

As I hasten to the Proof of this Particular, my Lord embarrasses and retards me with a fresh Obstacle. He Himself has thought proper to inform us, “ why the “ Posterity of *Canaan* was to be *deemed* an “ accursed Race.” But He lets the World know; “ It is not so easy to account, why “ the Posterity of the righteous *Shem*, that “ great Example of filial Reverence, be- “ came Slaves to another Branch of the “ Family of *Ham*, during more than four- “ score Years.” *——I am by no means convinced, that the Point proposed enters into the *Merits* of our Cause. Should the Reasons for this Dispensation remain an impenetrable Secret; yet, if we clear up the *Propriety*, and demonstrate the *Equity*, of the Curse denounced; we compass our main End, and confute the grand Censure. However, as the Question is presented, it shall be considered: And though his Lordship should affect to *sneer*, I chuse rather,

in

* Pag. 112.

in Imitation of those noble Writers, whose Dignity I would assert, to be *serious*.

Why were the *Israelites* Sojourners in *Egypt*?—— A Reason occurs, that is worthy of a *gracious* GOD, and greatly for the *public* Good. That they might carry thither the Knowledge of the everlasting JEHOVAH, and of the promised MESSIAH; of the only *acceptable* Method of Worship, and the only *effectual* Way of Salvation.—As *Egypt* was the Parent of Literature, and the Fountain-Head of Science: as Men of Letters and Curiosity came, from all Parts of the World, to complete their Studies at *Egypt*: if these heavenly Doctrines were received THERE, they would be more likely, some Streams of them at least, to be transfused into *all* Climes, and improve *every* Nation. So that the People of the LORD, the only Depositories of *divine* Philosophy, were settled in this Land of general Resort, with much the same wise and beneficent Views, as the ablest Professors of Learning are placed at our famous Universities.

But why were they *Slaves* in *Egypt*?—— This might be to *try* them, and to *humble* them; to *show* them what was in their Heart, and to *purge* out their Dross. We are taught in Scripture, that the Almighty

ty chastens whom He loves; and scourges the Men, whom He receiveth to Himself. Even the *beaten* Classics, my Lord's favourite Authors, have frequently remarked; That Adversity is a School, in which both private Persons, and public Societies, have learned the most heroic Virtues.— Besides; this might be intended to animate and inspirit the *Israelites* for their Invasion of *Canaan*. They were, in the general, a supine and groveling¹ Set of People. Had they been settled in a State tolerably easy, or in Territories that were but moderately commodious; they might never have aspired after the Land flowing with Milk and Honey; never have made any resolute Efforts, to possess their destin'd Inheritance. But, being *driven* by the *Lasb*, and *instigated* by the *Goad*, of pungent galling Slavery, they were even constrained to burst the Chains, and push ther way to Liberty and *Canaan*. Their insupportable Slavery, was somewhat like *bending* the Bow, and *straining* the String, in order to *launch* the Arrow.—Farther; GOD Almighty assures
Abraham,

¹ Let none imagine, that the *Wisdom* of GOD is impeached, by selecting to Himself a People of this Character. His *Clemency*, his *Forbearance*, and all those *benign* Perfections, which are so necessary for the Salvation of Sinners, are hereby displayed with peculiar Advantage, and to our unspeakable Consolation.

Abraham, that his Seed, though enslaved for a while, should *come out* of their Bondage *with great Substance*; ^k with the Silver, the Gold, the Jewels, and the choicest Treasures of *Egypt*. So that, when labouring for their *Task Masters*, they were, in Fact, labouring for *themselves*. The Wealth of the Oppressors, was laid up for the Oppressed. And the Season of their Affliction in the Enemies Country, was like the rigorous *Cold* of Winter; which, far from obstructing, only makes Preparation, for the *Blossoms* of Spring, and the *Fruits* of Autumn.—These Considerations might have solved the Difficulty to his Lordship, as a *Politician*.

Other Reasons are suggested by our *Divines*; which, if my Lord had thought it worth his while to regard, might have given better Satisfaction, and yielded more Edification. They would have reminded the *right honourable Querist*—That such a *gloomy* Aspect of the *Jewish* Affairs, made way for the *brightest* Manifestation of GOD's glorious Attributes: of his *Power*, in rescuing them from their tyrannical Rulers: of his *Faithfulness*, in fulfilling his Promise, made to their Fathers: of his *Goodness*, in supporting and conducting them; *keeping them*, amidst the most formidable
Dangers,

^k Gen. xv. 14.

Dangers, *as the Apple of an Eye*; and bearing them, even through the most insuperable Difficulties, *as on Eagle's Wings*.¹ This also opened a most *conspicuous* Theatre, for that amazing *Train of Miracles*; which have been, in all Ages, as serviceable to the Faith of *Christians*, as they were formerly conducive to the Welfare of the *Jews*. — They would farther have informed his Lordship, and have confirmed their Opinion by apostolical Authority; That the Whole of this most wonderful Transaction, was *typical* of *spiritual* Things: was a Series of *living* Lessons; delivered, according to the Eastern method of conveying Knowledge, in Figures and Emblems. The *Egyptian* Bondage was a Resemblance of our *natural* Condition; which is a State of the most abject Slavery to Sin. — The arbitrary and injurious Impositions of the *Task-Masters* shadow forth, though but faintly, the Tyranny of *unruly* Appetites, and *imperious* Passions. — That barbarous Edict for the Destruction of all the
 G 2 infant

¹ See Deut. xxxii. 10, 11. These, I think, are most delightful and *inimitably delicate* Representations. Let the pious Critic try, if He can conceive those *tender* Offices, that *un-intermitted* Vigilance, and Affiduity of *protecting cherishing* Cares, which are expressed in these fine Images. For my Part, I own myself incapable of describing them. But most earnestly wish, that every Reader as well as myself, may learn them in that best of Schools, the School of *Experience*.

infant Males, fitly enough represents the genuine Tendency of *carnal* and *corrupt* Affections; which destroy our true Comfort; subvert our noblest Interests; are as Death to the Joys and to the Hopes of our Souls.—Their *Deliverance* from that miserable State, was an expressive Sign of our Redemption, from the *Guilt* and the *Dominion* of Sin. ^m Both which the LORD JESUS accomplishes: the one by *Price*, the other by *Power*. Not by slaying the first-born, but by shedding his own Blood: not by softening Rocks into a Stream, but by taking away the Heart of Stone: not by turning the Current of *Jordan* backward, but by turning all our Desires into a new Channel.—The many Troubles and Oppositions they met with in the Wilderness, exhibit a lively Picture of the *Molestations*

^m The divine Writer to the *Hebrews*, makes the Land of *Canaan*, typical of a better Country, even of an *Heavenly*. Heb. xi. 16. xii. 22. According to the same Author, the *peaceful Settlement* of the *Israelites* in *Canaan*, suggested to their Thoughts, and pointed out to their Faith, that everlasting *Rest* which remaineth for the People of GOD. Heb. iii. 4, 5, &c. Since the *Terminus ad quem*, (as the School-men speak) is evidently mystical and allegorical: may we not conclude, that the *Terminus a quo* is mystical and allegorical likewise? Then it will follow, upon the clearest Principles of Analogy, that the *intermediate* Steps and Advances are of the same Nature; significative of *refined* and *spiritual* Things, under *earthly* and *sensible* Images.—This, if I mistake not, is put beyond all Doubt. 1 Corinth. x. 1, 2. &c.

lestations that attend, and the *Temptations* that assault, the Christian. Trials await Us. Snares are around Us. Through many Conflicts, and *much Tribulations We must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Only let Us beware, lest, like the ungrateful *Israelites*, We forget the GOD of our Salvation, and *fall after the same Example of Unbelief.* — The *Cloud*, that was spread over them by Day, to intercept the Glare, and screen them from the Heat of the Sun: The *Fire*, that shone before them in the Night, to cheer the nocturnal Darkness, and lead them through the trackless Desert: were not these very amiable and exact Emblems of our Saviour's *Merits*, and of his holy *Word*? The former of which, are *refreshing* to the guilty Conscience, as the Veil of a thick interposing Cloud is welcome to a Traveller in sultry Climes. The latter, is a *Light* to our Feet, and a *Lantern* to our Paths, to guide us in the Way everlasting. — Their *Passage* through *Jordan*, the Priests that bare the Ark of the Covenant going before them, ^a and standing in the midst of the River, till all the Congregation were passed over: this very emphatically prefigured our great High-Priest; *bearing our Sins; fulfilling the Law* in our Stead; *abolishing*
Death;

^a See Joshua iii. 13, 14. &c.

Death; and making it a *safe* as well as short Transition to Life eternal.

You will excuse me, Madam, for *expatiating* upon these Topics. They are so inviting, so pleasing, so comfortable, that I can hardly persuade myself to leave them.— If any other Parts of the Epistle, through a Kind of unhappy Necessity almost inseparable from Controversy, should resemble the *Asperity* of the *Thorn*; this I hope, will bear some Affinity to the *Fragrance* of the *Rose*. For which Cause it is, that I chuse only to touch, and but lightly touch, the one; while I would open the other, into a full Expansion, and a rich Effusion.— Let me add one more Observation on this Head, and I have done. It is apprehended by very judicious Persons, that the Punishment of the *Egyptians*, and their total Overthrow, may be a Presage of the *Misery* and *Ruin*; which will sooner or later fall upon Individuals and Nations, that *reject* the glorious Gospel, and *vilify* its sacred Repository THE BIBLE.

If the Reasons I have offered, are neither tiresome, nor un-satisfactory to your Ladyship, I shall proceed the more cheerfully to shew, That the Curse was *executed*, as well as pronounced.—Had it been the
senseless

senseless Extravagance of a Man intoxicated with Liquor ; or the *rash* Imprecation of a Man heated with Resentment ; or the *designing* Interpolation of some crafty Statesman ; would the *holy*, the *gracious*, the *true* GOD have set the broad Seal of Heaven to it ? Would HE, who over-rules all Events, have *suffered* it to succeed—have *commanded* it to succeed—nay, have *brought it Himself to pass*, by a mighty Hand, and stretched out Arm ? Impossible to conceive !—If therefore it was really brought to pass ; and with a surprising Punctuality ; and not by any Competency of human Means, but by the most evident Display of divine Power : this will be such a Proof of its *Credibility*, its *Reasonableness*, and *Equity*, as no One, who thinks reverently of the Deity, can deny.

Canaan was to be Servant to *Shem*.—This was accomplished, when the *Israelites*, the Descendants of *Shem*, conquered the Land of *Canaan* ; slew thirty of its Kings ;ⁿ and took Possession of their Cities. When the *Gibeonites* particularly, who composed one of their principal States, ° became *Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water, to the Congregation* ;^p or, in other Words, the most menial Servants to the lowest of the People. By

ⁿ Josh. xii. 24.

• Josh. x. 2.

^p Josh. ix. 27.

By what Instruments was this extraordinary Revolution wrought? — By one of the finest Armies in the East or West? Marshalled by the bravest Officers, and headed by the most experienced General? No: but by a raw, undisciplined, enslaved People. Who were destitute of military Skill; and without any personal Qualifications, or warlike Apparatus for so difficult, so dangerous an Enterprize.

Through what Obstacles was it begun, carried on, and compleated? — In spite of the Attempts of one potent Monarch, to detain them in Servitude. In spite of the Resolution of several combined Kings, to dispute with them every Inch of Ground, to the last Drop of their Blood. — A deep River, and an Arm of the Sea must be crossed, by six hundred thousand Men, with their Wives, their Children, their Cattle; and without any Vessel to transport them, or any Bridge to transmit them. — They must dwell, forty Years, in a desolate, inhospitable, barren Wilderness. Which was infested by ravenous Beasts, and fiery flying Serpents: In which there was neither Water; nor Corn; nor any sort of Accommodation for Abode, or Sustenance for Life.

How were all these Difficulties surmounted? — Not by the Arm of Flesh. This was

was utterly impracticable. But by the most astonishing Interposition of Omnipotence. — The *Egyptian* Tyrant is humbled, and brought to their Terms, by the Infliction of ten tremendous Plagues. — The Waters of the River are dried up, and the Waves of the great Deep are divided, so as to yield them a safe unobstructed⁹ Passage. — A Stream gushes even from the hard Rock; and gives them Drink, as it had been out of the great Depths. — Prodigious Quantities of *Manna*¹ descend, with every Morning-Dew; and supply them, not from the Garner, but from Heaven, with their daily Bread. — Vast Flights of Quails arrive, with every setting Sun, and drop,

⁹ He led them through the Deep, encumbered as they were with their Kneading-Troughs, and surrounded with frightful Billows, as an Horse in the Wilderness: with as much Ease and Spirit, as some courageous Courier makes his Way through (כַּרְכַּר) a plain, open, champaign Country. *Isai.* lxxiii. 13.

¹ We are not to think, that the *Manna* took its Name, from any Resemblance to the medicinal Drug, which, among us, is so commonly known, and so frequently used. It is rather derived from the abrupt Expression of the *Israelites*, on their first beholding this wonderful Food. They cried out with Amazement, מַן הוּא? *Man Hu? What is this?* Which Exclamation, denoting their own Surprise, and the unexpected as well as unparalleled Nature of the Gift, became both a Memorial of the one, and a Denomination of the other.

drop, like a Bird shot through the Wing,^o in the midst of their Camp, and round about their Habitations.—The Walls of an impregnable City fall to the Ground, at the Blast of Rams-Horns.^t The Sun stands still in the midst of Heaven, at the Voice of a Man.^u All the Hosts of the Nations, with all their Weapons of War, are *driven asunder as the Foam upon the Waters, and cut off as the Tops of the Ears of Corn.*

And is it probable? Can it be possible? That every Element, and all Nature, should not only *concur*; but *alter* their *established* Course; *depart* from the *fundamental* Laws of their Creation; on purpose to ratify, what was bolted out by the Patriarch in a *drunken*

^o This is described with the utmost Vigour and Beauty, in that sublime Piece of sacred Poetry, Psal. lxxviii. 27, 28. *He rained Flesh upon them as Dust, and winged (here lies a peculiar Emphasis, and thus should the Original עוף כנף be translated, winged) Fowl like as the Sand of the Sea.* Yet, though they were furnished with Wings, and therefore might easily escape, they neglected to make Use of their natural Power: They fell round the Israelitish Tents, like the Rain from Heaven, *which returneth not*; and like the Sand of the Shore, *which cannot be numbered.*

This whole Psalm is a manifest Proof of the Observation, which was made in a preceding Paragraph — That the *historical* and *doctrinal* Passages of Scripture are, like the Deed and its Counter-Part, in their Substance *exactly corresponding*: and like the several Links of the same Chain, in their Connection *absolutely inseparable.*

^t Josh. vi.

^u Josh. x. 12, 13.

drunken Revel, or foisted into the Text by some Hebrew Machiavilian?

Canaan was to be Servant also to *Japheth*.—Pursuant to this Prediction, did not the *Greeks* and *Romans*, who derive their Lineage from *Japheth*, make themselves Masters of the Residue of *Canaan*. *Tyre* built by the *Sidonians*, and *Thebes* ^t by *Cadmus*, were both destroyed by *Alexander* the *Grecian*. *Carthage*, founded by *Dido*, was, after a long Succession of Losses, and a vast Effusion of Blood, demolished by *Scipio* the *Roman*. Which Losses made *Hannibal*, a Child of *Canaan*, cry out with a Mixture of Astonishment and Despondency; *Agnosco Fortunam Carthaginis!* i. e. " " I " see plainly the Hand of Destiny working;
H 2 ing;

^t " *Alexander* laid Siege to this City, took it by Storm, and entirely destroyed it; slaying ninety thousand of the Inhabitants, and selling the rest, to the number of thirty thousand more, into Slavery." *Prideaux's Connect.* Vol. I. Pag. 479.

" Vid. Liv. Lib. xxvii. *ad finem*.—A Writer of the first Repute, for elegant Taste, and penetrating Judgment, thinks it *more than probable*, that *Hannibal*, in this dispirited and hopeless Acknowledgment, refers to the Prophecy under Consideration. Which will justify my *free*, though I hope, not erroneous Translation of the Passage.—What the same Author adds, is so very ingenious,

“ ing ; I see *that oracular Doom* hastening to
“ its Accomplishment ; in these dreadful
“ Calamities sustained by *Carthage !*”

If these Facts are true, which have the unanimous Consent of Historians for their Support, what can we say of his Lordship's Assertion ; “ that *Canaan* was Servant to *Shem*, though not to *Japheth ?*” * This, I am

ingenious, and so apposite to my Purpose, that I will beg Leave to transcribe it.

“ That the *Romans* were no Strangers to the same divine Oracle, appears from *Virgil*.”

*Progeniem sedenim Trojana a Sanguine duci
Audierat, Tyrias olim quæ verteret Arces.
Hinc Populum latè Regem, Belloque superbum,
Venturum Excidio Lybiæ. Sic volvere Parcas.*

“ In translating which, if we only name the *An-*
“ *cestors*, instead of the *Descendants*, the original
“ Prophecy glares upon us.”

*From Japheth's Loins deriv'd, a Race she knew
Design'd the Strength of Canaan to subdue :
Wide-spread their Empire, destin'd to succeed
And waste the Sons of Ham : So Fate decreed !*

See Mr. *Ridley's Sermons* at *Lady Mayer's Lecture*.
Pag. 252.

* The Words at large are, “ *Canaan* became Ser-
“ vant of Servants to *Shem*, though not to *Japheth*,
“ *when the Israelites conquered Palestine.*” Pag. 111.
— I must beg Leave to inquire, *why* the last Clause
is added ? Is it to prove, that, when the *Israelites*
subdued the *Canaanites*, the Descendants of *Ham* were
not, by *this* Victory, made Servants to *Japheth's* Off-
spring ?

am apprehensive, will be found as *false*, as the following Objection is *weak*. In which He urges; That “ *Canaan* was Servant to “ one of his Uncles, not to his Brethren.”
 * — Such a Cavil (for certainly it deserves no better Name) discovers an *utter Ignorance* of the Hebrew Phraseology; or else, a *strange Inattention* to it; I would not say, an *egregious Misrepresentation* of it. I thought *every one* had known, till Lord Bolingbroke undeceived me, That nothing is more common in the oriental Idiom, than to express any *Relatives* of the Male Line, by the Denomination of *Brethren*.^y

I hope, your Ladyship will not think *this*, or any of my other Remarks, *indecently*

spring? If so, my Lord encounters a Phantom of his own raising; and confutes, what no Man asserts. — Is it to insinuate, that, because the Race of *Canaan* were not, at *this Time*, made Vassals to the Posterity of *Japheth*, therefore they *never* were; and, of Consequence, the Prophecy was *eluded*? This seems to be the Design of the Sentence, Abstracted from this Design, I see not what End it can answer. But this is to draw, from Premises that are true, a Conclusion that is false. And is just as good Logic, as the Libertine’s Argument is sound Divinity; “ Vengeance is *not yet*, therefore it *never will be*, Executed.” See 2 Pet. iii. 4.

x Pag. 111.

^y See Gen. xiii. 8. Where *Abraham* and *Lot*, though Uncle and Nephew, are called *Brethren*. — Gen. xxiv. 48. Where *Betuel*, another of *Abraham*’s Nephews, is styled his *Brother*. — Gen. xvi. 12. xxiv. 27.

cently free. In the Presence of the most High GOD, all Men are upon a Level. When the Honour of his divine Word or glorious Attributes is concerned, We are to *know no Man after the Flesh*:^y pay no deferential Regard to the Distinctions of Birth, or Elevations of Character. In *these* Lifts the Privileges of Peerage cease. And I should reckon myself the most abject of Creatures, if, through Respect of Persons, I could *palliate* or *secrete* the Truth, when the ever-venerable Oracles of Inspiration are treated with Contempt. A *Violation of Decency* this! by whatever Hand it is offered, or from whatever Quarter it comes, incomparably more flagrant than *Scandalum Magnatum*.

Pardon, Madam, this Digression, and permit me farther to observe——That the Progeny of *Ham*, in another Line, are, to this very Day, the Slaves of the whole trading World. The *Negroes* I mean: whose Descent is from that unhappy Man. And what is their Country, but the *Market of Slavery*? Are not their Persons bought^z and sold, as the meanest Commodities? Are they not debased to the
most

^y 2 Corinth. v. 16.

^z No less than *thirty Thousand*, I have been informed, are, every Year, bought for Slaves by the *English* only.

most *sordid*, and harrassed with the most *toilsome* Drudgery? made, in the strictly literal Sense of the Phrase, *Servants of Servants*?

I have not forgotten what I promised to make appear, with relation to the *Egyptians*; neither shall I overlook what his Lordship has remonstrated, from the same Quarter. “The Descendants of *Mitfrain*,” He says, “another of the Sons of *Ham*, were “the *Egyptians*: And they were so far “from being Servants of Servants to their “Cousins the *Shemites*, that these were “Servants of Servants to them.”^a——
For a Season, they were. But this Servitude was calculated for the Good of their Community, and redounded to the Glory of their GOD. It terminated in such a signal Deliverance, as brought Honour and Opulence to themselves, Confusion and Ruin to their Enemies. Does it then follow, from this *temporary* Superiority of the *Egyptians*, which ended in so *disastrous* a manner, that they were *excepted* in the Denunciation of the Curse, or favoured with an Act of *Indemnity*?

^a Pag. 112.

What says the supreme Arbitrator? *The Nation whom they serve, will I judge:*^a I myself will punish; not by any human Instruments, but by my own immediate Hand. Accordingly, they were visited with the most dreadful and destructive Plagues. In the last of which, the First-born, the Flower of their Kingdom, were cut off; and at length, their King, and his whole Army, perished in the Red Sea. Does my Lord make no Account of these most terrible and unexampled Judgments?

Besides; what was the Condition of this People in the following Ages? If we consult *Ezekiel*, He will declare it, as clearly by the Spirit of Prophecy,^b as if He had lived on the Spot, and seen the Face of Affairs. *And it came to pass in the eleventh Year, in the first Month, in the seventh Day of the Month, that the Word of the LORD came unto me, saying; Son of Man, I have broken the Arm of Pharoah King of Egypt; and lo, it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a Roller to bind it, to make it strong to hold the Sword. — I will scatter the Egyptians among the Nations, and will disperse them through the Countries. — Egypt shall be the basest of Kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more among the Nations.*
—And

^a Gen. xv. 14.

^b Ezek. xxx, 20, 21, 23. xxix. 15. xxx. 13.

— *And there shall be no more a Prince of the Land of Egypt.* — Is not all this confirmed, by *antient* History, and by the *present* State of *Africa*? From the one We learn, That the *Egyptians* were subject, first to the *Persians*; next to the *Grecians*; then to the *Romans*; afterwards to the *Arabs*. And from the other it appears, That they *now* wear the *Turkish* Yoke: are governed, not by a Prince of their own, but by the *Grand Seigneur* and his *Bashaws*.

Nay; let any Person look round upon *all* the Countries, peopled by the Progeny of *Ham*; and I am much mistaken, if He does not find them, what the Psalmist describes, *Dark Places of the Earth, and full of the Habitations of Cruelty*:^a the Dens of *Rapine*, and the Dungeons of *Ignorance*: where *Slavery* drags the Chain, and *Tyranny* lifts the Scourge. — Infomuch, that We need not scruple to say, in the emphatical Words of *Joshua*; *Not one Thing has failed of all the Good, or the evil Things, which the LORD spake by the Mouth of Noah, concerning each of his Sons respectively. All are come to pass, not one Thing has failed.*^b

This calls upon me to clear up another Part of the Prediction. — The Blessing.

I

pro-

^a Psal. lxxiv. 20.

^b Josh. xxiii. 14.

pronounced upon *Shem*, and the Enlargement promised to *Japheth*. Which will afford a new Argument, to maintain the Authenticity of the Passage, and assert its divine Inspiration.

I said, the Blessing *pronounced upon*. Because, I would not translate the Words, *Blessed be the LORD GOD of Shem*; but, *Blessed of the LORD GOD is Shem*. This will put a *striking Contrast*, between the Doom of the irreligious Scoffer, and the Reward of filial Piety: this is what we *naturally expect* from a GOD, who is not unrighteous to forget his People, and their Labours of Love: this Sense the original Language will very commodiously *bear*,^c and the Event seems to *require*. For, how manifestly, how eminently, was this benedictive Sentence fulfilled! Since, in the Posterity of *Shem*, the *Church of GOD* was established, and his true Worship propagated. From Him, the *Redeemer of Mankind*, that *Blessing of Blessings*, according to the Flesh sprung.

The great *Enlargement of Japheth's Territories*, is no less certain, and no less remarkable.

^c Gen. ix. 26. בְּרַךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי שֵׁם — Words of the very same Import, in the very same Construction, are *thus* rendered by our Translators, Deut. xxxiii. 13. and will hardly admit of any other Interpretation; מְבֹרָכַת יְהוָה אֲרֵצוֹ *Blessed OF the LORD &c.*

markable. He had, for his Possession, the Isles of the Sea Westward, and the fine extensive Countries near them ; *Spain, Italy, Greece, Asia* the less, all *Europe*, and the vast Regions towards the North ; which antiently the *Scythians*, now the *Tartars* inhabit ; from whom the *Americans*, the People of the new World, seem to be derived. —By Japheth's *dwelling in the Tents of Shem*, is meant The Conversion of the *European* Gentiles, to the Gospel of CHRIST. Who, through a long Progression of Years, were *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel ; Strangers to the Covenants of Promise ; having no Hope of eternal Life ; and without any saving Knowledge of GOD in the World.*^d But were, in due Time, persuaded to embrace the true Faith : were made (as the Apostle elegantly speaks, and in a Strain perfectly corresponding with the Language of our Prophecy) *Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of GOD.*^e An Event, altogether as undeniable, as it is important, delightful, and glorious.

Upon the whole ; I cannot but think that his Lordship has planted his Battery, and played his Artillery, if not like an unskilful, at least like an unsuccessful Engi-

I 2

near

^d Ephes. ii. 12.^e Ephes. ii. 19.

neer. He has *planted his Battery* against a Place, too well fortified to admit of any Impression, and that must infallibly triumph over every Assault. He has so *played his Artillery*, that it recoils upon Himself, and crushes his own Design.—And this, I apprehend, will always be the Issue, when Men even of the *finest Genius* and most *improved Capacities*, presume to attack the Scriptures of eternal Truth.

This very Passage, instead of *depreciating*, unspeakably *ennobles*, the divine Writings. It shews, that they bear the Stamp—of that *all-over-ruling Power*, which purposes, and none shall disannul it—of that *all-comprehending Knowledge*, which discerns Events, long, long before they come into Existence.—And let any unprejudiced Reader judge, what Degree of Esteem those Books may fairly challenge; whose least considerable, or, in his Lordship's Opinion, *most obnoxious Parts*, have such a *Depth* and such a *Dignity* of Wisdom! Such as will be admired and revered, so long as *historic Truth* has any Credit, or *commercial Intelligence* any Being.

Shall I trespass upon your Ladyship's Patience, a little farther?—The Penmen

men of the Old Testament, carry all the Marks of the most *disinterested* and *undesigned* Sincerity. They record the *Failings* of their favourite and most illustrious Heroes; without concealing the *Punishment*, inflicted on such Miscarriages.—The uniform *Tendency* of their Narratives and Observations is, To promote a Religion the most *pure*, the most *benevolent*, the most *elevated* imaginable; as remote from all selfish Aims, and every low Art of Collusion, as the Heavens are higher than the Earth.—They were Men singularly *qualified* for their Work; being either *Eye-Witnesses* of the Facts, they relate; or else *Cotemporaries* with the Persons, they describe; or still more remarkably distinguished, by their Ability to work *Miracles*, and their Insight into *Futurity*.—As to the Facts related, some of them had anniversary *Solemnities*, on which they were commemorated: Some of them had significant *Ceremonies*, by which they were represented. They were *publicly read* in the Synagogues, and *universally known* through the Nation. It was a Duty of Religion, to *talk* of them by Day, to *meditate* on them by Night, and diligently to *instruct* the Children in them. And were not these Circumstances a Security, an *invulnerable* Security against any Attempt
to

to corrupt, to innovate, or alter?—So that their Writings appear with every Character, both *internal* and *external*, of genuine Truth; and with the most unquestionable *Credentials*, from the GOD of Power, and GOD of Wisdom.^d Consequently, they have a Credibility of *their own*: sufficient both to claim, and to support, the Faith of an antient *Jew*. Such as must *command* the Assent of every *rational* and *honest* Inquirer, even before the Christian Dispensation took Place.

If my Lord had duly adverted to these Considerations; surely, He would have expunged that *bold* and *rash* Assertion, “without Christianity we have no Obligation to believe the Old Testament.”^e—Surely, he would never have left behind Him, that *unwarrantable* and *injurious* Insinuation; That the *Hebrew* Original deserves

^d Another very extraordinary Peculiarity in these Writings; and, to me at least, an undoubted Proof, that their Authors were divinely inspired; is, Their *perfect Agreement*, and *entire Consistency* throughout.—Though they were composed by *different Men*; placed in very *different Stations* of Life; and flourishing in very *distant Ages* of the World: Yet, they are as consonant and harmonious, as if they had all been penned by the *same Hand*.——Any Thing equal to this, I never saw; never heard of; and I believe, the most inveterate or most sagacious Adversaries of the Old Testament, will not attempt to produce a Parallel.

^e Pag. 94.

erves no better Credit, than the fabulous Story ^f of the *Septuagint* Translation.— Nor have found any Reason to “ protest, “ that He knew of no Rule to go by,” ^g (in settling the Degree of Assent, due to the several Parts of the Old Testament) but the *fanciful Distinction*, which has already been examined. — He would rather have found Reason to adopt and subscribe *Agur’s* Confession of Faith. A Man, who was famous in his own, who will be famous in every Generation ; and for this, among other most judicious Maxims ; *EVERY word of GOD is pure.* ^h ’Tis all Gold, *fine* Gold, without *any* the *least* Alloy.

For my own Part, I freely acknowledge to your Ladyship, that I value the sacred History (even exclusive of its Connection with the transcendent Glories of CHRIST, and the unspeakable Benefits of Redemption) on the very same Principles, which
 incline

^f The Story is told, pag. 86. — The *Insinuation* is made, in a prolix, confused, and obscure Paragraph, pag. 87.

^g Pag. 100.

^h Prov. xxx. 5. St. *Peter* bears much the same Testimony, to the *whole* Order of scriptural Writings. With regard to their *Use*, He calls them *Milk*; because, nothing is so well adapted to *nourish* our Faith and our Holiness. With regard to their *Quality*, He styles them (*αδολον*) *sincere*, unadulterated, pure; without any Mixture of Falseness, or any Tincture of Folly. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

incline our Connoisseurs to value those celebrated *Antiques*, they call Medals *singular*. Because, it is supposed, there is but *one* of the Sort extant.—Considering the *private* Interests, and *personal* Attachments, which are so apt to bias the human Mind; considering the *imperfect* Information, and *Ignorance* of Causes, to which all other Writers are unavoidably subject; I cannot but conclude, that the sacred History is, in Point of strict, precise, universal Veracity, SINGULAR. There is none other besides this, no, not one in the whole World, that is free from *all* the false Colourings of Prejudice; clouded with *no* Mixture of Uncertainty; most *minutely* true; and to be depended on, in *every* Particular. The Sacred History, is not only seated on the *Throne* of *Truth*; but, in *these* Respects, possesses it *without a Rival*.

Lord Bolingbroke is fond of *Davila*:¹ because, *Davila* discovers the *hidden Springs*.

¹ He wrote a History of the civil Wars of *France*, in fifteen Books; containing all that was remarkable, from the Death of *Henry II.* in 1559, to the Peace of *Verwins* in 1598. It was originally written in *Italian*, and translated into French by *J. Bodoin*. *Collier's Hist. Diss.*

Springs of Action, and traces up almost every Enterprize to it's Source. ^k — Is this so valuable a Qualification in the *Italian*? How then should we admire the *inspired* Historians? Who disclose to us, not the secret Measures of a Court, but the *unsearchable Counsels* of Heaven: Not the little Motives, that actuate the Politician, but the *deep Designs* of the universal Sovereign: And all this, not from precarious Surmise, but with the *fullest Assurance*. An Excellency! to which no other Narrative on Earth, can lay any Claim.

The Scriptures throw Light upon the most memorable Transactions, that have passed in the *Heathen* World, and are recorded by the *classic Authors*. — When the *Affyrian* Monarch subdues Kingdoms, and ravages Nations; We are apt to think, He is only gratifying his insatiable Ambition. But the Scripture assures us, that He was *the Staff in JEHOVAH's Hand, and the Rod of his Indignation*.¹ An Instrument, made use of by the King of Kings, to execute his righteous Vengeance. — When *Cyrus* is habituated to all the noble Exercises, educated in all the fine Accomplishments, that form the gallant Prince, and constitute the complete Ge-
K neral;

^k Pag. 167.¹ Isai. x. 5.

neral; *Xenophon* sees nothing more, than the Exertion of human Policy. But *Isaiab* beholds the all super-intending Arm of the LORD, girding^m this Hero, and preparing Him for the Deliverance of his People.—So that the Scripture-History is *itself* the grandest and most useful; while its *inter-current* Observations, are a Key to open, the most celebrated Affairs, which give Weight and Estimation to other Annals.

The grandest, and most useful.——This will appear to be more than a bare Assertion, if we recollect; That Here is a Display of that great *Messiah*, who is *the Hope of Israel*,ⁿ and *the Desire of all Nations*.^o A Display of Him, in his mysterious Incarnation; his wonderful Person; and all the gracious, the benign Majesty of his mediatorial Offices. From the original Promise, (made to our first Parents) through all its progressive Evolutions; till He arises in the New Testament, *as the only begotten*
of

^m Isai. xlv. 5. *I have girded Thee, though Thou hast not known me.* *Xenophon's* *Κυρη Παιδευα*, though written with quite a different View, is a very fine, and perhaps the very best *Comment*, on *Isaiab's* beautiful and expressive Phrase, **ΤΙΝΝ**.

ⁿ Acts xxviii. 20.

^o Hag. ii. 7.

of the Father; ^p with a Lustre and Dignity, suitable to so divine a Personage.— Which is an Event, of such incomparable *Condescension, Magnificence, and Grace*, that all the Prophets bear Witness to it, ^q and the *very Angels desire to look into it.* ^r

How then must your Ladyship be surprised, to see Lord Bolingbroke undertaking to assign the *principal* Scope of the *Mosaic* History, ^s (the former Part of it at least,) and not *enlarging, not dwelling upon, no, nor so much as mentioning, the Redeemer.* That all-glorious, all-important REDEEMER, who is the Sum and Substance of the whole Scriptures: the *Alpha* and *Omega* in all the Revelations of GOD.

——Of whom *Moses* wrote, ^t and whose Day *Abraham* saw. — Whose Righteousness was preached by *Noah*, ^w and his final Advent foretold by *Enoch.* ^x — Whose Accidents, apprehended by Faith, were the Recommendation of *Abel's* Sacrifice; ^y and the Consolation of *Adam*, ^z under the Loss of Immortality, and Expulsion from Paradise. — From whom many, if not all,

K 2

the

^p John i. 14. ^q Acts x. 43. ^r 1 Pet. i. 12.

^s Pag. 109. ^t John v. 46. ^u John viii. 56.

^w 2 Pet. ii. 5. It can hardly be doubted, but *Noah* preached the very same Righteousness, of which he himself was an Heir: and *that*, we are assured, was the Righteousness of Faith; Heb. xi. 7.

^x Jude xiv. ^y Heb. xi. 4. ^z Gen. iii. 15.

the *Ante-diluvian* Patriarchs, borrow their Honours; and stand upon everlasting Record, chiefly as being in the Number of *his* Progenitors:— This *capital* Omission is (to use his Lordship's own Language) “ a manifest Abuse of *sacred* History, and “ quite inexcusable in a Writer, who knew, “ or should have known,” ^a that, in its *most early* as well as in its *later* Periods, it invariably testifies of CHRIST. ^b

Thus to undertake, and *thus* to execute, is as if some *Pretender* to *Anatomy*, should engage to explain the Nature of Animal Motion; and say not a Word, concerning the Nerves, the Muscles, the Heart. Or, as if some *Smatterer* in *Geography*, should offer to exhibit a complete Map of our Country; and leave entirely out of his Plan, the Cities, the Towns, and the Rivers.— Yet, this is not the *only* Incident, on which my Lord, however critical in profane Literature, discovers Himself to have been very *remiss* in the Study, at least very *superficial* in the Knowledge, of his Bible.

From which Hint I would take Occasion to entreat, and with the most affectionate Earnestness, all that are inclined to dispute against this divine Book, first to make themselves *thoroughly acquainted* with it.—

And

^a Pag. 178.

^b John v. 39.

And would they once set about the momentous Work, with a candid, upright, and impartial Mind: Free from the *Jaundice* of Prejudices; not *blinded* with the Fumes of Self-Conceit; nor *intoxicated* with the Cup of vicious Pleasure: If they would *thus* examine the inspired Volumes, they would soon perceive such a *lovely Constellation* of Truth, of Wisdom, and of Grace, shining forth from every Page; as must turn their *Disesteem* into *Admiration*, and their *Aversion* into *Delight*.

But if they bring with them a Fondness for Fame; a haughty Self-sufficiency of Spirit; or an ignoble Attachment to sensual Gratifications: If they are determined to cherish, and will on no Consideration divorce, these *Seducers* of the *Heart*, and *Perversers* of the *Judgment*: We cannot wonder, that the Scriptures should appear to *them*, with much the same Aspect, as the miraculous Cloud appeared to the *Egyptians*. Which threw Darkness on their Paths, and shed Horror on their Souls; even while it gave Light to the Steps, and Alacrity to the Hopes, of the *Israelites*.^c
 —In this Case, we may assign a *Reason* for their *Opposition*, from the unhappy Circumstances

^c Exod. xiv. 20. *It was a Cloud and Darkness to them, but it gave Light by Night to these.*

cumstances recorded of *Ishmael*:^d Their Hand, their Tongue, their Pen, is against the Word of GOD; *because*, the Word of GOD is against them, their Tempers, and their Ways.

In the sacred Narrations, we behold *the Arm of the L O R D revealed*.—Other Historians, only *guess* at the Interposition of an *avenging*, or *propitious* GOD. And, though Conjectures of this Kind, occur but very rarely, in their Works; they are frequently censured, as a *presumptuous* Intrusion upon the *Arcana* of Heaven.—But the Pen-men of Scripture, with *unerring* Certainty declare; *This is the LORD's Doing*: a Stroke from the Sword of his Justice,^e or a Reward from the Riches of his Goodness.^f

Here

^d Gen. xvi. 12. *His Hand will be against every Man, and every Man's Hand against Him.*

^e See 2 Chron. x. 15.—xv. 6.—xxv. 20. xxviii. 5, 6.—xxix. 8, 9.

^f See 2 Chron. xii. 7.—xiii. 15, 16, 18. xiv. 6, 12.—xxvi. 5.—xxvii. 6.—I refer to the *Chronicles*, rather than to the other Parts of sacred History, in order to create a *higher Esteem* for these excellent Memoirs. Many People, I believe, are *contentedly* ignorant of the *Chronicles*. Because, some of the first Chapters consist of Hebrew Names, which are *forbidding*, and of genealogical Tables, which are *useless*, to the Generality of Readers.—But, notwithstanding

Here we perceive, as in the brightest Mirrour, what Practices He *favours*, and what Methods He *opposes*: what Courses are attended with his *Blessing*, and what Behaviour provokes his *Displeasure*.—These Records set before us the most *striking Exemplifications*, both of the divine Threatnings, and of the divine Promises: demonstrating, from repeated Experience, that the former, are more than vain Menaces; the latter, are far from alluring Fallacies. By which Means, they are admirably well adapted, to inculcate those fundamental Lessons of practical Religion—a continual *Advertence* to GOD—a believing *Dependence* on GOD—and an habitual Expectation of *Success* in our Schemes, not *merely* from any Address or Industry of our own, but from the all-powerful *Benediction* of GOD.—Which are, of all other Precepts, perhaps, the most salutary and beneficial to Mankind.

My

withstanding their unpromising Introduction, they contain the most *memorable* and *momentous* Occurrences. They are interspersed with the most *weighty* and *edifying* Remarks. They are worthy of our *repeated* Perusal, and will amply repay the most *careful* Attention. — I would compare them to some noble *Mine*, whose Surface is barren, and seems to include nothing valuable. But, as you penetrate the Soil, the Treasure opens. The deeper you go, the more Riches you find. And, instead of regretting the little Toil of Application, you are only grieved, that you undertook the gainful Search no sooner.

My Remarks would be immoderately prolix, were they to enumerate *all* the Perfections of Sacred History. I shall content myself with wishing, that your Ladyship may esteem, may reverence, may love the *whole* Book of GOD,——*only* in Proportion to its Worth. Then, I am persuaded, it will have your *highest* Esteem, your *profoundest* Reverence, and most *devoted* Love.

Before I conclude, give me Leave, Madam, to make *one Request*. Which I make, under a Sense of my various Obligations to your Ladyship; with all the engaging Acts of your Condescension and Generosity, full in my View. It ought therefore to be, and it really is, *expressive* of the most *unfeigned* Thankfulness for your Favours, and of the *truest* Zeal for your Happiness. It is this——That you would carry on a *daily* Intercourse, and cultivate a holy, an *intimate* Familiarity, with the inspired Writers, and their inestimable Volumes.——Read them. Recollect them. Weigh them.——Contemplate them, in their magnificent *Whole*; in their beautiful *Parts*; and their harmonious *Connections*.

I should be afraid to recommend, in this zealous Manner, and to this assiduous Perusal,

rufal, the *most correct* Compositions, that ever proceeded from a *human* Pen. But Here, I am under no Apprehension, of your exhausting the Mine, and complaining of *Emptiness*: under no Apprehension, lest the Entertainment should *flatten* upon your Taste, and create *Disgust*. The more We search those Store-Houses of Wisdom; the better We understand those Oracles of Truth; the more they will *approve* themselves to our *Judgment*, and become *dearer*, still *dearer* to our *Affections*.——The Pages of Scripture, like the Productions of Nature, will not only endure the Test, but improve upon the Trial. The Application of the Microscope to the one, and a repeated Meditation on the other, are sure to display *new* Beauties, and present Us with *higher* Attractives.——Nay, the very Attempts of an Adversary to *blacken* the Scriptures, serve only to *encrease* their *Lustre*. For my Part, I never should have seen the Prediction of *Noah*, *rising*, with such Perspicuity, Propriety, and Glory, to Observation; had not Lord Bolingbroke made an Effort, to *over-whelm* it with Objections, and *sink* ^z it into Discredit.

Above

^z An Allusion to the *Motto*, in the Title Page,
Merses profundo, pulchrior evenit,
and expressive of its Meaning.

Above all, may We bring to this best of Studies, an *humble Mind*. A Mind, deeply sensible of its own *Ignorance* and *Weakness*; yet frequently and chearfully lifted up to GOD, for his enlightening and animating Spirit. That, by his blessed Influences, our *Understandings may be opened to understand the Scriptures,*^h and our *Hearts opened to receive them:*ⁱ to understand them, in all the *Fulness* of their heavenly Meaning; to receive them, in all the *Force* of their transforming Power. — That, reading the *Threatnings*, We may tremble^k at the awful Word; and acknowledge ourselves justly liable, to those terrible Judgments. But at the same Time believe, that *CHRIST has delivered Us from the Curse of the*

^h Luk. xxiv. 45.

ⁱ Act. xvi. 14. — Such is the *Darkness*, such the *Depravity* of our Minds, that they will not, they cannot, be made *wise unto Salvation*, even from the Scriptures themselves, without the *powerful Agency* of the blessed Spirit. Unless *his Influences enlighten* our Understandings; and *apply* the Doctrines, when understood, to our Hearts; We shall be, even with the Word of *Light* and *Life* in our Hands, somewhat like *blind Bartimeus*, sitting amidst the Beams of Day; or like the *withered Arm*, with invaluable Treasures before it. This, I think, Experience must *acknowledge*; this, I am very certain, the Texts referred to, in Concert with many others, *evince*.

^k See *Ezra* x. 3. — *2 Chron.* xxxiv. 27. Where it might not be amiss, to compare the Temper of true *Believers*, and the Behaviour of an illustrious *King*, with the Spirit that runs through his *Lordship's* Performance.

*the Law, being made a Curse for Us.*¹——
 That, reading the *Promises*, We may confess Ourselves unworthy of an Interest, in such unspeakable Blessings. Yet rest assured, that *all the Promises of GOD are Yea and Amen in CHRIST JESUS:*^m are our unquestionable Portion, through his Merits and Atonement; and will certainly be fulfilled, through his Intercession and Faithfulness. —— Reading the *Precepts*, let Us rejoice in the Belief, that our Saviour, *obedient unto Death*, has fulfilled them *perfectly* for our Justification: that our Saviour, *exalted unto Heaven*, has engaged to *put his Spirit within Us* for our Sanctification; *causing Us to walk in his Statutes, and to keep his Judgments, and do them.*ⁿ——
 Contemplating the various *Examples*, may We use some of them, as *admonitory* Sea-Marks, to avoid the Rocks of Sin: use others, as a *conducting* Clue, to guide our Feet into the way of Peace: use all, as so many *Incitements*, to awaken our Circumspection, or quicken our Diligence, in *making our Calling and Election sure.*

Then, We shall have *another Proof*, that the Original of these holy Books, is not from Man, but from the LORD JEHOVAH. A Proof, which some People

L 2

may

¹ Gal. iii. 13.^m 2 Corinth. i. 20.ⁿ Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

may explode, as imaginary or enthusiastical : but is really of the *utmost Solidity*, and of the *last Importance*. Which, though by no Means independent on, much less exclusive of, other Evidences ; is, nevertheless, to each individual Person, incomparably more valuable, than any, or every other Attestation. We shall HAVE THE WITNESS IN OURSELVES. ° We shall experience, on our own Souls, the happy Energy of the *Scriptures*. They will be the *Instrument* of working, such a *lively Faith* in CHRIST ; such an *ardent Love* of GOD ; such a *cordial Benevolence* for our Fellow-Creatures ; † as cannot fail to *exalt* our Desires, *refine* our Affections, and dignify,

• 1 John v. 10.

† This is what his Lordship means, or ought to mean, when He speaks of “ the proper Force of Religion ? “ that Force which subdues the Mind, and awes the “ Conscience by Conviction,” pag. 182. And I am well assured, whatever He may surmise to the contrary, that *this Voucher* to the real Inspiration of the *Scriptures*, and divine Original of Christianity, “ *is not wanting.*” Nay, I durst venture to engage, that it *never will be wanting* to any Person, who seeks it with due Attention, and becoming Diligence : and neither forgets, nor neglects those necessary Preparatives, prescribed by the great Master of the Christian School—the one, comprehended in this Maxim ; *If any Man will do his Will, He shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of GOD.* John vii. 17. The other, delivered in the following Direction ; *If any of you lack Wisdom, let Him ask of GOD, who giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given Him.* Jam. i. 5.

dignify our Tempers.—Such as will administer *Comfort* under Affliction, and impart an *additional* Relish to Prosperity.—Such as will teach Us to order our Conversation right, amidst all the Snares, all the Labyrinths of *Time*; and gradually train Us up, for the pure Bliss, and consummate Enjoyments of *Eternity*.

May THIS Proof, Madam, be written on your *Heart*—written in *bright* and *indelible* Characters—written by the Finger of the *living* GOD!—*Then*, I am assured, every Attempt to stagger your Belief, or withdraw your Veneration from THE BIBLE; will be like an Attempt, to shatter the Rock in Pieces with a Bubble, or to pierce the Adamant with a Feather.—This is not only the *sincere Wish*; but, so long as Religion and Gratitude have any Place in my Breast, it will also be the *earnest Prayer* of

YOUR LADYSHIP'S

much obliged,

and most obedient

humble Servant,

April 22d.

1752.

JAMES HERVEY.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I Have taken no Notice of his Lordship's Animadversions, relating to the Genuineness of the *Gospel-History*. Because, this would be entering upon a new Field; which I leave *open* and *untouched*, for some more able Defender of that invaluable Depositum.—Not that I apprehend, there is any Thing very formidable in the Attack. But I think it would be serviceable, as I am persuaded it is easy, to shew the *Weakness* and *Unreasonableness* of those Arguments; which Men of superior Abilities are obliged to take up with, when they list themselves under the Banner of Scepticism or Infidelity.—It would also be a Piece of public Justice, to enquire into the *Sincerity*, *Probity*, and *Consistency* of those Writers; who, in some Places, lay a mighty *Stress* upon the Authority of the New Testament; (pag. 94.) in others, endeavour to *sap* the very Foundation of its Credibility; (pag. 177.)

F I N I S.

✂ Since the Postscript was written, an Incident has occurred, which affords me the Pleasure of informing the Public—That Lord Bolingbroke's Objections to the Authenticity of the Evangelical Historians, will shortly receive an Answer, from the Pen of my learned and judicious Friend, the Revd. Mr. WHALLEY of Northampton.

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