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THE
S T U D Y
O F
Sacred L I T E R A T U R E

Fully S T A T E D and C O N S I D E R E D.

I N A
D I S C O U R S E
T O A

S T U D E N T in D I V I N I T Y,

At a Foreign U N I V E R S I T Y.

By T. P. S. C. T.

Thomas Philips, Secular Canon of Tongres.

THE SECOND EDITION,

Enlarged and Improved by the A U T H O R.

His Studiis salubriter & prava corriguntur, & parva nutriuntur, & magna oblectantur Ingenia. Ille huic Doctrinæ inimicus est animus, qui vel errando eam nescit esse saluberrimam, vel odit ægotando medicinam. *S. Augustinus.*

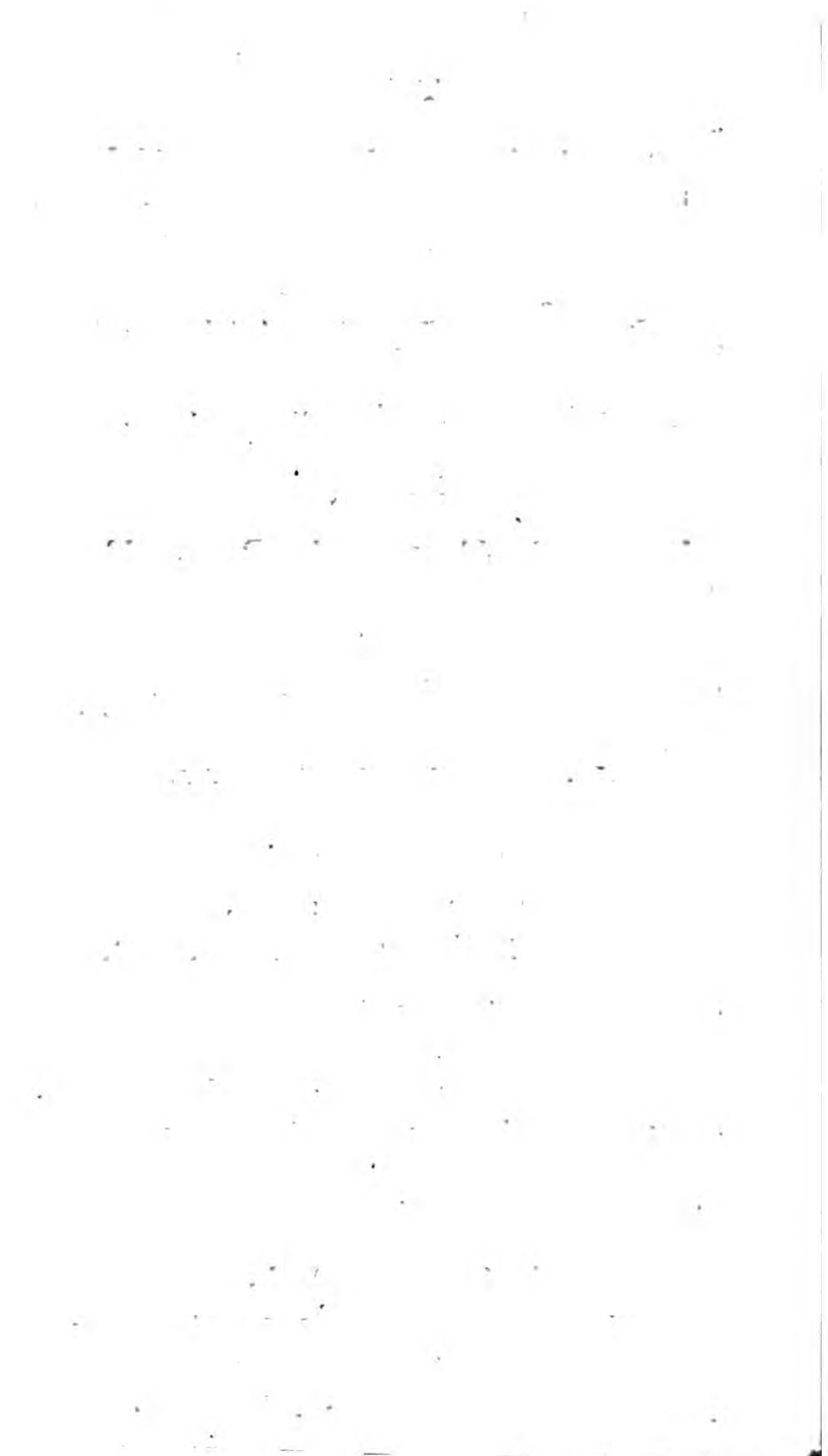
Aufus equidem sum ab itinere cæterorum, jamdiu trito atque usitato deflectere; aliâque quadam ingredi viâ, quæ mihi visa sit magis emergere ex fluctibus Quæstionum, fortiusque & splendidius ad Veritatem contendere. *Sadoletus, Epif. ad Eras.*

L O N D O N,

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P R E F A C E.

*T*H E following Sheets were originally intended for the private use of a Student in a Religious Order, which makes a particular Profession of Learning. They were, afterwards, thought not unworthy to be offered to the Public; and had the good fortune to meet with a favourable reception, not only from Persons of Knowledge and Discernment of the Church of Rome, but likewise from several of candour and impartiality, joined to the greatest abilities, of a different persuasion. And sure, if any thing could entitle the Author to the favour of the Judges and Patrons of Literature, it is the Subject he has made choice of. For whether we consider the Object, or the End the Writer should propose to himself, or the Character of the Persons, for whose benefit such a Work is principally undertaken, or the Authority on which it must be supported; To draw up an accurate and comprehensive Method of the Study of DIVINITY, must needs ap-

pear a Task no less difficult than important. The Object, as it takes in the whole Extent of Christian Knowledge, and the Rules, the Models and Observations, from which it is derived, is truly great and universal: The End proposed, of giving a true Notion of the most sublime and necessary of all Sciences, could not be higher or more beneficial; nor could any Connexion be more intimate and inseparable than of this Subject, and the Interests of Religion, whether they are considered as public or personal. No Set of Men could better deserve the attention of a Writer, than those for whom these Instructions are designed, the future Ministers of the Lord of Hosts, whose Lips are to be the Repository of Knowledge, and from whose Mouth the People are to learn the Law*. The Plan of Studies here laid down rests on such Principles, as few (it is presumed) will be disposed to contest, the Opinion of the best and greatest Men, the Evidence of Facts, the Reason of Things, and the

* Malachi, ch. 2.

unerring Authority of divine Truth. What Design could more worthily engage the Attention and Favour of an Intelligent and well minded Reader than that, whose salutary and extensive Tendency is so acknowledged? The Author wishes his Ability was as equal to the Undertaking, as his Intentions are upright, and his Zeal in the Attempt sincere. He is sensible that a more masterly Hand, animated by so noble an Object, would have drawn forth, to much greater Advantage, the distinguishing and genuine Lineaments of true THEOLOGY. But still he hopes this Draught, imperfect as it is, will sufficiently trace out to the Student the great Lines of this Science, and be a Direction to him to attain an Excellence beyond the Reach of this rude Sketch. Encouraged by this Prospect he presents the Public with a Second Edition, in which a great many Articles, which were but slightly touched on in the former, are treated in a Detail, which may be useful to Beginners, and entertaining, at least, to the more Advanced. And as the

Work now exceeds the Bounds of a Letter, and has taken a larger Compass, the Title, under which it first appeared, is altered. The Author's Expectations will be fully answered, if such as think right and mean well, are satisfied with his Performance ; Et placere quæ bene dicit non suo magis quàm eorum nomine delectabitur, qui rectè judicabunt. Quintilian.

C O N T E N T S.

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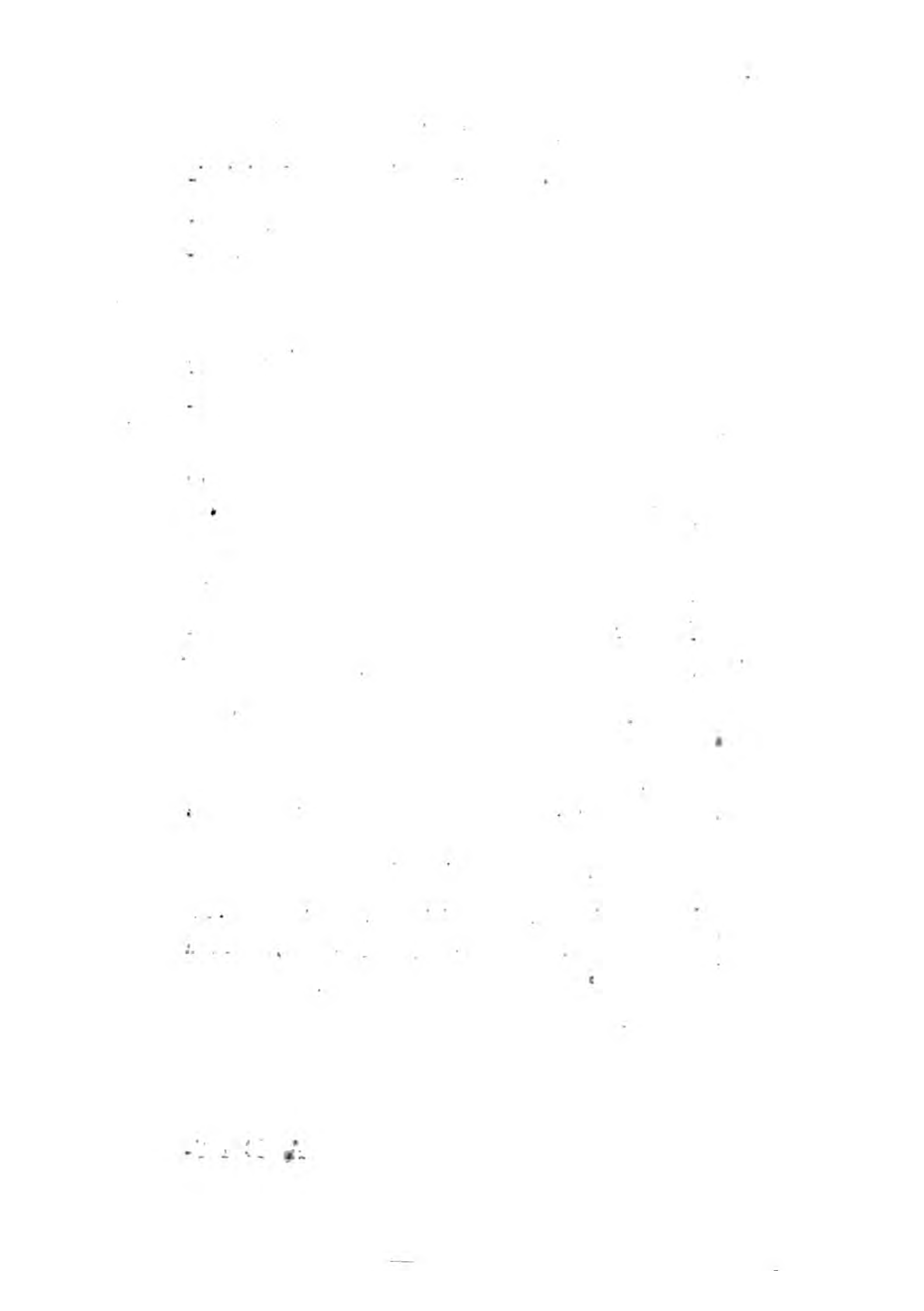
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ERRORS of the PRESS.

Page 150, line 10. for *Cymbol* read *Cymbal*. Page 159, line 1, for *Anger*, read *Agar*. Page 185, line 22, there is a ! instead of a ,



A

DISCOURSE

ON THE

STUDY, &c.

ALL the Learning peculiarly necessary and proper to a Christian, especially to one who designs himself for Holy Orders, is comprised under the four following Heads, the *Holy Scriptures*, the *Works of the Fathers*, *Church History*, and *Divinity*. Under the Head of the *Works of the Fathers*, the Writings of learned and pious Men of every Age of the Church are justly ranked; as the Lives of holy Personages are one of the fairest Portions of *Church History*. *Divinity*, especially that which is distinguished by the Name of *Positive*, is little more than a Science resulting from the three former Heads, reduced to art and method;

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thod ; and that which is termed *Speculative*, is nothing but Reasonings, Deductions and Conclusions, drawn from the same Heads, particularly from the *Scriptures*. This I take to be a just and adequate Notion of *Ecclesiastical Learning*. A Student in *Divinity* should make this his first Object ; and should keep it constantly in View during the whole course of his Studies. And thus, as *Aristotle* has observed, * *The perfect Knowledge of any thing consists in being acquainted with the causes in which it is contained.*

I SHALL begin with the *Scriptures*. The best way of studying them, is to be very conversant, not with Commentators, but the Text. Read it from the beginning to the end, without the help of any Expositor : Attention and Assiduity will supply the want of a Commentary. On the second reading, a great part of the Difficulties which occurred in the first, will disappear ; a third reading will clear up more ; and the oftner you read it, the better you will understand not only the Literal but the Spiritual Sense of it. Be-

* Met. I. ch. 3. & 1. Post. c. 2.

fides attending the public Lecture, you should give half an hour a day to this Study: its dignity and importance require it should be considered as the chief Branch of *Divinity*; And I am sorry it does not always seem to have that Time and Attention allotted in some Colleges and Universities, which it deserves, and which might well be spared from Occupations, by no means comparable to this.—I should desire that the Study of the *Scriptures* might be put on such a footing as to have them all read and explained within four years. By this Method all the Students in *Divinity* would become acquainted with them, and carry on this with their other Studies. But when this Lecture is appointed at such an hour that it cannot fail of being frequently omitted; or is given in such a manner, that a great deal of time is employed in explaining very little of the *Scripture*, every prudent Person must perceive how short of the Mark such Aims must be.—
 The *Historical Books* of the *Old Testament*, with those of *Wisdom*, might be read and explained the first year; the *Prophets*, the second; the *Gospels*, the *Acts*, and the *Apo-*
B 2
calypse,

calypse, the third; and the *Epistles*, the fourth. As this Division seems very practicable and easy, I have ventured to propose it. I think all the *Divines* should be present at this Lecture, and be instructed to look on it as the most delightful and useful part of Theological Studies; the *Scriptures* being, as St. *Hierom* most truly says of them, † *The Summary and Abridgment of all Theology*.—After this short, and, perhaps, impertinent Remark on the publick Method of teaching the *Scriptures*, I am going back to those Reflexions which may be serviceable to you in your private Studies.—When you have read, as I said, the Text of the *Scriptures* twice or thrice from the beginning to the end, it will be expedient to gather from the Writings of others those Lights, with which your own Understanding, assisted by the Holy Spirit, does not furnish you. For we ought, first, to exert our own Faculties, and, then, call in Succour, not to favour our Laziness, but relieve our Wants. The Produce of our own Stock will always be more lasting, as well as pleasant and advantageous, than any thing

† *Breviarium & Compendium totius Theologiæ.*

we can borrow from others. Now a few Commentators suffice, if they are well chosen and well digested. I should dissuade you from undertaking to read many, or those who are very voluminous; the Sense and Spirit of the Text is lost in the Explication. The Comment appears like a wide Ocean, in which the Author is sunk and scarce raises his Head †. Besides, such Works are always full of things foreign to the Meaning of the Text, and, however fraught with Erudition, or even Piety, cannot but displease a judicious Reader, who can approve of nothing but what is in its proper place.—§ Those Authors

† Quis enimvero non cohorrescit, commovetur saltem, ubi immensum videt illud Scholiorum quasi Pelagus, in quo demersus Author atque obrutus, vix effert summum caput. *Olivet. Præf. in Cicer.*

Neque opprimere aggredimur commentariorum mole vividos Scripturarum sensus . . . neque cibos ad satietatem oggerimus; sed acuere nitimur meditandi quærendique cupiditatem ipsâ Scripturæ copiâ atque veritate satiandam . . . interim Lectorem optamus tam diligentem fieri, ut notis quàm minimùm indigeat. *Bossuet, Præf. in Prov. Sal.*

§ Cavenda in Sacræ Scripturæ explanatione nimia subtilitas & argutia. *Cornelius à Lapide.*

Authors likewise who refine too much, are to be read with no less caution; particularly in our first Studies of sacred Literature; for as the Former incumber the Scriptures with an exuberance of their own Learning, so These spin out the plainness and sincerity of the Text into small threads and subtleties, which are, indeed, of wonderful fineness for the work, but of little substance and profit. Such Curiosities instead of instructing the Learner, often puzzle and make him giddy: they turn Reality into a Shadow, and Truth into a Dream; and, as *Seneca* observes, when things are most refined, they are nearest nothing.

AMONGST all the Commentators, who have kept clear of these and all other Extremes,

Prudentem semper admoneo Lectorem ut non superstitiosis acquiescat interpretationibus, & quæ commaticè pro fingentium dicuntur arbitrio; sed consideret priora, media, & sequentia, & neçtat sibi universa quæ dicta sunt. *S. Hieronymus.*

Verborum minutiis frangunt rerum pondera.

—Non abstrusa & recondita, hoc est, plerumque vana, sed apta atque accommodata ad simplicem litteralemque intelligentiam. *Bessuet, Præf. in Psal.*

and

and are most suited to a Beginner in the Study of the Scriptures, I should give the preference to *Menochius*. The distinguishing Character of this Author is Judgment: He had the Advantage of writing after the most able Authors of the *Society of Jesus*, *Maldonatus*, *Sa*, *Mariana*, *Serrarius*, *à Lapide*, *Ribera*, *Bonfrerius* and *Tirinus*; and he has collected what is most useful from those truly great Men. His style is clear, concise and elegant; he has hardly a superfluous word, and very few mistakes. The Preface to his Commentaries is very short in comparison of the long and exquisite Dissertations of *Serrarius* and *Bonfrerius*; but it is suited to the Plan he had laid down, and of a piece with the rest of his Work. However, as such general Discourses enlarge the Mind, and help greatly to understand the Scriptures in a liberal and extensive manner, I would, by all means, have you conversant with the Prefaces of the two last mentioned Authors, and those of *Tirinus*, as the most perfect that have yet appeared: to which you may join the Discourses of the same kind of *à Lapide*, and his *Canons*, which are highly esteemed.

THERE has lately appeared in *France* a Work well deserving your Attention. It is a Latin Translation of the Old Testament from the original Tongues, with copious Prefaces and critical Notes. The *Folio* Edition, in four large Tomes, contains the Text, the Translation, the Prefaces and Notes. And there is another Edition in eight Tomes in 4to, of the Version alone, with the Prefaces in two separate Tomes. The Author is an *Oratorian*, his name *Houbigant*. He does not pretend to a Translation strictly and rigidly literal, but such as the difference of Idioms will admit. One would almost imagine it to have been done under the immediate inspection of the sacred Penmen, by *Hebrews*, indeed, yet perfect Masters of the Latin Tongue. The Language is pure, the Phrase concise and nervous, and does not only give the Sense and Spirit of the Scriptures, but likewise the Genius and Manners of those remote Ages, in which they were writ. This Work, which is not more diffuse than the *Vulgate*, has the exactness of a Translation, with most of the Advantages of a Paraphrase, and even of a Commentary; and answers, in
great

great measure, most of the useful purposes of both. If you read the *Psalms*, the book of *Job*, and the *Prophets*, which are the most difficult parts of the holy Writings, you will perceive I have not said more than the Subject will bear ; and the Work, if you are not already acquainted with it, will gain one Admirer more. However, I think myself obliged to caution you against this Author's Assertion concerning the Extent of the Prophecies of the Old Testament ; which appears to me very faulty : it is the sixth of those Prejudices, which he sets down as Obstacles to the right understanding the Prophets.

WHAT I have already taken the liberty to recommend, will alone, if rightly attended to, make you no contemptible Proficient in the most divine of all Sciences, and which, I hope, will be no less agreeable to your inclination, than it is suited to the Profession you intend to embrace. But as I have the pleasure of knowing you to be a young man of a very promising Genius, and that your desire of improvement is equal to your capacity, I will point out to you a few more Works in this
Branch

Branch of Study, which have not only the general approbation of the Learned, but are peculiarly adapted to please and cultivate an elegant and religious mind. I shall, however, be very moderate in this choice, and not forget I recommend it to a Person, who is to learn, at the same time, the other Parts of *Divinity* as well as this. And, if my approbation should be of any weight with you, I will propose no Author to your reading, from whom I have not received uncommon satisfaction myself.—*Bossuet's* Latin Dissertation on the *Psalms*, which is prefixed to his Notes on them, is recommended by that order, distinction, and beauty, which constitute the Perfection of a Work, and shew the Ability of the Writer. That great Man proposed writing Notes on the Whole Bible; but death prevented him from going beyond the *Psalms*, and the Books of *Wisdom*. I except his Explication of the *Revelations*, which was wrote on a different Plan from that he designed to follow in his other Works on Scripture, and is indeed worthy the Bishop of *Meaux*. I would have you also read his Prefaces to all the Books of *Wisdom*, and his Exposition of
Solomon's

Solomon's Song, which, tho' a very delicate undertaking, he has executed in so masterly a manner, with such clearness and brevity, that those who have not read it, can have no notion of its merit. I must add, that his Language is not unworthy the purest times of the Latin Tongue.—*Riberia's* five short Books * *on the Temple, and what belonged to it*, surpass every thing which has been wrote on that Subject, and are of singular use towards the understanding several parts of the Old and New Testament. The Moral and Allegorical Exposition of the Ceremonies and Types of the Jewish Law, which is the chief subject and purpose of this Work, is so natural, and so exquisitely adapted to give the mind the highest idea of Christian perfection, that it is hard not to be sensible of the energy with which this instruction is conveyed.—Cardinal *Sadoletus* has wrote on *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* with all the Advantages of piety, learning and politeness. You will find in the Work of this illustrious Author not only a most judicious and compleat Commentary on a part of the inspired Writings, which both

* De Templo & eis quæ ad Templum pertinent.

on account of the Subject, and the Apostle's manner of treating it, is, as * *St. Peter* himself acknowledges, *difficult to be understood*; but likewise a finished piece of Christian Morality, and of genuine Roman Eloquence.—As the understanding the *Psalms* is of great importance to all in holy Orders, who repeat them so often, you may, when you have leisure, read the Exposition of them by Cardinal *Belarmine*. His Character given by Cardinal *du Perron*, who was not only acquainted with his Works, but knew him personally, appears in none of his writings to greater advantage than in this: † *That he had very fine and clear Parts, and excelled in throwing a wonderful Light on the subjects he treated.* ‡ Another very compleat Judge in such Matters has given his opinion, that this Exposition alone, with the Paraphrase of *Cornelius Jansenius*, is sufficient to give the Reader that accurate knowledge of the *Psalms*, without which, *St. Austin* says, a person can scarcely deserve the name of a

* Epist. 2d. ch. 3.

† Perroniana B.

‡ *Card. Bona*, de divinâ Psalmodia, c. 16. § 11.

Priest. The piety of this Work is equal to the erudition ; and *Menochius* has made great use of it where he treats the same Subject. •

THE Method Mr. *Locke* has followed in explaining *St. Paul's Epistles* is very judicious and satisfactory. * He expounds the Apostle by his own words, and those of the other inspired Writers only ; and the same method might be applied, with great success, to the rest of the Scriptures. This Work, however, should be read with such caution that the Errors which occur in it, even those which seem but slightly touched on and dropt, as it were, by accident, may neither escape the Reader's observation or endanger his principles. He has joined a Paraphrase to his Notes, which is much esteemed.

HAVING spoken of the Text of the sacred Oracles, and of those who have expounded it, as much as my design and your information seem to require ; I must add a few Works, and those not voluminous, which may be

* *Sacra Scriptura inter se collata & composita, optima sui ipsius est interpres. Cor. à Lapide.*

considered as Appendixes to the Commentators, and such as greatly contribute to a full and accurate knowledge of holy Writ.—
*Fleury's Treatises * of the Manners of the Israelites and the Christians* are valuable for their great accuracy, piety, and universal use in all that regards the historical part of the *Old and New Testament*: they present the Reader with a just and elegant Abridgment of that *Theocracy*, which the Scriptures describe in its full extent.— † *Menochius's Books on the Jewish Common-Wealth* are of the same stamp, and not inferior to his Commentaries—
 ‡ *Serarius's little Work of the three Sects amongst the Jews*, is very learned, the subject extremely curious and useful, and the Author's manner of treating it gained him great reputation—There are some particular Passages of the Scriptures, and even single Texts, which require an accurate discussion; such, for instance, amongst many others, is that celebrated Prediction concerning the *Messiah*,

* *Les Mœurs des Israelites & des Chrétiens.*

† *De Republicâ Hebræorum.*

‡ *De tribus apud Judæos Sectis.*

Gen. xlix. v. 10. which is expounded by the Author of the *Discourses on the Use and Intent of Prophecy*, in one of the most satisfactory and masterly Dissertations I have ever read.—A Dissertation of Cardinal *Bellarmino* on the authority of the *Vulgate*, found in the *Jesuits Library at Mecklin*, and first published by a Professor of their Order at *Witzburgh*, is so accurate and judicious a performance, so perfectly clear of all prejudice and those opinions, which border on either Extreme; so new (at least, it was so to me) and yet so agreeable to Truth, that the Curious and Intelligent in Scripture Learning may congratulate themselves on the discovery of a Piece, which had lain so long unheard of, and was only brought to light by an accident, so lately as the year 1749. * A late French Publisher of the Bible has translated and prefixed it to his Edition; in which there are several Dissertations; as likewise in that of *Calmet*, which furnish both information and improvement.

* *A Paris, Rue St. Jacques, à L'Etoile, 1750.*

By the help of these few and short Treatises, the *Scriptures* will present themselves to you in a very different light from what they appear to the generality of Readers; they will reach your Heart as well as inform and enlarge your Mind: you will enter into the spirit of them, and be admitted not only into the outward Courts of the *Sanctuary*, but into the *Holy of Holies* *.

THIS is a short sketch of what might be said on this copious subject. You are not to imagine that by these, or any other human helps, we shall ever attain to a full and perfect knowledge of the *Scriptures* †. The

* Atque idcirco magna Deo gratia habenda est, quod quas Litteras voluerit mentibus nostris clarissimum lumen præferre ad vitam rectè instituendam, & ad æternam salutem capessendam, earum quoque jussit singularem esse & incomparabilem ubertatem, quæ ex interpretationum concordie varietate in primis perspicitur. *P. Morin, Ep. ad Sixtum 5. P. M.*

† Ita voluit Deus sua arcana Consilia ad cognitionem hominum dispensari, ut aliquid semper novum scrutantibus appareret; nullaque unquam posset Ætas, nulla discerpentium nec haurientium multitudo divitias consumere infinitæ sapientiæ suæ. *Sadoletus Com. in Epif. ad Rom. l. 1.*

more you read, the more you meditate on them, the more you will discover in them an inexhaustible source of light, and of all manner of instruction : that their language is not the language of men, nor the subject a production of their ingenuity : that they have a Character peculiar to themselves, and different from the compositions even of the greatest and best men : that they are exempt from, and superior to all common passions and interests, and to the ordinary views of human prudence and forecast ; in fine, that no man ever raised himself so much above humanity as to produce a work, in which all is so superior to man.

‘ * THE Truths of Religion, says *Lactantius*, are delivered in a brief and plain manner ; such as best became the Majesty of God : who, when he declares his will to men, can have no need of assigning reasons

* *Sacra tradita sunt breviter ac nudè ; non enim decebat aliter, ut cum Deus ad hominem loqueretur, argumentis affereret voces suas, tanquam fides ei non haberetur : sed, ut oportuit, est locutus, quasi rerum omnium maximus Judex, cujus non est argumentari sed pronuntiare. Lactantius.*

‘ for it, as if he was not to be believed or
 ‘ obeyed on other terms. He spoke there-
 ‘ fore as the supreme Arbiter of All, whose
 ‘ Prerogative it is not to argue, but assert.’

It is to this peculiar and priviledged character, with which the Spirit of God had been pleased to stamp the Scriptures, that *Sulpitius Severus* has, with no less religion than elegance, ascribed the silence, which is remarkable in the Heathen Authors, concerning the facts related in them. The observation is so finely touched in the original, that I am almost afraid to venture to translate it.

‘ * Let it not seem strange to any one, says
 ‘ he, that the facts contained in Holy Writ,
 ‘ are not mentioned by profane writers.
 ‘ A superior disposition of Providence over-

* Cæterùm, illud minimè mirum esse oportebit, quòd Scriptores sæcularium litterarum nihil ex his, quæ sacris voluminibus scripta sunt, attigerunt: Dei spiritu prævalente, ut intaminata ab ore corrupto, & falsis vera miscente, intra sua tantùm Mysteria contineretur Historia; quæ separata à mundi negotiis, & sacris tantùm vocibus proferenda, permisceri cum aliis, velut æquali forte non debuit. Etenim erat indignissimum, ut alia agentibus, aut alia quærentibus hæc quoque cum reliquis miscerentur. *Hif. Sac. l. 2.*

' ruled here, that this History might receive
 ' no adulteration from corrupt men, and
 ' such as advance indifferently both truth and
 ' falshood ; but be confined within its own
 ' Myſteries : for being ſeparated from world-
 ' ly concerns, and not to be treated but with
 ' awe and reverence, it ought to have no-
 ' thing common with other writings. And,
 ' indeed, it would have been the higheſt in-
 ' dignity that theſe ſacred matters ſhould on-
 ' ly have ſerved as an occaſional ſubject to
 ' writers, who were bent on other views and
 ' other purſuits.'——No foreign aſſiſtance
 could be wanting to give a Sanction to a
 Work recommended by ſuch Evidence.—The
 moſt accurate of the Pagan Authors are juſt-
 ly charged with errors, darkneſs and uncer-
 tainties with reſpect both to Facts and Doc-
 trine : but it became the wiſe and great Be-
 ing, who inſpired the ſacred Penmen, to ex-
 empt their Works from all ſuch imputations ;
 and, accordingly, he has favoured them with
 every argument of truth and perſuaſion, a-
 dorned them with the graces of language and
 ſentiment, lighted up and enlivened them
 with the brighteſt examples of virtue and

sanctity, annexed to their study and meditation such helps and communications of his holy Spirit as cannot be described, and made the belief and practice of them the only foundation of true peace and happiness. In this manner, Revelation being the Work of a God, whose darling Attributes are Truth and Holiness, has had every mark and every distinction of this two-fold Character. And Mankind beholding this *Urim & Thummim*, this *Wisdom* and *Sanctity*, which equally dispense the Oracles of the *Christian* and *Mosaic* Doctrine, must acknowledge the gracious purpose of the Almighty Lawgiver, who requires the submission of our understanding, and the obedience of our wills, to no other end than to make us partakers of those perfections, which have their source and fulness in him alone.

NOT that we are to expect to meet with the forms of argumentation in every part of the Scriptures. Such niceties would have ill become the Majesty of him who delivered them : but where these are wanting, the seeming deficiency is abundantly compensated by a convic-

conviction superior to whatever could have been derived from the rules and accuracy of argument : and the impression is felt no less by the will than the understanding. Thus while art is overlooked, an end is attained beyond the reach of it.

EVERY one readily allows no subject can be equal to the Life of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ* ; that is, to the Incarnation and Birth ; the Miracles and Doctrine ; the Sufferings and Death ; the Resurrection and Ascension of a God become Man to reform and save a sinful and lost World : and whoever imagines this History can be better wrote than it is by the *Evangelists*, does not yet understand it *. But though it becomes a Christian to be particularly conversant in this and the other Writings of the *New Testament*, yet there is not any part of the *Old* which does not furnish ample matter of instruction.— The Book of *Genesis*, in the account it gives of the Creation, of the Fall and Punishment of our first Parents, of the Righteousness of *Noah*, of the Deluge, of the wonderful Obe-

* *Mabillon.*

dience of *Abraham*, and the Promise made by God to reward it, of the Destruction of *Sodom*, and the Providence of God over the Patriarch *Joseph*, presents to our minds the most suitable subjects to fill them with every Christian sentiment. When we go on to *Exodus*, we see the Wonders wrought by the Almighty in favour of his People, the Impenitence of *Pharaoh*, and the various chastisements by which the Murmurs and Idolatry of the *Israelites* in the Desert were punished. *Leviticus* and *Numbers* set forth the accuracy which God exacts in his Worship: *Deuteronomy*, the sanctity of his Laws; *Joshua*, the Accomplishment of his Promises. In the Book of *Judges*, we see the strength and weakness of *Sampson*; in that of *Ruth*, the plain-dealing and equity of *Booz*; in those of *Kings*, the holiness of *Samuel*, of *Elijah*, of *Elisha*, and the other Prophets; the reprobation of *Saul*; the Fall and Repentance of *David*, his mildness and patience: the Wisdom and Sin of *Solomon*; the Piety of *Hezekiah* and *Josiah*. In *Esdra*s, the zeal for the Law of God; in *Tobit*, the conduct of a holy Family; in *Judith*, the power of Grace; in *Esther*, Prudence;

in

in *Job*, a pattern of admirable Patience. The *Macchabees* afford such instances of personal and national Bravery ; such an exalted and generous Love of our Country, and all this grounded on the true Principles of Valour and Patriotism, as the most boasted Achievements in profane Story are perfect Strangers to. The *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*, and the other two books which go under the title of the *Wisdom of Solomon* and of *the Son of Sirach*, teach a more useful and sublime Philosophy than all the Writings which *Greece* and *Rome* have published. The noble Images and Reflexions, the profound Reasonings on human actions, and excellent Precepts for the government of life, sufficiently witness their inspired origin. This Treasure, indeed, is thrown together in a confused magnificence, above all order, that every one may collect and digest such Observations as chiefly tend to his own particular instruction. And though it behoves us to reverence the Doctrine of the holy Ghost, without pretending to assign the reasons for his dispensing it in this or that manner, yet, I think, we perceive the fitness of the Method

here taken, in setting forth the nature, substance, and end of our obligations; and, without entering on minute Discussions, in taking in the whole Compass of Duty: for by this means the Paths of Life are not only pointed out to each individual, and his personal character formed; but the minds of Mankind, in general, are furnished and enriched with the beauty, copiousness, and variety of all Virtues. The *Prophets* announce not only the Promises, but also the characteristic Marks of the *Messiah*, with the threats against Sinners, and those calamities which were to befall the *Jews* and other Nations. The *Psalms* unite in themselves the chief subjects, and all the different excellencies of the *Old Testament*. In a word, every thing in the sacred Writings will appear, as it truly is, holy, grand, and profitable, provided it be read with suitable dispositions.

THE only reason of our being so little touched by them, must be our inadvertence and indifference to whatever is tried by a higher Test than that of our Senses: and being so taken up with other pursuits, as to
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be but slightly affected with such a chaste and holy Discipline, as can never possess a heart which is not freed from the tumult of passions and worldly desires*. And Saint *Athanasius* has observed, that *we can never understand the Scriptures, but in proportion as we live by the Rules they prescribe.*

I SHALL finish this Subject, which is so apposite to the main design of this Discourse, and of such real and universal use, with observing that the *Scriptures* can never be understood unless we make them the Subject of deliberate enquiry, and of frequent and serious reflexion; and, not understood, they cannot become, what they ought to be, the Object of our admiration, love and reverence; the Rule of every detail of our Actions, and the governing Principle of our whole life. — Many, from whose education and profession another behaviour might be expected, neglect to be conversant in them, with equal folly and ingratitude: Many read them in a hasty and superficial manner: Many, again, read

* Adde, quòd ne Studio quidem operis pulcherrimi vacare mens, nisi omnibus vitiis libera, potest. *Quintilianus*, l. 10. c. 1.

them only by scraps and parcels, and consequently, can only view them in a narrow, and pedantic light.—Instead of this, we should converse with them often, we should pierce into their Soul and Spirit; we should contemplate them on all sides, in all their parts, and in the whole; and accustom ourselves to judge and decide on matters by their light, as we do of outward objects by the Sun beams.—But let no view unbecoming the sanctity of the Subject engage you in a Science, which should be undertaken with the spirit of Prayer rather than of Study. It is a kind of profanation to search these sacred Treasures more to embellish your mind with Knowledge, than to cultivate and adorn it with Virtue: and (which is a frequent error in the Learned) with a view to teach rather than to practise. This disposition is very different from that which is taken notice of in *Esdra's*, of *searching the Law of God; in order, first to fulfil, and then teach it.* After this great Example, you are not only to endeavour to render the knowledge of this Law as familiar and exact as possible, but to fulfil it also, before you begin to instruct others.

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The Lessons there laid down, and so much insisted on, concerning purity of Life, contempt of Riches, the spirit of Peace, and Mildness, and the fulness of Charity, should be considered as no less personal, than if God had declared his Will on these Heads to each one in particular.—By this method of reading and meditating on the *Scriptures*, you will improve in every Christian accomplishment, and fit your self for a more accurate, more enlarged, and more perfect service of that God, by whose Inspiration they were wrote, and who intended they should inform our lives, not gratify a roving and unsettled mind.—Indeed, the most ordinary obstacles to our progress in this Study are Curiosity and Eagerness; the latter is the consequence of the former, and a Student is always eager in proportion as he is curious. The impatience of knowing still more hurries us on, and the love of Truth is less the spring of our Vivacity, than that of Novelty. A slow and silent study of a single sentence of the *Scriptures*, like a heavenly Dew, would sink deep into our minds and refresh them; whereas haste and precipitation, like an impetuous

petuous Rain, which runs off almost as fast as it falls, leaves us as unimproved after reading whole Books, as we were before. Let me exemplify the method I would recommend, in the following Instances.

WHAT can be more plain and obvious than the meaning of the first verse of the seventh *Psalms*; or where does simplicity both of sense and expression seem to suggest less matter for reflexion? *O God, look down unto my aid; Lord, make haste to assist me.* And yet a holy *Abbot*, mentioned by *Cassian*, has discovered in it the fund of the following reflexions, which are equally natural, instructive, and pious. * ‘ This short Sentence, ‘ says the good Man, contains a prayer to ‘ God in time of danger; as likewise an

* Habet ille Versiculus adversus discrimina, invocationem Dei; habet humilitatem piæ confessionis; habet sollicitudinis ac timoris perpetui vigilantiam; habet considerationem fragilitatis suæ, exauditionis fiduciam, confidentiam præsentis præsidii: habet amoris ardorem, insidiantium formidinem, quibus perspicens se noctu diuque vallatum, confitetur se non posse sine sui Defensoris auxilio liberari. *Colla. 10. cap. 10.*

‘ humble sense of our own insufficiency : it
 ‘ awakens a solicitude and constant fear of of-
 ‘ fending : it causes us to reflect on our
 ‘ weakness, and to pray with a confidence of
 ‘ being heard, and of the divine Succour
 ‘ being always ready at hand : it expresses
 ‘ the fervour of Charity, and a just appre-
 ‘ hension of the snares of our invisible ene-
 ‘ mies, from whose repeated assaults we can-
 ‘ not be secured, but by the assistance of the
 ‘ Almighty.’—The Reader’s piety, and *
that flame, which, David says, is enkindled by
meditation, will make him discern, more than
 any Commentary, the same depth of thought
 and fruitfulness of consideration in all the
Psalms : almost in every verse of them.

I SHALL take a second instance from an his-
 torical passage of St. *Stephen’s* Martyrdom †.
Being full of the holy Ghost, he saw the glory of
God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of
God. In which words we may remark, that
 the posture in which our blessed Saviour is
 represented, is proper to a person in his full
 vigour and perfection, and suited to the oc-

* *Psal.* 38. e. v. † *Acts,* ch. vii.

caſion of that glorious Apparition; for he appeared, either as a Champion, to combat for St. *Stephen*; or as an Advocate, to plead his cauſe before his eternal Father; or as a high Prieſt, offering up this firſt Victim to him; or as the Maſter of the Race, ſhowing to the Martyr the Goal of everlaſting Glory, and encouraging him to gain it by laying down his own life.

THE third and laſt inſtance ſhall be taken from the *Proverbs*; *He that giveth to the Poor, lendeth to the Lord*: ‘ there is more Rhetorick, ‘ ſays Sir *Thomas Brown*, in that one Sentence than in a Library of Sermons; and, ‘ indeed, if thoſe Sentences were underſtood ‘ by the Reader, with the ſame Emphaſis as ‘ they are delivered by the Author, we needed ‘ not thoſe Volumes of Inſtructions, but ‘ might be wiſe by an Epitome.’

To this deliberate and reſpectful method of Study, you are to join an humble and teachable mind, prayer, temperance, and that tranquillity which reſults from Paſſions ſubdued, or, at leaſt, brought to move within
their

their due bounds, and not disturb the even Temper of the Soul. * *For the holy Spirit of Instruction will shun whatever is contrary to genuine goodness, and withdraw himself from thoughts which are without understanding, and be checked by every blemish of the inward Man.*

THESE appear the most requisite dispositions for reading the *Scriptures* with that Spirit, with which they were wrote; and, indeed, for undertaking and pursuing the Study of *Divinity*, in general.—I have some doubt, if it be not presumption to have given my opinion on a Subject, to which I am, on so many accounts, unequal. But your own piety, and the excellent discipline of the place where you are, as it would have made even the most compleat Instructions on this Head less necessary, so it will supply whatever is deficient in these.

I SHALL now go on to the other Branches of *Ecclesiastical Learning*, which are the *Fathers*, *Church History*, and *Divinity*. Next to the *Scriptures* therefore, the Writings of the *Fa-*

Wisdom, ch. i.

thers

thers claim our attention and reverence : their usefulness, importance, and authority have acquired them this rank ; and it has been given them by the Good and Judicious of all ages. However you must not imagine I expect you should read all their Works, or even any considerable part of them, during a Course of four years study of *Divinity*. Such an undertaking would be idle and chimerical ; and I am persuaded but few persons, who had nothing else to do, and many years allotted for this Task alone, would be equal to it. Besides, such various reading would, generally speaking, oppress the mind instead of enlarging it, and quite extinguish that Spirit it was intended to light up and improve. The Faculties of the Intellect have a close Analogy with those of the Body, which can digest no greater quantity, even of the most wholesome food, than is suited to them. We are therefore to apply to the former what *Cicero* says of the nourishment of the latter, *let so much be taken as may recruit our strength, not overpower it*. With this Caution, I would, by all means, have you acquainted, during your studies of *Divinity*,
with

with the Works of the *Fathers*, so far, at least, as to know the Times in which they wrote, the chief Subjects they have treated, their different Manner of treating them, their Stile, their Method of Reasoning, their various Excellencies of eloquence, erudition, and piety. Now all this may be compassed with great ease and advantage by a judicious choice of the Works of these venerable Writers, and setting aside about two hours on all Sundays and Festivals for a reading so becoming those times. You should read, in their turn, both the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers, and those Works, preferably to others, which have a nearer connexion with your Studies.

SAINT *Leo's* Letter to *Flavian*; the thirty third, and three following Orations of Saint *Gregory Nazianzen*; the Letter of St. *Athanasius* to *Epiſtetus*; the Treatise concerning the *H. Ghost*, by *Didymus* of *Alexandria*, which we only have in St. *Hierome's* translation; are some of the most excellent Works, which have been wrote on the *Trinity* and *In-*
carnation. I only exemplify what I have just

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before

before advanced, in one Instance, which you may apply to all your Studies.

WHEN you are become a little conversant with these Writers, you will perceive they were not only great Saints, but Genius's of the first Class ; and have not only expressed in their Works the Spirit; but likewise the different Excellencies of Stile so remarkable in the inspired Writings. Indeed, *Cicero's* definition of Eloquence, * *that it is Wisdom with the Advantages of Elocution*, agrees so perfectly with the *Scriptures*, and those Writings which bear a resemblance with them, that it is, properly speaking, applicable to none besides.—The Choice and Disposition of Facts, in the *Historical* Parts; the Conciseness and Spirit, and, at the same time the Clearness with which these Facts are set forth: In the *Poetical*, the Loftiness of the Elocution, the Variety of the Figures, the Elevation of Thought: In the *Moral*, the Weight and Energy of the Precepts: In the *Prophets*, the Vehemence of their Threats and Re-

* *Copiosè loquens Sapientia.*

proaches,

proaches, the Persuasion of their Promises, their moving Expostulations, the Richness of their Expression, their fine and striking Descriptions, and numberless other Beauties recommend the *Scriptures*, considered merely as a Composition, above all other Writings. You will have the pleasure of making the same discovery, in proportion, in the Works of the *Fathers*.

St. *Basil* and St. *Athanasius* reason as closely, and with as much strength as *Aristotle*: the Eloquence of St. *Gregory* the *Divine*, and St. *Chrysostome* is little inferior to that of *Tully* and *Demosthenes*. The Invectives of the Former against the *Apostate* Emperor *Julian*, carry with them a Thunder as pointed as that of the *Philippics*; at the same time that the Cause and Argument have a Superiority, of which the whole Pagan System, and, indeed, all Temporal Concerns, how important soever, must fall infinitely short.—Though the *Latin Fathers* lay under Disadvantages with respect to Learning, from which the *Greek* were exempt, yet they abound with the most useful, and frequently with the or-

namental part of Knowledge ; and all the Excellencies of *Plato* are to be found in *St. Austin*. *Erasmus*, who will not be suspected of partiality to this Writer, says of his Books, *Of the Manners of the Catholic Church and the Manicheans* ; * ‘ the Subject is treated with
 ‘ wonderful elegance, which it were to be
 ‘ wished the holy *Doctor* had imployed in his
 ‘ other Works ; that this, however, was a
 ‘ proof that whatever offends the Learned
 ‘ in his manner of writing, was not the effect
 ‘ of inability, but charity, which caused
 ‘ him to let down his Stile to the meanest
 ‘ Capacities.’ I desire you to read that *Critic’s* Preface to his Edition of the Saint’s Letters, and, if you please, the Dedication of all his Works, to *Fonseca*, Archbishop of *Toledo*. I am not ignorant that the Founder of the *Jesuits*, a Person no less eminent for his prudence than the sanctity of his life, has

* Id facit admirabili sermonis elegantia, qua utinam illi uti licuisset in caeteris lucubrationibus. Hoc sane opere declaravit, si quid offendit Eruditos in ipsius dictione, non fuisse incitiae sed charitatis, qua stilum demisit ad Imperitorum intelligentiam. *Eraf. in praef. in Lib. de moribus. Eccle. Cath. & Man.*

forbid those of his *Order* to read the Works of *Erasmus*; and, though it be something foreign to my present purpose, I cannot but observe, that whoever has read any considerable part of them, or the Answer to an Apology which *Marsollier* wrote in their defence, will be convinced of their pernicious tendency, and that St. *Ignatius's* caution is very equitable.—But, to return to the Subject of the *Fathers*: St. *Cyprian* has a distinguished merit for energy both of sentiment and expression; and all the graces, all the persuasion, all the endearments of Sanctity (if I may be allowed to speak in this manner) center in St. *Bernard*.—Nobility, wealth, honours, and every worldly accomplishment conspired to form the Character of *S. Paulinus*, till the love of God made him exchange all these advantages for the humility of the Gospel. His Epistles and Poems, which make up the small Volume we have of his Works, show how superior the Spirit of Christianity is to every thing which a vain and infatuated World courts and admires; and that the imitation of *Jesus Christ* raises the greatest Men more above themselves, than

any inequality of Condition can raise one Man above another.—St. *Leo's* Eloquence is of a peculiar kind, but has an elevation and majesty equal to the supreme Dignity of the Writer.—No Philosopher understood human nature better, or has made a nicer Anatomy of the heart, and all its foldings, than St. *Gregory the Great*; especially in his *Moral Books on Job*.——*Canisius's* Edition of St. *Hierome's* select Epistles is equally adapted to entertain and improve; and the whole Spirit of St. *Paul* breaths through those of St. *Ignatius*.

You may observe that several of the *Fathers*, in the Explication of *Scripture*, seldom insist much on the *Literal* Sense, unless when a Point of Doctrine is to be established, or an Error refuted. On other occasions, for the most part, they give themselves up to the *Moral* Sense, and think they have then attained the true *Meaning*, or, to say better, the true *Intention* of the *Scriptures*, when they have turned them all to the information of Manners.

It may not, perhaps, be necessary to caution you against a false Delicacy, which would take offence at some Blemishes which occur in the Writings of these venerable Authors. A harsh Metaphor in *Tertullian*; a swoln Period in *St. Cyprian*; an obscure Passage in *St. Ambrose*; a Quibble or Gingle of words, a strained Allegory in *St. Austin*, should not make you think less reverently of the Works, much less of the Persons of these Authors. They are, indeed, blemishes in the Composition, but not in the Subject; and not so much to be charged on the Writers, as on the Country and Times in which they wrote: or, if they are faults in the latter, * ‘ they are such, as the Poet says, in-
 ‘ attention lets drop, or human weakness can
 ‘ scarcely avoid; and are compensated in such
 ‘ a manner that every candid Reader will be
 ‘ willing to overlook a few faults, where so
 ‘ many excellencies call for his attention.”
 —† We should be very reserved, says
 another

* *Hor. Ar. Poet.*

† *Modestè tamen & circumspecto judicio de tantis viris pronuntiandum est, ne, quod plerisque accidit, damnent quæ*

another of the best Judges that learning and penetration ever formed, when we give our opinion of Great Men, lest, as it frequently happens, instead of discovering their mistakes, we betray our own ignorance. And, if both Extremes could not be avoided, it were more eligible to approve every thing they have wrote, than to dislike many.

SOME of the late Writers of our own Country (with sorrow and shame I own it) have been notoriously wanting to candor and equity on this Head, and have accordingly, treated it with the highest indecency. But * *a Scoffer, as Solomon says, seeks for Wisdom, and does not find it*: and as these Persons seem only to have read with a lust to misapply, it is no wonder they were given up to their own perverseness, and have gained the applause of Readers, as profane as themselves, at the expence of Religion, Justice, and even good

non intelligunt. Ac si necesse est in alteram errare partem, omnia eorum legentibus placere, quàm multa displicere maluerim. *Quintil.* l. 10. c. 1.

* *Prov.* ch. xiv. v. 6.

Sense.

Sense. — This, however, for the guilt of the Age we live in, is now become a subject of less indignation ; since, to say nothing of others, a very modern impious Declaimer, whose Quality and Parts have only rendered his Crime and Infamy more conspicuous, has represented the Divine Oracles both of the Old and New Testament, as the Productions of Folly, and Ignorance of the true Principles of Morality *. This rare Discovery was reserved to the *All-accomplished* Person, in whom *Happiness dwelt*, and *who knew*, it seems, *what it was to be Wise* †. The shortness of this Digression, and the resentment of injured Truth, which occasioned it, must be its Apology.

BESIDES the Writings of the *Fathers* I have already mentioned, there are others, such as *the Monitor of Vincent of Lerins*, and the Oc-

* Nonne Prodigio simile est aut natum esse hominem qui hæc diceret, aut extitisse qui crederet? *Lactant, de Irâ Dei*, cap. 10.

† These, and several other Appellations of the same Import; are bestowed, by Mr. P. on the late Ld. B.

lavius of Minutius, which are equally solid and elegant. I need not put down those of *Lactantius*, in which there is all the eloquence and philosophy of *Cicero*, with the purest Maxims of *Gospel Morality* *. He wrote most of them before he was thoroughly instructed in the Christian Religion; and therefore allowance must be made for such Errors as did not proceed from pride and obstinacy, but from want of more perfect information.

THESE, and such like Writings, as I have said, will soon convince you that several of the most celebrated Saints for their zeal for Religion, and the austerity of their lives, were Men extremely civilized; and if, in their maturer years, they laid aside human literature, it was not before they were perfectly acquainted with it. — Nay, it must be acknowledged to the advantage of polite Learning, that the most eminent *Divines*, both ancient and modern, have excelled in it, and seem to suppose it as a necessary Groundwork to

* *Christianorum omnium facundissimus est Lactantius: sonum habet planè Ciceronianum, præterquam in paucis. Lud. Vivés.*

higher Studies. Was I to enumerate the Instances of this kind, the List would never end. On the contrary, my own Reading and Observation (to go no higher) has let me see how ungraceful and heavy Theology appears, which is not raised on this Foundation.

THE Works of *Cassian* are an inexhaustible Fund of every thing which can lead the Reader to Christian Perfection; and I mention them the more willingly to you, as the Chief and Patron of the Schoolmen, *St. Thomas of Aquin*, and that great Proficient in the Science of Saints, *Claudius Aquaviva*, are reported to have been particularly conversant in them. I must bestow the same commendation on a Work, which has a great affinity with this, the *Lives of the Fathers of the Desert*, by *Ros-weide*. You should get an early relish for this sort of reading; because, when you have leisure afterwards, nothing can be more delightful, nothing more edifying than the Precepts, Maxims, and Examples, that is, than the whole Circle of Instruction, which make up these two celebrated Collections.

THE six short Books of *St. Chrystome on Priesthood* are one of the most proper Works a Person can read before he takes Holy Orders, and as this is done towards the end of the higher Studies, I shall with them conclude what I had to say concerning those Writings of the *Fathers*, which I should desire you to read during the course of them. But that you may be directed to a Method of reaping all the benefit of this Part of sacred Literature, I must recommend to you, with uncommon earnestness, a Treatise in four small Books, printed at *Paris*, in the year 1697, which is a Masterpiece of erudition, solidity, and elegance, and contains every rule, remark and instruction, which can be of use on this important Subject. The Title is, * *Of reading the Works of the Fathers of the Church*: the Author, if I am rightly informed, was a *Carthusian*.

I OBSERVED in the beginning of this Discourse, that the Writings of pious Men of all Ages, are a very natural Appendix to those of the *Fathers*; and shall therefore point

* *Sur la Lecture des Peres de L'Eglise.*

out some few Authors, who have excelled in this way, and who, I have reason to hope, will please you as much as they do me. *Alphonfus Rodriguez* has had the approbation of the whole Christian World, and retains in the *French Translation* by *Des-Marais* all the ease and spirit of the Original.—*Bossuet's Elevations of the mind on the Mysteries of our Religion*, and his *Meditations on the Gospels*, have all the dignity and spirit peculiar to that Author: they are not only Works of the most enlightened and moving piety, but likewise an excellent Commentary on the principal parts of the Scriptures.—The five small Works of Cardinal *Bellarmino* * in force † *the reasonable service* of Christians of every Profession in a very persuasive and moving manner, and being wrote from the Heart, they speak to it.—*Lessius's Considerations on the Names of God* ‡, though very short, is so finished a Piece, that the Author gave it the preference to a Commentary on all

* *Opuscula Bellarmini.*

† *Rom. ch. xii.*

‡ *Considerationes de 50 Nominibus Dei.*

St. Thomas's Works, the Design of which he had conceived some time before his death. It has been published at *Brussels* and *Lovain*, and perhaps elsewhere. The *Lovain* Edition, by *Bovetius*, is preferable to any I have seen.—It would be injurious to your piety to imagine *the Imitation of Christ*, by *a Kempis*, had any need of being recommended to a person, who must know the esteem in which this Book is held by all judicious Readers. The other Works of this Author carry with them the best of Characters, *Simplicity*.—The *Sancta Sophia*, an *English* Work with a *Latin* Title, by *F. Baker*, a *Benedictine Monk*, sets forth with great justness the Advantages of Retirement, and a Contemplative Life, and is a most compleat Guide to it. It were to be desired that this Work was more known to Persons in all States, who aspire to Perfection.—The Epistle of St. *Ignatius of Loyola* on Religious Obedience, is as compleat as any thing Profane Antiquity can show in that kind of writing.—*Cardinal Bona* has the elegance of a polite Writer, the good Sense of a Philosopher, and the piety of a Saint. His

Treatises

Treatises * *concerning the Liturgy and Divine Offices* show his profound insight into all sacred Antiquity, and are no less curious and entertaining than instructive. You cannot fail of being highly pleased and edified with the Works of this pious and learned Personage, who was one of the chief Ornaments of the *Cistercian Order*, and a worthy Disciple of his great Master, *St. Bernard*.

THE Authors I have mentioned are more than sufficient to inform you of that better way, that holy and chaste Discipline, which becomes a Christian and a Clergy-man; and a greater Detail would not suit the Design of this Discourse. What *Seneca* says of Learning and Books in general, † ‘ that a moderate
 ‘ share of the first is sufficient in order to at-
 ‘ tain a right way of thinking; and that
 ‘ there are certain Authors, to whose Works
 ‘ we should inure and habituate our selves,’
 is particularly applicable to those who treat

* *De Rebus Liturgicis & de Officiis Divinis.*

† *Paucis Litteris opus est ad bonam mentem. Certis Ingeniis immorari & innutriri oportet.*

of the Science of the Saints. Be conversant therefore with a few, but let those be excellent; and if you should sometimes look into others, return again to the former: Your Acquaintance may be general, but your Intimates should be few.

I HAVE remarked that several of the most celebrated amongst the Ancients have had some favourite Author, who was always excellent in his kind: and that two Considerations seem to have determined the Reader's choice; his own Genius and Profession, which in prudent and great Men always go together. Thus, to bring a few Instances from profane History, *Scipio Africanus* was addicted to *Xenophon's Instruction of Cyrus*, *Bрутus* to *Polybius*; *Demosthenes* transcribed all *Thucydides* several times; and we are all informed how much *Cicero*, as a Speaker, studied *Demosthenes*, and *Plato*, both as an Orator and Philosopher. The same Method has been practised in the Arts, with the same success; and every body has heard of the unwearyed inspection *Michael Angelo* gave to a fine, though maimed Antique Statue, which
made

made his Contemporaries call it, *his School*. And, perhaps, the Figure which each of these made in their several Professions, may, in great measure, be owing to the judiciousness of the Choice, and a patient attention to an Original so chosen. And, to bring this Observation home to those who have excelled in Christian Virtues, I have read of St. *Ignatius*, that he had only two books in his Chamber, at his death, which were the *New Testament* and *the Imitation of Christ*.

* THE next Consideration, is *Church History*, which makes the *Third* Branch or Division of Ecclesiastical Learning. I am of opinion the Order of this Study requires you should begin with what concerns the General History of the Church; and then go on to that of your own Nation. These, without doubt, are what you are most concerned to be acquainted with. Next to these, the History of the several *Religious Orders* seems most to deserve our Observation. You may after-

* Etenim viri omnes docti consentiunt rudes omnino Theologos illos esse, in quorum Lucubrationibus Historia muta est. *Mel. Canus de locis Theol.* l. II. c. 2.

wards, as occasion serves, inform your self of those Facts, to which your other Studies, or your own Inclination may lead you. On this Head, no one Method can be prescribed to all Persons, nay there may be, perhaps, as many different Methods, and all useful, as there are Genius's. Reflexion and Experience will lead you into several Particulars, and a more profitable Detail than Books, or even the Advice of intelligent Persons can extend to.

You cannot, I think, make a more judicious acquaintance with the general History of the Church, than by beginning with *Tillemont's Memoirs*, which are extremely accurate, and contain a compleat Account of all Ecclesiastical Transactions during the five first Centuries; for the Work comes down no lower. The Criticism is judicious and modest, and yet ingenuous and liberal; the Language and Stile highly adapted to the Subject; and though, for the most part, it be little more than a literal translation of a vast number of different Original Authors, yet it is pure and uniform. The Account
both

both of Persons, Writings, and Facts, is so well attested, that it is alone a Library, with respect to the Subject and Time it treats of. It must, however, be acknowledged that some Parts of the Three last Tomes, which death prevented the Author from putting a finishing hand to, fall far short of the correctness of the rest of the Work. I would likewise advise you to read his *Memoirs of the Emperors*, who reigned through the same Period, because they reflect a great light on those of the Church.

I HAVE been told there are some exceptionable Passages in his Ecclesiastical *Memoirs*. I confess I do not reflect to have observed any, which regard Faith or Morals. However, I submit my Judgment to those who have greater Abilities and Discernment. I would have every thing else I advance in this Discourse, understood with the same Restriction. I need not assure you of my unfeigned Deference to that Authority, which *Jesus Christ* has established; and that I look on Books and Tenets in no other Light, than that in which this Heavenly-directed Guide

considers them.—*Fleury's Church History*, which ends with the year 1414, is certainly a very valuable and entertaining Work: The Choice of Facts, the Extracts from the Writings of the *Fathers*, and the ease and fluency of the Stile, make it well worth reading. I own, it is not exempt from faults; the chief of which seems to be, too great a propensity to Censure. This Disposition in Writers, sometimes, does not only appear in particular Passages, but diffuses itself through a whole Work, and gives a certain air, which very much alters the whole face of things. There are, I know, Persons of understanding and learning, who take this to be the case of *Fleury's History* in general; for my own part, after having read it with great attention, though I think the Observation applicable, in a Degree, to some Parts of the Work, I can by no means think it the Character of the Whole. I don't pretend to justify some sentiments and expressions, which are less exact and respectful than the Persons and Subjects this Historian treats of, had a right to; and I honour that Piety which I am persuaded had so great a share in

in the Censures which have been passed on him. Upon the whole, did I not think that what I have said of this Author, would be taken as an admonition to read him with caution, I would advise all, but persons of very steady minds, to lay him aside.—I should chuse to learn the History of the *Old Testament*, and whatever concerns the General Transactions of Mankind, from the Creation to the Birth of *Christ*, from *Salianus's Annals* abridged by himself, preferably to any other Writer : And this not only on account of the copious and well digested Matter, which is the Subject of the Work, but likewise of the easy and unaffected air of good Sense and Religion with which the Author relates Facts and makes his Reflexions on them.—*Spondanus's Abridgment of Baronius* takes in the Dates of the Christian *Æra*, and will be very satisfactory to those Readers who want leisure or inclination to go through the whole Work of the Great Church Annalist.—*The History of the Bible*, by *Calmet*, is a judicious Performance: and that *of the People of God*, by *Berruier*, extremely polite, and (excuse some worldly stains) not less calcu-

lated to instruct than please.—* The Account of the *Councils*, by the learned *Cabassutius*, answers the purpose it was designed for.—*Sulpitius's* Sacred History is an admirable Epitome of the Transactions of the *Old Testament*, and of what happened under the Law of Grace for the first four hundred years. And next to that elegant Writer I think we may place *Turfellini*.—You might reproach me with an inexcusable omission did I not mention a Work, which will greatly contribute to make the Study of Church History beneficial, and let you see the Chain of Providence in all the divine Dispensations from the Creation to the year 800 of the Christian *Epoch*, accompanied with the most proper Reflexions to enlarge the mind, and a most judicious Collection of all the memorable Events during that long series of Ages: All this is but a part of what *Bossuet* has executed in a manner superior to all other Writers, in his *Discourse on Universal History*.—This wonderful Performance was undertaken at the suggestion of the Duke of *Montausier*, for the use of the *Dauphin*, that His illustrious

* *Notitia Conciliorum.*

trious Pupil might, in this single Picture, behold the History of all Times and all Nations ; not so much with an intent to learn the succession of Ages, the duration of Empires, and those astonishing Revolutions which have destroyed them all, one after another : as to observe, and feel, as it were, the Conduct of the Almighty, in making all these Changes subservient to the glory of his Name, and the establishment of that Worship, by which he would be honoured. 'Tis hard to say which of the Parts of this inimitable *Piece* most deserves our admiration ; whether the boldness of the *Design*, or the disposition of the innumerable *Figures* of which it is composed, or the lively and natural *Expression* which animates them, or that beautiful *Whole* which an incredible variety conspires to form, by meeting all in one Point, which is the Holy Religion we profess. — * *The Policy grounded on the Scriptures and extracted from them*, may be considered as an Appendix to the *Discourse on Universal History* ; both being wrote on the same Plan and with the same View. These Works will, moreover, lay open to every in-

* Politique tirée de l'Écriture Sainte.

telligent person the important Art of reading so as to profit by it: which the generality of Scholars seem never to have learnt, or to have forgot.—All the Writings of this Author are smooth, sententious, and correct; and distinguished by that delicacy and agreeable Sprightliness, which was peculiar to the *Athenians*.—The * *Chronological and Dogmatical Memoirs, with Reflexions and Critical Remarks*, contain a very curious and interesting Detail of all the remarkable Occurrences in the Church from the year 1600 to 1716. The particular Articles are related with a conciseness and perspicuity which thoroughly informs, without ever tiring the Reader. This polished Performance makes no more than four Pocket Volumes.

THE Works already mentioned will convince you that the Object of Ecclesiastical History is one of the greatest and most noble that can be proposed to the mind of Man. For what can be more wonderful than to see Religion always subsist on the same Princi-

* *Memoirs Chronologiques & Dogmatiques depuis 1600 jusqu'en 1716.*

ples; that neither Idolatry or Impiety, which have encompassed her on every side; nor Tyrants, who have persecuted; nor Hereticks or Infidels, who have endeavoured to corrupt her; nor Apostates, who have deserted her; nor unworthy Followers, whose vices have dishonoured her; nor, lastly, length of time, which brings all human things to a period, have ever been able, I do not say to overthrow, but even to alter any one Point of her belief or worship? In spite of the Opposition arising from all these various Causes, the *Law* she has published, has been received as holy, equitable and beneficent; as full of decency and wisdom, of forecast and simplicity; and as the only true band of Society between Man and Man, and of that more sacred Union between Man and God: that is, as having every Qualification by which *Legislature* can be recommended. Supported by the same Almighty Power, from which she derives her Origin, she has continued the same thorough all the different States of the People of God: under the Law of Nature and the *Patriarchs*; under *Moses* and the written Law; under *David* and the *Prophets*;
after

after the return of the *Jews* from their captivity, to the coming of *Jesus Christ*; and since, under *Jesus Christ* himself, that is, under the Law of Grace and the Gospel: In the Ages, in which the *Messiah* was looked for, and in those which have seen this expectation fulfilled; when the Worship of God, was confined to one People, and when, according to the ancient Prophecies, it was to be spread over all the Earth; when infirm and carnal Men stood in need of temporal rewards and punishments; and when, actuated by more exalted motives, they lived by Faith and the prospect of good things beyond this state of being. Nor can we conceive (as *Bossuet* has observed on the evidence of these Facts) any conduct more worthy the God we adore, than, first, to have chosen a People, who was to be a standing Monument of his Providence, whose various fortune was to depend on their piety, and whose prosperity and adversity were to bear witness to his wisdom and justice who governed them. This is what God was pleased to manifest in his dispensations towards the *Jews*. But after having established, by so many sensible Proofs,

this

this unshaken foundation, that He alone directs all human Events to their appointed Ends; it was time to raise Men to higher expectations, and to discover to a new People, which was to be formed from all the Nations of the Earth, the Secrets of a future Life. — This uninterrupted Uniformity of Religion from the beginning of time down to our days, which has always acknowledged the same *God* as Creator and Ruler, and the same *Jesus Christ* as Saviour of Mankind, is the very life, spirit, and Substance of the general History of the Church, whether delivered in the inspired or other Writings; and is, on that account, the most sublime and divine Object, that ever was, or could be proposed to the knowledge and contemplation of Man.

As to the Ecclesiastical History of our own Country, to the year 1189, *Alford's Annals* are the best I am acquainted with. The Detail into which this Author enters, gives him an opportunity of transferring into his own Work the most valuable parts of the Historians, who went before him; which he

generally does in their own words. A great many Points of Controversy are treated with much Solidity, the Truths of Religion asserted no less from Facts than Arguments, and the whole Work planned and executed for the improvement and edification of a well disposed mind, especially of an *English* Reader. I readily grant that several of the Memoirs the Author has made use of, are not so authentic as the Accuracy of this Age requires; but a too great Facility in admitting Facts, which seem to favour Piety (for the Mistakes in this Performance are to be charged on this Head) does not hinder it from being very valuable.—*The Variations of the Protestant Churches*, by *Bossuet*, inform us of many Particulars, in the knowledge of which every *English* Man is interested.—There are several curious Anecdotes relating to the same Subject, which, as you love information, will fall in your way. Some of *F. Persons's* Works, *Sanders of the English Schism*, some of *Lord Castlemaine's* Treatises deserve a place in this List.—*The Councils of Great Britain*, by *Sir Henry Spelman*, are a very noble Collection, and give a just notion of the Church Discipline

Discipline of this Nation, and its ancient Piety; as does *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, for the short Period it gives an account of, which is to the year 731: though the far greater Part is taken up with what happened after St. *Austin's* arrival in 597; and what goes before concerning the *Britons*, seems designed by that venerable *Saxon*, but as an Introduction to what he was to say of his own Nation.

ALTHOUGH a great deal of what concerns *Religious Orders* be interwoven with the General History of the Church, and that of your own Country, yet, did your situation allow leisure for such an undertaking, I would in the next place, as I have already said, recommend to you a particular information of what concerns them. The conspicuous Rank they hold in the *Hierarchy*, the great Ornament they have always been to the Church, and the many and various benefits the Christian World receives from these Institutions, make them well deserve a special Attention.—The *Order of St. Benedict*, and that illustrious Branch of it which St. *Ber-*

nard brought back to its primitive Spirit, claim an uncommon regard and veneration from all *Englishmen*. The number of Foundations they possessed in our Country, the Share they had, for some Ages, in the Affairs of Church and State, the signal Services they have done to both, and the Saints which these excellent Schools of Virtue have produced, furnish alone a large and important Body of History.—The *Dominicans*, *Franciscans*, and *Carthusians*, the reformed Order of the *Carmelites*, of which St. *Theresa* was the chief Instrument; the *Canon Regulars*, particularly the Congregation erected by *Gerard le Groot*, which flourished so much in the fifteenth Century, * “ were Men
 ‘ rich in Virtue, studious of the beauty of
 ‘ Holiness, and promoters of peace in their
 ‘ Families. All these obtained glory in their
 ‘ respective Ages, and were praised in their
 ‘ Days. Those also who came after them
 ‘ have left a Name behind them, that their
 ‘ praises likewise might be recorded. As for
 ‘ the Founders themselves, they were persons
 ‘ eminent for good deeds, and these still con-

* *Ecclesiasticus*, ch. xliv.

‘ tinue with their Descendants. Even their
 ‘ latest Posterity is a holy Inheritance, which
 ‘ shall not fail, nor their glory be blotted
 ‘ out. Their Bodies were buried in peace,
 ‘ and their name lives from Age to Age.
 ‘ The People show forth their Wisdom, and
 ‘ the Church publishes their Praise.’

BUT though a particular Detail of these and the like Institutions cannot be recommended to you at present, you may, without allotting too great a part of your time, make your self Master of the Chief Heads of these Matters, from *the Origin of Monastic Institutions*, and those of the *Benedictines* in particular, by *Aubert le Mire*, Library Keeper to *Albert* and *Isabella*, and one of the most religious and knowing Persons in all kinds of Ecclesiastical Learning the *Netherlands* have ever had. I am sorry * *the Apostleship of the Benedictines in England*, by *Reyner*, though a very valuable piece, is printed in such a manner as to be scarcely legible.—*Bulteau’s Monastic History of the East* is very exact, much esteemed, and little read. His Abridg-

* *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Angliâ.*

ment of that of the *Benedictines*, though well wrote, was not received with the approbation it deserved.

YOUR modesty must not be offended, if in the following, and some other Articles, I am somewhat particular in what concerns a Body of Men, of which you are a Member, and in whose commendation you will find the greatest encouragement to proficiency, Domestic Example. There is a peculiar use and propriety in proposing to all Persons the Advantages and Hereditary Honours of their different Societies, and calling forth to imitation the excellent Models each of them has produced. And though I have reason to hope, that through the goodness of your own disposition, and without any adventitious influence,

Quò te cœlestis Sapiëntia duceret, ires,

Yet I cannot but think, that placing before you the Worthies of your own Family, will add new vigour to Precept, and give Direction its full weight. But not to pretend to sway you with any thing of so little consequence

quence as my own opinion, I will alledge such Testimonies as are above all exception.

‘ * There is no Religious Order, says the
 ‘ Abbé *Lenglet du Fresnoy*, which has fur-
 ‘ nished so much Matter to History, as *the*
 ‘ *Society of Jesus*; and none likewise which
 ‘ has had more correct and eloquent Histo-
 ‘ rians.” — The Circumstances of Time, in
 which God was pleased to raise up this Body
 of Men in his Church, the wonderful Sanc-
 tity and Wisdom of their Founder, their sur-
 prising and rapid Progress, the infinite Good
 they have every where done, either in esta-
 blishing Religion, or reforming the Manners
 of those, who were a discredit to it, the emi-
 nent Virtue of so many of their Members,
 particularly at their Institution, will fix your
 Observation and excite your Piety as a Chris-
 tian, who interests himself in the common
 cause of the Gospel. And as a young Man
 of Parts and Learning, you will have the ad-
 ditional pleasure of perceiving that this So-
 ciety alone has produced such excellent and
 various Works in every Branch of sacred

* *Methode pour etudier l’Histoire.* Tom. 3. Art. 27.

Literature (for that only is here in Question) that a great part of what we have most valuable on any of these Subjects, is owing to the Writers of that Body.

THE same Success has attended them in the Education of Youth, and *Peter Morin*, who was one of the Restorers of Learning in the Pontificate of *Gregory* the XIIIth, and *Sixtus* the Vth, gives the following Character of them in his Books of *the Right Use of Sciences*: * ‘ We have an Instance, says he, of ‘ the right Method of Education in that illustrious Society, which is called by the ‘ name of *Jesus*; the Professors of this Body ‘ enable those committed to their care, in a ‘ few years, to go through every Branch of ‘ sacred Knowledge, Ecclesiastical Antiquities, Church History, the ancient Divines,

* Exemplo fit clarissima nominis Jesu Societas; quæ postquam Adolescentes aliquot annos his in Studiis tenuit, eos ita dimittit, ut ipsi, quod aiunt, sine cortice nare, ac immensa Ecclesiasticæ vetustatis volumina, . . . veteres Theologos per se evolvere & intelligere, perlustrare Conciliorum varias Sanctiones, Historiasque Ecclesiæ omnes cum admirabili utilitate ac voluptate cognoscere possint. *Lib. 3.*

‘ the

‘ the Councils, with wonderful profit and
 ‘ pleasure, and without any further Help
 ‘ than their own Industry, and the Foun-
 ‘ dation they have laid in their Schools.’——

* Cardinal *Allen*, the Ornament of the *English*
 Clergy, has expressed his Sentiments in terms
 no less advantageous than those of *Morin* :

‘ Pope *Gregory* the XIIIth, says he, has been
 ‘ pleased to make use of the most famous
 ‘ Society of the name of *Jesus*, in the Go-
 ‘ vernment of most of the Colleges he has
 ‘ endowed, to the eternal good of all Peo-
 ‘ ple....’ He likewise observes, ‘ That the
 ‘ *Jesuits*, for their exemplar Life and Vir-
 ‘ tue, for their exceeding Exercise, Diligence,
 ‘ and Dexterity in the Education of Youth,
 ‘ both in Piety and Knowledge, for their
 ‘ great Learning and Discretion, and for
 ‘ other rare Graces of God’s Spirit, were
 ‘ used, to the marvelous benefit of the Church,
 ‘ as well by his Holiness, as other greatest
 ‘ Princes of Christendom, for Professors in
 ‘ their Universities, Reformers of the de-
 ‘ cayed Manners of all Sorts, and most ex-
 ‘ quisite Masters of all Religion, Devotion,

* *Allen’s Apology for the English Seminaries*, Ch. iii. and vi.

‘ and true Worship of God.—Lord *Bacon*
 ‘ seems to have been of the same opinion ;
 ‘ * That excellent Part of ancient Discipline,
 ‘ says he, which consists in Education, has
 ‘ been in some sort revived in late times by
 ‘ the Colleges of the *Jesuits*, in regard of
 ‘ which, and some other Points concerning
 ‘ human Learning and Moral Matters, I
 ‘ may say, as *Agésilas* said of his Enemy
 ‘ *Pharnabafus*, *Talis cum sis, utinam noster*
 ‘ *esses.*’ And in another Place of the same
 Work, he says, ‘ On the other hand, we see
 ‘ the *Jesuits*, who partly in themselves, and
 ‘ partly by the emulation and provocation of
 ‘ their Example, have much quickned and
 ‘ strengthened the State of Learning ; we
 ‘ see, I say, what notable service and repara-
 ‘ tion they have done to the *Roman See.*’ —

Morin and *Allen* had no particular Connexion
 with the *Society* ; and the Religious opinions
 of the other great Personage were so opposite
 to those of the Church of *Rome*, that no-
 thing but Conviction could have drawn from
 him this Acknowledgment in favour of a
 Body of Men, who, amongst other Com-

* *Advancement of Learning.*

mendations,

commendations, have distinguished themselves by their zeal and attachment to it. I might add, that the flourishing State of their Schools in most Parts of *Europe*, is an Instance of their Ability being still equal to the Reputation they at first acquired.

As to their Works, * *Alegambe's Catalogue of their Authors*, and Books published by them, which *du Fresnoy*, in his *Method of studying History*, prefers to any thing which has yet appeared in that kind, may be of great use to you: as *Bellarmino's* short but excellent *Treatise of Ecclesiastical Writers*, will give a proper and sufficient light on the extensive Subjects he there examines. *Philip Labbe* has wrote a *Philological and Historical Dissertation* on this Work, which is much esteemed. *Sixtus Senensis's Holy Library* is something of the same nature, but on a larger Plan than *Bellarmino's*; as is also the *Select Library of Possesine*, and the *Ecclesiastical of Aubert le Mire*. And if there be any Writer, whose Character you desire to be informed of, and which is not to be met with in the

* *Bibliotheca Scriptorum*, S. 7.

above-mentioned Works, you may have recourse to any other Historical Dictionary.— For my own part, I have always endeavoured to get a just Notion both of the Author and his Subject, before I began to read the Work; and this, when I was not acquainted with the Remark of a celebrated Critic. * ‘ Two
 ‘ things, says he, greatly contribute to keep
 ‘ up our Attention, and let us into the Sense
 ‘ of what we read; The Knowledge of the
 ‘ Author’s Character and Subject: for the
 ‘ Disposition we bring to reading, and the
 ‘ Opinion we have imbibed of the Writer
 ‘ have a greater influence on our judgment
 ‘ than is easily imagined.’

THIS is what I had to say on *Church History*, as well General as Particular. I have often thought there is nothing more unprofitable than this Study as it is commonly un-

* *Dux res sunt quæ vehementer & accendunt ad lectionem, & conducunt ad intellectum voluminis, vita Authoris cognita, & operis non ignoratum argumentum. Plurimum enim refert quem animum adferas ad legendum, nec facile dictu sit quantum in judicando momenti habeat præsumpta de homine Opinio. Erasmus.*

dertaken,

dertaken, whereas nothing would be more useful, was it pursued as it ought to be. To study History, is to study the Motives, the Opinions, the Passions of Men, in order to be acquainted with all their Springs and Windings, all the Illusions by which they blind the Understanding and surprize the Heart. It is to know our selves in other people; to discover in the Wise and Virtuous, by what we may improve; and in those of another Character, what we are to shun; and, in general, how we are to behave in all the various Incidents of Life. The Result therefore of this Science is to know Mankind, who are the Subject of it. Where these Dispositions are wanting, History, which *Cicero* very deservedly stiles * ‘ the Register of Time, ‘ the Ray of Truth, the Life of the Memory, the Guide of Life, the Messenger of ‘ Antiquity,’ even the History of the Church, will only give us a vain Idea of our own Sufficiency, and make us mistake a very trifling and superficial Knowledge for real Improvement.

* Testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriz, magistra vitæ, nuncia vetustatis.

Books of Piety, whenever wrote, being, as I have already observed, an Appendix to the Works of the *Fathers*; the Lives of holy Men must, strictly speaking, be so many Branches of Church History, no less than the Persons themselves are of that *Tree of Life*, by which the *Church* itself is frequently represented.—Saint *Bernard's*, which was wrote by his Contemporaries and Disciples, gives us the highest Idea of the Saint's Actions and Virtues, and makes his Works more entertaining and profitable. The Author of the first Part, *William*, Abbot of *St. Thierry*, was one of the greatest and most holy Personages of his time, to whom we are beholden for that incomparable Treatise *on Solitude*, addressed to the *Carthusians* of *Mont-Dieu*, which is always printed with *St. Bernard's* Works.—The Lives of the Saints *Ignatius*, *Xavier*, *Francis Borgia*, and Cardinal *Bellarmino*, by *Boubours*, *Verjus*, and *Frison*, are not only wrote with a Spirit becoming the Sanctity of the Subject, but may be justly ranked amongst the finest Compositions of the *French*, or any other language.—That of *St. Martin* by *Sulpitius*, with his *Dialogues on the Virtues of the Eastern*

Eastern Monks, are Proofs that sacred Subjects admit of all the Elegance of the *Latin* Tongue; as is that of *St. Ignatius*, by *Masseus*.—There is an affecting air of Piety in the Lives of *St. Lewis Gonzaga*, and *John Berchman*, by *Ceparius*; and in that lately published by *Daubenton*, of *St. J. F. Regis*. * *The Enlightned Shepherd*, by *Colombiere*, joins the most sublime Holiness to the innocence and simplicity of a Pastoral Life.—*Thomas à Kempis* has given us an account of several *Canon-Regulars*, with whom he lived, in the same artless Stile that recommends his other Works.—The Life of *Mabillon*, by *Ruinart*, his Scholar; and that of *Lessius*, wrote by *Schoofs*, a *Canon-Regular*, though published by *Curtois*, must have the approbation of every Reader, who is pleased to see the same Persons equally eminent for Learning and Religion.—That of *Don Bartholomew*, the holy Archbishop of *Brague*, represents in one Person the double Character of a perfect Religious Man, and a zealous and laborious Prelate: it was published by the *Dominicans* of *Paris*, of whose Order he was.—And,

* *Le Berger illuminé.*

to mention the Life of one Saint of the other Sex, that of St. *Theresa*, wrote by herself, affords such Instances of frequent and sublime Communications of the Holy Spirit, as must necessarily improve, raise and refine a Mind capable of such Lessons; nor can any Work be better translated than this is into *French*, not by *d'Andilly*, but *Chanut*.— As all these are great Originals, I shall put down no more: A cursory View of such Pieces, and which does little more than gratify Curiosity, is not the way to reap the Advantage designed in proposing them for our Example and Imitation. They are to be studied with that accuracy and attention which Artists employ on excellent Patterns, to raise their own Genius and bring their Works to the same Standard. For I must apply to this sort of reading, the same Observation I have already made on the Treatises of Christian Morality; the only Difference between these two Kinds of Writing being, that the Former teaches by Precept, this by Example.— ‘ The Reason we reap so little Benefit from Reading, says a wise Heathen,* is, because

* *Epietetus apud Arianum*, l. iv. c. 4.

‘ we read only with a View to Know, and
 ‘ do not refer our Studies to Action and the
 ‘ Conduct of our Lives.’ And another in-
 forms us, ‘ * that the Intent of Reading is
 ‘ to raise an Emulation of the virtuous Ac-
 ‘ tions we approve in others, and make our
 ‘ own Advantage of the Wisdom of their
 ‘ Observations and Sayings.’

† I AM now come to the *Fourth* and last Branch of Ecclesiastical Learning, which is *Divinity*, properly so called, and as it is distinguished from the *Scriptures*, *Fathers*, and *Church History*, which, in a more qualified and rational, though less general acceptation of the word, make up so great a part of all Christian and sacred Knowledge, and consequently of *Divinity*.—I need not inform you that one may be Master of the *Divinity Lec-*

* *Macrob.* l. 5. *Satur.* c. i.

† Ad divini auctoritatem verbi accedat Theologica Ratiocinatio, quæ partim è sacris illis oraculis, tanquam primariis principiis; partim ex communibus notionibus, & insitâ humanæ intelligentiæ luce cognitis efflorescit. *Peta-vius, Dog. Theol.* Tom. IV. l. 8. c. 7. §. 3.

tures

tures which are given in the Schools, and even give an account of them in Public with applause, and yet leave the University very ill provided of that Science. And this I know to have been the Case of several. A Mistake in a thing of such Moment cannot be sufficiently lamented in those who have been led into it, or too carefully avoided by Persons who have that Career yet to begin. The Origin of it I take to be a Misapprehension of what *Divinity* really is, which is taken up at the first setting out, and holds on to the Journey's end. A young Divine is taught to look upon it as the Height of Merit in his Profession to be able to maintain whatever his Professor has advanced, and refute or evade all the Objections brought against it. This alone is frequently all the Fruit of four Years Application, and is attended with great Ignorance and sometimes with a supercilious Contempt of whatever is not contained in his Professor's Writings. In this manner, a Reputation of Knowledge is owing to the prevailing Mistakes about it, and Students of very good Abilities have often given themselves little or no trouble to be Learned to the purpose,

purpose, to be truly and usefully Knowing, from a false Notion of being so already.

THE *Divinity Lectures* which are given in the Schools are but the Out-Lines of this Science, which must afterwards be filled up, the different Parts drawn out and distinguished, the Colouring added, and the whole Piece perfected. When this is done, those Out-Lines, which, as in a Picture, guided the whole Work, begin to disappear, and are at length lost in something more compleat; and the Piece is never seen to so great an Advantage, as when the Delineations, by which it was perfected, are removed out of sight. You, who have already gone through a Course of *Scholastic Philosophy*, which is delivered in the same manner as *Divinity*, must be sensible of the truth of this Observation.

As I am a great friend to Method and regular Institutions, I cannot but approve that Students in *Divinity* should write the Heads of the several Subjects they are to learn. This Method fixes their Attention, and makes a more lasting Impression than
 I reading

reading alone can do ; And as it is the received Practice in Universities, I am willing to look on it as the most beneficial : Though as to the manner of giving these Heads, I shall reserve my opinion to a more convenient place of this Discourse. Your first care, therefore, should be to be well acquainted with your Professor's Lectures : Duty and a Deference to established Rules require this, and these Motives are sufficient, though others were wanting. But then this does not oblige you to sit down satisfied with the Knowledge these Lectures convey, and not to seek elsewhere what may supply their Deficiency. The Foundations are laid, and the Scaffolds raised, and this should put you in mind to finish the Building. If you ask, how this is to be effected ? I answer, that a good deal depends on the Teacher, but much more on the Learner. If the Professor, as occasion served, would read some short and remarkable Passages of the *Fathers*, and of the most able School-Divines on the several Subjects of his Lessons, this Variety would awaken the attention of his Scholars, enlarge their Minds, and prevent that narrow and

low way of thinking on the most exalted Matters, which a fervile and disagreeable Attachment to a Professor's Lectures is apt to produce. Thus, for Example, when he treats of the Church, he might bring them acquainted with *Tertullian*, concerning *Præscription against Heretics*; with *St. Cyprian*, on *the Unity of the Church*; with *St. Austin*, on *the True Religion*, *Vincent of Lerins*, and *Campian's Reasons given to the University-Men*. — He might, on other occasions, diversify his Lectures by some chosen Passages of *Eftius*, on *the Master of Sentences*, which is a most excellent Work, and quite adapted to the Method of the Schools, which, perhaps, have seen nothing more perfect in its kind; or of *Melchior Canus's Common-places of Divinity*; or of the *Councils*, the *Letters of the Popes*, of the *Theological Works of Petavius, Lessius, du Hamel* and others. But then he ought to chuse these Passages with Discernment, and make his Auditory remark their propriety, strength and usefulness; for otherwise, the mere reading them will be but dry and unprofitable. *Mabillon* says, he knew
 this

this method to have been practised by a very able Professor with great Success.

BUT as all the Advantages which can be reaped from this or any other Industry of the Teacher will fall far short of the Progress a young Man of good Parts may make ; his own Diligence must supply the rest. Now this is to be compassed chiefly by reading: and as the Books which have been wrote on *Divinity* are almost, in the literal Sense of the Word, infinite, your great care should be to read such only as are excellent.

INDEED, if a judicious Choice of Authors be, in general, the first and principal Step towards real Improvement, it is more particularly necessary in a Matter so serious and important as the study of *Divinity*. An endless multitude of Works (I have already said it, and I repeat it again, that so necessary a Caution may have its full influence) have been wrote on all the Divisions of this Science, with great Gravity, and in all the Forms of Argumentation, which say and
teach

teach little to the Purpose; and whoever employs his time and thoughts on such kind of Reading, is much in the same case with a Husbandman, who instead of cultivating a fertile Soil should till barren Sands. What *Quintilian*, therefore, says of a *Grammarian*, let us apply to a *Divine*; *Mibi inter virtutes Grammatici habebitur, Aliqua Nescire.*

THERE is a Point of Perfection in Science, as of Goodness and Maturity in Nature. Those Writers who perceive and attain it, have a true Taste; those, who perceive it not, and either fall short of, or go beyond it, have a faulty one. But by a strange and unhappy Fatality, to which all Human Productions are subject, this Justness and Discernment is scarce ever attained, and things brought to Perfection, but they begin, almost as soon, to fall from it; and right Notions being gradually worn away, where one Mistake has entered, Legions have found their way through the same Breach. What has added to the Misfortune, is, that whereas Men rise by slow Degrees to this Ripeness; when they have once lost it, the Recovery is very difficult,

cult, and many Ages have sometimes past, before they have been brought back to relish that genuine Goodness, from which they wantonly departed. And whoever imagines that *Theology*, considered as a Science, has been exempted from these general Revolutions, is an utter Stranger to the State of Ecclesiastical Learning, from its first Institution to our Days. I cannot produce a stronger, and, at the same time, a more melancholy Proof of this Assertion, than by setting before you a succinct View of what has happened to *School-Divinity*.——When *St. Thomas of Aquin* appeared in the thirteenth Century, he found this Science much degenerated from the Plan, according to which *St. John Damascen* had modelled it in the eighth, and which *Peter of Lombardy* had revived 400 years after. But being endowed with a superior Understanding, and more extensive Knowledge than his Predecessors, he gave School-learning a perfection it had not yet received, and of which the others had only traced imperfect Sketches. Indefatigable industry, a most consummate skill in the *Scriptures, Councils, and Fathers*, a great insight
into

into the Philosophy of *Plato* and *Aristotle*; and, more than all the rest, that assistance which is derived from Prayer and Sanctity of Manners, enabled him to withstand the wretched method of Studies which then prevailed, and to compile his *Sum*, which is an Abridgment of all his Works, his Master-piece, and the greatest effort of genius and erudition the Church had seen for many Ages. And whoever considers the disadvantages he had to struggle with, the wild heap of barbarous Rubbish, which surrounded him, and the early period of a life of only forty-eight years, far from being offended that his Works have not that finished air, which in other circumstances he would not have failed to have given them, must acknowledge his merit equal to what I have said of it.—

But School Learning no sooner began to appear fair and accomplished in this great Original, but it quickly changed its form under those who followed him. These restless spirits instead of endeavouring at a Perfection, which he had pointed out, and made such advances towards it, copied only his blemishes; the minuteness and multiplicity of his dis-

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quisitions,

quisitions, and a want of that correctness, which is the result of Criticism, and those Attainments which are preparatory to it. Thus, far from advancing Theology, they did but encumber it more. The pretence, indeed, was to refine on the Method, the *Angel of the School*, as he is deservedly styled, had laid down; but the Success was like that of the *Viper's* attempt, in the *Fable*, who polished his Tongue on the Smith's file till he wore it away. They perplexed Truth instead of clearing it up, banished and despised useful Knowledge, introduced a false taste of Learning, and, which was still a more capital Disorder, by pursuing with Zeal and Obstinacy fruitless Inquiries and endless Cavils they extinguished, by degrees, the spirit of Piety towards God, and that of Peace amongst one another. Study, even that of the most serious Subjects, was no longer considered as a means to become wiser and better Christians, but sharper Disputants; and was employed, not to remove Uncertainties, but to increase them *. And as in *Music*, fanciful divisions,

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* Ergo indagandi veri una & simplex via, est relicta; faciendi fuci apertæ sexcentæ. Nec solum in hanc opinionem

and light and uneven Quirks have been introduced in order to shew the Hand of the Performer, to the Neglect of real Harmony; and the Ears alone been tickled with what ought to have raised, or tempered, or allayed every affection of the Soul: so, the excellence and use of *Theplogy* was laid aside, and its whole merit transferred to Knacks and Subtilties; which shewed the Quickness of the Disputant, to the prejudice of what was most valuable and useful in the Science.—This was the too general face of the Schools, when the Dawn of Science began to open on the World about the end of the fourteenth Century, and to promise Day.

nem populus cucurrit, finem discendi esse disputare, ut militiæ conflictum: verùm publicus consensus permultos Veteranos & quasi Triarios Scholasticæ militiæ rapuit; ut supervacaneum esse ac stultum censeant, si quis *ad mentem & mores & quietum hoc inquirendi genus* Philosophiam revocet. *Vivés, de causis corruptarum artium, L. 1.*

Verterunt ad *altercationes* disciplinam morum, quæ ad *agendum* esset parata; & sic tractarunt, non ut *meliores* vel fierent vel facerent; nec ut *rectè* statuerent de virtutibus & vitâ, sed ut *cavillarentur*. *Idem, L. 5.*

THE Writers of the *Society of Jesus* have the advantage to have appeared when useful and solid Learning was revived, after an almost universal Lethargy of some Ages; and have been themselves some of the chief Restorers of it. This makes the Language of their eminent Writers so correct, their Method so clear, their Tenets so exact; in a word, their Works so compleat. They likewise write uniformly, which is a great help to the Learner. Besides, those amongst them who have excelled in Ecclesiastical Literature, have had, for the most part, another inestimable advantage of joining great sanctity of Manners to the most consummate knowledge, and their lives, no less than their Works, have been the clearest Commentaries on the Scriptures, and the most sublime Lessons of Theology.

THE Trophies of *Marathon* (for I must here resume what I touched on above) which awakened all the military genius of *Themistocles*: and the encouragement to laudable Undertakings, which *Q. Maximus* and *P. Scipio*, two of the greatest Men of *Rome*,
acknow-

acknowledged they received from the Images of their Ancestors, are a lesson to a Student, so well read in Classic Learning as you are, of the force of home-bred Example. And when you reflect that *Augustus* adorned the *Porticos* of his *Forum* with nothing but the Statues of the most celebrated *Roman* Generals, with a view, as he declared, to excite in himself and succeeding Princes an Emulation of the like Exploits ; you must feel, that a *Society*, which makes a particular profession of Learning, and has supported that claim by such various Patterns of Excellence, has a right to animate all its Members by an Authority of much greater weight than that of *Augustus* ; *Be mindful, O my Sons, of the Deeds of your Forefathers from Age to Age, and you shall obtain great glory, and a Name which will remain for ever**.

WHOEVER is conversant with the actions and writings of the Persons I am speaking of, will know the Character here given of them, to be grounded on something more substantial than *Partiality*. True Merit is

* *Maccabees*, l. 1. c. 2.

the Foundation, which nothing can shake. As you have received your Education amongst them, your future Proficiency will be chiefly owing to the Principles they instilled, and, in some measure, to the Authors their School has produced. * But if your Progress in Literature be the only, or even the chief Advantage you reap from this Institution, give me leave to say, you will fall short, very short of what is, on so many Titles, expected of you. There is, as I have already intimated, a higher Attainment, and of quite another importance, in which these great Men are not less able Masters than in the Sciences; and in which a suitable Proficiency will be expected from you. To conquer the reluctance of

* Hortabor & rogabo, ut hoc cursu quo cœpisti, ad summam laudem sic contendas & enitare, ut statuas, tibi hominum expectationem non modò explendam, sed omnibus partibus & numeris absolutissimæ Virtutis etiam superandam esse. . . . optimèque id & commodissimè fiet, si bonorum morum velut firmo fundamento substrato, studia deinde & genera doctrinarum ita super extrues, ut in eligendis, quæ opportunissimæ sint, & in addiscendis quatenus possunt esse utiles, non solùm curâ atque consilio, sed divinâ etiam forte quâdam adjuvère. *Sadolet, ad Ran. Farnesum, Card.*

corrupt

corrupt Nature, to advance daily in Virtue, to purify your Intentions, and perfect your Actions; and gradually refine and ennoble your Mind with every Christian Disposition, are the genuine and peculiar Lessons you are to learn from this Discipline.

I SHALL consider the Authors of this Body, as well as the others I recommend to you, with a view to that Branch of the Science, which I am now treating of; after having said a word or two, in general, on the different manner of conveying it.— There are two Methods of teaching *Divinity*, one ancient, the other modern: the former admits of most of the ornaments of Discourse; the latter, more severe, seems to have laid aside eloquence, and aimed only at being exact and subtil. This Difference in the Manner of delivering the Science, has given occasion to the Division of the Science itself into *Positive*, and *Speculative* or *Scholastic*: the first being supposed to be confined to the ancient method, the second to the modern. Thus what *Socrates* said concerning those, who separated *Interest* and *Virtue*, seems, in some

some measure, to have happened to them, who made this Distinction in *Theology*, viz. * to have made a Divorce between things, which by *Nature* were designed to go together. One, however, might very well be tempered by the other, and *Divinity* become exact without preciseness, and copious and agreeable without being florid and diffuse.

IT is observed to the praise of St. *Athanasius* and several of the ancient *Fathers*, that they propose their Arguments very gracefully, and with great clearness: that their manner of Reasoning is close and conclusive; that they use the most proper Terms to explain the Mysteries of our Religion, and clear up Difficulties in a plain Manner, and void of those Refinements which often show the Subtlety of the Reasoner, without elucidating the Subject. By this Method, the ancient and modern Schools of *Divinity* might be allied, and receive a reciprocal lustre and strength from each other: the Latter would be exempt from Cavils and Driness, and the Former possess all their Richness with a Di-

* *Naturâ cohærentia opinione distraxerunt. Cicero.*
 Distinction

inction and Order, which would enhance their merit and place it in a more useful light.

WE have an illustrious Instance of this in the *Theological Works* of *Petavius*, in which *Positive* and *Scholastic Divinity*, without confounding their several Properties, conspire to set off each other, and are moreover joined to all the Advantages of Profane and *Jewish* Erudition.—This great Man treats his Subject in the most clear and natural Order, employs no Terms which can cause Ambiguity, advances no Principles which he does not pursue, and only Reasons in order to conclude. By this means he interests and fixes the attention of a Reader who is disengaged from Prejudice, who is studious, patient, attentive and reasonable. When he has laid down his Positions, he leads his Scholar, step by step, to all their Proofs, bears him company all the way, and does not leave him till he is satisfied. As his Knowledge was, in the strict sense of the word, Universal, and, as *Abbé Olivet* says, * *beyond the bounds*

* *Ultra humanam sortem eruditus. Olivet, Præf. in Cicer. which*

*which Nature seems to have set to Man, and his Genius equal to his Knowledge, his Works are enriched with every kind of sacred Literature, which either past or present Times could furnish. He is not fraught with the Spoils of the East only, as the Poet says of his Hero, but with those of the four Quarters of the World : all which he has digested into admirable Order, and adorned with an Eloquence truly becoming the Dignity of his Subject. And as all these Advantages meet in one Writer, and, perhaps, in him alone, I am inclined to think his Works sufficient to form a compleat System of Positive and Speculative Divinity, both with respect to the copiousness of the matter they contain, and the method, penetration and judgment with which it is treated : I mean, as far as the Work goes ; for Death prevented his finishing above half of the *Body of Divinity*, of which he has given the Plan at the end of his Preliminary Discourses.*

AND here it may be seasonable to say something of the different Parts which compose *Divinity* ; how many and what they are, and

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the connexion they have with one another. You are not to expect an universal agreement amongst the Learned on this Head, and that Persons of great, and even equal Abilities, should have the same notions of Order and Gradation in this divine Science any more than in others.—The most accurate and full Division of it seems to be this: That the *First* Part should treat of the *Divine Nature and Perfections*, considered in themselves; and this takes in the Treatises of *God*, his *Attributes*, and of the *Trinity*. The *Second* Part contains those Works which flow from Him, as the Author of Nature, and which are two-fold, Spiritual and Corporal; this Part contains the Treatises of the *Angels*, the *Creation* of the visible World, and particularly of Man. That most excellent Work of the divine Bounty, the *Incarnation*, by which God, as the Author of Grace no less than of Nature, communicates Himself to Man in such a manner as to become one Person with him, makes the *Third* Part. The *Fourth* treats of the Means and Instruments by which the Benefit of the *Incarnation* is either conveyed to us, or we guided to it; and these are

are the *Sacraments* and the *Divine Laws*. The *Fifth* sets forth those *Qualities* by which Men and Angels become holy and divine, and are fitted and prepared for everlasting Happiness: these are *Grace, Faith, Hope, Charity*, and the other *Virtues*. The *Sixth* and last Part treats of what is destructive of, and contrary to these *Qualities*, and this is *Sin*.—I need not enlarge on the propriety and fulness of this Division: Reflexion and Use will let you into both. It embraces all the Knowledge we can attain concerning God, and the different Relations he bears to his Creatures, and they to him: * *It reaches, in a comprehensive manner, from end to end, and sweetly disposes all things*: and, to make use of an expression, in which a Poet and a Heathen has set forth the sense of a Christian and a Divine, it directs us † *to derive every thing from the supreme Being, and to refer every thing to him*.

AND now, to return again to *Petavius*; I would not be supposed to recommend him on

* *Wisdom*, ch. 8.

† *Hinc omne Principium, huc refer Exitum. Hor.*

my own judgment alone. The ablest Critics and most learned Men of his own time, and those who have since flourished, have concurred in bearing Testimony to his singular Merit: *Huet, Simon, Grotius, Perault, Mabilon, Henry de Valois*, the latter of whom wrote his Life, speak of him as the most extraordinary Personage of his Age; to say nothing of those of his own *Society*, who may be suspected of Partiality.

AMONGST a variety of Encomiums bestowed on him, which I have occasionally met with, I shall content myself with setting down two: the first is from the famous Bishop of *Avranche, Huet*; who speaks thus *.

‘ That during the stay he made at *Paris*,
 ‘ he read with a particular Attention the

* Per eos dies, quos in amplificandâ Bibliothecâ meâ consumebam Lutetiæ, ad vesperum aliquando domum redux, cum partas opes recognoscerem, hæsi potissimum in pervolutandis Dogmatibus *Petavii*, recens editis, quorum magna erat apud doctos homines commendatio. Me etenim, qui & Authorem nossem, & amarem, & facerem plurimi, cum materiæ dignitas, tum nitor dictionis, & passim diffusa eruditio totas noctes tenebant attentum & fixum. *Huetius, de rebus suis*, page 69.

‘ Theological Works of *Petavius*, which
 ‘ were then just published, and had been re-
 ‘ ceived with great Approbation by the Learn-
 ‘ ed: That being acquainted with the Au-
 ‘ thor, and having a great love and value
 ‘ for him, he was so taken up with the Dig-
 ‘ nity of the Subject, the elegance of the
 ‘ Stile, and the erudition which appeared
 ‘ through the whole Work, that it fixed his
 ‘ attention whole days and nights.’—The
 other commendation of *Petavius* I shall take
 from the account he gives of himself to *Mu-
 tius Vitelleschi*, Superior General of the *So-
 ciety of Jesus*. * ‘ That he had presented

* Litterarium tibi munus offero, Theologicorum meorum
 Dogmatum Tomos tres, à Prælo recentes ; in quibus Theo-
 logiæ partem illam complexus sum, quæ de Deo, deque An-
 gelis & Opificio Mundi disputat. Quam quidem divinarum
 rerum tractationem, non vetere illâ & Scholarum usu tritâ
 viâ, sum ingressus ; Sed novâ, &, quod sine invidiâ dictum
 fit, nullius adhuc vestigiis impressâ. Non enim subtilem il-
 lam, & obscuris Philosophiæ tricis involutam Theologiam
 institui ; sed ingenuam & amœnam, ac de limpidis ac na-
 tivis Scripturarum, Conciliorum, Patrumque veterum fon-
 tibus liquidiùs profluentem ; eandemque non horridam ac
 propè barbaram, sed cultu quodam humanitatis hilaratam
 atque conditam. *Pet. Lib. 3. Epif. 54.*

‘ him

‘ him with a production of his Studies,
 ‘ Three Tomes of Theological Works, just
 ‘ fresh from the Press, wherein he had dis-
 ‘ cussed that Part of *Divinity* which treats
 ‘ of *God*, the *Angels*, and the *Creation* of
 ‘ the World. That he had undertook to
 ‘ write on these divine Matters, not accord-
 ‘ ing to the old Method, which had long
 ‘ prevailed in the Schools, but on a new
 ‘ Plan, and which (he hoped he might say
 ‘ it without Offence) no one had yet attempt-
 ‘ ed. For he had made choice, not of a
 ‘ subtil kind of *Theology*, wrapt up in Phi-
 ‘ losophical Intricacies, but of one that was
 ‘ ingenuous and entertaining, and flowed
 ‘ from the limpid and native Sources of the
 ‘ *Scriptures*, the *Councils*, and the *Fathers*.
 ‘ Neither was the Method he had followed,
 ‘ forbidding, and almost barbarous, but
 ‘ lighted up and enlivened with a certain air
 ‘ of Elegance and polite Literature.’—A
 little acquaintance with this Author will let
 you see the right he has to be addressed in the
 Poet’s words,

With conscious Pride, O Man divine!

Assume the Honours justly thine. *Fra. Hor.*

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That he stands amongst the Foremost on the Records of sacred Fame, and will, in all appearance, verify what the above-mentioned fine Genius and celebrated Scholar, *Huet*, has foretold of him, in Terms no less deserved than pompous: * ‘ All the Schools of Divinity throughout the Christian World re- found with the Name of *Petavius*, listen to, and improve from his Lessons; and he will continue to enlighten the Church to the End of Time.’

BUT his Works, as I have said, taking in only *Three* of the *Six* Parts of the above-mentioned Division, that is, not above half of the Treatises which compose a compleat Course of *Divinity*; this Deficiency must be made up from other Writers, and from those, by way of preference, who come nearest to His Method and Excellence; for, indeed, he seems to me to be the Standard of both.

LESSIUS's Theological Works, will, in great measure, supply this want. This Author's manner of treating *Divinity* is neither purely

* *Huetiana*, §. 76.

Positive nor *Scholastic*, but is tempered with, and partakes of each. His penetration and discernment place him on a Level with *Peta-vius*, though his reading was less universal. His Stile is less eloquent, or, if you please, has less of the Orator, but is of greater use in Theological Lessons. He excels in that perspicuity and conciseness which is the result of extensive Genius, and having thoroughly understood and digested the Matter he treats. No language can be more adapted to convey our own Notions to others, and which, on that account, from the *Greek* Idiom, is called *Didactic*.

THE Sanctity of his Life surpassed his Erudition; and there is an air of Piety breathed through all he wrote, and an Uction which makes the most sublime and abstruse Subjects affect the Will no less than they exercise, improve, and raise the Understanding. When he forces the Reader into emotion and transport, as he frequently does, particularly in his Books * *on the divine Perfections*, it is plain he is seized with it himself. It would

* *De Perfectionibus Moribusque Divinis.*

be superfluous, as well as endless, to point out instances of this kind : they occur in every Page, and cannot possibly escape any one, who understands and feels. His Works were so accurate before he suffered them to appear in Public ; so finished, as Mr. *Pope* expresses himself, *with the patient touches of unwearied Art*, that afterwards, when they were republished, * ‘ He neither changed, ‘ added, or omitted any thing ; and they appeared in the following Editions exactly the ‘ same as in the first.’—I ought not to omit, for the honour of this Author, that one of the last actions of our renowned Countryman Sir *Walter Raleigh*, was to desire an intimate Friend to translate into the *English* tongue and publish † two celebrated Treatises of *Lessius*, as a Testimony of the Sentiments in which He died. And whoever reads these Works, will think the request worthy that learned, and gallant, though unfortunate

* Omnia hæc Opera ita solidè semper, etiam ipsi *Lessio* steterunt, ut in eis nec sententiam, nec apicem mutandum sentiret. *De vitâ & moribus Lessii.*

† *De providentiâ Numinis, & Animi immortalitate.*

Commander.—Surely no two Writers have done more towards recalling School-learning into the use and practice of the World, and bringing it into the Company, if I may speak so, of the wisest and politest Men, than *Petavius* and *Lessius*.

I SHALL only add one more to these great Men, and that is *du Hamel*, who has wrote a Course of *Divinity*, both *Speculative* and *Practical*, as he terms it, in a very neat and judicious manner. And though this Author be no ways comparable, unless in the purity of his Language, to either of the above-mentioned, yet he has this Advantage over both, to have published a compleat Body of *Divinity*, and comprised it in *seven* moderate Volumes*.—*Tournely's* Course of *Divinity*, as I am assured, is on the same Plan, and has all the Advantages of *du Hamel's*, and contains moreover a discussion of several Points which have a nearer relation to the Disputes of the present Times. But it being contrary to my present Design to recommend to you any Author, with whose Works I am

* *Parisii, apud Michellet, viâ Jacobæâ, Anno 1691.*

not converfant; I muft refer you, for this Gentleman's merit, to thofe who are acquainted with it.

WAS *Divinity* ftudied on fuch Plans as the Authors I have fpoken of have not only laid down, but given us Examples of in their own Writings, no Study would be fo noble, fo proper to give the Mind a Chriftian elevation, or afford fuch pleafure, and be of fuch ufe to the Learner. It would unite, in an eminent degree, all the Advantages of the pureft *Philofophy*, both ancient and modern; the Politenefs of *human Literature*; a great infight into *Church Antiquity*, and be the beft Key to the Works of the *Fathers* and the *Scriptures*. The moft ufeful Treatifes likewise of the *Canon* and *Civil Law* would have their place, as * *Of God*, confidered as a *Lawgiver*, of *Laws*, of *Law* and *Equity*; which Subjects have been treated in a very mafterly manner by two Divines, *Suarez* and *Leffius*; the former of whom has no lefs excelled in this Matter, than in thofe admira-

* *De Deo Legislatore. De Legibus. De Jure & Jufitiâ.*

ble Books * *on Religion*, which have a nearer relation to Theological Studies ; and the Work of the other has filled the Closets of the learned in the Law, and all the Courts of Judicature in *Europe* with the Author's reputation.

How pleased would a young Divine be to have such a Field of Knowledge opened to his view ; to perceive his Mind enlarged by Objects so suited to satisfy all its Capacities ; and to feel the influence and natural tendency of this Study to ground and improve him in all Christian Accomplishments ! *Divinity*, treated in this manner, would appear in that noble Simplicity, which is the sovereign Perfection of Art, and very different from that narrow and abject View, which some take of it from the crude Notions and barbarous Language, from the low Sophistry, and endless Wranglings, the useless and superfluous Disquisitions, which have sometimes prevailed in the Schools, and sink *Theo-*

* *De Religione.*

logy by clogging it with a load of their own*. Every ingenuous Disposition must be sensible this could never be the Purpose of so divine a Science, whatever may have been the Misapplication, by any of those who profess it. It reminds me of that rich and beautiful Weapon which was employed to the Destruction of the Person who gave it; and of which it was said, with a delicacy which no translation can reach,

Non *hos* quæsitum munus in *usus*. *Virg.* L. 4.

Whereas, when we consider *Theology* in its proper Light, it presents itself to us as deserving our most serious Application; we discover its dignity and usefulness, and the preference it claims before all other Sciences, and how much it conduces to hinder the Soul from debasing itself by any Pursuit unworthy Faculties capable of such Elevation.

LESSIUS seems to have had a thorough conviction of what I have been saying, and has

* Interim modus ille commendetur Theologo nostro, ut quod in cæteris valet, multo magis in divinarum rerum commentatione teneat, *ne quid nimis*. *Petavius*.

very happily expressed his sentiments on this Head, in the Dedication of his Theological Works to the Abbot of *Lieffe*: His Words are these *. ‘ Amongst those things which
 ‘ we should chiefly have at heart during this
 ‘ Life, the Knowledge of the Deity has the
 ‘ first place. That he does not mean a su-
 ‘ perficial and barren Knowledge, but such
 ‘ as is accurate, clear and efficacious, and
 ‘ extends its Energy to the Affections, and
 ‘ to every Faculty of the Mind. From this,
 ‘ says he, as from a living Source, proceeds all
 ‘ Intellectual good, every wholesome dispo-
 ‘ sition, and that Heavenly-mindedness by
 ‘ which we are raised to Perfection and eter-
 ‘ nal Life; and without it, it is vain to
 ‘ pretend to any distinguished degree of Ho-

* Inter ea quæ homini in hâc vitâ maximè debent esse curæ, primum meritò locum tenet cognitio Divinitatis; eaque non perfunctoria, vel aridæ cujusdam speculationis, sed accurata, illustris & efficax, quæ vim suam etiam in affectum & omnes animæ vires diffundat. Ex hâc enim omne bonum animi, omnisque salutaris dispositio, quâ ad perfectionem & vitam æternam sublevamur, tanquam ex uberissimo fonte promanat; & sine hâc frustra ad sublimem Perfectionis gradum contendas.

‘ lines.’ He takes up the same Subject again towards the end of the Preface to the same Works, and informs the Reader, * ‘ That
 ‘ the Method he had followed was not altogether *Scholastic*, but somewhat more free
 ‘ and liberal ; and such as did not only clear
 ‘ up the Subject, but place it in an advantageous Light, and would affect the Will
 ‘ no less than improve the Understanding :
 ‘ that these Matters should be set forth so as
 ‘ to raise in the Reader, wonder, awe and
 ‘ astonishment, fear and joy ; which Ends
 ‘ could never be gained where the great Concern is about minute matters and subtleties,
 ‘ which seem only calculated for Disputes
 ‘ and Cavils.’ I must desire you to read both the Dedication and Preface, from which these

* *Modus tractandi non erit omnino Scholasticus, sed nonnihil liberior, ut res illæ non solum utcunque intelligantur, sed amplo quodam ac splendido modo menti Lectoris objiciantur, prout idoneæ sunt non modò ad Intellectum clarè instruendum, verùm etiam ad concitandum in animis affectum Pietatis. Ita enim concipi debent ut mentem admiratione, stupore, reverentiâ, timore, gaudio possint afficere : quod non fit cùm in minutiis ac subtilitatibus quibusdam solum ad disputationes comparatis hæretur.*

Citations are taken : they deserve, indeed, to be transcribed from the beginning to the end.

THE Preliminary Discourses likewise of *Petavius* to his Theological Works are as elegant and compleat an Instruction on this Head, and on the dispositions a Student is to bring to the Study of *Divinity*, as you can read.

BUT by a Method directly contrary to that I have been speaking of, and which the above-mentioned and some other judicious Writers have followed, this Study, both with respect to the Subject matter and the Manner of treating it, has frequently degenerated into fruitless Speculation and Contention. An infinite number of Questions have been started; Objections made to those Questions, and Solutions to those Objections, which often do not confute, but distinguish afresh, and breed one Question almost as fast they solve another. I hope I shall give no Offence in borrowing an Allusion from Lord *Bacon*, who brings the Fiction of *Scylla* as a lively image of this abuse of Learning. The up-
per

per part of her Body represented a comely Virgin; but then——*Candida succinētam lantantibus inguina monstros.* So the Generalities of the Schoolmen, their Definitions, Divisions, and Conclusions are, for a while, fair and proportionable; but when they descend into a detail of all the Subtleties, which the restlessness of human Wit can invent in Theological, no less than in other Matters, instead of a Womb fruitful with useful Information, and *that Wisdom*, the first Character of which, according to St. *James*, is to be *modest and peaceable* *, they end in Deformity, Altercation and Clamour.

THE complaint which the *Spanish* Critic made long ago, concerning the abuse of the *Mathematics*, is very applicable to this more sacred and important Study. And though it conveys little more than what I have just now observed, yet the Instruction being of that Moment, and, at the same time, so much neglected, it cannot be too often inculcated. † ‘ Use, says this valuable Author,

* Chap. 3d.

† Artes hæ, usu remoto longissime, ad ea sunt evedæ, quorum

‘ thor, is fet aside, and the Science screwed
 ‘ up to things, in which there is no Advan-
 ‘ tage, but only a barren kind of Contem-
 ‘ plation and endless Inquiry : for one
 ‘ Discuffion begets another without end
 ‘ or measure. And whereas the Principles
 ‘ of this Discipline, and a certain regular
 ‘ Progreffion in them, both sharpen and de-
 ‘ light the mind : fo when they are over-
 ‘ strained and carried beyond their due
 ‘ bounds, they become a torture to generous
 ‘ Difpofitions, and fuch as are formed for
 ‘ public benefit.’

I MUST confefs, when I refle&ct on feveral
 Treatifes of *Divinity*, which I have looked
 into, and feveral Difputations, at which I
 have been prefent, I cannot but think the
 following Obfervation of a thoughtful and

quorum nullus effet fructus, fed tantùm sterilis quædam
 contemplatio, & inq̄uifitio infinita: quoniam alia ex aliis
 fine modo ullo nafcuntur. Et ficut hujufmodi Disciplina-
 rum initia, & legitimi quidam progreffus juvant animos,
 acuunt, oble&ctant; fic magna & affidua exercitia carnifi-
 cinæ funt generofarum mentium & publico bono conditarum.
Lud. Vives, L. 5. de caufis corruptarum Artium.

judicious

judicious Pagan might frequently be of great use both to *Christians* and *Divines*. * ‘ *Aristotle*, says this Author, has excellently well observed, that we should never be so modest and reserved as when any thing relating to the Deity is in Question. For if we enter the Temples with composure, and approach to offer Sacrifice with our Eyes cast down, our Dress decent, and every other indication of Respect and Awe; with how much more cause ought we to observe all this, when we reason on the divine Nature, lest through Rashness or Irreverence, we either assert what we know not, or speak against the Truth we know ?’

FROM a habit of receiving into our Minds the most excellent things without the Respect and Reverence here recommended, such an

* *Egregiè Aristoteles ait, nunquam nos verecundiores esse debere, quàm cùm de Diis agitur. Si intramus Tempia compositi, si ad Sacrificium accessuri vultum submittimus, togam adducimus, si in omne argumentum modestiæ fingimur; quanto hoc magis facere debemus cùm de Deorum naturâ disputamus, ne quid temerè, ne quid impudenter aut ignorantes affirmemus, aut scientes mentiamur? Seneca.*

in sen-

insensibility almost always ensues, that any better information can with difficulty make an impression on a Breast already hardened : And Spiritual Medicine ceases to operate on the Mind from the same Principle as Physic taken wantonly, and without observing proper Prescriptions, has no effect, or a very bad one, on the Body *. Thus we often see Persons, who have been long inured to the Din of the Schools, as deaf to divine Subjects, as the Inhabitants about some parts of the *Nile* are said to be to all softer sounds than the Fall of the *Cataracts*.—The reason is obvious : the Lessons are often given in such a manner as rather depreciates than re-

* Quid quòd, ex illâ consuetudine recipiendi in animos res præstantissimas sine ullâ dignatione, ducitur callus, ne ulla deinceps ad virtutem exhortatio possit in pectus obduratum penetrare : nec aliter non prodest animis hæc medicina animorum, quàm nec corpora potest juvare pharmacum aut potio, cui, citra necessitatem, per lusum assuevimus. *L. Vives.*

Ideo Juvenes, inter morales illas altercationes, & tot strepitus de omni genere virtutum ac bonorum morum, nihil probitatis trahunt : quòd scilicet illa omnia sic dicuntur, ut nec commendari virtutis excellentia possit animis, nec vitiorum sceditas esse odio. *Idem.*

commends

commends the Subject, however sacred ; and thus, instead of creating a hatred to opposite Errors and Vices, it breeds an unbecoming and hurtful Familiarity with matters, which if considered in an advantageous light, would inspire more suitable Sentiments.

THERE yet remain two *Appendixes* of *Theological Studies*, which, though included in the Heads already treated, yet on account of their Importance deserve a particular Consideration ; These are *Casistry* and *Controversy*.—*Busenbaum*, as his Work stands now corrected, has given a very succinct and judicious Abridgment of *Cases of Conscience*, or *Moral Divinity*, which has been enlarged on by *La Croix*.—The *Summary* of Cardinal *Tolet* is much esteemed ; And *Layman* brought to the elaborate Work he has published on these Matters, all the succours of *Theology*, and a profound Knowledge of the *Canon* and *Civil Law*.—If these, or any other Authors of the same Body, have sometimes fallen into Errors, the Body (*that Wisdom might be justified by her own Sons* *) has corrected the Mis-

* *Matthew*, c. 11. v. 19.

takes of its Members, as soon as they were shown to have gone astray, and never maintained Opinions after they were condemned or censured by proper Authority.—The Clamour against the *Moral Divines* of the *Society*, which was raised by the *Provincial Letters*, and such like Libels, had the same Rise with a late idle Tale of a *Jesuit-King* of *Paraguay*: the former represented that Body as Corrupters of Christian Morality; the latter, as Rebels and Usurpers. Both opinions have been propagated, both believed, on Motives best known to the Authors. For Calumny spread, no matter how, will frequently prove an Over-match for Candour and Truth, till Time has applied his Touchstone, and proved the Temper of the Metal.

AFTER this brief mention of *Moral Divinity*, I cannot but desire you to read an * *Introduction to the Canon Law*, by *Fleury*, as containing a valuable branch of it. Indeed, it would not fall in with the Subject of this Discourse, but as it is grounded on Christian Morality: And accordingly the Author has

* *Institution au Droit Ecclesiastique.*

considered it, not as a Profession, by which a Name is to be acquired, or a Fortune raised; but as the Knowledge of those Rules we are first to practise our selves, and then bring others to observe, either by Counsel or Decision. For the *Canons* are not human Inventions, but the chief and sum of those Maxims and Observances, which the *Apostles*, inspired by the *H. Ghost*, and their Successors, guided by the same *Spirit*, have established at several Times, and on different Exigencies, from the beginning of the Church, in order to maintain or reinstate the Purity of the *Gospel* Discipline.

As for *Controversy*, besides the aid that Science receives from the other Parts of *Theology*, and the copious and excellent Works of the Great *Bellarmino*, you will find amongst the Writers of your own Country several who have distinguished themselves this way, and adapted their Writings to the particular Circumstances of the times in which they lived.—Mr. *Robert Manning* must be mentioned with singular Praise on this Occasion; and another Author still living, whose modesty,

defty, piety and Learning are. fo univerfally acknowledged, that *Doct̄or* * * * is the only Perfon who will not know it is Himfelf.—*Boffuet's Exposition of the Catholic Doctr̄ine*, undeceives the Reader of the abfurd and falfe Tenets which ignorance, prejudice and malice, have charged on the *Church of Rome*, and juftifies her Doctr̄ine by fetting it in its true Light. And as this incomparable Writer's ſkill in Controverfy was, what I hope your's will be, the Refult of comprehensive and uniform Knowledge of the *Scriptures* and *Eccleſiaſtical Antiquity*, rather than a Knack of quoting Texts and Paſſages, his Method is liberal, perſuaſive, and Solid.—*The Rule of Faith*, clears up that Cardinal Point concerning the Judge of Religious Controverſies, in a manner ſuperior to any thing I have met with elfewhere.—The diſtinguiſhed Talents of *F. R. Parſons* are too well known and admired to need any mention ; and his ſtrength appears no where greater than againſt *Dr. Barlow*, and the Attorney General *Sir Edward Coke*.

IN the Management of *Controversy* I have two things to recommend to you : the first, never to depart from that temper and mildness, with which the Spirit of Christianity always inspires its genuine Defenders : And makes them observe the Method of Physicians, who apply unpleasant Remedies, not to exasperate the Patient, but to heal the Disease. Secondly, to confine this Science to such matters only as are of its District.—When those who dissent from us are not enlightened by the same Truth, with which we are privileged, their Misfortune calls for our Tenderness, and is ever to be treated with that Charity, which is *gentle and compassionate* *, and *by Lips, which have made a League with Humanity* †. And if ever you enter this Religious List with any of your own Country, Remember good Sense, good Nature, and a disposition to Virtue, are the Characteristic of the *English*.—The other Caution to be observed in *Controversy* is, not to confound *Civil* Sanctions and things of mere *Temporal* concern with *Religious* Tenets and Matters of a *spiritual* and higher, in-

* 1 *Cor.* ch. 13.† *Prov.* ch. 31.

deed, but still very different Order.—As to the Nature and Extent of *Civil* and *Religious* Rights, the *Gospel* seems to have regulated their Claims and fixt their Boundaries by commanding its Followers * *To give to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God those that are God's*: and by those accurate Precepts St. *Paul* has given on this Head, and the Reasons he assigns for them †. And the primitive Christians, whose Circumstances were as difficult as all the adverse Powers of Earth united could make them, have left in their own Conduct, for above three hundred years, a full and plain Commentary on these and the like Texts ‡. Excluded by the Laws of the State from any share in public Affairs, they lived quietly under those, to whom Providence had either entrusted or permitted them; without alledging the Truth of their own Religious Tenets, or the Errors of their

* *Matthew*, ch. 22.

† *Romans*, ch. 13.

‡ *Vita Christi & Sanctorum Apostolorum & Martyrum verissimus Commentarius est verborum Magistri omnium Magistrorum. Bellarminus, de verbis Domini in cruce prolatis.*

Rulers, as a Plea for Exemption from such submission. Deprived of the free Exercise of their Religion, and of the common Advantages of Society, they only resented the Hardships they lay under by a Conduct which showed they deserved milder Treatment. Being instructed by their great Master that * *His Kingdom was of another World*, they engaged in no Faction or popular Commotion about the Concerns of *This*: And in their *Apologies* to the Magistrates of their respective States, they defied their most avowed Enemies to charge them with any breach of the public Tranquillity, or violation of the established Polity of their Country. A Libel on the Administration would have appeared to them a criminal Infraction of the Respect due to the Sovereign, which is one of the strongest bands of the Commonwealth, and for which the tenderest provision has been made by all Laws human and divine. They were as inoffensive and peaceable under a *Diocletian* as a *Constantine*. They considered the Times in which they lived, and acquiesced in that Order which had

* *Jahn*, ch. 18. v. 36.

appointed

appointed them to live in them *. Let me moreover, observe, that the Lenity of a Government gives it a particular right to the like Behaviour from all those who live under it; and more especially from Persons of equitable and ingenuous Dispositions.

AND now having gone through the several Divisions of sacred Learning, and the Authors I would recommend to you on each of them, I shall lengthen out the Catalogue by adding a few, whose Works have a great connexion not with *Divinity* only, but with Letters in general.—I think you cannot begin your Studies with a juster notion of the End, Measure, and Extent of them than may be gathered from *Mabillon's Treatise of Monastic Studies*. I do not know so useful a Work, and where so much Reading is joined to such elegance and ease. It is in two Parts, the first of which is Historical, and contains the state of Literature amongst the Monks, from the earliest Times of their Institution to our Days. The second contains general

* *Meminisse Temporum, quibus nati sumus. Tacitus, L. 4. Hist.*

Instructions concerning the Studies of Religious Men. It was designed as a Justification of the Studies of the *Benedictines*, and may be justly ranked amongst those Works, by which the great and excellent Author, and his Brethren *Dacheri*, *Ruinart* and *Menard* have proved in their own Persons, that Science is one of the greatest helps to religious Perfection, when undertaken with their Views, and carried on by their Example.—There are likewise several Observations and Precepts in * the *Method of Studies of the Society of Jesus*, which you cannot fail of approving, as being the Result of great experience and judgment, as well as of † *that Knowledge, which, according to St. Paul, is agreeable to Godliness.* ‡ *Monfieur Simon*, in his *Critical Library*, speaks very advantageously of this little Book.—*Lord Bacon's Advancement of Learning human and divine*, is a Reach of Genius beyond any thing perhaps, that our own or any other Country can boast of: He there opens so extensive and fruitful a Field of Knowledge, and gives such Directions for cultivating it, as the Learned themselves were

* *Ratio Studiorum*, S. J. † 1 *Tim.* ch. 6. ‡ *Tome I. c. 4.*
unac-

unacquainted with; till the Person, whom Mr. *Pope* calls *the Greatest and Wisest of Mankind*, made the Discovery and brought it to Light.—*Lewis Vivés* has wrote * of the causes of decay in Sciences, and of the method of teaching them, with such judgment, learning, and elegance, as to be esteemed the best Critic the *Spaniards* have had since *Quintilian*. His Works are not only profitable in point of all profane and sacred Erudition, but likewise with respect to Religion, in justice to which he lays down this Principle at setting out, † *That Piety is to be the Rule of all other Sciences.*—*The Theological Common-Places* ‡ of *Melchior Canus* are little inferior in method and elegance of Style to those Books in which *Tully* draws the Character of an accomplished Orator.

AND since not only general but particular Subjects have been illustrated by this Method;

* *De causis corruptarum Artium, & de Disciplinis tradendis.*

† *Oportet Pietatem esse reliquarum Institutionum Canonem.*

‡ *De Locis Theologicis.*

it will likewise be worth your while to be conversant with some of these. To give one Sample of Excellence in this kind ; The Preface of *Petavius* to his Books on the *Trinity*, which, as *Bossuet* has with great judgment observed, clears up and illustrates his whole System ; is extremely fine, and worthy a peculiar distinction even amongst that Author's Works.

* It is not easily to be imagined how much such Plans as these, and that extensive and universal Light in which they place Knowledge, contribute to enlarge the Mind, and give just notions of Tenets, Facts, and Authors ; at the same time that they show the Relation one Science has to another, and by what Coalition the several Parts of the Whole of Knowledge are formed : Which are the great Ends of Study, and the ripest fruits of Proficiency. † For it is a Truth which

* Quid est ergo quod vehementius homines in errorem inducat & fraudem, quam inferioribus niti rationibus, superiores autem illas & primas non tenere ? *Sadoletus*.

† Illud dicere fatis habeo, nihil esse in omni vitâ prius
Consilio ;

which cannot be too much insisted on, that nothing is more estimable than Justness of Mind and Discernment: All other Qualities have limited Uses; but Exactness in Judging is of general Use in every Branch of Science, in every Employment of Life. Those Books, therefore, which most conduce to form our Understanding, and render it as correct as may be, ought to have that share in our Application they so justly deserve; since all our Studies either have, or should have no other View.—The Generality of Men reason only within a certain narrow Circle, from Principles impressed either by the Authority of others, or their own Prejudices. But the knowing Man, the true *Philosopher*, and much more, the true *Divine* goes further, and begins higher. He does not stop either at the Opinions of other People, or at Notions, which are received before they are examined; he goes up till he has found such

Confilio; frustra que sine eo tradi cæteras artes; plusque vel sine Doctrinâ Prudentiam, quàm sine Prudentia facere Doctrinam. *Quintil.*

Sapientiam adjunge, Cui præparare ingenia nostra litteræ debent, non detinere ea, aut sibi vindicare. *Lipsius.*

fixt Principles and a Truth fo clear that it cannot be questioned; and that being discovered, he draws his consequences and never departs from them. A Scholar of this Stamp is not only instructed to be clear and uniform in what he knows, but likewise to be steady in his Conduct, unshaken in his Resolutions, though patient in the execution of them, even in his Temper, and constant in Virtue. This Method of Studying is, indeed, divested of that Noise and Show, in which the vanity and pride of Men dress up *Learning*; but it opens the way to real *Knowledge*; it hits the *Mark*, and at length, gains *the Prize* *.

IN what has been hitherto said, I have chiefly had an Eye to that Advancement, which either wholly or in great part depends on our selves. But there is, as I have already observed, another great Help to proficiency, which we must owe to others; I mean the Ability of the *Professor*.—I wish

* At nos plerique hodie ut omnium rerum, sic litterarum quoque intemperantiâ laboramus; nec Vitæ sed Scholæ discimus. *Seneca*.

you one, whose Judgment is solid and Notions clear ; who has sufficient Discernment in the Choice of his Matter, and Language to recommend it so disposed. The unpolished and even barbarous Stile in which this sacred Science has been sometimes delivered, can surely have no Advantage over Perspicuity and Purity of Expression ; and if it has been employed in Theological Matters, in Times which were not acquainted with any thing better, this can be no more an Argument for our continuing the use of it, than to pretend we should still build on like our *Gothic* Ancestors, in defiance to all that Harmony of Proportion and those Graces of Architecture, of which *Palladio* and *Jones* have revived the Rules, and set the Example to a happier and politer Age.

‘ I would have all sacred Matters, says
 ‘ an Author, whose Works are at once the
 ‘ precept and the pattern too, be treated in
 ‘ such a manner as becomes Persons of a li-
 ‘ beral and ingenuous way of thinking: for
 ‘ I can by no means approve of those who
 ‘ write on such Subjects with carelessness and
 ‘ inac-

‘ inaccuracy. Their Works carry with them
 ‘ no Character of genuine Piety, and are
 ‘ very unfit to inflame the Mind with the
 ‘ Love of God *.——I was moreover
 ‘ moved by this Consideration, says the po-
 ‘ lite *Muretus*, that *Plato* had very rightly
 ‘ observed, there ought to be a certain agree-
 ‘ ment between the Stile and the Subject:
 ‘ from whence it was easy to infer, that in
 ‘ order to treat divine Matters in a manner
 ‘ suited to their Dignity, the Language ought
 ‘ to have an affinity with them †.’——The
 accuracy of the *Classic* Authors may, in this
 respect, be a lesson to Professors of *Divinity*.

* Volo ut omnia Latinè, atque ut inter ingenuè eru-
 ditos maximè decet, dicantur. Nam hos, qui genere di-
 cendi inaccurato & incondito res Theologicas scribere ag-
 grediuntur, ego sanè non probo. Nullum enim inest in eis
 scriptis veræ pietatis specimen, non ad inflammandos in
 amorem Dei animos ulla apposita ratio. *Sadoletus, in Epif.*
ad Rom.

† Illud etiam me commovebat, quod præclarè à *Platone*
 scriptum noveram, orationi & iis rebus quæ oratione tractan-
 tur, quandam inter se cognationem intercedere oportere.
 Ex quo facilè intelligebam consequi, ut ad res divinas pro
 dignitate tractandas, divinum quoddam requireretur ora-
 tionis genus.

Not only the main purpose of their Writings, but every Incident, however foreign to the Studies they make Profession of, is touched with as great care and propriety, as if that alone had been the Object of their Application *. — I think the *Fathers* of the Church have made it past a doubt that all the *Speculative* and *Practical* Parts of the *Christian Doctrines*, that is, of the whole substance of *Theology*, may be so treated as to receive a new lustre from the ability of the Writer. The *Divines* I have mentioned through this Discourse, and several others, have confirmed the same Truth, which has likewise been greatly illustrated by the Works of the learned Cardinals *Contarini*, *Pole*, and the other Ornament of the sacred College above cited. Nay, *Vida* has shown that such an Attempt may not be, in some degree, unsuccessful in Prose only.

THE Order of my Subject has at length brought me to a Discussion, which I men-

* Quocirca prisca homines, qui Orbes illos Disciplinarum confecerunt, videas quidquid libris suis admiscent, adeo esse purum atque exactum, ut unum illud studuisse atque egisse semper dicas in vita. *Lud. Vivés.*

tioned

tioned above, concerning the most proper Method of giving Theological Lectures, so as to bring *Divinity*, as near as possible, to that Standard of Excellence, which has been proposed throughout this Discourse, and, namely, in the foregoing Paragraph. I shall therefore enter on it accordingly.

IT were to be wished, for the Advantage both of the Students and Professors, that the Divinity Lectures which *Maldonatus* gave at *Paris*, had been made public. I will only mention the sublime and difficult Treatise of the *Trinity*, in which he seems to have gone beyond his usual erudition and judgment, as great as they are acknowledged to be in his other Works. He has joined brevity with perspicuity, and says much in few words, which is a rare quality amongst *School Divines*. He divides this important Subject into *six* Chapters only, which make up no more than *ten* Sheets of paper; and are a proof that a compleat Course of *Divinity* might be given in Two years, which a *Sorbon* Professor can scarcely drag his Scholars through in Ten. He disposes these *Six* Chapters under

der particular Heads: In the *First*, to remove all Ambiguity, he gives an Explication of the Terms made use of in treating this Myſtery. In the *Second*, he expounds the Myſtery itſelf, but without entering on any Queſtion concerning it. The *Third* treats of the Method, by which the *Trinity* either has, or may be known by us. The *Fourth* aſſerts the Unity of the Divine Being in Three Perſons, againſt the Hereticks who divided it. The *Fifth* proves the Diſtinction of the Divine Perſons, againſt thoſe who confounded them; and the *Sixth* treats of the Proprieties of each of the Three Perſons in particular. His manner of citing is very brief: he gives the Subſtance of the Authorities he makes uſe of, and refers the Reader to the Works, from whence they are taken. This Method does not hinder his Lectures from throwing a ſufficient light on the chief and more important Subdiviſions, and affording every neceſſary aſſiſtance towards a further and more particular Information: at the ſame time, it neither ſurfeits nor wearies the Learner, and allows him freedom of thought, and leiſure for reading and reflexion. In commending this

compendious Method, I would not be suspected to think *Four* Years too long a term for the Study of *Divinity*: But I look upon all time and labour, without a proper Direction, in whatever Science, to be in a *Maze* rather than a *Way*; and such as may carry the Student about the Mart of Knowledge, but seldom and late lead him to it.— And as such Direction with respect to the public Lectures of *Divinity* must necessarily be of singular service, I hope I shall not be censured for assuming too much, if I give my opinion concerning them.—I must begin by owning very ingenuously, that I cannot approve of the Composition of those Lectures, which are generally given in the Schools; nor of the Length to which they are usually extended. Can we reasonably suppose that a young Professor can produce any thing of his own, comparable to the elaborate Performances of so many great Personages, who have joined distinguished Abilities and Industry to Age and Experience? There are no new *Discoveries* to be made in *Theology*; and, if there were, I presume they would not be brought to light by such raw

Adven-

Adventurers. And if any one will give himself the trouble to look into the Compositions of twenty modern Professors, he will find the *Lectures*, indeed, greatly *multiplied*, but the *Science* itself little *forwarded*: that they have proceeded, as the *Proverb* says, *in aliud*, not, *in melius*, and have given other *Words*, not other *Matter*. But, not to speak of the Subject of these Lectures; the manner of delivering them has been *Circular* rather than *Progressive*, and so far from *extending* the Boundaries of this Science, that it has not *cultivated* that Portion, of which it found her in Possession—In order to remove this Check on Improvement, and thus, at the same time to spare both the Professor and the Student that time and labour, which might be reserved to better Purposes; there ought, I think, to be in each University and Religious Order, a printed Course of *Divinity Lectures*, compiled from the most approved Authors, in a judicious, clear, and compendious manner; and thus compiled, made the Standard and Classic Author of each respective School. Some important Questions, in which whole Schools differ,

might be treated Problematically, and the Arguments on each side stated fairly (if such a thing can be) in separate Articles. *Confutation*, which is apt to take much time, should be treated sparingly, and only employed against errors and prejudices of Moment ; and not furnish fresh matter for *Objections*: For if it be too closely followed, it is as prejudicial to Knowledge, as it would be to an Army to omit the great purpose of the Campaign, and set down before every little Fort and Hold. Whereas if the Field be kept, and the main Enterprize pursued, other things come in of themselves.—This Course of Lectures should be so printed as to have all the Treatises detached from each other ; and given separately to the Students as they advance in their Studies.—But as the skill of the Professor helps greatly to the progress of the Scholar ; and nothing realizes our Attainments, if I may so speak, and renders us more Masters of a Subject, than to make a judicious Extract of a Work, in which it is treated with accuracy ; The Professor should abridge the chief Heads of these Lectures, and then deliver and explain them. The

smaller the *Quantity* was of such an Extract, the stronger would be the *Spirit*; and *half an hour's* writing a day would be sufficient to give the Student the *Heads* so digested; and *all* the assistance of *this kind* he could receive from his Professor's industry.—The Oeconomy of this Method, both with regard to time and labour, appears to me extremely advantageous, and well deserving the attention of those who have the government and direction of the higher Studies. The Scholars particularly, for whose benefit public Institutions should be chiefly calculated, would find their account in the leisure and opportunity it affords for Reflexion, and deriving their Knowledge from the purest and deepest Sources: Their Health, likewise, and Disposition to learn would be consulted: the former of which is frequently much impaired, and the latter quite worn out by so much writing.

LET a Professor make a Trial of the Method here proposed, in the * *Divinity Lectures*

* Prælectiones Theologicæ L. Lessii. Opus Posthumum, Lovanii, Anno, 1645.

tures of *Lessius*, or any other Author of the first note, and I am much deceived if he does not find *Ease* and *Advancement* both to himself and those, whose care he has undertaken, to be the *Result* of it.

BUT besides this part of a *Divine's* Institution, there is another which deserves no less consideration; and that is *Disputation*. This Exercise was originally introduced amongst Youth, that the necessity of giving an account in Public of what they had learnt, either as Opponents or Defendants, might oblige them to uncommon diligence; awaken the latent vigour of their Minds, and keep up an Alacrity, through a desire of Superiority, or shame of being overcome. And Persons, more advanced, conferred together; that having considered the Object of Inquiry on all Sides, they might, at length, perceive its real point of View, and true Light. *The derivation of the name in the *Latin* tongue shews this to have been the Origin of *Disputation*; and that it was only intended to clear

* Dicuntur Disputationes, quòd per eas Veritas ceu putaretur ac purgaretur.

up Truth, and remove whatever is an obstacle to the discovery of it. ‘ Nor can it be doubted but such Conferences would, like a gentle-friction, as an ancient Writer has observed, brighten up and polish that Truth, which is worn away by altercation and contest *.’ The Definition therefore of Disputation is, a cool and deliberate Search after Truth, amongst Persons as ready to hear the reasons of others, as to communicate their own: And those who are so determined in favour of their own Sentiments, as only to give ear to the contrary in order to oppose them, cannot seek information by such Discussions. The mere Disputant is resolved before he begins; the Reasoner, when he leaves off: and in this the use and abuse of Argumentation is chiefly visible.—But where the Attack and Defence are carried on without any regard to moderation and decency, and the Strife ends in Animosity and Noise, are we not obliged, with sorrow and surprize, to put the same Question to Theo-

* *Moderatâ quadam Studiorum collatione enitescit Veritas, tanquam attritu: nimium autem altercando amittitur.*
Pub. Mimog.

logy, which *Vivés* does to Philosophy? * *Is this the Exercise of Wisdom? this the School of so venerable a Discipline?* The Answer, indeed, is ready; that so gross a Mistake would be no less injurious to true Science, than to prefer the ribaldry of a *Thersites* to the debates of a *Messala*, or a *Chesterfield*.—But besides a proper regulation of the method of Disputation, the time employed in it should not exceed that due proportion, which this holds with the other Academical Exercises, the chief of which, unquestionably, are reading and thinking. For where there is not what *Cicero* terms *Sylva and Supellex*, sufficient and fit Matter to work on, the Artist might as well be employed about measuring Sounds or weighing the Wind; and the Result of all these Trials of Skill will be a displaying of Defects, instead of exerting Abilities.—There is likewise a further consideration which should over-rule and direct whatever can be said on this Head; which is, that all these Rehearsals of Learning, if they may be so called, ought to be adapted to future

* *Estne hæc Exercitatio Sapientię? Est hæc Professio venerandę Disciplinę?*

and real Use: and when this is otherwise, the faculties and workings of the Mind are not prepared, but perverted*. Care therefore should be taken both in the choice and management of the Argument, that all the Ends of this Exercise be answered. And the account which your judicious *Founder* made of it, is sufficient to recommend it to the Professors and Students of his *Society* †.—By the help of these Cautions, the Spirit of Party, which has found a way into those Schools, which ought to have banished it from all other Places, would be greatly abated; and Difficulties and Disputes cease, in which true *Theology* is no more concerned, than the *Sun* in the Wranglings of Philosophers, who dispute about Effects which it does *not* produce.

‡ I HOPE you will not think this System of
Studies

* Hæc Adoleſcentes ſibi ſcripta ſciant, ne aliter quàm dicturi ſint, exerceri velint, & in deſueſcendis morentur. *Quintil.*

† See his *Life*, by Bohours, B. 5. page 547.

‡ Quid enim? tam varia? tam multa? inquires. Nihil eſt; imo incredibile quàm citò hæc ſuſcipiantur & fiant; ſi
tenor

Studies comprehends too much. I might say a great deal to show the Proficiency I expect from you, is easy and gradual, provided you pursue it with constancy and order: that the Method I have proposed, is rather sedate and slow than hasty; and that every thing succeeds to those who persevere. What your present Situation will allow you only leisure to begin and advance in, may be fully attained hereafter. I had a farther View in this Essay, than that its use should end with your stay at the University. As your Knowledge increases, and is better established, you will in proportion be fitted for higher Attainments: for though there ought to be an uninterrupted *Progress* in Literature, yet there should be no *Anticipation*; and the Plan here laid down will first secure you a solid *Foundation*, by giving you a just notion of Theological Studies, and then enable you to raise a suitable *Superstructure*. To excel in any Branch of Learning, and especially in that Profession which takes in so many, requires great Application besides Capacity; and as

tenor & constantia fit, & quisque dies opus suum probet.
J. Lipsius, Epist. ad Hacquevillum.

in the latter respect, Talents have been plentifully entrusted to you, you should do your part, and second the liberal hand of Providence with respect to the former. To finish your Studies with a moderate Stock of Learning would but ill suit your Spirit and Parts: you must aspire to something more worthy the importance of the Concern, more worthy your self. Let Information and Knowledge, which at best, are in so many others, but the late and backward Fruit of the Remains of Life, be in You, the early Acquisition of undissipated Youth. In making you this Compliment, I only continue my Subject, and indulge myself in the prospect of seeing you, one Day, a Pattern of those Instructions, which friendship and partiality make you now think me qualified to give.

As to the number of Authors, and variety of Matter, I might, moreover, justify myself by the Authority of *Sadoletus*, one of the best Judges the Golden Age of *Leo* the Xth produced, who speaks in the following manner in his Book *on Right Education*; ‘ That
‘ at the Age at which his Nephew was, and
‘ even

‘ even afterwards, it was both useful and or-
 ‘ namental to be conversant with the Cha-
 ‘ racters and Writings of different Authors,
 ‘ because many things, of which daily expe-
 ‘ rience justifies the use, were thus learnt;
 ‘ and because various and extensive reading
 ‘ sharpens the Discernment, and makes the
 ‘ Judgment more steady. That otherwise
 ‘ our comparing Faculties would lie idle;
 ‘ and though in the choice of things we
 ‘ gave the Preference to what deserved it, yet
 ‘ this would seem the Effect of Chance ra-
 ‘ ther than Judgment: And as he desired the
 ‘ Youth, whose Mind he was forming,
 ‘ should be judicious, preferably to any other
 ‘ Commendation, this could never be com-
 ‘ passed without comparing several things to-
 ‘ gether. That a habit of deciding on the
 ‘ side of Merit could only be acquired by
 ‘ Experience, and particularly by that which
 ‘ was derived from various and useful read-
 ‘ ing: the Fruit whereof would be no less
 ‘ advantageous than pleasant*.’

I HAVE,

* *Est enim huic ætati, in quâ tu es, & verò etiam con-
 sequenti, magno ornamento simul & emolumento videre
 multorum*

I HAVE, however, this restriction to add to what the learned Cardinal has here laid down, that it signifies much less how many, than what Works we read ; and that this is applicable not only to the Books, but to the Knowledge they convey : What it is, concerns us much more, than how various and extensive ; and *Virgil's* advice * *Commend a large Farm, but Cultivate a small one*, will, if rightly applied, hold good in Literature,

multorum ingenia atque scripta, quòd & multa addiscuntur à multis, quæ ad usum & manum quotidie opportuna accidere possunt ; & Lectio varia atque multiplex judicandi vim prudentiamque confirmat, quæ si in uno tantùm genere versetur, nec habeat quocum id comparet, non delectu ullo ad id se applicavisse, etiam si sit optimum, sed casu & fortunâ in illud solum ineidisse videatur. At nos delectu volumus & judicio valere vel maximè ejus Adolescentis naturam, de quo jamdudum insistimus loqui - - - Quod quidem sine comparatione plurium fieri non potest : quam nobis probandi & adsciscendi facultatem usus rerum multarum, imprimisque lectio erudita & varia adfert - - - Nec solùm egregia utilitas, sed maxima quoque delectatio ex lectione variâ percipietur. *Sadol. de reëtâ institutione.*

* . . . Laudato ingentia Rura,
Exiguum colito.

as well as in Husbandry. * Crowding our Memory is no more improving our Understanding, than loading our Stomachs is increasing our Stock of Health; and we might as well make an Estimate of the goodness of a Man's Constitution by the Bulk and Circumference of his Body, as of his Learning from the useless load with which his Mind is burthened. This manner of knowing by the Memory only, does not so much as deserve the name of Knowledge: for to know, is to understand a Subject, and form a true Judgment of it. Now this is very different from having our Memory strung, if I may use the Expression, with an infinite number of Names, Epochs, Quotations, and even memorable Events and Actions. Mr. *Locke* has observed, ' that nothing almost has done
' more harm to Men dedicated to Letters than
' giving the name of Study to Reading, and
' making a Man of great Reading to be the
' same thing with a Man of great Know-

* Idcirco studiosi, qui, nihil intermittendo, multa legunt, multa audiunt, multa scribunt & colligunt, Judicio ferè seipsos privant, præcipuo bonorum omnium in hac vitâ. *Vivés.*

' ledge.'

‘ ledge.’ A want of Attention to this Restriction on *Sadoletus’s* Advice causes Students to wander from one Subject to another, till it fares with them, as *Seneca* says of those who spend their Lives in travelling, * ‘ Who are received as Guests every where, but have no where the welcome of Friends.’

‘ It may be justly doubted, says Sir *William Temple*, whether the weight and number of so many other Mens Thoughts and Notions, may not suppress our own, or hinder the Motion and Agitation of them, from which all Invention arises; as heaping on Wood, or too many Sticks, or too close together, suppresses, and sometimes quite extinguishes a little Spark, that would otherwise have grown up to a noble Flame †.’

* Ut hospitia multa habeant, amicitias nullas.

Ne confusa & vaga Lectio sit, aut defultoria & interrupta. Hoc plerisque evenit; & velut ex equo in equum se trajiciunt, ab hoc Scriptore in alium, ab isto Argumento in illud: quo fructu? momentaneæ voluptatis, & ut tempus suum, imo & se fallant. *Lipsius, Epist. ad Hacquevillum.*

† *Essay on Learning.*

Now

Now to bring these general Reflexions home to the Subject of *Divinity*; I shall make the Application in the Words of *Lectusius* *. ‘ Let every thing, says he, be so explained as to leave no Obscurity in any part of it; and yet so as to leave room for the Reader’s Genius and Reflexion, whose Mind is not to be oppressed with too much reading: for an attentive consideration of a few matters improves the Understanding, and stirs up the Affections more powerfully than much reading and a long Deduction of Arguments: This, however, when the Subject requires it, should not be wanting.’

THOUGH I am very sensible you ought, and can allow but very little time to human Literature during your Theological Studies,

* Omnia sic explicentur, ut intelligi possit ratio singulorum, & ut locus ingenio & meditationi Lectoris relinquatur; neque mens multâ lectione obruatur. Plus enim illustrat mentem, ac potentiùs movet affectum intenta paucarum rerum consideratio, quàm multa lectio longusque multorum argumentorum discursus; qui tamen, ubi res postulat, non desit. *Præf. ad Opuscula Theol.*

yet I would by no means have you neglect, and quite lay it aside. * Some Relaxation may be very properly allowed, and that which is taken from polite Learning, as it unbends, so it polishes and perfects the Mind, refines and gives vigour to the Imagination, strengthens Reason, and forms true Taste and Judgment. *Sadoletus* (for I must still borrow assistance from his Authority) in a Letter to Cardinal *Pole*, sets forth the account we are to make of the different Branches of Learning by the following Allusion; † ‘ That
 ‘ it is the business of a prudent Oeconomist
 ‘ to take care of the preservation and wel-
 ‘ fare of the whole Family, not of some
 ‘ one Part only; but still so to temper the
 ‘ care of the whole, that the most valuable
 ‘ Parts be chiefly looked after.’ — When you think fit either to refresh or enlarge your

* Non obstant hæ Disciplinæ per illas euntibus, sed circa illas hærentibus. *Quintil.*

† Esse boni Patrisfamilias totius domûs tutelam & procurationem, non unius duntaxat partis gerere; verùm ita totius, ut potissimæ quæque in eâ diligentius curentur partes. *Epistol. L. 8. Epif. 4.*

knowledge in Philosophy, besides the review of the Lectures you have already received, you may read *du Hamel's * Philosophy adapted to the use of Schools*, which is an elegant and judicious Work ; and Experience taught the *Jesuits* in their foreign Missions, that it was of greater service to them than any other of the kind.—*Strada's † Academical Entertainments*, *Fenelon's Reflexions on Grammar, Poetry, &c.* *Longinus, on the Sublime*, and such like Writings will preserve and improve the justness of your Notions, and rather further than be a hindrance to more serious Studies.—I could read *Juvenci's* little Book ‡ *of the Method of learning and teaching*, with Pleasure and Advantage, every year.—A late *English Translation of the Greek Critic*, with Notes and Observations by Mr. *Smith*, does Credit to the Author, and reflects a Lustre on *Longinus* himself. As conversant as you are in the Original Language, you cannot but be highly pleased with this Performance.

* *Philosophia ad usum Scholæ accommodata.*

† *Prolusiones Academicæ, Reflexions sur la Grammaire, &c.*

‡ *De ratione discendi & docendi.*

—The *Reflexions on the Character of Iapis*, in *Virgil*, by Dr. *Atterbury*, are an Instance of the finest and most useful Criticism, exemplified in one Subject, though applicable to a thousand. —And who can read the Account Mr. *Warburton* has given of the *Elusinian Rites*, without admiring a superior Erudition, and strength of Thought joined to equal Delicacy and Correctness? Part of the *Sixth Book* of the *Eneid* was almost as mysterious as the *Rites* themselves of *Ceres*, till this Gentleman, by an effort of Genius peculiarly his own, had showed that the chief Intent of the Poet was to be explained by an Allusion to those *Ceremonies*. — You will find in several other short Works of our Countrymen as much Discernment and Taste, as in the most celebrated Productions of the Ancients, or modern Authors of other Nations.

GREAT care, however, should be taken that these youthful Studies do not take up too much of your Time ; and this not only when they would manifestly interfere with others more suited to your present Situation ;

but afterwards, when you have more leisure, and are free to employ it as you please : *
' For we are not to be always learning these
' things, but ought to have already learnt
' them ; and only allot them that Vacancy
' which is less fit for things of more serious
' Consequence.'

THE necessity of a foreign Education is apt to render those who lie under it, very imperfect in their own Language : and as this Disadvantage takes off from the Merit of many good and valuable Qualifications, and makes Attainments in every branch of sacred Literature, not only less ornamental but less useful, great care should be taken to be correct and accurate, at least, in our native Tongue.

ONE great Advantage which will accrue from this, is an Ease in speaking in public :

* Non discere debemus ista, sed didicisse.

Tamdiu istis immorandum est, quamdiu nil agere majus animus potest. *Seneca.*

Rudimenta enim hæc nostra esse debent, non opera : via, non meta.

for

for when the *Mind* is fraught with such Knowledge as I have endeavoured to recommend through this Dissertation, and the *Tongue* prepared to give it Utterance, nothing but *Use* can be wanting to form a Christian Speaker. I think it therefore a matter of great Moment that all young Divines should be very early initiated in this Practice, as being essential to their Calling, and which several of them will have occasion to exercise as long as they live. Some Preparation will at first be necessary; but Habit will gradually wear away the Difficulty, and make them every Day more ready. And let it be remembered, I am not forming an Orator to make a display of Eloquence before a Profane Audience, but one who is to explain and enforce the Christian Doctrine in such a manner as may reach the Hearts and reform the Lives of his Hearers. This will sufficiently qualify him to *preach*, not himself, indeed, but *Jesus Christ, and him crucified*. With this View, therefore, let an *English* Divine not appear a *Foreigner* in his own Country.

BUT let no Temptation of Pleasure or Curiosity, no pretext of polishing either your Mind or Language, prevail on you to read any Work in which Revelation and the sacred Truths of Religion are treated with Disrespect.—For Instance, the CHARACTE-
 RISTICS.—And here let me stop a while at this celebrated Name, this prime Idol of Unbelievers, * *this sounding Brass and tinckling Cymbol*. I am persuaded a secret tendency to Infidelity, the capital Crime of a superficial and sensual Age, has contributed more to the Reputation of this Work, than the acknowledged ingenuity and politeness of those Parts of it, where the Subject is mere Literature. This unhappy bias on the Mind has not only made the Free-thinker pleased with the open and concealed Profaneness and Irreligion, which are liberally scattered thro' this motly Performance; but also overlook the frequent stiffness and Pedantry of the Stile, the weak and false Reasoning, and the low and ungentlemanlike Abuse, which would have given great offence in any Writing, designed to recommend Religion, instead of de-

* 1 *Corinthians*, ch. 13.

preciating

preciating it. But the Author has taken every Opportunity, not only in these Effays, but elsewhere, to improve in his Admirers a disregard to Revelation, and let his other Readers observe, with what Discernment he was gifted, wherever those Subjects are in Question, which are founded on it. This remarkable Sagacity made him discover ‘ that Dr. ‘ *Burnet* was the greatest Pillar of the Church ‘ since its first Founders * : and that *Origen*, ‘ the good Father, was the best of those they ‘ call so.’ The same justness made him advise a Student at the University, who was preparing for holy Orders, to read, not the *Scriptures*, or such *Authors* as expound and enforce the Doctrine contained in them, but *Simplicius* and *Epiſtetus*, and, when he was more advanced, the divine *Plato*. The wild Absurdities, with which the Morality of the Latter is so frequently blended, ought, one would think, to have controuled such Advice, and checked any Suggestion, that *Abana and Pharphar, the Rivers of Damascus, were better than all the Waters of Israel* †. But be-

* *Letters to a Student*, Letter 7 and 5.

† *4th Kings*, ch. 5.

cause this Philosopher teaches nothing beyond the reach of unassisted Reason, and was, moreover, a polite Writer, and a Heathen, these Advantages were too great not to make that proud *Scorner* give him the preference to any of the *Disciples* of the humble *Jesus*, however recommendable for the purity of their Doctrines, their Learning and Eloquence *.——A Writer of equal Judgment and Penetration has set the *Characteristics* in their real and genuine Light, and vindicated good Sense and Religion without any trespass on Decency and good Breeding; in both which Qualifications Dr. *Brown* has the Advantage of the noble Lord, as much as in Cause and Argument. He has shown the wily Author, like the Tempter, to have only a glossy outside, and to be a Reptile as to all the rest; that no confidence can be placed in his Abilities, no stress laid on his Arguments; that his genius creeps, and his pride

* Quòd si quæ de Deo à Philosophis dicta sunt cum solidâ Theologorum doctrinâ comparare libuerit, reperiemus hos quidem certa omnia, & explorata, & salutaria tradere; illos neque satis quod dicunt intelligere, & credula ingenia perniciosissimarum opinionum laqueis implicare. *Muretus.*

licks the Duft. He has followed him thro' all the Mazes, of Ribaldry mistaken for Wit, Spleen and Affectation for Elegance, and Buffoonery for Humour. He has detected idle Sophistry in the disguise of Philosophy, a contempt and hatred of revealed Religion, under an appearance of zeal for moral Virtue ; and, at length, buried the mad Assaultant of Christianity in the heaps he had raised against it.

DOCTOR *Conyers Middleton* (though such a *Title* is bestowed on such a *Writer* with the same Propriety as *Lucus* is derived *à non lucendo*) for the honour of the *Christian Cause* has met with the same fate from Mr. *Walton*, who has shown, in a very accurate and satisfactory manner, *the Free Inquiry* to be nothing more than a licentious and profane Misrepresentation of whatever is true and sacred, and no less an insult on Reason and Equity than on Religion. And as this Performance is as much distinguished for Piety as for good Sense and Erudition, it cannot fail of pleasing every Reader who seeks Truth, and has Discernment to relish those

Qualities

Qualities which adorn it, strength of Argument, Order, and Perspicuity*.

BUT that the boldest Invader of the rights of Heaven might find an Antagonist of Abilities equal to his own Folly, Pride, and Impiety (than which no Character can be higher) the overthrow of *Bolingbroke* was reserved to the genius of a *Warburton*.

† A PERVERSENESS of a different kind from that of the above-mentioned Champions of darkness, has produced another Set of Writers, who have deserved almost as ill of Mankind as the Author of the *Characteristicks*; and are therefore to be avoided as the very bane of Virtue and good Sense. These, under the pretence of giving a *general* Picture of human Nature, have copied only the *exceptionable* and *vicious* Parts of it: and their Philosophy, instead of being a true *history* of

* Printed for Needham, over-against Gray's-Inn-Gate, 1756.

† Præposterii homines, quibus nihil pensi est evertere omnia, dummodo cæteris doctiores acutioreſve videantur, ac sine more modoque, gravissimo in argumento ludant. *Bosſuet, Diſſert. in Pſal. c. 1. n. 6.*

Man,

Man, has been a *Satir* on his Defects and Failings. Lord *Shaftesbury*, with a view to depreciate Religion, and vilify those Lights and Succours which our Ignorance and Weakness derive from it, extolled moral Virtue beyond its due Sphere, and raised Man to a fantastic Height, from which his Fall must be more ruinous: These have reversed this Author's Folly, and sunk Man so much below his real Excellence, as to represent him void of all Pretensions to Goodness, and incapable of any moral Perfection. But neither of these Systems (if Dr. *Brown* will give me leave to take a Metaphor from his excellent Essays) being fastened to the Throne of Truth, they hang trembling from a shadowy and aerial Fabric, blown up by sportive Imagination.—I shall produce an Instance of the latter kind of Writing from the *Maxims* or *moral Reflexions* of the Duke of *Rochefoucauld*; a smaller, but not less celebrated Piece than the *Characteristics*. Numberless Readers have been wrapt up in the merit of a Work, which seems to Fathom the Heart of Man, and unfold all its Intricacies, and discover its most secret Springs: and all this in a new
and

and polite manner. Now to speak my own Sentiments, the Performance itself has no better Title to *Maxims*, under which it made its first Appearance, than the Observations contained in it, to Justness and Truth. For *Maxims* are Truths grounded on first Principles, and generally understood and received : and therefore cannot be applied to such Assertions as are new, abstruse, little known, and the mere result of Subtilty and Refinement ; which is the Character of those under Consideration. An attentive Perusal will discover the First of them, that *all our Virtues are but Vices in disguise*, to be as a Text, enlarged on and applied through the Work, and which the Author has endeavoured to exemplify at the expence of Candour and Justice ; setting human Actions in the most unfair and disagreeable Light, and interpreting the most harmless Intentions with Prejudice and Malignity. Vanity and Disingenuity, the two grand Weaknesses of all such Writers, furnish a great Part of the Articles ; in which, quaintness of Expression is visibly the Aim, rather than justness of Sentiment ; and general and atrocious Accusations are
brought

brought against Mankind, that *Monfieur de la Rochefoucaud* may find room for a witty and well turned Saying.—It may feem ftrange that Men fhould be pleafed with fo ill-favoured, and, at the fame time, fo unlike a Picture of themfelves, efpecially in a Piece which carries with it an Air of Difcernment and Sincerity ; whereas each Perfon in particular would look on it as the higheft Indignity to have the tenth Part of the Charge fixt on himfelf. Nor is it lefs matter of Wonder, to reflect, that the Philofophical Writings of *Epietetus*, *Seneca*, *Plutarch* and *Cicero* are as much fuperior in *weight* of Matter, *worth* and *importance* of Subject, *foundnefs* of Argument, *life* of Invention and *depth* of Judgment, to all the Froth and Fal-lacy of thefe Sophifters, as the pure and genuine Light of Nature and Reason is to the *ignis fatuus* of loofe and wanton Fancy. —The Pleafure and Improvement which is propofed from fuch Works, puts me in Mind of the Occupation which *Milton* has affigned to the fallen Angels :

Others

Others apart sat on a Hill retired,
In thought more elevate, and reason'd
high. . .

Of Good and Evil much they argued
then. . .

Vain Wisdom all and vain Philosophy!
Yet with a pleasing Sorcery could charm,
 &c. *Par. L. B. 2. V. 557.*

And as to the Leaders themselves in this dark
Undertaking to degrade Nature and pervert
Reason, must it not be owned that they have
pointed out a Path to their Followers, which
bears too near a resemblance to that in the
dreary Regions, through which the *Poet* leads
his Travellers?

Ibant obscuri, solâ sub Nocte, per Um-
 bram,
Perque Domos Ditis vacuas, & inania
 Regna*.

In which Description there is not one Idea;
no, not a single word, which, in a moral
Sense, is not emphatically true of these †

* *Æn. L. 6.*

† *Baruch, ch. 3d.*

‘ Sons of Anger, who seek after the Wis-
 ‘ dom that is of the Earth.—These Tellers
 ‘ of Fables, and Searchers after Prudence and
 ‘ Understanding, but who know not the
 ‘ ways of Wisdom, nor have her Paths in
 ‘ their Mind.’ What Experience justifies,
 may be with freedom asserted, that they have
 bewildered their Disciples in the endless Intri-
 cacies of Fancy and Hypothesis, and, in the
 End, left them exposed and defenceless amidst
 all the Attacks of Scepticism and Infidelity.
 And the Conclusion which every thinking
 Person must draw, is, * ‘ That God chose
 ‘ them not, nor shewed them the way of
 ‘ Knowledge ; that they perished because they
 ‘ were unprovided of true Prudence, they
 ‘ perished through their own Folly.’

BUT the Caution you are to use in Reading
 would be very insufficient, was it only to
 warn you against such Authors as are pro-
 fessedly dangerous or pernicious. You must
 extend it to all Works, by whosoever wrote,
 and however recommendable on other Ac-
 counts, which are infected with Errors and

* *Baruch*, *ibid.*

Heresies, or incline, by a secret Biass, to what is less laudable either in Opinion or Practice. And it would seem strange that a *Christian*, and especially a *Divine*, should think the contrary Method warrantable, or consistent with the Morals of the *Catholick Church*. If so plain a Truth needed to be supported by Authority, I might cite that of *St. Basil*, ‘ that a Religious Man is not only
 ‘ to abhor all erroneous Doctrine, but to
 ‘ read no Books which are not wrote with an
 ‘ Orthodox Spirit, and approved by the
 ‘ Church : because the Words of the Ungod-
 ‘ ly, according to the *Apostle*, are a Gan-
 ‘ grene, which by degrees vitiates and taints
 ‘ all that is found.’ The good Opinion we entertain of the Work, as *St. Ignatius* has observed, passes insensibly to the Author ; and has frequently such an Influence as to make every thing he says, seem reasonable. Besides, all moral and sacred Subjects have, I presume, been treated, with greater Advantage, by Writers, whose Doctrine is above any Exception ; who had their share of Learning no less than those of a different Character, and were, moreover, enlightened by
 the

the Sun of Truth and Righteousness, in comparison of which the oblique Rays of all human Understanding, in what regards Religion, are no better than Illusion and Darkeness *.—What I have here said, reminds me to observe, that in *the Elevations of the Mind on the Mysteries*, wrote by Bossuet, and mentioned in another part of this Discourse, there are some Propositions which, taken in rigour, favour the Errors of *Jansenius*. They are supposed, indeed, to have been inserted by the Editors of this Posthumous Work of the Bishop of *Meaux*, who were Abettors of that Sect, that Prelate's Character and all his other Writings being perfectly clear from any such Imputation.

† My Design in this Discourse has been to give you a right Notion, and trace out such
a Plan

* Lumen mentis humanæ Deus est, quem qui cognoverit, & in pectus admiserit, illuminato corde Mysterium Veritatis agnoscet: remoto autem Deo cælestique Doctrinâ, omnia erroribus plena sunt. *Lact.*

† Atque hæc omnia, pro rerum quidem magnitudine breviter præstiti. Nec enim ad disputationes & amœnitates

a Plan of *Ecclesiastical Studies*, as I thought most conducive to public and private Benefit. With this View I have set down not only what I would have you follow, but likewise what, in my opinion, you should avoid: the Knowledge of both being equally necessary to the End I propose. I have given you briefly my Reasons for whatever I have advanced on either of these Heads. The Plan is drawn, not for Ostentation, or from Theory alone, but from Practice and some Experience. * I have opened the *Fountains* of sacred Knowledge, deduced the *Streams*, and directed you to follow them in their *Course*, and, above all, to observe their *Effects*: And, if I am not too partial to my own way of thinking, you have in this Discourse a sufficient Guide in two important Enquiries, *the Choice and Method* of your

me diffudi ; sed pressis habenis currum hunc, ut sic dicam, continui intra orbitas *Usus & Actionis*. *Lipsius, Præf. in Doc. Civ.*

* Vis enim & Natura rei, nisi perfectè ante oculos ponatur, qualis & quanta fit, intelligi non potest. *Cicer. de Ora.*

Studies.

Studies. The greater and more useful Part of what I have taken the liberty to offer, has been drawn from Observation rather than Reading, and more deference paid through the whole to Wisdom than to Learning, to Reason than to Authority, or Custom; and to real and universal Use than to any other Consideration. * *To be, rather than seem to be,* is the Character I would aim at, both in my Studies and Manners; and shall always look on *Learning* rather as a *Means* to perfect the Mind, than the *Mind* as an *Instrument* to acquire Learning. Was I to begin again the Study of *Divinity*, I would follow the Method laid down here, and am so convinced of its Usefulness that I have pursued it for several Years, and will continue to go on with it as long as I live. I do not say this as any Argument of the Expediency of the Rule, but of his Candour and Sincerity who prescribes it.

BESIDES your Request, I had another View in putting together the Materials of this Dis-

* *Esse quàm videri.*

course.—* It has been an Occasion of recapitulating the several Heads of a Science, which very agreeably fills up the leisure Hours of a Country Retirement ; and, like a Picture drawn from Life (if the Sentiment be not too vain) has given me back the Image of myself.

† It has likewise afforded me an Opportunity of making a grateful, though slender Acknowledgment to a Body of Men, for the Entertainment and Benefit I have received from the Writings of those Persons, who have been the Ornament of it.

‡ I HAVE, moreover, endeavoured to make
the

* Nam & amœnis in locis sumus, quodque cunctorum maximum est, quæcunque pacem & tranquillitatem animi turbare possunt, omnia penitus ex animo ipso ejecimus atque expulimus. Itaque nihil jam cogitamus, nisi cum *Philosophia* habere rationem. *Sadolet. ad P. Bembum.*

† Amicum me toti Societati vestræ esse, quidni profitear? quæ prima litteris his aliisque me imbuunt, quæ salutaria in omnem vitam præcepta dedit & præivit. *J. Lipsius, Epist. ad M. Ruderum. S. J.*

‡ In hanc Sententiam non sanè ut primùm ejusmodi res tractare

the Studies I have treated of, appear no less noble and agreeable, than they are useful and solid; being persuaded that the chief Reason why so many young Men apply themselves to them with such Unwillingness, at the University; and lay them quite aside, on leaving it, is, because they consider them in a Light which represents them as laborious, abstracted, and barren. They are tempted to think, it can be of no great Consequence to be acquainted with things, which are taught in a dry and tiresome manner, which are seldom the Subject even of serious Conversation, and have little Relation with the business and duties of Life. To this is owing that gloomy and disagreeable Notion they entertain of *Theology*. No Attendant of Pleasure's smiling Train is supposed to wait on this divine Science: Her constant Company is the whole Family of constraint.—It has been remarked, indeed, on Methods of Teaching, in general,

tractare cœpi, statim adductus sum; sed post multas cogitationes, ac per quosdam quasi gradus, ad eam accessi: ut non temerè, illâ inventâ, Finem progrediendi fecisse, atque in eâ quievissè videar.

that they place whatever is agreeable on one side, and what is painful on the other: Drudgery on that of Study, and Pleasure on being relieved from it. The Part therefore that a Student takes in such Cases, is, to submit to the Subjection with an ill Grace, and get rid of it as soon as he can. * The Observation may be carried still higher, and that univereal Disrelish for every kind of literary Improvement, which is so remarkable in some Churchmen, can be assigned to no other Cause, than the unpleasing manner in which they learnt the higher Sciences. They see all Learning through that wrong *Medium*, by which their share of it was conveyed. On the strength of this Prejudice, the most trifling Amusements and very indifferent Company are preferred to the Pleasure of reading the best and most entertaining Authors, and

* Ille enim *Decori* splendor, quo ad Dei proximè imitationem accedimus, usque adeò hoc tempore oppressus & perturbatus est, ut ne minimam quidem partem luminis sui videatur obtinere: qui tamen è Philosophiâ bonis ingeniis inferendus atque insinuandus est; si qui videlicet sunt, qui verè magni viri, & in se ipsis perfecti homines cupiant evadere. *Sadolet. Epif. ad Ran. Farnesium, Card.*

making

making their own Reflexions on them. Hence pious and judicious Men have sometimes thought they had Cause to lament * *the holy Place laid waste, the Altar profaned, and the Stones of the Sanctuary scattered in all the high Ways.* A Disesteem for the Person, and, what is worse, by an unfair, yet too common Conclusion, a Disregard for the Profession, is the Effect of such Improperities. And those who fall into them, experience the very reverse of what was said of the Images of *Brutus* and *Cassius* on Occasion of their not being seen at *Junia's* Funeral, *eo ipso præfulgebant, quòd non visebantur.*

It will likewise appear from what has been said, that *Divinity* is not that abstruse and inaccessible thing, the Laity are apt to imagine it: but a Science full of Light and Satisfaction, adapted even to moderate Capacities, attainable by moderate Application, and suitable, in some Degree, to Men of all Professions, who have had the advantage of a liberal Education, and have leisure to read, and a Disposition to reflect. St. *Austin* and

* *Macch. L. 1. cap. 4. & Lament. c. 4.*

St. *Hierom* explained the most difficult Parts of *Scripture*, and even some curious Speculations and Subtilties to Courtiers, Officers in the Army, and Governors of Provinces. And when the latter of these holy and discreet Doctors performed the same Office to *Roman* Ladies of the first Quality, he did not think the Employment unbecoming either Himself or Them. And if my own Country Women, who are not inferior in sense or goodness of Disposition to those of any other Climate, would allow me to make the Application to themselves; some of that Time, which they seem so much at a Loss to fill up, should be given to an humble and attentive reading of the *Scriptures*. This, however, must be undertaken with such Cautions, and under such Restrictions as alone can make the Occupation useful, and, perhaps, even adviseable to the Sex. Next to the *Scriptures*, the History of the Church, and Books of Christian Morality might share their leisure. Such a Method, I am persuaded, would render their Lives much more agreeable than they now are, even in the highest and most opulent Stations; the Duties of the several
Relations

Relations of Life would be complied with more exactly ; and *England*, as well as *Rome*, might boast her *Paula's*, *Algasias's* and *Marcella's*. I must confess the Men should set the Example in an affair, in which it would not be to their Commendation to have copied only that of the other Sex : and without expecting they should lay aside innocent and moderate Diversions, much less neglect to discharge what they owe to the Public, and to their own Families ; my respect for their Persons and my zeal for their Salvation makes me earnestly desire, that spiritual Culture and Improvement was more the business of the Nobility and Gentry of this Kingdom, than at present it seems to be.—It is, indeed, too melancholy a Truth, as Sir *William Temple* has somewhere observed, that though leisure and solitude are the best Effect of Riches, as giving us the opportunities for Thought and Reflexion, yet they are generally avoided by the Rich ; who by seeking Company and Amusements plainly show they are Strangers to what, next to doing Good, is the greatest advantage of Wealth.—But, sure, Persons in the most exalted Fortune can esteem

teem it no impropriety to be refered to a Duke of *Montausier*, who, amidst the tumult of a Camp, the distractions of a Court, and the cares of the *Dauphin's* Education read the *New Testament*, in *Greek*, a hundred and twenty times, with all the attention due to that sacred Work. — When I was in *France*, I was acquainted with an Officer of the Train, as conversant in sacred Literature as most Divines ; and esteemed by the Gentlemen of his profession for his Bravery, and by the Women for his Breeding.

AND NOW, to return from a Digression, by no means foreign to my Purpose, and, in itself, of very great Importance : If in this Essay I have any where departed from the ordinary ways of the School, my Reasons for so doing, will, I believe, be my Justification rather than my Excuse *. For though I have no pretension to apply to the *Divine* I have endeavoured to form, what *Cicero* says

* Amentis est enim superstitione præceptorum contra rationem causæ trahi. *Quint.*

of his *Orator*, * ‘ That he had taken the
 ‘ Model, not from common Notions, but
 ‘ from the Rules of true Science, and had col-
 ‘ lected all the Precepts and Observations of
 ‘ the most excellent Masters in the Art he
 ‘ was treating of ;’ yet I should be wanting
 to Sincerity, and even deserve less well of
 you, did I not acknowledge, I have had an
 Eye to the same Original ; and now the Mo-
 del is finished, I send it with a good Will, at
 least, equal to that which accompanied those
 famous *Dialogues* from the Parent of *Roman*
 Eloquence to young *Lentulus*.

It may, perhaps, betray a weakness to
 confess, that the Novelty of the Subject has
 conduced, not a little, to make me go tho-
 rough the Performance with alacrity. For
 though there may be, for any thing I know,
 several Methods, Treatises, and Essays on
 the Study of *Divinity*; it is a Testimony I

* Scripsi igitur *Aristoteles* more Libros de Oratore, quos
 arbitror Lentulo tuo non fore inutiles : abhorrent enim à
 communibus præceptis ; ac omnem Antiquorum, & *Aristo-
 teleam* & *Isocrateam* rationem oratoriam complectuntur.
Epif. Fam. 1. 9.

owe to Truth when I tell you, I never saw one that has any Affinity with this. And the Production, as well as the Conduct of the Piece being my own, it has been wrote from Persuasion and Sentiment ; and, I hope, with a View to recommend, not myself, but the Subject.

* I WISH all Clergy-men were, in some degree at least, blest with a studious Disposition, as it would go a great way towards making them valuable, good, and happy. This turn of Mind would cause them to avoid the World and worldly Conversation ; would give them a love of Silence and Retirement, and an ease in uniting themselves with God, and finding that Tranquillity they sought for in lifting in his Service. They would be but little sensible to the Allurements of external Objects, and to those Trifles and Impropr-

* Nulla potest nobis esse præstantior actio, neque ad naturam vitamque accommodatior, quàm nobis-met-ipsis, qui in ordine rerum summum propè & nobilissimum genus sumus, rectè, & commodè, & convenienter uti ; in quo & Naturæ nostræ perfectio maximè inest, & vitæ vera fælicitas. *Sadolet. de laud. Philos.*

ties,

ties, which disgrace the *Man*, and quite degrade the *Priest*.—For you will almost always observe, that knowing and judicious Persons, who have inured themselves to serious Studies, are little subject to these Weaknesses. The Knowledge they are possessed of, is of so superior a kind, that it gives them a just Contempt for numberless things they are ignorant of, and which are not worth knowing; at the same time that it takes away all relish for the low joys and pleasures of the Vulgar. They see the emptiness and folly of those Amusements, with which little Minds, who know nothing and have nothing to do, are taken up; and consider those, who are addicted to them, with the same pity as a sober Man does one intoxicated with Liquor. It is the ill-instructed and unemployed, whose imagination is always wandering and on float: for want of solid Nourishment their Curiosity and Appetites turn to Objects which are either vain or dangerous; and hence proceed all those Inventions for squandering away Thought and Time, which generally end in a forgetfulness of God and our selves.

WHILST

WHILST we continue at College, the leisure and opportunities of making a progress in Learning are so great, and the benefits arising from such Improvement so considerable, that *Platus* has with reason placed them amongst the principal Advantages of a Religious Life, in a very edifying and entertaining Chapter on that Subject *. When we have finished our Studies, and are left to our own Disposal, it is incredible what Inconveniencies are avoided by those, who can spend their leisure Hours with Books and their own Thoughts. He is truly happy, says an *Italian* Philosopher, who content with the Satisfaction that arises from Learning and Retirement, lives, as much as he can, within himself, and neither desires nor aims at any thing beyond such a Situation †.

‘ HAPPY they, says the Archbishop of
‘ *Cambray*, who are disgusted with violent

* Lib. 3. ch. 11.

† Illum ego fœlicem inde à puero duxi, qui libris otioque literario contentus, intra fortunam vivere didicit, & quantum potest, in sese habitans, nihil extra se ipsum suspirat & ambit. *Mazzonius*.

‘ Pleasures, and know how to be pleased
 ‘ with the Sweets of an innocent Life !
 ‘ Happy they who delight in Instruction,
 ‘ and find a Satisfaction in cultivating their
 ‘ Minds with Knowledge ! into whatever Si-
 ‘ tuation adverse Fortune may throw them,
 ‘ they always carry Entertainment with them,
 ‘ and the Disquiet which preys on others in
 ‘ the midst of Pleasures, is unknown to
 ‘ those who can employ themselves in reading.
 ‘ Happy they who love to read *.’

THERE is, indeed, but one Limitation
 needful on this Subject, which is, that whilst
 we neglect nothing that can advance us in
 Literature, we guard against that immoderate
 Eagerness of it, which is common to Persons
 of Genius and Application †. This Intem-
 perance of the Understanding dries up the
 Spirit, and cools the Fervour of Devotion.
 Knowledge, however valuable, should be al-

* *Telem.* L. 2.

† *Studio Scientiæ flagrantem animum coercuit, tenu-
 itque quod est difficillimum, ex Sapientiâ modum. Tac. in
 Agric.*

ways subservient to Virtue : This alone has a right to engross our chief Attention, as it alone renders Learning useful to promote the glory of God, and the salvation and perfection of our Neighbour; the two great Purposes, to which not only our Studies, but the rest of our Occupations are to be referred.—It is related, as a particular Commendation, in the Life of St. *Lewis Gonzaga*, the Pattern of Religious Students, that he carefully avoided this Snare. And the pious Author of *the Imitation of Christ*, from the same Principle, cautions us against a too great thirst of Knowledge, as the cause of much Distraction and Illusion *.

BUT who can read what a celebrated Scholar relates of himself, on this Head, without taking it as a Warning to avoid so blameable and dangerous an Excess? † ‘ I was

* *Imit. Chr. L. 1. c. 2.*

† *Transversum rapi me sinebam deliciis Studiorum, quæ varietate rerum ita oppleverant pectus meum, omnesque ejus aditus obsepserant, ut intimos illos & amabiles Dei congressus respueret.— Quâ animi in divinis rebus imbecillitate*

‘ was entirely carried away, says he, by
 ‘ the pleasure I found in Learning; and
 ‘ that endless variety which it affords had so
 ‘ taken up my Thoughts, and seized all the
 ‘ Avenues of my Mind, that I was altoge-
 ‘ ther incapable of any sweet and intimate
 ‘ Communication with God.—These wan-
 ‘ derings and Indisposition of Mind have
 ‘ ever been my grand Failing, and they still
 ‘ break in on my Prayers and quite deprive
 ‘ me of all the benefit I should reap from
 ‘ them. . . When I withdrew into Religious
 ‘ Retirement, in order to recollect my scat-
 ‘ tered Thoughts and fix them on heavenly
 ‘ Things, I experienced a driness and insen-
 ‘ sibility of Soul, by which the holy Spirit
 ‘ seemed to punish this excessive bent to

cillitate & laboravi per totam vitam, & nunc quoque fre-
 quens illa ac pæne continua mentis evagantis aberratio ob-
 tundit preces ad Deum meas, omnemque earum fructum
 penitus intercipit. . . Cùmque ad confirmandos in animo
 meo pietatis sensus, concedebam in loca his usibus oppor-
 tuna. . . reflantem semper expertus sum divinæ gratiæ, au-
 ram, quasi vehementiorem meum in litteras impetum, sig-
 nioremque rerum divinarum curam stupore hoc Deus ul-
 cisci vellet. *Huet, Comment. de rebus suis, pag. 174.*

‘ Learning, and the Indifference I had for
‘ my spiritual Advancement.’

· ANOTHER Consideration also, though of an inferior Order, should check this eagerness and keep it within due Bounds ; which is the prejudice it brings to Health, and to that freedom of Thought, and a certain Univerfality of Mind, which is preferable to any progress in Letters, even those which most deserve our Esteem.

THIS Extreme being avoided, it requires no extraordinary Penetration to discover that Attainments, which take their rise from just and elevated Notions of Theology, are pursued with a generous and Christian Ardour of Mind, and end in the real and substantial Advantage which these Acquisitions bring with them, are an Object truly worthy one
* *of the chosen Race and the Kingly Priesthood.*

WAS I to enumerate the various Ills I have seen, occasioned merely from the want of an Inclination to read and think, it would

* 1 Pet. ch. 2.

make too unpleasing a Picture to have a place in a Performance, which was designed for your Information, not as a censure on others; it not being my Intention to descend to personal Reproof, but to trace acknowledged Evils from their Causes down to their Effects *.——I believe you will be more edified with the Reflexions of a religious Man of the Order of *Celestines*, who died at *Paris* in the year 1492, and at the End of a Treatise he wrote on the Studies of Monks, ‘ Thanks God for having always been favoured with the love of Books and Truth, and a disrelish of all worldly and exterior Employments. He acknowledges that he had reaped, in the decline of Life, very pleasant and wholesome Fruits from this Disposition, and exhorts the young Religious, on his own Example and Experience, to make Trial of it.’ He ended his Days in Privacy, after having been raised to the first Offices of his *Order*, and been deputed into *Italy* to reform the Monasteries of it.

* Verùm hæc omittamus, ne minus gratiæ, præcipiendo recta; quàm offensæ, reprehendendo prava, mereamur.
Quint.

FEW things could give me a more sensible Pleasure than to see you verify in your own Person a behaviour and temper of Mind so suited both to your Profession and Happiness. Experience will convince you that it is * *a Path*, which, though troden only by the Judicious Few, goes on, like a shining Light increasing till Noon-day. You have only to follow it with a constant and even Pace. One Proficiency will give birth to another; and the Perfection of sacred Knowledge, which a Person thus qualified tends to, only seems removed at a Distance, in order to make him more earnest to attain it. And when he stops at any Period of his Life to reflect on the Progress he has made, he will do it with the Satisfaction of a Traveller, who, in a long and agreeable Journey, looks back, from an Eminence, on the Road he has past, and recollects the many pleasing Incidents of it.

† AND though the Conduct of a Divine

* *Prov. ch. 4. v. 18.*

† *Est enim quiddam, quò ego aspirare conor, quod utique esse statuo cæteris rebus præstantius. Sadolet. Epif. ad P. Bembum.*

should,

should, by way of excellence, be exempt from all grosser Faults, and adorned with every Moral and Christian Virtue; yet, that I may confine myself to what is properly the purpose of this Discourse, I shall only warn you against such Failings, as, like certain Diseases to some Constitutions, are supposed to be peculiar to Men of Learning: and point out to your Practice those Qualities, which cast a kind of Sunshine over the Behaviour of a Scholar; and, like a gentle Smile, light up the sedate and serious Countenance of *Theology*.—This Caution is particularly seasonable, as you are coming into a World, where the purest and best guarded Virtue is beheld with a jealous, and often, with a scornful Eye. Let your Conduct, therefore, be such as by no Improperities to injure a Cause, which all your Care will be little enough to recommend.—It has been objected to the Learned, that they do not sufficiently attend to the End of Knowledge, and of that Labour which is employed to gain it: but seem to study for studying sake, and to gratify an unrestrained and lawless bent of Mind, in fruitless Speculation. And,

I fear, this Charge has been too well grounded, where an impotent Desire of Knowing has taken its full Range, before Judgment checked this Impetuosity, and admonished the Learner to consider, what was to be the Goal of so rapid a Race, and the Reward of so much Pains. This, however, ought to have been the primary Inquiry, as most suited to the Dignity of our Nature, and of the greatest Use towards the Success of every rational Undertaking. For to what Purpose is so much Application, if from a Thirst of Knowledge nothing be acquired but fresh Drought? if the end of one Pursuit be but the beginning of another; and we are always in that sort of Agitation, which seems to consider Rest as what we would not wish to attain, but avoid? Now this Mistake will either be avoided or corrected by looking on Learning, of what kind soever, as the Means, not the End, we are to propose to ourselves in all our literary Pursuits, which are always to be referred to the Christian Culture of our Minds, in order to form them for Action, to public and private Good; and, consequently, the Choice of our Studies, the Time and Application

cation we bestow on them, the Place they hold in our Esteem, are to be regulated by the Relation they have to these Objects, from which *alone* they derive all their Value and Lustre.— This Consideration, likewise, lets us see, how great their Error is, who look on Science as a sort of rising Ground, from whence they are beheld to Advantage; and look down on others with a vain Conceit of their own Superiority: or as a spacious and delightful Garden to wander in for Amusement; or as a Mart of Lucre and Promotion.— Another Inconvenience incident to the Learned is, a Partiality to certain Opinions and Authors, which are set up, like *Hercules's* Pillars, beyond which no Progress is attempted, or even supposed. The Schools, in which we have been educated, and the Societies, of Men, with which we are connected, are such Prejudices in favour of their Tenets, that an Abatement of this Evil is rather to be expected, than a total Cure. But as for those Antipathies and Enmities, which a difference of Opinions has occasioned whole Bodies of Men to conceive against one another, they spring from a

Foundation not only unconnected with, but quite opposite to all liberal Science, and owe their Rise to Passions, to which I hope your Breast will ever be a Stranger. This ungenerous and illiberal Disposition is sometimes carried so far, as to make Authors be disregarded on no other account, than their being of such or such a Society : and all Excellence is overlooked, when it comes from a Quarter that has, perhaps, every other Merit, but that of being agreeable to us.

Hinc illæ Lacrymæ.—

* But it were eligible, says a Pagan Instructor, to be born dumb, and deprived of the use of Reason, rather than thus to turn the gifts of Providence to our mutual Destruction.'——Too great Variety of reading, likewise, is apt to make Men curious and irresolute ; and thus Knowledge, which is nothing more than a Representation of Truth, causes its proper Object to be neglected, mistaken, or seen double, when the

* Mutos nasci, & egere omni ratione fatiùs fuisset, quàm Providentiæ munera ad mutuam perniciem convertere.

Quint.

Organ

Organ is unfit or vitiated. The strictness of Rules, to which Schoolmen have been accustomed, has sometimes a contrary Effect to the above-mentioned, and makes them peremptory and decisive : the great Examples they have been conversant with, inclines them to Extremes ; and the little Affinity those Examples have with what is at present generally practised, gives them a certain Disagreement, and, if I may so speak, an incompatibility with the Times and Persons amidst whom they live. Now a true Scholar should not only avoid these Failings, but improve the Sources from which they spring, to useful and generous Purposes. From much reading, instead of Perplexity, he should gather plain Precepts, when and upon what Grounds to resolve ; and even how to suspend his Judgment without Prejudice to his Understanding. Instead of too great Precision, he should learn what things are demonstrative, what only conjectural ! and be as skilled in Distinctions and Exceptions, as in the Latitude of Rules and Precepts. The Dissimilitude of ancient and modern Usage, far from making him uneasy under the present Times,

Times, should instruct him in the force of Circumstances, the Errors of Comparison, and all the Caution of Application.—Another capital Mistake, which has disappointed much Study and great Reading, is, the Neglect of being acquainted with ordinary and common Matters; whereas a judicious Direction in these, is the wisest Instruction; unless we suppose Knowledge must be made up of Novelties and Subtilties; and that the Learned, like the Grasshopper, have nothing more to do, than to cherrup, and skip, and bask in the Sun. This Sobriety in Knowing, as I have already said in some of the precedent Articles, has frequently escaped those, who have treated of the several Branches of *Theology*: who seem to have made little account but of Subjects which were new, rare, and sublime; and to have thought it a Disparagement to their Profession to let themselves down to others. But, surely, they did not consider, or, perhaps, even know, that the most useful and valuable Informations are not drawn from the sublimest and most difficult Instances; any more than a graceful and easy Carriage, from climbing up a steep
and

and craggy Precipice, or dancing on the slack Rope.—Another Exception has been made to Professors of Learning, in which the Inconveniencies they bring on themselves have less share, than those by which they are accused of injuring Society. From a consciousness of real or supposed Superiority, they are said to entertain a high Notion of themselves, and to treat the rest of Mankind as a sort of inferior Beings, and to verify too much the *Apostle's* Assertions * that *Knowledge puffs up, but Charity edifies*. The Consequence of this is, a Prepossession in favour of their own Opinions, a disregard of those who dissent from them, and too much warmth both in maintaining the one, and refuting the other. A young Divine brings this behaviour from the College, where it is too often overlooked, into the World, where it is always disagreeable. *Idem manebat, neque idem decebat*. Now, though you may meet with a great deal of this, both in your Academical Exercises, and in the ordinary Commerce of Life, your care must be never to return it, nor let yourself down to so de-

* 1 *Corinthians*, ch. 8.

grading a Level. The Persons, who are least favourable to you, will not fail to take their advantage from so offensive a weakness :

Hoc Ithacus velit, & magno mercentur
Atridæ.

A little Reflexion on the Disproportion of the things we know to those we are ignorant of ; on the darkness and limits of our Understanding ; on our frequent Errors and Mistakes, would correct this Fierceness in Debate, and that Self-Conceit, which is the Source of it. We should satisfy those we conversed with, that Steadiness in defending our own Opinion may be very consistent with the Deference we owe to that of others ; and the Post of Truth be maintained without such treacherous Auxiliaries as Bitterness and Passion *. We shall never bring over Others to our way of thinking by showing a Contempt of theirs ; because such Partiality destroys

* Bonus Altercator vitio iracundiæ careat. Nullus enim rationi magis obstat affectus, & fert extra causam, & plerumque deformia convitia facere ac mereri cogit ; & ipsos nonnunquam Judices irritat. Melior moderatio, ac nonnunquam etiam patientia. *Quint.*

all Confidence: And those we converse with, will never be at a loss to apply to our reasoning what we object to theirs. They will give us to understand, that if the Laws of humanity forbid us to strike our Neighbour, how much more carefully should we avoid wounding his Mind by a Contempt of his Opinions? Let us content ourselves with explaining our own, and leave others at large to do the same. The proper Temper in such Occurrences seems to be expressed by *Livy* in the following Words, though spoke on a different Occasion; *ne aut arrogans videare, aut obnoxius, quorum alterum est alienæ libertatis obliti, alterum suæ*: ‘ Avoid Arrogance and
 ‘ Obsequiousness; by the former of which
 ‘ you trespass on the Liberty of others, by
 ‘ the latter you give up your own.’ It would be, indeed, the highest Indignity, if Mechanics, and Day-Labourers should have more Coolness and Moderation in their Debates, than Persons stuck over with Aphorisms and Scholarship: and that Men both uncultivated and vicious should converse and live together on more amicable Terms, than those who are dignified with Titles which
 suppose

suppose and denote a superior degree of Wisdom. And when we reflect on the Evils and Scandals which have attended this Spirit, not only with respect to private Persons, but to whole Societies, the Moderation I am speaking of, recommends itself as the only Preservative of that Agreement which Learning should not violate but cement. Thus we should provoke none by Censure, Contempt, or Envy; and though there always will, and ought to be an Emulation in the Lists of Science, yet this would be calm and inoffensive; not embittered by that Contention and Rage, with which the Eager and the Proud support their Tenets, and vex, defame, and persecute one another in their strife about them.

THE Herd of Pedants may pronounce you a great Scholar for what you have read and retained of other Mens Writings: but, sure, those only are truly Intelligent, who live up to what they have learnt, to what themselves profess, and prescribe to others. This is that deeper Foundation than Knowledge itself, on which all Study must rest; but which is
never

never laid, where less account is made of what *should* be thought and held, than of what *has* been said and wrote. The latter Method may form Scholars to pore, and talk over their Books, but not to behave and live like Men of Sense: That is, to be silent on what they are not acquainted with, and talk pertinently of what they know; *not to be unseasonable with their own Knowledge**, and hearken to that of others with a patient and settled Spirit: to avoid Vanity and Indiscretion, and, instead of unprofitable Speculations, to be conversant with the two most necessary and useful Arts of Life, *Self-denial* and *Self-conquest*.

I AM unwilling to advance any thing, which may seem a Reflexion on the Profession of Learning, or the Persons of the Learned. I honour the former, and should esteem it a happiness to deserve to be ranked with the latter: Yet Sincerity, no less than the desire of giving a useful Caution obliges me to confess, that if the Singularities of several of the greatest Men Letters have ever

* *Ecclus. ch. 32. v. 6.*

formed,

formed, were put together, they would make a stronger Composition of Folly, than even the Blunders and Absurdities of Persons of the meanest Capacities. We have Instances of the Truth of this Assertion from the whimsical and strained Allegories some Writers have imagined they found in the holy Scriptures: *Abbé Rance's* Censure of the *Cassuists*, *Hardouin's* Sentiment of the modern Date of several ancient Writers; *Plato's* Notions of the Music of the Spheres, of the Mysteries contained in Numbers, his Origin of Names, are so many corroborating Evidences of it. And if *Fleury* had not been a Scholar, could he ever have imagined, that Conversation instead of being a relief and refreshment to the Mind, heated and disordered it? Nothing can be more judicious or deserved than the Censure which *Le Clerc* and Dr. *Atterbury* have passed on *Huet's* Treatise of the weakness of human Understanding; and yet the Author, no less celebrated for his Genius and Taste, than profound Learning, had so high an Opinion of its Merit, as to give it to the Publick in two Languages.— This Deviation from justness of Thought has
not

not only surprized the Learned, in an unguarded Minute, and been of that kind of Defect which, by way of Foil, sets off the luminous Parts of their Works, as in the above-cited Examples ; But in some Authors (I hope the number is very small) it has created a thick Mist, which has wholly overspread the Mind, from which it rose, and only suffered Reason to break through, in order to discover, *not Light*, as the Poet says, *but Darknes visible*. *Cardan*, amongst all I am acquainted with, stands first in this Character, and is a mortifying Proof how much Folly and Learning, extent of Genius and absolute want of common Sense may meet in the same Person.—Such Instances as these are a seasonable Check on that vanity which Knowledge is apt to give ; and at the same Time, a Lesson of the Circumspection with which Writers should produce themselves to the Publick ; and that as no Superiority of Parts exempts any Man from human Weakness, so it can never be a reasonable Argument to justify or adopt all his Opinions.

WHERE Application to Learning makes these Lessons be overlooked; or where the Result of it is, to live in open Violation of them, the Title to Scholarship becomes a Disgrace, and Men of true Judgment would esteem it a Happiness not to be learned on such Terms. And though no Observation may seem more plain and obvious than this, I am afraid it is as seldom attended to in Practice, as if it was a private Discovery, communicated to a few Persons, but hid from the Publick. On this account, therefore, you must allow me to inforce it, by the regard you bear to the credit of the Republic of Letters, and, in particular, of that excellent School, in which you are initiated; to the decency you owe your own Character, to the rights of civil and social Life; and, above all, to the assistance Mankind is intitled to expect from those who are to be ** the Salt of the Earth, and the light of the World;* and, having *instructed others in Righteousness, are to shine like Stars for all Eternity.*

* *Matthew, ch. 5. & Daniel, ch. 12.*

I HAVE now complied with your Desire, and my Promise, of giving you my Thoughts on the several Branches of sacred Science, and endeavoured to trace the Idea of a complete *Theology* and the Model of a perfect *Divine*.——In doing this, I have given the Public (if the Public can interest itself in any thing so inconsiderable as the Author of this Dissertation) a Pledge of what it has a right to expect from one, who acknowledges the Obligations which the Character of a Divine brings on all those who are honoured with it*.——My Design was, not to put down every thing which might be said on this Matter, but what chiefly suited with your Situation, as one just initiated in that School. † Besides, unless Directions of this kind are not only full and clear, but short also, they

* Contendo denique atque nitor, ut habeat hoc à me **RESPUBLICA** cùm boni & amantis Civis Sacerdotisque officium, tum testimonium meæ perpetuæ sententiæ, et in **SE** voluntatis. *Sadolet.*

† Adde, quòd Disciplinæ breviter ac purè ostensæ acumen, judicium, prudentiam, communium rerum usum adjuvant: longa earum tractatio retundit vim mentis, & molestissima est. *Vivés, de tradendis Disciplinis, L. 2.*

cease to be a Plan, and become, with a very useless Impropriety, the Work itself. Such a Brevity, however, is understood, as does not constrain, but confine to due Bounds; and which leaves no Part either obscure or defective, but gives light and vigour to the Whole. I began the Undertaking (to borrow a Figure from *Longinus*) by reviewing the Forces of my Subject, and culling out the Flower of them; that so, none might be placed amongst what I intended as a select Body, but those which had strength and aptitude to answer that End.

BEFORE I conclude, I must resume the same Observation with which I began this Discourse, that all *Ecclesiastical Knowledge* consists in the *Scriptures*, the *Fathers*, *Church History*, and *Theology*: I must resume it, I say, in order to make you remark the Agreement of these several Parts with each other, as well as the joint Force and full result of them all together.—The *Scriptures*, which are the Fountain of all the rest, are *the Rule and Law* given by God, concerning what we are to believe, hope, and love. The *Writings*
of

of the Fathers, and other Men of learning and piety, explain, apply, and inforce *this Law*. The *Church Historians* inform us of the various Revolutions which have happened to Mankind, with respect to the Cardinal Point of their happiness or misery, their observance or violation of *this Law*. The *Lives of the Saints* are so many animated Copies of it, * *not wrote with Ink on Paper, but ingraved by the Spirit of God on the living Tablets of Mens hearts and actions*. Theology, whether *Positive* or *Scholastic*, is human Reason directed by the Authority of this *Law*, and its legal Expositors, in the search of all Moral and Divine Truths. *Casuistry* and the *Canon Law* are a Detail of its several Precepts, and an Application of them to human Actions; and, like faithful Guardians, provide against the Incroachments of prescription, custom, and abuses, which would infringe or weaken it. In fine, *Controversy*, like † *the Tower of David, hung round with a thousand Shields, all Armour of the Mighty,*

* 2 *Corinthians*, ch. 3.

† *Solomon's Song*, ch. 4. v. 4.

is a Bulwark against all sinister Interpretations, all Mistakes and Errors, which might corrupt or endanger its Integrity.

THUS, as you perceive, the *Scriptures* are the Soul of all *Ecclesiastical Learning*, and the other Branches of it are so many *co-existent Parts*, which have a mutual dependence on each other, and form a *Whole*. Their Connexion and Relation is as natural and easy as it is necessary. Art seems to have done no more than join them together, and work them into that divine and admirable System we call *Divinity*.

BUT the use and intent of this Science reaches beyond mere information, and was designed by * *the Word of God, who is the Source of Wisdom on high*, to be the Rule of our affections and manners, much more than the Object of our Knowledge. † *If we know these things, says he, we shall be blessed if we fulfil them.* The ultimate End, to which

* *Ecclesiasticus*, ch. 1. v. 5.

† *John*, ch. 13. v. 17.

all Learning, but more especially divine, is to be referred, is the * *Love of God, which is the Fulness of the Law.* And the weighty terms in which the Almighty Lawgiver enjoins this Obligation, should be engraved in the Mind of every one who deserves the name of a Divine. † *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might ; and these words which I command thee this Day, shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt think of them when thou sittest in thy House, when thou walkest in the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them as a Sign upon thy Hand, and they shall be as Frontlets between thy Eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the Posts of thy House, and on thy Gates.*

ALL that now remains is, that we ask of Him ‡ *Who is the brightness of eternal Light, the spotless Mirror of the Majesty of God, and the Image of his goodness ;* and who came into the World to impart to Men § *those hidden Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, which are*

* Rom. ch. 13. † Deut. ch. 6. ‡ Wisd. c. 7. § Col. 2. 3.

*all in him, and to enkindle in them * the Charity, which is above all Science, that he would be pleased to light up in our breast that holy Flame, which never burns so steadily, as when an enlightened Understanding is united with a pure Heart.*

* *Ephesians, 3.*

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