DISCOURSES

ON

SCRIPTURE MYSTERIES,

PREACHED AT

ST. MARY'S, OXFORD,

BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY,

IN THE YEAR 1787;

AT THE LECTURE

FOUNDED BY THE LATE

REV. JOHN BAMPTON, M. A.

CANON OF SALISBURY;

WITH

NOTES

ILLUSTRATIVE AND CRITICAL.

BY WILLIAM HAWKINS, M. A.

PREBENDARY OF WELLS, VICAR OF WHITCHURCH, DORSET,

AND LATE FELLOW OF PEMBROKE-COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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IMPRIMATUR,

JOS. CHAPMAN,

VICE-CAN. OXON.

Aug. 6. 1787.

TO

HIS GRACE

THE

ARCHBISHOP

OF

CANTERBURY.

MY LORD,

HAVING had the honour of being appointed preacher of the *Bampton Lectures* for the current year, by the Heads of Colleges in Oxford, I have the happineſs to introduce them to the Public with the additional great advantage of your Grace's protection; an advantage the more conſiderable, as it derives as much from the character, as the rank of my patron.

In this ſituation it will, I preſume, become me to addreſs your Grace rather under the form of preface than in the ſtyle of dedication.

My ſlender pretenſions to your favour are grounded in the earneſt endeavour of the following ſheets fully and circumſtantially to vindicate that faith which, I need not tell your Grace, is not barely attacked, but inſulted every day. The Charity which *is not eaſily provoked* muſt reſent the freedom, I had almoſt ſaid the audacity which diſtinguiſhes the infidels of the preſent generation. Theſe Gentlemen affect to be the party aggrieved; and to conſole themſelves at the ſame time with a hope, and ſometimes a perſuaſion of the ſpeedy abolition of confeſſions and ſyſtems, and, in conſequence

quence of it, the revival of evangelical doctrine in its native ſimplicity.

I cannot think opinions openly and arrogantly hoſtile to the national eſtabliſhment can be juſtified even by their ſincerity. But infidelity in general is without this excuſe: it has been repeatedly ſhewn to draw its principal reſources from the vigilance of captiouſneſs, the popularity of profeſſion, the artifice of diſſimulation, the confuſion of things not really connected, and the occaſional ſuppreſſion, or adulteration of truth. To theſe I am ſorry, for our own ſakes, to add the inconſiſtency between certain controverſial terms, and the imprudence, or unwarineſs of conceſſion. Such reſources as theſe are indeed inexhauſtible. Mr. *Bampton*'s wiſe and pious inſtitution, and every

other of a ſimilar nature, ſuppoſes as much. We contend with enemies, who, though with unequal forces, will always be able to take the field. However, my Lord, I flatter myſelf I have happily choſen more advantageous ground than many of my fellow-ſoldiers in this warfare; to whoſe names on other accounts I look up with deference and veneration. After all, the event muſt be left in the hands of Providence. I have only to beg the favour of the intelligent reader to peruſe theſe diſcourſes and the annexed annotations, (which will be equally neceſſary,) with an inclination to be ſatisfied; and in that ſpirit of candor and impartiallity with which, I truſt, he will find them to have been compoſed. I requeſt his attention throughout the performance, and reaſonable allowances for the in-

accuracy

accuracy, or inequality that may be discovered in it. I hope he will be biassed, not by speciousness of principle, or habit of attachment, but by preponderance of argument. I submit it to his judgment, whether I have in any instance shewn an undue warmth, or unwarrantable resentment; and desire him finally to determine, as he shall upon the whole be persuaded, not of the abilities of the advocate, but the merits of the cause. Open to conviction myself, I shall always be ready to rectify an error, or to renounce an opinion, on competent representation; but shall not pay the least regard to any censure or animadversion, the features of which shall manifestly betray it to be the offspring of prepossession, chagrin, or malevolence.

With ſincereſt wiſhes and prayers for your Grace's health and happineſs, and for the peace and proſperity of that Church over which you ſo worthily preſide,

I remain,

With all duty and reſpect,

My Lord,

Your much obliged and

Moſt obedient ſervant,

WILLIAM HAWKINS.

Extract from the laſt Will and Teſtament of the late Reverend JOHN BAMPTON, *Canon of* Saliſbury.

—— " I give and bequeath my Lands " and Eſtates to the Chancellor, Maſters, " and Scholars of the Univerſity of Oxford " for ever, to have and to hold all and ſin- " gular the ſaid Lands or Eſtates upon truſt, " and to the intents and purpoſes herein after " mentioned; that is to ſay, I will and ap- " point, that the Vice-Chancellor of the " Univerſity of Oxford for the time being " ſhall take and receive all the rents, iſſues, " and profits thereof, and (after all taxes, " reparations, and neceſſary deductions made) " that he pay all the remainder to the en- " dowment of eight Divinity Lecture Ser- " mons, to be eſtabliſhed for ever in the ſaid " Univerſity, and to be performed in the " manner following:

" I direct and appoint, that, upon the firſt " Tueſday in Eaſter Term, a Lecturer be " yearly choſen by the Heads of Colleges " only, and by no others, in the room ad- " joining to the Printing-Houſe, between

" the hours of ten in the morning and two
" in the afternoon, to preach eight Divinity
" Lecture Sermons, the year following, at
" St. Mary's in Oxford, between the com-
" mencement of the laſt month in Lent
" Term, and the end of the third week in
" Act Term.

" Alſo I direct and appoint, that the eight
" Divinity Lecture Sermons ſhall be preach-
" ed upon either of the following ſubjects
" — to confirm and eſtabliſh the Chriſtian
" Faith, and to confute all heretics and ſchiſ-
" matics—upon the divine authority of the
" Holy Scriptures — upon the authority of
" the writings of the primitive Fathers, as
" to the faith and practice of the primitive
" Church — upon the Divinity of our Lord
" and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt — upon the Divi-
" nity of the Holy Ghoſt—upon the Articles
" of the Chriſtian Faith, as comprehended
" in the Apoſtles' and Nicene Creeds.

" Alſo I direct, that thirty copies of the
" eight Divinity Lecture Sermons ſhall be
" always printed, within two months after
" they are preached, and one copy ſhall be
" given to the Chancellor of the Univerſity,
" and one copy to the Head of every Col-
" lege,

"lege, and one copy to the Mayor of the
" City of Oxford, and one copy to be put
" into the Bodleian Library; and the ex-
" pence of printing them ſhall be paid out
" of the revenue of the Lands or Eſtates
" given for eſtabliſhing the Divinity Lecture
" Sermons; and the Preacher ſhall not be
" paid, nor be entitled to the revenue, before
" they are printed.

" Alſo I direct and appoint, that no per-
" ſon ſhall be qualified to preach the Di-
" vinity Lecture Sermons, unleſs he hath
" taken the Degree of Maſter of Arts at
" leaſt, in one of the two Univerſities of
" Oxford or Cambridge; and that the ſame
" perſon ſhall never preach the Divinity
" Lecture Sermons twice."

DISCOURSE

DISCOURSE I.

JOHN XVIII. 38.

Pilate ſaith unto him, What is Truth?

THIS queſtion, of all by far the moſt important, was put to our bleſſed Saviour by the *Roman Governour*, perhaps careleſſly, perhaps contemptuouſly, but certainly without the leaſt wiſh for information. In much the ſame ſpirit of ſcorn, or with ſimilar indifference, the ſame queſtion is every day in the mouths, ſometimes of ſceptics and ſcoffers, and ſometimes of men of a more ſerious caſt, who affect to be perſuaded that we cannot, and, it may be, deſire not to give them ſatisfaction. Unhappily, the Chriſtian world is divided and ſubdivided almoſt infi-

nitely; it is parcelled out into ſectaries of a thouſand denominations. The fact is, though the right of private judgment in matters of religion, which has been exerciſed from the beginning, was juſtly and neceſſarily aſſerted by the leaders and friends of the REFORMATION, it muſt be acknowleged, folly, perverſeneſs, pride, and enthuſiaſm, have, by ſeverally maintaining it, been productive of that ſtrange multiplicity of religious ſentiment which we have ſo much cauſe to lament; of that ſchiſm, hereſy, ſcepticiſm, and infidelity, which have all along diſturbed the Church, but fix a mark of peculiar diſgrace on the laſt and preſent century.

And indeed, when it is conſidered, that the Scriptures are on many accounts particularly liable to be miſapplied, perverted, or miſconſtrued; (*a*) that ſome paſſages are to be underſtood in a literal, and ſome in a figurative ſenſe; that ſome things are expreſſed agreeably to the modes of common ſpeech, and ſome in pure condeſcenſion to the human capacity; that paſſages are to be compared with

with each other in order to a true underſtanding of them, and doctrines to be deduced, not ſo much from ſingle and ſeparate texts, as from the manifeſt tenor of the Scriptures at large; that not unfrequently one and the ſame text ſhall be capable of different, and even oppoſite conſtruction; that though moſt places in holy writ are of univerſal importance, yet ſome are of temporary and occaſional purport only; that the ſacred writings, ſtrictly ſpeaking, are the foundation of a rule of faith and manners, ſuch as a creed, formulary, or confeſſion, rather than the rule itſelf, as will, I truſt, in due time more fully appear; and that an aſſent to the collective body of ſcripture, as true, does not imply a knowlege, or belief of all ſcriptural truths; when all this, to which more, were there occaſion, might be added, is fairly conſidered, we cannot poſſibly be at a loſs to account for that variety of notion, that wildneſs and abſurdity of conceit, that extravagance, or impiety of opinion, which I juſt now obſerved has more or leſs ſo ſhamefully diſhonoured the Chriſtian name in all ages.

Of this exuberance of folly and wickedneſs Popery has ever been induſtrious to avail itſelf. From the acknowleged liableneſs of the Scriptures to the groſſeſt abuſe, when in the hands of ſuch as are *unlearned* and *unſtable*, (to uſe the apoſtle's words,) the Church of *Rome* draws her moſt ſpecious argument againſt the common uſe of them; and would fain have us infer the neceſſity, or the certainty of an infallible authority lodged in the Church for the deciſion of controverſies, and aſcertainment of a rule of faith, from the confeſſed convenience and utility of ſuch an authority. (*b*) But, unfortunately for her pretenſions, as much error and abſurdity has repeatedly been demonſtrated to be within her pale as out of it. *What is truth?* becomes therefore with many a queſtion of as much difficulty as importance; or, rather, of more form than importance; ſome encouraging themſelves in ſcepticiſm from theſe circumſtances, and others blindly acquieſcing in any mode of religion, or in none at all, or at beſt in that which is uſually called natural religion, from a pretence of the utter impoſſibility of

diſcover-

discovering the true under such a complication of perplexity.

With points of inferior consequence I shall not trouble myself; but to such as deny, or call in question the capital articles of our religion on the strength of the above considerations, let me insist that nothing of this nature ought to supersede their endeavours to find the truth, and much less to discourage their obedience to it when found. After inquiry we may in some respect or other be mistaken, but without it we are inexcusable. In fact, the very diversity, or contrariety complained of may be justly urged in behalf of the faith which is received in the Church. Were the doctrine of the Trinity, for instance, impugned from one quarter only, and by consistent and uniform opposition, infidelity would be a much more formidable thing than it is; but you may as well look for *one language* at *Babel* as for a catholic system of unbelief, if I may be indulged with the expression. To enumerate all the heresies which have at different times torn and dismembered the

Church of Chriſt, is in a manner to confute them; and theſe, their common animoſity againſt her excepted, are *at* perpetual *enmity* among themſelves. Nay, what is yet more extraordinary, we ſhall find infidelity itſelf abounding in myſteries, even while it reprobates them almoſt with the confidence of a *faith* which *could remove mountains!* If the ſacred theory we are to maintain be in many reſpects incomprehenſible, the ſubſtitutions of human wiſdom will in due time be ſhewn to be at leaſt equally ſo; and to require the ſame degree of aſſent without any thing like the ſame foundation.

What is truth, ſay others *among us,* what is it but a ſyſtem of doctrines officially taught, and formally tranſmitted from generation to generation?

But if doctrines are true, why not officially taught, and carefully tranſmitted? Is profeſſion ridiculous, or authority contemptible, as ſuch? Indeed, the queſtion is not, what ſaith the Church?—but—*what ſaith the Scrip-*

Scripture? Now by Scripture, and the earlieſt antiquity, our ſureſt guide, and pureſt precedent, we are not only willing, but wiſhful to be tried. It is true the bulk of Chriſtians are not equal to this trial; in a certain ſenſe, they *care for none of theſe things*; they take matters upon truſt; they are not able to *give an anſwer to every man that aſketh a reaſon of the* faith *that is in them*, except that they were born and bred in it, and ſuppoſe it to be unqueſtionable. It is with reſpect to this implicitneſs of aſſent, this tameneſs of acquieſcence, as it is opprobriouſly called, that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity has no leſs impiouſly than ludicrouſly been expoſed to contempt under the deſcription of the **Trinity of the Mob!* But this is very unfair repreſentation. Surely no argument can be drawn from the incapacity, or the credulity of the *many*, to the diſadvantage of a doctrine that, with reſpect to the grounds on which we defend it, ſolicits, demands, defies the penetration of enquiry, and the inquiſitive-

* See p. 16, 36, 37. in Preface to *Stillingfleet*'s Diſcourſe in vindication of the doctrine of the Trinity.

neſs of criticiſm. The ſpiritual ſtate of the *common people* all over the world falls nearly under the ſame predicament; but at the ſame time a proportionable degree of ſatisfaction will always be derived to every man from every degree of rational aſſurance that he is in the *right way*; or belongs to a communion wherein the truth is held in purity approaching neareſt to the ſtandard of primitive Chriſtianity.

What is truth?—Say others, We are no ſtrangers to the doctrines publicly eſtabliſhed; to the faith aſſerted in your Articles, and expreſſed in your Creeds; but to theſe *Subſcription* is much more univerſal than agreement. We can produce you names even among yourſelves of perſons *not a whit behind the very chiefeſt* Divines in point of rank, probity, or underſtanding, who nevertheleſs hold that *God* is to be *worſhipped after a way which* you *call hereſy*; who *preach another Goſpel than that which ye have received* from your fathers, *conſtantly affirming*, or perpetually inſinuating, that *ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.*

Too

Too true indeed it is that the principal controverted points ſubſiſting among thoſe "who profeſs and call themſelves Chriſtians" are of the moſt ſerious nature. If the tenets of our gainſayers and adverſaries of many appellations are right and juſt, the doctrines of the Trinity, and of the reſurrection of the body, (which will be the objects of the enſuing diſquiſitions,) are hereſies of the moſt abominable, or ridiculous tendency. However, theſe are circumſtances which ſhould not check, but ſtimulate the ſpirit of inveſtigation. It will be of infinite moment to inquire whether we or they are the miſtaken party, and on which ſide error really lies; whether *our* doctrines or *theirs* have the ſtrongeſt foundation in ſcripture and antiquity; are beſt ſupported by preſumptive argument, and corroborative evidence; or have leaſt recourſe to artifice, and the pitifulneſs of ſubterfuge and evaſion. We do not wiſh to have this matter determined either vulgarly by a majority of voices, or invidiouſly by the reputation of names.

But

But again, ſay others, *What is truth?*—What good purpoſe is anſwered, or what advantage gained by this extraordinary zeal for theory and eſtabliſhment? What doth it but *gender ſtrifes*, and feed the flame of contention? The practical doctrines of the goſpel are ſo forcibly, yet ſo familiarly inculcated, as not to be liable to miſinterpretation. *Concerning the faith* thouſands *have erred*, but, *as* one *of* our *own poets* hath *ſaid*,

"His can't be wrong, whoſe life is in the right."

It is well for us there is nothing argumentative in the jingle of a couplet. I confeſs myſelf to be one of thoſe who are hurt by every effort that has a plain aſpect towards reſolving all religion into morality. I conſider every attempt of this kind as an indirect attack upon the fundamentals of Chriſtianity. According to the idea of theſe reaſoners, the character of the *Meſſiah*, and of the *Son of God*, will dwindle into that of a mere Legiſlator, or moral philoſopher, who *teaches us to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world.*† This text, and texts

† Tit. ii. 12.

con-

congenerous with this, may plausibly be urged in exaltation of *good works* to the exclusion of faith: but let them be contrasted with the following, *he that believeth, and is baptiz'd shall be saved*;* *he that believe thon the Son hath everlasting life*, † &c. &c; and *where is boasting* on the part of moral honesty, or evangelical righteousness? As speciously, or as justly as men may harangue in demonstration of the excellence of piety and virtue; or as loudly, or as reasonably as they may exclaim against the violence, and much more the virulence, which has actuated the spirit of controversy in too many instances; I presume, no intelligent person, if he is impartial, will deny, that the *faith* which St. *Jude* tells us *was once delivered to the Saints*, whatever we are precisely to understand by it, is something entirely distinct from mere morality; that it ought *earnestly* to be *contended for*, agre ably to the same Apostle's exhortation; that it is very possible to contend with *meekness*; that errors, and schisms, and heresies are represented in scripture as things more or less sinful, dangerous, and damnable; and

* Mark xvi. 16. † John. vi. 47.

that

that consequently it is of the utmost importance to our spiritual interests to be right in principle as well as in practice. The petulancy, the pride, and the malevolence of bigots, and of *disputers of this world*, as the Apostle calls them, will no doubt be *brought into judgment* no less than the grossest immoralities; but this will not by any means supersede, or retard an honest and charitable attempt to enquire into and ascertain the leading doctrines of our common Christianity.

Complaints against the damnatory clauses of the *Athanasian* Creed, as it is commonly called, reverberate from more quarters than one. People do not seem to be sufficiently aware that a right faith and a good life are required by this form of confession under the same penalty. "Which faith except a man "keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he "shall perish everlastingly. They that have "done good shall go into life everlasting, and "they that have done evil into everlasting fire. "This is the catholic faith, which except a "man believe faithfully he cannot be saved."

It

It is plain these clauses are to be considered as simply declarative on scriptural grounds of the necessity both of faith and of good works to salvation; and at the same time as leaving all men to that infinite mercy, and those inestimable merits, which are fully adequate to the pardon and atonement of sins, failings, ignorances, and errors of integrity. (*c*) Which few considerations will, I apprehend, fairly deliver the Creed before us from the reproach of uncharitableness. With regard to the several articles of which it consists, I trust, they will be found, in the course of these disquisitions, to have foundation in a fully competent authority; and in the mean time I shall endeavour to remove one general prejudice against them, and to create rather a prepossession in their favour, by evincing, that their acknowleged mysteriousness and incomprehensibility does by no means unqualify them for our assent.

"Man is as such a rational creature;" and as a rational creature he is a believing one too. We can no more conceive him to be without

without belief, than without ſenſe, thought, or reflection. The Atheiſt who *ſays in his heart*, as well as with his lips, *there is no God*, believes there is none. He proteſts againſt the ſuppoſed folly, or extravagance of the fundamental article of all religion; and on the ſtrength of falſe concluſions, reſolves every thing into a concourſe of atoms fortuitouſly uniting; or into the operation of an unintelligent principle which we call nature; or, in other words, into an everlaſting ſucceſſion of cauſes and effects. It is poſſible for a man to deny his own exiſtence, or that there is any ſuch thing as motion. We have heard of inſtances of this ſort; though properly they are inſtances, not of falſe perſuaſion, but of inſanity. (*d*) Still man is a rational creature, whether he reaſons well or ill; and whether, in conſequence of ſuch reaſoning, his faith be well or ill grounded. It is certain we know little or nothing by intuition. The mind yields aſſent to many myſterious truths by forming a very ſmall chain of deductions; ſuch as the immenſity of ſpace, the infinite progreſſion of number, and eternity, as well *a*

parte

parte ante as *a parte post*. "Space and duration, "says an ingenious author, are mysterious "abysses in which our thoughts are confounded with demonstrable propositions, to all "sense and reason, flatly contradictory to one "another. Any two points of time, though never so distant, are each of them exactly in the "middle of eternity. The remotest points of "space that can be imagined are, each of them, "precisely in the centre of infinite space." * In fact, we have no stronger, or more adequate conception of immensity than of omnipresence; we have no clearer idea of the existence of SOMETHING from all eternity than we have of eternal generation. Faith, it is true, strictly speaking, has reference to religion only; † but, I hope, a truth or a mystery is not inadmissible purely on account of its respecting practice, or implying obligation. This will readily be granted even by infidels who deny the truths of Revelation; and much more by such Christians as have

* See *Deism Revealed*. Vol. 2. p. 145.

† See Note at p. 3 of *Howes's Discourse on the abuse of the Talent of Disputation in Religion*. &c.

called

called into debate particular points of that Revelation, to which in general they profess to subscribe. It is well worth remarking that Deists and Heretics never fail to attack the professed atheist with such reasonings, as, if pursued through their just consequences, may fairly and successfully be enforced upon themselves. For if *he* affects to decry the fundamental principle of all religion, the Being of a God, on account of the pretended inconceivableness of it, will not *they* observe, in order to confute him, that, unless a more complete, a more uniform, and intelligible system could be built on the ruins of this great article, such his exception can have no weight? And this is the very reasoning we urge against the principles both of deists and heretics. With the professed atheist I shall no farther concern myself; but desire to observe, that deists and heretics of all denominations are agreed with us in one general point, the acknowlegement of the existence of God, and consequently the incomprehensibleness of the Divine nature, attributes, and operations. The primary notion which

which the human mind frames of God is this general and complex, yet negative idea of incomprehenſibleneſs. There is a certain preeminence, if I may ſo call it, in the Divine eſſence, &c. which utterly precludes inveſtigation. But if ſo, all myſteries, whether natural or religious, whether relative, *e. g.* to the extenſion of ſpace, &c. or to the nature of the Deity; all theſe, if conſidered purely as myſteries, will ſtand upon a level in point of credibility. And let a revelation be ſuppoſed, all adventitious truths introduced thereby will be fixed upon the ſame foot; becauſe faith cannot have a ſtronger foundation in human reaſon than in divine authority. This is granted without difficulty; but then as the deiſt denies the authenticity of thoſe writings which we affirm to contain ſuch revelation, ſo the heretic diſputes the ſenſe and ſcope of them. The queſtion therefore is, whether the opinion of the one, and the unbelief of the other, is reſpectively the reſult of judgment, or of paſſion; of conviction, or of pride; of impartial enquiry, or of unwillingneſs to ſubmit the underſtanding of man to

the *wiſdom of God?* For, I repeat it, neither the one nor the other can, conſiſtently with his own principles and acknowledgments, controvert the received ſenſe, or deny the authority of thoſe writings which the Church holds to be the *Word of God*, barely on account of myſterious truths contained in them. If the Divine Eſſence be neceſſarily incomprehenſible, no Revelation can poſſibly make it leſs ſo; ſo far from it, that the very idea of a Divine Revelation, with reſpect to that eſſence, implies a Revelation of myſteries; *i.e.* of truths undiſcoverable, and inconceivable by our natural powers; and accordingly, the credit of Revelation is rather confirmed than weakened by the number and importance of ſuch truths. For it is but natural to expect a more ample diſplay of wonders, and larger diſcoveries of ſublime and ſacred points of faith in this Revelation; and ſurely God is not the leſs to be believed, the more he communicates to us of his nature, properties, and diſpenſations. As far as theſe remarks affect Revelation in general, heretics in general will admit the juſt-

neſs

neſs of them; though at the very inſtant that they allow the writings in queſtion to be the ſole rule of faith, they endeavour, as much as may be, to reduce that rule to the meaſure of their own judgments and apprehenſions. I am however already juſtified in aſſerting, that as much as ſome people are averſe to believing what they do not underſtand, they cannot avoid believing what they do not underſtand; and that therefore, on proper authority, it is full as reaſonable to believe an hundred myſteries as one. (*e*) And here taking my leave of the deiſt, I would deſire the heretic by what appellation ſoever diſtinguiſhed, to recollect, that Revelation left human nature as it found it; I mean with reſpect to our intellectual faculties; that, *from the beginning of the creation* to this very hour, man is to be conſidered as a reaſonable creature, as a free-agent, as ſometimes believing upon competent evidence, ſometimes governed by paſſions, and ſometimes influenced by prepoſſeſſion. A truth which accounts in a moment for the multitude of perſuaſions which have engaged the ſpeculative world. To ex-

pect, or require that God ſhould manifeſt himſelf and his proceedings, &c. to every man fully and perſonally, is to deſtroy every notion not only of faith, but of obedience likewiſe; and to wiſh to invert the eſſential frame and conſtitution of things. Difficulties, unſurmountable difficulties of many kinds occur to our contemplations on that frame and conſtitution; difficulties, on which the light of Revelation darts not a ſingle beam. If we indulge the excurſive faculty of imagination beyond the bounds which reaſon and ſcripture have ſet us, we ſhall find ourſelves inextricably entangled in perplexity, and ſometimes in impiety too. Who ſhall diſcover the conſiſtency between Divine preſcience and human free-will? Yet that man acts freely, and that God foreknows all events, and decrees accordingly, are equally truths not to be ſhaken by any ſeeming irreconcileableneſs or contrariety whatſoever. So again: that the moſt perfect *freedom* of agency muſt be aſcribed to God, cannot poſſibly be controverted; and yet does he not *neceſſarily* foreknow his own actions? Does he

not *neceſſarily* act agreeably to the eternal rules of juſtice, wiſdom, and holineſs? That God is in no ſenſe the author of evil, either natural or moral, every reaſonable man, and much more every Chriſtian will maintain; yet is it not certain, that had this world never been made, neither *ſin* nor *death* could have *entered* into it? Human wiſdom has fatigued itſelf to no purpoſe in the ventilation of theſe ſubjects. (*f*) Many real truths, but at preſent ſeeming paradoxes, will doubtleſs be capable of future explication; and ſpiritual things in general ſhould rather be received with the humility of reverence, than encountered with the arrogance of diſcuſſion. There will be no end to *doubtful diſputations* while men's ſentiments are modified by a partial attachment to a favourite principle; and while truths, apparently oppoſite and contradictory, are ſeparately contended for, which ought both to be admittted; as ultimately they will be reconciled.

What has been here advanced concerning faith, or myſteries in general, will, I truſt,

ſecure at leaſt a fair and earneſt attention to what I ſhall have to offer in defence of the myſteries of the Goſpel. If theſe myſteries ſhould be found to be real objects of faith, it will be neither right, nor ſafe, to think, or to ſpeak of them indifferently, unhandſomely, or contemptuouſly.

That the doctrines of the Church of *England*, the doctrine of one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, and that of the Reſurrection of the Body, are as reconcileable to our ideas as the conſiſtency of free-will with neceſſity, or of the Divine perfections with the exiſtence of evil, I ſhould ſuppoſe, no man can deny; and therefore the great queſtion is, whether thoſe doctrines be undeniably in thoſe Scriptures which all with whom I am concerned acknowledge to be the rule of faith.

That, with reſpect to the Trinity, the doctrine of the Church has been ſo long, ſo frequently, ſo copiouſly agitated with much leſs ſucceſs, on our part, than might have been expected from ſome of the beſt *Soldiers of Jeſus Chriſt*, the

the *weapons* of whoſe *warfare* have been *mighty* in this ſpiritual field; this, I muſt confeſs, is a circumſtance enough diſcouraging; but however, not without its counterbalance in certain conſiderations. *The race is not always to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong.* Matters are capable of being ſet in new lights; nor will any exertion be deſperate which has for its object the honour of God, and the peace of his Church. Men are wedded to their errors as much as to their vices; but as we are not to be remiſs, or hopeleſs in our labours for the reformation of ſinners, though the *whole world* ſhould *lie in wickedneſs*; ſo neither ſhould we be impeded or diſheartened in our attempts for the converſion of infidels and heretics, by that pride, that prejudice, however contracted, that *hardneſs*, or that *ſlowneſs of heart*, which indiſpoſes them for the reception of truth.—After all, inquiries of this nature are of very conſiderable uſe and importance; they cannot fail at leaſt to *ſtabliſh*, *ſtrengthen*, and *ſettle* ourſelves; to *root* and *ground* us in that *faith* which we ſhall find to be built upon the moſt immoveable foundations.

That aſſertors and vindicators of this faith, that champions for the Church militant, might never be wanting in this place, the zeal and the piety, the wiſdom, and the munificence of our founder hath nobly provided. The preſent inſtitution is happily diſtinguiſhed by its location; and, in ſome degree to anſwer and accompliſh it's end, I ſhall proceed with as much confidence and ſatiſfaction as may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to ariſe from a proper ſenſe of obligation, a full perſuaſion of the truth of the great doctrines in queſtion, and particularly of the merits of the *Trinitarian* cauſe.

DIS-

DISCOURSE II.

JOHN V. 39.

Search the Scriptures.

TO the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament our bleſſed Saviour referred the *Jews* for ſatisfaction with reſpect to his claims to the character in which he appeared among them; and to the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, together with the other, I am to refer for proofs of thoſe great but myſterious doctrines which I have undertaken to defend: the doctrines contained in the Liturgy, and in the Articles of the Church of *England*.

Without laying before you at preſent all, or the principal texts by which the doctrine of

of the Trinity is ſupported, or in which the abſolute divinity both of the Son and of the Holy Ghoſt is explicitly aſſerted, or neceſſarily implied, we may previouſly remark that, ſuppoſing them to be authentic, unequivocal, and intelligible, the infidel is in fact precluded from taking advantage of thoſe paſſages which are declarative either of the acknowleged humanity of Jeſus Chriſt, or of the gifts and operations of the bleſſed Spirit: that humanity, and thoſe operations being things manifeſtly diſtinct from the Divine eſſence, and real perſonality. What we ſhall have to do therefore will be to enquire, in due time and place, whether the exceptions which have been made againſt the texts with which the catholic doctrine is fortified, are grounded in principles of common candour and common ſenſe; or, in other words, whether the interpretations of anti-trinitarians are critically juſt, and agreable to the rules which are generally allowed to govern interpretation. In the mean time, it will be well worth while to examine, whether the doctrine before us

is

is not proveable by evidence which, though indirect and collateral, is irresistible. There is hardly any such thing as framing a sentence, or a proposition that cannot be prevaricated with; but the tenor of a context, and the weight of circumstances will not easily admit of sophistication.

According to the Athanasian Creed, as it is called, "the Catholic Faith is this; that "we worship one God in Trinity, and Tri-"nity in Unity; and that the Godhead of "the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy "Ghost is all one: the Glory equal, the "Majesty co-eternal." *But what saith the Scripture? Saith it not*, in effect, *the same also?* That the Father is the first Person in the Trinity, merely in order of nomination; the Son, the second; and the Holy Ghost, the third; is sufficiently demonstrable from many considerations. In the first place, though the three divine Persons are usually mentioned in a manner which at first sight seems to import an order of a different kind, yet this order is upon some occasions

casions inverted; *e. g.* in St. *Paul*'s often quoted benediction to the *Corinthians*; *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you*: and in the following passage of the same Apostle; *there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.** And, in other places, the same inversion is observable with regard to the first and second persons; *Ye know*, says the Apostle, *that no whoremonger, nor unclean person*, &c. *hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*† *Now our Lord Jesus Christ* HIMSELF, says the same Apostle, *and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, comfort your hearts*, &c. *No man*, says our Lord, *knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.*‡ To this we may add the introduction of St. *Paul*'s epistle to the *Galatians*; *Paul, an Apostle, not of men, neither by man,*

* 1 Cor. xii. 4. † Ephes. v. 5. ‡ Matt. xi. 27.

but

but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who hath raised him from the dead, &c. From these instances we may at least draw this inference, that the general priority of order above mentioned imports no distinction, or preeminence of essence.

The root, ground, or fountain of essence may be acknowledged to be in the *Father*, without the least prejudice to the *Trinitarian* doctrine, which supposes an ETERNAL communication to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. The terms *root* and *fountain*, &c. are customary indeed, but by no means strictly proper, or precisely descriptive. They are familiar, not to our ideas, but to our ears. When we speak of, or contemplate the Divine nature, absolutely, and without reference to particular dispensations, God the *Father* is generally the first in our conception, as far as he can be the object of conception, but not to the exclusion of the Divine nature either of the *Son* or *Holy Ghost*. In these dispensations, in the heavenly œconomy, we have a manifest and obvious reason for addressing our prayers

prayers and petitions, public and private, for the moſt part, to the firſt Perſon of the Holy Trinity. In ſhort, the terms *Father* and *Son*, under which it has pleaſed infinite wiſdom, by way of analogy, to repreſent this myſterious relation to our minds; theſe terms imply nothing more than nominal preeminence and ſubordination: if the Anti-trinitarian ſhould inſiſt that they do imply more, and aſk what we mean by eternal generation, or proceſſion, we will anſwer him the moment we are told what he means by eternal eſſence itſelf. (*g*)

Again. The Father is commonly repreſented to us under the character of the maker, the governor, preſerver, and judge of the world; the Son under that of our redeemer, advocate, and ſaviour; the Holy Ghoſt under that of our guide, comforter, and ſanctifier; and yet theſe characters, we ſhall ſee, with the names, properties, and attributes of the Deity, are frequently reciprocated. Thus, in the following places among others, the office of Redeemer is aſcribed in

expreſs

expeſs terms to the firſt perſon; or, if you pleaſe, to God abſolutely conſidered. *God will redeem my ſoul from the power of the grave. I will ranſom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.** *My ſoul ſhall rejoice which thou haſt redeemed.*† So likewiſe in numberleſs paſſages the Father is ſtyled Saviour. To inſtance only a few. *There is no God elſe beſide me, a juſt God, and a Saviour.* ‡ *Paul, an apoſtle,* &c. *by the commandment of God our Saviour,* § &c. *We truſt in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men. To the only wiſe God our Saviour be glory and majeſty now and ever* ||. And again; the work of ſanctification is indiſcriminately ſaid to be the work of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. Thus our bodies are ſometimes called the *temple of God,* and ſometimes of the *Holy Ghoſt.* The Apoſtle declares, that *it is God which worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* The ſame Apoſtle prays, that *the very God of peace may ſanctify the Theſſalonians; and*

* Hoſea xiii. 14. † Pſalm lxxi. 23. ‡ Iſa. xlv. 21.
§ 1 Tim. i. 1. || Jude v. 25.

make

make his *Hebrew* converts *perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight*; and, not to multiply examples, St. *Jude* addresses his general Epistle to *those that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ*. To which we may add, that the Father hath sometimes other titles and characters given him which belong more peculiarly to the Holy Spirit, and is called the *God of consolation*, and the *God of all comfort*; as, according to one Apostle, *all scripture is given by inspiration of God*; while we are assured by another, that *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*.*

Again. We find all the great properties and characters of the first Person frequently attributed to the second. In a passage in *Isaiah* he is even called the (*h*) *everlasting Father*.† And (to lay no stress upon prophetic phraseology) is not the first person the supreme God, a self-existent, independent Being, the creator, the governor, and preserver of the world?

* 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 21.

† The Father of the everlasting age. Bp. *Lowth*.

So

So is *Jesus Christ*. For *before Abraham was*, says he, *I am*; * *and he that came from heaven is above all; he filleth all in all; he is the head; and by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible;* &c. *All things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and upholdeth all things by the word of his power, and by him all things consist.* † Of some of these and the following texts at present we shall take the sense to be granted. Is God the Father a being eternal and unchangeable? So is God the Son. For *he hath neither beginning of days nor end of life. He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, which is, and which was, and which is to come; the Almighty;* ‡ *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.* Is omniscience an attribute of the true God? So is it likewise of him whom he *sent into* the world. For he *knew all things*; he *knew what was in man*; he *knoweth the hearts of all men*; § *he it is who searcheth the reins and heart.* Can any power less than in-

* John viii. 58. † Coloss. i. 16.
‡ Rev. i. 8. § Acts i. 24.

finite raiſe the dead? And is it not the prerogative of the Supreme God to judge the world? Yet to do both is the work of *Jeſus Chriſt*. For he is *the reſurrection and the life*;* *and as the Father raiſeth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even ſo the Son quickeneth whom he will; and whoſo eateth his fleſh hath eternal life, and he will raiſe him up at the laſt day*.† In conſequence of ſuch reſurrection *we muſt all appear before his judgment ſeat*.‡ And once more; is not the true God inviſible and incomprehenſible? So is *Jeſus Chriſt*. For, agreably to a text before cited, *no man knoweth the Son but the Father*. Again. The character and office of the Third Perſon are explicitly attributed to *Jeſus Chriſt*. The Apoſtle's wiſh, or benediction, which we have already had occaſion to refer to, may be produced as one inſtance of this. *Now our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and God, even our Father, comfort your hearts, and eſtabliſh you in every good word and work. For without Chriſt we can do nothing; and he of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemp-*

* John xi. v. 25. † Ibid. vi. 54. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 10.

tion;

tion;* *and he gave himself for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it*; and the Apostle could *do all things through Christ which strengthned him*. Farther; the characters and properties both of the *first* and *second* Person in the Holy Trinity are likewise many of them ascrib'd to the *third*. Thus, in the old Testament, the work of creation seems to be attributed to the operation of the Holy Ghost, as a distinct personage, or agent. *The Spirit of God*, says *Moses*, *moved upon the face of the waters*. *Thou sendest forth thy spirit*, says the Psalmist, *and they are created*: and *Job* asserts, that *God by his Spirit hath garnish'd the heavens*;† and *the Spirit of God ha smade me*, says *Elihu*. ‡ For whatever might have been the precise notion of the antient *Jews*, with regard to the *Spirit*, the *Spirit of God*, and the *Spirit of the Lord*, of which we find such frequent mention; or, whatever they might understand by that parallel expression, (in respect at least of the work of creation,) the *breath of the Almighty*, or the *breath of his mouth*; the light of the New Testament, I

Cor. i. 30. † Job. xxvi. 13. ‡ Ibid. xxxiii. 4.

think, ſufficiently directs us to the above interpretation. Thus again, the Holy Ghoſt is omniſcient, and eternal; for the *Spirit ſearcheth all things, yea the deep things of God*;* and *Chriſt through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God* † Thus the office of advocate, or interceſſor, is attributed to the *Spirit, who maketh interceſſion for the Saints according to the will of God.*‡ Thus the reſurrection of our Lord himſelf is ſaid to have been effected by the power of the *Holy Ghoſt*; for *Chriſt was put to death in the fleſh, but quickened by the Spirit,*§ *and he that raiſed up Chriſt from the dead ſhall alſo quicken our mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.* Thus again; both Prophets and Apoſtles are ſaid to be ſent, or commiſſioned by the *Holy Ghoſt*, as well as by the *Father* and the *Son*. *The Lord God and his Spirit hath ſent me*, ſays *Iſaiah*; *the Spirit entered into me*, ſays *Ezekiel, and ſaid unto me, go ſhut thyſelf within thy houſe*; || and *the Holy Ghoſt ſaid, ſeparate me Barnabus and Saul for the work whereunto I*

* 1 Cor. ii 10. † Heb. ix. 14.
‡ Rom. viii. 27. § 1 Pet. iii. 18. || Ezek. iii. 24.

have

*have called them.** Once more. The Holy Ghoſt is indiſcriminately called the *Spirit of God,* and the *Spirit of Chriſt*; and the *Goſpel of God* and the *Goſpel of Chriſt* are terms equivalent; and the Apoſtles are ſometimes ſtiled *ſervants of God,* and ſometimes *ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt*; and the *Holy Ghoſt* is ſaid to *make overſeers over the flock*; as God the *Father* hath *ſet ſome in the Church, firſt Apoſtles,* &c; and as the *Son gave ſome, Apoſtles*; *and ſome, Prophets,* &c. And, laſtly, the very terms of our ſalvation are reciprocated. St. *Paul teſtified to Jews and Greeks repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*;† and among the *principles of the doctrine of Chriſt,* the Apoſtle reckons *repentance from dead works, and faith towards God.*‡ Our Saviour ſays in one place, *he that believeth on the Son hath everlaſting life*; and in another place, *he that believeth on him that ſent him hath everlaſting life.* The general ſcripture doctrine is, that we are ſaved by the mercy of God through the merits of our Redeemer;

* Acts xiii. 2. † Acts xx. 21.
‡ Heb. vi. 1.

and yet our ſalvation is ſometimes aſcribed abſolutely to the mercy, or grace of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Thus St. *Peter* declares his and his brethren's belief, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles ſhall be ſaved through the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*;* and St. *Jude* exhorts Chriſtians to *keep themſelves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life*.† To all this we may add, that the title of *Lord*, (which is one unqueſtionable character of ſupremacy,) is common to the three Perſons in the *Holy Trinity*; to the ſecond it is applied as well as to the firſt in places almoſt numberleſs; and to the third beyond all doubt in the following: *the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Chriſt*; § *now God himſelf, and our Father*, (where, by the way, the word—HIMSELF—does not appear to be more emphatical than in the text ſometime ſince cited,) *and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt direct our way unto you; and the Lord make you to increaſe, and abound in love one towards another*, &c; *to the end he may ſtabliſh your*

* Acts xv. 11. † Jude 21.
§ 2 Theſſ. iii. 5.

hearts

*hearts unblameable in holineſs before God, at the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.** For that by the *Lord* in theſe texts we are to underſtand the *Holy Ghoſt*, is, I apprehend, demonſtrable from theſe two conſiderations; firſt, becauſe it is his peculiar office to *direct the heart, to make us to increaſe in love, and to ſtabliſh our hearts unblameable in holineſs*; and ſecondly, becauſe, according to any other conſtruction, we ſhall at beſt make but very indifferent ſenſe of either of theſe paſſages. From this inverſion then and reciprocation, of which we have produced ſuch a number of inſtances, the Divinity of each Perſon in the Trinity may reaſonably be inferred; eſpecially as the ſenſe of many at leaſt of the texts I have produced is obvious, and altogether uncontrovertible.

Again; this great point is evincible from the neceſſary ſenſe, or natural import of certain paſſages. Let us turn to a few of the moſt remarkable.

* 1 Theſſ. iii. 11.

The *ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt* is pronounced by our bleſſed Lord himſelf to be of all ſins the moſt damnable. *I ſay unto you, all manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto men; but the blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall not be forgiven unto men. And whoſoever ſpeaketh a word againſt the Son of Man it ſhall be forgiven him; but whoſoever ſpeaketh againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.** Now without ſtaying to inquire here into the preciſe nature of this ſin, or how far it may be abſolutely incapable of remiſſion, or in what ſenſe our Saviour's audience underſtood him, or he meant to be underſtood, it will be ſufficient for our purpoſe to remark, that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in general, and particularly of the perſonal exiſtence, and coequal divinity of the *Holy Ghoſt* with that of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, is plainly and truly though covertly comprehended in the above texts, and in their parallels in the other Evangeliſts. For otherwiſe we ſhall be unavoidably driven into

* Matt. xii. 31.

the

the following abſurd and execrable concluſions, *viz.* that the higheſt degree of impiety and profaneneſs againſt God the *Father* is a mere venial ſin; and that a blaſphemy, or a ſin, a ſin, humanly ſpeaking at leaſt, without hope, or poſſibility of pardon, may be committed againſt a Being leſs than the ſupreme God; and even againſt a kind of ſpiritual chimera, a motion, a virtue, a quality, or an operation.

Again. *As touching brotherly love,* ſays St. *Paul, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourſelves are taught of God to love one another.** Now that by him who in this place is abſolutely ſtyled God, we are to underſtand *Jeſus Chriſt,* I have little or no difficulty to pronounce, for the two following reaſons; firſt, becauſe, though we may very properly be ſaid to be *taught of God,* when we are inſtructed by the mouth, or by the preaching of his prophets, or apoſtles, or others commiſſion'd by him, yet the doctrine of univerſal love and charity was more immediately

* 1 Theſſ. iv. 9.

and

and peculiarly the doctrine of our bleſſed Saviour: *A new commandment*, ſays he, *I give unto you, that ye love one another;—by this all all men know that ye are* MY *diſciples, if ye have love one to another**; *this is* MY *commandment, that ye love one another*†: and ſecondly, becauſe the Apoſtle ſeems to regard this great duty as a principle recently taught, and particularly enforced by the precept and example of our Divine Maſter.

Again. *He that hath ſeen me hath ſeen the Father*‡, ſays our Lord, and *he that ſeeth me, ſeeth him that ſent me.* Now in what ſenſe are theſe declarations true? Not in the literal; for the *Father* could not be viſible in the human perſon of the *Son*; becauſe *God is a Spirit, and no man hath ſeen God at any time; whom no man hath ſeen, or can ſee*§: and by neceſſary conſequence our Saviour hereby in effect aſſerts, that, notwithſtanding his appearance in the fleſh, he himſelf really and truly partook of the Divine nature; that, according

* John xiii. 34. † John xiv. 9. ‡ John i. 18.
§ 1 Tim. vi. 16.

to

to his own expreſſion, the *Father dwelt in him*; or, in the language of the Apoſtle, in him *dwelt all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*, or ſubſtantially.

Again. In the Goſpels St. *John* the Baptiſt is called *the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths ſtrait* *: but in the evangelical prophet the ſtyle is at once more explicit and more majeſtical; *prepare ye*, ſays he, *the way of the Lord, make ſtrait in the deſart a high-way for our God.*† In the courſe of the ſame ſublime chapter *Jeruſalem* is called upon to *lift up her voice with ſtrength*, to *lift it up and ſay unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God.* And then the prophecy proceeds in the following words. *Behold, the Lord God will come with ſtrong hand, and his arm ſhall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd*, &c. Now, unleſs it can be demonſtrated, that theſe paſſages do not refer, ultimately at leaſt, to the coming, and to the

* Matt. iii. 3. † Iſa. xl. 3.

perſon

perſon of the Meſſiah, he is manifeſtly here announced under the different characters of a *good ſhepherd*, a *righteous judge*, and the *Lord God*. Beſides, if there is no ſuch reference, the ſeveral apoſtolical citations from the prophet are moſt impertinently ridiculous.

Once more. The firſt and ſecond perſons of the bleſſed Trinity are expreſsly diſtinguiſhed, and reſpectively characteriſed as equal, in a paſſage wherein the Apoſtle occaſionally aſſerts the unity of eſſence in the Godhead. *We know*, ſays he, *that there is none other God but one; for though there be that are called Gods, to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom are all things, and we by him**. It may be pretended indeed, that the terms under which the *Son* is here characteriſed are not of equal weight and ſignificance with thoſe which are deſcriptive of the *Father*; but I will take upon me to aver, that the ſame might have been pretended, had theſe terms been tranſpoſed,

* 1 Cor. viii. 4. &c.

and

and the paſſage had run thus; *to us there is but one God, the Father,* by *whom are all things, and we* by *him; and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* of *whom are all things, and we* in *him.* And in many places the three divine Perſons are ſeverally ſpecified and referred to, as jointly concurring in the wonderful ſcheme of man's redemption; particularly in the following. St. *Peter* inſcribes his firſt epiſtle to the *ſtrangers ſcattered through Pontus, Galatia,* &c. *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through ſanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt:* and St. *John* ſalutes the *churches* of *Aſia* with wiſhing them *grace and peace from him which is, which was, and which is to come, and from the ſeven ſpirits which are before his throne, and from Jeſus Chriſt**. I am ſenſible indeed that by the *ſeven ſpirits,* juſt mentioned, interpreters do not univerſally underſtand the *Holy Ghoſt*; but this at leaſt, I cannot help remarking, may be offered in favour of the ſenſe in which I have taken the expreſſion, that it is a ſenſe of which the

* 1 Rev. 4.

words

words are full as capable as of any other whatever; and that by the present construction a very considerable difficulty is removed which clogs a different interpretation. For admitting the *Holy Ghost* to be signified by the *seven spirits*, there will be nothing singular or unprecedented in this inversion of the order of Persons in the *Trinity*; but why *angels*, according to the sense of some commentators, should be mentioned before *Jesus Christ*, (who is higher than the angels even in many of our adversaries conceptions,) seems accountable only by forced and unnatural explications. And still more perplexed, and incompatible with the nature of a blessing, or a salutation in general, or with the apostolical greetings and benedictions in particular, the sense of others seems to be, who by the *seven spirits* understand the *graces* of the *Spirit*, or the various operations of Divine Providence. (*i*) However, granting the passage to be rather obscure, I would take occasion to observe from it yet farther, that although we should be very cautious of deducing doctrines of faith from symbols, or mystical expressions,

preſſions, yet types and emblems confeſſedly ſignificant and characteriſtical will juſtify our ſuitable concluſions. It may be queſtioned perhaps what is preciſely to be underſtood by the *ſeven ſpirits* juſt mentioned, or by many other ſymbols in the *Revelation*; but it would be exceſs of perverſeneſs to doubt, whether the *Lamb* in our Apoſtle's allegorical prophecy be the emblem of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Whenever therefore we obſerve divine honours plainly aſcribed to the *Lamb*, or find him ſpoken of in terms of equal importance and majeſty with thoſe which are predicated of him who is indiſputably the true God, the inference is obvious and unavoidable. How then will the *antitrinitarian* evade the force of ſuch paſſages as theſe? *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth,* &c. *heard I ſaying, Bleſſing and glory, and honour, and power, be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.** *The Lamb ſhall overcome them, for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.*† *I ſaw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty,*

* Rev. v. 13. † Rev. xvii. 14.

and

and the Lamb are the temple of it; and the city had no need of the Sun, &c. *for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof**. *And he ſhewed me a pure river of water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb* †. *And the kings of the earth, and the great men,* &c. *hid themſelves in the rocks and the mountains, and ſaid unto the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*‡. If any man ſhould affect to make a diſtinction betwixt *him that ſitteth on the throne and the Lamb*, or him who is ſaid to *ſit on the right hand of God*, in proof of the ſuperiority of the former, I would deſire him to remember, that the throne in queſtion is called ſometimes ſimply the *throne of God*; ſometimes, as in a text lately produced, the *throne of God and of the Lamb*; that, in another place, the *Lamb* is ſaid to be *in the midſt of the throne*; in another, to *ſit down in the throne of the Father*; and that it is the *throne* of the *Son of God* which is *for ever and ever*.

* Rev. xxi. 22. † Rev. xxii. i. ‡ Rev. vi. 15.

So

So likewiſe, notwithſtanding the diverſity of conſtructions to which the expreſſion of the *ſeven ſpirits* is liable, the perſonality, operation, and Divinity of the *Holy Ghoſt* may be demonſtrated from the plain literal ſenſe of many places in this book which are utterly void of emblematical ornament, or alluſion. Indeed, the whole was evidently dictated by the *Spirit*, by whoſe *inſpiration all ſcripture was given*, who alone *ſearcheth the deep things of God*,* and under whoſe immediate direction our Apoſtle wrote this epiſtle: for he tells us expreſſly, before he communicates his Revelations, that he *was in the Spirit on the Lord's day*; and elſewhere, that he *was carried away in the Spirit*; and the ſolemn call to all perſons concerned is frequently repeated, *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches.* † To all this we may add, that the perſonal inherency of the *Spirit* in the eſſence of the Godhead is demonſtrable from St. *Paul*'s illuſtration of a paſſage juſt now quoted from him. *The Spirit*, ſays he, *ſearcheth all things, yea, the*

* 1 Cor. ii. 10. † Rev. ii. 11.

deep things of God. For what man, continues he, *knoweth the things of a man, ſave the Spirit of man which is in him? Even ſo the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* If the conſcious ſpirit in man is man, the *Spirit* of God muſt be eſſentially God.

I deſire to obſerve yet farther, that nothing leſs than a belief in the doctrine of the *Trinity*, as it is received in the Church, can ſatisfy the full demands of the terms—*faith*, —and *myſtery*,—which we meet with ſo repeatedly in the New Teſtament, and to which there is ſo much reference under the old. The whole of the *myſtery* of the divine *will made known in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times*;* *the wiſdom of God in a myſtery, even the hidden wiſdom which God ordained before the world*, &c; † or, if you pleaſe, the real character of the univerſal Saviour, who was to be both God and man, was a ſecret from the beginning. This ſtupendous doctrine was infinitely, and by the divine intention, too ſublime for the carnal conceptions of the

* Epheſ. i. 10. † 1 Cor. ii. 7.

Jews;

Jews; who, whatever they might ultimately underſtand by, or hope from the *Meſſiah* promiſed to *Adam*, to *Abraham*, to the *Patriarchs*, and to others; and foretold by the Prophets in language clear and ſtrong indeed, but at the ſame time figurative, magnificent, and myſterious, expected, and primarily deſired only a temporal deliverer, who ſhould *reſtore again*, and perpetuate *the kingdom to Iſrael.* Nay, it is abundantly evident that the Prophets themſelves, thoſe *holy men of God who ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*,* had not an inſight into the full ſcope, and whole import of the ſacred truths and oracles which they delivered. Our Lord ſeems to allude to this ignorance, when he acquaints his diſciples, that *many prophets and kings had deſired to ſee the things* which they ſaw, and *had not ſeen them*,† &c. It is true this was ſaid by way of anticipation; becauſe, as will be ſhewn, it was not then even to them *given* to *know* the capital *myſtery of the kingdom of heaven.* But St. *Peter* is plain and full upon this ſubject, when, ſpeaking, in his firſt general epiſtle, of the ſalvation obtained

* 2 Pet. i. 21. † Luke x. 24.

for us by *Jesus Christ*, he proceeds in the following words; *of which salvation the prophets have enquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow: unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.** The expressions here are, I think, in themselves almost sufficiently decisive upon the great point before us. For it is hard to conceive that the Prophets, in whom, it seems, the *Spirit of Christ* resided; and much harder that the angels should not have a clear idea of the work of human redemption; should not be *able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height*, (as St. *Paul* expresses himself, with an eye, I imagine,

* 1 Pet. i. 10.

to

to this diſpenſation,) ſuppoſing that work to have been accompliſhed by any perſon leſs than *very God*; but admit the Divinity of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the inquiſitiveneſs and the incapacity of men and angels will by no means be unaccountable. All this, I truſt, will afford a moſt ſtrong argument, that the *faith* which the Apoſtles preached after the aſcenſion of our Saviour; the *faith* which was firſt *delivered* to the chriſtian *Saints*; the *faith* which we are required to *hold faſt without wavering*, * and to *build up ourſelves upon*, † is a *faith* in the incarnation of the *eternal Son of God*; or, in other words, in the doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, as it has all along been held in the Chriſtian Church. In conſequence of the removal of a popular objection againſt all this, I hope in the enſuing diſquiſitions to ſet in a ſtill clearer point of view the great doctrine before us.

* Heb. x. 23. † Jude 20.

DISCOURSE III.

ACTS I. 3.

By many infallible proofs.

THESE words immediately refer to the great event of our Lord's resurrection, but in consequence of it to the divinity of his person. Of this therefore I shall proceed to lay more proofs before you, taking first this opportunity to obviate the following popular objection; that, notwithstanding all that has been, or can be advanced, the doctrine before us is not so absolutely clear and indisputable as we would have it thought, and as a fundamental article of faith ought to be; in as much as no text can be produced which precisely, and *totidem verbis*,

ſpeaks the language of the firſt article of our Church; *viz.* "in the unity of the Godhead "there be three Perſons of one ſubſtance, "power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, "and the Holy Ghoſt; or of the ſecond; "two whole and perfect natures, that is to "ſay, the Godhead and Manhood are joined "together in one Perſon, never to be di-"vided, whereof is one Chriſt, very God "and very man; or of the fifth; the Holy "Ghoſt, proceeding from the Father, and "the Son, is of one ſubſtance, majeſty, and "glory with the Father and the Son, very "and eternal God."

To all this, I apprehend, we may readily reply, that if there be any real force in ſuch objections, it will operate much farther by neceſſary conſequence than the objectors themſelves can be ſuppoſed to deſire it ſhould. For it will ſupply the perverſe, or idle caviller with pretences and exceptions againſt all the divine properties and attributes, as far as they are aſſerted in the firſt article. There is no *one* paſſage in the Scrip-

ture

ture which literally tells us, that "there is "but one living and true God, everlasting, "without body, parts, or passions, of infinite "power, wisdom, and goodness, the Maker "and Preserver of all things both visible and "invisible." The divine superintendency, &c, usually called *Providence*, is justly reputed one of the capital doctrines of religion. Yet, upon the principles of these objectors, it should be no doctrine at all. For we meet with no such term as *Providence*, in the sense demanded, either in the *old* or *new* Testament. So that this doctrine must inevitably fall to the ground, unless it be maintained and supported by natural inference; or unless we are at liberty to make use of a proper term to express our sense of it. He who objects to the term—*Trinity*—as unscriptural, should consider by what texts he will undertake to prove the *Unity* of the Divine Nature; which, in the sense required by his argument, is a term no more to be found in Scripture than the other. In fact, upon the principle of our opponents, we shall be under a necessity of expunging a great

great part of the Apoſtles Creed, and even ſuch parts of it as all Chriſtians whatever, without the leaſt ſcruple or heſitation, have aſſented to. For I deſire to know by what expreſs or literal authority of Scripture any perſon believes in the *Holy Catholic Church*, or in the *Communion of Saints*; or that our bleſſed Lord was *born of the Virgin Mary, or ſuffered under Pontius Pilate*, &c? In ſhort, if we are to be abſolutely precluded the uſe and application of proper terms and expreſſions in the inveſtigation and expoſition of Scripture-meaning, it will, I preſume, be impoſſible to frame the moſt ſimple ſyſtem, or formulary of Chriſtian faith and doctrine, or any ſuch thing as a *Creed* of any kind in the Church. The holy Scripture is the ſole rule or meaſure of every form of confeſſion, &c; it is the only teſt by which any doctrine, or ſyſtem is, in all its branches, even the moſt minute of them, to be deliberately and ultimately tried; but it is not the rule itſelf; and indeed a little inquiry will ſhew us why the capital points of religion are not ſyſtematically delivered in the ſacred writings.

The

The doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*, as maintained by the Church of *England*, was the doctrine of the Catholic Church at and before the time of the publication of the Scriptures of the *New Teſtament*, or it was not. If it was, the controverſy is at an end. If it was not, we would fain know how to account for that great variety of paſſages, and thoſe numerous circumſtances, by which it is at leaſt ſo plauſibly countenanced, not to ſay forcibly defended. We would fain know how to reconcile with the character of the *meek* and the *lowly* Jeſus, any one of his expreſſions which is capable of being conſtrued into a claim to the Divinity. If this doctrine was the doctrine of the Church previouſly to the publication of the holy writings, they are ſufficiently full and explicit for the ſatisfaction, or confirmation of Chriſtians of all ages; if otherwiſe, here is more than enough ſaid to perplex and miſguide them, and to lead them into errors of the firſt magnitude. The great queſtion therefore, I take it, is, whether we have not all the reaſon in the world to infer from the very mode in which the doctrine

doctrine of the *Trinity* is inſerted and inculcated in the ſacred pages; the queſtion, I ſay, is, whether we are not authoriſed by this circumſtance to conclude that this doctrine was antecedently received in the Chriſtian world? For inſtance; ſuppoſing the doctrine of the *Trinity* to have been the ſtanding doctrine of the Church when St. *John* (*k*) wrote his Goſpel, we have no kind of difficulty to encounter; but are we not very much embaraſſed by the contrary ſuppoſition? In the former caſe, we may readily conceive the Apoſtle to be aſſerting the Divinity of *Jeſus Chriſt* in the moſt expreſs terms at the beginning of his Goſpel; and, in the courſe of it, to record many particulars clearly declarative of the ſame; not by way of formal anſwer to *Cerinthus*, or any other heretic that diſputed, or denied it, but purely in flat contradiction to the novel and heterodox notions advanced and propagated by them; and to encourage and ſtabliſh good Chriſtians in the faith, as they had all along been taught. What this great Evangeliſt declares at the latter end of his Goſpel, *viz.* that

that *these things were written*, or, as we may say, given under his own hand, that the Christians whom he addresses *might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, is perfectly consistent with their pre-acquaintance with these matters. Agreably hereunto, and indeed in direct confirmation of our hypothesis, St. *Luke* (and many, it seems, before him,) *set in order a declaration of those things which most surely were believed among Christians*,* that the person he writes to *might know the certainty of those things wherein* he had *been instructed*. In the same light we may regard those passages in the epistles which have often been produced in vindication of the doctrine before us. Some of these epistles were, with respect to the main end and design of them, entirely of a temporary nature; being written with a view to the decision of controversies in the primitive Church, which for many centuries have been out of date; and upon several occasions and subjects of little moment to succeeding generations. Not one of them however was professedly written

* Luke i. 1.

in

in defence of the doctrine of the *Trinity*. According to our present hypothesis, a vindication of this kind had been absolutely superfluous; and though we cannot wonder to observe a point of this consequence frequently mentioned, or alluded to in these writings, yet it would be very unreasonable to expect to find it methodically or systematically taught.

The grand principle of the leading oppugners of the doctrine under consideration is, that the only thing required of Christians to be believed with regard to the Person of *Jesus Christ*, is, that he was the *Messiah*, the Person promised and sent by God to redeem men from that death which they were inevitably appointed to as descendants of *Adam*; and that the *Messiah*, and the *Christ*, and the *king of Israel*, and the *Son of God*, are terms or titles in Scripture absolutely denoting one and the same thing. I need not tell you, that this is the favourite tenet of Mr. *Locke* in his treatise on the *Reasonableness of Christianity*, as delivered in Scripture.

Now

Now we ſhall willingly admit, that the Apoſtles themſelves were believers under this idea moſtly, during our Saviour's reſidence upon earth; as 'tis certain, they had not the whole *myſtery* of the Divine *Will*, the grand ſcheme of man's redemption, clearly and fully made known to them before our Lord's Aſcenſion into heaven. *I have many things to ſay unto you*, he ſays to them, *but ye cannot bear them now*;* &c. and in ſaying this he had moſt probably an eye to the *myſtery* of the Goſpel. For though he took frequent occaſions to aſſert and preſignify, as I may ſay, his truly Divine Nature, either directly, or by neceſſary implication, and could not but have been underſtood ſo to have done by his diſciples, and by the *Jews*, who *ſought to ſtone him* on that very account, yet, *in the days of his fleſh*, many circumſtances concurred to ſhake, or rather to overturn the faith of his followers, with reſpect to this great article. This is plain enough from the tenor of the evangelical hiſtory. It would be ridiculous to ſuppoſe that the Apoſtles could believe their Maſter to be the *Son of*

* John xvi. 12.

God

God in the highest sense, or even to be the *redeemer of Israel* in any sense, when *they all forsook him and fled.* At the melancholy crisis I refer to, they conceived no doubt very different notions of their Lord from what they had once entertained of him, and afterwards did, when he was *declared to be the Son of God with power*, or to full effect, by his *resurrection from the dead.**

The fact is, the scheme of human redemption by *Jesus Christ*, the *only-begotten Son of God*, in the strictest sense, was opened gradually, and propounded to the world as it were article by article. At first it must necessarily have been sufficient to have believed that *Jesus* was the *Christ*, the *Messiah*, or the *Son of God*, merely as executing a divine commission, &c; his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation to the *right hand of the Majesty on high*, being subsequent points of faith; and accordingly we read of many that *believed on him* at different times, and in different places, long before the conversion of

* Rom. i. 4.

the

the *three thouſand on the day of Pentecoſt*, whom we cannot but conſider as believers in a much higher ſenſe. The *faith* of Chriſtians at that memorable period, and ever ſince, cannot with the leaſt colour of reaſon be aſcertained, or is to be meaſured by what is declared to be *faith* in particular inſtances recorded in the Goſpels. The *faith* which *made the woman whole*, who *had an iſſue of blood*, * and the *faith* that *ſaved*, i. e. reſtored to ſight the *blind man* near *Jericho*, † could not be that *faith*, the *myſtery* of which St. *Paul* requires *Deacons to hold in a pure conſcience*. ‡ In ſhort, our Saviour's actual reſurrection, by virtue of his own as well as his Father's power, (as we ſhall preſently ſee,) cleared up a thouſand difficulties in a moment, and amounted to a full demonſtration of his Divinity. From a thorough conviction of this no doubt it was that his Diſciples *worſhipped him*; and St. *Thomas* in particular burſt into that rapture of acknowlegement, *My Lord, and my God!* Though therefore the *Meſſiah*, or the *Chriſt*, be not

* Luke viii. 43. † Ibid. xviii. 35. ‡ 1 Tim. iii. 9.

unfrequently called the *Son of God*, as a perſon *ſent from God*, as a *teacher*, a *prophet*, or deliverer, &c. (as many even created beings, angels, &c. and men in general are called *Sons of God* in certain reſpects,) yet we inſiſt that this appellation belongs peculiarly to *Jeſus*, the *author of our faith*, as a Divine Perſon likewiſe; and that he is ſo called with reference to his nature, as well as to his offices. In ſome paſſages of Scripture perhaps, the preciſe import of this title may be controvertible; as when *devils* and *unclean ſpirits* call our Saviour the *Son of God*, and the *Holy One of God*; and when *Peter* ſtyles him the *Son of the living God*. In anſwer to our Lord's queſtion, *whom ſay ye that I am?* the diſciples, according to St. *Mark*, replied by the mouth of *Peter*, *thou art the Chriſt*. In other places the ſignificance of the title in queſtion is diſcoverable by the context; as when *Nathaniel* addreſſes our Saviour in the character of the *Son of God*, the *king of Iſrael*. But why muſt all this affect the ſenſe of any one paſſage wherein the appellation is given for reaſons infinitely ſuperiour? *The*

Holy

*Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee; therefore alſo that Holy thing which ſhall be born of thee ſhall be called the Son of God.** (*l*) Could ſtronger terms be deviſed to expreſs the aſſumption of the human nature by the Divine? Is it not perfectly reaſonable to conclude, that the ſacred penmen often make mention of the *Son of God* with an eye to this myſterious and ineffable incarnation? And is it not certain that the perſon whom St. *John*, at the end of his Goſpel, calls the *Chriſt*, the *Son of God*, is the ſame with him whom, at the beginning of it, he ſtyles the *Word* that *was with God*, and *was God?* And if ſo, is not the ſenſe of the latter paſſage determinable by the preceding? Nevertheleſs the great Philoſopher above mentioned leaves the introduction to this Goſpel, and other paſſages in it of equal import, entirely unnoticed, as though it had no connection with his argument; which is a piece of diſingenuouſneſs that, one cannot avoid ſaying, did little credit to his cauſe, or to himſelf.

* Luke i. 35.

We ſhall be enabled, by ſuch conſiderations as theſe, to put the true conſtruction on the title of the *Son of God*, in moſt, if not all the places where it occurs in the Epiſtles; naturally taking into the account the many clear and expreſs proofs of our Lord's Divinity which are cited from them. Of ſome of the moſt ſtriking of theſe proofs, among other particulars, we ſhall for ſatisfaction-ſake take a review in proper time. What Mr. *Locke* has adduced on this ſubject with a purpoſe to invalidate theſe proofs in general, will, I am confident, be utterly overthrown by the force of the following conſiderations; *viz.* that the *Epiſtles* are a part of the *New Teſtament*, and as eſſential a part as the Goſpels; were like them, as was obſerved, written occaſionally, and after our Saviour's *Aſcenſion*, &c; that St. *Paul*, e. g. was as much a *teacher* of the *Goſpel*, an inſpired *Apoſtle*, as St. *Matthew*, or any other Apoſtle who has hiſtorically recorded the actions, words, or doctrine of *Jeſus Chriſt*; and that a *Creed*, or ſyſtem of faith ſhould have its foundation in theſe *Epiſtles* together with the other Scriptures.

tures. The truth is, St. *John* in his *Epiſtles* aſſerts the ſame doctrine of our Lord's Divinity as in his Goſpel. By Mr. *Locke's* way of proceeding, *viz.* arbitrarily admitting, or rejecting Scripture, we may mould Chriſtianity into what form we pleaſe; and to this way of proceeding, among other cauſes, we are to aſcribe the various Schiſms, and Hereſies, which have ſo long, and ſo deplorably divided the Chriſtian world.

We may now, I imagine, fairly date the reception of the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity from his reſurrection; and we will next ſee whether the ſubſequent accounts we have of the propagation of the Goſpel be not entirely uniform and conſiſtent upon this hypotheſis, at the ſame time that they open to us the whole *Trinitarian* ſyſtem.

Let it be obſerved then, that the firſt recorded prayer we meet with is that of the Apoſtles after the *Aſcenſion*, in which the addreſs is made immediately to our Lord himſelf, that he would be pleaſed to *ſhew*

whether he had *chosen Joseph, or Matthias,* to supply the place vacated by *Judas* the *traitor,* whom he had originally chosen with the *eleven Apostles. Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen.* * It is, I believe, generally agreed that this address was made to *Jesus Christ,* and if so, this attribution of omniscience to him is sure as strong an argument of his Divinity as any one thing which can be produced in demonstration of it. The ascription is to me on any other foot unaccountable. It is indeed true, that the Apostles had not yet a thorough insight into the evangelical mystery, nor had got perfectly clear of the prejudices and notions, respecting the *Messiah,* which they had imbibed in common with their countrymen: in consequence of which we find them asking our Lord, even after his resurrection, and after he had spoken to them, more or less explicitly, of the *things pertaining to the kingdom of God,* whether he would *at that time restore again the kingdom to Israel?* But that they put this question to

* Acts i. 24.

him

him as to one who was able to effect ſuch reſtoration by his own inherent divine power, or, in other words eſſentially partook of the divine nature, muſt ſurely be concluded from this conſideration; that they could not poſſibly *now* entertain the leaſt doubt but that all his declarations and aſſurances to them would be verified to a tittle; and that as he *came forth from the Father, and was come into the world*, ſo he would ſoon *leave the world, and go to the Father; and be glorified with that glory which he had with the Father, before the world was.* The caſe appears plainly to have been this: they did not yet comprehend the whole evangelical plan in the concurrence of three Divine Perſons, in "glory equal, in majeſty coeternal;" they did not perfectly conceive all the *things pertaining* to Chriſt's ſpiritual kingdom; the *kingdom of God* in the fulleſt and moſt exalted ſenſe, of which he had been ſpeaking to them alluſively *forty days*, and with regard to which he may be ſuppoſed to have before promiſed them, that the *ſpirit of truth, whom* he would *ſend unto them from the Father*, ſhould *guide them into*

ALL truth, and *teſtify of him.* Accordingly, after the miraculous effuſion of the *Holy Ghoſt* on the *day of Pentecoſt*, we find them diſcovering very different ſentiments, and animated with ſpiritual expectations; we ſee them calling upon the people to *ſave* themſelves from an *untoward generation*; exhorting them to *repent*, and to be *baptized for the remiſſion of ſins*; (*m*) renouncing in an inſtant all honours, profits, and pleaſures of this world; *rejoicing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame* for the *name* of their Divine Maſter; and, in a word, preaching the Goſpel of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the *Son of God*, through the inſpiration of the *Spirit*, and in the trueſt ſenſe of the expreſſion. On the memorable day juſt mentioned we are told, that the *Apoſtles were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and began to ſpeak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.* What they ſpake is not particularly ſpecified; but in general we are given to underſtand, that they ſpake in all languages the *wonderful works of God.* On the credit of what has been advanced, which will be ſtrengthned by what will follow, it

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is moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that, by the *works* here referred to, the great work of redemption by the eternal *Son of God* is principally intended; the *myſtery of godlineſs*, exhibited in *God manifeſt in the fleſh*, and diſplayed in the wonderful effuſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*.

In the firſt addreſs of the Apoſtles to the *Jews*, and *Jewiſh proſelytes*, by the mouth of *Peter*, on the ſame day, both the humanity and divinity of our Saviour are plainly and diſtinctly aſſerted, or implied; and in ſuch a manner as hardly to be liable to miſconſtruction. The doctrine of the reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt*, conſidered as the confirmation of a ſtill greater doctrine, that of his Divinity, is the chief *corner-ſtone* of our Chriſtian Faith; and, as ſuch, is particularly inſiſted upon by the Apoſtles, who were *ordained* to be *witneſſes* of it. And becauſe this moſt important of all events could not be accompliſhed by himſelf in his mere human capacity, we find the holy writers frequently declaring that *God raiſed him from the dead*. But let

let it be remembered, that *Jesus, whom God raised up*, is likewise as expressly said to have *risen*; and is styled by these very witnesses the *Holy One*, and the *Just*, and the *Prince of life* in different places; which beyond all doubt are titles appertaining to the Supreme God. Under the first of these characters, God the Creator is described in numberless passages of the *Old Testament*; and he who is the *Prince*, or author of *life*, according to the marginal reading, must be the same, in point of power and perogative, with him to whom belong the *issues from death*; who *killeth and maketh alive*; and *in whose hand is the life of every thing*. Indeed the *Prince*, or Author of *life* must have *life in himself* from all eternity; must be emphatically *the life* and *resurrection*, as our Saviour calls himself; and therefore may as truly and properly be said to have *raised the temple of his body* by his own power, (to borrow his own phrase,) as to have been *raised from the dead* by the power of *God the Father*. We may say, in short, with equal truth and propriety, *Christ was raised from the dead*, or *Christ rose from the dead*,

dead, according to the Scriptures; the latter aſſertion importing his Divinity, the former not ſuperſeding it; and therefore when St. *Peter* told the *men of Iſrael*, that they had *killed the Prince of life*, I ſcarce know which ſtrikes us moſt, the force of the implied truth, or the keenneſs of the ſarcaſm. But to return to the addreſs of the Apoſtles. *Peter, ſtanding up with the eleven*, ſays the ſacred hiſtorian, *lift up his voice, and ſaid unto them, ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jeruſalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words; for theſe are not drunken, as ye ſuppoſe, &c; but this is that which was ſpoken by the prophet Joel: and it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, (ſaith God,) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all fleſh; and your ſons and your daughters ſhall propheſy, &c*; and I *will ſhew wonders, &c; and it ſhall come to paſs, that whoſoever ſhall call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved.* * Now let us compare the promulgation or delivery of this prophecy with the completion of it at this period. Obſerve the words of the Apoſtle in

* Acts ii. 14.

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the courſe of his harange. *This Jeſus*, ſays he, (whom, with reference to his humanity, he had juſt before called *a man approved* by God,) *hath God raiſed up, whereof we all are witneſſes. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt*, HE *hath ſhed forth this which ye now ſee and hear*. That the *Father* and the *Son* concurred in this wonderful diſpenſation of infinite wiſdom and power on an equal foot, it will ſcarce be poſſible for us to doubt, when we recollect that the *ſecond Perſon* in the bleſſed *Trinity* is often repreſented as the giver of *ſpiritual gifts*, independently on any *promiſe* from, or aſſociation with the *firſt*. *I will give you a mouth*, ſays he to his Apoſtles, juſt before his paſſion, *and wiſdom which all your adverſaries ſhall not be able to gainſay. I am with you always*, ſays he after his reſurrection, *even unto the end of the world.* * *Without* him, he tells them, they *can do nothing*. And, to produce only one paſſage more out of many that might be cited, which has a manifeſt

* Matt. xxviii. 20.

alluſion

alluſion to the effuſion of the *Spirit* on the *day of Pentecoſt*, St. *Paul* aſſures the *Epheſians*, that *unto every one is given grace according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt. Wherefore*, he adds, *he ſaith, when he aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* † It may be pertinent yet farther to remark, that ſometimes neither the *Father*, nor the *Son*, appear to be concerned in this matter; the *Spirit* being ſaid, of and by himſelf, to *divide* his *gifts* and graces *to every man ſeverally as he will.*

But what ſhall we ſay to the invocation implied in the cloſe of the prophecy we are conſidering; *whoſoever ſhall call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved?* Whom are we to underſtand by the *Lord* here? This, I ſhould think, may be determined by the ſignificance of the ſame words in other places. They cannot be miſunderſtood in the original prophecy of *Joel*. And if we refer to the tenth Chapter of St. *Paul's* Epiſtle to the *Romans*, where they occur again, they will amount

† Epheſ. iv. 7. 1 Cor. vii 11.

to

to an irreſiſtible, though indirect proof of the point in queſtion. It is apparent that *Jeſus Chriſt* is intended, or included however in all theſe texts, is accordingly to be worſhipped, and conſequently is God.

After what has been ſaid, we ſhall not be at a loſs for the conſtruction to be put upon the inference with which the Apoſtle concludes this firſt diſcourſe which we have been remarking on. *Therefore let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Chriſt.* Juſt noting that in the phraſe—*that ſame Jeſus*—abundance of reproach is conveyed, I obſerve, that theſe words ſufficiently expreſs the two natures united in our bleſſed Saviour, the *Chriſt* in his human character, the *Lord* in his divine. But yet farther, the Apoſtle encourages his auditors, (who, it ſeems, were *pricked* in the heart by what he had preached to them,) to *repent and be baptized in the name of Jeſus Chriſt*, with the comfortable aſſurance that the *promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt was unto them, and to their Children,*

Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD OUR GOD ſhould *call.* Agreably to which declaration we are told, that *the Lord added to the Church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved*; and are afterwards informed, that *believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.* Now that, according to the moſt natural and obvious interpretation, we are by the *Lord* to underſtand *Jeſus Chriſt* in the two laſt quoted places, I preſume will be admitted by every candid enquirer; and if ſo, it is he who is deſcribed under the character of the *Lord our God* in the text immediately before cited. When therefore we are told at the 42d verſe of this Chapter, that the newly-baptized converts *continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles doctrine*; and afterwards, that the *Apoſtles taught and preached Jeſus Chriſt*, and ſpake to *the people the words of this life*, &c. we may juſtly conclude that doctrine to have been the doctrine of redemption, as it has ſince been received in the Chriſtian Church.

When St. *Peter* and his colleagues were brought before the *High-Prieſt and Rulers*, &c.

&c, in order to be examined concerning the cure of the *impotent* man at the *beautiful gate of the Temple*, we find them again insisting on the *resurrection* of their Master, as the fundamental article which was demonstrative of the truth of his mission and doctrine, and by consequence of the Divinity of his Person. This *deceiver* (as they had blasphemously reputed him) had *said, while he was yet alive*, that *after three days he would rise again*; he had affirmed to them, that *as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will*; he had declared to them his existence before *Abraham* in the most explicit terms, *Before Abraham was, I am*; he had *said, that God was his Father*, in the strictest sense, *making himself equal with God*, &c, &c. Supposing then *the Lord to have risen indeed*, the truth of these several assertions must necessarily follow. And, in fact, that he was *risen*, these *betrayers* and *murderers* of the *just one*, had they not been *stiffnecked* and *uncircumcised in heart and ears*, could not but have been convinced by *beholding the lame man who was*

healed

healed ſtanding before them; and afterwards by the many *ſigns* and *wonders* which were *wrought among the people by the hands of the Apoſtles*, who moſt undoubtedly muſt have been *endowed with* ſuch *power from on high*; or, in other words, by their now *glorified* Maſter.

I have already in effect conſidered the ſin of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, who *agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord*, as a ſin againſt the *Third* Perſon in the Holy *Trinity*; and, I think, we may defy infidelity to put a fairer interpretation upon this portion of the Apoſtolical hiſtory.

I ſhall not dwell on the two invocations of the proto-martyr at the hour of death; *Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit*; *Lord, lay not this ſin to their charge*; both which abundantly imply his faith in *Jeſus Chriſt* as God; but paſs on to the account of the converſion of the *Ethiopian Eunuch* by *Philip* the *Deacon*. * *The Angel of the Lord ſpake unto Philip*,

* Acts viii. 26, &c.

ſaying, ariſe, and go toward the South, &c; *and he aroſe, and went; and behold a man of Ethiopia, an Eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians,* &c, *who had come to Jeruſalem for to worſhip, was returning, and, ſitting in his chariot, read Eſaias the prophet. Then the Spirit ſaid to Philip, go near,* &c. *And Philip ran to him, and heard him read,* &c, *and ſaid, underſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt? And he ſaid, how can I, except ſome man ſhould guide me? And he deſired Philip that he would come up, and ſit with him. The place,* &c. *which he read was this, He was led as a ſheep to the ſlaughter,* &c. *And the Eunuch ſaid, I pray thee, of whom ſpeaketh the prophet this? Then Philip began at the ſame Scripture, and preached unto him Jeſus. And as they went on their way they came to a certain water; and the Eunuch ſaid, ſee, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip ſaid, if thou believeſt with all thy heart, thou mayeſt. And he anſwered and ſaid, I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God. And he baptized him.* The hiſtory is as ſuccinct as poſſible: but why is it not as reaſonable

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to ſuppoſe, that, when *Philip preached unto the Eunuch Jeſus*, he laid the whole myſtery of Chriſtianity before him, the grand ſcheme of human Salvation; and conſequently that he believed *Jeſus Chriſt* to be the eternal *Son of God*, as that, when he *baptized him*, he did ſo *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt?* There was no manner of occaſion to be more circumſtantial, ſuppoſing the primitive readers of this hiſtory to have believed in our ſenſe of the term.

The next particular that meets us is the converſion of St. *Paul*. It will be proper to lay it before you. * *Saul yet breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter againſt the Diſciples of the Lord, went unto the high-prieſt, and deſired of him letters to Damaſcus to the Synagogues, that if he found any of this way, he might bring them bound unto Jeruſalem. And as he journeyed, ſuddenly there ſhined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice ſaying unto him,*

* Acts ix. 1, &c.

Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me? And he ſaid, who art thou, Lord? And the Lord ſaid, I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt: it is hard for thee to kick againſt the pricks. And he trembling, and aſtoniſhed, ſaid, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord ſaid, Ariſe, and go into the city, and it ſhall be told thee; and Saul aroſe, and when his eyes were opened, he ſaw no man; but they led him, and brought him into Damaſcus. And there was a certain diſciple at Damaſcus, named Ananias; and to him ſaid the Lord in a viſion, Ananias. And he ſaid, behold I am here, Lord. And the Lord ſaid, Ariſe, and go into the ſtreet which is called ſtrait, and enquire in the houſe of Judas for one called Saul of Tarſus; for behold he prayeth; and hath ſeen in a viſion a man named Ananias, coming in, and putting his hands on him, that he might receive his ſight. Then Ananias anſwered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy ſaints at Jeruſalem: and here he hath authority from the chief prieſts, to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord ſaid unto him, go thy way; for he is a choſen veſſel unto me. And

Ananias

Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord (even Jesus that appeared unto thee) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus; and he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. Upon this compendious narrative I remark, first, that throughout the whole we must understand by—the *Lord*—*Jesus Christ:* secondly, that whether *Saul* received the *Holy Ghost* by virtue of the imposition of the hands of *Ananias*, and previously to his baptism, or after it; in either case, the whole *mystery of the Gospel* must have been communicated to him by immediate irradiation: and, thirdly, that therefore when *he preached Christ in the Synagogues that he is*

the Son of God, he asserted him so to be by eternal generation. Occasionally indeed, when he *confounded the Jews*, by proving *that this is very Christ*, his argument no doubt turned upon what he alledged to shew that *Jesus Christ* was the true *Messiah*, the *prophet that should come into the world*, and the *king of Israel* in a spiritual sense, whom they had, and did expect under the idea of a temporal Saviour. It seems after this *Saul spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus at Jerusalem*; and we are told, that upon his being *sent forth to Tarsus*, that he might be out of the reach of the *Grecians*, who *went about to slay him, the Churches had rest throughout all Judea*, &c, *and were edified, and walking in the* FEAR OF THE LORD, *and in the* COMFORT OF THE HOLY GHOST, *were multiplied*. I recommend the two last particulars of this passage to the attention of every candid and intelligent hearer. I add too, in corroboration of what has been offered under this portion of the history, that as *Jesus Christ* here tells *Ananias*, that *Saul* was *a chosen vessel unto* HIM, so *Ananias* tells *Paul*, (according to the latter's account of this

this tranſaction in another place,) that the GOD OF THEIR FATHERS had *choſen* him.*

The converſion of *Cornelius* and his family preſents itſelf next to our conſideration; and the ſhort, but important narrative of it is pregnant with matter to our purpoſe. This *proſelyte* of the *gates* (for ſuch doubtleſs he was) *ſaw evidently an Angel of* GOD *coming unto him*, &c. To the *voice* which called to *Peter* to *riſe, kill, and eat*, he anſwered, *not ſo*, LORD; *for I have never eaten any thing that is common*, &c. *While Peter thought on the viſion, the* SPIRIT *ſaid unto him, Behold, three men ſeek thee; ariſe therefore, and go with them, nothing doubting, for I have ſent them.* GOD *hath ſhewed me*, ſays he afterwards to *Cornelius* and his friends, that *I ſhould not call any man common*, &c. Now if we only ſuppoſe, as, I think, we can do no leſs than ſuppoſe, that St. *Peter* addreſſes *Jeſus Chriſt* in the words—*not ſo, Lord*, we have plainly a diſtinction of *three* Perſons in the ſacred ſtory. The ſame will be obſervable likewiſe in the

* Acts xxii. 14. x. 1, &c.

harangue of the Apoſtle upon this extraordinary occaſion. *Of a truth I perceive that* GOD *is no reſpecter of perſons; but in every nation he that feareth him, &c. is accepted with him. The word which* GOD *ſent unto the children of Iſrael, preaching peace by Jeſus Chriſt,* (HE IS LORD OF ALL,) *that word, I ſay, you know, which was publiſhed throughout all Judea; how God anointed Jeſus of Nazareth with the* HOLY GHOST, *and with power, &c.* However, if it be objected, that it is by no means credible this devout *proſelyte* and his family ſhould be converted to the Chriſtian Faith, in the *trinitarian* ſenſe, by any thing aſſerted, or intimated in St. *Peter*'s diſcourſe to them, we will admit the objection, and leave our adverſaries in poſſeſſion of all the advantage they can make of it. We may venture to do ſo without the leaſt heſitation; for I deſire it may be remembered in what manner, and by whom the Apoſtle was interrupted in his ſermon, if it may be called one. *While Peter yet ſpake theſe words,* ſays the ſacred writer, *the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumciſion*

circumcision were astonished, for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. By this miraculous event therefore all farther endeavours of the Apostle for the instruction of these people were happily superseded: they were, as St. *Paul* was, instantaneously as it were, *guided into all truth*; and became believers in the same sense in which he was one. Aagreeably hereunto, when St. *Peter rehearsed* this matter, and *expounded it by order to those of the circumcision who contended with him*, he tells them in the course of his narration, that *as he* BEGAN *to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them* that heard him. After this, would it not be idle to insist upon the inadequateness of St. *Peter*'s address to the purpose of conversion in its utmost extent?

We read in the sequel of this, and in the following chapters, that the *word was preached*, that the *hand of the Lord was with these preachers*; that *a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord*; *and that the word of God grew and multiplied.* If these expressions are compared with others similar to them

them in this hiſtory, and with ſeveral already cited, they will be found, I preſume, abundantly to coincide with our hypotheſis, or, more properly, to confirm it.

But the time admoniſhes me to beſpeak your attention to the continuation of my argument at the next opportunity.

DIS-

DISCOURSE IV.

ACTS I. 3.

By many infallible proofs.

IN profecution of the fubject which engaged us laft *Sunday*, I proceed to the account of St. *Peter*'s imprifonment, and what followed upon it, which the facred Hiftorian gives us in the 12th chapter of the *Acts of the Apoftles*.

When *Peter* was *put in prifon by Herod*, it feems, *prayer was made without ceafing of the church unto God for him* *; and on the night before his intended execution, *the Lord*, we find, *fent his angel, and delivered him out*

* Acts xii. 5.

of

of the hand of Herod, &c. Now that *Jesus Christ* was *the Lord that sent his angel*, appears evident enough from these considerations. *Jesus Christ* is manifestly designed by this title, for the most part at least, through this whole history. *The Lord who delivered Peter by his angel* was certainly the same *Lord* who afterwards spake to *Paul in the night by a vision*; and who, upon another occasion, *stood* by the same Apostle, and encouraged him, &c. Now we should be glad to know, why these particulars are not to be regarded as equivalent to the appearances, and visions, and deliverances *, which are so frequent in the *Old Testament*; and, in that case, I need not point out the consequences they lead to.

In the following chapter, we see *Barnabas* and *Saul sent forth* by an immediate commission from the *Holy Ghost*. *The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them* §. *So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed*

* See Dan. iii. 28. and chap. vi. 22. § Acts xiii. 2.

unto

unto Seleucia, &c. The paſſage has been introduced before, and I leave it to the conſideration of every attentive and impartial hearer.

The next occurrence is the converſion of the *Deputy S. Paulus*, who, we are informed, was a *prudent man*, and *called for Barnabas and Saul, and deſired to hear the word of God.* And we may reaſonably ſuppoſe that our Apoſtles preached it to him at large, and laid before him the great myſteries of the Goſpel; and that he *believed* in the moſt extenſive ſenſe, and was confirmed in his faith by the judgment which he ſaw miraculouſly inflicted by the *hand of the Lord* upon *Elymas the ſorcerer*; being, as the ſacred text expreſſes it, *aſtoniſhed at the doctrine of the Lord:* the doctrine juſt above ſtyled the *word of God.*

After this we find St. *Paul* preaching in the *ſynagogue* of the *Jews* at *Antioch* in *Piſidia**. Now theſe *Jews*, though they were

* Acts xiii. 16, &c.

not

not immediately concerned with them that dwelt at *Jeruſalem* in the proceedings againſt our bleſſed Lord, were yet in all probability *conſenting unto his death*; as they could not all this while be unacquainted with his ſtory, or ſtrangers to his pretenſions. The Apoſtle therefore adopts the ſame mode of argumentation which St. *Peter* had uſed before, in his ſpeech to the council, and lays the main ſtreſs on the fundamental article of the reſurrection of our Lord from the dead. From the admiſſion of this, the truth of the other great points of Chriſtianity muſt neceſſarily follow. And it ſhould ſeem that this diſcourſe of our Apoſtle had a conſiderable effect upon ſome of his audience; and indeed that others conceived the full force and import of the moſt ſtriking particulars in it: for we read, that *when the congregation was broken up*, many of the *Jews* and religious *proſelytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who ſpeaking to them, perſuaded them to continue in the grace of God.* And, by the way, this circumſtance may well be thought to imply, that the *Spirit of grace* had previouſly

ouſly operated in their hearts to their entire converſion. But the *next ſabbath day*, we are farther told, *almoſt the whole city came together to hear the word of God*; and the reſult was, that the *Jews, filled with envy, ſpake againſt thoſe things which were ſpoken by Paul, contradicting and blaſpheming*. I would juſt aſk then, whether this BLASPHEMY does not help us to a very ſtrong preſumptive proof of the ſenſe in which theſe *Jews* underſtood *the things which were ſpoken* by the Apoſtle?

Let us now attend *Paul* and *Barnabas* to *Iconium*; and ſee whether we may not readily infer the nature of their doctrine from the ſucceſs of it there. In this place, we are informed, *they abode long time, ſpeaking boldly in the* LORD, *which gave teſtimony to the word of his grace, and granted ſigns and wonders to be done by their hands**. I would deſire you to compare the laſt clauſe of this paſſage with the concluſion of St. *Mark*'s

* Acts xiv. 3, &c. &c.

Goſpel;

Gospel; *so then after the* LORD *had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven,* &c. *and they went forth and preached; the* LORD *working with them, and confirming the word with signs following*; and with the twelfth verse of the next chapter; *all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul declaring what miracles and wonders* GOD *had wrought amongst the Gentiles by them*; and with the following passage in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*; *how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation*; *which at the first began to be spoken by the* LORD, *and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him*; GOD *also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the* HOLY GHOST, *according to his own will* §; I say, I could wish you to compare these several places; and, I believe I might venture to abide by the conclusions you will draw from them.

We find our Apostles next at *Lystra*, where *Paul* cured the man that was *impotent in his*

§ Heb. ii. 3, &c.

feet,

feet, &c: * on the ſight of which miracle, *the people lift up their voices, ſaying, the gods are come down to us in the likeneſs of men.* Poſſeſſed with this notion, the *prieſts* of *Jupiter brought oxen*, and would *have done ſacrifice*, &c. This no ſooner came to the ears of *Barnabas* and *Paul than they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, ſirs, why do ye theſe things? We alſo are men of like paſſions with you, and preach unto you, that ye ſhould turn from theſe vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth*, &c. &c. Now this was preciſely the expoſtulation which the occaſion demanded. The exiſtence of the one living and true God was to be aſſerted to theſe idolatrous believers in a plurality of deities. At that time to have oppoſed to their perſuaſions doctrines peculiarly Chriſtian, would have been altogether premature and unſeaſonable. It appears however that our Apoſtles had, before and after this, preached theſe doctrines at *Lyſtra*, and in the neighbourhood, with ſucceſs; though moſt probably, for obvious reaſons, not in the

* Acts xiv. 8, &c.

hearing of those that *would have done sacrifice*. For we read at the sixth verse of this chapter, that, being *ware* of the design of the *Jews* and *Gentiles* at *Iconium to use them despitefully*, &c. *they fled unto Lystra and Derbe*, &c. and *there they preached the Gospel*. And after the affair of the sacrifice, we are told, that *there came to Lystra certain Jews from Antioch, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city*, &c; that nevertheless he revived, and soon after *preached the Gospel at Derbe, and taught many, and returned again to Lystra*, &c, *confirming the souls of the Disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith*. *

We meet with nothing now that hath particular connexion with our argument, before the conversions related in the sixteenth chapter. Let us proceed then to these. At *Troas*, says the history, *a vision appeared to Paul in the night*; from which he and *Silas assuredly gathered that the Lord had called them to preach the Gospel in Macedonia*. Observe

* Acts xvi. 1.

then

then the account of the converſion of *Lydia* at *Philippi*. *A certain woman named Lydia, which worſhipped God, heard us: whoſe heart the Lord opened, that ſhe attended unto the things which were ſpoken of Paul. And when ſhe was baptized, ſhe beſought us, ſaying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my houſe*, &c. Now I would aſk, whether we may not reaſonably ſuppoſe the *Lord opened* this woman's *heart* for the reception of all evangelical truths, almoſt in an inſtant? Whether her caſe is not at leaſt ſimilar to that of *Cornelius?* And whether we are not as much authoriſed to take it for granted, that *the things which were ſpoken of Paul* were *the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*, agreeably to our ſyſtem, as that this convert was baptized according to the form in St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel? I would juſt remark here, that this ſyſtem is in no wiſe prejudiced, either by the declaration of the *damſel poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of diviniation*, who *followed Paul* and his companions, *and cried, ſaying, theſe men are the ſervants of the moſt high God, which ſhew unto us the way of Sal-*

vation; or by the Apoſtle's exorciſm of that ſpirit in the following words, *I command thee in the name of Jeſus Chriſt to come out of her.*

But let us turn to the converſion of the jailor, to whoſe cuſtody *Paul* and *Silas* were committed at *Philippi*. *Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?* * is the queſtion which the former, in a fit of aſtoniſhment and terror, put to the latter. *And they ſaid, believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy houſe. And they ſpake unto him the word of the Lord,* &c. *And he was baptized, he and all his. And he rejoiced, believing in God with all his houſe. To believe in God, and to believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* appear here to be convertible expreſſions. In ſhort, I affirm that in this, as well as in preceding inſtances, we have good reaſon to ſuppoſe the perſons preached to were made acquainted by the Apoſtle and his companion with the capital truths of Chriſtianity, as they are taught in the Church.

* Acts xvi. 30.

Not

Not long after this, our Apoſtle and his fellow-travellers came to *Theſſalonica, where was a ſynagogue of the Jews.* * *And Paul* (as the narrative proceeds) *went in unto them, and three ſabbath days reaſoned with them out of the ſcriptures; opening and alledging, that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered, and riſen again,* and that *this Jeſus whom I preach unto you is Chriſt. And ſome of them believed.* It will be ſufficient to obſerve here, that our Apoſtle dealt no doubt with theſe *Jews* and *Jewiſh* proſelytes, as he had before done with others on like occaſions. But the groſs miſrepreſentation, and ſcandalous calumny of the *unbelieving Jews,* in the city juſt mentioned, is extremely worth notice. They drew *Jaſon,* as we are informed, and *certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, theſe men that have turned the world upſide down, are come hither alſo;* † *and theſe all do contrary to the decrees of Cæſar, ſaying, that there is another king, one Jeſus.* Now it is perfectly reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that *Jaſon* and theſe *brethren* proclaimed their crucified

* Acts xvii. 1, &c. † Ibid. xvii. 6.

maſter king in a ſpiritual ſenſe; nay, that they proclaimed him the ſovereign of the univerſe, *king of kings, and lord of lords*; but it is clear, beyond a poſſibility of doubt, that they aſſerted no temporal juriſdiction of *Jeſus Chriſt*, or ſaid or did any thing *contrary to the decrees*, or againſt the government of *Cæſar*.

We have next an account of *Paul* and *Silas*'s preaching the Goſpel at *Berea* *; but there is nothing in it which diſcriminates it from parallel ones already ſpoken to, except the candid reception the Goſpel met with at that place.

We will therefore follow our Apoſtle to *Athens*, where we find him *diſputing in the ſynagogue with the Jews, and others that met with him*. Among theſe were *certain philoſophers of the Epicureans and the Stoics, who encountered him*; ſome calling him a *babler*; others, *a ſetter forth of ſtrange gods, becauſe he preached unto them Jeſus and the reſurrec-*

* Acts xvii. 10.

tion,

tion§. I mean not to insinuate from this passage, that the Apostle is maintaining the Divinity of *Jesus Christ*; as it is evident from the tenor of his ensuing discourse to those heathen philosophers, which is set down at large, that he has here only an eye to the prophetic character, or office of our blessed Lord. If you will turn to the discourse, you will find the great points insisted on, to be the unity and the spirituality of the Godhead, together with the doctrine of a future state, and the resurrection of *all* men from the dead, in consequence of *his*, whom God had *ordained* to be the judge of the world. This was a proper beginning with heathens. But what effect had this discourse upon these idolatrous philosophers? *When they heard of the resurrection*, continues the sacred story, *some mocked*, and others said, *we will hear thee again; howbeit certain men clave unto, him, and believed*, &c. Our Apostle appears then to have made converts at *Athens*, though we do not read that they were *baptized*, or indeed believed in the fun-

§ Acts xvii. 16, &c.

damental articles of Christianity, according to our hypothesis. Without doubt, these articles, the great mysteries of faith, were gradually opened to them afterwards, and previously to their admission into the church by baptism. For we shall see presently that these converts are not the only instances of persons who were disciples, or believers in a certain sense, though they were uninstructed in the first principles of Christianity; and this too even since the propagation of it by the Apostles.

After these things, we are told, *Paul* and *Silas—came to Corinth*§; *and Paul reasoned in the synagogue,—and persuaded the Jews and Greeks;—and was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ; and when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, your blood be upon your own heads*, &c. You will be pleased to compare this relation with that of the perverse and unbelieving

§ Acts xviii. 1, &c.

Jews

Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, already taken notice of.

We have next an account of the conversion of *Justus*, (though it is not particularly set down,) and of *Crispus*, and of *many of the Corinthians*; which contains nothing material to our argument.

But after this we read of an *insurrection made* by the *Jews against Paul*, and of a charge brought against him before *Gallio*; which has a particular worth our notice. *This fellow*, say they, *persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law**. Now when we recollect, that our blessed Saviour was *circumcised*, and "obedient to the law for "man;" that himself and his Apostles conformed to the religion of their country in all points, and attended divine service in the temple, and in the synagogues; that our Apostle circumcised *Timothy* in pure condescension to the *Jews*; that, in vindication of his innocence, he declared to *Festus*, as

* Acts xviii. 13.

he

he had done before in ſubſtance to *Felix*, that *neither againſt the law of the Jews, neither againſt the temple he had offended any thing at all*; that the *Moſaic* œconomy totally ceaſed not before the final deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, when all diſputes concerning circumciſion, and the legal rites and obſervances were happily terminated; when we recollect all this, to which more might be ſubjoined, it will, I conceive, be impoſſible to make tolerable ſenſe of the accuſation juſt mentioned, without ſuppoſing ſomething to have been ſuperadded to the *Jewiſh* worſhip by the Apoſtles, and firſt Chriſtians, which gave this *great offence*; and what ſhould this be but the worſhip of Chriſtians, as ſuch; or, in other words, the adoration of Chriſt, as God?

We will now proceed to the account which the ſacred hiſtorian gives us of *Apollos* in the ſame chapter. * *A certain Jew named Apollos, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Epheſus. This man was*

* Acts xviii. 24.

inſtructed

instructed in the way of the Lord; and, being fervent in the Spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. Whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace; for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ. This portion of Scripture, though a little abstruse, is replete with matter for our observation. *Apollos* is here said to have been *mighty in the Scriptures*; to have been *instructed in* THE WAY OF THE LORD; and to have spoken, and *taught diligently* the THINGS OF THE LORD; i. e. beyond all controversy, the *things of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Nevertheless he is only called a *Jew*; and why, but because he was not baptized in the name of *Jesus Christ?* He was not a Christian in the full sense of the term, as we understand it; he

he *knew only the baptiſm of John*; he knew, as we cannot but ſuppoſe from this account of him, he knew *Jeſus Chriſt* to be the *prophet*, the *Meſſiah that was to come*, whoſe *way John* had *prepared* by *preaching the baptiſm of repentance*, &c; but he knew not the whole *myſtery of godlineſs*, the grand ſecret of human redemption by the *Son of God*, coexiſtent with his *Father*, *before the foundation of the world*. And accordingly, we may ſafely conclude, that it was with reſpect to this great myſtery, that *Aquila* and *Priſcilla expounded to him the* WAY OF GOD *more perfectly*. If we do not infer from hence, that he expreſsly and directly preached the great myſtery in queſtion to thoſe *Jews* whom he *mightily convinced*, &c. every difficulty under this head is fairly ſolved by preceding conſiderations.

The caſe of the diſciples whom St. *Paul* found at *Epheſus* is very ſimilar to that we have juſt deſpatched. *Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt*, ſays he, *ſince ye believed? And they ſaid unto him, we have not ſo much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghoſt.* ‡ *And*

‡ Acts xix. 2, &c.

he

he ſaid, unto them what then were ye baptized? And they ſaid, unto John's baptiſm. Then ſaid Paul, John verily baptized with the baptiſm of repentance, ſaying unto the people, that they ſhould believe on him which ſhould come after him, that is, on Chriſt Jeſus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghoſt came on them; and they ſpake with tongues, and prophesied. The paſſage is not wholly free from obſcurity; but we cannot do leſs than collect from it, that theſe *diſciples* knew as much of *Chriſt Jeſus* antecedently to this interview as *Apollos* did before his acquaintance with *Aquila* and *Priſcilla*; and conſequently, that when *they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus*, they were baptized in the name of a greater perſon than a prophet; and when the *Holy Ghoſt came on them, and they ſpake with tongues and prophesied*, had, like *Cornelius* and his houſhold, an immediate inſight into the profound myſtery of the Chriſtian faith. I juſt add that, in the chapter before us, the *name of the Lord Jeſus* is ſaid to have been *magnified*; and

and that the WORD OF THE LORD JESUS, and the WORD OF GOD are different modes of expreſſion which at firſt ſight will be found to import one and the ſame thing.

But to proceed. I ſee nothing of conſequence enough to our argument to detain us, till we find St. *Paul* at *Miletus*, from whence he *ſent to Epheſus, and called the elders of the Church. And when they were come to him*, ſays the hiſtory, *he ſaid unto them, ye know from the firſt day that I came into Aſia, after what manner I have been with you; ſerving the* LORD *with all humility; and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you; teſtifying both to Jews and Greeks, repentance towards* GOD, and *faith toward our* LORD *Jeſus Chriſt. And now behold, I go bound in the ſpirit unto Jeruſalem, not knowing the things that ſhall befall me; ſave that the* HOLY GHOST *witneſſeth in every city, ſaying, that afflictions abide me. But none of theſe things move me, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe, and the miniſtry which I have received of the* LORD

* Acts xx. 17, &c.

Jeſus,

Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of GOD. *And now I know, that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of* GOD, *shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record, that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you* ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the* HOLY GHOST *hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of* GOD, *which he hath purchased with his* OWN BLOOD. *For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.* Now if we suppose this Apostolical charge to have been delivered to persons pre-instructed in the mystery of the Gospel, agreeably to our representation of it, i. e. to have been believers in the Holy Trinity, it must be acknowleged to contain words of perspicuity, *truth, and soberness*; but on every other supposition, must not St. *Paul* have been thought by his audience to have been indeed *beside himself?* I would recommend the

the whole of this paſſage to every judicious and impartial reader's thorough conſideration.

We will now attend this great Apoſtle to *Jeruſalem*; where we find him violently attacked by the *Jews which were of Aſia, who ſtirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, men of Iſrael help, this is the man that teacheth all men every where againſt the people and the law*, &c. The accuſation brought here againſt our Apoſtle is plainly in ſubſtance the ſame with that alledged by the *Jews of Achaia*, who accuſed him of *perſuading men to worſhip God contrary to the law*. I ſhall therefore refer you to what was ſaid on that occaſion. Only I will add here, that the obſervation then made is much confirmed by the circumſtance of St. *Paul*'s *purifying* himſelf at *Jeruſalem* with the *four men who had a vow on them*, agreeably to the advice before given by the judaizing Chriſtians, and in exact conformity to the *Moſaic* conſtitution. But if we turn to what the Apoſtle has to ſay in his own defence, we ſhall find

* Acts xxi. 27, &c.

his

his apology to contain an account of his conversion, and of his Apostolical commission in consequence of it; which strengthens much what has been remarked relative to the charge brought against him. It is observable, that St. *Paul* calls himself here a *Jew* in the very same breath almost in which he avows himself a Christian. He admits his hearers to be *zealous towards God, according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers*,† though he plainly intimates all the while that they were erroneously or blindly zealous, or, as he elsewhere expresses it, that their *zeal of God was not according to knowlege*. He does not undervalue or vilify the law, and much less pronounce it to be *void*, and of *none effect*, though he professes himself a preacher of the Gospel. Neither the *Jews* of *Jerusalem*, nor those of *Asia*, could possibly be strangers to the NEW DOCTRINE which he taught under that character: so that we are not at a loss to know the nature and import of the testimony which he bore concerning his Divine Master. Beside, we are to remember, that he was in-

† Acts xxii. 1, &c.

terrupted in the courſe of his harangue, and precluded from enlarging his ſpeech, or expatiating on his doctrine, (which otherwiſe perhaps he might have done,) by the clamours and outrage of a giddy and incenſed multitude.

We ſee him next before the *chief prieſts* and *council*; in which ſituation he politicly takes advantage of the difference of ſentiment between them that compoſed it: the *one part* being *Sadducees*, and *the other Phariſees*. The Apoſtle openly declares himſelf a *Phariſee*; in which plea his immediate view was manifeſtly to his own preſervation; though ultimately he had doubtleſs an eye to the converſion of the moſt conſiderable and reſpectable part of his audience, by tacitly at leaſt referring to the reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the important conſequences neceſſarily reſulting from it.

In much the ſame light we may regard his apology for himſelf before *Felix* in the

† Acts xxiii. 1, &c.

following

following Chapter. Under one article of his accusation he is charged with being *a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes*;† or, as the *Asiatic Jews* had expressed themselves, with *teaching men every where against the law*; or, in the words of the *Jews* of *Achaia*, with *persuading men to worship God contrary to the law*; and under another article he is traduced as a *mover of Sedition*, and a disturber of the public peace. Now there is something observably dexterous in our Apostle's reply to all this; in which he partly denies the charge, professes his innocence, and defies them to *prove the things whereof they accuse him*; and partly asserts the cause he had espoused, and in general terms acknowleges his Christian principles. In this, as in the preceding case, there is fine address in the Apostle's endeavour to interest his auditors on the side of Christianity, by representing its professors as holding one common tenet with the *straitest* and most popular sect of the *Jewish* religion; while at the same time he was indirectly *preaching through Jesus the*

† Acts xxiv. 5, &c.

resurrection from the dead, and by necessary implication maintaining the great mystery of the Christian Faith. *Felix,* we find, was far from being unacquainted with at least some of the doctrines of Christianity, and reserved the matter for a farther hearing; but in the interim he, with his wife *Drusilla, which was a Jewess,* sent for *Paul* privately, and *heard him concerning the faith in Christ.*‡ It does not appear that our Apostle on this occasion discoursed on any one article of faith, strictly and peculiarly Christian. *He reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,* till this iniquitous governor *trembled;* and probably had proceeded to the full display of all evangelical truth, had he not been abruptly dismissed. However, if there be any difficulty here, it is such as affects not our argument in particular; because the very same difficulty will subsist, whether we suppose *that Jesus whom Paul preached* to be "very God of very God," or to be the *Son of God* in a secondary sense only, or indeed barely the *prophet that was to come into the world.*

‡ Acts xxiv. 24, &c.

Many

Many of the foregoing remarks may be applied to the defence made afterwards by our Apoſtle before king *Agrippa and Feſtus* ‡. I think it unneceſſary therefore to cite it. It will ſuffice to obſerve, or rather to repeat, that, aſſerting the doctrine of the reſurrection in general, and particularly that of *Jeſus Chriſt*, St. *Paul* at one and the ſame time inſinuates himſelf into the good graces of ſuch as were phariſaically diſpoſed; and points to a fact, the admiſſion of which, upon full and diſpaſſionate enquiry, muſt lead all that heard him, all the *Jews* at leaſt into a train of concluſions, neceſſarily comprehending the great truths of the Goſpel. And that this was a much more judicious mode of conviction than the direct or poſitive aſſertion of all, or any of thoſe truths could have been, I preſume, I need not ſtay to prove.

When St. *Paul* ſome time after this *expounded and teſtified the kingdom of God to the Jews at Rome, perſuading them concerning Jeſus both out of the law of Moſes, and out of the*

‡ Acts xxvi. 1, &c.

prophets, ‡ we cannot ſay with any preciſion how much of the whole ſcheme of Chriſtianity he laid before them. Moſt probably his uſual diſcretion directed him to deal tenderly with them at firſt; though when he declared to the unbelieving part of them that the *ſalvation of God was ſent unto the Gentiles*, the expreſſion has evident reference to that ſcheme; as, ſuitably hereto, the hiſtory of the *Apoſtolical Acts* concludes with an account of his *receiving all that came in unto him for two whole years, and preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching thoſe things which concern the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

This minute and circumſtantial ſurvey of the hiſtory of the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, ſo far as it is connected with our preſent ſubject, will, I apprehend, throw much light upon the ſame. And it will receive additional luſtre from the following conſideration: that, as in the Holy Scriptures, ſo in the writings of the Apoſtolical Fathers, the leading truths of Chriſtianity are incidentally mentioned, or

‡ Acts xxviii. 23, 31.

alluded

alluded to, and not ſyſtematically, but uniformly taught. The doctrine of theſe Fathers is delivered in the ſpirit of ſimplicity; it appears plainly to have been the ſtanding doctrine of the Church; nor is there a ſingle circumſtance that will incline us to ſuſpect them of a deſign to obtrude their own private opinions, or conceits, upon the Chriſtian world. This to me ſeems demonſtrable from a very obſervable particular; which is, that in their writings they do not cite all, or the principal texts which are adduced in maintenance of the doctrine of the Trinity, but aſſert the ſame in other terms, and in language fully equivalent. They evidently conſidered it, not as requiring proof, but deſerving illuſtration. *Ignatius*, in the introduction to his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, ſalutes them "according to the will of the Father, "and *Jeſus Chriſt our* God." The ſame Father wiſhes the *Romans* to "permit him to "imitate the paſſion of his God;" or, of *Chriſt* his God, as it ſtands in the Original. In the above-mentioned Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, he takes occaſion thus to expreſs himſelf.

ſelf. "There is one phyſician, both fleſhly "and ſpiritual; made and not made; GOD "INCARNATE; true life in death; both of "*Mary* and of God; firſt paſſible, then im-"paſſible; even *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord." (*n*) In the concluſion of his Epiſtle to the *Magneſians*, he injoins them to "be ſubject to "their biſhop, as *Jeſus Chriſt* to the Father, "according to the fleſh, † and the Apoſtles "both to Chriſt, and to the Father, and to "the Holy Ghoſt." This inverſion is a very remarkable one. In his Epiſtle to *Polycarp* he exhorts him "to conſider the times, and "expect him who is above all time, eternal, "inviſible, &c." Were there occaſion, much more to the ſame purpoſe might be extracted from this venerable Father.

Polycarp in his Epiſtle to the *Philipians*, wiſhes them to be "ſubject to the Prieſts, "&c. as unto God and Chriſt."

In St. *Clement*'s firſt epiſtle to the *Corinthians* theſe paſſages occur. "The ſceptre of

† Romans i. 3.

"the

" the majesty of GOD, our Lord *Jesus Christ*, " came not in the shew of pride," &c. &c. The second section of the same epistle proceeds in the terms following. " Ye were " all of you humble-minded, &c. desiring " rather to be subject than to govern, &c. " being content with the portion GOD had " dispensed to you, and hearkening dili- " gently to HIS word, ye were enlarged " in your bowels, having HIS SUFFERINGS " always before your eyes." This passage is not unsimilar to part of St. *Paul*'s discourse at *Miletus* to the elders of the church of *Ephesus*, before submitted to your consideration. Let us see now what this Father says in his other epistle to the Corinthians. The exordium of it is this—" Brethren, we ought " so to think of *Jesus Christ* as of GOD &c." In the third paragraph he quotes these words of our blessed Saviour; *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father*. But, continues he, " Wherein " must we confess him? Namely, in doing " those things which he saith, &c. by wor- " shipping him, not with our lips only, but

" with

"with all our heart, &c. for HE ſaith in *Iſaiah*, "*This people honoureth me with their lips, but* "&c." In conformity with this good Father's idea, we may aſk, after the manner of St. *Paul*, is *Jeſus Chriſt* the God of the *New Teſtament only? Is he not alſo of the Old? Yea, of the Old alſo.* In the concluſion of the epiſtle, St. *Clement* exhorts the *Corinthians* to be vigilant, &c. "becauſe we know "not *the day of* GOD's appearing;" *i. e.* undoubtedly, the day when we *muſt appear before the judgmentſeat of Chriſt.*

It is true, as the learned tranſlator acknowledges, this ſecond Epiſtle, was neither held in ſo much reverence by the ancients, nor is ſo generally received among the moderns, as the firſt; and, it is certain, St. *Jerome*, *Photius*, and *Archbiſhop Uſher* after them, concur in endeavouring to repreſent it as a ſpurious production. But I am apt to think every reader will be ſatisfied with what the learned Prelate has advanced in its defence; though, were the point ſtill really controvertible, as the ground of the objections, raiſed

raiſed by theſe illuſtrious perſonages, does not lie in the doctrine ſo explicitly contained in it, and at the ſame time ſo conſonant to the ſentiments of the apoſtolical fathers, I ſee no manner of neceſſity for retracting theſe quotations. Whoever the author might be, we have his clear ſenſe of the matter.

The charge of credulity brought againſt many of the Fathers by a late celebrated Author, with vehemency of zeal, and in the dialect of virulence, even admitting it to be well founded, cannot juſtly be thought to affect in the leaſt the validity of theſe primitive and plain teſtimonies to the great truths of the Goſpel, as they *are moſt ſurely believed among us*. There is not, I am confident, one circumſtance to colour a charge of this nature againſt the Fathers from whom we have been drawing our evidence, except that of the *Phœnix*, by which, as we ſhall ſee, St. *Clement* illuſtrates the doctrine of the reſurrection. And ample ſatisfaction will be given on that head in its proper place. (*o*)

To

To these testimonies we might subjoin those of *Justin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Irenæus*, and a number of others; the weight of whose collected evidence will be found infinitely to preponderate all that has perversely been alledged to its discredit from writers of a subsequent date, and minor authority.(*p*) This in due time will fully appear.

Now, if in all this doctrine we can see nothing like a formulary, or system, we see however from whence *confessions of faith* may reasonably be supposed to have originated, and by what at this day they may be most justly defended. Supposing the first rule of faith to have been purely the baptismal form; or, agreeing with Dr. *Sykes*, that the "very short Creed which at first "was deemed sufficient to entitle men to bap-"tism, was no other than a faith in God the "Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, "and in *Jesus Christ*, his Son our Lord, and "in the *Holy Ghost*;" even admitting this, we cannot surely have recourse to better or sounder authority than that which has been laid

laid before you, in order to know exactly what *this faith* implies. It will be hard indeed if the Apoſtles, and theſe Apoſtolical Fathers, ſhould be all along teaching hereſy, while they perpetually and earneſtly, though not formally or methodically, complain of, and expatiate againſt it.

But I have yet farther to obſerve, that the ſenſe of antiquity, and the faith of the primitive Church, may be inferred from ſuch circumſtantial evidence as has never, that I know of, been profeſſedly produced, but yet, I truſt, will be allowed to come little if at all ſhort of demonſtration.

The infamous reproach which was caſt upon the whole Chriſtian name by its firſt enemies, is a circumſtance of a particular aſpect to our purpoſe. Chriſtianity was called emphatically THE ATHEISM.(*q*) Now I own I cannot help conſidering this equally horrid and ridiculous imputation as neceſſarily importing the primitive Chriſtians to have worſhipped *Jeſus Chriſt* as ONE with the Father,

or

or as "very God of very God" from all eternity. For nothing leſs than ſuch worſhip will account for the charge either from *Jews* or *Gentiles*. It might naturally be conſidered by both as a kind of dethroning of the ONE SUPREME GOD. But every modern unbeliever will readily agree with me, that the idea of inferiority and delegation, &c. is far from being irreconcileable with *Jewiſh* tenets, or with known principles of Polytheiſm. (*r*)

According to the *Apoſtolical conſtitutions*, as we learn from an eminent author, it was cuſtomary for the prieſt, after *amen* ſolemnly pronounced by the communicants in the holy ſacrament, to cry out with a loud voice *τα αγια τοις αγιοις—Holy things belong to holy perſons*; upon which the people anſwered, *There is one Holy, one Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

The ſame writer acquaints us from *Vegetius*, an heathen author, who flouriſhed in the time of the younger *Valentinian*, that Chriſtians in a military capacity were uſed

to

to ſwear by *God, Chriſt*, and the *Holy Spirit*, and the *Majeſty* of the Emperor, which next to God is to be honoured, &c. *

In his *Diſſertation on Epictetus*, *Arrian* (as Biſhop *Wilkins* obſerves) " aſſures us, " that in his time, (which was about an " hundred and tweny years after Chriſt,) it " was an uſual form in the prayers of the " heathen to ſay Κυριε ελεησον—*Lord have* " *mercy upon us*; whereby they did acknow- " lege the *unity* of God, ſays his Lordſhip; " which clauſe, he adds, is thought to have " been from that uſage taken into the Li- " turgy of Chriſtians."

Now, if this be admitted, I would remark, that as the title of *Lord* confeſſedly belongs to our Saviour, the Chriſtians may fairly be ſuppoſed, in their triple form of ejaculatory addreſs,—*Lord, have mercy upon us*; *Chriſt, have mercy upon us*; *Lord, have mercy us*; to invoke *Chriſt* the *Lord*, as ſupreme *God*: or if by *Lord* we are in the firſt

* Cave's Prim. Chriſt. p. 86. Echard's Roman Hiſtory, Vol. III. p. 2.

and

and third petition to underſtand *God the Father*, ſtill we muſt be preſumed in the intermediate one to addreſs the *Son* as *equal* to the Father; becauſe we ſhall elſe be abſurd enough to invoke the *ſupreme God* and a *ſubordinate being* with the ſame fervour, and as it were in the ſame inſtant. You will ſee the argument theſe pious ejaculations furniſh us with, whether we do or do not credit the account of *Arrian*. ‡

In confirmation of what has been offered, I deſire to add one or two more facts, which, if I miſtake not, have more weight in them than is commonly apprehended; as, for inſtance, the appointment of the *Lord's day*; and the ſtyle or title Κυριακα τα οικεια by which churches were in the primitive times diſtinguiſhed. For can we do leſs in common reaſon than worſhip him with the *ſupreme God*, and as the *ſupreme God*, to whoſe particular honour one day in the week is for ever to be *kept holy*; on whoſe particular account the moſt ſacred obſervances of religion were trans-

‡ See Wilkins on Nat. Relig. B. I. ch. 8. p. 42.

ferred

ferred from the *ſeventh* day of the week to the *firſt*; and whoſe peculiar houſe is now the only *houſe of prayer for all people?*

I ſhall conclude this diſcourſe with reminding you of a circumſtance, if poſſible, ſtill more deciſive: I mean the *Unitarian* doctrine which is ſo copiouſly, and ſo emphatically inculcated in the *Koran* of *Mahomet*.* Of the perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in his prophetical character, this arch impoſtor ſpeaks in terms the moſt reſpectable. "God, "ſays he, gave miracles to *Jeſus*, the ſon "of *Mary*, and ſtrengthened him with the "Holy Spirit, &c. *Jeſus* ſaid in the cradle, "verily I am the ſervant of God. This was "*Jeſus* the ſon of *Mary*, (*s*) the word of "truth, &c. Verily God promiſeth thee a "ſon, named *John*, (ſays the angel *Gabriel* "to *Zechariah*, according to the *Koran*,) "who ſhall bear witneſs to the WORD, "which cometh from God, an honourable "perſon, chaſte, and one of the righteous "prophets." To do honour to the author of

* See Paſſim.

Chriſtianity in this capacity, *Mahomet* poſitively aſſerts, that " they (the *Jews*) ſlew " him not, neither crucified him; but that " he was repreſented by one in his likeneſs. " They did not really kill him, ſays he, but " God took him up unto himſelf."

But with reſpect to our Lord's Divinity, or equality with the Father, you have, among a thouſand parallel ones, the ſentiments following. " They (viz. the Chriſtians) ſay, " God hath begotten children; God forbid. " It is not meet for God that he ſhould have " any ſon; God forbid. Bleſſed be he that " hath revealed the *Forkan*, (Koran,) to " whom belongeth the kingdom of heaven " and earth; who hath begotten no iſſue, " and hath no partner in his kingdom, &c. " Yet have they taken other Gods beſides " him, which have created nothing, but are " themſelves created, &c. *Jeſus* is no other " than a ſervant whom we favoured with the " gift of prophecy, &c. When *Jeſus* came " with evident miracles, he ſaid, now am I " come unto you with wiſdom, and to ex-

" plain

"plain unto you part of thoſe things "concerning which ye diſagree; wherefore "fear God, and obey me. Verily God is "my Lord, and your Lord; wherefore wor-"ſhip him. He is God, beſides whom there "is no God, &c. Far be God exalted above "the idols which they aſſociate with "him. The 112th. ch. of the *Koran* is "entitled *the declaration of God's Unity*, and "the whole runs thus: Say God is one God; "*(t)* the eternal God; he begetteth not, "neither is he begotten; and there is not "any like unto him. In the 6th. ch. is the "following queſtion: How ſhould he have "iſſue, ſince he hath no conſort?"

That theſe carnal ſentiments, this groſs language, (the language of infidels and ſcoffers every day,) is directly levelled, not at a *new* or *ſtrange* thing; not at a peculiar tenet of a few enthuſiaſts; or a particular ſect of Chriſtians; but at the leading article, the fundamental principle of our religion, may be affirmed in utter defiance of the united powers of effrontery and equivocation. The

doctrine of the Trinity was moſt indiſputably the ſtanding doctrine of the Chriſtian Church at the time this falſe prophet broached his impoſture, in the beginning of the ſeventh century. All theſe conſiderations combined, demoliſh in a moment the ſeveral ſorts of infidelity, in early corruptions, in Monaſtic ſuperſtition, in Gothic barbariſm, Scholaſtic ſubtilty, and Papal innovation. (*v*)

DISCOURSE V.

1 JOHN V, part of verſe 20.

This ‡ is the true God.

HAVING, I truſt, already beyond all reaſonable doubt aſcertained the abſolute Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt, *by many infallible proofs* from holy writ, and by other arguments of a nature little leſs demonſtrative, I ſcruple not to ſet the words juſt read to you in the preſent diſcourſe, as plainly declarative of this great doctrine, though, ſingly and ſeparately conſidered, they may not, on a critical review of the whole verſe, be altogether unliable to cavil, or, if

‡ HE *is the true God—according to ſome verſions, and perhaps defenſible ones. See Webſter; and Scot's Chriſtian Life, Vol. II. p.* 558. *See Whitby in loc.*

you pleaſe, to exception. And I hope very much to ſtrengthen what has been advanced by ſhewing the repugnancy of anti-trinitarian principles to the genius and deſign of the Chriſtian diſpenſation; or, in other words, by proving that, if we ſolely or chiefly regard our bleſſed Saviour under any character inferior to that of the *true God*, our higheſt ideas will come infinitely ſhort both of the dignity of his Perſon, and the nature and end of his Commiſſion.

By affecting the common appellation of *Unitarians*, modern unbelievers, as well the followers of *Socinus* as the diſciples of *Arius*, (who again may be ranged under many more claſſes than one,) appear in ſome ſort to be aſhamed of the leaders of their reſpective hereſies, and to deſert the captains under whoſe banners they fight. But be their ſeveral motives hereunto what they may, (tho' indeed they are obvious enough,) it will ſuffice, without concerning myſelf with particular conceits, to take into conſideration the two following general perſuaſions:

First,

First, that of those who regard our Saviour merely as a Legislator, or teacher of morality by divine commission: and,

Secondly, that of those who profess themselves *both almost and altogether such as* we are, his coequality with the Father excepted.

With a view to the confutation of *Socinian* principles, I would observe in the first place, that the title of Legislator, or Lawgiver, is by no means that by which *Jesus Christ* is distinguished, or particularly described, either in the *old* or *new Testament*. The great characters of *Wonderful, Counsellor, Prince of peace, the Sun of righteousness,* * *the Lord our righteousness;* † the *Messiah*, the *chosen of God,* ‡ the *Christ of God*; of *Mediator* and *Advocate*; of *Saviour, Redeemer,* and *High-Priest*; of *Son of David, Son of God, Son of the Blessed,* § *Lamb of God, Lord of glory,* ‖ *Prince of life, Author and Captain of our Salvation;* ** these characters, and more that might be enumerated, import little or nothing of legislation,

* Mal. iv. 2. † Jer. xxiii. 6. ‡ Luke xxiii. 35.
§ Mar. xiv. 61. ‖ 1 Cor. ii. 8.
** Heb. ii. 10. v. 9.

but are almoſt wholly ſignificative of the perſonal quality of our Saviour, and of his own moral excellence, and of the value and efficacy of his ſacrifice. He was, it is true, a *teacher ſent from God*; but he was not ſent primarily in the capacity of a *teacher*. To inſtruct the world in righteouſneſs was not the grand and ultimate, but merely a ſubordinate end of his appearance; and indeed a neceſſary conſequence of it.

Let us ſee then, in the ſecond place, what the Scripture, and he himſelf declares to have been the more immediate purpoſe for which he was *made fleſh, and dwelt among us. To this end was I born*; * ſays he, *and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs to the truth.* Again; *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* †. Again; *I muſt work the work of him that ſent me.* ‡ *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.* § *He hath anointed me to preach the*

* John xviii. 37.
† Ibid. iii. 16.
‡ Matt. ix. 13.
§ John ix. 4.

Goſpel

Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and to set at liberty those that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. Once more; *I must preach the kingdom of God, for therefore am I sent.* * What the sum and substance of our Saviour's preaching was, will be remembered presently; and mean time we shall find his Apostles delivering themselves in language correspondive to the above. *The law was given by Moses,* says St. *John, but grace and peace came by Jesus Christ.* † *In this was manifested the love of God towards us,* says the same Apostle, *because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us; and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* ‡ Again; *When the fulness of time was come,* says St. *Paul, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of Sons.* § *This is a faithful saying,* says the same Apostle, *and worthy of*

* Luke iv. 18. 43.
† John i. 17.
‡ John iv. 9, 10.
§ Gal. iv. 4.

all

all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. * And to adduce only one passage more, *the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.* † The question then will be how, or in what manner, we are taught to live thus; or, in other words, what we are to understand by *Christ's* religion, regarding it as a system of morality.

I must beg leave then, in the third place, to put you in mind, that Christianity is not a *new* law, properly speaking, but a new edition, if I may so say, or promulgation of the *old*; agreeably to the express declaration of its Divine Author, who assures us that he *came not to destroy the* moral *law, or the prophets, but to fulfil both.* ‡ The fact is, *Christ blotted out the hand writing of carnal ordinances,* § *and took out of the way* the whole ceremonial of Judaism, but left every thing

* 1 Tim. i. 15.
† Tit. ii. 11, &c.
‡ Matt. v. 17.
§ Col. ii. 14.

which

which was intrinſically *holy*, and *juſt*, and *good* in the law, in its full force and obligation. He was the *mediator of a better covenant*; he laid the foundation of a new ſyſtem of faith, and a purer mode of worſhip; but he repealed not a ſingle law of *Moſes*, that had any thing in it properly of a moral and binding nature. A religion of this ſort ſuppoſed and required reformation in the lives of its profeſſors; and accordingly our bleſſed Lord, in his excellent diſcourſe on the mount, and in other places, enforces the import, and explains the obligation of many of the precepts of the *Jewiſh* lawgiver; the full ſenſe and genuine meaning of which had been perverted by the falſe gloſſes and miſconſtructions of later ages, and particularly of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*. We find him perpetually upbraiding theſe with their ſubſtitutions of oral tradition in the room of the written word of God; and with abſurdly and impiouſly *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*.* In theſe inſtances he nobly reſcues the Scripture from human cor-

* Matt. xv. 9.

ruptions;

ruptions; and faithfully discharges the important office, not of a maker or prescriber of law, but of a doctor or expounder of it.

Suitably to all this, our Lord cites and refers to the law of *Moses* upon all occasions. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* † *viz.* the commandments contained in the *Mosaic* decalogue, was his answer to the person who had asked him, *what he should do that he might have eternal life?* When the *lawyer*, by way of *tempting* him, put this question to him, *which is the great commandment in the law?*‡ He mentions those *two* capital ones, which, though not literally to be found among the *ten*, virtually comprehended them all, namely, the *love of God and of our neighbour*; at once satisfying and confounding his insidious querist with this apposite and decisive reply. Accordingly when he told his disciples, that he gave them a *new commandment* § in his particular injunction to them to *love one another*, he

† Matt. xix. 17. ‡ Ibid. xxii. 35.
§ John xiii. 34.

was

was not teaching a *new doctrine, or bringing strange things to their ears,* this duty being evidently implied in the *love* of our *neighbour*, but only injoining a duty, by the practice of which his followers ought to be more especially distinguished; to which they had inducements of an extraordinary nature; to which they were bound by ties and considerations peculiarly Christian, and by reverence for his astonishingly great example, who so *loved* them, *and washed* them *from* their *sins in his own blood.**

In perfect consistence with this, the Apostles *preached the Gospel,* after their *Lord* and *Master* had left the world, and was *gone to his Father*. They taught Gospel truths; they insisted on, (St. *Paul* more especially,) they rejoiced, they gloried in their deliverance from *bondage under weak and beggarly elements*;† they exulted in the abolition of the ceremonial law, as a mere temporary establishment, and shadowy institution; but at the same time they regarded the moral law

* Rev. i. 5. † Gal. iv. 9.

as

as of inviolable authority, and a complete ſtandard of conduct ſtill. When the Apoſtle juſt now named expoſes the extreme folly of ſuch tranſgreſſors of the law as ſtood ſelf-condemned; or complains of the rigour of its requiſitions; or declares the impoſſibility of yielding meritorious obedience *to it*, and conſequently of obtaining Salvation *under it*, its ſubſiſtence and obligation are ſuppoſed beyond all poſſible contradiction. That it *could not make the comers thereunto perfect*, was an argument of its own intrinſic perfection. The ſame great Apoſtle, preſſing upon his *Roman* converts the duties of *brotherly love*, and univerſal charity, recites almoſt all the commandments of the ſecond table; and ſubjoins that comprehenſive precept of *Moſes* juſt now mentioned, which he no doubt conſidered as incluſive of every evangelical precept, even that of *loving our enemies*, *thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf*. St. *James* calls this very precept, this great ſocial principle, the *royal law*; ‡ and when he argues againſt the folly and preſumption of a partial

‡ James ii. 8.

obedience

obedience to the divine commandments, and a commuting as it were for iniquities, rests his argument wholly in that supreme authority by which the law of *Moses* was enacted: *he that said, do not commit adultery, said also, do not kill.*† In short, both our Lord and his Apostles inculcated, and enlarged upon many things of practical importance, as circumstances admitted, and occasions required; but they taught nothing of this kind but what was reducible to the *Mosaic* institutions, or to some general head of *Jewish*, or natural morality. I add of natural morality; because the law of nature, the law of *Moses*, and the law of *Christ* are, in point of morality, one and the same; the latter illustrating, explaining, enforcing, and recommending the two former, but neither *adding to*, nor *diminishing from* them. For the *reason* or *fitness* of things is absolutely unalterable; and whatever is in its own nature morally good or evil, has always been so, and will for ever continue so to be. The moral law which was once written upon *tables of stone* was origi-

† James ii. 11.

nally

nally engraved upon the *fleſhly tables* of man's *heart*.(*u*) To maintain or to imagine otherwiſe, is to *charge God fooliſhly*; and to ſuppoſe both the law and the Goſpel to preſcribe a practice in ſome inſtances unnatural and unreaſonable. St. *Paul*'s deſcriptions of the groſs ignorance and depravity of the heathen world are equally animated and juſt.† But notwithſtanding this, the irradiations of reaſon and conſcience are ſometimes beautifully viſible amidſt this *blackneſs* of ſpiritual *darkneſs*. We might extract from the writings of *Pagan* authors, philoſophers and others, of different times, and in different places, a moral ſyſtem, againſt which, collectively taken, ſhould lie no fair exception; and produce from them ſentiments finely coinciding with the moſt exalted principles, and moſt refined doctrines of Chriſtianity.

In theſe writings we find the pureſt piety, the exacteſt juſtice, the trueſt benevolence, the firmeſt fortitude, the nobleſt diſintereſtedneſs, and the meekeſt patience, moſt explicitly taught, and earneſtly inculcated. (*w*)

† Rom. i. 21, &c.

Tully

Tully divides the duty of man as we do at this day; *viz.* into that which is due, firſt, to God; ſecondly, to our neighbour; and thirdly, to ourſelves. *Hæc (philoſophia) nos primum ad Deorum cultum, deinde ad jus hominum, quod ſitum eſt in generis humani ſocietate, tum ad modeſtiam, magnitudinemque animi erudivit.* *

The golden rule of equity, *whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you,* &c. (Matt. vii. 12.) † obtained, as many have obſerved, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and was delivered by them as well negatively as poſitively, and under various modes of expreſſion. That to intend wickedneſs is to commit it, is the expreſs doctrine of *Seneca*, as quoted by *Le-Clerc* in his note on the 12th Chapter of the 4th. book of *Grotius*; and, which is ſtill more remarkable, he inſtances in caſes of luſt and ſenſuality:

Inceſta eſt etiam ſine ſtupro, quæ cupit ſtuprum.

Even ſo great a debauchee as *Ovid* ſpeculates well upon this ſubject:

* Tuſc. Q. l. I. 26.

† See Whitby in loc.

Quæ quia non licuit, non facit, illa facit.
Ut jam ſervaris bene corpus, adultera mens eſt;
Omnibus excluſis intus adulter erit. Ibid.

This is preciſely the morality of our Divine Legiſlator. Forgiveneſs of enemies, &c. is a great point of morality which the heathens were far from being unacquainted with. According to *Plutarch*, it was a prayer of the *Lacedæmonians*, that the *gods would enable them to bear injuries*. And we are informed by the ſame great biographer, that *Dion* maintained true philoſophy to conſiſt, not in ſhewing kindneſs to friends, but in forgiving injuries, and pardoning offences. *Menander* is clearly of the ſame opinion in the following fine paſſage;

Ουτος κρατιςος ες' ανηρ, ω Γοργια,
Ος τις αδικειϑαι πλης' επιςαται Βροτων. *

Some of the philoſophers argued againſt preſent ſolicitude, and the *taking* too much *thought for the morrow*, preciſely as our Saviour does in his diſcourſe on the mount. A philoſopher, or wiſe man, ought not to be anxious about theſe things, *viz. food*, &c. &c.

* See Le Clerc's Note above referred to.

δεδοικως

δεδοικως μη ȣ χη τροφας αυριον—is a ſentence quoted by Dr. *Whitby* in his note on v. 25. Ch. 6. of St. *Matthew*. The following ſentiment of *Plato*, κȣφων και πληνων λογων βαρυληη ζημια,* is almoſt a counterpart to our Saviour's —*of every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak they ſhall give account at the day of judgment*. *Tully*'s notion of the *ſervitude* of a ſinner quadrates exactly with the doctrine of our bleſſed Lord, and of St. *Paul* after him. *Whoſoever committeth ſin is the ſervant of ſin*, † ſays the former; *his ſervants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of ſin unto death, or of obedience unto righteouſneſs*, ‡ ſays the latter; and ſays *Cicero*, *ſi ſervitus ſit obedientia fracti animi, et arbitrio carentis ſuo, quis neget omnes imbrobos eſſe ſervos?* § On the other hand, *Deo parere libertas eſt*, ſays *Seneca*, in the ſpirit of a Chriſtian, and the language of the Church; in one of the *Collects* of which, God's ſervice is called *perfect freedom*. The ſame philoſopher repreſents the Deity as a moſt beneficent Being who *maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil and the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt*

* See Plato de Leg. l. 4. † John viii. 34.
‡ Rom. vi. 16. § Tully's Par. 5.

and on the unjuſt; ecce ſceleratis, ſays he, *ſol oritur, et piratis patent maria.** And, to mention only one particular more, he directs us in another place to conſider human afflictions as the corrections of a father for our ſpiritual benefit. God, he ſays, *ſicut ſeverus pater durius educat*; † which is almoſt literally the ſentiment of the Apoſtle. ‡ The frailty of human nature, our radical diſinclination to virtue, the neceſſity of propitiation, and our want of extraneous aſſiſtance as well as of perſonal reſolution, for the purpoſe of a good life, are points often intimated, and as often inſiſted upon by *Pagan* writers. The *nitimur in vetitum*—of the poet was a ſort of ſtanding *theſis* with many. The multitude of heathen ſacrifices ſhews a conſciouſneſs of guilt, and a ſolicitude for atonement. Their ſenſe of the need of a divine bleſſing on their endeavours in general, appears ſufficiently from their undertaking nothing of moment, whether of a public or

* Sen. de Ira. l. 4. c. 26. de vit. beat. 15.
† See Wilkins. B. 1. c. 16. ‡ Heb. xii. 7, &c.

private

private concern, without the previous obſervance of certain rites and ceremonies; or, as *Pliny* expreſſes himſelf in the introduction to his *panegyric* on *Trajan*, *ſine deorum immortalium ope, conſilio, et honore.* It may not be eaſy to aſcertain what we are to underſtand by the *Dæmon*, or the *Genius*, which, by his own account attended *Socrates*; but it is certain the notion of *good and evil genii* prevailed much in the heathen world. In the following lines, the warmth of divine infuſion in the human breaſt is beautifully expreſſed by *Ovid*;

Eſt Deus in nobis; agitante caleſcimus illo:
Impetus hic ſacræ ſemina mentis habet. ‡

The neceſſity of ſupernatural impulſe to the regulation of human conduct has always been acknowleged. *Tully* ſays ſomewhere, *Nemo unquam vir magnus ſine divino afflatu fuit*; and *Homer* affirms by the mouth of *Polydamas*, that God is the diſpenſer of all our talents, or endowments whatſoever;

Αλλω μεν γαρ ἔδωκε θεος πολεμηια ἔργα,
Αλλω δ' &c. &c. *Il. lib. xiii. v.* 730. *et ſeq.*

‡ Sententiæ illuſ. ex Ovid. See Cumberland on the defects of heathen Deiſm. p. 21.

Correſpondently with all this, philoſophers have repreſented the difficulty of perſevering in a virtuous courſe, under the very ſame metaphor which is uſed by our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf. *Cebes* affirms, that there is a *little gate* θυρα τις μικρα* at the entrance of the path that leads to happineſs &c. and that it is a path which few walk in; in which παυ ολιγοι πορευονται.

When we conſider theſe ſentiments and principles independently and ſeparately from whatever is erroneous, inconſiſtent, or extravagant in heathen authors, we can do no leſs than reverence them as doing credit to human nature in its moſt depraved ſtate; as ſo many efforts of reaſon nobly ſtruggling to emerge from a vaſt abyſs of ignorance and impurity. The grand uſe and advantage of the Goſpel, regarded as a moral ſcheme, is not ſo *much* that things are uniformly taught therein, and delivered in conſummate purity, as that they are taught with proper authority, by a Legiſlator † from heaven, and under ſanctions the moſt efficacious imaginable. In ſhort, the

* See Whitby on Matt. 7. 13.

† See Locke's Reaſonab. of Chriſtian. p. 269.

Chriſtian

Christian religion stands particularly discriminated from all other institutions by the personal pre-eminence of its Author, and by the transcendent graciousness, importance, and splendor of the dispensation.

If we regard our Saviour under any character inferior to that of the true God; at least if we regard him merely as a man, or as a law-giver, we shall find few or no marks of that originality by which the founders of all persuasions, religious or philosophical, are distinguished. As a prophet, he was *like unto Moses*, according to the express prediction of the latter; as a worker of *miracles*, he stood supereminent, but not single; as a teacher, or instructer, he followed precedents; his apologues and allegories were agreeable to the oriental mode, and many of his parables were borrowed from the *Jews*; * even that excellent form of prayer which he taught his disciples was almost entirely taken out of the *Jewish* liturgies; and the sacraments which "he ordained in his

* See Whitby on Matt. 6. v. 9.—13. v. 10.

"Church" were graffed upon a *Jewiſh* ſtock; *baptiſm* being a rite which the *Jews* obſerved with the exactneſs of ſuperſtition; and that of the *Lord's Supper* being transferr'd from their practice of *eating bread and drinking wine*, in an euchariſtical way, at the celebration of the *Paſſover*. * The great Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* ſeems to ſet the matter before us in the cleareſt light. *He*, ſays he, *that deſpised Moſes's law, died without mercy, under two or three witneſſes: of how much ſorer puniſhment ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he* be thought worthy,—(not who hath broken the law of the Goſpel, but) *who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath accounted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was ſanctified an unholy thing, and hath done deſpite to the ſpirit of grace.* † Immoralities, it is true, and thoſe of the groſſeſt kind, are implied in theſe words; but they are ſuch as are moſt provokingly aggravated by ſingular contemptuouſneſs; and the leaſt that can be inferred from this paſſage is, that a *greater than*

* See Patrick's Diſc. on Baptiſm. p. 8. Allix's Reflect. V. 2. p. 177. Potter's Ch. Government. † Heb. x. 28.

Moſes

Moſes is here. How does *Socinianiſm* ſhrink before ſuch conſiderations as theſe!

But it is little material which of two errors may be moſt plauſible, when both are equidiſtant from the centre of truth. Our bleſſed Saviour is no more *half-God* than he is *all man*, if I have leave ſo to expreſs myſelf; nor will *Arianiſm* fix a firmer baſis of faith by its chimerical expedient of a ſecondary worſhip, and a gradation of Deity. For this at beſt will be found to be neither more nor leſs than *Paganiſm* improved, and contracted within a ſmaller circle. It muſt be equally idolatrous, equally injurious to the honour of the Supreme Being, to acknowlege *Gods many*, or Gods few, or only one God *beſides* him. Infinite almoſt as the number of ſubaltern deities was among the Heathens, there is no doubt but the wiſeſt of them at leaſt acted nearly upon *Arian* principles; *viz.* under a perſuaſion of the exiſtence and properties, and with a reſervation of the prerogatives of the one Supreme God. According to univerſal tradition

tion, the notion of a ſupreme power, a ſelf-exiſtent, independent Being, a firſt cauſe of all things, prevailed more or leſs every where in the world.* The doctrine of divine Supremacy was no ſecret even among people whoſe religious rites and uſages were ſilly and extravagant enough to render them obnoxious to the ſcorn and laughter of mankind, thro' all ages. The ſuperſtitions of the *Ægyptians* were groſs and numberleſs; and their worſhip of the meaneſt animals, and indeed of things inanimate, was beyond meaſure contemptible. And yet they had an opinion with reſpect to God, that erred even on the ſide of ſpirituality. For they held that he is not to be addreſſed by mortals ſo much as in vocal prayer.† This is at once an inſtance of ſtrong belief, and miſtaken veneration. The great attributes of the Deity are aſſerted by writers of all ſorts, by philoſophers, and by poets, and in terms of the fulleſt ſignificancy. His ſpirituality, omnipotence, omnipreſence, independence, inviſibility, and incomprehenſible nature, are

* See Shuckford's Sac. and Prof. Hiſt. connec. Vol. 1. B. 5.

† See Parker on Idolatry, p. 43.

ſet

ſet in a very ſtrong light by *Pagan* authors; particularly by *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, *Anaxagoras*, *Cicero*, *Porphyry*, *Seneca*, *Homer*, and the *Greek Dramatiſts*. *(x)* I have not time or occaſion to produce my authorities here. The truth is, many *goodly pearls* of ſpeculative doctrine are to be found amongſt the rubbiſh of *Pagan* antiquity; and they ſtrikingly contraſt an enormous *farrago* of traditionary error, radical prejudice, vulgar folly, and popular ſuperſtition. They are the ſentiments of minds that ſeem to have been enlightened beyond the conceptions of the bulk of mankind. If we ſeparate the carnal *droſs* from the ſpiritual *bullion* of heatheniſm, we ſhall be able to extract a body of theoretic divinity from the old *Pagans*, little if at all inferior to the fineſt *unitarian* ſyſtem. In ſhort, if *Arianiſm* be not ſtrictly *polytheiſm*, it is not much better; it is maintainable only on much the ſame ground, and by a ſimilar mode of reaſoning.

Surely a *Tully*, or a *Plato*, had as admiſſible an apology for his conformity to idolatrous ſervices,

ſervices, in general prepoſſeſſion, and national eſtabliſhment, as the modern unbeliever has for his ſecondary worſhip, in any diſtiction he may affect to make between *Pagan* and *Arian* theology. For unleſs the holy Scriptures direct us in the plaineſt manner, and with all poſſible cautiouſneſs of expreſſion, NOT *to honour the Son even as we honour the Father*; if they do not clearly and uniformly diſtinguiſh between *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, and the *Supreme God*, in point of *nature*, or *eſſence*; or, in other words, if *Arianiſm* has not a moſt firm foundation in the ſacred pages, and in apoſtolical and primitive worſhip, we cannot honeſtly reſolve it into any thing but the pride of human reaſon, fabricating its own theory, and *reſiſting the Holy Ghoſt*. Now the invalidity of its pretences has, I perſuade myſelf been ſufficiently ſhewn already; and therefore we are to reject its hypotheſis, together with that of *Socinianiſm*, as reſpectively aiming to eſtabliſh *another doctrine* than *that* we have *received*; as fundamentally erroneous, and abſolutely repugnant to the genius and ſpirit of Chriſtianity.

But

But becauſe the *ſtrength* of true believers may be ſaid in ſome ſenſe to be *made perfect in the weakneſs* of their antagoniſts, as a giant appears to moſt advantage when confronted with a pigmy, I ſhall take my next opportunity for your conviction, that the *anti-trinitarian* cauſe has its chief ſupport in diſingenuous evaſion, flimſy ſophiſtry, or wilful miſconſtruction; and neither is nor can be defended from the *ſtrong holds* of reaſon, or by *weapons* from the armory of Sacred Writ.

DISCOURSE VI.

GAL. Chap. 1. part of verſe 7.

There be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the Goſpel of Chriſt.

THE Apoſtle, as appears from the argument he proſecutes throughout this epiſtle, had, in the words juſt read, an eye to thoſe *Jewiſh* converts who were ſo zealouſly attached to the *Moſaic* ritual, the *law* of their *fathers*, that they could not endure to ſee it ſuperſeded by the more liberal, the more pure, the more ſublime principles of the Goſpel. But I ſhall avail myſelf of the latitude my text admits; not heſitating to regard as *perverters* of the *Goſpel*, thoſe heretics of different ſorts, whoſe unfairneſs, or imbecility

imbecility of allegation, conſtruction, and exception on the part of infidelity, I ſtand engaged to make appear in the following diſcourſe.

That pride, or prepoſſeſſion ſhould be tenacious of any opinion however ſtrange, or however extravagant, will be no matter of ſurprize to us when we recollect, that almoſt every thing which we ſee not by immediate intuition, or which is not capable of a ſtrictly mathematical demonſtration, may be ſtarted, and upheld for a ſubject of diſpute. It is poſſible indeed, and it ſometimes happens, that men ſhall reaſon injudiciouſly and inconcluſively even in a righteous cauſe; and truth may ſuffer, or rather be ſuppoſed to ſuffer by precipitance of paſſion, or inadvertency of zeal. This before now has been the caſe with the cauſe before us. A pious wiſh to confirm the doctrine of the *Trinity* by producing multifarious evidence, and heaping proof upon proof; (*y*) or an earneſt endeavour to elucidate a point, the knowlege of which is too wonderful and excellent for the

the attainment of human wisdom, by metaphysical nicety, and the sagacity of abstract speculation; (z) or by studied similitudes, and artificial allusions, to bring it nearer to our conceptions; all this has been hurtful to the interest of religion, and *given occasion to the enemy* to ridicule, if not to *blaspheme*. Erroneous constructions, and misapplication of particular passages, betray too often a want of moderation, or of skill in interpreters. But, all this while, a charge of unskilfulness, or of prevarication, or of perverseness, or of presumption, or of insincerity, or of intemperance, will come with a very ill grace from our adversaries; and we are to look on the side of infidelity for the most visible signs of weakness, and the surest tokens of conscious distress. I am apt to believe, you will soon be convinced by a few select particulars that this is not arbitarily, or groundlessly said.

I shall hardly be called upon to apologize for freedoms I shall be obliged to take with authors who are no more. It will be acknowleged, with respect to every *Arian* &c.

of note, that, to mischievous purpose, he *being dead yet speaketh.* To proceed then.

That when we are baptized *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,* we are baptized in the name of three Persons, and of three Divine Persons, and of three equally Divine Persons,* seems not to be more evident from Scripture than from the reason of the thing. For else we are baptized in the name of *two* Persons and *one* virtue or quality, &c. which is a notion palpably ridiculous; or we are baptized in the name of *three* Persons, betwixt the *first* and *two latter* of which there is an infinite disparity; (there being no medium between God and a creature;) which is a supposition not less ridiculous. And, in fact, the *Baptismal Form* is so strong, that heretics have found themselves under a necessity of changing it; or of explaining it away; some baptizing into the *death of Christ*; some *in the name of the uncreated God, and in the name of the created Son, and in the name of the sancti-*

* See Lightfoot's Harm. of the N. Test. Sect. 92. p. 273.

fying

fying Spirit, created by the created Son. Dr. *Clarke*, to whom *Arianism* is under great obligations, writes as follows. *We are baptized*, says he, *into the profession of that belief, and an obligation to the practice of that religion, which God the Father has revealed and taught by the Son, and confirmed and established by the Holy Ghost.* If this is extrication, what is difficulty? †

The same learned author paraphrases the introduction to St. *John*'s Gospel in the following words: "With God the Father, the "FIRST, the SUPREME cause and original of "all things, there existed *before all ages* that "*Divine Person* whose name is called the "*Word of God*, the *only begotten of the Father*, the *brightness of his glory*, and by "ineffable COMMUNICATION of divine "power and perfections, the *express image of* "*his Person.*" The fine artifice of this paraphrase will escape a common, or a cursory reader. I guess, Dr. C— would never have consented to the least alteration in this pas-

† See a late work entitled An Elucidation of the Unity, &c. p. 59. where this *Form* is treated with equal freedom.

ſage, or have permitted us only for *ineffable* to read *eternal*. The phraſe—*before all ages*—is deſignedly ambiguous; and imports merely an acknowlegement of the impoſſibility of fixing the date of the generation of the *Son of God*.

In the beginning was the word,* ſays St. *John*; i. e. (if we will hearken to the *Socinians*,) *Jeſus Chriſt* exiſted when the Goſpel was firſt preached by *John* the *Baptiſt*; or, if you pleaſe, by himſelf. *The word was with God*; i. e. was *known to God, and to God only*; or, *was with God, by* being *taken up into heaven to receive his prophetic commiſſion*, agreeably to a parallel expoſition of another paſſage, which will be preſently noticed, and both by the ſame interpreters. *The word was God, viz.* in a ſecondary or derivative ſenſe; in a ſenſe implying *Chriſt's* priority and ſuperiority to all other creatures; ſo that if we take this whole ſentence together, *the word was with God, and the word was God*, the term *God* is to be underſtood in the proper ſenſe in the firſt clauſe, and in an improper and inferior ſenſe in the ſecond: as Dr. C.

* John i. 1.

and

and others, according to a judicious writer's remark, *ingeniouſly* expound this paſſage!

No man hath aſcended into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven; * are the words of our Lord himſelf in the ſame Goſpel. Perhaps the *Socinian* conſtruction of this text which was juſt now laid before you is little leſs romantic than *Grotius*'s expoſition of the words —*he that came down from heaven*, i. e. ſays this famous commentator, he that "was "ſent, or given to us by the ſpecial Grace "of God."

As ſome interpreters make, or, more properly, invent a diſtinction between primary and ſecondary worſhip, and would fain have us believe in a created creator, or a deity by delegation, ſo others of a very different ſtamp *think* of the *Saviour of the world* as meanly as they can poſſibly *think*, and diveſt him of almoſt every ray of glory. *The word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us*, ſays St. *John*. †

* John iii. 13. † John i. 14.

Christ was born *mortal, subject to infirmities and sufferings*, &c. say some *Socinian* expositors: the *word* WAS *flesh*, simply and absolutely, say others: the *word* was MADE, or CONVERTED into *flesh*, says the *Flandrian Anabaptist*.

St. *Paul* assures the *Colossians*, that in *Jesus Christ dwelleth all the fulness* * *of the Godhead bodily*; *viz.* all the will of God as we are given to understand by *Socinus*. *Before Abraham was*, I AM, † says our Lord expressly to the *Jews*; by which he means only to affirm, according to some interpreters, that he was the *Messiah before Abraham was the father of many nations*; or, as others expound, shall I say? or wrest this scripture, that he existed, or WAS before *Abraham* in the *purpose* and *decree* of God. How far the name of *Grotius* dignifies this exposition, let every intelligent hearer judge. Or, let us see whether we are like to derive more satisfaction from the following explanation or rather evacuation of this text by the celebrated

* Col. ii. 9. † John viii. 58.

author

author of the *Scripture doctrine of the Trinity.* "Before Abraham was, and before all *gene-* "*rations,* I had a being with him of whom "*Moses* told the *Israelites,* that his name was "I AM."

That often justly cited passage in the 9th. Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever,* is a rankling *thorn* in the *eyes* of unbelievers, which Dr. C. wished to *extract* with the *poultice* of a devised ambiguity. He would have us believe that the original *Greek* is of a doubtful construction, and may signify either, *of whom Christ came; God who is over all be blessed for ever;* or, *of whom Christ came, who is over all; God be blessed for ever.* To this text we shall have occasion to turn again.

The *Arians* in general confess that the Divine Personage who so often, and sometimes so magnificently makes his appearance under the Old Testament, is *Jesus Christ,* the *Son of God;* yet when this transcendent Being

expreſsly ſays,—*I am the God of Bethel,*—we are to underſtand him as in effect ſaying only, *my Father, whom I repreſent, is God of Bethel.* Such is the ſenſe of theſe expoſitors; who however kindly and *logically* grant that *the Word was with God,* or, in plain terms, exiſted from all eternity, tho' not *actually,* yet *potentially!* One is tempted to ſpeak ludicrouſly by the extravagance of theſe conceits. Is not this *making the word of God of none effect* thro' wantonneſs of interpretation? Is not this turning holy Scripture, which ſhould be the *rule of faith,* into a mere play-thing of fancy?

Let us take a view of another famous writer's ſentiments on this important ſubject.—Mr. *Whiſton,* after acknowleging *Jeſus Chriſt,* (whom he calls λογος θεανθρωπος) to have given the law upon mount *Sinai,* to have appeared to the Patriarchs, &c. and to have taken "the peculiar ſtyle, titles, attri-"butes, adoration, and incommunicable name "of the God of *Iſrael,*" ſuppoſes him to have been "truly and really concerned in the "creation

" creation of the world." But, obſerve, he was a Creator merely by commiſſion; &c. " it being (according to this author) unfit " and impoſſible for the DIVINE NATURE " ITSELF, or at leaſt THAT OF THE FA- " THER, to be ſo much, and in ſuch " a manner concerned with the corporeal " world, and the ſinful race of mankind, as " we every where find this DIVINE PERSON, " our bleſſed Mediator, to have been."* And ſo we are obliged to this philoſopher for his wonderful diſcovery, that *Jeſus Chriſt*, tho' a DIVINE PERSON with all the attributes &c. and the "incommunicable name of the God of *Iſrael*," was yet without the DIVINE NATURE, becauſe it is impoſſible for the DIVINE NATURE to act in the abſtract; or at leaſt for THAT of the FATHER to do ſo, which, it ſeems, is ſomething *diſtinct* from, or ſuperior to the *Divine!* If this is not Chriſtianity, it is tolerable Platoniſm.

But the grand expedient to which a late-mentioned Divine, and indeed the *Arian*

* Whiſton's Solution, &c. p. 254.

fraternity

fraternity have usually recourse, is yet behind. Unable to withstand the united force of the several texts by which the full Divinity of our Saviour is evinced, they contrive to resolve the whole of his Deity into that absolute authority which, they say, he derives from his Father, and exercises jointly with him in the government of the universe. Dr. *Clarke* not unartfully tells us, that "*the* "*reason why the Scripture, tho' it stiles the* "*Father God, and also stiles the Son God, yet* "*at the same time always declares that there is* "*but one God, is, because in the monarchy of* "*the universe there is but one authority, origi-* "*nal in the Father, derivative in the Son:* "*the power of the Son being not another power* "*opposite to that of the Father, nor another* "*power co-ordinate to that of the Father,* "*but itself the power and authority of the* "*Father, communicated to, manifested in, and* "*exercised by the Son.*" *

But did not, or would not this able writer recollect, that something besides power was communicated, when the *Father gave to the*

* Scrip. Doc. of the Trin. Prop. 39. See Stephens's Sermon on the eternal generation, &c.

Son

Son to have LIFE *in himself?* * From which paſſage I take occaſion to obſerve, that when an ambiguous word occurs in any paſſage of Scripture; or a term, which independently conſidered, appears to denote communication from the Father, and inferiority in the Son, its ſignification is generally qualified and reſtrained by the plain tenor and importance of the whole ſentence. This is eminently the caſe with the text laſt quoted. *As the Father hath life himſelf*, ſays our Bleſſed Lord, *ſo hath he given to the Son to have life in himſelf.* In this phraſe—*having life in himſelf*, (which is a periphraſis of *Jehovah*, the firſt and moſt eſſential name of the Deity,) the ſelf-exiſtence both of Father and Son from all eternity is neceſſarily implied: becauſe tho' the word *given* imports communication of an incomprehenſible kind, yet ſuch communication muſt have been from eternity. To aſſert, that the Father gave ſelf-exiſtence to the Son from all eternity at any ſuppoſed period of time, would be neither more nor

* John 5. v. 26.

leſs

leſs than a contradiction in terms. † It may be worth while to adduce two or three inſtances more. *By him, viz.* by *Jeſus Chriſt*, ſays St. *Paul* to the *Coloſſians, were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible*, &c. *all things were created by him and for him.* Ch. 1. 16. Does not all this imply *unoriginateneſs?* Is not *Chriſt* repreſented here as abſolutely the Creator? Yet in this very chapter reference is had to the Goſpel-diſpenſation, and in that reference terms muſt neceſſarily be uſed importing ſubordination and inferiority. So in the 1ſt. chap. of the *Revelation*, where *Chriſt* is ſtyled *Alpha* and *Omega, the beginning and the ending*, &c. the ſame reference is made. *I am he that liveth, and was dead.* So again, *the Word was with God*, ſays St. *John*; and this expreſſion does not neceſſarily imply equality, or coexiſtence. But what follows?—*The Word was God.*

We not unfrequently meet with interpreters who agree in oppoſition to the catholic ſenſe of a paſſage, but differ in the mode of

† See this text miſerably diſtorted in Locke's Reaſonab. of Chriſtian. p. 67.

it;

it; who, like contrary qualities in bodies counteracting each other, mutually defeat their respective ends by repugnancy of construction. We will turn to one or two singular instances of this.—*By whom also* * *he made the worlds*, says the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, speaking of *Jesus Christ*. One should hardly think these words liable to be misunderstood. But *Grotius*, unwilling, as it should seem, that *Jesus Christ* should be supposed to have any concern in the creation, even as an agent or minister, gives us to know, that the *worlds* were *made* not *by* him, but *for* him, or for his sake; agreeably enough to part of a text just now cited, and agreably to the notion of the *Jewish* Rabbins, that the world was made for the *Messiah*. Now, in the first place, not to insist with Dr. *Whitby*, that this construction manifestly wrests the preposition διὰ, with a *genitive case* annexed to it, from its proper import, I wish to observe, that there is no admitting this learned writer's exposition of the place before us, and of that other passage of the Epistle

* Heb. 1. 2.

to

to the *Romans*, *Christ was raised from the dead** *by the glory of the Father*, (the single one with which he supports his interpretation,) without obscuring, or confounding our ideas of the divine operations. For, according to our author, *God* the *Father made the worlds* for the *glory* of his *Son*, but raised up that Son from the dead for his own *glory*.—*Christ was raised from the dead for the glory of the Father*, says our commentator; so that by this interpretation the Apostle in effect affirms, that *Christ was raised from the dead by the Father for the glory of the Father*: which at best is uncouth phraseology. But let us see how the passage will fare under the management of *Socinus* and his followers. These gentlemen are sensible of the powers of the preposition in question, but are equally reluctant to believe *Jesus Christ* to have been the Maker of the Universe.—*By whom he made the Worlds*; i. e. say they, by whose agency, or ministry God established *a spiritual kingdom, and reconciled the world unto himself* by the Gospel dispensa-

* Rom. 6. 4.

tion.

tion. Are not these several expositions as irreconcileable as light and darkness? And have we not reason in abundance rather to reject both, than to subscribe to either? I just observe farther; that *Grotius* had been more consistent, had he done no violence to the preposition aforesaid, and adopted the *Socinian* interpretation. For he is intirely of one mind with the *Socinians* in his explication of the above-cited parallel in the *first Chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians.*

But this is not the only instance of this great writer's inconsistency with others and with himself. Convinced by ocular demonstration of the resurrection of his Master, *Thomas answered and said*, that is, say some very gravely, in effect cried out, or exclaimed, *My Lord, and my God.* For, it seems, this is not the language of confession, but of astonishment! *Grotius* however sees this matter in a very different light. "Hic primum, "says he, ea vox in narratione Evangelica "reperitur ab Apostolis Jesu tributa, post-"quam scilicet sua resurrectione probaverat,

"se

" ſe eſſe a quo vita et quidem æterna ex-
" pectari deberet. Manſit deinde ille mos in
" Eccleſia, ut apparet non tantum in ſcriptis
" Apoſtolicis, ut in nono capite Epiſtolæ ad
" Romanos commate quinto, et veterum
" Chriſtianorum, ut videre eſt apud Juſtinum
" Martyrem contra Tryphonem, ſed et in
" Plinii ad Trajanum Epiſtola, ubi ait Chriſ-
" tianos Chriſto, ut Deo, carmina ceciniſſe."*

And yet we are not much obliged to this eminent commentator for an acknowlegement which appears to have been forced from him. In the firſt place, it is not true that Chriſt is ſtyled God purely becauſe he is *the reſurrection and the life*, as is here more than intimated. It is not true, that he is ſo called by the Apoſtles and firſt Chriſtians, merely on the ſtrength of the paſſage before us. For though the terms in which St. *Thomas* declares his conviction, *My Lord, and my God*, occur not before, nor poſſibly could, Chriſt is not only in effect in many places, but alſo expreſsly ſtyled God in this Goſpel. In the next place it is worth remarking, that this author

* See Grotius in loc.

author in ſome ſort at leaſt aſſerts the Divinity of Chriſt from a text, of which, when he takes it ſeparately in hand, he queſtions the authenticity. *

The truth is, we find too many among us perpetually leaning to the ſide of infidelity, by ſoftening and qualifying as much as poſſible the ſenſe of texts which are quoted every day on the part of the orthodox. An eminent commentator ſuppoſes the firſt prayer of the Apoſtles, *Thou Lord, who knoweſt the hearts of all men, ſhew whether of theſe two thou haſt choſen,* to be addreſs'd not to *Jeſus Chriſt,* but ſimply to God. *Whoſoever ſhall call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved,* ſays St. *Peter* in his diſcourſe on the *day of Pentecoſt*; i. e. ſays Dr. *Pyle,* "Whoſoever "ſhall believe and embrace his religion;" which paraphraſe plainly reprobates the idea of invocation on *Chriſt.* The reference of the words *he is Lord of all,* in St. *Peter*'s addreſs to *Cornelius,* either to God the Father,

* See Grotius on Rom. ix. 5.

or to *Jesus Christ*, is at best perversely singular; and surely neither just nor natural. *To this end*, says St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, *Christ both died and rose*, &c. *that he might be Lord both of the dead and living*; * i. e. (according to our author's inadequate illustration,) that "he might be the Saviour and "rewarder of all good Christians." St. *Paul* wishes *grace* and *peace* to the Church at *Corinth*, &c; *to them that are called to be saints*,† *with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*, &c; *viz.* (as the same writer interprets the passage,) "to all "who worship God through *Jesus Christ*, "the Lord and Saviour of all that profess "his religion." In the second Chapter of this Epistle, the Apostle calls our Saviour *the Lord of glory*; meaning, it seems, thereby simply the *Messiah*. *God was manifest in the flesh*, says the same Apostle to *Timothy*; which, being interpreted by this writer, is only equivalent to "the Son of God took upon him "our nature." In short, our author's notion

* Rom. xiv. 9. † 1 Cor. i. 2.

of

of the whole *myſtery* of the Goſpel ſeems to be lamentably inſufficient, when he tells, and in more places than one tells us, that it ſignifies only the admiſſion of *Gentiles* as well as *Jews* into the Chriſtian covenant.

But a very recent inſtance of perverſe interpretation in the work of a ſenſible and ſpecious author * out of our Church is fit to be taken into particular conſideration. In his note on that famous paſſage in the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, (which the Anti-trinitarians are ever attempting to preſs into the ſervice of *Arianiſm*, as has already been in effect ſeen,) *viz. of whom as concerning the fleſh, Chriſt came, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever*; this author admits the juſtneſs of the application to our bleſſed Lord, who, ſays he, "is *God over all*, as he is by the Father APPOINTED Lord, King, and Governour of "all." And then he refers to ſeveral texts as declarative of ſuch APPOINTMENT.

* Mr. Taylor. See his *Key* to the Apoſtolical Writings.

The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; John v. 22. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; &c. *John. xiii.* 3.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; Matt. xxviii. 18.

The word which God sent unto the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all; &c. *Acts x.* 36.

God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; Phil. ii. 9. *and set him at is own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power,* &c. *and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come,* &c. *Ephes. i.* 21, &c. *He hath put all things under his feet,* &c. 1 *Cor. xv.* 27. "This, says our author, is our Lord's "SUPREME GODHEAD. And that he is "*blessed for ever*, or the object of ever-"lasting blessing, is evident from Revelation "v. 12, 13." *Worthy is the Lamb,* &c. *to receive blessing,* &c. *and every creature,* &c.

heard

heard I ſaying, bleſſing, and honour, &c. *be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever,* &c. Now it is very obſervable that in ſome of the places here referred to there is not any intimation of an *appointment*. The annotator ſeems to be aware of this when it is too late; he grows jealous of the paſſage he had admitted; and, like one conſcious of having allowed more than his hypotheſis could conveniently afford, to all intents and purpoſes revokes his grant by a counter conſtruction, and ſo at one daſh deprives our Lord both of his bleſſedneſs and ſupremacy. For thus he proceeds. "But what this part of his cha-
"racter, in which he is *more nearly related* to
"believing *Gentiles*, than to infidel *Jews*,
"has to do with *privileges belonging to the*
"*latter*, doth not ſeem to me very clear;
"much leſs can I conceive, why the Apoſtle
"in this particular enumeration of *Jewiſh*
"privileges, ſhould not mention their rela-
"tion to God, *as their God*, in which they
"particularly gloried, (Chapter ii. 17.) and
"which was indeed the glory of all their

" glories, being the firſt and grand article in " the covenant with *Abraham*; and which " he fails not to aſſert among the ſingular " privileges of *Chriſtians*, (Ch. v. 11.) when " he is ſhewing that the ſubjects of their " glorying were not inferior to thoſe of the " *Jews*. How could he overlook the main " article of this liſt? Or what if there " ſhould be a tranſpoſition of a ſingle letter " in the text, ο ων for ων ο. This will remove " every difficulty. Then the *Engliſh* will be, " *of whom, as concerning the fleſh, Chriſt came,* " *whoſe is the God over all, bleſſed for ever.* " Thus the grand privilege will be inſerted " to advantage, and ſtand at the top of a " lofty *climax* riſing from the Father, to " Chriſt, and to God. *We have indeed no* " *copy to juſtify this reading*. But the afore- " ſaid conſiderations ſeem to make it pro- " bable the article (ο) might be very eaſily " tranſpoſed. This is only my conjecture."

Now I beg leave to aſk, whether our annotator was under an abſolute neceſſity of conjecturing? Conjectures, I preſume, are never

never admiſſible in criticiſm, but when they clear the ſenſe of an author from obſcurity; or when direct abſurdities, or conſiderable difficulties are removed by them. Is either of theſe caſes the caſe at preſent? So far from it, that unleſs we are to ſacrifice ſenſe to figure, and real truth to ideal climax, I affirm without ceremony the old and univerſal reading to be the only right one; and that this paſſage, abundantly plain and conſiſtent in itſelf, is here obſcured by elucidation, and marred by amendment. Mr. T. in fact ſmothers himſelf in a duſt of his own raiſing. For though, in a ſpirit of true compaſſion, and in the tendereſt affection to his brethren, &c. the Apoſtle calls to mind their national character, and many of the privileges they had enjoyed, yet at the time of his writing this Epiſtle, it ſhould be remembered, that their grand privilege of all, as our author juſtly terms it, that which the *Jews* conſtantly made their boaſt of, and "which was indeed the glory of all their "glories," was abſolutely loſt, and irrecoverably *done away* for ever. God was no longer

their God in any ſenſe favourable to them; they were diſowned; they were *cut off* by him, to uſe St. *Paul*'s words in another place; the believing *Gentiles* were now "more nearly "related to him;" *they* were *purified* to be a *peculiar people*; and *Jews*, as *Jews*, had no manner of intereſt in the new diſpenſation: ſo that, according to this author's conſtruction, the Apoſtle falſifies fact, and inſults his *kinſmen*, by way of commiſeration.

There is another text which the ſame author handles not leſs to his own diſadvantage. *Every houſe is builded by ſome man*, ſays the writer of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, Ch. iii. 4. *but he that built all things is God*. Mr. T's. paraphraſe is as follows. "When he ſaith, "*every houſe is builded by ſome perſon, but he* "*who built all things is God*, he evidently "diſtinguiſhes between a *ſubordinate* and "*Supreme* builder. But this diſtinction he "needed not to have mentioned, had he not "ſpoke of a *ſubordinate* builder before. For, "if in the caſe under conſideration, there "be no *ſubordinate* builder at all, this diſ-

"tinction

"tinction is nothing to his purpose. Then "his argument would have been; *Christ* "must build the house; because no one "could build it but he; seeing no house is "built by any but God. Whereas, contra-"riwise, he asserts a *subordinate* builder, and "tells us such a one is consistent with God's "being the *Supreme* original builder."

Now, I take it, this is a mere fanciful distinction of Mr. *Taylor*'s own brain. The context runs thus. *This man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house: for every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God.* Surely he *that built all things*, he who made the world was the very Person or Being that *built the house*, as the Apostle expresses it; i. e. who founded the whole *Jewish* OEconomy, ecclesiastical and civil; and consequently, though *every house is builded by some man*, though every institution, &c. has some author, and *Moses* in particular may be said to be a founder in a secondary sense, *Jesus Christ*

Chriſt is ſtrictly and properly the Supreme Architect, as we may ſay, as well in the one as the other of the above inſtances, to the total excluſion of every idea of *ſubordination.* And ſo this very paſſage in effect plainly aſſerts our Saviour's Divinity, and confirms the *Supremacy* this Gentleman appears to be extremely forward to deſtroy by it. It is remarkable enough that the texts under conſideration have been before now a *ſnare* to unbelievers. For the *Socinian* gloſs on them is, "that Chriſt is as much more excellent than "*Moſes* as God is more excellent than his "own people;" and this ſuperexcellence is on all hands allowed not to come one jot ſhort of abſolute infinity.

In conſequence of the ſhifts to which infidelity is reduced, it will add, omit, affirm, and ſuggeſt, ſometimes arbitrarily, ſometimes imprudently, and ſometimes on weak and incompetent authority. That paſſage in St. *Paul*'s firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy, without controverſy great is the myſtery of godlineſs;* * *God*

* 1 Tim. iii. 16.

was

was manifeſt in the fleſh, &c. makes ſo clearly for us, that the *Socinians*, and they who patroniſe them, ſtruggle to get rid of it at all events. And that they do ſo purely by the help of a ſuppoſititious reading, which can be ſupported only by a ſtrained, incoherent, and ridiculous conſtruction, (according to which the *myſtery of godlineſs* was *manifeſt in the fleſh*, and *received up into glory*, &c. inſtead of *Jeſus Chriſt*,) hath been abundantly ſhewn by many, and eſpecially by the learned Biſhop *Pearſon* in his *Expoſition of the Creed*.

With a view to the eluſion of certain paſſages in the *Revelation* which we have already produced as plainly expreſſive of the *Son's* coequal majeſty with the *Father*, *Grotius* has moſt unwarrantably aſſigned them their proper and reſpective *thrones* in heaven. *He that ſat on the throne*, &c. *in primo ſolio, id eſt Deus*, ſays he in his paraphraſe of Rev. xxi. 5.

Suppoſing, for argument's ſake, the merit of the *trinitarian* controverſy to depend chiefly on

on the authenticity of the ſeventh verſe in St. *John's* 1st *Epiſtle, there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, and theſe three are one,* ‡ I would gladly aſk, whether it is not, in the nature of things, at leaſt as reaſonable to ſuppoſe in general that this text was omitted by the enemies of the doctrine of the *Trinity*, as that it was inſerted by its friends? And if ſo, infidelity would appear at beſt to ſtand upon a precarious foundation, as far as it depends on the ſpuriouſneſs of this text; and we ſhould ſurely err with more prudence and modeſty on the ſide of the Catholic Church, than againſt her. But an excellent writer * has, in his *Letters* to Mr. *Gibbon* on this ſubject, evinced the genuineneſs of this text to the intire ſatisfaction of every candid and impartial inquirer; and particularly makes it appear, that "the context of the Apoſtle "is ſo far from receiving any injury by the "retention of the verſe in queſtion, that it "would loſe all its genuine ſpirit, would be-"come unapt and feeble in its application,

‡ See Mr. JONES on this verſe. * Mr. Travis.

"and

" and therefore could hardly be ſaid to ſubſiſt " without it." To this performance I refer you with pleaſure.

It has been urged, and with an air of confidence, that *Jeſus Chriſt* cannot be an object of divine worſhip, becauſe in that excellent form of addreſs to the Deity which he recommended to his diſciples, there is not the leaſt mention made of himſelf, nor the moſt diſtant alluſion to his office and character. A circumſtance which has been conſidered as deciſive in favour of *Unitarianiſm*. Some perſons have as *little* of *knowledge* as they have of *faith* in theſe matters. At the time of his dictating this mode of prayer, our bleſſed Lord was not, properly ſpeaking, either the *mediator between God and man*, or a *ſacrifice for the ſins of the whole world*. Though therefore this form of devotion is uſed at this day with the greateſt propriety imaginable, yet it was originally delivered to the diſciples for their own more immediate uſe; as is manifeſt from the nature of the thing, and from St. *Luke*'s account of this matter. *It came*

to

to pass, says that Evangelist, *that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.** *And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father*, &c. It was not till after his Ascension, and return to his Father, that they could properly pray *to* or *through* him; that they were to *ask* in his *name*, and to *receive*; it was not till after he had *offered one sacrifice for sin*, † *and sat down at the right hand of God*, that his mediatorial character commenced, *in which he ever liveth to make intercession for us.*

There are two remarkable passages in St. *Paul*'s Epistles, which, as they are claimed by our adversaries with more appearance of right than the foregoing, it will be proper to take into consideration. *Who* (i. e. *Jesus Christ*) *being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation*, &c. ‡ This text is often quoted as asserting the true Divinity of our Saviour. I am therefore concerned to deliver

* Luke xi. 1. † Heb. x. 12. vii. 25.
‡ Phil. ii. 6. &c.

it

it from the conſtruction which the *Arians* with much aſſurance put upon it; and which many amongſt ourſelves have, I think, very unwarily admitted; ſubjecting themſelves thereby to the neceſſity of having recourſe to a hackneyed, and after all mere verbal diſtinction between *ſelf-exiſtence and neceſſary exiſtence*, in order to reconcile their admiſſion with orthodox principles. *Thought it not robbery*, &c. ουχ αρπαγμον ηγησατο, i. e. (ſays *Novatian* and many with him,) he never compared himſelf with God the Father, *nunquam ſe Deo Patri aut comparavit aut contulit*; the reaſon follows, *memor ſe eſſe ex ſuo Patre*. Every *Arian* will abide by this explication; and how do the advocates for *Novatian* get clear of the imputed conſequences? Why, ſays *Dr. Waterland*, "this interpretation of the text (ſup-"poſing it juſt) implies no more than this, "that *Jeſus Chriſt* never pretended to an "equality with the Father in reſpect of his "*original*, knowing himſelf to be ſecond only "in order, not the firſt Perſon of the ever-"bleſſed Trinity." Dr. W. obſerves, that the whole paſſage in *Novatian*, rightly underſtood,

derſtood, affords a ſtrong proof of the co-equality of the two Perſons; and that it is quoted accordingly by Dr. *Whitby* in his treatiſe *de vera Chriſti deitate.* But as this can only be done by help of the above diſtinction, I muſt aſk, why *Novatian's* ſenſe of this text muſt be admitted as the true one? He did not *affect*, ſay ſome, did not *claim*, did not *take upon him*, &c. to be honoured as God. Notwithſtanding the great authorities of *Grotius*, *Tillotſon*, and *Clarke*, &c.* with which this interpretation is fortified, I cannot help thinking the reading in uſe, *thought it not robbery to be equal with God*, not barely to be the more eligible, but indeed the proper reading. For, not to inſiſt on one circumſtance in its favour, which is the non-agreement of the ſeveral interpretations of the learned Gentlemen above-mentioned, it deſerves to be noted, that though the phraſe ουχ αρπαγμον ηγησατο would admit the conſtruction contended for, yet the context will be found abſolutely to revolt againſt it. Granting the phraſe *being in the form of God* to be

* See Mr. Parkhurſt's Note at p. 79. of his Treatiſe on the Divinity and Pre-exiſtence of our Saviour.

in

in itſelf of undeterminate ſignification, yet when predicated of him who is *one* with the *Father*, who *was in the beginning with God*, and really and truly *was God*, it certainly is to be regarded as ſynonymous with thoſe expreſſions; and conſequently as importing an intire equality with God. But herewith the conſtruction of *Novatian*, and of the *Arians*, not to ſay of Dr. W. himſelf, is totally incompatible. The reading in uſe therefore muſt be allowed to be not only natural, but neceſſary. *He thought it not robbery*, i. e. to be no violation of right, or juſtice.

The other paſſage is the following. *There is one body*, ſays the Apoſtle to the Epheſians, and *one Spirit*; *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm*; *one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Chap. iv. 4. &c. The *Socinian* and the *Arian* inference from theſe texts is obvious; but in proof that it is an unfair one, I would remark, that had St. *Paul* intended here to have diſtinguiſhed the *Father* from the *Son* and the

Spirit, by this aſcription of Supremacy, he would certainly have named the two latter with their ſeverally diſcriminating inferior titles; and this without a needleſs, and I might ſay, impertinent combination of *unities*, if I may ſo call them. Beſides, had this been the Apoſtle's deſign, how comes it to paſs that ſupremacy is in almoſt the ſame terms aſcribed in the *New Teſtament* to *Jeſus Chriſt*; whoſe *throne is for ever and ever*, who is *Lord of all, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever?* Or how are we to account for its being ſo frequently ſaid, that both *Chriſt* and the *Spirit* as well as the *Father* is *in us?* If the manifeſt attribution of Supremacy in the texts juſt now cited does not exclude the *Father*, why muſt it be underſtood in the place under conſideration to exclude the *Son?* The ſame queſtion may be aſked with the ſame propriety, and with the ſame ſucceſs, with regard to the following well-known paſſages in the firſt Epiſtle to *Tim.* which, I believe, the Anti-trinitarians in general ſet with much aſſurance at the head of their authorities.

Now

Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever : † *Who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or can see : to whom be honour and power everlasting.* Surely all this is *briefly* but fully *comprehended* in the above descriptions of *Jesus Christ*; to whom, by the way, independently on the *Father*, St. *Peter* ascribes *glory both now and for ever.* We shall now be able to despatch with no difficulty certain passages which at first sight have an humiliating tendency, and seem to import the inferiority of the *Son* to the *Father*, and the impersonality of the Holy Ghost. It may be of use to expose pretences.

With respect to his human character, or his legation, *Christ* is confessedly *God's*; and the *head of Christ is God*; and, says he, *my Father is greater than I.* We have already seen, that the absolute Godhead of *Jesus*

† 1 Tim. i. 17. vi. 15, &c.

Chriſt, though it had been on certain occaſions not barely intimated, but in plain terms aſſerted by him, was not uniformly manifeſted to his diſciples during his reſidence upon earth. It was a truth which he was in due time fully to authenticate to them, but which at preſent for obvious reaſons they could *not bear*.* Accordingly, as in many other places, ſo in the words laſt quoted, which were calculated to ſooth them under the loſs they were about to ſuſtain by his *going away, my Father is greater than I*, the bleſſed *Jeſus* with particular propriety alludes to the commiſſion he had undertaken, and adapts himſelf to their imperfect and unſettled conceptions.† On pretty much the ſame ground he had at another time declared to the *ruler* who addreſſed him under the character of *Good Maſter*,‡ that *there is none good but one, that is God*. The full manifeſtation of the great myſtery of the Goſpel was reſerved for the *day of Pentecoſt*; before which conſideration a thouſand difficulties

* See Parkhurſt's Divin. &c. of Chriſt. p. 102. &c. 117. &c.
† See Diſc. 3 and 7. See John xiv. 26. xv. 26.
‡ See Luke xviii. 18.

will

will crumble into atoms; and by which an anſwer is given in full to the ſubſtance of what Dr. *Prieſtly* has advanced in the *firſt Sect. of the Introd. to his Hiſtory of* EARLY OPINIONS, with reſpect to the ſilence of the *Old* Teſtament, and the incompetency of a great part of the *New*.

This is life eternal, ſays our bleſſed Lord, *that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* * Our Lord, ſpeaking here in his human capacity, and with reference to his miſſion, very naturally avows his Father to be *the only true God*, in contradiſtinction to all *falſe Gods*; but cannot be ſuppoſed to exclude *himſelf* and the *Holy Ghoſt*, who are partakers of one eſſence with the *true*.

So again: *who is the firſt born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God.* † As to the latter of theſe expreſſions, it implies no more, according to ſome interpretations, than the Father of the Chriſtian

* John xvii. 3. † Col. i. 15. Rev. iii. 14.

Church, &c; or, if the original word had been rendered the *cauſe*, or the *origin*, inſtead of the *beginning*, as with very ſufficient warrant it might have been, this text is ſo far from affirming *Chriſt* to be a *creature*, that, in effect, it avers him to be the *Creator*; or, if it be preciſely equivalent to the former expreſſion, it will in courſe be reducible to the ſame ſignification. Now literally, and in his human character, *Jeſus Chriſt* was not the *firſt-born of every creature*; and in his divine character he was not born or begotten at all, except in a tranſcendent and incomprehenſible ſenſe; but he was, and is ſtyled in a few verſes below, the *firſt-born from the dead*, and in his own reſurrection aſcertained ours, &c. And in this juſt ſenſe he is the *firſt-born of every creature*, the *beginning of the Creation of God*, or of the new creation and conſtitution of things, not only without diſparagement to his divine nature, but in direct confirmation of it.

So again: *Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither*

neither the Son, but the Father. * In our Saviour's human capacity, or in his mediatorial character, the final and general judgment was a matter that did not concern him; but in his divine character he cannot but know the time of his own visitations.

So again: *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.* † These words contain a proper and natural commission given to *Mary Magdalen* by our blessed Lord in consequence of his resurrection, and agreeably to what he had spoken *unto* his disciples *when he was yet in Galilee.* ‡ It was his intention to signify by her the speedy accomplishment of what he had frequently foretold and promised them under the character of the *Messiah*; but it was neither necessary nor expedient to discover to her singly the *fulness* of his *Godhead.*

So once more: *When all things shall be subdued unto him,* THEN *shall the Son also*

* Mark xiii. 32. † John xx. 17. ‡ Luke xxiv. 6.

himſelf be ſubject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. § In other words; when the great ſcheme of man's redemption ſhall be completed, *Chriſt* ſhall reſign his commiſſion into his hands from whom he received it, and his mediatorial kingdom be ſucceeded by the eternal kingdom of God, the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt,* with whom the *Saints,* and *Spirits of juſt men made perfect,* ſhall live in fulneſs of bliſs and glory. This is the obvious and indeed neceſſary conſtruction. For if we attend to the *letter* of this paſſage, and not to the *ſpirit* and ſcope of it, *when all things ſhall be ſubdued,* &c. THEN ſhall the Son be ſubject, &c. we ſhall aſſert that *Jeſus Chriſt* will be *ſubject* to the *Father* AFTER the conſummation of all things, but was not ſo BEFORE; or, that he was greater in his *human* character than in his divine: which is abſurd. *He muſt reign,* ſays the Apoſtle, juſt before, *till he hath put all things under his feet.* Now it is not literally true that he ſhall reign ſo long, and no longer than this, as the words

§ 1 Co. xv. 28.

import.

import. For though his reign over the Church militant ſhall ceaſe, of his reign over the Church triumphant *there ſhall be no end.* The truth is, with the Evangelical plan, with the commiſſion of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the idea of ſubordination, or ſubjection, is connected; but with regard to abſolute perfection of eſſence and attribute, the complement of the Godhead, the Trinity in Unity, ever was, and for ever will be ALL IN ALL.

Laſtly: with reſpect to ſuch expreſſions as the following, which appear inconſiſtent with perſonality, *be filled with the Spirit*; * *quench not the Spirit*; † *the Spirit which he hath given us*; ‡ *receive ye the Holy Ghoſt*; § &c. it is obvious to remark, that, agreeably to a common figure, the cauſe and its effects are promiſcuouſly uſed; and accordingly by the *Spirit* in all theſe places, and in all parallel ones, we are to underſtand the gifts and graces of which the *Holy Spirit*, or *Holy Ghoſt* is the diſpenſer. If this interpretation

* Epheſ v. 18.
† 1 Theſſ. v. 19.
‡ 1 John iii. 24.
§ John xx. 22.

be

be not admitted, we may with equal propriety and juſtice call in queſtion the perſonality of *Jeſus Chriſt* in his human character, and even that of God the Father himſelf. For *if Chriſt be in us, the body is dead*; * and *God is a conſuming fire*; † *God is love*; ‡ *and God is in you of a truth.* §

On the whole then, I may fairly conclude with remarking, that, for the moſt part, in the arguments of *Socinians* we may be ſaid to have *premiſſes* without *concluſions*, and in thoſe of *Arians concluſions* without *premiſſes*; and that there is nothing in the feeble attempts, the bold aſſertions, or the *perverſe diſputings* of our adverſaries, I do not ſay to terrify, but in any degree to diſcourage us from *ſtriving together for the faith of the Goſpel*, even that *faith which ſtandeth not in the wiſdom of men, but in the power of God.***

* Rom. viii. 10.
† Heb. xii. 29.
‡ 1 John iv. 8,
§ 1 Cor. xiv. 25.
** 1 Cor. ii. 5.

DIS-

DISCOURSE VII.

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1 Cor. Chapter 15. Verſe 12.

If Chriſt be preached that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you that there is no reſurrection of the dead?

THAT important article of our Creeds, the *Reſurrection of the Body*, is the other great *myſtery* which has all along been *fooliſhneſs* to Infidels, and a *ſtumbling-block* to many Chriſtians. Under this article then I am to endeavour, agreeably to my engagements, to give all the ſatisfaction which the ſenſible, the candid, and the well-diſpoſed can require.

I might inſiſt that the great doctrine before us is virtually at leaſt contained in my text: but

but as there is a ſtrong propenſity in human pride to conſider what is propounded to our faith as inſulting our underſtandings, it will be neceſſary to enter into a full and even minute diſcuſſion of the ſubject.

A late ingenious author, Dr. *Sykes*, very confidently aſſerts, that this doctrine has no manner of warrant from ſcriptural authority. He obſerves, as Mr. *Locke* has done before him, that "there is not any ſuch expreſſion "in the New Teſtament as the *Reſurrection* "*of the fleſh*; that the Scriptures often ſpeak "of a *Reſurrection*, and of the *Reſurrection* "*of the dead*; but as to the *Reſurrection of* "*the body, or of the fleſh*, there is not "one word. And therefore that ſuch an "article was required *at firſt* to be profeſſed "in order to Baptiſm, can never be proved."*

I have already apologized for freedoms taken with the dead. The names I juſt now mentioned are of the firſt authority with unbelievers at this day; and I take a part in the controverſy with a hope to con-

* See Enquiry when the Reſurrection of the Body was firſt inſerted in the Creeds. ſub. init.

duct

duct it to your content, if not by recency of argument, or reply, at leaſt by the mode of their enforcement.

Now that the above expreſſions or phraſes, —the *Reſurrection of the body*, or *the fleſh*, never occur in the New Teſtament; that this article, together with ſome others which Dr. *S*. mentions, did not make a part of the *Baptiſmal Creed* before the middle of the fourth century, may without difficulty be admitted; becauſe if it will appear, that the *Reſurrection of the body*, or *of the fleſh*, is moſt unqueſtionably the doctrine of Scripture, and of the Apoſtolical and primitive Church, we are bound by all means to retain it; and its inſertion into the *Creed* at *any* time was both proper and neceſſary; the original *Creed*, whatever it preciſely was, having been reaſonably enlarged, (by Dr. *S*'s own confeſſion), as circumſtances demanded, and hereſies multiplied.

Let us enquire then, whether the doctrine of the *Reſurrection*, as it is delivered in our *Creeds*,

Creeds, be not founded in evidence rational, ſcriptural, and irreſiſtible.

If we conſider this doctrine as a matter of opinion, and not of faith, we ſhall find it to have countenance in no contemptible authority. Tho' the heathens ſaw *ſpiritual things* in general thro' a dim *glaſs* indeed; tho' the proſpect of futurity was greatly clouded to a world almoſt wholly corrupt in principle, and abandoned in practice, yet the notion of another ſtate, and even of a *reſurrection*, or of a *renovation* of all things, which is a *reſurrection* in effect, was far from being univerſally exploded, as abſolutely ridiculous, or chimerical. We are aſſured *Zorouſtres* taught the doctrine of the *reſurrection* among the antient *Perſians*, as he himſelf derived it moſt probably from the *Jews*, with whom he had communications. *Grotius*, who, with reſpect to this article at leaſt, was not of *doubtful mind*, in proof of the admiſſible poſſibility of the thing, cites the authorities both of hiſtorians and philoſophers, and affirms it to have been the tenet of almoſt the whole ſect of the Stoics. * The Grecian

* See Grotius de vent. l. 7. and 10. Le Clerc's Notes. Prideaux Connect. v. 1. p. 103. &c.

cuſtom

cuſtom of burying the dead with their faces upwards, and looking toward the riſing Sun, which is exactly the Chriſtian mode, has a very ſtrong ſmatch of this ſentiment. (*aa*) 'Tis obſervable, *Mahomet* ſpeaks in his *Koran* of the *reſurrection* as of a doctrine known and received in the world from the beginning, and far antecedently to the *Moſaic* diſpenſation. This appears from the following paſſage. "That this, i.e. the doctrine of the *re-* "*ſurrection*, is no other than fables of the "ANTIENTS is, ſays he, the pretence of "unbelievers." And indeed his learned tranſlator remarks in his *Preliminary Diſcourſe*, that ſome of the *Pagan Arabs* believed neither a *creation*, nor *reſurrection*; but that others believed both. We are given to underſtand by a ſenſible writer, that the firſt *Europeans* who viſited *China* found many Chriſtian truths intermingled with the traſh of fable, and tradition; that the *Gentiles* of *Indoſtan* have confuſed notions of the Trinity; and in particular that the people of *Ceylon* believe the *Reſurrection of the Body*. *

* Jenkins's Reaſonab. &c. V. 1. p. 103. P. on the Cr. p. 379.

In

In his note at the 19th verſe of the 26th chapter of Iſaiah,—*Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe*, &c. the learned Bp. *Lowth* obſerves, that the doctrine of the *reſurrection of the dead* muſt have been "a popular and common doctrine" among the *Jews*, at the time of the delivery of this prophecy; and we may reaſonably make the ſame inference from a parallel paſſage in *Daniel*;—*many of them that ſleep in the duſt of the earth ſhall awake*; &c. *many*, as I find it noted by the judicious commentator, being here and elſewhere manifeſtly equivalent to *all*.

That the notion of a *Reſurrection*, according to the common acceptation of the term, prevailed among the *Jews* in our Saviour's time, will be ſoon manifeſt from certain occurrences and paſſages in the evangelical writings. St. *Paul*, in his apology before King *Agrippa*, affirms it to have its foundation in the *hope of the promiſe made unto the Fathers:* tho' when, where, or in what manner, he mentions not. And certain it is that the *Phariſees*, the *ſtraiteſt* and moſt

conſiderable

considerable *Sect* among them, not only entertained this notion with seriousness, but contended for it with vehemency; as appears from the violence of opposition between them and the *Sadducees*, who as strenuously denied it. What then did both parties understand by it? Let us, for a resolution of this question, turn first to the account which the evangelists give us of a discourse held by the *Sadducees* with our Saviour, on the subject of the *Resurrection*. *The same day*, says St. *Matthew*, and much in the same words, St. *Mark*, and St. *Luke* after him, *came to him the Sadducees, who say that there is no Resurrection, and asked him, saying, Master, Moses said, if a man die having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother: now there were with us seven brethren; and the first when he had married a wife, deceased; and having no issue left his wife to his brother; likewise the second also, and the third, to the seventh. And last of all, the woman died also. Therefore in the Resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven, for they all*

 had

had her. * The argument herein implied is indeed perfectly ridiculous, and groſſly carnal; and is expoſed accordingly by our bleſſed Lord in his reply to it: but it undeniably ſuppoſes the *reſurrection* of the *bodies* of theſe ſame *brethren* and their *wife*, agreably to the *Phariſaical* hypotheſis. Indeed that very reply plainly ſuppoſes the ſame thing. *Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the reſurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.* All this is abundantly confirmed by our Saviour's own argument immediately following. *As touching the reſurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was ſpoken to you by God, ſaying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.* There is neither connection, nor indeed ſenſe in this portion of ſcripture-hiſtory, unleſs we ſuppoſe the re-union of the *ſouls* and *bodies* of *Abraham* and *Iſaac*, &c. in the *reſurrection*; and that our Sa-

* Matt. 22. 23. &c.

viour

viour meant by implication to aſſert it. For his argument directly proves nothing more than the immortality of the ſoul, and its conſequential exiſtence in a future ſtate. But had this proof been the ſole object of his diſcourſe, he would moſt aſſuredly have expreſſed himſelf in a very different manner upon the occaſion. Our Lord's meaning is yet more fully diſcovered by St. *Luke*'s account of this matter. *Now that the dead are raiſed*, ſays he, according to that Evangeliſt, EVEN *Moſes ſhewed at the buſh*, ſaying, &c.

Again: When our Lord told *Martha*, that her *brother*, newly deceaſed, ſhould *riſe again*, *ſhe ſaid unto him*, ſays the ſacred text, *I know that he ſhall riſe again in the reſurrection at the laſt day*.* Now that *Martha* believed her *brother ſhould riſe again at the laſt day* with that *body* which was laid in the grave, and had been *dead four days*, is evident enough from this conſideration; that, though ſhe appears to have been doubtful of the poſſibility of his reſurrection at *that* time,

* John xi. 24.

and in ſo *extraordinary* a way, *Lord*, ſays ſhe, *by this time he ſtinketh*, and this notwithſtanding *her* avowed belief that *whatſoever* our Saviour would *aſk of God, God would give it* him, and *his* declaration that he was himſelf *the reſurrection and the life*, yet when *Lazarus* actually *came forth*, neither ſhe nor the many *Jews* who were preſent ſhewed the leaſt ſign of amazement. It does not appear that they were in any degree aſtoniſhed at this mode of his reſtoration to life; and therefore we may juſtly preſume they were perſuaded that *in the reſurrection at the laſt day* "all men ſhall riſe again with their bodies," through the operation of that omnipotent power which, *in the twinkling of an eye*, is able to inſpire life and vigour into duſt and aſhes, and animate corruption itſelf.

The ſuppoſed *reſurrection* of *John the Baptiſt* may be conſidered in the ſame point of view. *Herod*, hearing of the *fame of Jeſus, ſaid unto his ſervants*, as the Evangeliſt acquaints us, *this is John the Baptiſt, he is riſen from the dead, and therefore mighty*

works

works do ſhew forth themſelves in him. Herod hardly thought theſe *works* were done by the ſpirit or apparition of the *Baptiſt*; and if not, we muſt conclude that he believed him to be riſen indeed, according to the notions entertained by the *Jews*. The ſacred hiſtory informs us the *Sadducees* were *grieved* that the Apoſtles *preached through Jeſus the reſurrection from the dead*. And is it not as plain as implication can make it, that their doctrine was, that the followers of Jeſus, and indeed all men, ſhould be raiſed in like manner as he was?

The truth is, of this kind of implied evidence we have plenty in the ſacred volume. I will only produce one piece more of Goſpel-hiſtory, in preſumptive proof that *Gentiles* as well as *Jews* underſtood by a *reſurrection* what we do at this day. St. *Paul* concludes his diſcourſe to the *Athenians* with inſiſting on the certainty of a future judgment from the *aſſurance* which God had *given to all men* of it, by his having *raiſed that man, whom he had ordained to be their judge,*

from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, says the historian, *some mocked*; but *others said, we will hear thee again of this matter.* * Now St. *Paul*'s audience consisted chiefly of *Stoics* and *Epicureans*; and the latter most undoubtedly were the party that derided the doctrine which the former did not conceive to be altogether extravagant, or ridiculous. But had the Apostle meant only to inculcate the general doctrine of a future state, the *Stoics* in all probability would have been satisfied as to that point without a farther hearing; and the *Epicureans* would have no more *mocked*, or insulted, than if a *Stoic* had preached it.

Indeed there is one circumstance in the evangelical history which at first glance may be thought to militate against what has been laid before you. When our Saviour *came down from the mountain* after his *Transfiguration*, with *Peter, James, and John, and charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen*

* Acts xvii. 32.

from

from the dead, they kept that ſaying with themſelves, queſtioning one with another, what the riſing from the dead ſhould mean. † But that they could not poſſibly doubt what was to be underſtood by the expreſſion, or the thing itſelf, is demonſtrable from preceding conſiderations; and therefore the caſe muſt have been this. They were perplexed with the account our Lord had given of himſelf; they could not conceive how their Maſter, whom they ſtill regarded as a temporal deliverer, ſhould ſuffer and be put to an ignominious death, (as he had aſſured them he ſhould in the 31st v. of the laſt Chapter;) or how the expected deliverance would be effected by, or after ſuch reſurrection: this was probably the ſubject of their enquiry; they *queſtioned one with another*, not what THE, but what HIS *riſing from the dead ſhould mean.* All this is perfectly conſiſtent with a parallel paſſage in St. *Luke. He took unto him the twelve, and ſaid unto them, Behold, we go up to Jeruſalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man ſhall be ac-*

† Mark ix. 10.

compliſhed. For he ſhall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and ſhall be mocked, and ſpitefully intreated and ſpitted on; and they ſhall ſcourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he ſhall riſe again. And they underſtood none of theſe things: and this ſaying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were ſpoken. Luke xviii. 31.

What has already been advanced will obviate a common aſſertion, or inſinuation, that there is a very material difference between the caſe of a body which has been dead a few days, or months, or even years, and of one which has been buried in the earth many centuries ſince; and that the ſame Power which is able to effect a *reſurrection* in the former caſe, cannot be conceived adequate to the like operation in the latter. And indeed it deſerves to be remarked, that to maintain, or to intimate this, is at beſt to make extremely free with Omnipotence, and in fact only begs a queſtion inſtead of ſatisfying it. Beſides, this expedient will appear to be heavily encumbered with ſtrange inconveniences;

ences; to ſpeak much leſs harſhly of it than perhaps in juſtice I ſhould. When a finite underſtanding has laid the line which infinite power cannot paſs, it will have a fair claim to our attention; although, even were this done, the number of inſtances we meet with in holy writ of the ſame identical body's being raiſed from the grave, or reſtored to life, which had actually deceaſed, will however juſtify our ſuppoſition, that the bodies of ſuch as ſhall die within a reaſonable time before the *laſt day* ſhall be raiſed after this *modus* or manner; and agreeably to the common and natural ideas of a *reſurrection*. It will be hard indeed if our adverſaries will not allow us to take this for granted; and if they will, the ſame underſtanding which is able to meaſure infinity can readily inform us how, or whether with a body or without one, the bulk of mankind ſhall appear at the great day of final retribution.

I come now to revelation more clear and explicit; to plain, intelligible Scripture; with reſpect to which, it pains one to ſee ſo great a man as Mr. *Locke* taking refuge in

in the above diſtinction, and indeed in the moſt pitiful evaſions. Obſerve then how this juſtly celebrated philoſopher expreſſes himſelf in the paſſage following. "In the "New Teſtament (wherein, I think, are "contained all the articles of the Chriſtian "Faith,) I find our Saviour and his Apoſ-"tles to preach the *reſurrection from the* "*dead*, and the *reſurrection of the dead* in "many places: but I do not remember any "place where the *reſurrection of the ſame body* "is ſo much as mentioned. Nay, which is "very remarkable in the caſe, I do not re-"member in any place of the New Teſta-"ment, (where the general *reſurrection* at "the laſt day is ſpoken of,) any ſuch ex-"preſſion as the *reſurrection of the body*, much "leſs of the *ſame body*. I ſay, the general "*reſurrection*, &c. becauſe where the *reſur-*"*rection* of ſome *particular perſons* preſently "upon our Saviour's reſurrection is men-"tioned, the words are, *the graves were* "*opened, and many bodies of ſaints, which ſlept,* "*aroſe, and came out of the graves, after his* "*reſurrection, and went into the holy city, and* "*appeared to many:* of which peculiar way

"of

" of ſpeaking of *this* reſurrection, the paſſage
" itſelf gives a reaſon in theſe words, *ap-*
" *peared to many*; i. e. thoſe *who ſlept, ap-*
" *peared*, ſo as to be riſen. But this could
" not be known, unleſs they brought with
" them the evidence, that they were thoſe
" who had been dead, &c. And it is pro-
" bable they were ſuch as were *newly* dead,
" whoſe bodies were not *yet* diſſolved, &c."*

There is, I perſuade myſelf, little or nothing in this paſſage but has its anſwer in the foregoing conſiderations; unleſs we ſhould be kind enough to acknowlege for argument the triumphant ſneer of that parentheſis, (*wherein, I think, are contained all the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith.*) It might therefore be ſufficient to remark, that Mr. L. ſeems to admit *myſteries* as ſome people diſpenſe *alms, viz. grudgingly*, or *of neceſſity*; and at the ſame time to expreſs our obligations to him for his indulgent conceſſion, that *bodies* have been raiſed from the dead upon *particular occaſions*. But becauſe this great writer may poſſibly be ſtill thought by ſome to have hit

* See Eſſay on the Human Underſt. and ch. on Identity.

upon

upon an expedient, which happily helps him out of embaraſſment, in the ſtale diſtinction between a *particular* and the *general* Reſurrection, let us ſee whether this diſtinction will not vaniſh before the enſuing argumentation.

I venture to aver then that the *reſurrection* of the *body* of *Jeſus Chriſt* is an eſpecial earneſt, or ſure token of the *reſurrection* of our *bodies* from the dead. I deſire your impartial judgment of the texts which follow. *Now is Chriſt riſen from the dead, and become the firſt-fruits of them that ſlept.* * *God hath both raiſed up the Lord, and will alſo raiſe up us by his own power. If we have been* † *planted together in the likeneſs of his death, we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection. He who raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe up us alſo by Jeſus.* ‡ *As the Father raiſeth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even ſo the Son quickeneth whom he will.* § Theſe texts will be ſufficient for my preſent purpoſe. Let us conſider them ſeparately a little. *Now is*

* 1 Cor. xv. 20. vi. 14.
† Rom. vi. 5.
‡ 2 Cor. iv. 14.
§ John v. 21.

Chriſt

Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. I need not enlarge upon the *Jewish* practice alluded to under this figurative expression; and shall only observe, that, as the *first-fruits* were offerings of that identical grain of which the harvest was to follow, the *resurrection* of our *bodies*, after that of Christ, could not have been signified by a finer emblem. *God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power:* i. e. most undoubtedly, he will raise up us in like manner. *If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.* The former part of this verse has some obscurity in it, which may be liable to various construction; but the latter ascertains, almost as fully as words can do, the great article before us. *He who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus.* This text is exactly parallel with that just quoted from the other Epistle to the *Corinthians*. *As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.* This proof runs rather in another line, but how-

ever

ever will terminate in the ſame point. For we may ſafely conclude, that the Son will *raiſe the dead, and quicken them* hereafter, in the ſame manner in which himſelf and many dead perſons have been already raiſed. We have by this time, I hope, ſufficient grounds for this concluſion. And indeed St. *Paul* aſſures us, that the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall change our vile body that* IT *may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body.** For how, or when ſhall he do this, if not in the GENERAL *reſurrection at the laſt day*, and by a change of THAT *body* which was depoſited in the ground? Our *vile body* is not to be *changed* for ANOTHER *body*, but is ITSELF to be *faſhioned like unto Chriſt's glorious body*. Would it not be *prima facie* ridiculous to attempt torturing the paſſage to any other ſenſe?

Though what has been here offered can, I think, ſcarcely fall ſhort of bringing conviction to a mind open to it, yet it will be greatly corroborated by other paſſages and particulars, and eſpecially by the doctrine

* Phil. iii. 21.

contained

contained *in the fifteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians*, which is almost totally spent upon this subject. In truth, there are more reasons than one for our not passing by that Chapter. If we read this portion of Scripture with due attention, and impartiality, we shall be led, I presume, to this unavoidable conclusion, that the *bodies* of all men shall be raised, if not absolutely, totally, or numerically, yet really and truly the same as they died; or, in other words, that the *bodies* which shall be raised shall, with their respective souls, constitute the same persons that lived before in the world: nor can this doctrine be invalidated by metaphysical subtilties, and *oppositions of science falsly so called*; which are much less calculated to satisfy, than to perplex and confound us. If the import of such passages as the following, *it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory*; † *it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; behold I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a mo-*

† v. 43, &c. 51, &c.

ment,

ment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trump; for the trumpet ſhall ſound, and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and we ſhall be changed; for THIS *corruptible muſt put on incorruption, and* THIS *mortal muſt put on immortality*; if the manifeſt import of theſe texts can be evaded, ſo may the moſt ſtudied paraphraſe, or the moſt careful illuſtration of them. There will be no ſuch thing as intelligible language to be found. The caſe is, the human body undergoes many changes in a courſe of years, e. g. from infancy to old age, which, I ſuppoſe, it will be granted, are the changes of the ſame body, properly ſpeaking, ſtill. For though it may not be eaſy to ſay preciſely in what the *ratio* of identity conſiſts, we may ſafely ſay, than an almoſt infinite number of changes and modifications, which might be ſuppoſed, do not affect it. There are very few names which have a ſtronger claim to deference than that of Mr. *Boyle*; and it is an obſervation of his, that "there is no ſaying what the utmoſt "human art or contrivance may be able to "effect; much leſs what means, even phyſical

"ones,

" ones, God is able to uſe for the repro-
" duction of bodies; of which the *neceſſary*
" *conſtituent parts* may be preſerved conſiſ-
" tently with numberleſs changes from the
" cradle to the grave, and after death."
Our great Creator at leaſt knows what properly conſtitutes identity much better than we can tell him; and therefore without entering fully into the ſtate of the controverſy as maintained long ago by Dr. *Stillingfleet* and Mr. *Locke*, (which would be little better than continuing a *game of words*,) I ſhall content myſelf with pointing out to you one or two inſtances of cavil, and quibble, and captiouſneſs in the latter, which plainly enough indicate him to have been galled in many places, and are indeed altogether unworthy both of himſelf and his argument.

The Biſhop, in vindication of his own and the catholic tenet, cites theſe words of our bleſſed Saviour, *all that are in the graves ſhall hear his voice, and ſhall come forth.* " From hence, ſays Mr. L., your Lordſhip

" argues, that theſe words, *all that are in the* " *graves*, relate to no other ſubſtance than " what was united to the Soul in life; be- " cauſe a different ſubſtance cannot be ſaid " to be in the graves, and to come out of " them. Which words of your Lordſhip, " if they prove any thing, prove that the " Soul too is lodged in the grave, and raiſed " out of it at the laſt day. For your Lord- " ſhip ſays, *can a different ſubſtance be ſaid to* " *be in the graves, and come out of them?* So " that according to this interpretation of " theſe words of our Saviour, no other ſub- " ſtance being raiſed but what hears his " voice, but what, being called, comes out " of the grave; and no other ſubſtance com- " ing out of the grave, but what was in the " grave; any one muſt conclude, that the " Soul, unleſs it be in the grave, will make " no part of the perſon that is raiſed, unleſs, " as your Lordſhip argues againſt me, you " can make it out, that a ſubſtance which " never was in the grave, may come out of " it; or that the Soul is no ſubſtance." *But

* Ibid.

will

will not this ſophiſtical bubble burſt in an inſtant before a moſt ſimple conſideration, purſued through its neceſſary conſequences? By a common figure, and agreeably to the cuſtomary licenſe of ſpeech, we talk of the acts, or operations of one of the two conſtituent parts of man, as of the acts or operations of the whole. E. G. *No ſoul ſees me*; or *no body ſees me*; *every ſoul heard him*; or *no body heard him*; are expreſſions uſed indiſcriminately, not only in ordinary diſcourſe, but in correct compoſition. The ſoul perceives the *voice*; the body is raiſed by divine power, and reunited to it. (*bb*)

Again: The learned prelate quotes the following words of the Apoſtle, in ſupport of the doctrine of the *reſurrection* as it is held in the Church. *We muſt all appear before the judgmentſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* To which his Lordſhip ſubjoins this queſtion: CAN THESE WORDS BE UNDER-

STOOD OF ANY OTHER MATERIAL SUBSTANCE BUT THAT BODY IN WHICH THESE THINGS WERE DONE? "A man, "Mr. L. anſwers, may ſuſpend his deter- "mining the meaning of the Apoſtle to be, "that a ſinner ſhall ſuffer for his ſins in the "*very ſame body* in which he committed "them: becauſe St. *Paul* does not ſay he "ſhall have the *very ſame body* when he ſuf- "fers, that he had when he ſinned. The "Apoſtle ſays indeed, done *in his body*. The "body he had, and did things in at five, or "fifteen, was, no doubt, *his body*, as much "as that which he did things in at fifty was "*his body*, though *his body* were not the *very* "*ſame body* at thoſe different ages: and ſo "will the body, which he ſhall have AFTER "the *reſurrection*, be *his body*, though it be "not the *very ſame* with that which he had "at five, at fifteen, or fifty."* Now agreeing with Mr. L. and the admirers of his doctrine upon this head, that "the body which a man "ſhall have *after* the reſurrection," according to their ſcheme, (for what ſhall be done *in*

* Ibid.

or

or *at* it, we are left to conjecture,) I ſay, agreeing with them, that this body will be *his body*, yet we would fain know in what ſenſe he could be ſaid to *receive the things done* IN IT, *or* BY IT, according to another reading. A man has *his body* truly, if not numerically the ſame through life, under a greater or leſs variety of changes and modifications; but by Mr. L's train of reaſoning, it ſhould ſeem that a man may have *his body* before he is in poſſeſſion of it. Had the Apoſtle ſaid, as a man ſins in *a* body, ſo he ſhall ſuffer in *a* body, Mr. L's mode of arguing might have been admitted; but as matters ſtand at preſent, it has evidently no logic to ſupport it.

Once more. "The next text of Scripture "you bring for the ſame body, ſays Mr. L. "is, *if there be no reſurrection of the dead, "then is not Chriſt raiſed.* From which your "Lordſhip argues, IT SEEMS THEN OTHER "BODIES ARE TO BE RAISED AS HIS WAS. "I grant other dead as certainly raiſed as

"Chriſt was; for elſe his *reſurrection* would "be of no uſe to mankind. But I do not ſee "how it follows, that they ſhall be raiſed "with the *ſame* body, as your Lordſhip in-"fers in theſe words annexed; AND CAN "THERE BE ANY DOUBT, WHETHER HIS "BODY WAS THE SAME MATERIAL SUB-"STANCE WHICH WAS UNITED TO HIS "SOUL BEFORE? I anſwer, none at all; "nor that it had juſt the ſame diſtinguiſhed "lineaments and marks, yea and the ſame "wounds that it had at the time of his death. "If therefore your Lordſhip will argue from "other bodies being raiſed as his was, that "they muſt have proportion with his in "SAMENESS, then we muſt believe, that "every man ſhall be raiſed with the ſame "lineaments and other notes of diſtinction "he had at the time of his death, even with "his wounds yet open, if he had any, be-"cauſe our Saviour was ſo raiſed; which "ſeems to be ſcarce reconcileable with what "your Lordſhip ſays, of A FAT MAN "FALLING INTO A CONSUMPTION, AND "DYING." *

* Ibid.

The

The wit here is not worth anſwering; and the fallacy of the paragraph was obviated in ſome of the foregoing obſervations. Suffice it to remark that the addition of one word in its *proper* place would have demoliſhed all this fine fabric of reaſoning. Mr. L. ſhould have granted, that other *dead* and BURIED ſhall "as certainly be raiſed as Chriſt was." In ſhort, we affirm, on Scriptural authority, that at the *laſt day* the *bodies* of men ſhall really be raiſed. The article of the *reſurrection* in our Creeds requires only this belief. We are neither concerned in niceties of conjecture, nor obliged to adopt Mr. L's. notion of identity. (*cc*)

But to return to Dr. S. I admit that this learned writer has ſpecioufly enough reconciled a text or two * to his favourite tenet, which have been generally referred to the received doctrine. But ſhall plauſibility be obtruded upon us for demonſtration? Shall it overturn the credit of other interpretations

* See particularly Rom. viii. 11.

of the ſame paſſages, more ſolid perhaps, or at leaſt equally ingenious? Shall it ſuperſede the authority of a very great number of texts too clear and explicit to be oppoſed by any thing but general aſſertions, bold denials, flat contradictions, and the artifice of ſubtilization? Shall it ſhake the faith of ages, and nullify the doctrine of the catholic Church?

And, after all, in this, as in the caſe of the *Trinity*, we are in effect only called upon to exchange one Creed for another. Theſe *ſqueamiſh* Gentlemen who know not how to *digeſt* the *wholſome* doctrines of the Goſpel, expect us to *ſwallow* with *greedineſs* a kind of ſpiritual *Noſtrum*, *prepared* by human imagination. It is true, Dr. S. with all the effrontery of *quackery*, would make us believe his *doſe* may be *taken* without any ſort of inconvenience. For he roundly aſſerts, that "the *reſurrection of the dead* is no ways liable "to any of the difficulties which the other "notion MAY be liable to." Now whatever difficulties

difficulties our notion *may* be liable to, I aſk, whether that of the Doctor has not at firſt ſight its *peculiar* difficulties? Indeed it will ſtand clear of all, if we anſwer the following queries ſuitably to the confidence with which he propoſes them. "May there not be a "*reſurrection of the dead*, ſays he, without "the *reſurrection of fleſh*? May not the dead "perſon be raiſed to life, and have a *body* "given to him, ſuitable to the place he is "to have? May not the *thinking conſcious* "perſon be reſtored, though he has not that "reſtored which has no thought, nor conſci-"ouſneſs belonging to it?" To the firſt of theſe three queſtions I anſwer abſolutely—No.—A *reſurrection of the dead*, ſuppoſes a *reſurrection of fleſh*. To the ſecond and third I make free to reply with a few queſtions in my turn; and deſire to aſk, whether, when the *graves and the ſea ſhall give up the dead*, they will not give up what was *put into them*? Was this the *body*, or was it the *ſoul*? Or, if by a *reſurrection of the dead* we are only to underſtand our being inveſted with a *new*

body,

body, with what ſhadow of ſenſe is this ſtyled a *reſurrection?* Or, if there is ſenſe and propriety in the term, may we not fairly aſk, from whence is *this body* to *come?* (*dd*) If *thought*, or *conſciouſneſs* conſtitutes perſon, can *thought or conſciouſneſs* die? If not, what are we to underſtand by "a thinking con-"ſcious perſon's being reſtored?" Reſtored! From whence? Or to what? (*ee*) In ſhort, whatever becomes of man after death, whatever may be the nature of the intermediate ſtate, what notion can we form of *thought's riſing from the dead*, or the *reſurrection of conſciouſneſs?* Men will advance inconſiſtences, and aſſert paradoxes ſooner than believe as the Church would have them. (*ff*)

This notion of a *thinking perſon's being reſtored* does indeed correſpond well enough with an opinion maintained with much earneſtneſs ſome years ſince by certain Divines,* who held, that during the ſtate between death and the laſt day, the ſoul will *ſleep*, as

* Dr. Law. Mr. Peckard, &c.

it

it were, and all the rational powers be ſuſpended. I ſhall not enter into the merits of their arguments. It will be ſufficient to ſay, that theſe writers ſuppoſed the reunion of the Soul to the body at the day of judgment; and conſequently, according to their notion, (for argument's ſake admitting it,) the *reſtoration of the Soul* to its powers, &c. and *the reſurrection of the dead*, are very different things.

Again: if we believe the Apoſtle's account, the inſtantaneous change which is to be effected in us at the *reſurrection* will be from *natural* to *ſpiritual*, from *corruptible* to *incorruptible*; but we ſhall look in vain for ſuch a change under any other hypotheſis. They who inſiſt, that our ſouls ſhall be united to *new bodies* may be allowed to ſuppoſe ſuch bodies will be *ſpiritual*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, and *incorruptible*; but will they not be hard put to it to prove that *theſe* ever were *natural*, or *corruptible?* Or does this Apoſtle's illuſtration of the doctrine before us by the ſimilitude of ſeed ſown, which *is not quickened except it die*, convey the leaſt idea of

of a ſoul's awaking from ſleep, and in a moment as it were recovering the uſe of all its faculties? Surely this cannot be the *myſtery* which the inſpired writer *ſhews* us in this chapter. But, according to our ſenſe, the Apoſtolical compariſon is as apt and happy as poſſible. The *bare grain* is *ſown*, diſſolves, and appears again under a new modification. *So alſo is the reſurrection of the dead.* The body *is ſown in corruption, it is raiſed in incorruption. It is ſown in diſhonour, it is raiſed in glory. It is ſown in weakneſs, it is raiſed in power. It is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body*; a body ſubtilized and purified; a body diſencumbered from that *fleſh and blood which cannot inherit the kingdom of God*, and, to adopt the high figuring of St. *Paul, clothed upon with an houſe from heaven*, and arrayed with *immortality*. And, all this while, in both caſes, *God giveth a body* as it *pleaſeth him, and to every ſeed*, and to every individual, *his own body*.

The

The learned authors we are concerned with, and their numerous admirers, ſeem to have forgot, or to wiſh us to forget, that they hold opinions declared to be heretical, and condemned as ſuch by an inſpired Apoſtle. The author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* numbers the *reſurrection of the dead* among the *principles* of the *doctrine of Chriſt.** What was the preciſe tenet of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* who aſſerted that the *Reſurrection is paſt already*, we cannot learn from the Apoſtle who ſo ſeverely cenſures them. But he deſcribes them to be perſons who *concerning the truth* had *erred*, and *overthrown the faith of ſome*. It is reaſonably to be preſumed, that they, as well as the old heretics, *Baſilides*, *Carpocrates*, *Menander*, *Valentinus*, &c. and the *Anabaptiſts* and *Libertines* of later ages, (as I find them called,) denied the *reſurrection of the body* on much the ſame grounds as their ſucceſſors in this heterodoxy. It has been boldly maintained, that by the *reſurrection of the dead* we are only to underſtand

* Heb. vi. 1, 2.

a *reſur-*

a *resurrection* from *sin* to a state of *grace*; or a kind of *resurrection* from *ignorance* to a *knowlege* of truth; or, in general, the immortality of the Soul. *Libertini*, says *Calvin*, as quoted by Arch-bishop *Laud*, *rident spem omnem quam de resurrectione habemus, idque jam nobis evenisse dicunt, quod adhuc expectamus*, &c. *ut homo sciat animam suam spiritum immortalem esse viventem in cælis*. And says *Peter Martyr*, as cited by the same prelate, *sunt etiam hodie Libertini qui eam irrident, et resurrectionem quæ tractatur in Scripturis tantum ad animas referunt*. The *Gnostics* and *Valentinians* affirmed the flesh to be incapable of incorruption. *Carnis salutem negant*, says *Irenæus*, *dicentes non eam esse capacem incorruptibilitatis*. *Menander* had the impudence to annex the privilege of immortality to his Baptism. And among others, probably the *Corinthian* converts affirmed the *Resurrection of the dead* imported no more than a *renovation of life and manners*, a *newness of life*, as St. *Paul* expresses it; and thus they absurdly confounded figure with letter, or a type with its antitype.

We

We ſhould now ſee, for full ſatisfaction's ſake, what the ſenſe of the primitive Church was with reſpect to the doctrine before us; but this enquiry affording ample matter for diſtinct conſideration muſt be reſerved accordingly.

DIS-

DISCOURSE VIII.

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1 Cor. Chapter 15. Verſe 12.

If Chriſt be preached that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you that there is no reſurrection of the dead?

THAT the doctrine of the *Reſurrection of the body* was taught by the Apoſtles and by our Lord we have already ſeen; and that the Apoſtolical Fathers maintained it with the ſame preciſion will preſently appear.

"Let us conſider, ſays St. *Clement* in his "firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, how the "Lord does continually ſhew us that there "ſhall be a future *reſurrection*; of which he

" has made our Lord *Jesus Christ* the FIRST
" FRUITS, raising him from the dead. Let
" us contemplate, beloved, the *resurrection*
" that is continually made before our eyes.
" Let us behold the fruits of the earth.
" Every one sees how the seed is sown. The
" sower goes forth, and casts it upon the
" earth; and the seed which when it was
" sown fell upon the earth dry and naked, in
" time dissolves; and from the dissolution
" the great power of the Providence of the
" Lord raises it again; and of one seed many
" arise, and bring forth fruit."

This passage is almost a direct comment on the 36th. and two following verses of the 15th. Chapter of St. *Paul*'s first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. St. *Clement*, it must be confessed, is not so happy in his elucidation of the doctrine of the *resurrection of the body* from the supposed death and revivifcence of the *Phœnix* from his own ashes, according to a current opinion in those days; the enlargement on which fabulous wonder has drawn a charge of ungenuineness on the Epistle itself.

ſelf. But the judicious Editor and Tranſlator in his preliminary diſcourſe vindicates the good *Father*, and reſcues the work from this imputation in a moſt ſatisfactory manner; ſo that "with ſerious and ingenuous minds," (to borrow his own words,) this is a matter which will reflect no diſcredit on St. *Clement*'s doctrine, or on the pious zeal with which he maintained it. The reality of the doctrine is in no wiſe affected by the whimſicalneſs, or the weakneſs of the illuſtration.

"He that raiſed up *Chriſt* from the dead, "ſhall alſo raiſe up us in like manner, if we "do his will," ſays *Polycarp* to the *Philippians*.

Ignatius aſſures the *Trallians* in the moſt poſitive terms, that "as *Jeſus Chriſt* was truly "crucified and dead, ſo he was alſo truly "raiſed from the dead by his Father, *after* "*the ſame manner* as *he* will alſo raiſe up *us* "who believe in him." (*gg*)

The following extract from St. *Clement's* ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians* is at leaſt as

full and expreſs as the paſſage a little above quoted from the firſt. "Let not any one "among you ſay, that this very fleſh is not "judged, neither raiſed up. Conſider, in "what were ye ſaved, in what did ye look "up, if not whilſt you were in this fleſh? "We muſt therefore keep our fleſh as the "temple of God. For in like manner as ye "were called in the fleſh, ye ſhall alſo come "to judgment in the fleſh." (*hh*)

And yet all this evidence ſhall ſhrink into nothing before a little ready confidence, and unceremonious deciſion. For thus ſays the Author of the *Inquiry*. "If we paſs from the "New Teſtament, *Barnabas* and *Clemens* of "*Rome* mention no more than the *reſurrec-* "*tion*; and not any particular *modus* of it, "or the *reſurrection of the fleſh*: vide *Barna-* "*bas*, ch. xxi. *Clemens*, ch. xxiv. *Clemens* "indeed, in his ſecond Epiſtle, mentions the "*reſurrection of the fleſh*; but that is allowed "not to be genuine. *Ignatius* too ſpeaks as "the Scriptures do. *Ep. ad Trall.* And in "the larger Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, he ſpeaks

"of

" of the resurrection ἐκ νεκρῶν, *from the dead*; " but he never mentions any thing of a *re-* " *surrection of the flesh*."

Now if the passages I produced from St. *Clement*'s first Epistle, and from *Ignatius*, do not to all intents and purposes assert the *resurrection of the body*, or *of the flesh*; if St. *Clement*'s second Epistle must absolutely be pronounced spurious, because the learned world is divided in its sentiments relative to it; if the doctrine contained in this Epistle cannot possibly be agreeable to that of the other, or to that of *Ignatius*, or to that of the Apostolical and primitive Church, because it is a matter of some doubt who the author might be; if these reverend fathers speak in *no* place of the *resurrection* of the *body* because in *some* places they speak of the *resurrection of the dead*, or of the *resurrection* in general, as the holy Scripture itself occasionally does; if this be the case, equivocation shall hereafter pass for argument, and dogmaticalness for demonstration.

One ſhould be apt to think, that the nearer the fountain, the clearer the ſtream; or, in plain terms, that the moſt antient Chriſtians are the moſt orthodox; that thoſe who lived in, or neareſt to the times of the Apoſtles, and Apoſtolical men, were like to underſtand their doctrine with readineſs, to embrace it with veneration, and to tranſmit it in purity. What can be more clear than the language of *Juſtin Martyr*, as it is quoted by Dr. S. himſelf? "*Chriſt* ſhall "come a ſecond time, when τα σωματα ανα-"γερει παντων των γενομενων ἀνθρωπων, *he ſhall raiſe* "*the bodies of all men that have been?*" Well; but ſays our author, "this was *Juſtin*'s opi-"nion, but it was not in any *Baptiſmal* "Creed; he takes no notice of any article "of any Creed as containing the notion of "the *reſurrection of the fleſh*, whatſoever his "own philoſophical notion of the reſurrec-"tion might be."

Will it follow then that the doctrine of the *reſurrection of the fleſh* was purely the perſonal, or philoſophical notion of *Juſtin Martyr*,

Martyr, becauſe it was not in his time an article in any *Creed*? If ſo, it will follow, by parity of arguing, that almoſt all the other articles of our preſent *Creeds* were the private tenets or opinions of particular perſons, and not the common doctrine, or belief of the catholic Church. This muſt follow upon Dr. S's own principles. For he has himſelf remarked in his preface, that "it "is highly probable theſe, (referring to doc-"trines he had been mentioning,) and other "doctrines were taught, (*viz.* after baptiſm,) "as circumſtances aroſe, either to explain "ſome things inculcated in the Goſpels, or "to avoid ſomething erroneous. And hence "it was that the *original Creed* was enlarged, "and more things inſerted into it; and in-"deed all that has been added to it ſeems to "have been owing to theſe cauſes." The juſt now cited declaration of *Juſtin Martyr* is therefore to be regarded as exactly coincident with a doctrine publickly received, and not as the bare reſult of his own judgment, for any thing Dr. S. has ſaid, or proved to the contrary. But if ſo, the doctrine of the

Resurrection of the body, or of the *flesh*, was an article of faith from the beginning; and its subsequent date as an article of any *Creed* is a circumstance of very inferior consideration. What matters it to us *when* it was thought necessary to be required of the members of the Church of *Christ* openly to profess they believed as the Apostles and primitive Christians did?

But let me shew you how unfairly the author of the *Enquiry* deals by *Polycarp*. Of the two places in this *father's* epistle to the *Philippians* in which mention is made of the *resurrection*, the principal, I think, is that I not long since quoted, and will here lay again before you. *He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also raise up us in like manner*. The words *in like manner* are by the no less faithful than judicious translator printed in *Italics*, as not been literally contained, though necessarily implied in the original. This passage then, like many more parallel ones which I have had occasion to produce, I mean, from the Scripture itself, manifestly imports

imports the *resurrection of the body*; though should any person affect to doubt what the good *father's* meaning may be *here*, they may soon learn what his idea of the *resurrection* was, from a part of the prayer he preferred to God in the hour of his martyrdom, according to the account we have of it in the circular epistle of the Church of *Smyrna*. He *there* makes mention of the *resurrection* both of *soul* and *body*. For though the *soul* cannot, properly speaking, be said to *rise again*, yet as the soul and body constitute the same man, as these constituent parts are separated by death, and reunited at the *resurrection*, this reunion is not unfitly expressed by a term that may be truly predicated of one of the constituent parts.

Dr. S. admits the genuineness of the above-mentioned narrative; and yet will not suffer us to consider the *letter* in one place to be an explanation of the *sense* in the other. There is more of art than honesty in an attempt to slip out of this difficulty by saying, as the *Enquirer* does in the following words, that

that "by the time this letter was wrote, the "notion ſeems to have prevailed among "Chriſtians, that the *body* was to be raiſed, "though it was not yet got into any of their "Creeds." This is a ſort of ſpiritual juggle which inverts truth, and diſguiſes it in the ſame inſtant: it metamorphoſes the real ſentiment of *Polycarp* into a whimſical notion which began to gain ground in the Church!

But this matter may be viewed in another light. The force of truth has drawn from our author an involuntary ceſſion of his own darling point. For immediately after the ſentence laſt cited from him, he acquaints us, that "ſoon after the middle of the ſecond "century diſputes aroſe about the *reſurrec-* "*tion*; the *heathens* objecting to the poſſibi- "lity of it, and the CHRISTIANS endea- "vouring to anſwer the objections they met "with. The enquiry, ſays he, was, whe- "ther there was to be a *reſurrection* of the "*ſoul* alone, or of the whole man conſiſting "of body and ſoul? And then a ſecond "queſtion was, whether the *fleſh*, the *very*

"*fleſh*

"*flesh* which we now bear about us, was to "be raised up again? The WRITERS of "that time still extant contended for the *re-* "*surrection of the flesh* together with the soul. "But there does not appear to be any *Creed* "which established such a doctrine. For "whatever PRIVATE PERSONS might ima- "gine to be true, was not instantly to be "*professed* as an article of faith, necessary to "be believed in order to Baptism." And afterwards he tells us, that "the controversy "about the *resurrection of the flesh* did not "begin till the middle, or near the end of "the second century. And then as philo- "sophers objected to the *resurrection* ITSELF, "from the common topics, *how could* FLESH "*devoured by beasts or fishes, and thus become* "PARTS *of those animals; or perhaps reduced* "*by fire to ashes, or dispersi by seas and rivers,* "*be restored? Athenagoras, Theophilus,* and "*Tertullian* undertook a defence of this no- "tion; and taught, that it was no ways be- "yond the power of Almighty God to "restore to every one the flesh he once "had." * (*ii*)

* Enquiry &c. p. 18.

Now

Now I desire to observe, in the first place, that these philosophers objected to the *resurrection* from the common topics just mentioned because they were the strongest that occurred to them; and because when they objected to the *resurrection of the body*, they most unquestionably meant to object to the *resurrection* ITSELF. In the next place, I would remark, that if by the CHRISTIANS, *who endeavoured to answer the objections of heathens*, and by the WRITERS of *that time*, we are to understand only a few PRIVATE PERSONS who maintained an extraordinary opinion; if *Athenagoras*, and *Theophilus*, and *Tertullian* did no more than defend their own personal tenets; it is passing strange these same heathen philosophers should set their *wits* against them at all; and stranger still, that the whole body of Christians had not joined the outcry in their own vindication, and in public disavowal of an enthusiastic and ridiculous principle. Nay this is not all. The doctrine of the *resurrection of the body*, if it was a mere private or personal opinion, was in fact contrary to the Gospel of *Christ*,

and

and the ſenſe of the Church; and therefore muſt have been regarded as a moſt groſs, if not dangerous hereſy. But as it moſt undoubtedly was never repreſented ſo to be, we are to conclude, I preſume, that it was true and catholic doctrine, notwithſtanding its non-appearance in any Creed, in the early ages, and though the acknowlegement of it was not a qualification for Baptiſm. We therefore inſiſt, that whenever it became an article of a *baptiſmal Creed*, it was inſerted with the moſt admiſſible pretenſions.

It is, farther, very obſervable, that the doctrine of the *reſurrection of the body* is moſt expreſſly taught in many places of the *Koran* of *Mahomet*. Let us turn to a few. "*Man* "*ſaith*, ſays *Mahomet*, *after I have been dead*, "*ſhall I really be brought forth alive from the* "*grave? Doth not man remember that we* "*created him heretofore when he was nothing?* "*The unbelievers ſay, when we and our fa-* "*thers ſhall have been reduced to duſt, ſhall we* "*be taken from the grave? Man ſaith, who ſhall* "*reſtore bones to life when they are rotten? An-* *ſwer, he ſhall reſtore them to life, who produced* "*them*

" *them the first time.*" (*kk*) The whole ſyſtem of *Mahometiſm* is, you well know, a ſuperſtructure raiſed upon the foundations of *Judaiſm* and *Chriſtianity*. The grand aim of the impoſtor ſeems to have been to concentre both in one faith; with which view, and that no romantic one, he in part adopted, and partly rejected the reſpective theories. In order to ingratiate himſelf with the *Jews*, he aſſerted, as we have ſeen, even to an extremity of zeal, the unity of the Godhead; and at the ſame time not to put the *Chriſtians* out of all temper, as he frequently takes occaſion to ſpeak reſpectfully of *Jeſus Chriſt*, ſo he declares probably in the moſt explicit terms for the great article we have been diſcuſſing. (*ll*) We may therefore fairly conclude from this circumſtance only, that the doctrine of the *reſurrection of the body* was not the ſentiment of a few individuals, but the profeſſion of the univerſal Church at the beginning of the ſeventh century. And after all, ſuppoſing it to be queſtionable whether this were really the plan of *Mahomet*, the leaſt that can be inferred from the

perſpicuity

perſpicuity with which the doctrine of the *reſurrection* is taught and enforced in the *Koran*, is that he conceived it to be ſufficiently reconcileable with the common reaſon and apprehenſion of mankind; at the ſame time that, from this among other particulars, we muſt ſee, and muſt deſire its adverſaries to take notice, that it is not a doctrine peculiar to Chriſtianity.

To come now to the *concluſion of the whole matter*. If *theſe things are ſo*, if the great doctrines we have been handling are defenſible upon ſound principles, and have a moſt firm foundation in Scripture, and in primitive authority, abundant reaſon have we to *hold faſt the profeſſion of our faith without wavering*; in nothing diſmayed by adverſaries who trifle with us upon the moſt ſerious ſubjects; who render the word of God of none effect, by perverſe interpretation; who cannot, or will not ſee the plain ſenſe of the plaineſt expreſſions; who will not acknowlege *Jeſus Chriſt* to be the Creator of the world though *all things were made by him*;

or

or that he made ſatisfaction for ſin, though he was *ſacrificed for us*, and *gave his life a ranſom for all.* I know not any thing that can equal this ſtubbornneſs and flowneſs of heart except the inſolence of ſuch as gravely tell us, we muſt not hope to propagate the Goſpel among *Jews*, *Mahometans*, or heathens, while the ſtrange doctrines contained in our Creeds are retained in the Church. Is not this to all intents and purpoſes ſaying, we muſt not hope to eradicate infidelity till we have renounced the capital articles of our belief; or, in other words, muſt not expect to make converts to Chriſtianity, till we ceaſe to be Chriſtians? And indeed ſo inconſiderable are the impediments to a ſpiritual coalition between the followers of *Socinus* and the diſciples of *Mahomet*, that, according to information given us by writers of credit, terms of union and amity were actually propoſed by the former to the latter in the laſt century.* That men ſhould admit the myſterious truths of holy Writ upon rational grounds, or that they ſhould reject them upon what they call rational grounds,

* See Mr. Jones's Introduc. Diſc. p. 4. Note.

we

we may readily enough comprehend; but there ſeems to be ſomething unaccountably romantic in an attempt to compromiſe matters as it were with the author of our faith by accommodating theſe truths to the human underſtanding.

But whatever may be the views, or whatever the claims, or whatever the pretences of Latitudinarians in general, the notion of a *Creed*, or a ſyſtem, or an eſtabliſhment reſpecting the great doctrines we have been conſidering, occurs to us in a manner ſpontaneouſly. In the Church of *Chriſt*, the only queſtion ought to be, not whether a *confeſſion*, a *formulary*, or a ſeries of *articles*, be long or ſhort, ſimple or circumſtantial, antient or modern, but whether it has its grounds in competent authority. (*mm*) If the doctrines of the *Trinity* and of the *Reſurrection*, as they are held in the Church, be ſcriptural doctrines, no more objection can juſtly lie againſt the *Nicene*, or the *Athanaſian Creed*, than againſt that of Dr. S. This author not only admits but refers to an *original Creed*, which he obſerves has been

enlarged "as circumſtances aroſe," or occaſions called; though that it has been enlarged in ſome inſtances beyond all reaſon he ſtrongly inſiſts, with many *others with* him. But be this as it may, and even if *theſe things* were not *ſo* as we have repreſented them, it is abundantly ſufficient that they appear to be *ſo* to us. No rule, no ſyſtem, no eſtabliſhment whatſoever can in any tolerable ſenſe be ſaid to invade the *right of private judgment* in matters of religion; becauſe *Creeds*, formularies, inſtitutions, and appointments in general muſt be incompatible with the exerciſe of this right, at all periods of the Chriſtian Church, or at none. It is pleaſant enough to remark how *zealouſly* ſome will be *affected in a* ridiculous *thing*; and how vehemently they will *beat the air* in their contention for that *right* of *private judgment*, which is indeed unalienable; and in fact is exerciſed by thoſe who ſubmit to what may be called *public*; by men of all perſuaſions; by *Jews*, *Turks*, *Infidels*, and *Heretics*; by the Sectaries of all religions; and by people of no religion at all.(*nn*) "Not Heretics "only, ſays the great *Chillingworth*, but *Ro-*

"*miſh*

" *miſh* Catholics alſo, ſet up as many judges, " as there are men and women in the Chriſ- " tian world. For do not your men and wo- " men judge your religion to be true before " they believe it, as well as the men " and women of other religions? Oh! but " you ſay, *they receive it, not becauſe they* " *think it agreeable to Scripture, but becauſe* " *the Church tells them ſo.* But then, I hope, " they believe the Church, becauſe their own " reaſon tells them they are to do ſo. So that " the difference between a Papiſt and a Pro- " teſtant is this, not that the one judges, and " the other does not judge, but that the one " judges his guide to be infallible, the other " his way to be manifeſt." The fact is, every man's attachment to any thing, to this or that Church, to this party, or to that principle, &c. is ultimately reſolvible into his opinion of its excellence, its truth, its propriety, or its expedience; or of its conduciveneſs on the whole to his welfare, comfort, and ſatiſfaction, &c; i. e. it is reſolvible into his own private judgment. This judgment, it is true, may be warped by paſſion, biaſſed by prejudice, clouded by ignorance, and blinded

by perverſeneſs; it may be intoxicated by voluptuouſneſs, enervated by indolence, or inverted by frenzy; or it may be influenced by wiſdom, by folly, or by caprice. But, at the ſame time, whether we judge well, or ill; or of whatever differences or degrees human judgment may admit; we ſhall ſtrictly and properly be found in all caſes and inſtances to judge for ourſelves. (*oo*)

It was the concurrence of private judgment which firſt formed the Chriſtian Church; it was the ſame concurrence which gradually compounded the enormous maſs of popery; it was the ſame that effected the *Reformation*; and it was the ſame that conſtituted the numerous ſects and parties into which this *Reformation* has been moſt deplorably ſplit and ſubdivided. It is to nothing more or leſs than this that the Church of *England* owes her exiſtence. And upon this ground it is certain, her requiſition of aſſent to her public offices, and of ſubſcription to her *articles*, the meaſure of juſt policy, and common prudence for her ſecurity, are no more to be regarded

garded as invaſions of the *right of private judgment*, than the open attempts, or the ſecret machinations of her enemies, for her deſtruction. Upon this ground, in ſhort, her declarations of faith in what ſhe holds to be evangelical truth; and indeed the whole ſcheme of her doctrine, diſcipline, and polity, are perfectly intelligible, and manifeſtly conſiſtent. But is not the inference drawn from the acknowleged *right of private judgment* by a late famous author, and his aſſociates, altogether chimerical, and totally incomprehenſible? Their inference is, that every individual Chriſtian may, if he thinks fit, withdraw himſelf from all the Churches upon the face of the earth, ſtand abſolutely ſingle in the profeſſion of his faith, or, as this author expreſſes it, be a *Church to himſelf*.* And is not this in effect to aſſert, that a Church may be formed without a communion, without government, or miniſtry; without a poſſibility of being infected with hereſy, or divided by ſchiſm? Is it not to all intents and purpoſes to aver, that a ſociety may ſubſiſt without members, without eſtabliſhment, or

* See Confeſſional. Ch. 2. p. 34. Note.

conſtitution? We deny not that a man may judge he has a claim to this ſpiritual independence; and indeed our principle ſuppoſes him ſo to judge; but then we muſt beg leave to think in our turn, that he is groſſly miſtaken in that judgment. (*pp*)

I wiſh to remark, that if the capital truths of the Goſpel are diſcoverable any where, they are moſt indiſputably to be found in the Catholic Church; the great repoſitory of Chriſtian doctrine. Our bleſſed Lord's aſſurances of ſuperintendency, ſupport, and protection are out of all queſtion given to his diſciples, and to believers in general, as to a body, or ſociety. *Upon this rock*, ſays he, *I will build my Church*, &c. *Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* When he promiſed his Apoſtles that he would ſend the *Holy Spirit* to them, who ſhould *guide them into all truth*, he muſt neceſſarily mean that truth which they were to communicate to their ſucceſſors, and theſe to others, and ſo on, through all generations. When the ſacred penmen ſpeak of the *truth*,

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or the *faith*, &c. they undoubtedly ſpeak of the truth embraced, and the faith profeſſed by all ſound Chriſtians; and when St. *Paul* exhorts the *Corinthians* to *examine* themſelves, and to *prove* themſelves, *whether* they were in the *faith*, he moſt certainly means the faith of the catholic Church. In a word, we muſt look for ſpiritual truth in its native ſimplicity, though we *ſearch* for it as for *hid treaſures*; we muſt look for it within the pale of ſome communion or other: which ſurely will be acknowleged by every man, who does not, in defiance of Scripture, and in contempt of all the world, ſuppoſe that the infallibility which he juſtly denies to appertain to any Church upon earth, is really and truly lodged in himſelf.

The principle of the *Confeſſional* leads, we apprehend, to theſe abſurd conſequences; but at the ſame time we aſſert no *dominion* over the *faith*, or the conſciences of others; we leave every one to *ſtand or fall to his own maſter*; we conceive, that, by the immutable conſtitution of things, every one will think

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and act for himſelf, though we imagine all men to be accountable to God as well for their opinions as for their practices; we neither do, nor wiſh to *compel* men to *come in* that our Church *may be filled*, perſuaded as we are at the ſame time that this Church is, in reſpect of all eſſentials, an apoſtolical one; that ſhe *holds faſt the things which become ſound doctrine*, and teaches the *words of eternal life*.

It may with great truth be affirmed, that the Church of *England* aſſerts the *right of private judgment* in the ſame ſenſe, and to the ſame latitude that every party or body of Proteſtants does. For how does the management of the ſeveral leaders and teachers of the Sectaries accord with this univerſally avowed principle? How do *they* leave men to their own judgments in matters of religion? Do *they* not find ways and means to become maſters of the underſtandings, and the conſciences of their followers; and accompliſh that by indirect artifice which they load us with obloquy for doing under the ſanction of lawful authority? The fact is, in caſe of ſuperiority,

riority, any ſect that you may name would think itſelf, not barely empowered, but bound to ſtrengthen and ſecure itſelf by legal fences and eſtabliſhments, and by authoritative conſtitutions; i. e. by thoſe very means and methods againſt which it now ſo vehemently exclaims. Experience will juſtify our ſuppoſition that ſuch would be the caſe; as we know the moſt conſiderable branch of the *Diſſenters* to have changed its language, and its ſentiments, with its ſituation. The firſt article of the memorable *ſolemn League and Covenant* declares the intention of its framers to be, *to "bring the Churches of God in "the three kingdoms to the neareſt conjunction "and uniformity in religion,* CONFESSION OF "FAITH, FORM OF CHURCH-GOVERN-"MENT, and DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP "and CATECHISING; *that they and their "poſterity after them might as brethren live in "faith and love."*

It is pleaſant enough to obſerve, that, notwithſtanding the fine flouriſhes and colourings of certain authors, who plauſibly profeſs

profeſs themſelves to be advocates for the common rights and privileges of Chriſtians, we find them ſometimes driven out of their track by the irreſiſtible force of truth, and inſenſibly advancing, or admitting eccleſiaſtical notions: we find them after all their efforts and ſtruggles to climb over the pale of the Church, unwarily, or rather unavoidably ſlipping back, as I may ſay, into her fold, and undermining their own principles. The words of a late famous prelate* upon this ſubject will verify the obſervation. "As it "is abſurd, ſays he, to ſuppoſe that any man "can be ſaved by the faith of another, or "by any belief but what is truly his own; "ſo there is no poſſible method of having a "faith of his own, properly ſo called, with-"out building it entirely upon what appears "right to his own judgment, ſuch as it is, "after his beſt endeavours for INFORMATION." That is to ſay, in other words, a man cannot properly be ſaid to judge for *himſelf* till he has received information, or inſtruction from *others*. In ſhort, let privileges be as ſacred, or conſciences as tender

* Bp. Hoadley.

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as you pleaſe, I affirm that the erection and eſtabliſhment of a national Church, whether the doctrines ſhe teaches are in themſelves orthodox or otherwiſe, true or falſe, is as fairly defenſible upon rational and proteſtant grounds, as the inſtitution of any religious ſect, or ſociety whatſoever.

True it is that men, inflamed with falſe zeal, or miſled by wrong judgment, may depart both from proteſtant and Chriſtian principles; and at their peril it will be. The Church of *Rome* endeavoured to extirpate what ſhe *called hereſy* by the very ſame means which in early days Paganiſm employed for the overthrow of the Chriſtian faith itſelf. And what was the conſequence? The inhumanity of perſecution afforded to every thinking mind a very ſtrong argument of the corruption of that Church in which it was countenanced; it frightened men *into* their *Senſes*; it helped to open their underſtandings; and Popery may upon the matter be ſaid to have been burnt out of the kingdom. I undertake not to prove, that in our own

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Church zeal has always been ſufficiently governed by prudence, or tempered with charity. There is no occaſion to recur to a few diſagreeable inſtances, or the tranſactions of untoward times. But, I truſt, I ſhall be abundantly warranted in aſſerting, that he who at this day ſhall charge the Church of *England*, or any conſiderable number of her members, with a want of due moderation, *knows not of what manner of Spirit we are of.* And yet, if the author of the *Confeſſional* is to be credited, we are relapſing gradually into Popery, both in our doctrines and our practices. We are given to underſtand, in the ſeventh Chap. of that work, that "Some "competent obſervers have grounds for "more than a ſuſpicion, that the Church of "*England* has been, and ſtill is, though by "degrees imperceptible to vulgar eyes, edg-"ing back once more towards Popery." Sure theſe *obſervers* are much more *ſharp-ſighted* than their neighbours! I do not well know what theſe Gentlemen are afraid of; but I know true Chriſtianity to be moſt in danger from the diametrically oppoſite quarter; not

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ſo much from men of too great, as from people of too *little faith*; not ſo much from the triple-mitre of the *Roman* pontiff, as from the many-headed *hydra* of infidelity. The truth of the matter is, the author before us and his friends do not ſpeak out, as our *open enemies* have done, and as themſelves were called upon to do, by every maxim of juſtice, candor, and generoſity. They are in no dread of *fire* and *faggot*; they are offended, not by the *diſcipline*, but by certain doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, which we hold in common with her, (even the *doctrines* I have been defending,) and which they moſt inſidiouſly and induſtriouſly labour to confound with the abſurdities which are juſtly had in deriſion, or in abhorrence among us, and of which the credit viſibly diminiſhes every day. Errors may be grafted upon the ſtock of truth; which in itſelf is not the leſs pure, or the leſs amiable, becauſe it may be *holden* in folly as well as in *unrighteouſneſs*. To an ardent longing to ſee theſe common doctrines expunged from our *Articles* and *Creeds*, we are unqueſtionably to aſcribe that

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profusion of spleen, malevolence, and rancour with which so many pages, of the *Confessional*, and of other treatises are shamefully defiled. But for these doctrines, I am thoroughly persuaded, the reasonableness, and utility, not to say necessity of Church-establishments, would generally be admitted, and even contended for. That nicety of human wisdom which strains at two or three of our *Articles* could, I am apt to think, well enough digest the remainder of the *thirty nine*. But as matters are circumstanced, the principle I have been combating is far from being an unpopular one. The privilege, or right of private judgment, in the sense of our adversaries, reduces in some sort all men to an equality, and is extremely soothing to vain and to weak minds. The fact is, there is no difficulty in declaiming from standing and specious topics either of eulogy, or invective. An affected zeal for reformation, and an avowed anxiousness for the revival of gospel simplicity, have a very ingratiating tendency with the bulk of mankind. *Liberty of conscience, Freedom of sentiment,* (qq) *ecclesiastical*

ſiaſtical tyranny, violence of bigotry, arbitrary injunctions, ſpiritual impoſitions, &c. are, I grant, expreſſions ſufficiently ſonorous and amuſing, and may paſs with many for argument; though at the ſame time, *looſeneſs of principle, ſtubbornneſs of ſchiſm, rankneſs of hereſy, arrogance of ſelf-ſufficiency, perverſeneſs of oppoſition, and petulance of temper,* &c. are phraſes which muſt be allowed by "competent" judges to ſound quite as well, and to mean full as much.

To conclude. That there is nothing in the leaſt exceptionable in our whole eccleſiaſtical ſyſtem; nothing that might reaſonably be retrenched; nothing that could poſſibly be amended even in our *Articles*, as well as worſhip, rites, and uſages, we by no means affirm: but reſpectfully leaving *theſe things* to the conſideration of them that *are over us in the Lord*, we utterly deny that there is any thing fundamentally wrong, or eſſentially erroneous in our ſpiritual conſtitution. (*rr*) Men may be, and we find them to be bigots in the cauſe of infidelity; nor

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can it afford the leaſt matter of wonder, if no regard is paid to the complaints, or rather the *railing accuſations* of ſuch as under fair ſhews and pretences have manifeſtly *evil will at Sion*; and while they profeſs themſelves to be actuated by the *Spirit of liberty*, appear to be really poſſeſſed with the *Dæmon of licentiouſneſs*. I profeſs I ſee not what we can do for, or with theſe determined enemies of our holy faith except praying, in the ſpirit of *fervent charity*, that God would be pleaſed "to bring them into the way of truth." *The Spirit ſpeaketh expreſsly*, ſays St. *Paul*, *that in the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits, and doctrines of devils.* * This paſſage cannot poſſibly be conſidered as a dead letter; and therefore it infinitely concerns ALL perſons "diligently to try and examine themſelves," in order to their moral aſſurance that it does not in any ſenſe or degree touch THEIR ſpiritual ſtate. In general however, under a conviction that we are ourſelves in the *good and the right way*, it will be our duty, as Mem-

* 1 Tim. iv. 1.

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bers of the Church to wiſh, and as Chriſtians to pray, that God would "have mercy "upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Here-"tics; that he would take from them all "ignorance, hardneſs of heart, and contempt "of his word; and ſo fetch them home to "his flock, that they may be ſaved among "the remnant of the true Iſraelites, and be "made one fold under one Shepherd, Jeſus "Chriſt our Lord."

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ANNOTATIONS.

Page 2. (*a*) *or misconstrued.*] Controversy in general may be said to subsist in a great measure by the pliancy of composition. *Christopher Davenport*, a *Franciscan*, in a paraphrase, or exposition of the *thirty-nine articles*, makes them all capable of a *Roman-Catholic* sense; and *Raynardus*, a *Roman* likewise, by a perverse interpretation, converts every article of the *Apostolic Creed* into heresy or blasphemy. The design of the latter is obvious enough. I do not recollect to whom I am indebted for these particulars. In like manner Dr. *Waterland* acquaints us, that *Franciscus*, abbot of St. *Clare*, contrived to reconcile our *thirty-nine articles* to the doctrine of the Council of *Trent*, "by "dint of great dexterity, and most amazing sub-"tilty," as the learned Doctor expresses it.

With respect to religious questions, the *Romanists*, in derision of the principles and pretensions of

Proteſtants, and by way of proof of the neceſſity of eccleſiaſtical interpoſition, have all along called the Scriptures *mortuum atramentum*, "dumb judges," &c. and aſſimilate the ſame to a "noſe of wax," to repreſent their ſuſceptibleneſs of any ſenſe it may ſuit us to put upon them; though at the ſame time none more than themſelves endeavour to make advantage of their verſatility. This is apparent in many inſtances; *e. g.* in their conſtructions of thoſe texts by which they pretend to prove the doctrine of *extreme-unction*, of a *purgatory*, &c.

The applications of Scripture made by the *Roman Canoniſts* are ſerio-ridiculous, if I may ſo ſay, beyond all conception. They will prove the two-fold power of the Pope from the *two ſwords* which the Apoſtles had when "Chriſt was ſeized by "Judas." Chriſt ſaid to *Peter*, *Feed my ſheep* in general, not ſuch or ſuch a flock; from whence it has been inferred, that the Pope, as ſucceſſor to that Apoſtle, is to be acknowledged the univerſal Paſtor, &c, &c.

JEWEL's *Defence of the apology of the Church of England.* part 4th. p. 473, &c. *Tranſlation of* JURIEU's *continuation of the accom. of the Scripture prophecies.* p. 52. Dr. WATERLAND's *Importance of the doctrine of the Holy Trin.* p. 211, 363, &c.

Page 4. *(b) Such an authority.*] It is much on the ſame principle that the Papiſts, as *Chillingworth* remarks, in order to ground the belief of the Trinity

Trinity, &c. in the Church's infallibility, roundly deny that this great doctrine can be proved, either from Scripture, or by "consent of the ancient "fathers." This, as that great author observes, is "doing the principal and proper work of the *Socinians* for them." I find the following extract from the *Racovian Catechism*, made by the anonymous author of *Four Treatises concerning the Doctrine*, &c. *of the Mahometans :—Sententia eorum, qui Christo naturam divinam tribuunt, est repugnans non solum sanæ rationi, verum etiam Divinis Literis*, &c." Hereunto the author subjoins two other similar passages, the first from *Smalcius*, a famous *Socinian* ; and the latter from *Socinus* himself. The words of *Socinus* are these. "*Usque ad tempora* CONCILII NICÆNI, *et aliquanto post, ut omnium* "*qui tum extitere scriptis liquet, ille unus verus Deus,* "*quem passim sacra testimonia prædicant, solus Pater* "*Jesu Christi est creditus*; *et qui contrarium sentiunt,* "*ut* SABELLIANI *et eorum similes, pro hæreticis plane* "*sunt habiti.*"

Let us see then how Bp. *Jewel* manages this matter against his antagonist Mr. *Hardinge*, who, in his pretended confutation of the *Apology for the Church of England*, confidently asserts, that "the Divinity of the Holy Ghost cannot be proved by any "express authority from Scripture." We find that illustrious prelate taking the wisest method of putting his adversary to silence and confusion, by producing testimonies and opinions, and not barely

conceſſions, but ſtrong aſſeverations of a directly contrary tendency, from the writers of the *Roman* Church itſelf. One quotation from *Nazianzen* is extremely remarkable, and runs as follows. " *Dicet* " *aliquis non eſſe ſcriptum, Spiritum Sanctum eſſe* " *Deum. Atqui proponetur tibi* EXAMEN *teſtimonio-* " *rum, ex quibus oſtendetur, Divinitatem S. Spi. teſta-* " *tam eſſe in ſacris literis, niſi quis valde inſulſus ſit,* " *et alienus a Spiritu Sancto.*" In ſhort, the various methods which have been taken by Papiſts to evince the neceſſity of admitting the infallibility of the Church, and to diſcredit the authority of the evangelical writings, are equally ſcandalous and pitiful. You have them particularly enumerated by an author juſt now quoted; and it will be ſufficient to ſelect one of them, as it is a flagrant one; I mean that of the Cardinal *Perron*, who, in the laſt century, in order to render the Scriptures ſuſpected and contemptible, aſſerted, that " ſome " things in them ſound like fables, others are apt " to raiſe in the mind indecent and diſhoneſt imagi- " nations, as ſome expreſſions in *Solomon's ſong*; " the hiſtory of *Balaam's Aſs* which ſpoke; and " the *jaw-bone* of an *Aſs*, with which *Sampſon* ſlew " a thouſand *Philiſtines.*"

CHILLINGWORTH's *Preface. Bp.* JEWEL's *Defence. part 2d. p.* 90. *Tranſlation of* JURIEU's *Contin.* &c. *p.* 66. WOLLEBIUS's *Compend. Theol. Chriſ. cap.* 2. *p.* 15. TRAVIS's *Third Letter to Mr.* GIBBON. See

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SOCINUS *de Eccles. p.* 345. *Four Treatises*, &c. *p.* 191.

Page 13. *(c) Errors of integrity.*] One of Mr. *K.*'s arguments, or rather one argument urged by him in the name of his Church, is the following. "Heretics would arise after the Apostles time, and "after the writing of Scriptures: these cannot be "discovered, condemned, and avoided, unless the "Church be infallible; therefore there must be a "Church infallible." To which Mr. *Chillingworth* replies in these words. "I pray tell me why cannot heresies be sufficiently discovered, condemned, "and avoided by them which believe Scripture to "be the rule of faith? If Scripture be sufficient to "inform us what is the faith, it must of necessity "be also sufficient to teach us what is heresy; "seeing heresy is nothing but a manifest deviation "from, and an opposition to the faith. That "which is straight will plainly teach us what is "crooked, and one contrary cannot but manifest "the other. If any one should deny that there is a "God, that this God is omnipotent, omniscient, "good, &c, &c; that Jesus Christ is the Saviour "of the world, and the Son of God; if any man "should deny either his birth, his passion, or resurrection, &c; or *sitting at the right hand of God*; "his having *all power given him*, &c; that it is he "whom God hath appointed to be *Judge of the* "*quick and the dead*; that all men shall rise again at

" the laſt day, &c, &c; if a man ſhould hold, " that either the keeping of the *Moſaical* law is " neceſſary to Salvation, or that *good works* are " not neceſſary; in a word, if any man ſhould " obſtinately contradict the truth of any thing " plainly delivered in Scripture, who does not ſee " that every one which believes the Scripture hath " ſufficient means to diſcover, and condemn, and " avoid that hereſy, without any need of an " infallible guide? If you ſay, that the *obſcure* " *places of Scripture contain matters of faith*, I an- " ſwer, that it is a matter of faith to believe that " the ſenſe of them, whatever it is, which was in- " tended by God, is true; for he that doth not ſo, " calls God's truth into queſtion. But to believe " this or that to be the true ſenſe of them, or to " believe the true ſenſe of them, and to avoid the " falſe, is not neceſſary either to faith, or ſalvation."

It may be aſked, however, whether this gives us ſatisfaction to the full? Do not our *Creeds* and *Articles* contain particulars which we ſhall look for in vain in M. *C.*'s liſt of the objects of faith? Are not many whom we conſider as heretics ready to ſubſcribe to this liſt? Was Mr. *C.* inadvertently, or deſignedly ſilent with regard to theſe particulars? Or are we to conſign them to the claſs of obſcurity? Whatever might have been his motive to the wording of his paragraph in this manner, or whatever was his perſonal perſuaſion in reſpect to the fundamental articles of the faith profeſſed by the Church

Church of *England*, the momentous import of the interrogatories I have juſt put muſt be viſible to every reader.

When Mr. *C.*, or any body elſe tells us, that "God does not require any more of any man than "this, to believe the Scripture to be God's word, "and to endeavour to find the true ſenſe of it, and "to live according to it;" or, that "he that "believes the Scripture ſincerely, and endeavours "to believe it in the true ſenſe, cannot poſſibly be "an heretic,"* he muſt be underſtood with qualification; as aſſerting, not abſolutely that an honeſt man cannot poſſibly *err concerning the faith*, but that error, or hereſy will not be imputed to involuntary ignorance, or to ſincerity of perſuaſion.

"Hereſy, ſays Bp. *Taylor*, is not an error of the "underſtanding, but of the will;" and elſewhere, "it is not the opinon, but the impiety that con-"demns and makes the heretic." On this principle this ſagacious and moderate writer condemns the *Hereſiarch* whoſe error "commences upon "pride and ambition, &c. and excuſes thoſe who "follow him in ſimplicity of heart."

Agreably to all this, Dr. *Potter*, (author of the Anſwer to *Charity Miſtaken*, whoſe cauſe *Chillingworth* eſpouſes,) and after him Dr. *Waterland* quotes the following remarkable paſſage from *Salvian*, an antient Biſhop of *Marſeilles*, reſpecting the truly

* See Relig. of Proteſt. p. 335; and end of Preface.

ſincere

ſincere of the *Arian* perſuaſion. *They are heretics, but do not know that they are ſo. In ſhort, they are heretics in our judgment, not ſo in their own; for they eſteem themſelves ſuch good Catholics, that they even throw upon us the infamous charge of hereſy. Such therefore as they are to us, we are to them. We know aſſuredly that they are injurious to the divine generation of the Son of God, in making him inferior to the Father. They, on the other hand, think us injurious to the Father, in believing them both equal. How they ſhall be puniſhed at the day of judgment for this their error,* &c. *no one can know except the Judge.*

It may be proper to take Mr. *K.*'s argument, and Mr. *C.*'s anſwer into re-conſideration. "Hereſies, "ſays the former, would ariſe after the Apoſtles' "time, and after the writing of Scriptures: theſe "cannot be diſcovered, condemned, and avoided, "unleſs the Church be infallible; therefore there "muſt be a Church infallible." The ſubſtance of Mr. *C.*'s reply is, that "without any need of an "infallible guide," the great truths of the Goſpel are diſcoverable, and conſequently hereſies avoidable, by all ſuch as "believe Scripture to be the "rule of faith:" and that with reſpect to thoſe "obſcure places of Scripture," which Mr. *K.* tells us "contain matters of faith," we have nothing to do but "believe that the ſenſe of them, whatſoever it "is, which was intended by God, is true," without being ſolicitous to avoid miſtakes concerning them.

By

By this anſwer 'tis certain this celebrated diſputant ſeems to lay his own faith rather open to ſuſpicion. For does he not admit what he might, and in fact ought to have conteſted? Take them in the groſs, the "places of Scripture which contain "matters of faith," are not by any means *obſcure*, but altogether plain and intelligible. *I ſpeak concerning* the faith of *the Church*. What the ſenſe of theſe places is, according to the eſtabliſhed laws of interpretation, and according to the belief of the Chriſtians of the firſt ages, is a queſtion, to the determination of which we ſurely need not have recourſe to infallibility. Though therefore, with reſpect to paſſages really ambiguous, or *obſcure*, it will be a ſafe and excellent rule, "to believe that "the ſenſe of them, whatſoever it is, which was "intended by God, is true," yet it will be unfair, unreaſonable, and unſafe to apply this rule to places which are no otherwiſe ambiguous, or *obſcure*, than as they "contain matters of faith;" eſpecially when we remember how frequently, and how earneſtly we are required to *ſtrive for the faith*, to *contend for the faith*, and to *examine* and *prove* our *own* ſelves *whether* we *be in the faith*. Truth is not leſs truth becauſe it is held in a Church that pretends not to be infallible. God *only knows the hearts of the children of men:* but at the ſame time it will be no breach of charity to intimate, that *every man* ſhould *be fully perſuaded in his own mind*, that

that if he errs, his error is an error, not of his *will*, but of his *underſtanding*.

CHILLINGWORTH, *part* 1. *c.* 2. *p.* 90. TAYLOR's *Diſc. on the Lib. of Prophesying*, *Sect.* 2. *p.* 23, 42. POTTER's *Anſ. to Char. Miſtaken. Sect.* 4. *p.* 119. WATERLAND's *Import. of the Doc. of the Trinity.* p. 167. SALV. *de Guber.* l. 5.

Page 14. *(d) of inſanity.*] I cannot bring myſelf to recall theſe words by the high reſpect which on many accounts is due to the names of certain perſons, eminent for their ability, and ſome of them for their piety too, who have advanced notions not a whit leſs eccentric or extravagant than theſe. The late worthy Biſhop of *Cloyne*, who denied, or at leaſt doubted the exiſtence of matter, is not without his numerous admirers. In fact, he ſeems to have confounded all, though he has convinced none. But whatever purpoſe was intended to be ſerved by ſuch a doctrine, ſurely its real conſequences muſt be detrimental to the cauſe of Chriſtianity. If all about us is mere mockery and illuſion, the very foundations of all evidence, all faith, and all practice are undermined; nor will it be poſſible to determine which poſition moſt contradicts my ſenſes, or offers moſt violence to my conceptions, *that* which avers the non-exiſtence of matter, or *that* which maintains the *tranſubſtantiation* of it in the holy Sacrament. The followers of Mr. *Hobbes* will be apt to laugh this notion to ſcorn,

under

under a perſuaſion that they deny, or doubt the exiſtence of Spirit, and conſequently of God, with a much better grace. It may be obſerved, with regard to both extremes, that there is no ſuch thing as demonſtrating beyond a poſſibility of doubt, or contradiction. For, to uſe the words of an author of the laſt century, " it is poſſible that *mathematical* " *evidence* itſelf may be but a conſtant undiſcovera- " ble deluſion, which our nature is neceſſarily and " perpetually obnoxious unto, and that either " fatally or fortuitouſly there has been in the " world time out of mind ſuch a being as we call " *Man*, whoſe eſſential property it is to be then " moſt of all miſtaken when he conceives a thing " moſt evidently true." There is no ſhutting the door againſt ſcepticiſm. We meet with doubters and diſputers of all ages and nations. *Marcus Antoninus* makes mention of one *Monimus*, a *Cynic* philoſopher, who averred that all is fancy, and that there is abſolutely no ſuch thing as a *criterion* of truth. *Pyrrho*, though not the firſt ſceptic, was famous enough to give an appellation to ſcepticiſm. But notwithſtanding all this, a man of ſenſe and of common prudence will liſten to rational evidence, and yield aſſent to moral certainty. He will ſoon be convinced upon enquiry, that both body and ſpirit exiſt, and that mind is neither matter nor motion; that if chance, or nature, if you pleaſe, made the world, it is that which preſerves it too; and

and may diſſolve it; and, after its diſſolution, may reſtore it to its original ſtate, or reduce it to one infinitely worſe than the preſent. This ſure is at beſt but uncomfortable philoſophy. Not that I would hereby inſinuate immorality to be neceſſarily connected with infidelity. *Plato* diſtinguiſhed long ago between the "ranting" and ſober atheiſt; and obſerved, that a man whoſe ſentiments are impious may be virtuous from conſtitution. Accordingly he very juſtly reſolves atheiſm into not barely depravity of manners, but ſometimes into an affectation of ſingular wiſdom.* One ſource of atheiſm in his opinion is, Αμαθια μαλα χαλεπη δοκουσα ειναι μεγιστη φρονησις, which is almoſt literally tranſlated in the following words of the Apoſtle, *profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools.*

Dr. *Cudworth* ſeems unwarily to give ſome advantage to the atheiſt, where he ſays, that "when "we affirm that God is incomprehenſible, we only "mean, that our imperfect minds cannot have "ſuch a conception of his nature as doth perfectly "maſter, conquer, and ſubdue that vaſt object "under it, &c." The caſe is, we comprehend by our reaſon *that* God is, though not *what* he is, in reſpect of his eſſence in the abſtract. But that he is ſelf-exiſtent from all eternity, that he is a *Spirit*, that he is the Creator and Governor of the Univerſe, that he is all-perfect, are certain truths,

* See Letters on Infidelity. p. 35.

notwithſtanding

notwithſtanding the darkneſs which ſurrounds them. *Sophocles* may be imagined to have had theſe truths in his eye, when ſpeaking of the divine edicts, and the immutable decrees of heaven, he puts this fine ſentiment in the mouth of *Antigone*,

Ου γαρ τι νυν γε κἀχθες, αλλ' αει ποτε
Ζη ταυτα, κουδεις οιδεν εξ ὁτου φανη.

And yet we have wits and philoſophers of great name and recent date, who ſeem deſirous of reviving the old atomical phyſiology, which, as Dr. *Cudworth* expreſſes it, "makes all things to be "materially and mechanically neceſſary without a "God." Theſe gentlemen are at leaſt far from pronouncing matter incapable of the privilege of thought. One * in direct terms calls thought the *agitation of the brain*. Unhappily Mr. *Locke* ſo far ſubſcribes to this principle, as to declare his opinion, that "we have not ſufficient knowledge to "determine, by the light of reaſon, that God "could not grant the gift of thought and ſenſation "to a being which we call material." Mr. *Voltaire* eagerly catched at this notion of the "ſole reaſon-"able metaphyſician," as he calls him.

MORE's *Antid. againſt Atheiſm. p.* 10. CUDWORTH's *Intell. Syſt. ch.* 3. *p.* 176. PLATO *de Leg. l.* 10. CLARKE's *Dem. of the Being*, &c. *of God, p.* 22, 23, &c. SOPHOC. *Antig. Act.* 3. *v.* 462. *Memoirs of* VOLTAIRE, *p.* 61. *See* JOHNSON's *note at cap.* 4. *of* PUFFENDORF's *de officio hom. et civ.* See M. ANTONI. lib. 2—15.

* Hume's Dialogues, p. 60.

Page 19. *(e) hundred myſteries as one.*] I ſhall beg leave to confront the pride of infidels with the joint authorities of Mr. *Boyle*, and Lord *Bacon*; the former of whom in his treatiſe, entitled *Motives to the Love of God*, thus expreſſes himſelf. "If I be not very much miſtaken, they are ſo, "who preſume to give us ſatisfactory definitions of "God's nature, which we may perhaps more ſafely "define by the impoſſibility of its being accurately "defined. Nor will an aſſiduity and conſtancy of "our ſpeculations herein relieve us: for too fixed "a contemplation of God's eſſence does but the "more confound us." And then he refers us to the well-known ſtory of *Simonides*. Agreably to theſe ſentiments, the great Lord *Bacon* ſays, "If any "man ſhall think by view and enquiry into theſe "ſenſible and material things, to attain that light "whereby he may reveal unto himſelf the nature "and will of God, then is he ſpoiled through vain "philoſophy. And hence, continues he, it hath "proceeded, that ſome of the choſen rank of the "more learned have fallen into hereſy, whilſt "they have ſought to fly up to the ſecrets of the "Deity, by the waxen wings of the ſenſes." And "again. "The prerogative of God comprehends "the whole man, and is extended as well to "the reaſon, as to the will of man; *i. e.* that "man renounce himſelf wholly, and draw near "unto God; wherefore as we are to obey his law,

"though

"though we find a reluctation in our will, so "we are to believe his word, though we find a re-"luctation in our reason; for if we believe only "that which is agreeable to our reason, we give "assent to the matter, not to the author, &c. By "how much therefore any divine mystery is more "discordant and incredible, by so much the more "honour is given to God in believing, &c. &c." How do these sentiments differ from those of the "philosophic Christians" of this enlightened age!

Motives, &c. p. 63, 64. *Bacon on the Advancement of Learning, translated by Watts, B.* 1. *p.* 8. 9. *p.* 468.

Page 21. *(f) ventilation of these subjects.*] It is ridiculous, it is useless, it is endless to start metaphysical questions, which instead of clearing matters, serve only to confound them. It has been asked, whether the Deity be naturally or morally good; or whether he is "necessarily good and "just in the same sense as he is eternal and omnis-"cient?" All speculations on such points as these are covered by the general idea of absolute inherent perfection. Perhaps *Seneca* may be allowed to discharge this difficulty not unhappily, when, speaking of the Deity, he says, *Ipse est necessitas sua.* The ingenious editor of *Puffendorf*'s treatise *De officio hominis et civis* speaks much the same language in the following note: *Deus intelligitur ad suarum perfectionum normam actiones componere. Ipse*

ſibi lex eſt. Ens natura perfectiſſimum cum Deus ſit, ideo quodcunque agit vel eligit, non poteſt non eſſe optimum. Itaque nugas agunt, vel quiddam pejus, qui Deum, ens primum et ſummum, virtutis et obligationis capacem eſſe docent. * But theſe laſt words ſeem rather obſcure.

To avoid making God the author of evil, the doctrine of *Zoroaſtres* was, that "God originally "and directly created only light, or good; and that "darkneſs, or evil, followed it by conſequence, "as the ſhadow doth the perſon; that light, or "good, hath only a real production from God, "and the other afterward reſulted from it, as the "defect thereof." An ingenious writer gives us the ſentiments of *Plato* on this perplexing ſubject, in the following tranſlation. "God is good. "He is not, as many ſay, the cauſe of every thing. "The good things we enjoy are to be ſolely aſcribed "to him; but we are to ſearch for another cauſe "than God for our evils. Or, if we will ſay "they come from God, † ſome ſuch reaſon as this is "to be aſſigned. We may ſay, God does always "what is juſt and good, and the perſons puniſhed "receive benefit by it; but the poet muſt not ſay "the ſufferers are miſerable, and God inflicts that

* See Johnſon's Note at Sect. 4. Book 1.

† *Plato* quotes here the famous paſſage in *Homer*, where mention is made of *Jupiter*'s two Veſſels, the one containing good, and the other evil, &c. See *Plato* de Repub. b. 2. and *Pope*'s Note at v. 527. of 24th. Book of the Iliad.

"miſery

" misery on them; if indeed he say, the wicked, " as miserable, stand in need of punishment, and " when punished by God, receive benefit from it, " this may be permitted; but we are strenuously " to oppose any man, who says God is the author " of evil to a good man. Such language is at " no rate to be tolerated in a state." The judicious reader will see how little a way this theory goes towards clearing the difficulty; but he will, I presume, acknowlege it goes far enough to convince us, that *Plato* had, " to speak modestly, as precise " ideas of the Divine nature as any modern philo- " sopher," according to the translator's expression. But in his *Timæus*, this famous philosopher imputes the origin of evil to the " necessity of imperfect " beings," as Dr. *Cudworth* expresses it. " Where- " fore, says he, though, according to *Plato*, God be " properly and directly the cause of nothing else but " good, yet the *necessity of these lower imperfect things* " does unavoidably give birth and being to evils." This is conformable enough to modern notions. *Aristotle* seems to have thought the Deity to have been the cause or principle of all things without exception; tho' in the following sentence he expresses himself in terms general, modest, and unperemptory;—Θεος δοκει το αιτιον πασιν ειναι και αρχη τις.

It is further observable, that not only many heathens, and among others, *Platonists*, but, what is more extraordinary, Christians also have asserted

the ſelf-exiſtence and eternity of matter, in order to account for the origin of evil, and effectually ſalve the honour of the Deity. God would have made *nihil non optimum*, ſays *Hermogenes*, as *Tertullian* repreſents his and his followers reaſonings. Theſe heretics were called *Materiarii*. It has been the opinion of ſome that God permitted the fall of man, purely with a view to his redemption. *

" The author of *Deiſm Revealed* remarks, " that " there are two oppoſite and ſupreme principles, " according to the belief of almoſt all the Pagans " now in the world." We are further given to underſtand by other authors, that God's *abſolute decrees and predetermination of good and evil* is the doctrine of the *Koran* in general; though the *Mahometans* are divided in their opinions upon this article. The ſect of the *Haſhemians* were, it ſeems, ſo afraid of making God the author of evil, that they would not allow him to have created an infidel; which was adopting ſomething like the old *Magian* theory, according to which there are two principles, or a good and evil God, who are in a ſtate of perpetual enmity and oppoſition. On the other hand, the *Mozdarians* thought it poſſible for God to be a liar, unjuſt, &c. as the *Baſharians* taught, that " God is not obliged to do what is beſt; and " that, had it pleaſed him, he might have made all

* See Catcott's Serm. 2. p. 33. 3. 48.

" men

"men true believers." The *English* tranſlation of a *Latin* verſion of an *Arabic* manuſcript, which contains a ſhort ſyſtem of *Mahometan* theology, gives us a diſtinction upon the ſubject of the divine decrees, as whimſical as it is unſatiſfactory. In the ſixth ſection we have the following paſſage.—"God hath ſo decreed good, "obedience, and faith, that he ordains and wills "them; and that they may be under his decree, "his ſalutary direction, his good pleaſure and com-"mand: on the contrary, God has decreed, does "ordain, will and determine evil, diſobedience, "and infidelity; yet without his ſalutary direction, "his good pleaſure, or command; it being only "by way of ſeduction, indignation, and prohibi-"tion. But whoſoever ſhall ſay, that God is not "delighted with good, and faith, or that God hath "not an indignation againſt evil and infidelity; "or that good and evil are from God, ſo that God "hath decreed and willed both, with complacency "in them, he is certainly an infidel." Then follows in another character;—*Direct us, O great God, into the right way!*—A petition expreſſive of the author's perplexity.

The general way both among Jews and Chriſtians of accounting for the origin of evil, is to derive it from the abuſe of human liberty. Let us turn to the ſentiments of the learned *Grotius* upon this ſubject. "*Cum diximus Deum omnium eſſe*

" *causam, addidimus, eorum quæ vere subsistnnt; nihil* " *enim prohibet, quo minus ipsa, quæ subsistunt, deinde* " *causæ sint accidentium quorundam; quales sunt* " *actiones. Deus hominem et mentes sublimiores homi-* " *ne creavit cum agendi libertate: quæ agendi libertas* " *vitiosa non est, sed potest sua vi aliquid vitiosum* " *producere.*" Still will not this elastic difficulty return with full force upon us? For may it not be asked, who created men and angels, and endowed them with this liberty? Or could *either* have abused a privilege they never enjoyed? Is there nothing of apparent causality in all this? Indeed the learned author seems to me to be sensible of his distressed situation. He observes very justly, in the words immediately following those just cited, that it would be impious to call God the author of evil. " *Hujus* " *quidem generis malis, quæ moraliter mala dicuntur,* " *omnino Deum adscribere auctorem nefas est.*" But what does he say in the leading sentence of this very section? " *Neque ab eo quod diximus, dimove-* " *re nos debet, quod mala multa evenire cernimus,* " *quorum videtur origo Deo adscribi non posse; ut qui* " *perfectissime, sicut ante dictum est, bonus sit.*" Surely that same *videtur* betrays entanglement. Let us just see now in what manner Mr. *Le-clerc*, the ingenious editor of this work of *Grotius*, illustrates this delicate passage. " *Prævidit quidem* " *etiam Deus fore ut naturæ liberæ libertate sua abute-* " *rentur, indeque multa mala et physica et moralia* " *eventura*

" *eventura ; nihilo ſecius abuſum illum, conſectariaque* " *ejus pati maluit, quam naturas libertate præditas* " *non creare. Quid ita ? Quia cum natura libera* " *ſit præſtantiſſima creatura, quæque ſummam opificis* " *potentiam quam maxime oſtendit ; Deus noluit incom-* " *moda ex naturæ mutabilitate promanantia antevverte-* " *re, quia ea poteſt, cum viſum erit, per totam æter-* " *nitatem emendare ; iis modis qui non niſi bonitati ejus* " *convenientiſſimi eſſe poſſunt, quamvis eos nondum re-* " *velarit.*"

The very learned and equally pious Dr. *Barrow* expreſſes himſelf on this ſubject in the following words. " As for thoſe real imperfections and evils, " (moral evils, habitual diſtempers, irregular ac- " tions, &c.) we need not ſeek any one eternal " cauſe for them ; (though order and uniformity " do, diſorder and confuſion do not argue any " unity of cauſe whence they ſhould proceed :) the " true cauſes of them are notorious enough : the " voluntary declining of men, &c, from the way " God doth preſcribe them ; their abuſing their " own faculties, &c. &c. As for other evils of " griefs and pains incident to the nature, or conſe- " quent upon the actions of any being, they are " ſuch as God himſelf, (without any derogation " to his goodneſs,) may in his wiſdom, or juſtice be " author of, for ends ſometimes apparent to our " underſtanding, ſometimes ſurpaſſing its reach. It " may ſuffice, that God challengeth to himſelf the

" being the cauſe of them. *Shall there be any evil* " *in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? Doth* " *not evil and good proceed out of the mouth of the* " *Moſt High? I am the Lord, and there is none elſe;* " *I form the light, and create darkneſs; I make peace,* " *and create evil.*" (See Amos. 3. v. 6. Lamen. 3. v. 38. Iſa. 45. v. 7.) We derive rather diſtreſs than content from all this; nor (to go a ſtep farther) ſhall we receive more ſatisfaction from St. *Auguſtine*, in the following quaint ſolution,—*mali nulla natura eſt, ſed amiſſio boni mali nomen accepit*; or from *Wollebius*, (Divin. Profeſſ. at *Baſil* in the laſt century,) in the following diſtinction, *non enim eveniunt (viz. Dei decreta) neceſſitate coactionis, ſed neceſſitate tantum immutabilitatis*; or from Mr. *Whiſton*, in his obſervation, that " whatever is evil " muſt have been the conſequence of man's fall, " and not God's introduction." We are reminded by theſe ſeveral particulars of the hereſy of the *Marcionites*, who no leſs abſurdly than wickedly maintained, that the God of *Moſes* and the God of the Goſpel were two different Beings; the former, rigid in his nature, and vindictive in his proceedings; the latter, benign in his diſpoſition, and gracious in his diſpenſations.

Bp. WILKINS *on the Prin. of Nat. Relig. B.* 1. *p.* 116. *See* Mr. GEDDES's *note at p.* 129 *of Eſſay on the Compoſi. of the Antients.* Bp. CUMBERLAND's *Eſſay on the defects of Heathen Deiſm, p.* 10. PRIDEAUX's

DEAUX's *Connex. V.* 1. *p.* 179. GEDDES's *Essay on* PLATO, *p.* 132, &c. JENKINS's *Reason. of Christian. V.* 1. *p.* 224. TERTUL. *adver.* HERMOG. *p.* 282. CUDWORTH's *Intell. Syst. ch.* 4. *p.* 197. *Ibid.* 220. ARIST. *Met. lib.* 1. *System of Mahom. Theol. p.* 33. SALE's *Disc. prefixed to the Transla. of the Koran.* BARROW's *Expos. of Cr. p.* 111, 112. AUGUS. *de civ. Dei.* 11. 9. WOLL. *Comp. Theo. cap.* 3. *p.* 23. *See* STILLINGFLEET's *Orig. Sac. B.* 3. *ch.* 3. Bp. BRAMHALL's *Controversy with* HOBBES, *on this subject.* Mr. BRYANT's *Treatise, and* Dr. PRIESTLY *on philosophical necessity. Humorous Dial. between* PHILAU. *and* TIMOTH. *dedicated to Abp.* SHELDON, *p.* 87, &c. WHISTON's *Disc. on the Hist. of the Creat. See Bp.* LOWTH's *note at Isai. ch.* 45. *v.* 7. *See* GROTIUS, *lib.* 1. *p.* 18. *de veri.*

Page 30. *(g) eternal essence itself*] We cannot possibly be too cautious, too reserved, too general in our doctrines from the pulpit, or the press, respecting the Holy Trinity, or the particular Divinity of our Saviour. Infidelity is always on the watch, and will take advantage in a moment of the least ambiguous,or inaccurate,or obscure expression, which may fall from our lips, or our pens. Some of the Fathers themselves, and indeed of our own most able writers, sometimes speak unguardedly, and inconsistently on these subjects. For the sake of perspicuity and distinction, as it should seem, it has been said, the *Father* is *self-existent*, and the *Son*,

Son, or *Holy Ghoſt*, *neceſſarily exiſtent*; which is in fact a diſtinction without a difference. The *Three* Perſons, as conſtituting *One God*, are equally *ſelf-exiſtent*. The *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt* are the Deity; and every idea of originality, derivation, &c. evaporates in the conſideration of a Trinity in Unity. "Though it has pleaſed God to "repreſent the relation which the Second Perſon "in the Trinity bears to the Firſt, under the ana-"logy of that of a Son to a Father, yet we "muſt not think that this analogy holds in every "reſpect, or that every circumſtance of human "paternity and filiation is applicable to the Di-"vine." Theſe are the words of a late worthy and learned writer, who expreſſes himſelf ſtill more happily in the following paſſage. "It is impoſſible "for God himſelf to reveal theſe things to ſuch "kind of beings as we are, any other way than by "accommodating himſelf to our conceptions, and "uſing ſuch terms as bear ſome analogy to things "known and underſtood by us." "The Father, (ſays another able advocate for the doctrine of the Trinity,) is firſt in our conception of God; and "therefore when we ſpeak of the Almighty, or "the eternal God, and the reaſon is the ſame for "the only God, we primarily and principally "mean the Father, tacitly including the other two "Perſons. *

* It is well obſerved by Mr. Parkhurſt, that the firſt, ſecond, and third perſons in the Trinity are merely *theological*, not *ſcriptural* terms. Divin. &c. of Chriſt. p. 35.

But

But is the language of the author laſt quoted of a piece with this ſentence, when he talks of ſelf-exiſtence, or *unoriginateneſs*, as the peculiar mode of the exiſtence of the *Firſt* Perſon? Or is the writer firſt quoted perfectly conſiſtent with himſelf, when he concurs in ſentiment with thoſe whom he calls "the moſt zealous defenders of the *Nicene* faith;" and agrees with *all* the antient writes, who, he tells us, "hold the Son to be in ſome ſenſe inferior "to the Father, and that even with regard to his "divine nature?" "The Father, ſays he, is the "firſt Perſon, the Son, the ſecond. The Father "they *all* repreſent as unbegotten, receiving his "being and attributes from none but himſelf; the "Son they teach to be God of God; begotten of "the Father, and receiving his nature, &c, from "the Father, but yet coeternal and coequal with "the Father, receiving from him from all eternity "the ſame intire and undivided eſſence." Is not this language inaccurate, incongruous, and ſelf-contradictory?" Many paſſages both in antient and modern writers are exceptionable on the ſame grounds. To ſelect a few. The learned Bp. *Bull* gives, in his own words, the following ſentiment of *Petavius*. *Nam, ut recte Petavius, non poteſt Filius a Patre gigni, niſi ab eo naturam ac deitatem accipit*, &c. St. *Hillary*, as quoted by the ſame author, ſays in *libro de Synodis, Patri ſubjectus eſt Filius, ut auctori*. *Ruffinus* in his treatiſe on the Creed,

Creed, calls the Father the head of the Son. *Cum ipse Filius sit omnium caput, ipsius tamen caput est Pater.* And *Damascenus* in his tract de *fide orthodoxa* has the following words; παντα ὅσα ἔχει ὁ υἱος καὶ το πνευμα ἐκ τȣ πατρος ἔχει, καὶ αὐτο το εἶναι. And St. *Austin, argute pro more suo,* according to Bp. *Bull's* remark, observes, in a discourse on a passage in St. *Matthew*'s gospel, (if I mistake not,) as follows: *Insinuatur nobis in Patre auctoritas, in Filio nativitas, in Spiritu Sancto communitas, in tribus æqualitas.* It is Bp. *Bull*'s own remark, *unicum esse in Trinitate principium, principii expers, nempe Patrem, dogma fuisse in primæva ecclesia tam fixum,—ut in quadrigesimo nono Canonum, qui dicuntur Apostolorum, damnetur quisquis baptizaverit in tres principii expertes*; εἰς τρεῖς ἀναρχȣς. Under the same article the learned Prelate observes, that the antient Fathers, and those of the *Nicene* Council, and *Athanasius* himself never scrupled to give the appellation or title of the one only God to the Father. Let the reader take his own words. *Denique veteres Deum Patrem, eo quod principium, causa, auctor, et fons Filii sit, unum illum et solum Deum appellare non sunt veriti. Sic enim ipsi Patres Nicæni exordiuntur suum symbolum*; q. v. *Et magnus Athanasius, quo nemo melius intellexit Synodi Nicænæ mentem,* &c, *concedit Patrem jure dici* μονον θεον, οτι μονος ἀγεννητος, καὶ μονος πηγη θεοτητος, *quod solus ingenitus sit,* &c. *Propter Patrem vivit Filius,* says St. *Ambrose,* as quoted by Bishop *Pearson, quod ex Patre Filius est*; *propter Patrem, quod* ERUCTATUM

est

eſt verbum ex Patris corde, quod a Patre proceſſit, quod ex paterno generatus eſt UTERO, &c. Dr. *Fiddes* gives us a paſſage from St. *Hilary*, in which that Father aſſerts, that "our making the Son God is "no objection againſt the Father's being the one "God. He is the one God, ſays he, becauſe the "only underived God." Surely Bp. *Pearſon* himſelf, who in the main is wonderfully exact, does not ſpeak in the moſt proper terms, when he tells us, that "the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is "originally God, as not receiving his eternal "being from any other; that therefore it neceſſa-"rily followeth, that Jeſus Chriſt, who is certain-"ly not the Father, cannot be a Perſon ſubſiſting "in the Divine Nature originally of himſelf; and "conſequently, it having been already proved, "that he is truly and properly the eternal God, "that he muſt be underſtood to have the Godhead "communicated to him by the Father, who is not "only eternally but originally God; that in him "(Chriſt) is the ſame fulneſs of the Godhead, "more than which the Father cannot have, but "yet that in that perfect and abſolute equality "there is notwithſtanding this diſparity, &c. &c." To adduce only one example more; even the judicious *Hooker* is off his guard in the following paſſage. "Seeing therefore the Father alone is origi-"nally that Deity which Chriſt originally is not, "(for Chriſt is God by being of God, light

"by

" by iſſuing out of light,) it followeth hereupon, " that whatſoever Chriſt hath common unto him " with his heavenly Father, the ſame of neceſſity " muſt be given him, but naturally and eternally " given him, not beſtowed by way of benevolence " &c.

The priority implied in the term Father, in its common acceptation, accounts for all this incoherency; but where, I would gladly know, do the terms *auctor*, *fons*, *origo*, *principium*, &c. occur in the Scriptures, or in the writings of the apoſtolical Fathers, *Clemens*, *Polycarp*, and *Ignatius?* Or where are any terms to be found importing ſubordination and inferiority, except ſuch as evidently refer to the humanity of *Jeſus Chriſt?* And after all, and all this put together notwithſtanding, the common reſemblances by which the great myſtery has been faintly illuſtrated by the Fathers, eſpecially by *Juſtin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and *Origen*, as light from the ſun, or a ſtream from a fountain, are produced to no purpoſe as proofs of a ſubordination, &c. For let light be ſuppoſed to have iſſued from the ſun, or a ſtream from a fountain, from all eternity; on this ſuppoſition it is plain, cauſality and originality are merely nominal; the fountain neceſſarily implies the ſtream, and the ſun, light: and in like manner, in the caſe before us, the exiſtence of the Father neceſſarily ſuppoſes the exiſtence of the Son,

and

and of the Holy Ghoſt. The Father can no more exiſt without the Son than the Son without the Father.

The truth is, the Fathers of the Church, whoſe ſentiments Bp. *Bull* lays before us, apparently grant much, but really yield nothing. If *Athanaſius*, e. g., aſſerting the eternity and Divinity of the Son of God, meant not ſuch an abſolute co-equality as entirely excludes all dependence and inferiority, he flatly contradicts the Creed which goes under his name, in which it is expreſsly ſaid, that in the Trinity, "none is afore or after other, none is "greater or leſs than another;" and if he did mean this, we cannot argue againſt his faith from the careleſſneſs, or the impropriety, or even the abſurdity of his expreſſions. Elucidation has before now been the parent of entanglement. The *Arians* themſelves are ſenſible they cannot admit the eternity of the Son of God, without acknowleging at the ſame time his abſolute co-equality; and therefore affect to underſtand every paſſage or phraſe ſeemingly derogating from the dignity of *Jeſus Chriſt*, as a direct aſſertion, or tacit conceſſion that he is a creature. Through a moſt ſtrange inadvertence, the writers we have been extracting from appear to have confounded the idea of temporal with that of eternal generation.

It has been frequently and well obſerved, that moſt of the Fathers, before the Council of *Nice*, ſpeak

ſpeak ſometimes of a temporal generation of the Son by the operation of the Holy Ghoſt on the bleſſed Virgin; and ſometimes, by a ſort of *catachreſis*, give the name of generation to the miſſion of the Son from the Father, for the purpoſe of creating the world; and that, by directing our whole attention to the paſſages relative to both theſe, the enemies of our faith have artfully attempted to prevent our notice, or acknowlegment of other numberleſs places in the writings of theſe Fathers, wherein they plainly and unequivocally aſſert the eternal generation of the Son of God.

By help of theſe conſiderations, and ſuch as theſe, we ſhall, for the moſt part, be enabled to reconcile exceptionable paſſages in the writings of the Fathers in general with the pureſt faith, and ſtricteſt orthodoxy; and ſhall have no cauſe for reſentment, or complaint, if in ſo large a bulk of human compoſition, and amidſt ſuch a multiplicity of ſubjects and circumſtances, we are ſometimes ſurprized by inaccurate diction, or unſound ſentiment.

The ſuppoſed canon referred to by Bp. *Bull*, which forbad the baptizing εις τρεις αναρχους, on pain of damnation, really maintains only the doctrine of the *Athana. Cr. viz.* that "there is one Father, "not three Fathers." *Tertullian* ſays ſomewhere, that there was a time *quando Filius Dei non erat*; whcih is true in the ſecond or third ſenſe of Sonſhip; as there was a time when God was not a Creator;

Creator; *viz. ante mundum conditum.* Nay, there is an expreſſion in *Lactantius* which more than inſinuates that there was a time, when even God the Father, or God abſolutely conſidered, was not; for, ſays he, *Deus ipſe ſe fecit.* And, by the way, they who talk of God the Father's "RECEIVING *his* "*Being from himſelf alone,*" do but paraphraſe the words of *Lactantius.* I cannot think the Catholic faith can be in the leaſt affected by theſe *early opinions* concerning *Jeſus Chriſt.*

Metaphyſical ſubtleties, technical terms, and unſcriptural definitions and diſtinctions have undoubtedly done no ſmall diſſervice to the cauſe of Chriſtianity. But, as Dr. *Waterland* repeatedly obſerves, let the blame be laid at the right door. Theſe things were artfully and gradually introduced into the Church by heretics, for the purpoſe of confounding and perplexing matters. The antient Chriſtians reſted ſolely on the authority of Scripture, and the concurrent voice of tradition.* The Church believed in the Trinity, believed in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghoſt, and worſhipped all Three as One God, before the diſtinction was expreſſed by the term *Perſons*, or the word *ſubſtance* was made uſe of. "It does not appear," ſays Dr. *W.* "that the word *Trinity* was yet "applied to this caſe;" *viz.* in *Juſtin Martyr*'s time, in the middle of the ſecond century. The orthodox were neceſſitated to contend againſt their

* See Barrow on the Pope's Supremacy. p. 626.

adverſaries with their own weapons. And, what is worſe, terms of art have been the fuel of ſtrife amongſt the orthodox themſelves. It was a mere diſpute of words which had like to have occaſioned an irreparable breach between the Eaſtern and Weſtern Churches. Take the following account of it in the words of Dr. *Potter*. "The Orientals," ſays he, "profeſſing to believe three *Hypoſtaſes* in "the glorious Trinity would not admit three Per-"ſons, and were therefore thought to be *Arians*. "On the contrary, the Weſtern believing three *Per-"ſons*, could not be induced to confeſs three *Hypoſ-"taſes*, and thereupon were taken to be *Sabellians*. "Here was a great jealouſy grounded upon a great "error; which *Athanaſius* eaſily diſcovered, and "reſtored again their good amity and intelligence; "ſhewing that they differed not in judgment, all "meaning the ſame thing; and that *Hypoſtaſis* on "one ſide was the very ſame in effect with *Perſon* "on the other."*

A writer of the laſt century, whoſe name does not appear, ſpeaking of the controverſies with which the Church of *England* was agitated in the year 1641, expreſſes himſelf in the following manner. "They be not of the higheſt nature; "for they are not touching the high myſteries of "faith; ſuch as detained the Churches after their "firſt peace for many years, what time the here-"tics moved curious queſtions, and made ſtrange

* Anſwer to Char. Miſta. Sect. 3. p. 90.

"anatomies

"anatomies of the nature and Perſon of Chriſt; "and the catholic fathers were compelled to fol- "low them with all ſubtlety of diſputations and "determinations, to exclude them from their eva- "ſions, and to take them in their own labyrinths: "ſo as it is rightly ſaid, *illis temporibus ingenioſa res* "*fuit eſſe Chriſtianum.*"

Farther; it is certain the great doctrine of the Trinity hath been ſometimes diſhonoured, if not weakened, by puerile illuſtrations, and playfulneſs of diſtinction. According to *T. Aquinas*, *Trinitas eſt quaſi trium unitas.* It is ſomewhere obſerved likewiſe by this famous Doctor, that the Father is the *beginning*, but not the *cauſe* of the Son. And ſays a learned ſyſtematical writer, I think, with a levity one ſhould not expect in him, *aliud eſt Trinus, aliud eſt Triplex. Trinum eſt quod eſſentia unum, tres habet ſubſiſtendi modos: triplex, quod ex tribus rebus eſt compoſitum. Deum trinum dicimus, non triplicem; et Trinitatem non Triplicitatem.* To which is very ſenſibly ſubjoined the following caution; *cum judicio legendi ſunt Patres, qui non raro ſententiis diſſident in uſu vocum*, Subſtantiæ, Hypoſtaſeως, ουσιας, &c. The ſame author cites, and at the ſame time juſtly cenſures a chimerical diſtinction of the Schoolmen betwixt *generation* and *proceſſion. Differunt* Generatio et Proceſſio; *ſed quodnam eſt diſcrimen, tutius ignoratur quam quæritur. Sholaſtici dicunt* Generationem *Filii fieri per modum* INTELLECTUS, *unde*

dicitur Dei ſapientia; *Proceſſionem per modum* VOLUNTATIS, *unde Spiritus dicitur amor et charitas.* You have Mr. *Boyle*'s ſentiments on this ſubject in his *Conſidera. on the ſtyle of Scripture*, p. 41.

Bp. BULL *de ſubord. Fil. Sect.* 4. *p.* 225. *Defen. Fid. Nicæ. cap.* 10. *Sect.* 3. *p.* 206, *&c.* PEARSON *on the Creed*, *p*, 34, 134. *Fiddes*, *vol.* 1. 384. HOOKER's *Eccleſ. Pol. p.* 296, *&c.* STEPHENS's *Serm. on the eternal Gen. p.* 51. WATERLAND's *Defence of his Queſt. p.* 134. FOGG's *Theol. Spec. p.* 89, 109. WATERLAND's *Sermons. p.* 141. RANDOLPH's *Vindica. of the Doctrine of the Trinity. Part* 2. *p.* 10.

Page 32. (*h*) *the everlaſting Father.*] Whatever we are preciſely to underſtand by this expreſſion, it is certain the proper title of Jeſus Chriſt, conſidered as the ſecond Perſon in the Trinity, is that of Son of God; Son in a tranſcendent and incomprehenſible ſenſe. We are informed by St. *John*, that the *Jews ſought the more to kill* our Saviour, *not only becauſe he had broken the Sabbath, but ſaid alſo that God was his Father*, thereby *making himſelf equal with God.* It is worth obſerving, that this tranſlation by no means does juſtice to the original; or any thing like ſo forcibly imports the equality in queſtion: πατερα ιδιον ελεγε τον θεον; *he called God his* OWN *Father*, as Dr. *Whitby* and Dr. *Hammond* render it, *his* PROPER *Father*, *his Father* αχρονως, (as *Nonnus* explains the words *in the beginning*, John i. 1.) *his Father* in a peculiar ſenſe, in a ſenſe

a ſenſe neceſſarily implying the ſame nature in both. The omiſſion here is the more remarkable, as our tranſlators attended to the ſame emphatical word in the only place beſides where it occurs, and where its ſignificance is not ſo obvious: *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* (Rom. viii. 32.) The *Socinian* evaſion of the paſſage in St. *John* is inexpreſſibly ridiculous, and reduces it almoſt to nonſenſe. *He made himſelf equal with God*, by aſſerting, that he did the works of his Father!

See WEBSTER *on John*. I. 2. *See* WHITBY *and* HAMMOND *on John* v. 18. *See Dr. W.* LOWTH'S *Commen. on Iſai.* 9. 6.

Page 46. (*i*) *of Divine Providence.*] The notion that by the *ſeven Spirits* here mentioned are to be underſtood *ſeven angels*, who are the principal *miniſtring Spirits* of the Deity, is countenanced by a no leſs reſpectable authority than that of Dr. *Hammond* and Mr. *Mede*. But this is rejected by *Grotius*, and by the anonymous writer whom I follow, though under a different idea, and purely from a general ſurvey of the matter. The writer I mean lays much ſtreſs on the number *ſeven*, which in *Hebrew* denotes perfection;* but his reaſonings from this circumſtance appear to me too weak a foundation for the ſupport of a theory.

* See Catcott's Serm. I. p. 14.

Dr. *Gill* without the leaſt heſitation underſtands by the *ſeven ſpirits* the third Perſon in the bleſſed Trinity. He has adopted the above idea, and enlarged upon it. " By theſe *ſeven Spirits*," ſays this very ſenſible writer, " are intended the Holy Spirit " of God, who is one in his Perſon, but his gifts " and graces are various; and therefore he is ſig- " nified by this number becauſe of the fulneſs and " perfection of them; and with reſpect to the *ſeven* " *Churches*, over whom he preſided, whom he in- " fluenced and ſanctified, &c."

The *Ethiopic* verſion, this author obſerves, reads *from the ſeven Spirits which are before the throne of Jeſus Chriſt.*

It is farther a remark of the ſame author, that the ſecond Perſon is laſt mentioned in the benediction before us, " becauſe many things were to be " ſaid of him; he is deſcribed in all his offices, &c."

Bp. *Newton* ſays, in effect, the very ſame thing. According to him, Jeſus Chriſt is mentioned laſt " becauſe the ſubſequent diſcourſe more immedi- " ately relates to him."

MEDE *Diſc.* 10. *B.* 1. *p.* 42. *See* HAMMOND *and* GILL *in loc.* NEWTON *on Prophecy. Vol.* 3. *p.* 12.

Page 60. (*k*) *when St. John wrote.*] Some have ſuppoſed, as an ingenious writer obſerves, that detached pieces of the hiſtory of Chriſt, written by Apoſtles, or under their inſpection, were extant in the Church before any Goſpel was publiſhed.

Opinions

Opinions are far from being concurrent with respect to the publication of the Gospels in general; but this is a diversity which does not in the least affect our argument. †

Cosmas of *Alexandria*, it seems, dates St. *Matthew's* Gospel from the martyrdom of St. *Stephen*; and is generally thought to be as wide of the mark as *Isidore* of *Seville*; according to whom, it was not written before the reign of *Caligula*. Perhaps the common opinion is the truest, that it was wrote about eight years after our Lord's Ascension.

It appears from the testimony of several old ecclesiastical writers, that St. *John* wrote his Gospel by the desire of the Bishops of *Asia*. *Is cum esset in Asia*, says St. *Jerome*, *et jam tunc hæreticorum semina pullularent*, *Cerinthi*, *Ebionis*, *et cæterorum*, *qui negant Christum in carne venisse*, *coactus est ab omnibus pene tum Asiæ episcopis*, *et multarum ecclesiarum legationibus*, *de* DIVINITATE *Salvatoris* ALTIUS *scribere*.

How far the notion of *Theophylact*, and, I believe, of some others, that St. *John* was particularly qualified to conceive, and to teach evangelical mysteries, by his personal purity, &c; how far such a notion was well-grounded, or ought to be regarded as a mere fantasy, I undertake not to determine.

In *Hermannus Frank's* treatise entitled, *Christ the Sum, &c, of all the Scriptures*, &c. there is an anecdote concerning a *Franciscus Junius*, who was con-

† See Bp. Percy's Key to the New Test. p. 47, &c.

verted from Atheiſm by accidentally dipping into the *New Teſtament*, and reading the firſt chapter of St. *John's* Goſpel. This, ſays the author, is recorded by *Theophilus Spizelius* in his *ſcrutiny of Atheiſm*. He tells the ſtory himſelf in his Life prefixed to his works, printed at *Geneva* 1705.

Mr. *Boyle* in his *Conſiderations*, &c. makes mention of the above circumſtance, as related ſomewhere by *Junius* himſelf; and at the ſame time refers us to the hiſtory of a certain *Rabbi* who was converted to Chriſtianity by reading the 53d. Ch. of *Iſaiah*; and to the converſion of St. *Auſtin*, who was "changed from a debauchee into a Saint," by a paſſage in the 13th. Ch. of St. *Paul's* Epiſt. to the *Romans*.

TOWNSON *on the Goſpels*, *p.* 25, 63. *See* LARDNER; *and teſtimonies prefixed to St.* MATTHEW'*s Goſpel in* MILLS'*s Gr. Teſt. Prolegomena ad Commen. in Mat.* RANDOLPH'*s Vindica. pt.* 2. *p.* 20, 21, 25. BOYLE'*s Conſid. p. incert.* SEE WATERLAND'*s Import. of the doctrine of the Trin.*

Page 67. (*l*) *the Son of God.*] It is excellently obſerved by the incomparable Dr. *Barrow*, that "the firſt *Adam* derived his being immediately "from God's power and divine inſpiration; that "*Iſaac*, *Samuel*, and *John the Baptiſt* had a gene-"ration extraordinary and miraculous, as being "of aged fathers, or barren mothers, by the in-"terpoſition of Divine Power; and that we can-

"not

" not easily conceive how the production of angels " should be so much inferior to our Saviour's " temporal generation, supposing he had no " other."

It will corroborate what has already been advanced, to remark farther, that if Jesus Christ be any thing less than very God by eternal generation, he was abundantly over paid for all he did and suffered for our sakes; he was recompensed beyond all measure by his exaltation to the *right hand of the majesty on high*, and by the divine honour and worship which has been universally ascribed and paid to him. Under this view of the matter, the assumption of humanity deserves not the name of a condescension. In his human capacity indeed, Jesus Christ *for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross, and despised the shame*; but in his divine, he could have no *respect to the recompense of a reward.* This is a thought which has been started and pursued by several writers. *Equidem rem attentius perpendenti*, says Bp. *Bull, liquebit, ex hypothesi sive Sociniana sive Ariana, Deum in hoc negotio amorem, &c, suum potius in illum ipsum Filium quam erga nos homines ostendisse.*

BULL's *Judic. Eccles. Cath. cap.* 5. *p.* 313. WATERLAND's *Import. of the Doct. of the Trin. p.* 47, 48, 49. BARROW *on the Cr. p.* 136.

Page 72. (*m*) *Baptized for the remission of Sins.*] Persons baptized were in the primitive Church dipped

dipped three times; and this immerſion at the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt repectively, let us, I think, ſufficiently into the ſenſe of the Chriſtian Church, with regard to the equality of the Perſons in the bleſſed Trinity. It affords at leaſt a moſt ſtrong preſumption; which is greatly confirmed by the ſtrictneſs of the *Apoſtolical Canons*, which, as Dr. *Cave* acquaints us, order *him*, Biſhop, or Prieſt, that neglects the trine immerſion, to be depoſed. Afterwards, ſays the ſame learned Author, to obviate the pretences of the *Arians*, who uſed the trine immerſion to denote the *Perſons in the Trinity to be three diſtinct ſubſtances*, the fourth Council of *Toledo* in their fifth Canon decreed, that a ſingle immerſion would be ſufficient; that the dipping under water would expreſs Chriſt's death and burial, or deſcent into hell, and the coming out, his reſurrection; the ſingle immerſion expreſſing the *Unity*, while the *Trinity* of Perſons would be ſufficiently noted by the *Form of words* in Baptiſm. To this effect Dr. *Cave*.

It is but reaſonable to make allowances for the zeal, or, if you will, the ſimplicity of the devout Chriſtians of the firſt ages. In proceſs of time, and as the Chriſtian world grew darker and more corrupt, many ceremonies and cuſtoms became *acts* of piety, which were originally but its *appendages*. I ſhall only mention one, for example's ſake,

ſake, I mean that of praying with *uplifted* and *expanded* hands, in repreſentation of the figure of the *Croſs*: a practice which has given ſanction to much folly and ſuperſtition.

CAVE's *Prim. Chriſtian. p.* 205, 183. *See* HOOKER's *Eccleſ. Pol. B.* 4. *p.* 154.

Page 120. (*n*) *Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*] The numerous paſſages we meet with, both in the writings of the Apoſtles, and of theſe Apoſtolical fathers, * which ſtrongly mark the human nature of *Jeſus Chriſt*, might, one ſhould think, direct us to the ſenſe we are to put upon ſuch as are relative to his divine. The perfect Godhead and perfect manhood of our Saviour ſeem to me to be forcibly contraſted in this diſcrimination. It had been better perhaps if Divines had reſted wholly in this one general diſtinction. We can hardly be copious without being obſcure at beſt on the ſubject of the *hypoſtatic union*. But we muſt not yet diſmiſs the paſſage before us.

In the firſt dialogue of *Theodoret*, which *Voſſius* refers to in his note at this place, there is a remarkable variation of reading. Inſtead of *made* and *not made*, or *born* and *unborn*, γενητος και αγενητος; ‡ it there runs γενητος ἐξ αγενητου. It ſeems, *Athanaſius*, and *Gelaſius*, in his treatiſe *de duabus naturis*,

* For proof of the genuineneſs of St. IGNATIUS's ſeven ſhort Epiſt. &c. See p. 131, &c. of Parkhurſt's Divin. of J. Chriſt. and Arch. Bp. Wake on the Epiſt. of Ignatius.

‡ See Note at p. 136. of Parkhurſt's Divin. of Jeſus Chriſt.

defend

defend the firſt reading. But both come to the ſame point. *Jeſus Chriſt* was *made* and *not made*, *born* and *unborn*, except in a myſterious and tranſcendent ſenſe; he was the eternal Son of God. Or, he was *made*, or *born of a woman*, through the operation of the Holy Ghoſt, who *came upon* her, who was *unmade* and *unborn*; he was "both of "*Mary* and of God;" the latter clauſe being a kind of paraphraſe on the former; and ſo in effect *Ignatius* aſſerts here both the perſonality and the eternal exiſtence of the *Spirit*.

There is another paragraph in this Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, wherein omniſcience, an eſſential property of the Godhead, appears to be attributed in the fulleſt terms to Jeſus Chriſt,—ουδεν λανθανει τον κυριον, αλλα και τα κρυπτα ημων εγγυς αυτω εστι. Παντα ουν ποιωμεν ως αυτου εν ημιν κατοικουντος, ινα ωμεν αυτου ναοι, και αυτος εν ημιν θεος ημων, ωσπερ και εστιν, και φαινησεται προ προσωπου ημων, εξ ων δικαιως αγαπωμεν αυτον. *Jeſus Chriſt* is ſignified by the word κυριος, wherever it occurs in the Epiſtles of this Father, I believe, without exception; and the context evidently patroniſes this application. Arch. Bp. *Wake* ſeems to have overlooked the plain ſcope of this paſſage. His tranſlation runs, "there is nothing hid from God, &c."

I had the ſatisfaction to find my ſentiments exactly coinciding with thoſe of Bp. *Bull* upon this very paragraph. His words are theſe, *De Chriſto loqui Ignatium, indubium eſt, non modo ex voce* Κυριου, *qua*

qua Christum ubique designat, sed etiam ex toto Sermonis contextu, de Jesu Servatore duntaxat agente.

And it is yet farther observable, that the introductory part of this Epistle (as *Vossius* has remarked) is rather obscure; and that (however it happened) the Most Rev. Translator has not done full justice to the plainest expression in it. The *blood of Christ* in the translation is in the original simply the *blood of God*; εν αιματι τυ θευ.

BULL's *Defen. Fid. Nicæ. cap.* 2. *Sect.* 2. IGNA. *Epis. to the Ephes. Sect.* 1. & 15. BARROW *on the Cr. p.* 156. *See John.* 1. *v.* 14.

Page 123. (*o*) *in it proper place.*] In matters not of faith, but merely of opinion, these venerable fathers in general are not altogether without peculiarities which are tinctured a little with the pious fancifulness of superstition. This is more especially apparent in their notion of spiritual references, and emblematical representations.

The *scarlet-line* which the *spies* directed *Rahab* to fix to her window, &c. is specified by St. *Clement* himself, * and by some others, as typical of the redemption of mankind by the *blood* of Jesus Christ. But of all of them, except St. *Barnabas*, *Origen* is perhaps the largest dealer in symbol and allegory, as has often been pointed out in numerous instances; although it would be as unreasonable to object this in order to disparage the grounds of our common faith, as it would be to except

* Epist. to the Corin. Sect. 12.

except, with the ſame view, againſt the eccentricity of ſome of this Father's tenets, or thoſe of any others in any other reſpects; as, e. g. that hell-torments will not be eternal, for which aſſertion he had certainly *no Scriptural warrant*; or that the *angel* with whom *Jacob wreſted* was an *evil* one, which was likewiſe a notion of *Origen*'s; or that ſouls after their ſeparation from bodies retain many corporeal properties, as *Irenæus* and *Tertullian* imagin'd, &c, &c. In truth, orthodoxy may be ſaid to be built *upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone*, and has no concern with theſe particularities; and much leſs with the conceits which the luxuriance of piety itſelf has ſometimes given birth to. The Father I laſt named whimſically aſſerted, that the devil invented *buſkins*, that a man might ADD TO HIS STATURE, notwithſtanding what our Saviour ſays to the contrary; and gravely informs us in another place, that this prince of darkneſs, or one of his infernal miniſters, upon being exorciſed out of a certain woman, who was a frequenter of ſtage-entertainments, complained loudly that he was diſpoſſeſſed of his property; the theatre being his own ground! *Clemens* of *Alexandria* adviſes us to *lay our heads upon ſtone*, as *Jacob* did, in order to our having viſions, &c. &c. But of ſuch harmleſs extravagance infidelity ſtrives in vain to avail itſelf.

Whether

Whether St. *Barnabas*, who was St. *Paul's* companion and fellow-labourer, was the author of the catholic Epiſtle to which his name is prefixed, is a queſtion undecided at this day. Much has been urged on this ſubject *pro* and *con* by learned men; nor am I concerned to inquire, on which ſide the arguments preponderate. It will ſuffice to ſay, that many have thought the allegorical interpretation of Scripture with which the performance abounds, by far too imaginary, or indeed too trifling for the pen of one of the *Minor* Apoſtles, as *Voſſius* calls him. This able critic is however a ſtrong advocate for him, and the primitive fathers in general; and gives it as his clear opinion, that nothing of this kind in him, or in St. *Clement*, (from whom he extracts the particulars above noticed,) ought in reaſon to be alledged to the diſcredit of their writings. His words are theſe. *Quis a primis illis Chriſtianis omnigenam ſcientiam, et doctrinam expoſtulet? Quis illos non æque hallucinatos exiſtimet atque eorum nepotes; præſertim in rebus nihil ad fidem pertinentibus? Nunquid et in Epiſtola Clementis ſimilia occurrunt? Quis enim bono animo concoquere poſſit fabellam illam quam de Phœnice narrat, &c? Non puto etiam quemquam velle admittere expoſitionem iſtam, ut linteum coccineum Rahab meretricis* * *ſignum fuerit ſanguinis Chriſti, &c. Atqui tamen iſte*

* N. B. Many are of opinion that Rahab was no harlot.

Clemens

Clemens pari jure atque Barnabas dictus est Apostolus. Non debent itaque in hoc reprehendere, quod in altero excusant. † But it ſhould be remembered all this while, that *Voſſius* vindicates the authenticity of St. *Barnabas*'s Epiſtle, ſo called, by a very unequal compariſon. The Epiſtle of St. *Clement*, and thoſe of other fathers are interſperſed more or leſs with typical application, but they are not diſtinguiſhed by it. (*See St.* BARNABAS'S *Epiſt. particularly Sect.* 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14.)

I would take this opportunity to obſerve, that the doctrine of types and ſymbols, as it has been revived by many moderns, ſo has it by ſome been upheld with a zeal which, in going beyond the bounds of judgment, has, it may be, done diſſervice to Chriſtianity. Let me aſk the moſt ſanguin advocates for ſymbols and prefigurations, how they reliſh this mode of ſpeculation in the *Romaniſts*, when, among the arguments which they adduce in pretended proof of St. *Peter*'s primacy, they tell us his SHIP, out of which the Lord taught the people, was an emblem or type of the Chriſtian Church? In ſhort, the doctrine of types in general is, in my opinion, too often at beſt more ingenious than ſolid, and has a ſtronger foundation in fancy than in fact. Perhaps the reader may be entertained as well as convinced by two or three ſelect inſtances. The coat of the *Jewiſh* High-prieſt, ſays Dr. *Lightfoot*, " fitly reſembled Chriſt's hu-

" man

† Voſſii Notæ ad Barnabæ Epiſt. Cathol.

" man nature: firſt, as this was of one ſtuff with-
" out mixture, ſo that without ſin, &c. ſecondly,
" as this was put on after an extraordinary manner,
" ſo Chriſt put on humanity by an extraordinary
" conception; thirdly, as was the edge about the
" hole to keep it from rending, ſuch was the
" unſeparable union of Chriſt's two natures;
" fourthly as were the bells and pomegranates,
" ſuch were his life and doctrine." Another learned writer, Mr. *Mede*, ſpeaking of the *manna* and the *rock* in the *wilderneſs*, which are mentioned by St. *Paul* as types of Chriſt, 1 Cor. 10. v. 3, 4. expatiates in the following words. " As *Manna*
" came from heaven beſide the ordinary courſe
" of nature, ſo Chriſt's birth was wonderful, &c.
" As *Manna* was of a moſt ſweet taſte, ſo is Chriſt
" unto the ſoul, &c. As *Manna* was of a white co-
" lour, ſo our Saviour was white and pure. As
" *Manna* before it was eaten was brayed in a mor-
" tar, &c. ſo was Chriſt our heavenly manna bro-
" ken upon the Croſs, &c. As the *rock* gave no
" water before it was ſmitten with the *rod* of *Mo-*
" *ſes*, ſo was Chriſt ſmitten upon the Croſs, that
" out of him might flow that ſovereign ſtream,
" which he who *drinketh* ſhall *never thirſt*. As the
" *rock* was ſmitten with the *rod* of *Moſes*, ſo was
" Chriſt our redeemer with the rod of the Law,
" &c. With much more to this effect." According to a modern author, Mr. *Calcott*, the *Jewiſh* tabernacle or temple was a type of the body

of Christ. The *table*, the *shew-bread*, &c. were all emblematical, and significative of the properties, &c. of *Jesus Christ*, dwelling in a *tabernacle of flesh*. The table e.g. was compounded of two sorts of materials, *wood* and *gold*, and it was a piece of furniture which exhibited a compound person, &c; it was a type of that person who should be compounded of *Jehovah* and *Adam*, God and Man. In Mr. *Bates*'s *Faith of the antient Jews*, the *right ear* is made to stand for *obedience*; the *thumb* of the *right hand* for *actions*; the *great toe* of *the right foot* for *ways*; *shoulder* for *consent*, &c. For farther satisfaction the reader may consult, if he pleases, LESLEY'S *Truth of Christian. Sect.* 13. POTTER *on Ch. Gov. p.* 50. ALLIX'S *Reflect. p.* 232, *and vol.* 2. *p.* 182. PEARSON *on the Cr. p.* 76. BARROW *on the Cr. p.* 107. 205. *See* MEDE. *B.* 1. *Disc.* 44. *p.* 249. LIGHTFOOT. *See* LANGHORN'S *Let. between Theo. and Const. p.* 93. TERTUL. *de Spectal. c.* 26. *&c. &c.*

Page 124. (*p*) *minor authority.*] The Epistles from which the extracts are made, (if we except the last,) have ever been held by the Church in general in the highest estimation. They were written by men who, it is well known, were intimately acquainted with the Apostles. *Polycarp* was a disciple of St. *John*; and his Epistle to the *Philippians*, with the first of St. *Clement* to the *Corinthians*, were for several centuries publickly read in the Churches

Churches of *Asia*. * Their authority therefore is little inferior to Apostolical.

I will transcribe a passage or two from the *ante-nicene* fathers, and leave the weight of the whole with the reader. Εκεινον, και τον παρ' αυτȣ ὑον, πνευμα τε το προφητικον σεβομεθα, &c, says *Justin Martyr:* Apol. I. c. 6. Προς αυτȣ, και δι' αυτȣ παντα εγενετο, says *Athenagoras*, ενος οντος τȣ πατρος και τȣ ὑȣ. οντος ὑȣ εν πατρι, και πατρος εν ὑω, ενοτητι και δυναμει πνευματος. *Legatio pro Christ.* p. 10. Nothing can be more express, simple, and unequivocal than these declarations.

And again, in contempt of, or rather in astonishment at the charge of Atheism, which the heathens brought against the first Christians, the same father asks, τις ȣν ȣκ αν απορησαι, λεγοντας Θεον Πατερα, και ὑον Θεον, και πνευμα αγιον, δεικνυντας αυτων και την εν τη ενωσει δυναμιν, και την εν τη ταξει δειαιρεσιν, ακȣσας αθεȣς καλȣμενȣς; *Ibid.* p. 11.

Tertullian calls the Holy Ghost *tertium numen Divinitatis, and tertium gradum majestatis. Irenæus* calls the *Word* Dei æternum verbum, † and, according to him, Jesus Christ is *Filius Dei existens semper apud Patrem.*

It may be proper to take notice in this place, that the equality we are contending for is not in

* See CH. 10. of WAKE's DISCOURSE prefixed to his Translation of these Epistles.

† See STEPHENS's Ser. on the Eter. Genera. who illustrates this doctrine by a multitude of testimonies from p. 44. to p. 50.

the left disturbed by the disagreement betwixt the *Greek* and *Latin* Church, with respect to the *procession* of the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of the former was, that the *Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father by the Son, and is the Spirit of the Son*; non ex Filio, sed spiritum Filii *esse dicimus, et Patris per Filium*. This doctrine is erroneous indeed, but innocently so. For, as Archbp. *Laud*,* and many others have observed, the question, whether the Holy Ghost proceeds *a Filio*, or *per Filium*, is but a question *in modo loquendi*; a mere difference in words, and affects not the faith. And therefore I cannot think Bp. *Taylor* argues candidly, or logically, in the following passage. "The procession "of the Holy Ghost from the Son, which is an ar-"ticle the *Greek* Church disavows, derives from "the Tradition Apostolical, as it is pretended; and "yet before St. *Austin* we hear nothing of it very "clearly or certainly, forasmuch as that whole mys-"tery concerning the blessed Spirit was so little "explicated in Scripture, and so little derived to "them by tradition, that till the Council of *Nice*, "you shall hardly find any form of worship, or "personal address of devotion to the Holy Spirit, "as *Erasmus* observes, and I think the contrary "will very hardly be verified."‡ The Holy Ghost

* See Laud against Fisher. p. 24.

‡ Bp. TAYLOR on Lib. of Pro. Sect. 5. p. 90.

is

is expreſsly ſtyled by St. *Peter* the *Spirit of Chriſt* which, in the next ſentence, is ſaid to have been *ſent down from heaven*; 1 Pet. 1. v. 10, 12. and I take it to be fully as preſumeable that the article of the *proceſſion* in queſtion was grounded in the conſtruction which this paſſage naturally admits, as that it "derived from tradition Apoſtolical;" notwithſtanding the immaterial diſagreement above-mentioned. But whether this difference with reſpect to the mode of *proceſſion* took its riſe from different conſtruction, or from diſerent tradition, the faith both of the *Greek* and *Latin* Church in the third Perſon of the Trinity was ſtill built on a ſure foundation. Eternity of generation, and proceſſion, and exiſtence, is equally inexplicable; and though nothing was, or, in the nature of things, could be "explicated in "Scripture" in reſpect of the whole myſtery, yet, I apprehend, enough was *revealed*. Even if the firſt Chriſtians had not addreſſed the bleſſed Spirit in any form of devotion at all, this could not have been owing to their want of comprehenſion of the mode of *proceſſion*, but to their diſbelief of his perſonality, and eternal exiſtence. But that the primitive Chriſtians, and the *ante-nicene* fathers believed the perſonality and eternal exiſtence of the *Spirit*, and conſequently his coequality with the *Father* and the *Son*, ſufficiently, I truſt, appears from the teſtimonies produced; and therefore ad-

mitting that moſt of the prayers of the Church were addreſſed to the *Father*, and few only to the *Son*, and fewer to the *Holy Ghoſt*, (which is far from being a matter unaccountable,) we have ample proofs that Chriſtians worſhipped "one God in "Trinity, and Trinity in Unity." *Eraſmus* does not venture to aſſert, that no addreſſes were made to the Holy Ghoſt; and, if he had, we might confront him with the above cited declaration of *Juſtin Martyr*; which at leaſt ſuppoſes this Divine Perſon to have been included, and frequently named in the ſupplications of the firſt Chriſtians. Εκεινον, και τον παρ' αυτȣ υιον, πνευμα τε, &c.

But we are by no means deſtitute of antient teſtimonies to the ſame effect. The accounts of the martyrdom of *Ignatius* and *Polycarp* conclude with aſcriptions of glory, &c. to the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*. ‡ The relation of the ſufferings of the former cloſes with theſe words; "who trod under foot the Devil, and perfected "the courſe he had piouſly deſired, in Chriſt Jeſus "our Lord; by whom, and with whom, all glory "and power be to the Father, with the bleſſed Spirit, "for ever and ever." The Epiſtle of the Church of *Smyrna* to the Church of *Philadelphia*, concerning the Martyrdom of *Polycarp*, concludes as follows: "We wiſh you, brethren, all happineſs by

‡ See WAKE's Relation of theſe Martyrdoms. p. 137, 152.

"living

"living according to the rule of the Gospel of "Jesus Christ; with whom glory be to God the "Father, and the Holy Spirit, &c." In *Clemens* of *Alexandria* there is a prayer and doxology to the Trinity in these words: "Be merciful unto thy "children, O Master, O Father, &c; O Son and "Father, both one; O Lord, grant that we may "pass the waves of this troublesome world, con-"tinually praising and giving thanks to the only "Father and Son, to the Son and Father, to the "Son our Master and Teacher, together with the "Holy Ghost, altogether one, in whom are all "things, &c. &c." Add to this, that the doxologies in the antient Liturgies were some of them expressed in fuller and stronger terms than that used in our daily services.

It is affirmed by Mr. *Lindsey* in his *Apology*, that the Fathers of the three first centuries were all what we now call *Arians* or *Socinians*. We might ask this Gentleman in the words of *Dathan*, &c, but on much better grounds, *wilt thou put out the eyes* of Christians? The assertion has hardly its fellow in the whole circle of polemical divinity. Let these venerable Fathers speak for themselves. I take this opportunity to put the reader in mind of the same Gentleman's very disingenuous translation of that passage in *Justin Martyr*'s dialogue with *Trypho*, where he tells him, that there were those who admitted Christ to be the Messiah, tho'

they believed him to be mere man. The whole paſſage is perfectly ſcrutinized, and a ſhameful omiſſion of Mr. *Lindſey* taken notice of in Mr. BINGHAM's *Vindication of the Doctrine*, &c. *of the Church of England*, p. 23, 24, 25. *See alſo* Dr. RANDOLPH's *Vindicat. of the Trinity*, part 3, p. 40. and *Bp.* BULL's *Judic. Eccleſ. Cathol.* cap. 7mo, where he charges the *Remonſtrants* with mutilating and curtailing this very paſſage. With what face will Mr. L. lay *Socinianiſm*, or *Arianiſm* at the door of *Juſtin Martyr?*

The paſſage quoted from this father in the former part of this note is ſo ſtrong and explicit, that it probably gave occaſion to ſome *Socinians* to aver, that HE was the firſt who taught the doctrine of the Trinity. I ſaid, *ſome Socinians*, becauſe, as we have already noted, moſt *Socinians* and *Socinus* himſelf fathers this doctrine upon the Council of *Nice*, with an abſurdity which is expoſed at large by Bp. *Bull* in his Defence of that Council. This duplicity is no ſmall argument of *Socinian* diſtreſs.

Dr. *Middleton*, in reſentment, I preſume, of that explicitneſs with which *Juſtin Martyr* in the place referred to, and in many other, aſſerts the doctrine of the Trinity, and with a view to counteract it, takes much pains to repreſent his interpretation of Scripture as frequently abſurd, and his doctrine as neither more nor leſs than refined *Platoniſm*. But the

the unfairneſs, or rather the falſity of both imputations has often been ſhewn. The *triad* of *Plato*, (whoſe admirer, &c. this holy father, it is well known, before his converſion was,) the *mundane*, *animative*, and *intelligent* nature of God, although it has been mentioned by ſome, improperly but honeſtly enough, to illuſtrate the doctrine in queſtion, with an intention to adapt it in ſome degree to our apprehenſions, could not poſſibly give riſe to it. It is as clear as words can make it, that *Juſtin* the *Martyr* was a *Trinitarian* on principles very different from thoſe of *Juſtin* the *philoſopher*. Dr. M. moſt uncandidly vilifies the typical and allegorical repreſentations, which occur often in this primitive writer, and in which probably he gratified not ſo much his own taſte as that of thoſe early ages.

Dr. *Whitby*, in his treatiſe entitled, *An Endeavour to evince the certainty of Chriſtian faith*, &c, cites hiſtorians of credit, who acquaint us, that when *Julian*'s deſign of falſifying the predictions of our Saviour, by rebuilding the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, was defeated by miraculous eruptions of balls of fire, &c, (as the ſtory is told by *Ammianus Marcellinus*, and many others,) almoſt all the *Jews*, who were eye-witneſſes of this wonderful ſcene, were converted to the Chriſtian Faith, and acknowleged Chriſt to be God. The writers referred to are *Sozomen*, *Nazianzen*, and *Socrates*, and the following paſſage ſeems to be as plain and deciſive as can be wiſhed.

wiſhed. Εκ τουτων τοσαυτη των ορωμενων καταπληξις, ως μικρου μεν, απαντας ωσπερ εξ ενος συνθηματος, και μιας φωνης, τον χριςον ανακαλειθαι θεον, ευφημιαις τε πολλαις και ικεσιαις εξιλασκεθαι.

It ſeems evident enough from theſe words, that the *Jews* who were converted on this occaſion, and conſequently Chriſtians in general, at that time acknowledged Jeſus Chriſt to be abſolutely God.

Indeed the truth of this great doctrine is in ſome meaſure inferrible from the incredibility formerly objected to it by its adverſaries. Καταβαινειν εις την γην τινα θεον, η Θεου ὑον, τουτ' αιχιςον, ſays *Celſus*; and *Trypho* ſpeaks rather reſentingly in the following words to *Juſtin*; απιςον γαρ και αδυνατον σχεδον πραγμα επιχειρεις, αποδειχυνναι, οτι θεος υπεμεινε γενησθηναι, και ανθρωπος γενεσθαι.

Agreably to this, the ſame *Trypho* declares, that to aſſert Chriſt to have been born of a virgin is τερατολογειν. Now I deſire to aſk, whether the doctrine of a miraculous birth, and bodily appearance of an *inferior* Deity for any ſuppoſable purpoſe whatever, be not ſufficiently reconcileable both with *Jewiſh* and *Pagan* principles, and with what we know to have been the ſentiments of *Julian* himſelf? Or, whether we are not in all reaſon to look for the chief ground of difference between *Juſtin* and *Trypho* in the coequality we are aſſerting? This will appear yet more clearly in a ſubſequent note. It is, in ſhort, this equality which conſtituted

conſtituted *ſuperſtitionis novæ genus*, as Chriſtianity is called by *Suetonius* in the life of *Nero*.

Dr. *Willes*, in his firſt diſcourſe, prefixed to Sir *Rog. L'Eſtrange*'s tranſlation of *Joſephus*, ſays that *Pilate* wrote to *Tiberius* de Chriſto Deo. But where does he find this? The Acts of *Pilate*, ſo called, are confeſſedly ſpurious.

CELSUS *apud* ORIG. l. 4. JUSTIN's Dial. p. 292. LACTANTIUS. l. 4. c. 12 and 22.

Page 125. *(q) the Atheiſm.*] The venom of this calumny ſoon ſpent itſelf; and the honourable and often-noted teſtimony of *Pliny* in his letter to *Trajan*, that the Chriſtians were a *ſimple* and *innocent* people who worſhipped Chriſt as God, at once vindicates their morals, and declares their faith.

The fact was, the primitive Chriſtians, like their immediate predeceſſors the Apoſtles, were reviled, defamed, and made as the *filth of the world, and the off-ſcouring of all things*; they were charged with the moſt deteſtable vices; with rebellion, murder, inceſt, &c; and to free them from theſe infamous reproaches, was one main buſineſs of the fathers in general, and eſpecially of *Juſtin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, and *Tertullian*.

WHITBY's *Endeavour*, &c. ch. 8. p. 243.

Page 126. *(r) principles of polytheiſm.*] *Heſiod* makes mention of many thouſand Deities, and *Varro* of three hundred *Jupiters*; but both with a reſervation of the properties and prerogatives of the

the Supreme God. Theſe ſubaltern Deities were ſuppoſed to act as his inſtruments, and under his direction. Some of the wiſer heathens however were aſhamed of this latitudinarian ſyſtem; and pretended to reſolve their theology into allegory, &c, as *Zeno*, *Chryſippus*, and other Stoics; and philoſophers of later date found it neceſſary to have recourſe to the ſame expedient to elude the charge brought againſt the multitude of the heathen Gods by Chriſtians. With reſpect to the Pagan notion of a ſubordination of Deities, we may affirm in the words of Dr. *Heylin*, that God is not only *unus*, but *unicus*, or in the phraſe of Mr. *Hooker*, that "our God is one, or rather very *oneneſs*, in which "eſſential unity, ſays he, a Trinity perſonal ſub-"ſiſteth."

It will be well worth remarking, that the doctrine of the Trinity has often been repreſented as having no little colour or countenance both from *Jewiſh* and *Pagan* principles. A. *Roſs*,* in his *View of all religions*, &c. undertakes to ſhew, that "the "doctrine of the Trinity was not unknown even "by the light of nature to the Gentile philoſo-"phers, poets, &c. *Zoroaſtres*, ſays he, ſpeaks "of the Father, who, having perfected all things, "hath delivered them to the ſecond Mind, which "Mind hath received from the Father knowlege

* See Note at No. 38.

"and

" and power. Here is a plain teſtimony of the firſt " and ſecond Perſon. Concerning the third, *Zoroaſ-* " *tres* ſaith, that the Divine Love proceeded from " the Mind or Intellect; and what elſe is this Di- " vine Love but the Holy Ghoſt?" He then proceeds to lay before the reader the principles of the *Chaldean Magi*, who " acknowleged three begin- " nings, to wit, *Ormaſes*, *Mitris*, and *Ariminis*, " i. e. God, the Mind, and Soul." He obſerves that " *Pythagoras* was not ignorant of this myſtery, " when he placed all perfection in the number " THREE, and made Love the original of all " things." He gives us the ſentiments of *Zeno*, *Socrates*, *Numenius*, *Plotinus*, and many others, " who write very plainly of the *Hypoſtaſes*, &c, ſo " that *no Chriſtian can write more fully*."

Let us hear now what a much better known, and an univerſally admired author has to offer upon the ſame argument. From the three divine attributes of infinite Goodneſs, Wiſdom, and Power, the *Pythagoreans* and *Platoniſts* ſeem to have framed their *Trinity* of what Dr. *Cudworth* calls *Archichal Hypoſtaſes*: to which he ſuppoſes *Ariſtotle* may be thought to allude in the following paſſage in his book *de cælo*. l. 1. c. 1. καθαπερ γαρ φασι (the Pythagoreans) το παν και τα παντα τοις τρισι διωρισται.

In another place, this learned author gives us to underſtand, that *Zoroaſtres*, and the ancient *Magi* acknowleged the Supreme Deity under the different

names

names of *Mithras* and *Oromaſius*; which *Mithras* was commonly called τριπλασιος or three-fold. This, it ſeems, *J. Voſſius* would refer to the three *hypoſtaſes* in the Deity, agreeably to the Chriſtian theory: but *Cudworth* thinks it to be more conformable to the *Pythagoric* or *Platonic* hypotheſis of three diſtinct ſubſtances ſubordinate to each other. This writer obſerves elſewhere, that *Pagan* theology in general maintained a *Trinity* of univerſal principles, or Divine *hypoſtaſes* ſubordinate; the το αγαθον, or το ΕΝ called ο προτοσθε ος; and ΝΟΥΣ or intellect, ο δευτερος, the ſecond God; and the mundane Soul, or animated world, τριτος θεος, the third God. According to the ſame author, the *Crocodile* was a ſymbol of the firſt God of the Ægyptians; "an animal which when in the water ſees "without being ſeen:" and among the ſame people *a winged globe with a ſerpent ſpringing out of it*, was the *Hieroglyphic* of a triform Deity, or Trinity of Divine *Hypoſtaſes*. By the globe was ſignified the firſt incomprehenſible Deity, without beginning or end, ſelf-exiſtent, &c; by the *Serpent*, the Divine wiſdom and creative virtue; and by the *wings*, that active Spirit which quickens, enlivens, and cheriſhes all things.

Let us ſee now what was the theology of *Julian*, and the latter *Platoniſts*. This famous Apoſtate maintained, that the inferior Gods were miniſters of a ſupreme God. He aſſerted, that this Supreme God, or firſt Deity, and fountain of all things, produced from

from himſelf, an eternal mind, and a corporeal, or "ſenſible animated Sun," as a great God in the viſible world. The latter *Platoniſts*, in oppoſition to Chriſtianity, held, that before the Trinity there was another ſupreme and higheſt *Hypoſtaſis*, exiſting and remaining in the *ſolitude of his own unity*, as Dr. *Cudworth* literally tranſlates the words of *Jamblicus*. This muſt at leaſt be allowed to be language ſomewhat more intelligible than that of thoſe old *Platoniſts* who taught, that there is a ſubſtance, a principle "in the order of nature ſuperior to intellect." They ſuppoſe this firſt and higheſt principle of all, to be, by reaſon of its abſolute and tranſcendent perfection, not only above underſtanding, knowlege, and reaſon, but above eſſence itſelf; which, by the way, was the hereſy of *A. Joachim*, condemned by the fourth *Lateran* Council. Our Author very juſtly calls this viſionary doctrine *myſterious Atheiſm*; and it ſeems to have been adopted by that fantaſtic heretic *Valentinus*, whoſe thirty Gods, or *Æons*, were the production or offſpring of a ſelf-originated Deity, whom he calls *Bythus*, or Βυθος, i. e. unfathomable *profundity*; or, according to ſome, of *profundity* and *ſilence*. Even the theory of *Heſiod*, whether literally, or phyſiologically underſtood, is much more agreeable to truth, and the *Moſaic* hiſtory. This old bard makes *Chaos*, and *Earth*, and *Tartarus*, and *Love*, the principles of all things. (*Theogon*

gon. v. 116. *and seq.)* In short, the philosophy we have been just speaking of absolutely refines away all religion, and the very belief of a God; because Divinity in the abstract can no more be said to produce, to act, or to govern, &c. than *wisdom* can be said to be *wise*, or *motion* to *move*.

At best, little solid or consistent can be extracted from this medley of principles; and if we understand by *a Trinity*, what in reason we ought to understand by it, *viz. a Trinity of three efficient, living, intelligent Persons, the sovereign causes and rulers of all things*, (to use the words of a learned ‡ writer,) we shall look in vain for such a doctrine properly and precisely taught before the epoch of Christianity. It is certain, the antient Pagan Theology derived partly from tradition, and partly from *Judaism*. In the doctrines of the latter we are to look for the rise and foundation of the principal tenets of the Philosophers whose names have been mentioned; of whom some are known to have had communications with the *Jews*. What then were the sentiments of these descendants of *Abraham* heretofore with respect to the great doctrine before us? The question is a material one; and, unless I greatly mistake, the solution of it will terminate in a very satisfactory conclusion.

Christian writers differ but little in what they

‡ See Extract from an anonymous Author quoted by Dr. RANDOLPH in his Vindica. p. 51. &c.

have

have advanced upon this head. To take a few of them as they fall in our way. *Wollebius* lays down the following principle as an indubitable one. *Etsi Veteris Testamenti tempore doctrina S. S. Trinitatis obscurior fuerit, non tamen plane ignota fuit.* He then quotes the first *Chap.* of *Genesis*, and other passages in the Old Testament, in common with other authors, in support of his position, or his *Canon*, as he calls it, and finishes the paragraph in the following words; *quæ testimonia tametsi pertinaces Judæi eludere satagunt, Christianæ tamen menti satisfaciunt.* The learned Dr. *Lightfoot*'s sentiments on this subject, which Mr. *Parkhurst* has adopted, or rather with particular warmth espoused, are as follows.

"The very first thing, says he, that is taught "in all the Bible * is this very mystery." God *created*; God, i. e. the Word *said*; and the Spirit, i. e. the Holy Ghost *moved*. "So *Moses* also when "he is to teach concerning the creation of man, he "first teacheth that it was the Trinity that created "him. *And God said, Let us make man after our* "*image*. He saith *Let us*, to shew the Trinity of "Persons; and he saith *in our image*, not *in our* "*images*, to shew the unity of essence." The Trinity is supposed by Dr. L. to be declared in many places; even at v. 4. of Deut. 6. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is one.* Dr. L. gives

* See Genesis 1. 1, 2, 3, &c.

this as the true reading, which, ſays he, " teaches " the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity. " Three words anſwer the three Perſons, and the " middle word our God, deciphering fitly the Se- " cond, who aſſumed our nature." This learned writer ſuppoſes the ſame myſtery to be imported in the following among many other texts. *Exo.* 34. v. 6. *Iſa.* 6. v. 3. *Pſalms* 50. v. 1. 136. v. 1, 2, 3.

Indeed, Jeſus Chriſt is by the almoſt unanimous ſuffrage of writers the *Jehovah* of the Old Teſtament. The *Angel of the Covenant*, the *Angel* who appeared to *Moſes* at the *buſh*, the chief of the *Angels* who were entertained by *Abraham*, &c, is generally ſuppoſed to have been the Second Perſon in the † Trinity. A ſenſible writer endeavours to prove, that the doctrine of the Trinity is contained in the *Law*, and that it is in fact acknowleged and aſſerted by the *Jewiſh* Rabbies, by *Philo* and *Maimonides*, &c. The *Jewiſh Cabaliſts*, ſays he, " diſ- " tinguiſh God into three Lights; and ſome of them " call them by the ſame names, as the Chriſtians, " of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; " and yet ſay that this does not at all break the " Unity of God. Your famous *Philo*, ſays he, ex- " preſſes the ſame in many places." And he produces a conſiderable number of inſtances, by which it appears that this celebrated Rabbin at leaſt lays

† See particularly ALLIX. BULL. JUSTIN MARTYR. IRENÆUS, and TERTULLIAN.

himſelf

himſelf open to the attacks of every Chriſtian adverſary.

To the ſame effect Dr. *Randolph* quotes a remarkable paſſage from *Euſebius*, in which it is obſerved, that, according to the doctrine of the *Jews*, " there is, after the Eſſence of God, &c, a prin-" ciple begotten of no other but the Father, being " firſt-begotten, &c, being the image of God, the " power of God, the wiſdom of God, and the word " of God; the true light, the *Sun of righteouſneſs*, " *&c, &c.*"

There are two ſtriking paſſages, the one in the book of *Proverbs*, and the other in the *apocryphal* book entitled the *Wiſdom of Solomon*, which have been pretty generally conſidered as deſignative of the Second Perſon in the Chriſtian Trinity. *I was ſet up from everlaſting, or ever the earth was. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then was I by him, as one brought up with him, &c.* (Prov. 8. v. 22. &c.) *When all things were in quiet ſilence, thine Almighty Word leapt down from heaven out of thy royal throne*, &c, &c. (Wiſd. 18. v. 15. &c.)

The anonymous Author of the teſtaments of the twelve Patriarchs, (who, as Dr. *Grabe* ſuppoſes, wrote at the latter end of the ſecond century,) makes every one of them foretell the coming of the Meſſiah, and moſt of them, in the plaineſt terms, the incarnation of the Son of God, or rather ſimply of God.

All this put together, intricate or incoherent as it may appear, will be thought moſt clearly to import a Trinity of ſome kind in the Godhead; and we may accordingly diſcern in a moment wherein lies the preciſe difference between the *Pagan*, the *Jewiſh*, the *Arian*, and the true Chriſtian theory. By the hypotheſis of each of the three former, the Supreme God neither is nor can be more than One Perſon; by that of the latter, the Deity conſiſts of three Perſons and one undivided eſſence. This as manifeſtly reſiſts the idea of dependence and inferiority, as the other is compatible with it, or rather, under the notion of a Trinity, ſuppoſes it. In ſhort, it will, I preſume, be no eaſy matter to ſay what objection of weight *Jews*, and *Gentiles*, *Pythagoreans*, and *Platoniſts*, could have made to the Goſpel, what obſtacle there was to their *becoming obedient to the faith without delay*, except that the univerſally adopted principle of SUBORDINATION was ſuperſeded, and effectually deſtroyed by the peculiarly Chriſtian doctrine of EQUALITY.

Perhaps I ſhall be thought to take upon me here the character of Moderator in the diſpute between Mr. *Parkhurſt* and Dr. *Prieſtly*. I had no ſuch intention. But if what has been offered does not exactly coincide with the notions of the former, it will at leaſt in the reſult be ſubverſive of the principles of the latter. The Chriſtian doctrine of an equal Trinity will be eſtabliſhed by the acknowlegement

knowlegement of a plurality of any kind, respecting the Godhead, by *Jews*, antient, or modern, or both. With regard to the notions of *Philo*, &c, see Howes's *Remarks in Vindication of the antient Fathers* &c. p. 41, 42, and seq.

It is observable, in conformity herewith, that the Fathers in general consider the doctrine of the Trinity, in the sense of the Catholic Church, as that which characteristically discriminates Christianity both from Judaism and Heathenism. With respect to the former, *Tertullian* has these remarkable words; *Judaicæ fidei est res, sic unum Deum credere, ut Filium adnumera re ei nolis, et post Filium, Spiritum. Quid enim erit inter nos et illos nisi differentia ista? Quod opus Evangelii? Quæ est substantia Novi Testamenti, statuens Legem et Prophetas usque ad Johannem, si non exinde Pater, Filius, et Spiritus, tres crediti, unum Deum sistunt?*

HOOKER's *Eccles. Pol. p.* A. ROSS's *View of all Rel. Sect.* 7. *p.* 185. CUDWORTH's *Intell. Sys. p.* 206. WOLLEBIUS's *Compen. Theol. l.* 1. *c.* 2. *p.* 15. LIGHTFOOT *on Gen.* 1. STACKHOUSE's *Hist. of Bib. Ch.* 1. *p.* 223. Bp. ANDREWS's *Lect. p.* 552. LOWTH's *Direct. for reading S. S. p.* 68, 69. *See* PATRICK's *Notes at* Exod. 3. v. 14. 6. v. 3. 18. v. 2. TERTULL. *adv. Prax. c.* 31. *See Mr.* PARKHURST's *Tract on the Divinity, &c. of our Lord from p.* 1. *to p.* 46. *See* JONES. *Chap.* 3. *Sect.* 1, 2, 3. *See* PATRICK *on Gen.* 1. *v.* 26. LESLIE's

*Short Method with the Jews. p.*88. RANDOLPH's *Vindica. of the Doctrine of the Trinity. pt.* 1. *p.* 21. GRABE's *Note at Sect.* 2, *c.* 3. *of* BULL's *Defense.*

Page 129. *(s) Son of Mary.*] Nothing can be more ridiculous than the *Mahometan* notions respecting the birth of our Saviour. *Mary* is supposed to have conceived by the breath of *Gabriel.* Yet in the nineteenth Chapter of the *Koran*, the following inconsistent and impious expressions are put into the mouth of the Deity himself. *We sent our Spirit Gabriel to Mary in the shape of a perfect man.*

Mr. *Sale* observes, that *Mahomet*'s account of the delivery of *Mary* is like the fabulous one of *Latona.* Both, it seems, were delivered by a *palm-tree*; and in the womb of the latter *Apollo* spoke, as in that of the former, say some, did *Jesus.* Possibly this may be a refinement upon the *Koran* itself; or upon the circumstance of the *babe's leaping in the womb of Elisabeth.* Luke i. 41.

See *Sale*'s Note at Ch. 19. of the *Koran.*

Page 131. *(t) God is one God.*] It is the tenet of all true *Mussulmen*, says the author of *Mahometism explained*, that the most abandoned sinners that ever existed shall be saved, "provided they shall "once during their lives have testified the Unity "of God, by pronouncing that fundamental ar-"ticle of the *Mussulman* belief, *there is no God but* "ALLAH, and MAHOMET *is his Apostle.*" This, I con-

I conceive, muſt be underſtood with ſome reſtriction, and ſuppoſes no apoſtacy ſubſequent to the atteſtation in queſtion. For the famous *Mahometan* Doctor, *Algazali*, in his comment on theſe two capital articles of their faith, delivers himſelf in the following words. *He ſhall alſo believe that they that confeſs one God ſhall at length go out of the fire, after they have underwent the puniſhment due to their ſins; ſo that by the favourable mercy of God, no perſon ſhall remain in hell who acknowleged the Unity of the Godhead.*

The firſt *Muſſulmen* gloried in the title of *Unitarians* upon every occaſion. Some of them carried their zeal for the grand article of their religion to a degree of ſavage ferocity. We have a notable example of this in the hiſtory of the *Saracens*. At the ſiege of *Damaſcus*, in the reign of *Omar*, the ſecond *Caliph* after *Mahomet*, *Abu-Obeidah*, the commander of the *Saracen* army, had granted quarter to certain citizens; which was a piece of lenity ſo exaſperating to *Derar*, an officer of very high rank, as to draw from him a declaration, ſeconded by the ſolemnity of an oath, that, for his part, *he would never have mercy upon any that ſaid that God had a ſon, and joined a partner with God.*

We learn from the anonymous author of *Four Treatiſes*, &c, (who aſſures us he derives his authorities from writers of the firſt claſs,) that the *Mahometans* carry this *unitarian* principle with them

literally to their graves. His account of their funeral ſolemnities is entertaining enough; but the following are the only particulars with which we are at all concerned. At the interment of a *Muſſulman* the *Muezzin*, or Cryer, muſt go before the corps, reciting with a loud voice, *there is no God but very God.* At the cloſe of the whole ceremony, the defunct is addreſſed by the prieſt in theſe words. *Be mindful of the covenant with which thou haſt gone out of this world; bearing witneſs that there is no God but very God alone, and that Mahomet is his prophet, and that Paradiſe is for certain, and fire for certain, and the reſurrection for certain*; &c, &c.

How ſhall we reconcile all this with Mr. *Locke's* aſſertion, that "to the light which the Meſſiah "brought into the world with him, we muſt aſcribe "the owning and profeſſion of one God, which "the Mahometan religion hath derived and bor-"rowed from it." Strange aſſertion! The *Mahometan* faith is this, that there is one Perſon in the Godhead; the Catholic faith is this, that there are three Perſons in one Godhead. Remove this difference; and you will make a conſiderable breach in the *middle wall of partition* between the two religions. (*See Diſc. 4th. ſub fin.*)

Reaſonab. of Chriſtianity. p. 86. *Comment prefixed to the 2d. Vol. of* OCKLEY'*s Hiſtory of the Saracens.* OOKLEY'*s Hiſt. of the Saracens, Vol.* 1. *p.* 227, 134.

Treatiſe

Treatise concerning the Turkish Liturgy. p. 139, 142.

Page 132. *(v) Papal innovation.*] The *Arians* in *Poland*, soon after the *Reformation*, most ridiculously attempted to represent the doctrine of the Trinity as the most anti-christian of all corruptions in the Church of *Rome*; and would have fain had it believed, that Providence permitted the Pope to wear a *triple* crown, as a mark denoting him to be a maintainer of that doctrine.

See HOOKER's *Eccles. Pol. B.* 4. *p.* 142.

Page 144. *(u) tables of man's heart.*] *Burlamaque*, in his book entitled *Principles of natural and politic Law*, observes somewhere, that "moral "maxims or actions are as certain, as much dic-"tated by pure reason, as physical, or mathema-"tical ones." That the Creator, e. g., says he, is to be worshipped &c, by the creature, is as self-evident as that the whole is greater than its parts. Bp. *Cumberland* calls the Law of nature immutable, eternal, and universal. ‡ I cannot think Bp. *Taylor* expresses himself with accuracy, and much less with true casuistical precision, in the following passage extracted by Dr. *W. Lowth* from the *Ductor Dubitantium*. "If we be sent to read the laws of "nature in the tables of our own hearts, where "some things are disordered by passion, many more

‡ Dissertation on the Law of Nature. p. 89.

"are

" are written by intereſt; ſome are indited by " cuſtom, and others imprinted by education; and " amongſt ſeveral men theſe are the authors of con- " trary inſcriptions; I ſay, if we have no better " director than this, whereby to ſquare our actions, " we ſhall find ourſelves at a loſs for the managing " our behaviour in ſome of the weightieſt concerns " of life." The *inſcriptions* of paſſion, intereſt, and cuſtom, &c, are not thoſe *original* impreſſions which are ſtill legible, and ſufficiently diſtinguiſhable by a candid and inquiſitive mind. The law of nature, abſtractedly conſidered, is ſtill what Bp. *Cumberland* calls it.

That obnoxiouſneſs to error from which men of the brighteſt parts, and the greateſt profeſſional abilities, are not exempt, is to writers in general at once an encouraging and an humbling circumſtance.

The corruption of human reaſon, and the ignorance and error incident to our underſtandings, " has, ſays a moſt excellent author, given manifold " occaſion for the benign interpoſition of Divine " Providence, which in compaſſion to the frailty, " the imperfection, and the blindneſs of human " reaſon, hath been pleaſed at ſundry times, and in " divers manners, to diſcover and enforce its laws " by an immediate and direct Revelation. The " doctrines thus delivered we call the revealed or " Divine law, and they are to be found only in the " Scriptures.

"Scriptures. Theſe precepts when revealed are "found upon compariſon to be really a part of "the original law of nature, as they tend in all "their conſequences to man's felicity. But we are "not from hence to conclude, that the knowlege "of theſe truths was attainable by reaſon in its "preſent corrupted ſtate; ſince we find that, until "they were revealed, they were hid from the wiſ-"dom of ages. As then the moral precepts of "this law are indeed of the ſame original with "thoſe of the law of nature, ſo their intrinſic ob-"ligation is of equal ſtrength and perpetuity. Yet "undoubtedly the revealed law is of infinitely "more authenticity than that moral ſyſtem which "is framed by ethical writers, and denominated "the natural law. Becauſe one is the law of na-"ture, expreſsly declared ſo to be by God him-"ſelf; the other is only what, by the aſſiſtance of "human reaſon, we imagine to be that law. If "we could be as certain of the latter as we are of "the former, both would have an equal authority; "but till then they can never be put in any com-"petition. Municipal law is a rule of civil con-"duct. This diſtinguiſhes municipal law from "the natural, or revealed; the former of which is "the rule of moral conduct, and the latter not "only the rule of moral conduct, but alſo the "rule of faith."*

* See Commen. on the Laws of England. Sect. 2. p. 42.

Theſe

Theſe periods ſeem to have ſlipped from the pen. The Scriptures are the Revelation of divine or ſupernatural truths, but of the "original law of "nature" they are only the revival, or republication. THEY plainly declare that to be the will of God which, in *the times of ignorance* and corruption, might rather be ſaid to have been obtruded upon the world, than recommended to it, as the will of God, by the philoſophers; *they* teach that by authority which, before, reaſon only dictated, or opinion eſpouſed; ſo that now every ſpecies of immorality is totally without excuſe. Properly ſpeaking, it is not the Divine Will, but the Divine Nature, "which was "hid from the wiſdom of "ages." For though we have in Scripture only the *ſure word* of morality, yet *Socrates*, *Plato*, and *Tully*, as far as they taught truly, taught the morality of Scripture. In a word, Revelation is neceſarily the rule of conduct, but directly and immediately the rule of faith.

The paſſages juſt cited interfered with the argument before me; and I am happy in the opportunity hereby given me to acknowlege my obligations to a learned and ſincere friend, and to teſtify my high reſpect for the name and memory of Sir W. BLACKSTONE.

Page 144. *(w) earneſtly inculcated.*] *See* GROT. *l.* 4. 12. TULL. *de Nat. Deo. l.* 2—25. *De Leg. l.* 2. 11. *De Off. l.* 2—3. PERS. *Sat.* 2. *v.* 69. XENO. *Memo. l.* 1. *p.* 571. POTTER's *Greek Antiq. Vol.* 1.

B. 2.

B. 2. *ch.* 5. PLATO's *Alci. and* PLUTARCH's *Insti. Lacon.* CICERO *pro domo sua, apud Pontif.* TULL. *de Leg. l.* 2—7. *De Divinat.* 1—51—57. *Fragmen. Vet. Poet. p.* 60. TULL. *de Nat. Deo. l.* 3—35. ÆSCHYLUS's *Persæ. v.* 293. EURIPIDES's *Hecuba. v.* 954. *Bacchæ. v.* 70. SOPHOCLES's *Ajax. v.* 118 *et seq.* ÆSCHYLUS's *Prom. Vinc. v.* 1073. EURIP. *Orest. v.* 821. *Phæniss. v.* 1206. *Androm.* 851. *Tusc. Quæst. l.* 2. *v.* 21. *Fragmen. Vet. Poet. p.* 24, 96. &c, &c, &c. See particularly the works of *Epictetus* and *M. Antoninus*. It has been indeed, and is often alledged, that both these authors borrowed, or rather stole the best of their philosophy from the documents of Christianity. But, admitting the truth of the allegation, they adopted these principles as fit and right, and as perfectly agreable to human reason; which is quite enough for our purpose. It is not at all material to know, whether, or how far, these, or any other philosophers, were really indebted to Revelation.

Many writers, with a laudable desire to extol Christianity, have represented in a very strong light the imperfection and insufficiency of heathen Morals, and drawn at full length, and in the most lively colours, the errors and impurities of Paganism; but all this in manifest consistence with what has been advanced.

See particularly LOWTH's *Direct. for reading the Scrip.*

Scrip. Ch. 8. *p.* 129. 10. *p.* 183, &c. and WHITBY's *Endeavour. p.* 10.

Page 155. *(x) the Greek Dramatists.* The true God must ultimately be understood by the πατηρ ανδρων τε Θεων τε &c. of *Homer*; the *Divum Pater*, &c. of *Virgil*; the *Summus Deorum* of *Ovid*; the *communis conditor* of *Juvenal*; and by him, as *Horace says*,

Unde nil majus generatur ipso;
Nec viget quicquam simile aut secundum.

Nævius, according to *Varro*, calls *Jupiter Patrem Optimum, Supremum, et Summum.* Ὁ επι πασι——*he above all*, is *Porphyry*'s description of the Deity. *Prometheus*, in *Æschylus*, calls *Jupiter*, though insolently and in defiance, τον κρατεντ' αει. v. 936. And in the *Supplices* of the same author he is styled αιωνος κρεων απαυστε; which are almost *Isaiah*'s own words according to Bp. *Lowth*'s translation. q. v. v. 584. See *Isaiah* 9. 6. There is a fine passage in the *Antigone* of *Sophocles* which represents *Jupiter* as neither *slumbering nor sleeping*, * and as subject to no infirmity, or decay. *See v.* 612. *et seq.* The sovereign independence of the Deity, the unsearchableness of his counsels, and the stability of his decrees, are strongly expressed in the following places. *See Homer. Il. l.* 1. *v.* 5. *Æschylus*'s *Supplices. v.* 1056. 600. *Prome. Vinct.* v. 50. *Agamem.* v. 1496.

* Psalm 121. v. 3, 4.

The

The *Chain* in *Homer*, Il. 8. v. 19. &c, has been remarked on by many writers; and the ſubſerviency of all things, paſt, preſent, and to come, to the Divine will and pleaſure, is expreſsly declared in the continuation of the paſſage above referred to in *Sophocles :*

Το, τ' επειτα, και το μελλον,
Και το πριν επαρχεσει. *Vid. ſupr.*

The ſpirituality of the Divine Being is expreſſed by *Plato*, *Anaxagoras*, *Ariſtotle*, and others, under the term νος; by *Cicero*, and the Latin writers, by that of *Mens*. The *divinæ particula auræ* of *Horace*, the *ætherius ſenſus of Virgil*, the *animus* as contradiſtinguiſhed from the *anima* of *Juvenal*, &c, &c, unqueſtionably refer us to the ſpiritual creator. *Tully*, we know, delights in this argument, and handles it in a thouſand places. In one particularly, he aſſerts, "Nihil ab optimo et præſtantiſſimo genitore, animo melius procreatum;" and in another, he ſpeaks the very language of Revelation itſelf. "DEI, ſays he, IMAGO quædam "ANIMUS eſt; ex ipſo DEO delibata ac profecta." ‡

The omniſcience, the omnipreſence, † the inviſibility, and the incomprehenſible nature of the Deity, are ſet in a very ſtrong light by *Pagan* writers. *Tully*, in his book *de natura Deorum*, cites *Pythagoras* affirming, *Deum eſſe animum per naturam*

‡ Timæus. Fragmen. Sec. 8. Conſola. ſub fin.
† See Virgil. Æn. l. 6. v. 724. Geor. 4. v. 221.

rerum

rerum omnium commeantem. l. 1. 10. *Seneca*, ſpeaking of God, ſays, *Quocunque te flexeris, ibi illum videbis occurrentem tibi*; *and Plautus* ſays finely, *Eſt profecto Deus, qui quæ nos gerimus auditque et videt.* The *Greek* Dramatiſts are very clear and explicit under theſe articles. In a fragment of *Euripides* one ſays,

Οξυς θεων οφθαλμος τα παντ' ιδειν; which, as Mr. *Barnes* obſerves, is exactly parallel with *Heſiod*'s,

Παντα ιδων Διος οφθαλμος, και παντα νοησας.* Of all the heathens *Plato* perhaps had the moſt exalted ſentiments, and, as a learned author expreſſes it, "came neareſt to the truth," He was indeed converſant in the *Jewiſh* Law to ſuch a degree as to be deſcribed under the character of *Moſes* ſpeaking *Greek*, according to the ſame author's obſervation from *Euſebius* and others. He calls God Δημιουργος, and emphatically the το ον. *Origen* cites this remarkable expreſſion from him, which is produced by *Grotius*; Μετα μεν Διος ημεις, αλλοι δε μετα αλλων δαιμονων.—

But, it may be, this eulogy is premature. "In "the ſacred commentary of the *Perſian* rites, the "following words, ſays *Sir Iſaac Newton*, are aſ-"cribed to *Zoroaſtres*." Ο Θεος εστι κεφαλην εχων ιερακος. ουτος εστιν ο πρωτος, αφθαρτος, αιδιος, αγενητος, αμερης, ανομοιοτατος, ηνιοχος παντος καλου, αδωροδοκητος, αγαθων αγαθωτατος, φρονιμων φρονιμωτατος. εστι δε και πατηρ

* See Tragæd. Incer. v. 8. and Barnes's Note. See Ibid. v. 335.

ευνομιας

ευνομιας και δικαιοσυνης, αυτοδιδακτος, φυσικος, και τελειος, &c.

"This, ſays he, was the antient God of the "*Perſian Magi.*" The ſame great author acquaints us, that *Hyſtaſpes*, father of *Darius*, was co-founder of the religion of the *Perſian* empire with *Zoroaſtres*; which religion, ſays he, "was compoſed "partly of the inſtitutions of the *Chaldæans*, in "which *Zoroaſtres* was well ſkilled; and partly "of the inſtitutions of the antient *Brachmans*, who "are ſuppoſed to derive even their name from the "*Abrahamans*, or ſons of *Abraham*, born of his ſe-"cond wife *Keturah*, and inſtructed by their father "in the worſhip of ONE GOD, without images, &c." (*See* NEWTON's *Chronol. Ch. 6. p.* 350, 351.)

One is almoſt afraid to ſay, this conſummate Philoſopher could himſelf be miſtaken in this or in any matter; could poſſibly be liable to the weakneſs of inadvertence, or the littleneſs of prepoſſeſſion. Yet the author of the *Eſſay on Spirit* makes uſe of Sir. *Iſ. Newton*'s words when he declares, that *God is a relative term, which has reference to ſubjects.* Surely it has been obſerved with great truth, that of all terms the term GOD is perhaps the moſt abſolute. It is the name of the Supreme, ſelf-exiſtent Being, independently on ten thouſand creations. We know not wherein the eſſential happineſs of the Deity conſiſts; but we know that the mere production of worlds contri-

butes nothing to it. It is true, God is our Creator, our King, our Father, &c; but does he ſtand related to us under theſe characters by neceſſity, or by bounty of grace? We worſhip him as our Maker, we honour him as our Sovereign, we fear him as our Judge, we love him as our Father, &c, &c; but before the great day of univerſal manifeſtation we ſhall not *ſee him*, and even then moſt probably ſhall but imperfectly *ſee him as he is*.

Page 160. *(y) proof upon proof.*] The refinements of learned men have diſſerved the cauſe they wiſhed to promote. According to the traditions of the *Chineſe*, as *European* miſſionaries have repreſented them, *Confucius*, their great philoſopher, who lived above five hundred years before Chriſt, uſed often to ſay, *It is in the Weſt that the true Saint is to be found*; and even before him it was a ſaying of *Laokun*, that *eternal reaſon produced* ONE; ONE *produced* TWO; TWO *produced* THREE; *and* THREE *produced all things*. How far the concluſion of *Simplicius*'s comment upon *Epictetus* may deſerve more attention, I will not determine. It is to be found in Dr. CAVE's *Prim. Chriſtian.* being a prayer "in which mention is made of three Per-"ſons, the *Lord*, (or Father;) the *Saviour*, (or "Chriſt;) and the *light of truth*;" which even in Scripture, ſays Dr. C., is "a common periphraſis of the Holy Spirit." If we may believe *Socrates* in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, (as the ſame author refers

refers to him,) *Ignatius* heard the angels in a vision praiſing the Trinity in alternate hymns, &c; which introduced alternate hymns into the Church. Mr. *Hooker* ſeems inclined to ſuſpect the authority of this ſtory; and it is certain nothing is ſaid relative to ſuch a viſion in all the genuine epiſtles of this antient Father, which are ſeven; though in one of them, viz. that to the *Epheſians*, he talks of *Jeſus Chriſt's being ſung, and of ſinging to the Father by Jeſus Chriſt:* * which makes the omiſſion more extraordinary.

The abſolute Divinity of *Jeſus Chriſt* has, with more haſte than judgment, been aſſerted by ſome from our Saviour's words to the *leper, I will; be thou clean:* and by others from his *power to forgive ſins*; nothing in all this implying a ſelf-inherent authority. Dr. *Whitby* quotes the following paſſage from a no leſs illuſtrious Father than *Irenæus*, with reſpect to the *remitting power*. "By remitting the "ſin, &c, he ſhewed who he was; for if none "can remit ſins but God, and yet our Lord did "remit them, &c, it is manifeſt that he was both "the *Word of God*, and the *Son of man*, receiving "the power of remiſſion from his Father, as God "and Man." Surely he could *receive* this power as man only.

It is not my intention to derogate in the leaſt from the merit of Mr. *Jones*'s performance, (the

* Sect. 4.

Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity,) which upon the whole is admirable and ſatisfactory. His ſcriptural parallels are for the moſt part happy; and his mode of reaſoning is always ingenious, and generally concluſive. Perhaps it rather fails in the application of the following text; *God was* IN CHRIST, *reconciling the world to* HIMSELF. 2 Cor. 5. 19.

" It is allowed on all hands, ſays Mr. *Jones*, that " the *world* was reconciled by Chriſt Jeſus to the " *one, only, great and ſupreme God.* But, this very " *ſame God* (for the word is but once uſed in the " whole ſentence) was *in* Chriſt; manifeſt *in* the " fleſh, and *reconciling the world to himſelf.* And " were there no other paſſage of Scripture to be " found, this alone is ſufficient to overthrow the " whole doctrine of *Arianiſm*; which, as far as the " Scripture is concerned, depends upon this one aſ- " ſertion, that *the word* GOD, *in Scripture,* NEVER " *ſignifies a complex notion of more perſons than one;* " *but* ALWAYS *means one perſon only, viz. either the* " *perſon of the Father ſingly, or the perſon of the Son* " *ſingly.* Which is abſolutely falſe: for here it ſig- " nifies *both.* The text conſiders God as agent and " patient at the ſame time, and upon the ſame oc- " caſion; as the *reconciler* of the world, in the *per-* " *ſon* of the *Son*; and the object to whom the *re-* " *conciliation was made,* in the *perſon* of the *Father*; " yet there is but one word (GOD) to expreſs them " both

" both. So that the word God, though of the " *ſingular* number, is of a *plural* comprehenſion. " And thus I find it to have been taken by ſome " of the moſt eminent writers before the council " of *Nice*; *Plaſmatus in initio homo per manus* DEI, id " eſt, FILII et SPIRITUS, ſays *Irenæus*; putting " the ſingular name of God for the *two perſons* of " the *Son* and *Spirit*. And the ſame word, in the " language of *Origen*, (if we are allowed to take " the verſion of *Ruffinus* as genuine,) includes the " whole *three* perſons: *igitur de* DEO, *id eſt*, de " PATRE, *et* FILIO, *et* SPIRITU SANCTO. And our " excellent church has uſed the word *God* in the " ſame comprehenſive ſenſe; as in the *Bleſſing* " after the communion ſervice, GOD ALMIGHTY, " *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt.*"

I am afraid this is not ſo full an anſwer to the above aſſertion as was to be wiſhed; and that it is not abſolutely ſufficient for the " overthrow of the whole doctrine of *Arianiſm.*" In the firſt place, Dr. *Clarke's* proſelytes will be apt to inſiſt, that the whole doctrine of *Arianiſm* does not depend upon this one aſſertion; and in the next place, that, if it did, Mr. *Jones* has advanced nothing here forcible enough to overthrow it. It is true, they will ſay, *God was in Chriſt*; but in what ſenſe? why, by his grace, his influence, and ſpiritual communications; as he is likewiſe ſaid to be *in* us; and as Chriſt is ſaid to be *in* us; and as we are ſaid to

be *in* God, and to be *in* Chriſt, by the purity of our hearts and affections. This, they will tell us, is plain ſimple theory, without any wanton refinement, or imaginary diſtinction of "agent and patient, &c." And with regard to the authorities of *Irenæus*, *Origen*, and the *Bleſſing* in the Communion ſervice, they will add, that they cannot admit either a private ſentiment, or a public doctrine to be the ſtandard of true Chiſtianity.

As this is ſpecious enough, it may be proper to diſencumber ourſelves from the weight of this ſame *Arian* aſſertion, by other conſiderations. *Hac non ſucceſſit, alia progrediamur via.*

Firſt then let it be obſerved, that though the *Engliſh* word *God* be "of the *ſingular* number," yet the *Hebrew* word *Elohim*, of which it is the tranſlation, is confeſſedly "of a *plural* comprehenſion." Accordingly it has been demonſtrated over and over again, that the ancient *Jews* held a plurality of ſome kind in the Deity. *(Vid. Supr.)*

But, ſecondly, we may recur to conſiderations ſtill more internal, and indiſputable. If it has been abundantly made to appear, that the Son is God, and the Holy Ghoſt is God, as properly and truly as the Father is God, the term God muſt unavoidably be acknowleged to include, or to "ſignify a complex notion of *more perſons than one*," in many places of holy writ. It will ſuffice to produce

duce a few inſtances. The Father is ſaid to be *in* us, 1 John. 4. 13. or to *dwell in* us, or *abide* with us, and the Son is ſaid to be *in us*, &c, Rom. 8. v. 10. and the Holy Ghoſt is ſaid to be *in* us; and, in a caſe which he mentions, St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, it would be reported, that *God* was *in them of a truth*. 1 Cor. 14. 25. Now can any man aſſign a tolerable reaſon why the word *God* in this paſſage ſhould not be regarded as incluſive of the whole bleſſed Trinity? *Another Scripture ſaith, every one of us ſhall give account of himſelf to God*; Rom. 14. 12. but if in the term, *God*, Jeſus Chriſt is not comprehended, what will become of the text which aſſures us *we muſt all appear before* HIS *judgment-ſeat?* 2 Cor. 5. 10. The great Apoſtle of the Gentiles puts the *Elders* of the *Church of Epheſus* in mind, that he had *not ſhunned to declare unto them all the counſel of God:* and if he who *purchaſed* this *Church with his own blood*, and he who appointed *overſeers over it*, are to be conſidered as parties in this *counſel*, (and ſurely they are to be ſo conſidered,) the word, God, has manifeſtly a *complex* ſignification here, and *means* more than *one perſon only*. Acts 20. 27, 28. The *Kingdom of God* is a phraſe which, in moſt places where it occurs, will, I preſume, not barely admit but require the ſame latitude of application. The *Word of God* may be regarded in the ſame light. Laſtly I ſhall cloſe theſe examples with one which is the more eligible,

becauſe it is contained in a text which has already undergone examination, and to which our adverſaries are for ever putting in their claim. I mean v. 28th. of the 15th. Chapter of St. *Paul*'s firſt Epiſt. to the *Cor.* * *When all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that God,* i. e. the complement of the Deity, the Trinity in Unity, *may be all in all.* Every critical eye ſees clearly that, in this paſſage, for the complex word —God—we muſt read the ſingle term Father, before we can with any ſort of propriety accommodate it to the purpoſe of the anti-trinitarians. In this caſe indeed, there would be an obvious ſenſe, and a natural antitheſis, and both in their favour.

The other text—*I am in the Father, and the Father in me,* John 14. 11., which Mr. J. produces as ſynonomiſing with the preceding, may be explained away by ſimilar means. The *Arian* has the following paſſages to oppoſe to them. *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be one in us; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me,* &c. John 17. 21, 22, 23. I am far from ſaying, or even inſinuating, that there is any real difficulty in all this; or that the orthodox conſtruction of

* See Diſc. 6. ſub fin.

the

the paſſages adduced by Mr. J. does not fairly and properly belong to them. I only take leave to obſerve, and have an obvious view in obſerving, that, with regard to the defence of Chriſtian doctrine in general, and particularly to the confutation of the aſſertion above-mentioned, this truly reſpectable author might have ſelected texts leſs equivocal, leſs liable to prevarication.

It is obſervable, Dr. *I. Watts* makes the texts *I am in the* FATHER and *the* FATHER IN ME, &c, ſubſervient to his doctrine of the inherency, or *indwelling* of the Father, i. e. of the godhead in the MAN *Chriſt Jeſus*..

It has been remarked, that by a ſmall alteration in the punctuation, the 3d. v. of the 17th. Chap. of St. *John, that they might know thee the only true God*, &c, may be thus rendered, *that they might know thee, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent, to be the only true God.* This reading is ſupported by the authorities of *Novatian*, St. *Auſtin*, and St. *Ambroſe.* But it will be prudent, I believe, to wave theſe authorities. Theſe Fathers ſeem to have been *in great fear, where no fear was.* We may ſafely abide by the ſenſe of the text before us in its preſent ſtate. Were we really in diſtreſs, it might be worth our while to appeal to theſe *early opinions* in our favour.

See Diſcourſe 6th ſub. fin. Dr. WATTS's *Laſt Sentiments. p.* 76, 77. *See the paſſage in* IRENÆUS *cited*

cited at large, and illuſtrated by Dr. WATERLAND *in his 2d Defence of his Queries. p.* 90. *See Mat.* 9. 6. *Deiſm Revealed. Vol.* 2. *p.* 192. CAVE'*s Prim. Chriſtian. p.* 40, 177. *See* WHEATLY'*s* MOYER'*s Lecture Sermons. Sermon* 5. *p.* 250. *Note B.*

Page. 161. *(z) abſtract ſpeculation.*] Among the many tripartite repreſentations of the Trinity, material and intellectual, *eſſence*, *intelligence*, and *will*, have been regarded by ſome as ſignificant of that great myſtery; which ſeems to be much about as wiſe a ſymbolization as that of thoſe who gravely affirm the *moon* to be an emblem of the *Church*, *birds* emblems of *heretics*, and *fiſh of anti-chriſt*. " We find in our nature, ſays a celebrated " writer, which is ſaid to be made after the image " of God, a very near reſemblance of the Holy " Trinity, and of the different operations of each " of the Divine Perſons. For example; to know a " thing preſent, and to remember what is paſt, and " to love or hate, are different operations of our " mind, and performed by different faculties of " it. Of theſe, the underſtanding is the *Father* " faculty, and gives being to things, as to us; for " what we know not, is to us as if it were not: " this anſwers to creation. From this faculty pro- " ceeds the *ſecond*, that of *memory*, which is a pre- " ſerving of that the underſtanding has created to " us. Then the *third* faculty, that of the will, " which loves or hates, proceeds from both the

" other;

" other; for we cannot love or hate what is not " firſt created by the underſtanding, and preſerved " to us by the memory."

The plaſtic power of a warm imagination, or a ſanguine zeal, will form emblems and adumbrations of the Trinity in all countries, and in all ages of the world. We are told the old *Ægyptians*, and modern *Americans*, worſhipped the Deity under the picture of a ſun with *three heads*.

As infidelity will take all advantages of pious whim, and indiſcreet attachment, ſo will it as ſurely avail itſelf to its utmoſt of certain ſtrange notions, which have been advanced, in direct variation from the received doctrine of the primitive Church. It is not eaſy to ſay with what propriety, or in what ſenſe, Papiſts have called the *Virgin* the *complement* of the Trinity. Mr. *Sale* tells us, ſome of the Chriſtian *Arabs* aſſociate with a Sect that worſhipped the *Virgin* as a God. We learn from the ſame author, and others, that ſome of the *Nicene* Council maintained there were two Gods beſides God the Father, *viz. Chriſt* and the *Virgin*. Others have affirmed, that the *Spirit* was the *creature* of the *Son*. The Bp. of *Agen* wrote an expoſtulatory letter to Father *Gabriel*, who had roundly aſſerted, that *Mary* was the *fourth* Perſon in the Godhead.

JURIEU's *Accom. B. 3. p.* 163, &c. STACKH. *Body of Div. p.* 183. SALE's *Prelim. Diſcourſe, p.* 35.

PRID.

PRID. *Life of Mahomet. p.* 36. LESLIE's *Sh. Meth. with De. p.* 61, &c.

Page 207. *(aa) ſmatch of this ſentiment.*] We are told that *Diogenes*, upon being aſked, how he would be buried, anſwered, in cynical contempt, as it ſhould ſeem, of this cuſtom of his country, εις προσωπον, with my *face downwards.*

POTTER's *Gr. Antiq. V.* 2. *B.* 4. *Ch.* 6.

Page 227. *(bb) reunited to it.*] There is no guarding againſt the impertinence of captiouſneſs, or the prevarications of infidelity. Many queſtions may be aſked upon ſubjects of this kind, which may perplex our judgments, without diſturbing our faith. It will be ſufficient to inſiſt, that, even ſetting aſide the authority of Scripture, or granting it to be undeciſive, our theory is at leaſt as free from difficulties as that of our opponents.

Page 231. *(cc) L's. notion of identity.*] In controverſy it is neither unuſual, nor is it bad policy to cry f—l firſt. Both Mr. *L.* and Dr. *S.* have recourſe to ſomething like this artifice, when they apply to believers St. *Paul's* ſevere reprimand to ſuch enquirers as ſhould aſk, *how are the dead raiſed up, and with what body do they come? Thou fool*, the Apoſtle replies; and proceeds to illuſtrate the doctrine of the *reſurrection of the body*, through the remaining part of the Chapter, and particularly in the verſes ſome time ſince quoted. If this plainly appears from the faireſt and moſt natural

conſtruction

conſtruction of theſe paſſages, we ſtand clear of the aforeſaid mortifying imputation, and may juſtly return the compliment. And, in fact, we are encouraged to riſk our reputation for wiſdom on *our* interpretation, by that ſort of half-conceſſion which truth ſeems to have extorted from Mr. L. himſelf, when he tells us, that the words—*that which thou ſoweſt*, &c. might be "ſufficient to deter us "from determining any thing *for* or *againſt* the "ſame body's being raiſed at the laſt day." For theſe are not St. *Paul*'s ſtrongeſt, or moſt unequivocal expreſſions.

Page 234. *(dd) this body to come.*] One would almoſt imagine Dr. *S.* had eſpouſed ſomewhat like the antient heathen notion, that the "ſhades of "departed perſons retained a kind of ſubtile ve-"hicle, in all particulars exactly reſembling the "body of the deceaſed." The notion of ſuch a *ſubtile vehicle*, which is not a whit more comprehenſible than the Chriſtian theory of the reſurrection, is at leaſt ſo far conſonant to the ſame, as it implies a natural wiſh of reunion, and a ſort of *hankering* of the ſoul after its old companion.

GEDDES's *Eſſay on Compoſ. p.* 212.

Page 234. *(ee) or to what.*] Dr. *S.* muſt have known what has been ſaid by our moſt eminent Divines upon the ſubject before us. This Church never produced a ſounder Divine, or this nation a cloſer reaſoneer than Dr. *Barrow*. His ſentiments

are

are as clear and determinate as poſſible on the orthodox ſide of the queſtion. Could the Inquirer perſuade himſelf that he has confuted them by the conſciouſneſs of ſilence, the affectation of contempt, or the peremptorineſs of oppoſition?

See BARROW's *Expoſ. of the Cr. under the Article of the Reſurrec. of the Body. p.* 305.

Page 234. *(ff) would have them.*] The common arguments which are adduced in proof of the identity in queſtion have, I preſume, much more weight than ſome are willing to allow. The effects of chymical operations have been obſerved to be analogous to the reſurrection. It has been remarked that "*from the aſhes of a plant fairer plants have ſprung.*"

Grotius purſues much the ſame courſe of arguments as others, but is unhandſomely deſerted by his Editor. For Mr. *Le-clerc* is for adjuſting matters nearly on the ſame ground, and in the ſame language with Dr. *S.* and Mr. *L.* RESURGERE *corpus dici optime poteſt, cum* SIMILE *ex terra a Deo formatur, conjungiturque menti. Itaque non opus eſt ut in nimias anguſtias nos redigamus dum* ταυτοτητα *materiæ nimis rigide defendimus.*

JENKINS's *Reaſ. of Chriſt. v.* 2. *p.* 447. *See* BEATTIE *on the immutab. of Truth, Ch.* 4. *p.* 86, *&c.* GRO. *de ver. l.* 2. *c.* 10.

Page 243. *(gg) believe in him.*] Some have erred concerning this matter. Dr. *Cudworth* ſuppoſes Chriſt's body to have been changed into a ſpiritual

or

or heavenly body immediately after his resurrection; the subtilty and tenuity of which was shewn by his entering into the place where his disciples were assembled when the DOORS WERE SHUT, &c; "however its glory were for the time suspended, "partly for the better convincing them of the "truth of his resurrection, and partly because they "were not then able to bear the splendor of it."

But there are many reasons why we should not humour this child of a fruitful imagination. When our Lord, after his conversation, &c, with the two disciples at *Emmaus*, vanished *out of their sight*, had he not *that* body with which he was crucified? Had he not *that* body when he *shewed* his disciples his *hands* and his *feet*; when he called upon them to *handle* him, &c, and assured them that it was he himself who addressed them? The truth is, he could appear or disappear at pleasure, by virtue of his divine power; and therefore it was by no means necessary he should be invested with a *spiritual* or heavenly body for that purpose. The resurrection of *that* body which was crucified, which *rose from the dead*, and with which Jesus Christ conversed upon earth *forty days*, is the proper pledge and earnest of *our* resurrection; his *glorious body*, strictly so called, being probably assumed at his *Ascension*.

St. *Ignatius*, in his epistle to the *Smyrnæans*, expresses himself very emphatically upon this subject.

In

In his note on the paſſage I allude to, the learned *Voſſius* ſays as follows. *Reſurrectionem Chriſti vocat (Ignatius)* συσημον *quia nobis hæc data commune reſurrectionis futuræ ſignum.* The Moſt Rev. Tranſlator, I obſerve by the way, renders συσημον by the word *token*, which I need not inform the critical reader is not fully adequate to the original: the *Greek* term denoting a *token*, or *ſign* given in conſequence of an agreement between party and party. Our Saviour had pledged himſelf, both to his diſciples, and to the *Jews*, to riſe again; and by ſo doing at once fulfilled his engagements, and gave ample ſecurity for the general reſurrection.

From that paſſage in St. *Paul's 2d. Epiſt. to the Cor. Ch.* 5. which ſpeaks of our being *clothed upon with our houſe which is from heaven*, &c, ſome have inferred, ſays Dr. *Cudworth*, that "bodies come "not out of graves:" but as this matter is cleared by commentators, and Dr. *S.* lays no ſtreſs on the place, I ſhall waſte no time upon it.

JENKINS's *Reaſon. of Chriſtian. v* 2. *p.* 447, *&c.* GROT. *de Verit. l.* 2. *c.* 10. IGNA. *to the Smyrn. Sect.* 1. *See* VOSSIUS's *note p.* 257. CUDWORTH's *Intell. Syſ. ch.* 5. *p.* 796, 799. *See* WHITBY's *Note at John* 20. *v.* 19.

Page 244. *(hh) in the fleſh.*] This paſſage in St. *Clement* is not to be over ſtrictly, or literally underſtood. The Apoſtle expreſsly declares, that *fleſh and blood ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God.* That body

body which ſhall be *raiſed up at the laſt day*, that material ſubſtance which, when re-united to the ſoul, will conſtitute the identical perſon who died, and was buried, ſhall be changed, ſhall even be *faſhioned like unto the glorious body* of *Chriſt*, previouſly, as it ſhould ſeem, to its appearance before his *judgment-ſeat*. For *we ſhall all be changed in a moment &c, at the laſt trump, when the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and this mortal ſhall put on immortality*.

It has been obſerved by many, that the good fathers from whom paſſages are extracted on this ſubject, together with St. *Paul* before them, in his 15*th. Chap. of the* 1*ſt. Epiſ. to the Cor.*, ſpeak only of the *reſurrection of the juſt*: but it is at the ſame time to be noted, that, with reſpect to this principle of incorruption, the change in the general *reſurrection* will undoubtedly be the ſame both of the *juſt and the unjuſt*.

Weak reaſoning, like a weapon which falls ſhort of its aim, will be returned upon us by our adverſary. St. *Chryſoſtom*'s argument, and that of ſome other fathers, and of many modern Divines, for the *reſurrection of the ſame body*, drawn from the ſuppoſed abſurdity of *one* body's ſinning and *another's* ſuffering, is obviouſly a futile one, and may be rendered ſerviceable to the intereſt of the enemy. The body undergoes a great variety of changes in the courſe of life; and, it might be aſked, would not every imaginable purpoſe of

retribution be fully anſwered by a future ſtate of happineſs, or miſery, to ſoul and body, whenceſoever *that body* might be ſuppoſed to *come? Ut juſtum eſt*, ſays *Wollebius, ut quædam peccata poſt hanc vitam puniantur; ita eſt quoque, ut quod ſocium fuit peccatorum ſit quoque pœnarum.*

Compend. Chriſ. Theol. p. 193.

Page 251. *(ii) he once had.*] "How far, ſays "Dr. *S.*, they *(Athenag. &c.)* ſucceeded is not the "point at preſent; they might have ſhewn that the "*reſurrection of the fleſh* is no where taught in Scrip-"ture." But what if this was left to be ſhewn by Dr. *Sykes?* What, if their deſign was to prove the *reſurrection of the fleſh* to be a Scripture doctrine, and that upon rational grounds? I venture to think this is put out of doubt by what has been ſubmitted to the reader; though luckily Dr. *S.* himſelf will help us out if we have any how failed in our argumentation upon this ſubject. For in his account of *Tertullian*'s *third form*, or *rule of faith*, in his book *De Præſcriptione Hæreticorum*, the Dr. thus expreſſes himſelf. "Nor is his *third Form* "or *Rule*, &c, any *Creed* of any Church, but only "a ſummary of the doctrines of the Goſpel." This father then intended his *Form* or *Rule*, as a ſummary of Chriſtian doctrine, even according to Dr. *S*'s account of the matter; and in *it*, as it is quoted by *himſelf*, we have mention in plain terms of the *reſurrection of the fleſh*. The words of *Tertullian*

tullian are these: that Christ shall come in glory to judge the world, *facta utriusque partis resuscitatione, cum carnis restitutione.* *

Page 254. *(kk) the first time.*] Notwithstanding the explicitness of these passages, *Mahomet*'s theory of the *resurrection* is sometimes not a little whimsical, according to what we learn from Mr. *Sale* of it. He acquaints us, that this false prophet supposed the whole human body would be corrupted, except the *rump-bone*, which is first formed, (the *os coccygis*, as he terms it;) and that this is to be a sort of seed from whence the whole will be renewed at the last day, after a rain of forty days, (*viz.* a great dew, according to the *Jews*, from whom *Mahomet* took this hint,) which will impregnate the earth, and "cause the bodies to sprout like plants." The *Jews*, it seems, call this bone *Luz*. *Cudworth* appears to have an eye to this particular in his 5th Chapter. p. 799.

SALE's *Prelim. Disc.* p. 81.

Page 254. *(ll) been discussing.*] The story which *Mahomet* introduces into the second book of the *Koran* of the miracle God was pleased to work, for the confirmation of *Abraham*'s faith in the article before us, is extraordinary indeed, and well worth transcribing. *God said to Abraham, take four birds, cut them in pieces, and disperse them in four different mountains; and then call them, and you shall see all*

* Enquiry. p. 17.

those four birds will immediately come to you. This story is told by *Mahometan* writers still more circumstantially. "These four birds, they say, were "a pigeon, a cock, a crow, and a peacock; and "that when *Abraham* had cut them in pieces, he "made a perfect anatomy of them, and minced "them all together. Some add, that he pounded "them in a mortar, and reduced them all to one "mass, which he divided into four parts, and car-"ried them to the top of four several mountains; "and that then, holding up their heads, which he "retained in his hands, he called them severally "by their names; and that each came accordingly "for his head, and flew away with it." *

It is certain *Mahomet* refined much upon the history of *Moses* in general; and my author observes, that probably this wild story has its foundation in God's command to *Abraham* to offer a sacrifice of a *turtle-dove*, and a *pigeon*, among other animals, as we read in the *15th Chapter of Gen. v. 9. et seq.*

Page 257. *(mm) in competent authority.*] The sense of the Apostolical and primitive Church may be collected from the Form of the first *Baptismal Creed*, which ran in the following terms, I *believe in God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* ‡ That

* MORGAN's Mahom. explained. Vol. 1. p. 156. See Mr. WHITES's Note at l. 14. p. 274. of his learned B. Lectures.

‡ See CYPRIAN. Epist. 73.

this

this Creed, which implicitly declares the *Three* Persons to be *One* God, was simply the Confession used in the earliest times, is the opinion of many learned men, and particularly of *Episcopius*, (the most eminent of the *Remonstrants* in *Holland*,) who, as Dr. *Waterland* observes, was not aware of its destructive consequence to his own Hypothesis, *viz.* "that the divine eternal generation of the "Son was not inserted in the Creeds from the be-"ginning." The words of *Episcopius*, as quoted by Bp. *Bull*, are these. *Antiquissimum (symbolum), quodque in prima Baptismi administratione jam inde ab ipsis Apostolorum temporibus usitabatur, hoc erat*; CREDO IN DEUM PATREM, FILIUM, ET SPIRITUM SANCTUM: *nempe ad præscriptam ab ipso Jesu formulam.* On which occasion the learned prelate makes the following observations. *Perspicuum est in hac formula vocem* DEUM απο κοινȣ *ad omnes Tres, nempe Patrem, Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum referri. Quod Græci adhuc clarius exprimunt.* Πιςευω εις τον θεον, τον πατερα, τον υον, και το αγιον πνευμα. *Ita sane hanc brevem Confessionem veteres intellexere. Hinc Tertullianus (adv. Prax. c. xiii.) communem Christianorum de Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto Fidem exponens, ait, et Pater Deus, et Filius Deus, et Spiritus Sanctus Deus, et Deus unusquisque. Mihi sane videtur in his paucis verbis, Credo in Deum, &c, magnam illam veritatem, nempe Filium et Spiritum Sanctum* UNUM *esse cum Patre Deum, aliquatenus clarius*

exprimi quam in fusioribus quibusdam symbolis quæ subsecuta sunt. Nam per additamenta illa post verba Credo in Deum Patrem, &c, *et adjectiones post mentionem Filii, non repetita voce* DEUM *in articulis de Filio et Spiritu Sancto, videri potuit, et nonnullis visa est* DEI *appellatio ad solum Patrem pertinere; plane contra mentem ac sententiam eorum qui latiora illa symbola condididerunt.*

BULL's *Judic. Eccles. Cath. Chap.* 4. *p.* 308, 309. WALL's *Hist. of Inf. Bap. Part* 2. *Ch.* 9. *p.* 491. BINGHAM's *Antiq. B.* 2. WATERLAND's *Import. of the Doc. of the Trin. Ch.* 6. *p.* 223. *and Serm.* 8. RANDOLPH's *Vindica. Part* 2. *p.* 81.

Page 258. *(nn) no religion at all.*] As nothing differs more than judgment, so by consequence nothing multiplies more than error. The number of heresies and heretics, according to *Prateolus*, was in his time no less than 520, as Bp. *Taylor* informs us, in his discourse on the *Liberty of Prophesying*. But he takes no small pains at the same time to lessen their number, and extenuate their malignity; and, it must be granted, not without success. It concerns not me to enter into particulars, or to examine the grounds of this learned prelate's moderation. The list of heretics, including those of a modern date, as it is given us by *A. Ross*, in his *View of all the Religions in the World*, is almost as numerous as the abovementioned. The very names of the greatest part of them must be to the generality

rality of readers unknown. He gives us an account of the *Secundians*, *Ptolomæans*, *Colarbasii*, *Heracleonites*, *Ophites*, *Cainites*, *Cataphrygians*, *Theodocians*, *Semiarians*, *Aquarii*, *Floriani*, *Æternales*, *Luciferians*, *Humiliarii*, *Cruciferi*, *Hospitalarii*, *Bethlemites*, &c, &c, &c.*

Of a few of the old heresies, which were to a remarkable degree extravagant, it may not be amiss to mention the tenets. *Irenæus* in *cap.* 28. *l.* 2. *adv. Hære.* censures such heretics, *quicunque inerrabilem* τȣ λογȣ *generationem enarrare ausi sint ex trivio petitis comparationibus, dicentes scilicet*, VERBUM DEI *ex Patre generari, ad instar* VERBI HOMINIS *per linguam prolati*; which are Bp. *Bull*'s words.

The *Valentinians* taught, that Christ's body was in a manner purely spiritual, and passed through the Virgin as through a pipe, or conduit.

The *Cainites* worshipped *Cain* as the author of much good to mankind; as also *Esau*, *Corah*, *Dathan*, &c, &c; and *Judas*, asserting that he foreknew what happiness should accrue to mankind by Christ's death, and therefore betrayed him.

It was the doctrine of *Apelles*, that there was but one chief God, to whom was subordinate a fiery

* A. ROSS was a *Scotchman*, and Chaplain to *Charles I.* He was the author, or compiler of near thirty treatises, the subjects of some of which are not uninteresting. His *View of all Religions* past several editions; the last of which appeared in 1696. It is referred to by Mr. BOYLE in his Discourse on the usefulness of *Natural and Experimental Philosophy*.

See GREY'S HUDIBRAS. Canto. 2. v. 2.

God, who appeared to *Moses in the bush*, who made the world, gave the law, and was the God of *Israel*. He gave to Christ a body compacted of the starry and elementary substance, which appeared in the shape only of man. This body, when he ascended, he left behind him, every part thereof returning to their former principles: Christ's spirit only being in heaven. This heretic lived, says *A. Ross*, about 150 years after Christ, in the reign of the Emperor *Commodus*.

We have already exhibited to the reader many strange Pagan notions relative to the nature, &c, of the Deity; but perhaps the most extraordinary, the most eccentric of them all, has not yet been remembered. It is not properly a heresy indeed, but it is an error which may fitly occupy this place. The heathen mystical theologists often call God αρρενοθηλυν—*male* and *female*, signifying thereby, though grossly, yet not unemphatically, the *creative* power of the Supreme Being. Dr. *Cudworth* cites a passage from a hymn of *Synesius*, (whom he calls a *learned* and *pious* Bishop,) wherein the Almighty is addressed under expressions precisely equivalent:—

Συ πατηρ, Συ ματηρ,
Συ δ' αρρην, Συ δε θηλυς.

Agreeably hereunto, *Varro* quotes from *Soranus*, an eminent poet, (according to our author,) the verses following:

Jupiter

Jupiter omnipotens, regum rex ipſe Deûmque.
Progenitor genitrixque Deûm; Deus unus et omnis.

Methinks this ſentiment becomes the heathen theologiſt, or poet, much better than the Chriſtian Divine.

Far from meaning to rank a late very eminent writer, Dr. *I. Watts*, in the number of notorious heretics, or in the leaſt to detract from the excellence of his character, I think myſelf bound in duty to my ſubject to take notice here of the ſingularity of his ſentiments. "His idea of the Divinity of Chriſt was, that *the Godhead, the Deity itſelf, perſonally diſtinguiſhed as the* FATHER, *was united to the man Chriſt Jeſus, in conſequence of which union, or indwelling of the Godhead, he became properly God.** He conceived this union "to have ſubſiſted before the Saviour's appearance "in the fleſh, and that *the human ſoul of Chriſt exiſted with the Father from before the foundation of the world*; on which ground he maintains the "real deſcent of Chriſt from heaven to earth, &c."

In theſe ſentiments there is not ſo much as a reference to the Holy Ghoſt. But we are not to conſider them as final. We ſhall find the Dr. to have had more enlarged notions reſpecting the doctrine of the Trinity.

* It ſeems theſe were likewiſe Dr. DODDERIDGE's ſentiments.

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In his SOLEMN ADDRESS TO THE GREAT AND EVER-BLESSED GOD, on a review of what he *had written in the Trinitarian Controverſy*, he puts the following queſtions with all that *humble reverence*, (his own words,) and that *holy awe* WHICH *becomes a creature in the preſence of his God.*

" Haſt thou not, O Lord God Almighty, haſt " thou not tranſacted thy divine and important af- " fairs among men by thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt*, and by " thy holy Spirit? And haſt thou not ordained " that men ſhould tranſact their higheſt and moſt " momentous concerns with thee, by thy Son, and " and by thy Spirit? Haſt thou not, by the mouth " of thy Son *Jeſus*, required all that profeſs his " religion to be waſhed with water in the name of " the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt? Is " it not my duty then to enquire, who or what " are theſe ſacred names, and what they ſignify?

" Haſt thou not aſcribed divine names, and " titles, and characters to thy Son and thy holy " Spirit in thy word, as well as aſſumed them to " thyſelf? And haſt thou not appointed to them " ſuch glorious offices as cannot be executed with- " out ſomething of divinity or true Godhead in " them? And yet art not thou, and thou alone the " true God? How ſhall a poor weak creature be " able to adjuſt and reconcile theſe claſhing ideas, " and to underſtand this myſtery? Or muſt I be- " lieve and act blindfold, without underſtanding?

" Holy

"Holy Father, (he proceeds,) thou knoweſt, "how firmly I believe with all my ſoul, whatſo-"ever thou haſt plainly written and revealed in "thy word. I believe Thee to be the only true "God, the ſupreme of beings, ſelf-ſufficient for "thine own exiſtence, and for all thy infinite af-"fairs and tranſactions among creatures. I believe "thy only Son *Jeſus Chriſt* to be all-ſufficient for "the glorious work of mediation between God "and man, to which thou haſt appointed him. I "believe he is a man, in whom dwells all the ful-"neſs of the Godhead bodily. I believe he is one "with God; he is God manifeſted in the fleſh; "and that the man *Jeſus* is ſo cloſely and inſepa-"rably united with the true and eternal Godhead, "as to become one perſon, even as the ſoul and "body make one man.

"I believe alſo thy bleſſed Spirit hath almighty "power and influence to do all thy will, to inſtruct "men effectually in divine truths, &c. I yield up "myſelf joyfully and thankfully to this method of "thy ſalvation, as it is revealed in thy goſpel. But "I acknowlege my darkneſs ſtill. I want to have "this wonderful doctrine of the all-ſufficience of "thy Son and Spirit for theſe divine works made "a little plainer.

"Hadſt thou informed me, gracious Father, in "any place of thy word, that this divine doctrine "is not to be underſtood by men, and yet they

"were

" were required to believe it, I would have fub-
" dued all my curiofity to faith, &c. But I can-
" not find thou haft any where forbid me to under-
" ftand it, or to make thefe enquiries. My con-
" fcience is the beft natural light thou haft put
" within me, and fince thou haft given me the
" Scriptures, my own confcience bids me fearch the
" Scriptures to find out truth, &c. I have, there-
" fore, been long fearching into this divine doc-
" trine, that I may pay thee due honour with un-
" derftanding. Surely I ought to know the God
" whom I worfhip, whether he be one pure and
" fimple being, or whether thou art a threefold
" deity, confifting of the Father, the Son, and
" the Holy Spirit.

" Dear and bleffed God, hadft thou been pleafed,
" in any one plain Scripture, to have informed me
" which of the different opinions about the Holy
" Trinity, among the contending parties of Chrif-
" tians, had been true, thou knoweft with how
" much zeal, fatisfaction, and joy, my unbiaffed
" heart would have opened itfelf to receive and
" embrace the difcovery. Hadft thou told me
" plainly in any fingle text, that the Father, Son,
" and Holy Spirit are three real diftinct perfons in
" thy divine nature, I had never fuffered myfelf to
" be bewildered in fo many doubts, nor embar-
" raffed with fo many ftrong fears of affenting to
" the mere inventions of men, inftead of divine
" doctrine

" doctrine; but I ſhould have humbly and imme-
" diately accepted thy words, ſo far as it was poſ-
" ſible for me to underſtand them, as the only rule
" of my faith. Or hadſt thou been pleaſed ſo to
" expreſs and include this propoſition in the ſeveral
" ſcattered parts of thy book, from whence my
" reaſon and conſcience might with eaſe find out,
" and with certainty infer this doctrine, I ſhould
" have joyfully employed all my reaſoning powers,
" with their utmoſt ſkill and activity, to have found
" out this inference, and ingrafted it into my ſoul.

" Thou haſt called the poor and the ignorant,
" the mean and fooliſh things of this world, to the
" knowlege of thyſelf and thy Son, and taught
" them to receive and partake of the Salvation
" which thou haſt provided. But how can ſuch
" weak creatures ever take in ſo ſtrange, ſo diffi-
" cult, and ſo abſtruſe a doctrine as this; in the
" explication and defence whereof, multitudes of
" men, even men of learning and piety, have loſt
" themſelves in infinite ſubtilties of diſpute, and
" endleſs mazes of darkneſs? And can this ſtrange
" and perplexing notion of three real perſons going
" to make up one true God, be ſo neceſſary and
" ſo important a part of that Chriſtian doctrine,
" which, in the old Teſtament and the new, is
" repreſented as ſo plain and ſo eaſy, even to the
" meaneſt underſtandings?

" O thou ſearcher of hearts who knoweſt all
" things,

" things, I appeal to thee concerning the ſincerity
" of my enquiries into theſe diſcoveries of thy
" word.

" I humbly call thee to witneſs, O my God,
" what a holy jealouſy I ever wear about my heart,
" leſt I ſhould do the ſlighteſt diſhonour to thy
" ſupreme Majeſty in any of my enquiries or de-
" terminations. Thou ſeeſt what a religious fear,
" and what a tender ſolicitude I maintain on my
" ſoul, leſt I ſhould think or ſpeak any thing to di-
" miniſh the grandeurs and honours of thy Son
" *Jeſus*, my dear Mediator, &c. Thou knoweſt
" how much I am afraid of ſpeaking one word
" which may be conſtrued into a neglect of thy
" bleſſed Spirit, from whom I hope I am daily
" receiving happy influences of light and ſtrength.
" Guard all the motions of my mind, O Almighty
" God, againſt every thing that borders upon theſe
" dangers. Forbid my thoughts to indulge, and
" forbid my pen to write one word, that ſhould
" ſink thoſe grand ideas which belong to thyſelf,
" or thy Son, or thy Holy Spirit. Forbid it, O my
" God, that ever I ſhould be ſo unhappy as to un-
" glorify my Father, my Saviour, or my Sanctifier,
" in any of my ſentiments or expreſſions concern-
" ing them.

" Bleſſed and faithful God, haſt thou not pro-
" miſed that the meek thou wilt guide in judgment,
" the meek thou wilt teach thy way? Hath not

" thy

" thy Son, our Saviour, aſſured us, that our hea-
" venly Father will give his holy Spirit to them
" who aſk him? And is he not appointed to guide
" us into all truth? Have I not ſought the gracious
" guidance of thy good Spirit continually? Am I
" not truly ſenſible of my own darkneſs and weak-
" neſs, my dangerous prejudices on every ſide, and
" my utter inſufficiency for my own conduct? Wilt
" thou leave ſuch a poor creature bewildered
" among a thouſand perplexities, which are raiſed
" by the various opinions and contrivances of men
" to explain thy divine truth?

" Help me, heavenly Father, for I am quite
" tired and weary of theſe human explainings ſo
" various and uncertain. When wilt thou explain
" it to me thyſelf, O my God, by the ſecret and
" certain dictates of thy Spirit, according to the
" intimations of thy word?"

Now, for truth's ſake, I deſire to aſk any intelligent, impartial, and candid reader, whether we have not in theſe paſſages ſtrong indications of a wavering, though pious mind? Whether ſuch language as this does not rather tend to encourage ſpecious ſcepticiſm, than ſound faith? Whether it is not chargeable with inconſiſtency between reverence and remonſtrance, between declarations of acquieſcence and expoſtulations of diſcontent? Whether, according to Dr. *W*—'s ideas, all eccleſiaſtical authority is not as ſuch altogether odious, or contemp-

tible;

tible; and whether, for what appears to the contrary from theſe periods, Chriſtianity might not flouriſh without the exiſtence of Church, paſtor, or teacher? Whether we have not in this illuſtrious Diſſenter an extraordinary inſtance of the compatibility of radical and invincible prejudice with an *honeſt and good heart*, and a ſolid underſtanding? Whether Dr. *W.* had any thing like ſufficient grounds for his ſuſpicion that the orthodox received doctrines are reſolvible into mere "explainings, "inventions, or contrivances of men?" Whether he does not appear to be unreaſonably, though ſincerely anxious to *underſtand all myſteries*, while at the ſame time he could not but know, that the capital doctrines of the Goſpel are delivered AS myſterious, and that Chriſtians are ſuppoſed and required to *walk by faith, and not by ſight?* Whether he does not moſt erroneouſly convert a *particular* promiſe into a *general* one; not recollecting that, though, for obvious and very important purpoſes, our *heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that aſk him*, yet that Spirit was by no means "ap-"pointed" to *guide* every individual Chriſtian into *all* ſpiritual *truth?* Whether, had we been told "plainly;" in ſo many words, "in any ſingle text, "that the Father, Son, and holy Spirit are three "real and diſtinct perſons in the divine nature," it had been poſſible for D. *W.* to have miſunderſtood it; or whether he, or any body elſe, could have been

been " bewildered in any doubts," with respect to this doctrine? Whether such a " discovery" of it would not have been received every where with " unbiassed hearts," and with universal " zeal, sa- " faction and joy," a few instances perhaps of obduracy, &c, excepted? Whether, had it been " so " expressed and included in the several scattered " parts" of Scripture, that the Doctor's " reason " and conscience could with ease have found it out, " and with certainty inferred it," there would have been the least occasion for the " skill and activity of his rational powers?" Whether, after all, the doctrine in question be not expressed, or included in the sacred pages sufficiently to warrant any man's firm assent to it; especially when we take into the account the whole weight of that evidence by which we prove its correspondency with the sense of antiquity, and the belief of the primitive Church? Whether the wisest and the weakest are not equally incapable of " taking in so difficult, and so abstruse a doctrine" as that of the Trinity? Whether the Christian doctrine concerning things spiritual and mysterious is really " represented," either in the Old Testament or the New, as " plain " and easy even to the meanest understanding?" Whether, granting that " multitudes even of men " of learning and piety have lost themselves in in- " finite subtilties of dispute, &c, in the explica- " tion and defence" of the doctrine before us, all

 this

this ſhould not be principally attributed to anti-trinitarian artifice, and to a gradual departure from that ſimplicity in which it was originally taught and received in the world? Whether, if this "perplex-"ing notion of three real perſons going to make "up one true God" be a part of Chriſtian doctrine, it is not *prima facie* the moſt "neceſſary and the moſt important?" Finally, whether the doctrine of the Trinity, as held in the Church, has not at leaſt as much countenance from Scripture, and even from reaſon, as Dr. *W*—'s notion of the *indwelling of the Deity in the Man Chriſt Jeſus*; and whether this is not in effect acknowleged by himſelf?

As to the notion itſelf, it is, I truſt, to all intents and purpoſes refuted in the foregoing pages; and I ſhall content myſelf with expreſſing my aſtoniſhment at the force of prejudice in one who ſo ſtrongly recommends, or more properly inculcates an "indifference for every thing but truth,"* and cenſures ſo ſeverely all domeſtic, national, or party attachments. For with all his gentleneſs, benevolence, charity, and love of truth, Dr. *W*. appears to me to have been biaſſed by more than ordinary prepoſſeſſions. He who has expreſſed himſelf in the manner we have ſeen; he who has occaſionally declared, that he "allowed the greateſt diſtinction poſ-"ſible between the ſacred three in the divine nature, "which does not ariſe to three diſtinct conſcious

* See Improvement of the Mind. p. 285.

"minds

" minds or ſpirits;" and that he was fully " eſ-
" tabliſhed in the belief of the *Deity of the bleſſed*
" *Three*, though he knew not the *manner of explica-*
" *tion*," muſt, to my apprehenſion, be conſidered as proteſting againſt the doctrine of a Trinity of *Perſons*, chiefly becauſe it was an eſtabliſhed one; becauſe it was the doctrine of the Church.

I have dwelt the longer on this caſe as it is uncommon; as it is the caſe of a great and good man, whom (to borrow Dr. *Johnſon*'s words) " every Chriſtian Church would rejoice to have " adopted."

Dr. WATT'*s laſt Sentiments on the Trinity. p.* 62. *Solemn Addreſs. p.* 101, *&c. See* JOHNSON'*s Life of Dr.* WATTS *with notes, &c.* CUDWORTH'*s Intell. Syſt. Ch.* 4. *p.* 304. A. ROSS'*s View of all Religions. Sect.* 7.

P. 260. *(oo) to judge for ourſelves.*] It abundantly appears by a conſiderable number of extracts made by Bp. *Jewel* from many fathers and doctors of the Church of *Rome*, that antiently in that communion the Holy Scriptures were not barely indulged, but recommended to every hand. By what means the *Romaniſts* have ſince qualified the ſenſe of theſe paſſages, or reconciled the ſame with principles of a later date, I have no occaſion to inquire. But in one of them there is a ſingularity which, I believe, will pay any man for his trouble in the reading. It is to be found in *Theodoret*; and is tranſlated by the

great prelate as follows. " Ye may commonly ſee, " that our doctrine is known, not only of them " that are the doctors of the Church, and the maſ- " ters of the people, but alſo even of the *tailors*, " and *ſmiths*, and *weavers*, and of all artificers: " yea, and farther alſo of *women*; and that not " only of them that be learned, but alſo of *labour-* " *ing women*, and *ſempſters*, and *ſervants*, and *hand-* " *maids*. Neither only the *citizens*, but alſo the " *country-folks* do very well underſtand the ſame. " Ye may find, yea, even the very *ditchers*, and " *delvers*, and *cow-herds*, and *gardiners* diſputing of " the HOLY-TRINITY, and of the CREATION OF " ALL THINGS."

The ſame paſſage is referred to by Dr. POTTER in his Anſwer to *Charity Miſtaken. p.* 205.

JEWEL's *Defence, &c. part.* 5. *p.* 507.

Page 262. *(pp) miſtaken in that judgment.*] An eminent and learned writer of the laſt century, whom I have quoted before, obſerves, (and the obſervation has been alſo cited,) that " hereſy is not " an error of the underſtanding, but of the will;" and to this doctrine, properly ſtated, we can readily ſubſcribe. But in the exceſs of his moderation, this Right Rev. author ſometimes queſtions, in effect at leaſt, the authority, not only of all eccleſiaſtical traditions, and councils, but of the Scripture itſelf; giving us ſentiments wholly incongruous with every idea of faith, ſyſtem, or eſtabliſh-

ment.

ment. Witneſs *thoſe* contained in the following extract, which, to my imagination, nothing but the zeal of adherency to a favourite principle could have drawn from the pen of ſo able a writer, and ſo profeſſed a caſuiſt.

" Since, ſays he, holy Scripture is the repoſitory " of divine truths, and the great rule of faith, to " which all ſects of Chriſtians do appeal for pro- " bation of their ſeveral opinions, and ſince all " agree in the articles of the Creed as things clearly " and plainly ſet down, and as containing all that " which is of ſimple and prime neceſſity; and ſince " on the other ſide there are in Scripture many " other myſteries, and matters of queſtion upon " which there is a vail; ſince there are ſo many " copies with infinite varieties of reading; ſince a " various interpunction, a parentheſis, a letter, an " accent may much alter the ſenſe; ſince ſome " places have divers literal ſenſes, many have ſpi- " ritual, myſtical, and allegorical meanings; ſince " there are ſo many tropes, metonymies, ironies, " hyperboles, proprieties and improprieties of lan- " guage, whoſe underſtanding depends upon ſuch " circumſtances that it is almoſt impoſſible to know " its proper interpretation, now that the know- " lege of ſuch circumſtances and particular ſtories is " irrecoverably loſt; ſince there are ſome myſteries " which, at the beſt advantage of expreſſion, are not " eaſy to be apprehended, and whoſe explication,

" by reaſon of our imperfections, muſt needs be
" dark, ſometimes weak, ſometimes unintelligible;
" and laſtly, ſince thoſe ordinary means of ex-
" pounding Scripture, as ſearching the originals,
" conference of places, parity of reaſon, and ana-
" logy of faith, are all dubious, uncertain, and
" very fallible, he that is the wiſeſt and by conſe-
" quence the likelieſt to expound trueſt in all pro-
" bability of reaſon, will be very far from confi-
" dence, becauſe every one of theſe and many
" more are like ſo many degrees of improbability
" and incertainty, all depreſſing our certainty of
" finding out truth in ſuch myſteries, and amidſt
" ſo many difficulties. And therefore a wiſe man
" that conſiders this, would not willingly be pre-
" ſcribed to by others; and therefore if he alſo be
" a juſt man, he will not impoſe upon others; for
" it is beſt every man ſhould be left in that liberty
" from which no man can juſtly take him, unleſs
" he could ſecure him from error. So that here
" alſo there is a neceſſity to conſerve the liberty of
" prophesying, and interpreting Scripture; a ne-
" ceſſity derived from the conſideration of the dif-
" ficulty of Scripture in queſtions controverted,
" and the uncertainty of any internal medium of
" interpretation."

Now if this be the caſe, we are but mocked, when we are told the Scriptures are the " repoſitory of divine truths;" or that *any* articles of faith can

can be "clearly and plainly ſet down" in any Creed whatſoever. Under the above circumſtances, in what formulary, or ſyſtem, ſhall we look for "all "that which is of ſimple and prime neceſſity?" Is it not ſtrange too, that there ſhould be *many other myſteries* in Scripture diſtinct from thoſe *divine truths* of which it is the repoſitory; and ſtranger ſtill, that matters of *queſtion* ſhould be put under a *vail?* Upon all matters of *faith* there is indeed a vail; I mean, upon all myſterious matters, which cannot poſſibly be "apprehended at the beſt advantage of expreſſion." The explication of *theſe* is abſolutely impracticable; and every attempt for that purpoſe, "by reaſon of our imperfections, "muſt needs be dark, ſometimes weak, ſometimes "unintelligible." Perhaps he will bid as fair as any man to be an expounder of myſteries who ſhall diſentangle the ſeveral clauſes of this paragraph. I know not whether any thing can be found ſurpaſſing this, either in the ſtyle, or in the ſpirit of preſent moderation.*

The truth of the matter is, that very ſenſible and very good men, are apt to run into inconſiſtencies upon this ſubject. "It is very meet, ſays Dr. *Potter* "in his anſwer to *Char. Miſtaken*, that the igno-"rant people ſhould *obey their overſeers in the Lord*,

* See a curious vindication of this author, (Bp. TAYLOR,) in WOOD's Ath. Oxoni. p. 402. Vol. 2.

" *and ſubmit themſelves to the miniſtry and direction of* " *the Church* in many *profound doctrines* above their " reach. But it behoves them, (ſays he, in the im- " mediately following ſentence,) to have a diſtinct " and comfortable knowlege of the *eſſential points* " *of faith*; and not ſecurely to reſt in a babiſh ſim- " plicity, but (ſo far as God hath enabled them) " to be led on to perfection. To which purpoſe " they are commanded to *ſearch the Scriptures*, that " they may *grow and increaſe in knowlege*, &c, and " that they may be able both to *believe with the heart*, " *and confeſs with their mouth*, and render a *reaſon* " of that *hope* that is in them."

Bp. TAYLOR's *Diſc. on the Lib. of Pro. Sect.* 2. *No.* 6. *Char. Miſtaken anſwered. Sect.* 6. *p.* 203.

Page 270. *(qq) freedom of ſentiment.*] The humour of raiſing doubts and diſputes, oppoſing eſtabliſhments, and diſdaining to think or act in the common way is, as Bp. *Gibſon* obſerves, well expreſſed by one of the advocates for infidelity, in words to the following effect; that *if the opinions of a certain friend of his were eſtabliſhed to day, he would oppoſe them to morrow.* This, the Bp. informs us, is reported to have been ſaid by a perſon (I ſuppoſe) of ſome conſequence, whoſe name he mentions not.

Bp. GIBSON's *Paſt. Let. p.* 7, 8.

Page 271. *(rr) ſpiritual Conſtitution.*] The author of a work publiſhed ſome years ſince under the

the title of *Free Thoughts on the ſubject of a farther Reformation*, ſpeaks of our Reformers in the following terms. "One no ſmall diſadvantage which "they unhappily laboured under, and which from "their time to this has been matter of juſt regret "to true friends of *Divine Revelation*, was their "*defect* of knowlege in ſacred matters, above all "in the *true ſenſe of Scripture*, &c. If (ſays he "in another place) we would form our judgments "of the abilities of our Reformers to frame for us "a ſyſtem of doctrines which ſhould remain a per-"petual ſtandard of belief and profeſſion in the "*Engliſh* Church, and by which all our Clergy in "all future ages ſhould be ſummarily concluded, "we ſhall, I ſuppoſe, ſee juſt reaſon to wiſh that "they had been more equal than they appear to be, "to ſo weighty an undertaking. Thoſe who are "well acquainted with their writings will ſee, in a "variety of inſtances, evident marks of their inſuf-"ficiency for ſuch a taſk; and be fully convinced "of the truth of that obſervation of a learned and "worthy Doctor of our Church, that they were but "*bad interpreters* of the Scriptures."

In ſupport of all this derogation, which is obligingly qualified with a few introductory common-place compliments, our author has given us a number of extracts, relative to certain religious topics, from Arch-Biſhop *Cranmer*'s Catechiſm, publiſhed in 1543, and dedicated to King *Edward* VI.

We

We may ſee, it ſeems, from theſe extracts, how greatly diſproportioned the abilities of this famous Prelate and his colleagues were to the work of Reformation, &c. To what concluſions this will lead, I need not inform the reader. But I take leave to offer a remark or two upon the occaſion. In the firſt place, if the intellectual weakneſs of our Reformers was really ſo great as is here repreſented, Proteſtants to a man have reaſon enough to be aſhamed of themſelves. What anſwer ſhall they make to any ſenſible *Roman-Catholic* who ſhould teaze them with theſe mortifying truths? To my thinking, as none of the exceptionable contents of the paſſages cited from the Arch-Biſhop's Catechiſm make a part of the doctrine of our Church, they might, in reverence to *his* memory, and for *her* credit, have much better been ſuppreſſed. Had this Gentleman contented himſelf with obſerving, that the Reformers of the Church were fallible men; and conſequently, that the Forms and Offices they have delivered down to us may be capable, in ſome inſtances, of alteration and improvement, he had ſpoken more agreeably to truth, though leſs adequately to his purpoſe. For what he has alledged has a plain tendency to ſhew the neceſſity rather of *pulling down* than *repairing* our ſpiritual *building*. On the whole, as he has conducted matters, I know not any one perſon upon earth under ſo many obligations to him as the Pope of *Rome*.

I ſhall

I ſhall take this opportunity to animadvert on certain dirty aſperſions in a late performance from the hand of a rigid non-conformiſt, and perhaps an avowed unbeliever, and perhaps both.

The anonymous editor of Dr. *Johnſon*'s Life of Dr. *I. Watts* with Notes, ſacrifices to the virulence of his diſpoſition every regard to decency, charity, and truth. It will be proper to trace this calumny to it's ſource. " Happy, ſays the celebrated Biogra-" pher, will be that reader (viz. of the works of " Dr. *W.*) whoſe mind is diſpoſed by his verſes or " his proſe, to imitate him in all but his Non-con-" formity, to copy his benevolence to man, and " his reverence to God." Is there any thing in this to put a man of candour, or a man of ſenſe out of humour? Yet our Editor aſks, " is not this ex-" ception, and even the mention of this circum-" ſtance, a ſtriking proof of Dr. *Johnſon*'s bigotted " attachment to the national eſtabliſhed mode of " worſhip?" It is really no proof at all. How far Dr. *J.* was in fact a bigot to eſtabliſhments, I undertake not to determine; but the period juſt quoted by no means proves him to have been ſo. The moſt moderate Chnrchman breathing has not the better opinion of Dr. *W.* for his Non-conformity. I cannot think ſuch an one could have " mentioned this circumſtance" more tenderly, had he mentioned it at all; and with what propriety Dr. *W*—'s Biographer could have left it unmentioned, I muſt leave

leave it to this Gentleman to explain to us. "Reverence to God, he proceeds, and benevolence "to man, are the two grand essentials of religion. "He that possesses these is a true Christian, whatever be the external mode of worship which he "adopts. Neither his Conformity nor his Non-"conformity will exclude him from the divine fa-"vour, nor ought it to be matter of censure to "his fellow-creatures. If a man in uniting with "any Christian community, appears to follow the "dictates of his own conscience, &c, he deserves "the esteem of all parties, and to object to his "peculiarity of religious profession is the mark of "a little mind."

Now this is partly true, partly false, but, you see, as far as Dr. *Johnson* is concerned, wholly impertinent. There is as little as possible of censure, or of objection in the sentence above quoted from him. As to sincerity of persuasion, no body denies the validity of it's pretensions; but at the same time what will make an honest man will by no means constitute a "true Christian." "Reverence "to God and benevolence to man are indeed the "two grand essentials of all religion;" and, to borrow our author's term, they MAY be *possest* by Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics.

"That Dr. *W.* was conscientious in his Non-conformity," will be readily admitted; but surely this will not justify the unfairness, or the duplicity,

or

or the malignity, or the falſhood of the following paragraph. " Conſidering what the terms of mi-
" niſterial conformity are, ſays our annotator, it
" may be juſtly queſtioned, whether if all the clergy
" were equally conſcientious, one half of them
" would not be Diſſenters. To declare an *aſſent and*
" *conſent* to ALL and EVERY THING *contained in the*
" *Thirty-nine Articles, the book of Common Prayer,*
" *&c*, (which comprehend ſuch a prodigious num-
" ber of particulars; many of them very diſputable,
" ſome of them unintelligible, and others exploded
" by the wiſeſt and beſt of men;) is ſuch a requi-
" ſition as it is hard to be conceived the generality
" of the clergy can *bona fide* approve. It is indeed
" WELL KNOWN that MOST of them, and even of
" the BISHOPS themſelves, diſbelieve ſome of the
" doctrinal articles of the Church, as appears from
" the general ſtrain of their preaching and of their
" writings, and that they profeſs to ſubſcribe
" them only as articles of peace. If the terms of
" conformity were a declaration that they *did not*
" *believe* " all and every thing, &c," it is unde-
" niable that many (not to ſay the moſt) of thoſe
" that conform might very conſcientiouſly make it.
" Whether therefore their ſubſcription to the pre-
" ſent terms be conſiſtent with ſimplicity and godly
" ſincerity, it behoves them ſeriouſly to enquire.
" If others think that ſuch a ſubſcription would,
" in them, be a groſs prevarication, and rather than

" be

" be chargeable with it, willingly forego the ad-
" vantages of being in the Church, they ought at
" leaſt to be reſpected as honeſt men. And if Dr.
" *Johnſon* had ſtudied the grounds of Non-con-
" formity (which he appears not to have done) he
" might have entertained a better opinion of the
" underſtandings of Proteſtant Diſſenters as well
" as their integrity. But this is not the place for
" entering into that controverſy."

If theſe repreſentations are juſt, and theſe aſſertions true, the controverſy is abſolutely decided with a vengeance; and the bulk of the clergy of of the Church of *England* are as great a ſet of ſc—ndr—ls as can be produced in the annals of the human race. I ſhall not waſte a moment in vindicating them from imputations ſo palpably ſcandalous; but content myſelf with declaring my firm belief, that Dr *Johnſon* would not " have en-
" tertained a better opinion either of the under-
" ſtandings or integrity of Proteſtant Diſſenters" from theſe ſamples of BOTH; and that were Dr. *W.* reſtored to life, he would, for viſible reaſons, think himſelf under much greater obligations to the Biographer than to the Annotator.

In ſhort, we are not to wonder at any thing which is advanced by one who maintains, as this writer does in another page of this very performance, that " in the Scripture-plan no traces of a
" national Church, or eccleſiaſtical authority, are
" to be found."

It

It may be pertinent to remark farther, that *exceedingly mad* as the Puritans and their friends in the laſt century were *againſt* the governors of the Church, and our whole eccleſiaſtical polity, THEY appear to have been more than ordinarily ſolicitous to expreſs their full *aſſent* and *conſent* to the moſt material articles of our faith. Their *quarrel* was not *againſt* our doctrine but our diſcipline. I have by me a juſt and literal tranſlation of the *Confeſſion of Faith*, together with two *Catechiſms*, a larger and a leſs, drawn up by the *Aſſembly of Divines at Weſtminſter*, in 1651, under the authority, and with the concurrence and approbation of Parliament, (ſo called,) and of the Kirk of *Scotland*. The 3d clauſe in the ch. *de Deo et Sacro-ſancta Trinitate* runs *verbatim* as follows. "In Deitatis unitate perſonæ tres ſunt unius "ejuſdemque eſſentiæ, potentiæ, ac æternitatis; "Deus Pater, Deus Filius, ac Deus Spiritus Sanc-"tus. Pater quidem a nullo eſt, nec genitus "nempe nec procedens: Filius autem a Patre eſt "æterne genitus: Spiritus autem Sanctus æterne "procedens a Patre Filioque." In the 23d ch. *de ſtatu hominum poſt mortem, deque reſurrectione mortuorum*, we find this clauſe: "Noviſſimo illo die, "qui comperientur in vivis non morientur quidem "ſed mutabuntur; qui mortui fuerint reſuſcita-"buntur omnes, ipſiſſimis iis corporibus quibus "viventes aliquando fungebantur, ac non aliis, ut

"ut

" ut qualitate differentibus; quæ denuo animabus
" quæque ſuis æterno conjugio unientur."

Theſe doctrines are held out almoſt in the ſame words in both *Catechiſms*.

From which circumſtances I take occaſion to aſk, whether, as far as we may reaſonably collect from the ſtyle and the ſentiments of the Editor of Dr. *Johnſon*'s Life of Dr. *I. Watts* with Notes, the views and the diſpoſitions of the Proteſtant Diſſenters of this age have not a tendency more inimical and deſtructive, than were thoſe of theſe ſame Anceſtors of theirs who " triumphed in the ruin" both of Church and State?

But is there not after all an inveterate difficulty, which we have rather met than encountered, and much leſs overcome, and which furniſhes Popery with its ſhrewdeſt argument, and Infidelity with its ſtrongeſt handle? The proteſtant principle aſſerts the right of private judgment in matters of religion. And yet precepts relative to obedience to ſpiritual authority, &c, are as plain as thoſe directions which require us to *prove all things, and to hold faſt that which is good*, &c. How ſhall we reconcile theſe things? In conſequence of the exertion of this perſonal right, differences ariſe in the world, and controverſies, the natural iſſue of them. How are theſe to be decided? Is it not a ſoleciſm in religion to ſuppoſe a controverſy without a judge? Nevertheleſs we ſay, and demon-

ſtrate

ſtrate too, that the Church of *Rome*, the only Church which pretends to infallibility, has erred, and that even in fundamentals. Accordingly we refer to no arbitration; we acknowlege no rule of faith, no judge of controverſy but Holy Scripture. *Supremus judex* (ſay the *Weſtminſter* Divines abovementioned) *a quo omnes de religione controverſiæ ſunt determinandæ, omnia conciliorum decreta, opiniones, &c, nullus alius eſſe poteſt præter Spiritum Sanctum in Scriptura pronunciantem.* †

But are not theſe *vain words?* Doth any man, or any body of men pretend to the *gift of diſcerning of Spirits* at this day? Or if they do, are their pretenſions admiſſible? Or can Scripture, with any propriety, be ſaid to be the judge of controverſy, when it is the whole and ſole ground of it? Do not all parties find means to wrench the authority of the ſacred pages to their ſide? Every *Anti-trinitarian* will ſay, in the words of *Chillingworth*, (whatever the real ſentiments of the latter might be,) "Propoſe me any thing out of this Book, "and require whether I believe or no, and ſeem "it never ſo incomprehenſible to human reaſon, I "will ſubſcribe it with hand and heart, as know-"ing no Demonſtration can be ſtronger than this, "God hath ſaid ſo, therefore it is true." ‡ But then to the proofs you have to offer, and the texts

† Confeſſ. Fid. Cap. 1. 10.
‡ Religion of Proteſtants &c. p. 335.

you have to produce, he oppoſes his texts, and his proofs, ſuch as they are; or perhaps one general aſſertion, which no body can deny, *viz.* that there is but "one living and true God." Where now is the judge of controverſy? What is become of eccleſiaſtical authority? Or what have we to ſay to thoſe who *caſt* it *in our teeth*, that the Church of *England* hath erred as well as the Church of *Rome?* In ſhort, where is hereſy? And what is ſchiſm?

With a view to the ſolution of this difficulty, and by way of Supplement to the contents of the foregoing ſheets, let us ſee whether a little enquiry will not enable us ſufficiently to aſcertain what hereſy of the worſt ſort was in the days of the Apoſtles themſelves, and according to the conception they muſt by fair conſtruction be underſtood to have entertained of it.

In his 2d general Epiſtle St. *Peter* foretells that there would be *falſe teachers* among Chriſtians, *who* ſhould *privily bring in damnable hereſies*, EVEN *denying the Lord that bought them.* (ch. 2. v. 1.) From which paſſage we can do no leſs than infer, that the denial of the *Lord that bought* us is of all *hereſies* the moſt *damnable.*

Now whether we do, or do not abide by Dr. *Whitby*'s interpretation, who apprehends we are to underſtand God the Father by the word *Lord* in this paſſage, "Chriſt being never ſtyled δεσποτης (the "original word) in the New Teſtament," the inference

ference will inevitably be one and the ſame. *Jeſus Chriſt* was confeſſedly the purchaſer of the *Church with his own blood*. In point of nature, or attribute, there can therefore be no difference betwixt theſe two Perſons; the hereſy which denies either will be equally damnable, according to Dr. *W*'s ſentiment. But if we reject it, the Divinity of our Saviour is not leſs implied in the text before us. For in moſt evident alluſion to this very purchaſe, *Ye are bought with a price*, ſays St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*; *therefore*, continues he, *glorify God*, i. e., out of all queſtion, *Jeſus Chriſt* who *bought* you, *in your body and in your Spirit*, which are God's; i. e., which are Chriſt's. (1 Cor. 6. 20.) It may be a ſatisfaction to the reader to compare this paſſage with the following in the next Chapter. *He that is called being free, is Chriſt's ſervant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the ſervants of men.* (v. 22, &c.)

In his laſt and farewell addreſs to the *Children of Iſrael*, which is called his *Song*, their great Legiſlator puts this queſtion to them, *is not he thy father that hath bought thee?* * God is ſaid to have *bought* his people by his deliverance of them from the *bondage of Ægypt*; which was only a type, but indiſputably a type of the *eternal redemption obtained for us* by the precious blood of *Chriſt*. And is it

* Deutero. Ch. 32. 6.

not juſt to infer the equality of theſe Divine purchaſers from the nature and value of their reſpective purchaſes? The denial of the *Lord that bought* us is therefore in effect the denial of the Divinity of our Saviour.

There is a paſſage in St. *Jude*, parallel to this which we have had in conſideration, that will not be found conſiſtent with it, or with its context, without ſuppoſing the ſame equality. This Apoſtle complains of certain *ungodly men*, who *denied the only Lord God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. They *denied our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, as one with the Father, not as in eſſence diſtinct from him. I ſay, the affinity of this paſſage to the other, and its own context, not barely warrant, but demand this ſenſe. *Jude the Servant of Jeſus Chriſt, &c, to them that are ſanctified by God the Father, and preſerved* BY *Jeſus Chriſt, and called*. We are very ſufficiently authoriſed to read *by* for *in*,* in this paſſage; and if ſo, it is moſt undoubtedly as much the attribute, or property of the Supreme God to *preſerve*, and to *call*, as it is to *ſanctify*; which indeed is the diſcriminative office of the Holy Ghoſt: whoſe Divinity, by the way, is here plainly aſſerted by implication. But we are under no neceſſity of diſturbing the preſent verſion. In the 3d verſe, the Apoſtle exhorts Chriſtians to *contend earneſtly for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints*. That from the beginning ſome ſhould *depart from the* faith, or

* See Hammond, &c, &c.

a belief

a belief in *Jesus Christ*, as the *Son of God* by eternal generation, on principles, and for reasons, by which infidels and sceptics are influenced at this day, is by no means matter of astonishment. But supposing the faith of the primitive Christians, the *faith which was once delivered unto the Saints*, to have been merely a faith in *Jesus Christ* as a *prophet*, or as the *Messiah*, or as a *creature* of a more or less *excellent name*, there would, I presume, have been little room for *contention* about it, or danger of its being *denied*.

If we take into examination that impious and strange doctrine of which St. *John* speaks in terms of strong censure and resentment, in his *first* and *second general Epistle*, this research will likewise terminate in an unquestionable proof of our Lord's Divinity; and convince us, that in the denial of it the error consisted. *Every Spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that Spirit of anti-christ, whereof ye have heard, &c. Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an anti-christ.* (1 John. 4. v. 3. 2 John. v. 7.) Or, as some read these passages, *that confess not Jesus Christ which is come in the flesh.* The import of these texts will not be in the least affected by this variation. That the *man Christ Jesus*, the person who was known by the name of *Jesus Christ*, lived and conversed in the world, did *many wonderful*

derful works, was contumeliouſly treated, and at length put to a painful and ignominious death, were facts too recent, and too generally known, to be diſputed by any at the time when our Apoſtle wrote theſe Epiſtles. That the *Jeſus Chriſt* of theſe Epiſtles was the very identical perſon whom the Apoſtle ſtyles in his Goſpel the *Son of God*, the *Word* that *was in the beginning with God*, and really and truly *was God*, cannot with the leaſt appearance of reaſon be queſtioned. But that *God* was indeed *manifeſt in the fleſh*, took our nature upon him, and *bare our ſins in his own body on the tree*, this was a *ſaying* too *hard* for the acceptation of thoſe *deceivers*, *falſe prophets*, and *anti-chriſts*, as St. *John* calls them, and whom, at the 6th v. of Chap. 4. he repreſents as poſſeſt with the *ſpirit of error*. Accordingly they were weak, and at the ſame time bold enough to reſolve this great truth into mere ſemblance and deception; and to affirm that the human perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt* was a phantom, and lived, and ſuffered, and died, not really, but in appearance only: which abominably ridiculous notion was, as has been obſerved, in a great meaſure adopted afterwards by *Mahomet*, who was offended at thoſe indignities and ſufferings which he conſidered as altogether unworthy of that prophetic character which he acknowleged *Jeſus Chriſt*, as his predeceſſor, to have been veſted with. This doctrine is delivered in the *Koran* in general terms; but the

followers

followers of *Mahomet* differ in their ſentiments reſpecting it. According to ſome, *Jeſus Chriſt* was not nailed to the Croſs, but a malefactor who in perſon much reſembled him. The perſon crucified, ſay others, was "a ſpy that was ſent to intrap our "Saviour;" and others aſſert him to have been *Judas*; and others, *Simon the Cyrenian.*

Or if we ſuppoſe St. *John* to have had in his eye another heretical tenet of a ſimilar nature and tendency, which was very early diſſeminated in the Church, *viz.* that of the *Carpocratians*, &c, who made a diſtinction betwixt *Jeſus* and *Chriſt*; and maintained, that the former ſuffered, and roſe again, but that the latter was impaſſible, as being purely of a ſpiritual nature; (agreeably to the idea ſuggeſted by *Webſter*'s tranſlation of Father *Simon*, which for *every Spirit which confeſſeth not*, &c, reads which *ſeparateth Jeſus*;) the reſult will neceſſarily be found to be one and the ſame. For to what can we reaſonably attribute the denial of our Lord's humanity, or its ſeparation from the divinity, but to an averſeneſs to acknowlege the union of God and Man in the perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt?* And if ſo, it will naturally follow that this union was the doctrine of the *Apoſtles*, and the belief of the primitive Church.

It is well worth obſerving, that *Polycarp*, in his Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, quotes word for word the 3d v. of the 4th Ch. of St. *John*'s firſt Epiſtle,

Whosoever does not confess &c; and that *Ignatius*, who conversed with the Apostles, and, upon the death of *Evodius* was appointed Bishop of *Antioch* b as many of the sacred College as were then living, not barely mentions, but most expressly censures and condemns this whimsical opinion of the *Phantomists*, if I may take liberty so to call them. "Stop your ears, says he, in his Epistle to "the *Trallians*, as often as any one shall speak con-"trary to *Jesus Christ*; who was of the race of "*David*, &c; who was truly born, and did eat "and drink; was truly persecuted under *Pontius* "*Pilate*; was truly crucified, and dead." And a little after, if, says he, "some who are Atheists, "that is to say Infidels, pretend that he only SEEMED "to suffer, (they themselves only seeming to exist,) "why then am I bound? Why do I desire to fight "with beasts?" In the Epistle of the same Father to the *Smyrnæans*, we have the following passage. "And he suffered truly, as he also truly raised up "himself; and not, as some unbelievers say, that "he only SEEMED to suffer."

Though therefore neither the Apostles, nor the Apostolical Fathers particularly specify what heresy is, it appears by just and natural inference from many passages in their writings originally to have consisted in denying the perfect Godhead, and perfect manhood of our Saviour; and that heresies in general deserve to be considered as so many evasions

ſions of theſe fundamental truths. There is another paſſage in the Epiſtle to the *Trallians* which, ſimply aſſerting the Divinity of *Jeſus Chriſt*, puts this out of all reaſonable doubt. " I exhort you, ſays the " venerable Author, or rather not I, but the love " of *Jeſus Chriſt*, that you uſe none but Chriſtian " nouriſhment; abſtaining from paſture which is " of another kind, I mean hereſy. *For* ‡ *they that* " *are heretics confound together the doctrine of Jeſus* " *Chriſt* with their own poiſon, &c. Wherefore " guard yourſelves againſt ſuch perſons. And that " you will do if you are not puffed up, but con- " tinue inſeparable from *Jeſus Chriſt* our GOD, and " from your Biſhop, and from the commands of " the Apoſtles." In ſhort, all theſe circumſtances concur to the eſtabliſhment of our firſt Hypotheſis. If the Catholic faith of the primitive Chriſtians was the ſame which is held in the Church of *England* at this day, at and before the publication of the Holy Scriptures of the New Teſtament, as well as the writings of the Apoſtolical Fathers, their doctrine on the ſubjects we have been handling is ſufficiently uniform and explicit; if otherwiſe, it is by far too conſiſtent, and too perſpicuous.

Agreeably to what has been advanced, we may farther obſerve the ſacred authors frequently referring to ſome ſtanding doctrines, ſome capital arti-

‡ See the references in the Margin.

cles

cles of belief, which had been by them taught, and were by the Church universally received. It will be a hard matter to comprehend the meaning of many passages in the Scriptures, without supposing them to import, or to allude to some such doctrines or principles. The first converts to Christianity are said to have *continued stedfastly in the Apostles, doctrine and fellowship*; * and whatsoever that doctrine might be, it was then no WRITTEN doctrine. St. *Paul* thanks God, that the *Roman* converts had *obeyed from the heart that* FORM OF DOCTRINE *which was delivered to them.* † He exhorts the *Thessalonians to stand fast, and hold the* TRADITIONS which *they had been taught, whether by word, or by* his *Epistle*; ‡ and recommends it to *Timothy*, to *keep that which was committed to his trust*; and to *hold fast the* FORM *of sound words which he had heard of* him. § He injoins *Titus* to *reject a man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition.* ** It will be sufficient to add to this the advice of St. *Jude* to Christians in general, which just above fell under notice, *viz.* that they should *earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints.*

It was doubtless with an eye to this *faith*, to the preservation of the same in purity, and to the future peace and prosperity of the Church, that *Jesus*

* Acts ii. 42. † Rom. vi. 17.
‡ 2 Thess. ii. 15. § 2 Tim. i. 13. ** Titus iii. 10.

Christ

Chriſt gave ſome, Apoſtles; as St. *Paul* informs us; *and ſome, Evangeliſts*; *and ſome, Prophets*; *and ſome, Paſtors and Teachers:* † nor could the purpoſe of ſuch appointments have been anſwered but by a regular ſucceſſion of ſome of theſe characters through all ages.

For the ſame purpoſe moſt unqueſtionably, *God hath ſet in the Church, helps, and governments*, &c, as the ſame Apoſtle declares to his *Corinthian* converts in the 12th Chapter of his firſt Epiſtle to them.

Now how all this could be done; or how either *Evangeliſt*, *Prophet*, or *Teacher*, or Governor could at *any* time, or in *any* manner, exerciſe his function, without invading the right of private judgment, as it has of late days been contended for; or without departing from the *ſimplicity* of the Goſpel in its original ſtate, I pretend not to have ſufficient penetration to diſcover.

Matters appear then to ſtand thus.—That *Jeſus Chriſt* conſtituted no arbitrator, no infallible judge, or decider of controverſy, &c, in his Church, is demonſtrable from the differences, the diſputes, and diſſentions, relative to *circumciſion*, &c, which ſubſiſted in its very infancy. At the ſame time it is certain the Holy Scriptures ſpeak of a *common faith, and of the common ſalvation.** You have ſeen

† Epheſ. iv. 11. * Titus i. 4. Jude v. 3.

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what grounds we have for our perſuaſion that ſuch *common faith* was nothing more or leſs than a belief in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and the other articles contained in our Creeds. Under this perſuaſion, the Church of England, as a national Church, as a Church reformed from the groſs errors, corruptions, and ſuperſtitions of *Rome*, has not only "power to decree rites, or ceremonies, but authority in controverſies of faith;" *viz.* authority, not to determine, but to declare. Accordingly we do not anathematiſe, or moleſt them that renounce our Doctrine, or ſeparate from our Diſcipline, upon principles avowed by ourſelves. We maintain our own rights without encroaching upon the privileges of others. We "diſcover, condemn, and avoid" what we call and believe to be hereſies, without aiming, or wiſhing to prevent them by coercion. We conceive ſpiritual government to be as compatible with religious liberty, as temporal juriſdiction is with civil; and that when the Reformers aſſerted the right of private judgment in matters of religion, the natural right of all men to make uſe of their own faculties, they could not poſſibly mean to inveſt every individual with the "privilege of working out his own ſalvation by "his own underſtanding and endeavours," independently on any extraneous aſſiſtance, or inſtruction whatever; and much leſs to intimate, that he

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is under an indiſpenſable obligation ſo to do. Were this the caſe, the Apoſtle's queſtion, *are all Teachers* muſt be anſwered in the affirmative; and the neceſſary conſequence would be, that EVERY BODY, and yet NO BODY would be a *Teacher*. Which is abſurd. Neither the juſteſt claim, nor the moſt reaſonable exemption can alter the nature of things. If it be true, that this Church derives her exiſtence from the exertions of human reaſon, emancipating itſelf from ſpiritual ſlavery; it is as true, that ſhe owes her preſervation to decent order, and legal eſtabliſhment. If it be true, that the bulk of the people naturally wiſh to act, to think, and to judge for themſelves; it is as true, that they naturally take advice or inſtruction from others, ſubmit to controul, and reverence authority. In ſhort, to whatever cauſes we are to aſcribe that diverſity of opinion which diſtracts the world; how perplexing ſo ever the preſent conſtitution of things may be; or for whatever reaſons it has pleaſed infinite wiſdom to place us in a ſtate of trial, infirmity, and imperfection; one general truth muſt univerſally be ſubſcribed to; *viz.* that, with reſpect both to faith and practice, *the Lord knoweth them that are his*, ‡ and will hereafter acknowlege them accordingly.

‡ 2 Tim. ii. 19.

P. S.

P. S. It is needleſs to tell the ſenſible reader, that I have not been profeſſedly contending with any of the latitudinarian writers whoſe works are incidentally quoted, or referred to, in the progreſs of theſe Diſcourſes and Annotations. If what has herein been offered be ſufficiently ſolid and ſatisfactory, they are ſeverally replied to, though not in form, yet in effect.

THE END.

N. B. The reader is deſired to correct a few errors of the Preſs with his pen; eſpecially in p. 84. l. 15.—109. l. 1.—147. l. 16.—333. l. 26.—334. l. 11.

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