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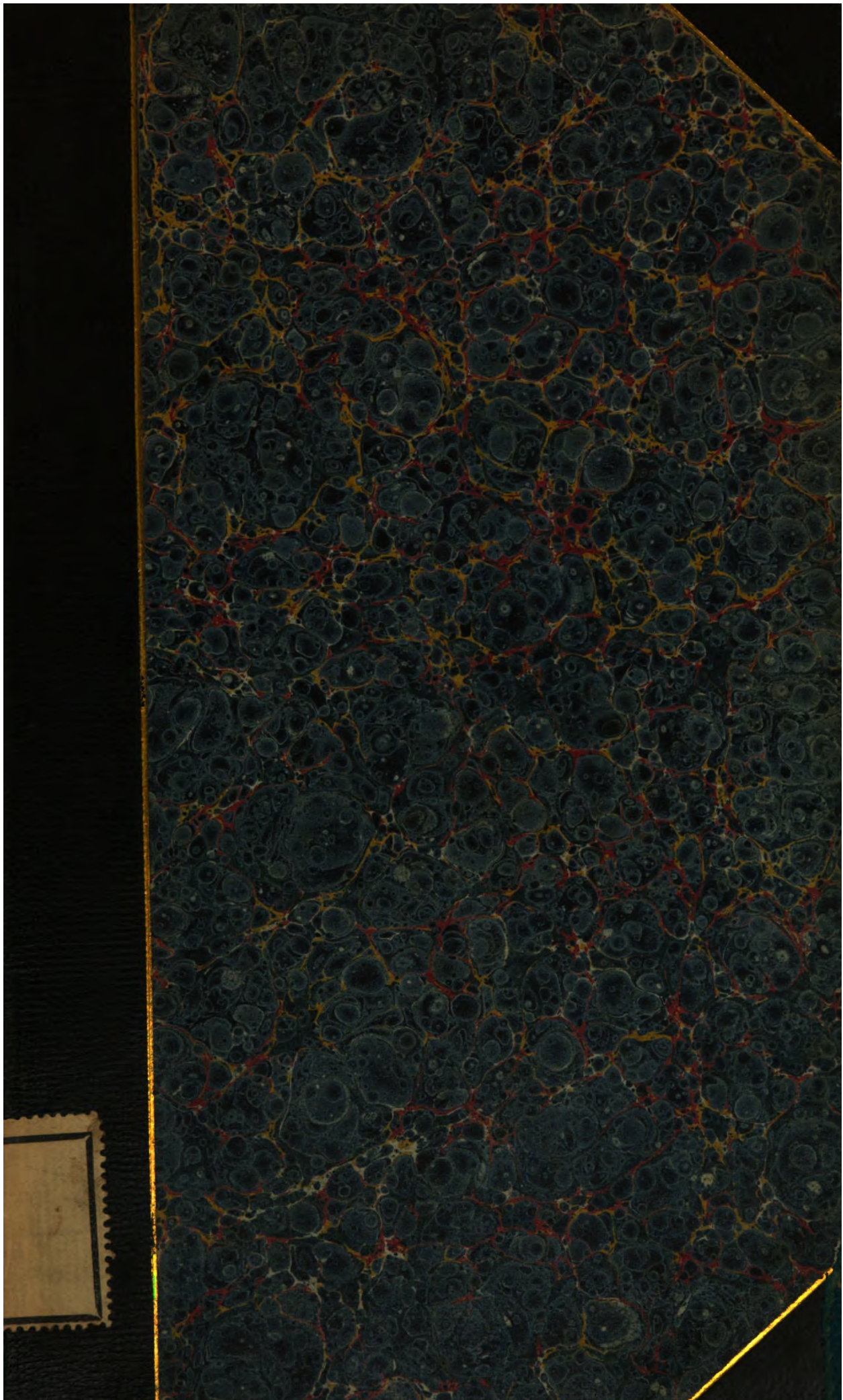
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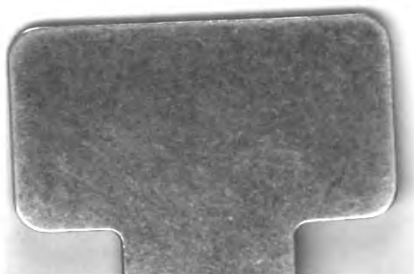
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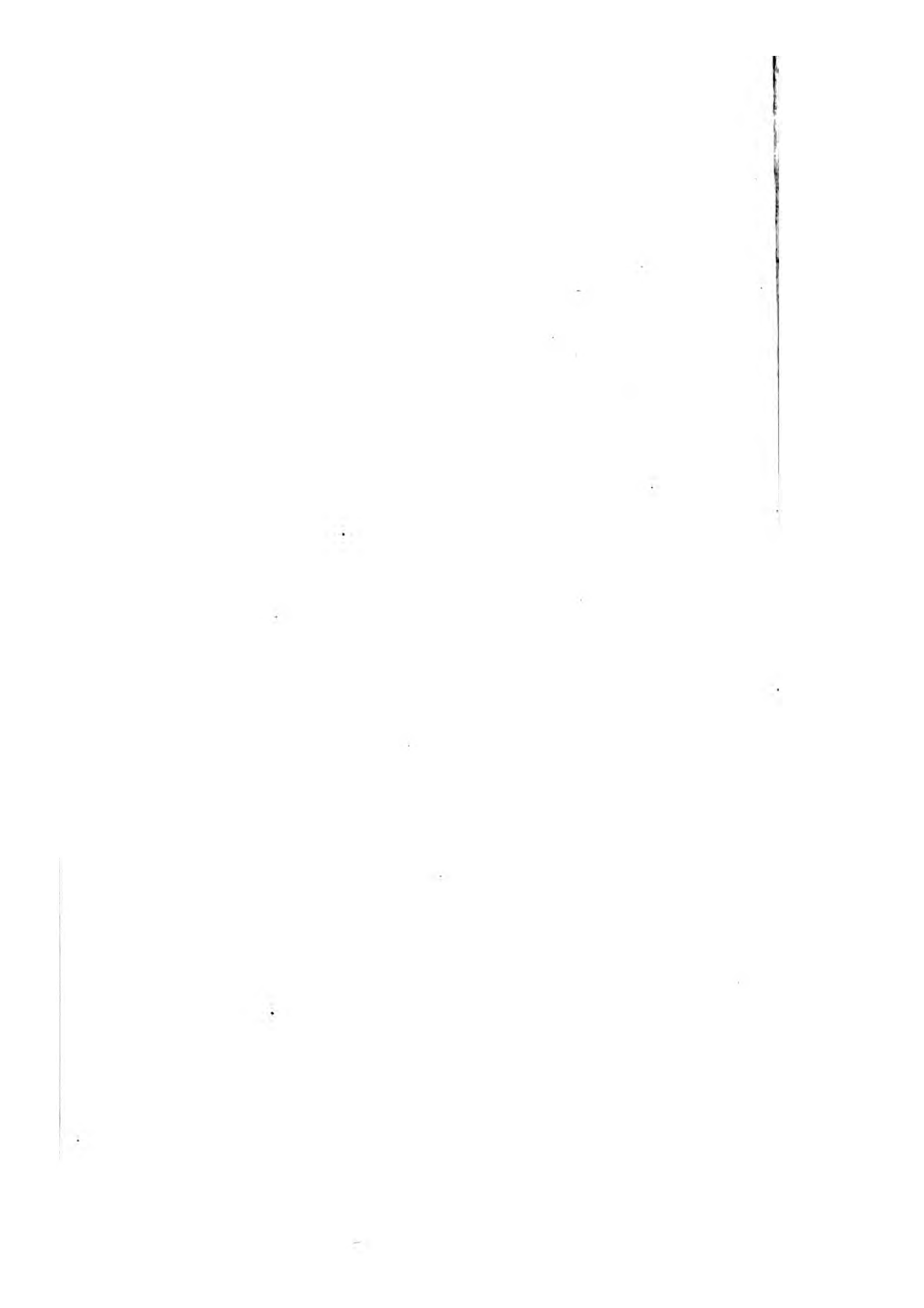
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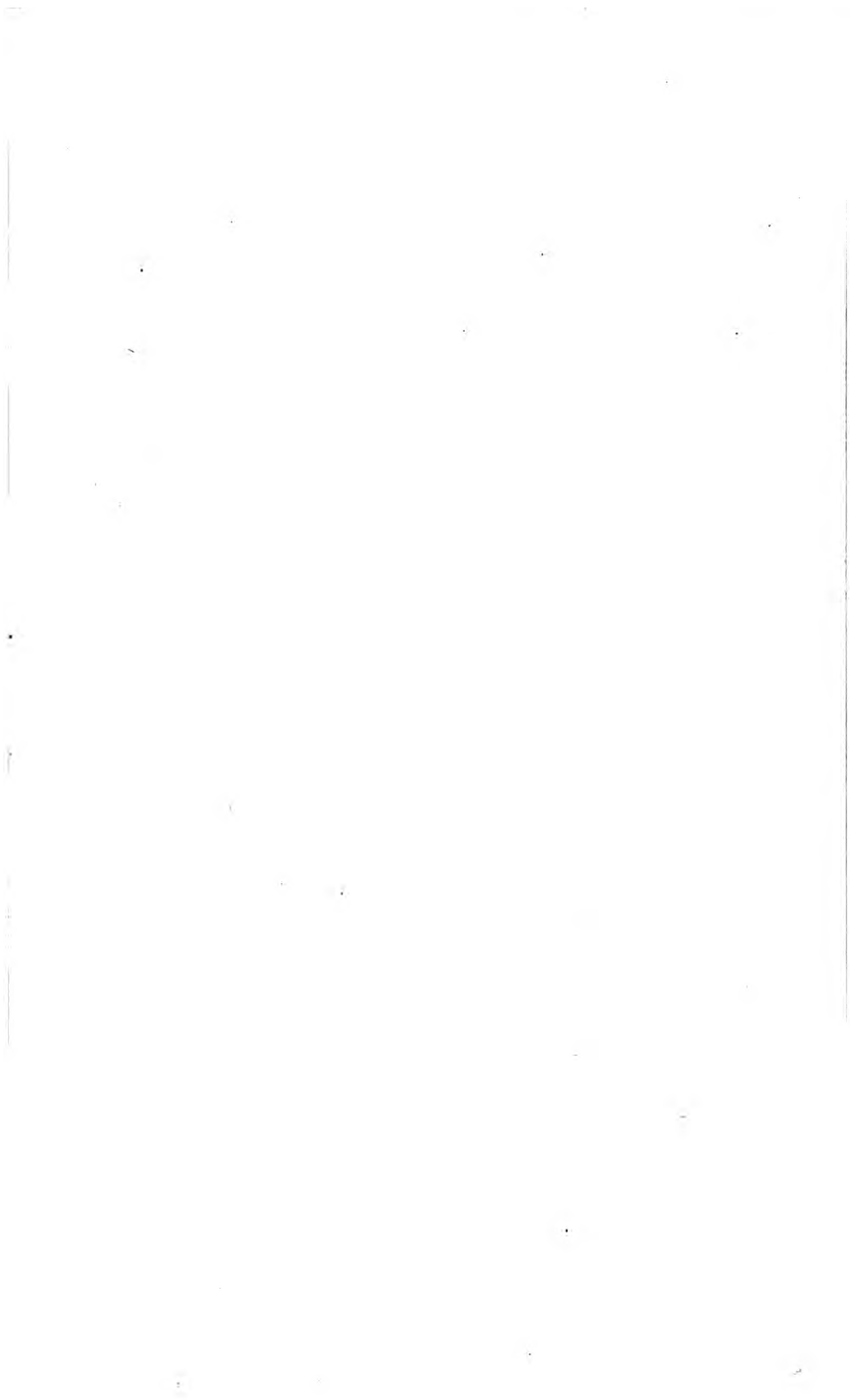


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OF THE
SOCINIAN SCHEME.

By EDWARD HARWOOD, D.D.

Και γαρ εισι τινες, ω φίλοι, ελεγον, απο του ημε-
τερου γενους ομολογουντες αυτου Χριστου ειναι, ανθρωπου
δε εξ ανθρωπων γενομενου αποφαινομενοι. οίς ου συν-
τιθεμαι. *Justin Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 142.*
Edit. Jebb. Lond. 1719.

THIRD EDITION, corrected and enlarged.

PRINTED for JAMES BUCKLAND, Paternoster-
ROW; PAYNE and SON, at the Mews-Gate;
CHARLES DILLY, in the Poultry; and
ROBERT FAULDER, New Bond Street;
LONDON.



T O

The Right Reverend Dr. LOWTH, Bishop of London:
The Hon. and Right Reverend Dr. BARRINGTON,
Bishop of Salisbury:
The Right Reverend Dr. HURD, Bishop of Worcester:
The Right Reverend Dr. EDMUND LAW, Bishop of
Carlisle:
The Right Reverend Dr. JOHN LAW, Bishop of Clon-
fert:
The Right Reverend Dr. NEWCOMBE, Bishop of Wa-
terford:
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Cheshire:
The Right Hon. Lady Charlotte Wentworth:
The Hon. Mrs. Walsingham:
Dr. Warren, Physician to his Majesty, and F. R. S.
John Peachey, Esq; M. P.
Joseph Windham, Esq;
Richard Payne Knight, Esq; M. P.
Michael Wodhull, Esq;
John Walker, Author of several ingenious Treatises.

To THESE most worthy Persons, who were my
great Benefactors, in my long and deplorable Illness,
this little Tract, with the most grateful heart, is in-
scribed by their

obliged Servant,

EDWARD HARWOOD.

ADVERTISEMENT to the SECOND Edition.

DURING the present triumphant Progress of *Socinianism*, I republish this little Treatise, in a cool and dispassionate manner to evince to the Reader, that such men as Sir ISAAC NEWTON, Dr. CLARKE, Dr. SYKES, Mr. WHISTON, PEIRCE, HALLET, CHANDLER, FOSTER, EMLYN, and BENSON did not, without *reason* and *judgment*, adopt those Tenets concerning the *exalted nature* of our blessed Lord, for which some of them *suffered bonds and imprisonment*; and ALL of them *had trial of cruel mockings* and calumnies from the world. If in *any* way this small Tract contribute to the Glory of the Gospel, I shall cordially rejoice amidst that deplorable condition, to which it hath pleased GOD that I should be reduced by a severe stroke of the Palsy, which for fourteen months hath deprived me of the use of my left side, and rendered me an helpless cripple. For the principal Merit of this Treatise the Reader stands indebted to the Rev. Mr. CLARK, late of *Birmingham*, with whom, when I was expert in scriptural knowledge, I once discoursed a whole day on this Subject. I write this discourse as a Greek Scholar, principally for the edification and establishment of young Clergymen in one of the fundamental Concerns of our most holy Faith; no Answer therefore, but from a Scholar can be deemed satisfactory either by *others* or by *myself*. May CHRISTIANITY, that heavenly System of *Doctrines, Duties* and *Discoveries* to this World, diffuse its salutary influence in the hearts and lives of its Inhabitants, *whatever* their metaphysical speculations may be concerning the *conception* and *nature* of that divine Person, *who had glory with the Father before the world was!*

London, Hyde Street, Bloomsbury,
July 1783.

EDWARD HARWOOD.

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ADVERTISEMENT to the THIRD Edition.

FOUR of the most eminent Divines and Scholars of the present Age have testified their approbation of this sincere and well-intentioned little Treatise, viz. Dr. LOWTH, Dr. BARRINGTON, Dr. NEWCOMBE, and Dr. PRICE. I am dying, but I leave it to the judgment of the Reader, and to the blessing of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose bar I shall very shortly appear.

London, Hyde Street, Bloomsbury,
1786.

EDWARD HARWOOD.

O F T H E
S O C I N I A N S C H E M E.

IN the celebrated Dialogue between *Justin Martyr* and *Trypho the Jew*, occurs the following distinguished passage. “ It appears to me, says *Trypho*, that they who maintain that Christ was merely a man, and that he was according to the Divine purpose anointed and constituted the Messiah, advance a sentiment much more probable than what you espouse. For all of us *Jews* expect the Messiah to be a *man*, and that *Elias* will come and anoint him, But when that Person, who is the Messiah, shall appear, it will certainly be found, that he is a *man* born from men*.” And a little before, we hear the

A 3

same

* Και ὁ Τρυφῶν, Ἐμοὶ μὲν δοκοῦσιν, εἶπεν, οἱ λεγόντες ἀνθρώπου γεγενῆσθαι αὐτὸν, καὶ κατ' ἐκλογὴν κεχρισθῆναι, καὶ Χριστὸν γεγενῆσθαι, πιθανώτερον ὑμῶν λεγεῖν τῶν ταῦτα ἄπερ φησὶ λεγόντων. καὶ γὰρ πάντες ἡμεῖς τὸν Χριστὸν ἀνθρώπου ἐξ ἀνθρώπων προσδοκῶμεν γενησεσθῆναι, καὶ τὸν Ἠλίαν χριστῆν αὐτὸν ἐλθόντα. εἰ δὲ οὗτος φαίνεται ὡς ὁ
Χριστός,

same *Jew* making this declaration: “ The sentiment appears to me to be strange and utterly incapable of being demonstrated; for to maintain, as you do, that the Messiah was a *Divine* person, and had a pre-existence before all ages, and that afterwards he submitted to assume human nature, and was not merely a *man* from an human origin, this seems to me not only a *paradoxical*, but a *foolish* opinion. I am sensible, replies *Justin Martyr*, that this subject appears to be paradoxical, especially to those of your nation, who never discovered a desire either to understand or to do the things of God, but rather chose to adhere to your *Rabbies*, as God himself witnesseth against you. However, *Trypho*, the great truth that Jesus is the Christ of God, is not invalidated, if I should not be able to satisfy you that the Son of the universal Parent is a *Divine* person, and had a pre-existent State, and that he became a *man* by means of the virgin. For it is in every respect demonstrable, that he is the Messiah of God, whatever his *nature* may have been. Should I not, therefore, be able to satisfy you that he pre-existed, and that in compliance with the *Divine* will, he
humbled

Χριστος, ανθρωπον μεν εξ ανθρωπων γενομενον εκ παντος επισασθαι δεσ.
Justin Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 142. Ed. Jebb.
 Lond. 1719.

humbled himself to become a *man*, to assume human flesh, and to subject himself to our infirmities, it behoveth you to say, that I *only* am in an error in this point—this will not justify you in denying that Jesus is the Christ, should he appear to have no other than an *human* origin, and to have been constituted the Messiah by the election of God. For, my friends, said I, there are some of our society who acknowledge him to be the Messiah, but maintain that he was a mere man—to whose opinion I assent not*.”

From this honest passage we learn, in the *first* place, that the *Jews* expected that their *Messiah* would only be a man, and have no other than an human original. We see *Trypho* treat with great ridicule and contempt the doc-

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trine

* Παραδοξος τις γαρ ποτε και μη δυναμενος ολως αποδειχθηναι δοκει μοι ειναι. το γαρ λεγειν σε προυπαρχειν θεον οντα προ αιωνων τουτου τον Χριστον, ειτα και γενηθηναι ανθρωπον υπομειναι, και οτι ουκ ανθρωπος εξ ανθρωπου, ου μονον παραδοξον δοκει μοι ειναι, αλλα και μωρον. Καγω προς ταυτα εφην, Οιδ' οτι παραδοξος ο λογος δοκει ειναι, και μαλιστα τοις απο του γενοϋς υμων, οιτινες τα του θεου ουτε νοησαι ουτε ποιησαι ποτε βεβουλησθε, αλλα τα των διδασκαλων υμων ως αυτος ο θεος εσα. ηδη μεντοι, ω Τρυφων, ειπον, ουκ απολλυται το τοιουτου ειναι Χριστον του θεου, εαν αποδειξει μη δυναμαι οτι και προυπηρχεν υιος του ποιητου των' ολων θεος ων, και γεγενηται ανθρωπος δια της παρθενου, αλλα εκ παντος αποδεικνυμενου οτι ουτος εστιν ο Χριστος ο του θεου, ος εις ουτος εσαι. κ. λ. *Justin Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 140. 141. Edit. Jebb.*

trine of the *pre-existence* of Jesus, and the transmission of this exalted Spirit into the uterus of a virgin! He calls it strange, passing strange, and stigmatizes this tenet of the Christians with absurdity and folly. “ You attempt, says *Trypho* to *Justin Martyr*, in another place, to prove to me a thing utterly incredible and almost impossible, That a *God* submitted to be *born* and to become a *man**!” He, elsewhere, attempts to ridicule the notions which the Christians held of the incarnation of a pre-existing Messiah, as the height of extravagance and infatuation. “ We read, says he, in the *Heathen Mythology*, that *Perseus* was begotten of a virgin called *Danae* by their supreme God *Jupiter* in the form of a golden shower. You *Christians* believe a *fable* similar to *this*—You ought to be ashamed of it—You ought rather to maintain that your Jesus was a *man*, of the same origin as other *men*, and to attempt to prove from the scriptures, that he was constituted of God to be the Messiah on account of his virtuous and perfect character—But venture not to vend these *prodigies*, lest you incur the same folly as the *Greeks* in their *Theology*.”

* Απίστον γὰρ καὶ ἀδύνατον σχεδὸν πρᾶγμα ἐπιχειρεῖς ἀποδεικνύουσαι, ὅτι θεὸν ὑπερμελεῖ γεννηθῆναι, καὶ ἀνδρῶπος γενεσθαι. *Justin Martyr. ibid. p. 104.*

logy*.” The Christians’ notion, that the Messiah existed with God before his assumption of human nature, was what *Trypho*’s understanding could not digest. He lavishes all his wit and satire upon it: Compares the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the virgin *Mary*, and the power of the Almighty overshadowing her, to the impregnation of *Danae* by *Jupiter*, and says that the Christians ought to be ashamed of such a weak and wild hypothesis. This exception of the *Jew*, the *Martyr* refutes with great learning and piety,

Another thing we learn from this passage is, that some of the Christians, in these *primitive* times, denied the pre-existence, affirming that our Saviour was no more than a *man*—with whose opinion, says *Justin Martyr*, I cannot agree†. *Other* Christians, on the contrary, in these

* Εν δε τοις των λεγομενων Ελληνων μυθοις λελεκται οτι Περσευς εκ Δαναης παρθενου ουσης, εν χρυσου μορφη ρευσαντος επ’ αυτην του παρ αυτοις Διος καλουμενου, γεγεννηται. και υμεις τα αυτα εκεινοις λεγοντες, αιδεισθαι οφειλετε, και μαλλον ανθρωπον εξ ανθρωπων γενομενον λεγειν τον Ιησουν τουτον. και εαν αποδεικνυτε απο των γραφων οτι αυτος εστιν ο Χριστος, δια το εννομως και τελεως πολιτευεσθαι αυτον, κατηξιωσθαι του εκλεγηαι εις Χριστον. αλλα μη τερατολογειν τολματε, οπως μητε ομοιως τοις Ελλησι μωραινειν ελεγχησθε. *Justin Martyr, Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 200, 201. Edit. Jebb 1719.*

† Και γαρ εισι τινες, ω φιλοι, ελεγον, απο του ημετερου γενους ομολογουντες αυτον Χριστον ειναι, ανθρωπον δε εξ ανθρωπων γενομενον αποφαινομενοι.

these *early* ages went into the *opposite* extreme, and rashly maintain, says *Origen*, that Christ was the Supreme God over all [the same individual being with the Almighty] but we do not think him so, says this Father, for we believe his own words when he assureth us, saying: The *Father*, who sent me, is *greater* than me*. In the very remotest ages of the Church there subsisted a great diversity of opinions concerning the nature and person of Christ. Some, even in the Apostle's time, asserted that *Christ was not come in the flesh*†—that he never was really invested with human nature—but only exhibited the external *shadowy appearance* and *form* of a man.

In the third place, this passage stands an everlasting monument of the amiable and truly Christian candour and charity of *Justin Martyr*. He brings no *railing accusation* against those Christians in his days, who believed our Saviour to have been merely a *man*—he pronounces no anathemas upon their creed—he only says, he
himself

αποφαινομενοι' οἷς ου συντιθεμαι. *Dialog. cum Tryph.* p. 142. *Edit.* 1719.

* Εγω δε τινας, ὡς ἐν πληθει πισευοντων και δεχομενων διαφωνιαν, δια την προπετειαν ὑποτιθεσθαι, τον Σωτηρα ειναι τον επι πασι Θεον· αλλ' ουτι γε ἡμεῖς τοιουτον, οἱ πειθομενοι αυτω λεγουσι, Ο πατηρ, ὁ πεμφας με, μειζων μου εστι. *Origen contra Celsum, Lib. viii.* p. 387. *Cantab.* 1677.

† Second Epistle of John, *ver.* 7.

himself could not concur with them in their sentiments in this particular. He declares, that the *denial* of a pre-existence did not invalidate, or in the least weaken the evidences of Christianity—that Jesus had abundantly evinced himself to be the Messiah, whatever his nature and origin might be, whether human or divine—and that however this disquisition were determined, Christianity itself could not be affected by it, but would remain in full possession of its native excellence and divine authority. One cannot but remark, with affecting concern, the striking contrast between that candour and moderation here expressed, by that good man, towards those who denied the pre-existence of Christ, and the temper and conduct of many haughty orthodox bigots, whose frantic violences and intemperate zeal against this sentiment, and those who adopted it, have, through a series of many centuries, defiled the pages of Ecclesiastical history, and dishonoured the annals of humanity.

In the time of *Irenæus*, there were Christians, who are frequently mentioned and confuted in his celebrated *Book against the Heresies*, who denied the pre-existence of our Lord, and contended that he was the son of *Joseph*. They argued thus: If Christ was *born*, he had no being before he was born.* In answer to these,

Irenæus

* Dicentium, si ergo natus est, non erat antè Christus. *Irenæus*, p. 245. *Edit. Græbe. Oxon. 1702.*

Irenæus asserts, “ That the Word existed along with the supreme Being at the beginning : that all things were created by him : that he ever superintended the human race : and that in the last ages, according to the time fore-ordained by the Almighty, this Divine person united himself to human nature, and became a man : that he descended from the Father—became incarnate : humbling himself even to death, and then accomplishing the oecconomy of our salvation*.” From the same Father we learn, that the persons who asserted that Christ was a mere man, and generated, in a natural manner, by his Father *Joseph*†, were the *Ebionites*‡. But with what propriety, replies *Irenæus*, can our
 Lord

* Oſtenſo manifeſtè, quod in principio Verbum exiſtens apud Deum, per quem omnia facta ſunt, qui et ſemper aderat generi humano, hunc in noviffimis temporibus ſecundum præſinitum tempus à Patre, unitum ſuo plasmati, paſſibilem hominem factum — Verbum Dei exiſtens a Patre descendens, et incarnatus, et uſque ad mortem descendens, et diſpenſationem conſummans ſalutis noſtræ. *Irenæus*, *Grabe*. 245.

† Dr. PRIESTLEY, than whom there is not a greater philoſopher and ſpeculatiſt now living, labours to prove in the fourth volume of his *History of early Opinions, &c.* that Chriſt was really and truly the Son of his old name-ſake *Joseph*.

‡ Nudè tantùm hominem eum dicunt ex *Joseph* generatum. P. 248. Οἱ Εβιωναιοὶ ἐξ Ἰωσήφ αὐτὸν γεγεννησθαι φαſκουσι. *Irenæus*, p. 253. *Oxon.*

Lord be styled greater than *Solomon*, or *Jonas*, or even *David*, if he had the same *common* original with these, and were merely an ordinary descendent from them. Or with what propriety could our Lord pronounce *PETER blessed* for making that profession; Thou art Christ the son of the living God!*. In another place of this learned and useful work, one of the most valuable remains of Christian antiquity, this Father argued against those who asserted, That the *beginning* of Christ's existence was the *time* of his advent into our world, that only from the time of *Tiberius Cæsar* had the Deity interposed for the happiness of mankind, and who *denied* that the Logos had *always* been the governor and guardian of the human race.†

In the *third* century *Paul of Samosata* distinguished himself, in maintaining that our Saviour had no existence before he was born of the virgin *Mary*. The council of *Antioch*, convened A. D. 269, by which he was deposed and excommunicated, in their synodical epistle say,
That

* Quomodo autem plus quam Salomon, aut plus quam Jona habebat et Dominus erat David, qui ejusdem cum ipsis fuit substantiæ. *Irenæus*, p. 358. *Grabe*.

† Si autem Christus tunc inchoavit esse, quando et secundum hominem adventum suum egit, et a temporibus Tiberii Cæsaris commemoratus est Pater providere hominibus, et non semper Verbum ejus unà cum plasmate fuisse ostendebatur. *Irenæus*, *Edit. Oxon.* p. 300.

That this heretic affirmed our Lord's original to be *human**, and that the son of God never *descended* from heaven†. Contrary to the doctrine of the church, says *Eusebius*, this divine formed a very mean and abject idea of Christ, as being nothing more than an ordinary man‡. In the vindication and support of his hypothesis, he maintained, That the essence of the son of God was consubstantial with the essence of the Father§.

In the subsequent century, *Marcellus*, bishop of *Ancyra*, in a controversial piece he published against one *Asterius*, being transported by the spirit of opposition to his adversary, in the heat of his zeal, happened to assert, That our Saviour was no more than a *man*. This was a part of his book too criminal for the zealots of those times to overlook. He was cited before a synod of Bishops, who then sat at Jerusalem. They accused him of reviving the heresy of *Paul of Samosata*. They commanded him publickly to
change

* Λεγει Ιησουν Χριστον κατωθεν. *Eusebii Eccl. Hist. Lib. 7. p. 362. Cantab. 1720.*

† Τον μεν γαρ υιον του Θεου ου βουλεται συνομολογειν εξ ουρανου καταληλυθειαι. *Eusebii Eccles. Hist. p. 362.*

‡ Την επισκοπην Παυλος ο εκ Σαμοσατων παραλαμβανει. τουτου δε ταπεινα και χαμαιπειτη περι του Χριστου παρα την Εκκλησιαστικην διδασκαλιαν φρονησαντος, ως κοιου την φυσιν ανθρωπου γενομενου. *Eusebius Eccl. Hist. Lib. 7. p. 357. Edit. Cantab. 1720.*

§ See the *Bishop of Clogher's* vindication of the Old Testament against *Bolingbroke*. Page 447. *Edit. Lond. 1759.*

change his sentiments. The poor man was covered with confusion, and promised them he would burn his book—His scheme was afterwards re-examined by a number of Ecclesiastics at *Constantinople*, and upon his refusing to destroy his bad book, as he had once promised them he would, they deposed him, and sent *Basil* to be his successor*.—By a synod, however, which was some time after convoked, he was invested with his former dignity, upon his protesting, That his book had been misunderstood, and that he had been *falsely* charged with adopting the opinions of *Paul* of *Samosata*†. Against this book of *Marcellus*, *Eusebius* wrote an elaborate treatise‡, which hath been happily transmitted

‡ Ψιλόν γὰρ ἀνδρῶπον ὡς ὁ Σαμοσατεὺς ἐτολμήσεν εἰπεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν ταῦτα γνοῦντες οἱ τότε ἐν Ἱεροσολυμοῖς συνελθόντες—ἐκέλευον αὐτὸν μεταθεσθαι τῆς δοξῆς ὃ δὲ καταισχυνθεὶς, ἐπηγγέλλετο κατακαῦσαι τὸ βιβλίον. ὡς σπουδῆ διελυθῆ ὁ τῶν ἐπισκοπῶν συλλογὸς, τοῦ βασιλεως εἰς τὴν Κωνσταντινουπολιν καλουτος αὐτοὺς, τότε δὴ τῶν περὶ Εὐσεβίου ἐν τῇ Κωνσταντινουπολει παρόντων, αὐτὸς τὰ κατὰ Μαρκελλὸν ἀνεζητήετο. ὡς δὲ ὁ Μαρκελλὸς οὐχ ἤρειτο κατακαῦσαι καθὰ ὑπέσχετο τὴν ἀκαίρον συγγραφὴν, οἱ παρόντες τὸν μὲν καθεῖλον, Βασιλείου δὲ ἀντ' αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν Ἀγκυραν ἐπέμψαν. *Socratis Hist. Eccles.* p. 72. 73. *Edit. Cantab.* 1720.

† See *Socrates*, p. 73. 105. and *Sozomen*, p. 91. *Edit. Cantab.*

‡ Τοῦτο μὲν τὸ συγγραμμά Εὐσεβίου ἐν τρισὶ βιβλίοις ἀνετρεψεν, ἐξελεγξας τὴν κακοδοξίαν αὐτοῦ. *Socrates Hist. Eccles.* p. 73. This treatise of *Eusebius* against *Marcellus*, is published at the end of his *Evangelica Demonstratio*. *Edit. Vigeri, Paris,* 1628.

transmitted to our times, and will amply recompence the learned reader's careful perusal.

Photinus, the disciple of *Marcellus*, inherited from his master the same religious system. He asserted, that there was one supreme Being, who had created all things by his own word, but he denied the eternal generation and pre-existence of the son, and maintained that Christ had no being before he was born of his mother. Say the good Bishops when sitting in council on this heresy; We execrate and anathematize those who falsely assert the Logos to be a pure simple essence, having its subsistence in another—some of them styling it the *Word manifested*, others the *internal Word*, and maintaining that Christ, the son of God, the mediator and image of God, had *not* a being before the ages, but that he only was constituted the Messiah, and the son of God, when he assumed our flesh from the virgin, four hundred years ago. For they assert, that our Saviour's Kingdom had a beginning, and will have an end after the general judgment and the consummation of all things. Such are the tenets of those who are the followers of *Marcellus* and *Photinus* of *Ancyra*. They, like the Jews, reject the pre-existence and deity of Christ, and the eternal duration of his kingdom*.

In

* See *Socratis Eccles. Hist.* p. 98. 100. 101. *Edit. Cantab.*

In these wretched times, also, of theological disputation and uncharitableness, one *Anastasius* happened to throw out this sentence in one of his sermons: Let no one presume to call *Mary* the mother of God. For *Mary* was a mortal, and it is impossible that God should be born of a mortal.—This was no sooner heard, but the whole church was in an uproar*. *Nestorius* seconded the preacher, and supported his assertion. Such a contest, such a tumult was instantly excited; that for the peace of the church, it was deemed necessary, that a general council should be convoked. The fathers met at *Ephesus*. *Nestorius* was summoned before them. And while they were witnessing a good confession of their soundness and orthodoxy, this heretic had the audacity publicly to declare before them all: I will never call him God, who was once a babe of two or three months old! And, therefore, I am pure from the blood of you all, and from this time I will never come among you. They affirmed he had spoken blasphemy against the Son of God, and deposed him†.

B

Crushed

* Και ποτε επ' εκκλησιας ο Αναστασιος διδασκων εφη, θεοτοκον την Μαρναν καλειτω μηδεις. Μαρια γαρ ανθρωπος ην. υπ' ανθρωπου δε θεον τεχθηναι, αδυνατον. τουτο ακουσθην, πολλους κληρικούς τε και λαϊκούς εν ταύτω παντας ιταραξεν. *Socratis Hist. Eccles.* p. 380. *Cantab.* 1720.

† Και δη πολλων θεολογουντων τον Χριστον, εγω, εφη Νεστοριος, τον γενομενον

Crushed by these Ecclesiastical censures and anathemas, this scheme at first languished, and seems at last totally to have perished in the Christian Church. But about *two* centuries ago it rose from its ashes, under the auspices and patronage of *Faustus Socinus*. Of generosity and liberality of mind, there is not perhaps, in the whole History of Religion, a more illustrious example than *Socinus*. An *Italian*, born in a country overwhelmed with popish darkness, fanaticism, and mystery, the greatness of his soul, the strength of his genius, and the honest freedom of his enquiries, threw off all that immense load of the national superstition, and the errors of a system which was every where triumphant. His understanding he cultivated with an assiduity which nothing could fatigue, the scriptures he read and examined with a mind divested, as much as the human mind can be divested, of prejudices and prepossessions, and from the profoundest *abyss* of national darkness emerged, some will tell you, to the highest summit of rationality and good sense. Smitten with the love of truth, and acted by a probity and integrity, which hath few examples, he dissolved all the ties of country, consanguinity, and friendship;

γενομενον διμνησιον και τριμνησιον, ουκ αν Θεον ονομασαιμι. και δια τουτο καδαρος ειμι απο του αιματος υμων. *Socrates*, p. 383.
Cantab.

ship; and in order to enjoy unmolested a system of religious institution, which he had the strongest persuasion was built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, he left his native soil, tore himself from the embraces of a prince who loved him, relinquished all the splendors and honours of a court, and migrated first into *Germany*, afterwards into *Poland*, where he supported the insults, that were offered him on account of his religious principles, with a dignity and elevation of soul worthy a philosopher and a christian. Whether his hypothesis concerning the person of Christ be true or false, the honesty with which he conducted his researches, and the greatness of mind he displayed in voluntarily expatriating himself, rather than incur the temptations and guilt of worldly compliances, will for ever immortalize his name and his virtue. And though upon a careful and impartial examination of the Divine records, I see reason to differ from him in that article which is peculiarly styled *Socinianism*, yet permit me, reader, freely to declare, that the most rational and instructive criticisms and annotations which were ever published upon the scriptures, were executed by *Socinus*, *Crellius*, *Wolzogenius*, *Slichtingius*, *Pzircovius*, and *Brennius*. I have had occasion to consult and collate many commentators and critics upon the sacred writings, and I will venture to assert,

That there is hardly a good criticism in all our modern Expositors, Mr. *Locke*, Dr. *Clarke*, Dr. *Benson*, Dr. *Taylor*, Messieurs *Pierce* and *Hallet*, Dr. *Sykes*, but what is to be found in that *Collection* published under the name of the *Unitarian Brethren*, and commonly called the *Fratres Poloni*. I once heard a Gentleman* of great erudition declare, That Dr. *Benson* plundered this great Treasure of a vast number of ingenious remarks and judicious observations, without acknowledging the sources of his intelligence. If this be true, which I hope is not, it was very disingenuous and illiberal.

In *England*, in the last century, a number of *Socinians* arose, and published a few books, ill-written and ill-translated. They appear to have formed themselves into a society—but, like *Marcellus*, they were only just shewn† to the world, and then disappeared.

Mr. *Biddle*, against whom Dr. *Owen* wrote, and who was for his heresy banished by the *Long Parliament*

* The late Reverend and worthy Mr. *Brekell* of *Liverpool*, at whose house I spent a fortnight in the year 1767 the pleasantest time, with regard to a literary intercommunity, I ever spent in my life; I never knew a better *Greek* scholar. E. H.

† Offendent terris hunc tantùm fata, neque ultra
 Illè sinent. *Virgil. Æneid Lib. 6. vers. 869.*

Parliament into the isle of *Scilly*, was an avowed *Socinian*. He possessed very considerable learning, and a singular understanding. A *Catechism* he published, and which is printed at *London*, 1654, discovers an enlargement of mind, a liberality of sentiment, and a sincerity in freely publishing what he apprehended to be truth, which do honour to his memory.

In the present *century* the scheme of *Socinus* hath met with several advocates of the first eminence for learning and piety. My late worthy and learned friend Dr. LARDNER, whose memory I honour, and whose distinguished abilities and integrity it is not for me to celebrate, for a number of years stood almost alone, among the Dissenters, as a supporter and defender of the *Socinian* doctrine. In his singular erudition and sincerity, the scheme had the weight and authority of a thousand advocates. He carried on a free and calm debate, in an epistolary correspondence, with his worthy and learned colleague Dr. *Benson*—but this amicable discussion produced no alteration in their respective sentiments and schemes. For a number of years, in harmony and love they conducted the pastoral offices together, and to a small but very respectable number of intelligent Christians preached, as one expressed it, *Socinianism* in the morning, and *Arianism* in the afternoon. I mention not this as any thing

invidious and disparaging. For it reflects the greatest honour upon the memories and characters of these great and good men, that such an inviolable harmony and friendship subsisted between them, notwithstanding this difference of opinion; and it redounds to the everlasting praise of that worthy society over which they presided, that the supporters and members of it allowed and encouraged, in their ministers, this generous latitude of sentiment, and this liberal freedom in their religious profession. On the publication of my Explanatory version, or Concise paraphrase of the New Testament, Dr. *Lardner* did me the honour of writing me a long and very learned and excellent *Letter* on *this* subject, which I once intended to have inserted in this Dissertation. But it shall not be lost*.

Of late years there have appeared a few publications in support of the Socinian scheme, written, chiefly, by *Dissenters*,† among whom,
it

* Perhaps, my aged and worthy Friend, the Reverend Dr. FLEXMAN, at present the learned and venerable Father of the Dissenting Ministers in LONDON, understands the *Socinian Controversy*, from its *origin* to its *present state*, better than any man *now* living. E. H.

† The Body of the Dissenters, both Pastors and People, are Calvinists, as I know to my sorrow, having been a Minister and Mendicant among them eighteen years. The rational

it is said, this theory has recently been gaining some profelytes.

In the year 1766 was published an anonymous pamphlet, entitled, *Another defence of the Unity, wherein St. John's Introduction to his gospel, and his account of the Word's being made flesh, are considered.* The professed design of this little production, is to invalidate and explode the pre-existence of Christ: but it is written with great inaccuracy of style and confusion of ideas.

In the subsequent year the public was favoured with an elaborate work in favour of the *Socinian Hypothesis*, entitled, *The true doctrine of the New Testament concerning Jesus Christ, considered, wherein the misrepresentations that have been made of it, upon the Arian hypothesis, and upon all*

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Trinitarian

tional Divines among them are few, and in general, very unpopular. The harvest, which Socinianism is now gathering, is not from the *rational Dissenters*, they are almost dwindled to nothing, but from the established Clergy. The Academies, which the rational Dissenters had once instituted at Taunton, Exeter, Warrington, and Hoxton, are now, 1785, dissolved. I hear, January 1786, that a new Academical College is going to be established at Hackney, to which, as being a rational Christian and a friend of Literature, I sincerely wish success. But the Funds of the Presbyterians should erect and endow *rational Churches*. Several of the worthy dissenting Clergy have lately shed great LIGHT upon Religion and the Scriptures, but the *darkness* of their people comprehended it not. E. H. 1785.

Trinitarian and Athanasian principles are exposed.
 This book, which is written with great candour, and with an excellent spirit, is little more than a studied Dissertation on one single passage of scripture, *Before Abraham was, I am*—for other passages of the New Testament, which have been understood to assert, in the strongest manner, the pre-existence of the Son of God, are either totally omitted, or mentioned in a very slight and cursory manner. To this treatise is prefixed a very sensible and judicious preliminary discourse on the rights of private judgment, in which the authority of scripture, as the sole standard of truth, is irrefragably supported, the native liberty and unalienable privilege of thinking and judging for ourselves in matters of religion, is excellently maintained and defended, and the notion of an infallible judge and arbiter of controversy, the *public* invasion of *private* freedom and liberty in forming religious sentiments, and the supposed utility and necessity of an human *established* orthodoxy, to be a public national test of truth and error, are admirably confuted and exposed.

The *Letter* written in the year 1730, and published 1759, and now well known to have been Dr. *Lardner's*, contains the strength of the *Socinian* cause.

These several performances I have read with care—with a mind, I can truly say, open to conviction,

conviction, and unbiaſſed as much as poſſible, by any former religious hypotheſis. But they have not convinced me. They have not cauſed me to heſitate. I believe others to be as ſincere in their opinions as I am in my own. I have candour and charity for all who differ from me in theſe ſpeculations*. I embrace thoſe, who believe the truth of the Chriſtian religion, but ſee reaſon to diſbelieve the pre-exiſtence of its author, in the arms of my benevolence and love, as my chriſtian brethren. I repeat with pleaſure the candid ſentiments of *Juſtin Martyr*, and with pleaſure adopt them for my own: Chriſtianity is the ſame divine and heavenly ſcheme, its authority

* I have carefully read what hath been written ſince the year 1772, in favour of *Socinianism*, either by *Dr. Priſtley*, or the learned and worthy *Mr. Lindſey*, and other names of inferior renown; but they have not invalidated my firm belief of the pre-exiſtence of the WORD OF GOD. Perhaps the Palsy, which hath deplorably broken my bodily frame, hath alſo impaired my mental abilities. That famous paſſage in our Saviour's ſolemn Addreſs to GOD, before his laſt Sufferings, is, I ſtill think, deciſive. *Glorify THOU me, with thine own ſelf, παρα ſεαυτω, apud te ipſum, in tuâ præſentiâ, with the glory, which I had, with thee, παρα σοι, apud te, in thy præſence, near thy perſon, before the world was,* On which my ingenious and learned Friend the Rev. Mr. ROBERTSON well obſerved: our Saviour evidently prays for his future Reſtitution to that glory, which in a prior ſtate of Exiſtence he had once enjoyed.

urity and excellence are not invalidated and destroyed, whatever our theories and speculations may be concerning the *nature* and *person* of Christ. I shall be highly indebted to any ingenious and learned person, who thinks me in an error, if he will publish remarks upon this Dissertation. I shall esteem it an honour done me*. I wish my worthy friend Dr. *Lardner* could have seen it.

But

* This Dissertation I published in 1772, and such an honour hath not yet been bestowed, 1786; though it hath been approved by the rational Christians and best Scholars of the present age. I may therefore reasonably adopt the *prophetic* language of my late friend Mr. TAYLOR, the learned Author of *Ben Mordecai's Apology*: "When the *Athanasian* and *Socinian* writers have effectually exposed one another's mistakes without getting rid of their own; when they shall have settled the various reading of an *av* or an *ov* in *Justin's Trypho*, and agree about the Construction of his Greek; when they have ransacked all Antiquity for the Opinion of the *Nazarens*, *Mineans*, and *Ebionites*, with as much zeal, as if their faith depended upon it, and all to no purpose; their Difficulties still remaining; it is not improbable that the Divines of the next Generation will consider the Subject more coolly, and upon another Footing than those who are now concerned in the Dispute, and find the Principle I am defending, will supply the only KEY that is able to open and discover the Consistency between the *Christian* and *Jewish* Revelations, and form one plain and rational System from the beginning to the end of Time; agreeably to the Nature and Attributes of God, and the common Notions and Principles of Mankind." TAYLOR's Preface to the *Second* Edition of his eight Letters, in two Vols. 8vo. London 1784.

But he is removed into Eternity, as I shall shortly be. It manifests a littleness, an illiberality of soul, unworthy an enquirer into truth, unworthy that benevolence the gospel was given to inspire into the human breast, to look *coldly* one upon another, to *think* and *speak* disrespectfully and contemptibly one of another, on account of a contrariety in our respective systems and disquisitions concerning the *Logos*. The essence of Christianity doth not consist in theorizing and speculating, in framing systems for ourselves, and ingeniously disproving those of others: but it consists in a good heart, in a devout life, in benevolent affections, and in a truly virtuous and well-ordered conversation. There are difficulties in most subjects: a *metaphysician* will *find* them in the *plainest*. I own it is most congruous to our natural ideas to suppose a person who was born in our world, lived in it, and died in it, to be only a *man*: but there are many of the plainest passages of scripture, which I think can never be accommodated to such an hypothesis. Metaphysicians and speculatists, by philosophical refinement, may shed darkness and obscurity upon the strongest light, and dispute and explain away the clearest and plainest expressions.

It is an excellent canon in interpreting scripture, often inculcated by all rational critics and expositors of the sacred Oracles, That the most obvious

obvious sense of the words is the true sense. The poor, originally, had the gospel preached to them, and the vulgar were designed to understand its truths equally with the scholar and philosopher. What ideas, therefore, does that text, *Before Abraham was I am*, convey to a man of plain understanding! Does he not naturally infer from these plain words, That our Saviour had a being *before* Abraham! What notion hath a plain poor man of figurative and ideal existence—of an existence, that was not real, but only posited in the Divine decrees! Or how did the *Jews* understand this assertion of our Lord? From their *conduct* most certainly it appears, that they understood him to assert his own existence *before* Abraham—for we find upon this explicit declaration, that he had a being *before* that great and illustrious ancestor, that they were exasperated to madness against him, and took up stones instantly to murder him for impiously presuming to say of himself a thing so enthusiastically extravagant. Their sanguinary violence on this occasion is a clear FACT in testimony of their construing his words in the *plain obvious* meaning of them, as being a solemn public assertion that He had a being *before* the birth of the great father and founder of their nation.

On this and every other subject I honestly and sincerely represent things as they appear to my understanding.

understanding. I plead not the prescription of antiquity, or the authority of names. Fathers and Councils, Creeds and Formularies, human Systems and Catechisms, are not the rule of my faith. Any *man*, however learned and illustrious, or bodies of men, however dignified with worldly stations and honours, and venerable for their age, erudition and piety, will not justify a blind acquiescence in their judgment*. They are not to direct my own understanding, to invade the unalienable right I have to think and examine freely for myself. The *Fathers* were weak men: the *public judgment* of oecumenical councils, paltry and puerile to the last degree. Synods and Convocations have erred. Great men, and the greatest number of great men are fallible, and the *weakest* things that were ever *said*, and the *wickedest* things that were ever *done*, in the whole history of mankind, were *said* and *done* in general Councils and Ecclesiastical synods.

Thanks to the immortal LOCKE, and to his illustrious second, the ever-memorable *Bishop of Winchester*, Religious Liberty is *now* well understood,

* The authority of Emperors, Kings, and Princes, is human. The authority of Councils, Synods, Bishops and Presbyters, is human. The authority of the Prophets is divine. *Sir Isaac Newton in his Observ. on Daniel*, p. 14.

understood, the rights of *private* judgment accurately defined, gloriously extended, and immoveably established; and *scriptural authority* alone, not any *established human* compilation or system of orthodoxy, uncontrovertibly proved to be obligatory on the opinions and consciences of Christians.

There is no man, for whom I retain so great a veneration as Dr. LARDNER. His memory is dear to me. His learning was immense, and the distinguished features of his mind were simplicity and godly sincerity. If there were any person whose *ipse dixit* would have been sacred with me, and in whose opinion I were to have reposed, without examining for myself, that person would have been Dr. *Lardner*. I had almost said, that I regard other critics as children in comparison with him. But with all my persuasion of his abilities, with all my conscious knowledge of his integrity, with the full idea, deeply infixed in my breast, of his singular worth as a scholar and a Christian, which worth was, moreover, endeared to me by an intimate friendship for many years, I think his celebrated treatise on the Logos to be weak, his criticisms in favour of the *Socinian* scheme inaccurate, and the whole book, like Dr. *Taylor's* Scriptural doctrine of the Atonement, to exhibit a melancholy proof of the fallibility of human talents and abilities, however dignified with erudition or exalted with goodness.

goodness. We must, I think, have *new** scriptures, and a *new* Revelation to prove and establish *Socinianism*: for I am persuaded it will never be satisfactorily demonstrated from the *present* sacred volume. I think it weak and foolish in any man, after free enquiry and impartial examination, to adopt an opinion which he cannot defend. But it is with most men, as it was with the Fathers, who undertook to *defend* Christianity before they *understood* it.

It need hardly be remarked, that this Disquisition is solely restricted to *Revelation*, and to be determined solely by *Revelation*. Men may easily frame what they may call *rational* hypotheses, and *then* accommodate *Revelation* to the support of them. But the New Testament was never designed to form subjects for philosophical disquisition and refinement. By this spirit it was corrupted and debased in the earliest ages. Even in the time of the Apostles the doctrine of the *resurrection of the dead* appeared to certain
geniuses

* The leading Socinians have accordingly most strenuously exerted all their learning and genius to prove that the *Introductions to Matthew and Luke's Gospels* are spurious, and that the whole fable of the miraculous Conception was very early invented by some injudicious Christian to pour splendor on the birth of Jesus Christ; but that the *original* Records began with the narrative of John's Baptism. *Modern Socinian Tracts*, passim.

geniuses to be irrational and impossible. They; therefore employed their understanding to invent and establish a more *reasonable* hypothesis; and by an ingenious explication they construed it to denote only a *moral* restoration, declaring that what the scriptures meant by a resurrection was *already past*, and had taken place in that *renovation* of heart and life, which Christianity had *already* effected in the world. The natural obvious meaning, that sense, which a man of plain good understanding would affix to the plain expressions of scripture, is the true sense of scripture. For it is the intended distinguishing excellence of the sacred books, that they are plain. Whether our Saviour had an existence in heaven with God the Father before his incarnation, I think one might safely rest the decision of this question with a *Turk* or an *Indian*, or any other plain honest upright person in the world, who could read our New Testament.

What idea does almost every man naturally annex to that expression, which so often occurs in scripture, of the Son of God's *descending from heaven*? Does not he certainly conclude, that this Divine person *lived* in that blessed place, and *came down* from it on *earth* to instruct and save us? What idea do we affix to the *very same* expression, which is of such frequent occurrence in the Classics, of the Gods *descending from*

from heaven* upon our earth, but that, according to the heathen mythology, these immortal Powers were happy in *Olympus*, but sometimes *relinquished* it to visit mortals. Such phrases we interpret in their natural obvious sense, when used by *Plato*, *Plutarch*, or any of the writers of antiquity. And should any of the inferior Pagan Deities, when on these embassies to mortals, have used such a plain expression as our Saviour hath employed, that he *was come from God, and was going to God*†, as these are *relative terms*, we should naturally understand him to signify that he actually, *descended from Jupiter*, and was *returning* to him again.

I will faithfully exhibit a detail of those passages of scripture which appear to me in a strong and striking manner to manifest the pre-existence of our Lord, prefixing or subjoining such remarks and observations, as either the *particular expressions* employed in these passages, or the obvious tendency and tenour of them, seem fully to justify.

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* — Summo delabor Olympo,
Et deus humanâ lustrò sub imagine terras.

Ovid. Met. Lib. i. ver. 212.

Deus aliquis delapsus e coelo cœtus hominum adeat,
versetur in terris, cum hominibus colloquatur. *Cicero de Harusp. resp. 28. p 486. Edit. Schrevel.*

† ΑΠΟ ΘΕΟΥ ΕΞΗΛΘΕ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ ΥΠΑΓΕΙ. *John xiii. 3.*

It has been the common and prevailing opinion of the Church, from the *first* institution of Christianity to the *present* time, that our blessed Lord was that illustrious instrument and minister whom the Deity employed in creating this world. This notion, which hath been almost universal, hath scriptural authority to support it. The inspired Apostles aver it in the most explicit terms, and in representing it they employ the strongest expressions, in order to impress the minds of Christians with the *dignity* of Jesus, and the *greatness* of his *humiliation*, 1 *Corinth.* viii. 6. And one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom all things: δι' οὗ, through whose instrumentality all things were originally created, *Heb.* i. 2. By whom he made the worlds, or, ages. For by *him*, namely Christ, says the Apostle Paul, were all things *created*, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him. All things were created δι' αὐτοῦ*, through his

* This is the invariable language of scripture. Thus is Christ's agency and employment under God always expressed. God is never said to do any thing for *Christ's sake*. Our translation, *forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you*, is very inaccurate, and conveys a false and injurious idea of the Deity. It ought

his ministry, under the direction of the Almighty. All things were made by him, says the Evangelist, and without him was not any thing made that was made, *John* i. 3.—These texts, I humbly apprehend, evince in as perspicuous and absolute terms, as writers can employ, the *existence* of our blessed Lord *previous* to the formation of this world, and that he was that illustrious *agent* and *minister*, whom the Supreme Father elected and impowered to form this planet on which we live, and all the things which it compriseth. Words, I think, have no meaning, and are not the true signs of mens ideas, if these plain and clear passages do not contain and manifest this position, That Jesus Christ was the person, who by the direction of the Deity, originally formed all things.

But the scripture carries our views beyond this *era* of the creation, and, according to the order of our ideas, plainly represents the Son of God as the very *first* production of the Deity, the very *first* being whom the Father Almighty called into existence. This is the precise and determinate meaning of some expressions in scripture, which explicitly convey this very idea, and in sound just criticism, I think, cannot be

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interpreted

to have been rendered, Forgiving one another, as God has, by Christ, *et Christus*, graciously forgiven you. *Ephes.* iv. 32.

interpreted to any *other* signification. For example: Our Lord is stiled the FIRST-BORN* of every creature. The word is very properly translated, *first-born*. It signifies the *very first production*. It obviously denotes that the Son of God was the *very first being*, whom the power and goodness of the Supreme produced into existence. The very same exalted idea had St. John of the pre-existent dignity of Christ, when he styles him; The *beginning* of the *creation* of God†—an expression, exactly of the same import with that employed by St. Paul, the *first-born* of every creature; and denoting that the Son of God was the very first and primary production of the Deity, generated by him before all other things had an existence. On account of this pre-eminence of nature and pre-existence *before all other* created beings, the Apostle declares concerning him: That he is *before* all things‡, and by him all things consisted. These words

* Πρωτοτοκος πασης κτισεως, *Colof. i. 15*. See a number of passages in which this word πρωτοτοκος occurs, produced in a note in my *third* Dissertation.

† Αρχη της κτισεως του Θεου. *Revel. iii. 14*.

‡ Και αυτος εις ΠΡΟ παντων. *Colof. i. 17*. I wish our modern Socinians would carefully and coolly read the *Book of the Wisdom of Solomon*, and the Writings of *Philo*, and attend to what is asserted there concerning the LOGOS; or that they would dispassionately weigh what hath been lately written

words of the Apostle manifest, that our Saviour had a *being before* the things to which he himself gave a being, and that he existed before all things were originally formed and constituted by him. This high and magnificent idea of the Son of God is also intended to be conveyed to the reader by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, where in representing the superiority of Christ to the Angels, he says: That when God introduced his FIRST-BORN* into the world he said, Let all the Angels of God worship him. — These expressions of scripture, I think, naturally lead us, and seem intended by inspired Apostles to lead us, to form the most exalted ideas of the glorious dignity and pre-eminence of our blessed Lord, antecedently to his incarnation, and to affect us, in the most powerful manner, with that *humiliation* and astonishing *benevolence* which this Divine person expressed for us.

Moreover, his *existence* and *dignity previous*

C 3 to

written on this important Subject by the very learned Mr. HOWES of *Norwich*. The misinterpretation of Logos and explaining it away to signify *Wisdom*, which it *never* does, is that species of Philosophy, which *originally* spoiled the Faith of the Christians, and now continues to *spoil* and *corrupt* it.

* Όταν δε παλιῶν εἰσαγαγῆν τον ΠΡΩΤΟΤΟΚΟΝ εις τον κισμον
Heb. i. 6.

to his incarnation are clearly manifested in the following passages. In the beginning was the Logos*, and the Logos was with the Supreme Being, and the Logos was a divine person†.

Verily,

* I have the fullest persuasion that this passage of St. John is rightly interpreted by Dr. CLARKE, as it was by the primitive Church. This divine personage was well known to the Jewish Church: See the *Book of the Wisdom of Solomon*, and *Philo passim*. Logos does not signify *wisdom*, as the modern Socinians translate. Mr. Temple and others have justly remarked this. A Frenchman might as well contend that λογος was Greek for a *Locust*.

† *Christ* was *with* GOD at the creation of the world, a real person distinct from him with whom he was. And he with whom *Christ* then was, is called ὁ Θεός, God in a peculiar and absolute sense, God, self-existent, unoriginated, independent, and supreme over all, Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ὁ Παντοκράτωρ, *the Lord God Almighty*. Our blessed Saviour is indeed styled Θεός, a God, that is, a *divine person*, but whatever dignity is included in this term, he is however here distinguished from ὁ Θεός, the supreme God, and, thus distinguished, must of necessity be subordinate to him. For two co-ordinate, self-existent, absolutely supreme Beings are a contradiction. This distinction is sufficiently evident from the nature of the *Greek* language to all that are skilled in it: But if it should be suggested that, because this is now a dead language, such critical remark is not to be depended on, I answer, that both *Origen* and *Eusebius*, who must be allowed to understand the language in which they wrote, and were men of eminent learning, in the early ages of Christianity, have taken notice of this difference for the same purpose, as I have mentioned. See

Verily, verily I say unto thee, says our Lord to Nicodemus, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness: If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man who was in heaven. Which I have thus paraphrased in my *Explanatory Version* of the New Testament. "I can solemnly assure you that I speak from certain knowledge, and attest only facts, for the veracity of which I have had the most undoubted

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a short and plain Commentary upon near two hundred texts in St. John: printed for Griffiths, 1754. Says a learned Lady: In quoting the text — *In the beginning, &c.* you ought in all fairness to have informed your hearers, that the original term θεος, a God, applied to the Word, or Christ, has not the same high signification, as ὁ θεος, God appropriated in the same verse to the Father. Whatever you may insinuate, or think, I will venture to affirm, that no person has a just and critical knowledge of the Greek Language, who denies this. And it is of great weight, that both Origen and Eusebius, who wrote in the Greek Language, and were the most learned Fathers of the primitive Church (ten times more learned than your great Athanasius) have expressly taken notice of this difference, and allowed the force of it. See an excellent Letter to the Reverend Mr. Randolph, rector of Deal, by a Lady, supposed to be our British Dacier, the very ingenious and learned translator of Arrian's Epictetus. It is printed for Griffiths.

evidence—and yet you are not disposed to credit my testimony. If I tell you these plain and simple truths, and you will not credit them—how could you relish and embrace more sublime and mysterious discoveries! None of the former prophets were ever admitted into the seats of celestial joy in order to attest to men the reality and happiness of this state—the son of man, who is descended on earth, was the only person that ever resided in those blessed abodes,” *John* iii. 11—14. The son of man *who was* in heaven*, is so direct, positive, and solemn an assertion of the pre-existence of our Saviour, from the mouth of our blessed Lord himself, that I see not what criticism can evade it, or how it can be tortured into any acceptation, compatible with a scheme which denies that our Lord had any being before he was born of the Virgin Mary. The antient *Socinians*†, indeed, in order
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* *John* iii. 13. Ὁ υἱ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ: the son of man who *was* in heaven. So it ought to have been translated, as it is very properly in *John* ix. 25. Τυφλὸς ὡν, ἀρτι βλέπω: Whereas I *was* blind, now I see.

† *Socinianism* is but of yesterday. It was *first* planted in the wilds and woods of *Poland*, not many ages ago. It is *now* advanced to a still greater refinement. I know some persons who scout the *miraculous conception* entirely. E. H. 1783. Little did I imagine, when I wrote this in 1783, that Dr. **PRIESTLEY** would exert all his philosophical powers to invalidate

to solve this difficulty, framed an hypothesis, that our Lord, after his *baptism*, was caught up into heaven, and there had the whole scheme of redemption, which he was to conduct and accomplish, revealed to him by the Father. But this *journey to paradise*, which hath so much the air of a *Mahomedan* tale, hath no existence in the sacred page. It was *ingeniously* imagined and invented to reconcile to a favourite theory, those many passages which speak of the *descent* of our Lord from *heaven* upon earth.—What can this plain declaration of St. John mean, *The same was in the beginning with God*, but that this Divine person, who was afterwards *manifested in the flesh*, existed with the Supreme Being before the foundation of the earth was laid? These assertions of our Lord; I speak what I have seen with the Father: *John* viii. 38. What he hath seen and heard, *viz. with the Father*, that he testifieth: *John* iii. 32. All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you: *John* xv. 15. If ye shall see the son of man ascend up WHERE HE WAS BEFORE: *John* vi. 62.—These expressions, in *just propriety*

validate and disprove the *miraculous conception*. See the fourth Volume of his *History of early Opinions concerning Christ*. Never were such bold things advanced to discredit and subvert any part of the gospel history, since the days of WOOLSTON.

priety of language, can be interpreted only to refer to that *state* of glory and happiness which the Son of God enjoyed with the *Father* antecedently to his mission into our world and assumption of our nature. They are the solemn asseverations of our Lord, predicated concerning himself, claiming attention and regard to his doctrines, from his pre-existent greatness and union with the Deity, and the authority of his commission and embassy from heaven. That plain declaration of our Saviour to the *Jews*, that before *Abraham* was he had an existence, will, I think, for ever stand in full force against all the acumen of criticism and sagacity of refinement which may be employed to invalidate and explain away its natural and obvious signification. The interpretation, that our Lord had an existence in the Divine decree before Abraham, and that it was before the *times* of this Patriarch *fore ordained* that he should appear in such an age and state of the world, is extremely forced and futile, and does not discriminate our Lord, from thyself, O reader, who hadst from eternity an existence in the divine decree, that thou shouldest appear under such a dispensation, and in such an age and state of the world. It is plain that our Saviour's audience took these words in their natural acceptation, as hath been already remarked; for upon his asserting to them that he was in being before their great ancestor, they

they were instantly transported into the last excesses of fury against him as a blasphemer and impostor, and took up stones with a design to murder him. These *actual* violences of the Jews, prove, I apprehend, better than a thousand inane and chimerical theories, *how* our Redeemer was understood and *intended* to be understood. His auditors, we find, always interpreted these declarations, which he so frequently repeats, in their most obvious meaning, by these plain solemn expressions, and understanding him to disavow that his original was only human, and peremptorily to manifest by them his intimate union and felicity with the DEITY *before* his appearance among men. The following passage clearly evinceth this. *I came down from heaven*, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that *sent* me. And this is the Father's will who hath *sent* me, that of all whom he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of him that *sent* me, that every one, who seeth the son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. The *Jews* then *murmured* at him, because he said, I am the bread which CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN. And they said: Is not this Jesus the *son of Joseph*, whose *father* and *mother* we know! How is it then that he saith, *I came down from heaven!* From this disgust
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and indignation of the *Jews*, excited against him for his solemn and reiterated assurances that he *came down* from heaven, it is manifest that they understood him to arrogate to himself an *original* superior to his *earthly* and obscure *parents*, and in the most plain and public manner to assert his pre-existence.

In consistence with this state of pre-existent glory and happiness which our Lord enjoyed with the Father before the world was, his amazing condescension in voluntarily relinquishing this station of consummate dignity and felicity, his astonishing abasement in cloathing himself with our infirmities, and his unparalleled humiliation and benevolence in expatriating himself from all the blessedness of heaven, and going in voluntary exile to our world, to deliver us from darkness, to rescue us from ruin, to save us from the penal effects of sin, to abolish death, to bring life and immortality to light, and to announce and ensure to all sincere penitents and good persons a resurrection from the grave at the last day, and a state of perfection and happiness with himself through all ETERNITY—in consistence, I say, with this pre-existent glory and dignity of our Saviour, his HUMILIATION, in order to effect our recovery and redemption, is by the sacred authors represented in all that sublimity of language and pathos of expression, which are suited to seal the most deep and indelible

lible impressions upon the minds of creatures who are infinitely interested in this great transaction. Of his *mission* from God—of his *descent* from heaven—of his *divesting* himself of his *former* honours, and shrouding all his *pristine* glory in the earthly house of our tabernacle, the following passages are clearly and emphatically declarative—His COMING FORTH FROM GOD, HE HIMSELF thus expresseth. “For the Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I *came out from God*. *John* xvii. 27. I *came forth from the Father*, and *am come into the world*. *John* xvii. 28. Jesus knowing that the father had given all things into his hands, and that he was *come from God*, and *was going to God*. *John* xiii. 3. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God: *John* xvi. 30. Now I *go my way to him that sent me*. *John* xvi. 5. God *sending his son in the likeness of sinful flesh*. *Romans* viii. 3. Concerning his son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David, *according to the flesh*.” *Rom.* i. 3. —His DESCENT from *heaven* upon our *earth*, and his wonderful *condescension* and *benevolence* in his *assumption* of human nature, are thus represented. “Now he that *ascended*, what is it, but that he also *descended* first into the lower parts of the earth. He that *descended* is the same also that *ascended* up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. *Ephes.* iv. 9. 10. A *body*
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hast thou prepared me. *Heb. x. 5.* Then said I, Lo! I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God! *Heb. x. 7.* Who, though he was in the form of a God, or a divine person, was not eagerly desirous of appearing on earth in this glorious form, but divested himself of it, assumed the form of a slave, and appeared amongst us cloathed with the common robe of frail mortality: And after this assumption of human nature, he gave a still farther proof of his humiliation, by voluntarily submitting to death, and even to the death of crucifixion! *Philip. ii. 6, 7, 8.* For ye know the benignity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was RICH, yet for your sakes he became POOR." *2 Cor. viii. 9.* On the *Socinian* scheme which institutes that the Son of God had no being before he was born of the virgin, with what propriety can this be predicated of our Lord? Where and when was our Saviour *rich* in *this* world! His whole history contradicts this assertion. On the contrary, he was so *poor*, that he was obliged to work a miracle to satisfy the demands of some *Jewish* collectors. He lived solely upon the beneficence of his friends. He had no place, whereon to lay his head. To interpret this of our Lord being *rich* in miracles, and becoming *poor* in them at his crucifixion, is such a strange metaphor and mode of diction, as I believe was never employed by any writer, and
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such a jejune and forced criticism, as I imagine was never studied to explain any author. But on the hypothesis that our Lord enjoyed the most exalted station before his embassy to our world, every thing is consistent and natural. In his pre-existent state he was *rich* in glory, honour, and happiness: with a greatness and benevolence of soul, that can never sufficiently be extolled, he abdicated all this, and became *poor*, that we through his *poverty* might become *rich*. The Apostle's *argument* to excite the liberality and beneficence of the *Corinthians*, from this stupendous act and instance of our Lord's condescension and benevolence, upon *this* scheme only, is cogent, apposite, and very elegant and persuasive.

I will conclude this enumeration of passages, which, after the most impartial examination of scripture, with a mind, I am sure, open to conviction, and solely intent upon investigating and embracing truth, I am persuaded, plainly and clearly evince the existence of Christ previous to his incarnation. I will close this detail with a distinguished passage, which I beg the reader seriously to ponder. In that most excellent PRAYER, which our Lord addressed to the Almighty a little before his last sufferings, among other requests he preferred to the Deity, the following very striking and distinguished one occurs. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with
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with thine own self, with the GLORY WHICH I HAD WITH THEE BEFORE THE WORLD WAS! Were there no intimation in the whole New Testament of the pre-existence of Christ, this single passage would irrefragably demonstrate and establish it*. Our Saviour, here, in a solemn act of devotion, declares to the Almighty, that he had glory with HIM before the world was, and fervently supplicates that he would be graciously pleased to *reinstate* him in his former felicity. The language is plain and clear. Every word hath great moment and emphasis. Glorify thou me with that glory which I had with thee. The *verb* is in the *past* tense †, and according to all the rules of language, relates to *past* time. The phrase we translate, *with thee*, is very expressive and emphatical, and signifies *apud te*, in *thy presence*, near *thy person* ‡.

Glorify

* The solemnity, with which I once heard Dr. BENSON appeal to this text, greatly affected me, when I was a young man. Dr. NEWCOMBE also the very learned and worthy Bishop of Waterford, in a visit with which he condescended to honour me, insisted on this text as decisive; his Lordship most ingenuously wishing at the same time that he could see this little Treatise *fairly answered*.

† Δόξη η ΕΙΧΟΝ προ του τον κοσμον ειναι. *John xvii. 5.*

‡ Πάρα σεαυτω, παρα σοι. *Says the Mother of the Maccabees: Τα της αρετης αβλα οισομεν και εσομεθα παρα Θεω. See Josephus,*

Glorify thou me with that glory which I enjoyed in thy presence, and near thy person, before the world was. It is a plain solemn address to the Deity, that since he had glorified his name on the earth, and had finished the work he had given him to do, that he would now be pleased to *re-admit* him to that state of glory and happiness which he had possessed in his presence *before* the creation of the world, Upon this single text I lay my finger. Here I posit my system. And if *plain* words be designedly employed to convey any determinate meaning, if the modes of human speech have any precision, I am convinced that this *plain* declaration of our Lord, in an act of devotion, exhibits a great and important truth, which can never be subverted or invalidated by any accurate and satisfactory criticisms.

When I have suffered my ideas freely to expatiate on this subject, I find reason to think, that men possessed of erudition and a philosophical genius, do wrong in indulging a disposition

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Josephus, tom. 2. p. 509. *Havere*. Non enim solum ante Adam, sed et ante omnem conditionem glorificabat Verbum Patrem suum. *Irenæus*, p. 315. *Edit. Oxon.* This very expression, *παρα σοι*, occurs in the *PLUTUS* of *Aristophanes*. Says *Chremylus*, the God *PLUTUS* is within, *ενδον*. *Blepsydemus*. Where? *Chr.* With me, *παρ' εμοι*. *Blepsy.* With you? *παρα σου*. *along with you*, *-chez vous?* *This is in point.* *Aristophanis Plutus*. vi. 394.

to theorize and speculate upon it. I wish learned and ingenious men would consider, That Christianity was never designed to teach men philosophy, and to reveal to the world the arcana of nature. The sacred writers never study, never frame any hypothesis to account for the mode and manner of our Lord's transmission into human nature. They relate it as a FACT. They weave no subtil refinements and curious theories on this subject. It was not their province. They declare only that the *Word* was *made flesh*, and dwelt among us, but the *manner* in which this was effected, it was no part of their design to teach men. Had they hazarded a *theory*, it might have afforded food to metaphysicians and speculatists, but would have contributed nothing to the cause of practical religion and personal holiness. The sacred writers give the world a plain unadorned narrative, lay before men a series of FACTS, and leave men either to admit them in their plain acceptation, to theorize and refine upon them, if they think them irrational, or to reject them, if they have reason to believe they are not properly authenticated. The gospel does no violence to the freedom and liberty of the human mind: it faithfully exhibits, before the understanding and judgment of rational beings, a system of duties, doctrines, and discoveries, and leaves the issue with themselves.

Moreover,

Moreover, it appears to me that the *Socinian* scheme, the notion that our Lord had no existence before he was born of his mother Mary, eclipses the lustre of his *humiliation*, or rather, totally annihilates such an idea. The astonishing *condescension* of Christ, in relinquishing a state of great glory and happiness in heaven, and assuming human flesh, is frequently represented by the sacred writers, in the strongest terms, in order to affect and impress us, and to move all the springs of gratitude and affection in our breasts. You know, says St. Paul, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he was RICH, yet for our sakes became *poor*, that we through his poverty might become rich. And when he is exhorting the *Philippians* to mutual *condescension* and *lowliness* of mind, he represents the *humiliation* and benevolence of the Son of God, in all its sacred dignity and greatness, most powerfully to affect them, and inspire them with the like amiable condescension and beneficence. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in *lowliness of mind* let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the *form of a Divine person*, was not desirous to retain this glorious form, but divested himself of it, and took upon him the *form of a servant*

and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself still *farther* by becoming obedient to death—and even to such a death as crucifixion! In numberless passages our Lord speaks of his *mission from God*, and *descent from heaven*, in order to instruct and save men—and the Apostles are perpetually extolling that most exalted philanthropy and grace which he displayed in this amazing condescension. But upon the anti-pre-existent scheme, all this illustrious merit and benevolence of Christ, in abandoning the mansions of the blessed, and assuming our nature, hath no place. He was no more than an *human* prophet and instructor, endowed with very great gifts. I cannot accommodate this to those many representations of scripture, which were purposely written to celebrate his wonderful humiliation and benevolence, in disrobing himself of his heavenly glory, and investing himself with our infirmities. The principal feature in our Lord's mind, which was BENEVOLENCE, is hereby effaced: by far the most illustrious and shining part of his character, is, surely, wiped away by this most degrading hypothesis.

Farther, when I have been contemplating this subject, it has always appeared to me very strange, That such a magnificent apparatus should be instituted by heaven to usher into the world one who was nothing more than a *man*! Angels after angels wing their flight to *Betlehem*

hem, to indicate the birth of a *man*! *Gabriel*, one of the most exalted of the heavenly Spirits, is despatched from the throne of God to announce the birth of a *man*! The *Holy Ghost* should come upon her, and the power of the Most High should overshadow the virgin, to convey into her uterus nothing but what was *human*! Another celestial envoy is delegated to *Joseph*, to bid him not hesitate in taking *Mary* to wife*, for that which was conceived in her, was, indeed, of the Holy Ghost, but was nothing more than *man*! A most magnificent heavenly choir, consisting of a multitude of Angels, cheering the midnight hours with repeating *Glory to God in the Highest! Good will towards men!* deputed to our World, and chanting these rapturous strains to celebrate the birth of a *man*! Is it not something incongruous and disparate, that Heaven should display all this splendid scenery, and lavish all this pomp and pageantry to introduce into our World a mere ordinary common man, distinguished in no one natural endowment from any other of the species? But supposing the Being introduced with all this eclat†, to be the
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* Heaven and earth have lately been moved, and all the genius and wit of philosophy been exerted to prove that our blessed Redeemer was really the *Son of Joseph and Mary Carpenter*. See modern Socinian Tracts *passim*.

† This splendid scene, which the sacred Historian informs

the same who was in *the beginning* with God, and had glory *with the Father* before the world was, is not the decoration and magnificence, with which heaven dressed the stage, on which this Divine messenger would shortly appear, highly pertinent and honourable, and is it not with the greatest propriety that multitudes of the heavenly host, on this GREAT occasion, the greatest that ever occurred in the annals of this world, should conjoin with harmonious voices and accordant hearts, in applauding and solemnizing a condescension and benevolence, illustrious and great beyond all example!

Finally, whenever I have in my own mind seriously revolved and discussed the merits of that scheme, which denies to our Lord all existence before his conception, and impartially collated it with the declarations of scripture, it hath always appeared to my reason and understanding, to be very strange and extravagant to imagine that a *man*, however illustrious his talents, and signal his endowments of God, who only figured as 'a most excellent teacher of religion and morals, on this little and very inconsiderable planet, for a few years, and was born, lived, and died as mortals do; it hath always appeared, I say, strange and extravagant to me
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us obtained at the birth of our Redeemer, will for ever prove the *Pons Asinorum* of the Socinians. This Bridge once cleared, they can make their way very tolerably. E. H. 1786.

to suppose, that a mere MAN should have all *power* in HEAVEN, as well as earth, immediately given him—that a mere *man* should instantly have a name given him *above every name*, and be exalted to an eminence infinitely *superior* to any that obtains even in heaven—that at the name of a mere *man* every knee should be commanded to bow, of things in *heaven* and things on earth, and things under the earth, and every being in the whole scope of the universe, be ordered to confess the worthy and regular exaltation of a *mere man*, above all the Cherubim, Seraphim, Archangels, and the most exalted orders of celestial Beings! Far be it from us to arraign the Divine allotments, and censure his wisdom, equity, and rectitude in the administrations of his distributive justice—but to a reflecting and contemplative mind, it cannot but appear a violation done to that established gradation and harmonious order, which obtains, as the scripture teaches us, among the various ranks and classes of angelic Beings, to suppose a *man* to be infinitely exalted above the most elevated and dignified of them—that a person, who had merely a *terrestrial* origin, should after his decease, be rapt above the spheres, and seated above the stations of the highest Angels and Archangels—and a *man* be raised, at once, far above *all principality, and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come!*

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