

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

#### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + Keep it legal Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

#### **About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at http://books.google.com/









_	8		
	\$		
_		 	<u> </u>

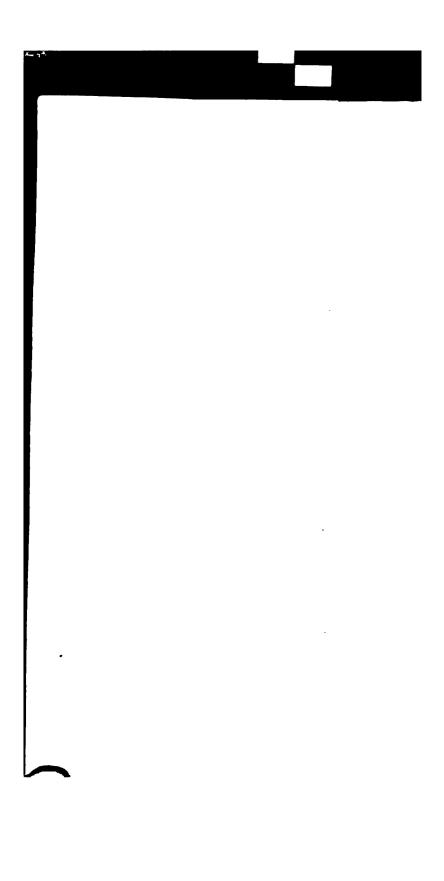
.

•





.

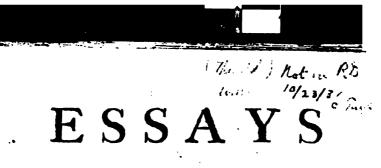


alay 1 30 mary 18 afar plinity of .. 1 cipton 376



·

.



### ON THE

# CHARACTERISTICS.

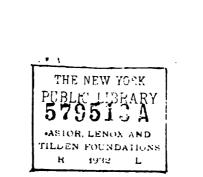
BY

JOHN BROWN, M. A.



LONDON, Printed for C. DAVIS againft Gray's-Inn-Gate, Helbern.

MDCCLI.



.

ς.

•

# ESSAYS

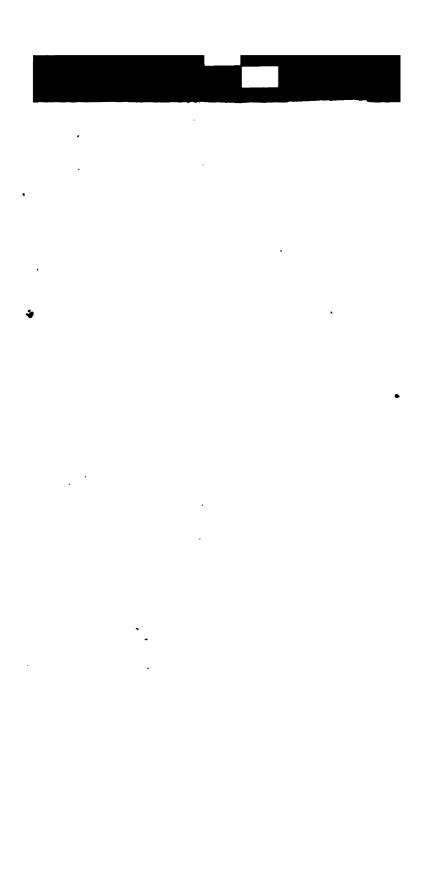
### ON THE

# **CHARACTERISTICS**

#### OF THE

# Earl of Shaftesbury.

- I. On RIDICULE confidered as a Teft of Truth.
- II. On the Obligations of Man to Virtue, and the Neceffity of *religious Principle*.
- III. On revealed RELIGION, and CHRISTI-ANITY.



### т о

# Ralph Allen, Efq.

### SIR,

D ID this Addrefs aim no farther than at the common End of Dedicators, I fhould have been proud enough to have declined the Trouble, and You too wife to have approved this public Manner of offering it.

To praife You, were *impertinent*; and to tell others of my Obligations to You, would have the Appearance rather of *Vanity* than *Gratitude*.

THE

Dedication.

**ii** 

THE Truth is; I make free with Your Name on this Occafion, not fo much to protect my Book, as to complete my Argument.

I HAVE ventured to criticize the Works of a very celebrated Writer, who took it into his Head to oppofe the folid Wifdom of the Gospel, by the Visions of false Philosophy. As His, at best, is but the Cause of Wit and Eloquence, all the Support he could give it was only to tell us how PLATO wrote: Mine being that of Truth, and Christianity, I have the Advantage of realizing all I fay, in bidding the World take Notice how You live.

IN

## Dedication. iii

IN a Word; I was willing to bring the Question to a short Issue; and shew, by a known EXAMPLE, to what an Elevation true Christianity can exalt human Nature. Till therefore philosophic Taste can produce a parallel Effect, Religion must bear the Palm; and CHRISTIANITY, like her Parent WISDOM, will be justified of her Children.

Iam, SIR,

Your most obliged,

humble Servant,

## JOHN BROWN.

# -. . • • • • . • • .

# CONTENTS.

# ESSAY I.

On RIDICULE confidered as a Teft. of Truth.

### SECT.

•

I. VINDICATION of the noble Writer's Zeal for Freedom.

page 1.

- II. Of his Method of treating the Queflion concerning Ridicule. p. 7.
- III. Of the different Kinds of Composition; Poetry, Eloquence, and Argument.
- p. 12. IV. That Ridicule is a Species of Eloquence. p. 41.
  - V. A Confirmation of the foregoing Truths by an Appeal to Fact. p. 48.
- VI. Of the noble Writer's Arguments in Support of his new Theory; particularly the Cafe of SOCRATES. p. 54. a VII. His

### N CONTENTS

SECT.

VII. His further Reafonings examined, page 64.
VIII. Of bis main Argument; relating to Protestantifm and Christianity.
P. 74.
IX. Of the Opinion of GORGIAS quoted by bis Lordship from ARISTOTLE.
P. 80.
X. The Reasoning of one of bis Followers in this Subject, examined. p. 88.
XI. Of the particular Impropriety of applying Ridicule to the Investigation of religious Truth.

### ESSAY II.

On the Obligations of Man to Virtue, and the Necessity of Religious Principle.

SECT.

 Introduction. page 109.
 II. That the Definitions which Lord SHAFTESBURY, and feveral other Moralists have given of Virtue, is inadequate and defective. p. 111.
 II. Of the real Nature of Virtue. p. 123. IV. Of

## CONTENTS (

TDE:

#### SECT.

IV. Of an Objestion urged by Dr. MANc DEVILLE against the permanent Reality of Firtue. page 137. V. Examination and Analysis of The Fable of the Bees. p. 146, VI. Of the natural Motives to Virtuous Action. p. 158. VII. How far thefe Motives can in Reality influence all Mankind. The Errors of the Stoic and Epicurcan Parties; and the most probable Foundation of thefe Errors. p. 168. VIII. The noble Writer's additional Reasonings examined; and shewn to be without Foundation. p. 187. IX. That the religious Principle, or Obedience to the Will of God, can alone. produce a uniform and permanent Obligation to Virtue. The noble Writer's Objections examined. p. 206. X. Of the Efficacy of the religious Principle. Conclusion. · p. 223. . ESSAY. 1.1.1.1.1.1.1.1.1

<u>io</u> 71

# ESSAY III.

On revealed Religion, and CHRISTIANITY.

SECT.

4

I. Of the noble Writer's Manner of treating Christianity. page 241. **II.** Of his Objections to the Truths of naural Religion. p. 245. "III. Cf be Credibility of the Gofpel-Hiftory. p. 256. IV. Of the Scripture-Miracles. p. 271. V. Of Entbufiafm. p. 292. VI. Of the religious and moral Doctrines of Christianity. p. 312. VII. Of feveral detached Paffages in the Characteriftics. P. 347. **VIII.** Of the Style and Composition of the Scriptures. p. 369.

IX. Of the noble Writer's Treatment of the English Clergy. p. 389.

ng g

ESSA Jam ON THE Ray Characteristics, etc.

### ESSAY I.

On Ridicule, confidered as a Teft of Truth.

### SECTION I.

T hath been the Fate of Lord SHAFTES-SECT. BURY'S Characteristics, beyond that of I. most other Books, to be idolized by one Party, and detested by another. While the first regard it as a Work of perfect Ezcellence, as containing every Thing that can render Mankind wise and happy; the latter are disposed to rank it among the most pernicious of Writings, and brand it as one B conti-



## Ellay on RIDICULE.

SECT continued Heap of Fustian, Scurrility, and Falfebood.

2

THIS Circumstance hath always appeared to me a Demonstration, that Passion and Prejudice have had a greater Share than Reafon, in deciding upon the Merits of this Work, which many read with Difpleafure, more with Admiration, but few with impartial Judgment. 'Tis probable, the Truth lies between the two Extremes of these difcordant Opinions: and that the noble Writer hath mingled Beauties and Blots, Faults and Excellencies, with a liberal and unsparing Hand.

THESE, fo far as they relate to Religion and Morals, it is my prefent Intention to point out, without Regard to the bigoted Cenfures of his Friends or Enemies: While I forefee, that fome will frown upon me for allowing him any Thing, and others treat me with a contemptuous Smile for prefurning to differ with him at all.

THE first Thing that occurs to an unprejudiced Mind, in the Perufal of the Characteriftics, is that generous Spirit of Freedom which shines throughout the whole. The noble Author every where afferts that natural Privilege of Man, which hath been ſo

### Esfay on RIDICULE.

to often denied him, of feeing with his own SECT. Eyes, and judging by his own Reafon. It may poffibly appear ftrange to fome, why he should fo extremely labour a Point fo plain. But in Justice to his Lordship these Gentlemen must remember, or be informed, that in former Times, fome well-defigning Men among ourfelves, from a groundlefs Dread of an unlimited Freedom of the Prefs, attempted to make a most unnatural and cruel Separation between Truth and Liberty. Having shaken off the Corruptions of Popery, and established what they thought a pure and perfect System, they unhappily flopped short in their full Carrier of Glory; prepofteroufly attempting to deprive others of that common Privilege which they had fo nobly exercised themselves. This mistaken Spirit seemed entirely fubdued by the excellent LOCKE, and others, about the Time of the Revolution: But at the Period when our noble Author wrote, it not only revived, but was heightened by a terrible Accession of Bitterness and Rancour. Hence those frequent Sallies of Invective, which he throws out against this intolerant Principle, which he justly stigmatizeth as equally impolitic, irrational, and unchristian.

ϓιs

i

# and the second sec

### Estay on RIDICULE.

Sест. І.

'T is the Glory of our Days, that this accurfed Spirit of Perfecution is at least dying away. What Pity that we cannot add, it is wholly extinguished! It is true, we most of us profeis ourfelves Friends to a Freedom of Inquiry, in the Main. But why, in the Main? Why that needless Circumstance of Hefitation? Would we embrace Error? Or do we think that Truth can fuffer by the most rigid Scrutiny? On the contrary, not only the Perfection, but the very Being of Knowledge depends on the Exercife of Freedom. For whatever fome may fear from an open and unlimited Enquiry, it feems evidently the only Means vouchfafed us for the Attainment of Truth. The Abuse of it may be hurtful, but the Want of it is fatal. Such, indeed, are the clear and undoubted Principles of our Religion: Neither fure can these Declarations surprize us. For if human and political Establishments had been facred or unviolable, where had been our Protestantism; nay, where our Christianity? Dare we then to defert or difcountenance a Principle, on which not only the Purity, but the very Existence of our Religion depends? Nor is this Principle leis confonant with the strictest Reason. It is

### Essay on RIDICULE.

is Falfehood only that loves and retires into SECT. Darknefs. Truth delights in the Day; and demands no more than a juft Light, to appear in perfect Beauty. A rigid Examination is its only Teft: For Experience hath taught us, that even Obfinacy and Error can endure the Fires of Perfecution: But it is genuine Truth, and that alone, which comes out pure and unchanged from the feverer Tortures of Debate.

IT will ever be our truest Praise therefore, to join the noble Apologist in his Encomiums on Freedom; the only permanent Basis on which Religion or Virtue can be eftablished. Nor can we less approve his frequent Recommendations of Politenels, Chearfulness, and Good-bumour, in the Profecution of our most important Enquiries. The morofe, contemptuous, and furly Species of Composition is generally an Appendage to Bigotry, as appears in Inftances innumerable, both among the miftaken Friends and Enemies of Religion. On the contrary, the amiable Qualities of Chearfulnefs and Good-humour, cast a Kind of Sunfhine over a Composition, and naturally engage us in Favour of the Writer. They refemble that gentle Smile that often lights

up

5

### Effay on Ridicule.

SECT. up the human Countenance, the neverfailing Indication of a humane Temper. How naturally then must we be disposed to listen; how open our Minds to receive Conviction, when we perceive our Opponent's Intention is benevolent : When we perceive that his Aim is not Victory, but Information: that he means not to infult, but to instruct us.

I.

So far, out of an unfeigned Regard to Truth, it should be my Boast to take Party with the noble Writer: On the fame Principle it will now be neceffary to depart from him. For, not content with establishing the free Exercise of Reason, and the Way of Chearfulneis, in treating the Subjects of Religion and Morals; he revolts from the Principle on which the rational Advocates for Religion were willing to have joined him, and appeals to a new Teft, the Teft of This, in his two first Treatifes, Ridicule. he attempts to establish as a furer Method of Conviction: And that Ridicule, which had hitherto been employed in difgracing known Falfebood, he informs us, may be fuccessfully applied to the Investigation of unknown Truth.

### Estay on RIDICULE.

### SECTION II.

'TIS great Pity the noble Author hath SECT. not condescended to a little more Precision in treating the Question now before us. He indulges the Gaiety of Spirit, the Freedom of Wit and Humour fo far, that a Reader, who feeks Information rather than Amufement, is often at a Lofs to know where his Argument, or even his Opinion, lies. This, no doubt, was in Part owing to a generous Abhorrence of Pedantry, which he takes all Occasions of exposing to Contempt. Yet a better Reafon may poffibly be alledged : For in recommending and enforcing the Use of Ridicule, what could be more natural and proper than the Power of Ridicule itfelf? To draw a striking Picture of demure Folly and folemn Imposture, was a Masterpiece of Prudence: But to have argued ferioufly, would have destroyed his Argument : It would have been a tacit Confession, that there is a deeper Foundation, on which Ridicule B 4



### 8

.

### Estay on Ridicule.

SECT. Ridicule itself must reft, he must there-II. fore have overturned, even while he intended to establish this new Pillar, and Ground of Truth.

HERE then we discover why the noble Author is fo witty in Defence of Wit, and chuses to maintain the Cause of Raillery by Raillery itself. He finiles at his Adversary, who had attempted to find Coherence in his first Letter. He glories in being an Adventurer in the Way of Miscellany; where " Cuttings and Shreds of Learning, " with various Fragments and Points of "Wit, are drawn together and tacked in " any fantastic Form. Where the Wild " and Whimfical, under the Name of the " Odd and Pretty, fucceed in the Room of " the Graceful and Beautiful: Where Just-" nefs and Accuracy of Thought are fet "afide, as too constraining, and of too " painful an Afpect, to be endured in the " agreeable and more eafy Commerce of "Gallantry and modern Wit "." Hence with Reafon he proceeds to his Conclusion, that "Grounds and Foundations arc of no " Moment, in a Kind of Work, which, ac-

> • Vol. iii. p. 18, 20, • Ibid. p. 5, &c. " cording

## Estay on Ridicule.

" cording to modern Establishment, has pro- SE c'r. " perly neither Top nor Bottom, Beginning \_\_\_\_\_\_ " nor End"."

IT must be confessed, that in the Conduct of the literary Warfare, they who depend on the Regularity and Force of Arguments, have but a forry Chance against these nimble Adventurers in the Sallies of Wit and Ridicule; these Huffars in Difputation, who confide more in their Agility, than Strength or Discipline; and by fudden Evolutions and timely Skulking, can do great Mischiefs, without receiving any. Ill qualified, indeed, is the faturnine Complexion of the dry Reasoner, to cope with this mercurial Spirit of modern Wit: The · Formalift is under a double Difficulty; not only to conquer his Enemy, but to find him. Though it must be owned, the Search is a harder Tafk than the Victory; and more mortifying, as it ends in fhewing us that this redoubted Figure of Ridicule, armed at all Points like Reason, is no other than an airy Phantom, tricked up by the Goddess of Folly, to confound formal Wifdom; as that other in the Poet, to miflead his Hero:

Vol. iii. p. 8.

Tum

Effay on RIDICULE.

#### **Sест.** II.

10

Tum dea nube cava tenuem fine viribus umbram In faciem Æneæ (vifu mirabile monftrum) Dardaniis ornat telis : clypeumque, jubafque Divini affimilat capitis ; dat inania verba, Dat fine mente fonum, greffufque effingit euntis. Illum autem abfentem Æneas in prælia pofcit. Tunc levis haud ultra latebras jam quærit imago, Sed fublime volans, nubi fe immifcuit atræ<sup>4</sup>.

SINCE, therefore, the noble Writer declines treating this Subject in the Way of clofe Argument; we must take our Chance with him upon the Terms he hath been pleased to prescribe. We must be content to go a *Gleaning* for his Opinions, and *pick* them up as they lie thinly scattered through a wide Extent of Pages.

BUT, however, his Lordship's high Quality may exempt him from the established Forms of Argument, it were the Height of Imprudence in Writers of inferior Rank, to attempt an Imitation of his peculiar Manner. His delicate Raillery, therefore, will best be repayed by fober Reasoning. This, fure, his most zealous Admirers cannot take amis: It is the noble Author's allowed Maxim, that "a Jest which will not bear a "ferious Examination is certainly false "Wite." Neither was he a Stranger to "Virg. En.x. # 636, &c. "Vol i. p. 74.

the

### Essay on RIDICULE.

the methodical Species of Composition: As SECT. II. appears from that fine Chain of moral Reafoning which connects his Enquiry concerning Virtue : Where he proceeds through the Work with a Pace equally regular and majeftic. Indeed should we form our Idea of him from the Attitudes in which his forry Mimics prefent him to our View, we should fee him labouring through a confused Mass of Words and random Halfmeanings, entangled in his own Argument, and throwing himfelf into every unnatural and awkward Posture, to make his Way, though in vain, into common Senfe. But this is a very bad Picture of our noble Au-. thor: Though it be all his affected Admirers can exhibit of him in their own Productions. Deformities are eafily copied : True Features and graceful Attitudes are caught by the Hand of a Master only. For in Reality, none ever knew the Value of Order and Proportion better than Lord SHAFTESBURY. He knew that Confusion can only tend to difgrace Truth, or difguife Method, indeed, may dege-Falfehood. nerate into Stiffness, but to despise Order, is the filliest Affectation. Especially when the flovenly and confused Form of the Compolition

II

## 12 Estay on Ridicule.

SECT. position (if it may be properly faid to have II. any) pretends to the Character of *Elegance*, it becomes of all others the groffest and most contemptible Pedantry.

### SECTION III.

- SECT. THE divine Author of our Being having
  - III. given us feveral different Powers, Senfe, Imagination, Memory, and Reason, as the Inlets, Prefervers, and Improvers of Knowledge; it may be proper here briefly to remark their respective Provinces. As the Senses are the Fountains whence we derive all our Ideas; fo these are infinitely combined and affociated by the Imagination: Memory preferves these Assessments of Things: Reason compares, distinguishes, and separates them: By this Means determining their Differences, and pointing out which are real, and which settimes.

THE Paffions are no more than the feveral Modes of Pleasure and Pain, to which the Author of Nature hath wisely subjected us, for our own and each others Prefervation.

" Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure's smiling " Train;

" Hate, Fear, and Grief, the Family of Pain. To

### Essay on Ridicule.

To these we may add two more of a mixed SECT. Kind, Pity and Contempt, which seem to III. partake of both Pain and Pleasure.

As the Senfes and Imagination are the Sources of all our Ideas, it follows that they are the Sources of all our Modes of Pleafure and Pain: That is, of all our Paffions. Nor is any Paffion ftrongly excited in the Soul by mere Knowledge only, till the Imagination hath formed to itfelf fome Kind of Picture or Representation of the Good or Evil apprehended. Thus ARISTOTLE justly defines Fear to be a Kind of Pain arifing from the Phantaly or Appearance of future Evil<sup>f</sup>. Confiftently with this, he again truly observes, that though all Men know they must die, yet, while Death is at a Distance, they never think of it<sup>g</sup>. The fame may be observed concerning the Belief of future Existence; which never sways the Conduct of Mankind, till the Imagination is strongly impreffed by steady and repeated Contemplation.

<sup>5</sup> Εστω δε Φοδος, λυπη τις η ταξαχη εκ ΦΑΝΤΑ-ΣΙΑΣ μελλοντος κακου. Arift. Rhet. l. ii. c. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Ισασι γας παντες, ότι απο<sup>β</sup>ανουνται αλλ' ότι ουκ εγγυς, ουδεν Φροντιζουσιν. Ib. l. ii. c. 5.

As

13

#### Ellay on RIDICULE.

14 Sест. III.

As therefore it appears to be the Province of Senfe and Imagination to present and affociate Ideas, but not to mark their real Differences; and as the Paffions are always excited according to the Suggestions of these two powers; it follows, that apparent, not real Good and Evil are univerfally the Objects of all our Paffions. Thus the respective Objects of Joy, Fear, Anger, are apparent Good, apparent Danger, apparent Injury. Universally, whether the Object be real or fictitious, while it is apparent (that is, while the Imagination reprefents it as real) it will produce its relative Paffion.

IT is the Province of Reafon alone, to correct the Paffions. Imagination and Paffion can never correct themselves. Everv Assemblage of Ideas, every Impression made upon them, hath an Object apparently real : Therefore without the Aids of Reafon, the active and separating Power, the Mind can never diffinguish real from fictitious Objects. And as it is the Province of Reafon only, thus to regulate the Senses and Imagination, and to determine when they impressa Truth, or fuggest a Falsehood : so it is no less the Province of the fame corrective Power, to deter-

determine concerning the Modes of appa-SECT. rent Good and Evil, and thus to fix both \_\_\_\_\_\_ our Opinions and Passions on their proper Objects<sup>h</sup>.

UPON this just Dependance of Imagination and Passion on the superior and leading Faculty of Reason, the whole Weight of this Question concerning the Application and Use of *Ridicule* depends. But that we may obtain as wide a View as possible of our Subject, it may be proper to ascertain the Nature, Limits, and Ends of the different Kinds of literary Composition, which take their Rise from these three different Powers, as they subsist in Man. Thus we shall difcover, to which of them the Way of Ridicule is to be referred, and determine how far

<sup>b</sup> Some of these Truths are both finely and philosophically expressed by our great Poet in the following Pasfage:

But know, that in the Soul Are many leffer Faculties, that ferve Reafon as chief: Among thefe, Fancy next Her Office holds: Of all external Things Which the five watchful Senfes reprefent, She forms Imaginations, aery Shapes, Which Reafon joining or dif-joining, frames All what we affirm, or what deny, and call Our Knowledge, or Opinion.

Parad. Loft, B. v. # 100, &c.

16

SECT. it may, or may not, with Propriety be re-III. garded as a Test of Truth.

> PERHAPS there is no Species of Writing (except only that of mere Narration) but what will fall under the Denomination of Poetry, Eloquence, or Argument. The first lays hold of the Imagination; the fecond, through the Imagination, feizes the Passions, the last addressesh itself to the Reason of Mankind. The immediate, effential End therefore of Poetry is to pleafe, of Eloquence to perfuade, of Argument to instruct. To this End, the Poet dwells on fuch Images as are *beautiful*; the Orator felects every Circumstance that is affecting; the Philosopher only admits what is true. But as all these, in their several Kinds of Writing, addrefs themfelves to Man, who is compounded of Imagination, Palfion, and Reafon; fo they feldom confine themfelves to their respective Provinces, but lay hold of each others Art, the more effectually to gain Admission and Success to their own. Yet still, the Masters in these various Kinds of Composition, know how to keep their feveral Boundaries distinct; not to make unwarrantable Inroads into each others Provinces, nor remove those Lines which Nature

## Estay on Ridicule.

17

. 1

ture hath prefcribed: But fo to limit their SECT. Excursions, that the Intelligent may always III. know what is defigned, a Poem, an Oration, or an Argument<sup>i</sup>.

Thus the judicious Poet, though his immediate and universal Aim is beautiful Imitation, yet in order to become more pleafing, endeavours often to be interesting, always to be rational. His Application being made to Man, should he let loofe Imagination to its random Flights, he must shock the Reafon of every penetrating Observer. Hence appears the Neceffity of cultivating that Maxim in poetical Composition, which the two best of French Critics, Boileau and Boubours have fo much infifted on; "that all " poetical Beauty must be founded in " Truth "." Becaufe in the unlimited Excurfions of Fancy, though one Faculty should approve, yet another is difgusted:

<sup>3</sup> Would it not carry us too far from our Subject, it might perhaps be both a new and pleafing Speculation, to point out the Writers in these feveral Kinds, who have been most remarkably excellent or defective, with Regard to this just Union of these three Species of Composition. At present it must suffice, to have hinted such a Criticism, which the Reader may easily prosecute.

\* Que si on me demande ce que c'est que cet agrément et ce sel — à mon avis, il consiste principalement à ne jamais presenter au lecteur que des *pensées vrais*, C Though

 $\sum_{i=1}^{n}$ 

SECT. Though Imagination acquiesce in false III. Beauty, Reason will reject it with Disdain. Thus, although the primary and effential End of Poetry is to please by Imitation; yet as it is addressed to Man, Instruction makes a necessary, though an adventitious Part of its Character<sup>1</sup>.

FROM this View of Things we may, in paffing, further fee the *Nature*, *Limits*, and *comparative Excellence* of the various Kinds of Poetry. The *Defcriptive* holds entirely

et des expressions justes. Ocuvres de Boileau, tom. i. Pres. p. 29.

Car enfin, pour vous dire un peu par ordre ce que je pense la dessi, la verité est la premiere qualité, et comme le fondement des pensées : les plus belles sont vitieuses; ou plutot celles qui passent pour belles, et qui semblent l'etre, ne le sont pas en effet, si ce sonds leur manque. Bouhours, Man. de bien pens. p. 11. <sup>1</sup> Hence the Debate mentioned by Strabo (l. i.) be-

<sup>1</sup> Hence the Debate mentioned by Strabo (l. i.) between Eratofthenes, and fome of the Ancients, may eafily be decided. The first infisting that Pleasure, the other that Instruction, was the only End of Poetry. They were both wrong: as it appears that these two Ends must always be united in fome Degree. However, Eratosthenes was nearer the Truth, as he alledged the effential End. 'Tis no bad Defeription, given by Mr. Dryden and others, of the End of Poetry, that it is " to "instruct by pleasing:" Though upon the whole, it<sup>4</sup> throws more Weight on the Circumstance of Instruction, than the Thing will bear. The Admirers of Lord S. who love pompous Declamation, may fee a great deal faid on this Subject, and with little Precision, in Strada's Third Prolution.

18

of

of the Imagination, and may be termed pure SECT. III. Poetry or Imitation: Yet, with regard to. the fecondary End of Instruction, it feems to merit only the lowest Place, because it is then perfect when it fatisfies the Imagination; and while it offends not Reason, or the Affections, nothing further with regard to these Faculties is expected from it. The Tragic, Comic, Satiric, and the Elegy, as they chiefly regard the Pallions and the Heart of Man, fo they draw much of their Force from the Sources of Eloquence. On the other hand, the Didactic, as it makes its chief Application to Reafon, though it retains fo much of the Graces of Imagination, as to merit the Name of Poetry, is principally of the logical Species. The Epic, by its great Extent, includes all these Kinds by turns, and is therefore the noblest, both in its . primary and fecondary Intention. Much indeed hath been occasionally afferted by feveral Writers, concerning the fuperior Dignity of the tragic Species<sup>m</sup>: But this , hath been more in the Way of Affirmation than Proof. Their Opinion feems to have

Thus the excellent Mr. *Addison*: "A perfect Tra-"gedy is the nobleft Production of humane Nature." Spectator, N° 39.

**C** 2

been

#### SECT. been founded on a miltaken Interpretation III. of ARISTOTLE, whole supposed Authority on this Subject, hath generally passed unquestioned. But whoever shall thoroughly examine the Sentiments of the grand Master, will find he only meant to affert, that the Mode of Imitation in Tragedy is more forcible, and therefore fuperior to that of the epic Kind; because in the last, the Action is only told, in the former, it is vifibly reprefented. This is the Truth. But if we confider, not the Mode of Imitation, but the Subjects imitated; if we confider the comparative Greatness of the Action which these two Kinds of Poetry can comprehend; and the moral Ends of Instruction, no lefs than the Variety and Beauty of Description, which conftitutes the very Effence of Poetry; we shall find the Epic greatly superior, on account of the Extent and Importance of those Actions, and the Variety of Characters which it is capable of involving. Thus for Instance, such an Action as the Death of OEDIPUS or CATO may be more perfectly imitated (because vifibly reprefented) in Tragedy, than in the Epos: But a much greater and more extensive Action, fuch as the Establishment of an Empire, with

20

all

## Estay on Ridicule.

21

all its fubordinate Epifodes, religious, poli-SECT. tical, and moral, cannot be comprehended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or exhibited in *Tragedy*, while yet they may be perfectly defcribed in the *Epopée*.

So much concerning *Poetry* will be found to have Relation to our Subject. But as the Queftion concerning *Ridicule* will turn chiefly on the proper Subordination of *Eloguence*, it will be neceffary to confider this Kind of Composition in a more particular Manner.

ELOQUENCE then is no other than a Species of Poetry applied to the particular End of Persuasion. For Persuasion can only be effected by rowzing the Paffions of the 'Soul; and thefe, we have feen, are only to be moved by a Force impressed on the Imagination, affuming the Appearance of Truth; which is the effential Nature of poetical Composition. Thus the Lord VERULAM: " In all Perfusions that are wrought by "Eloquence, and other Impression of like \* Nature, which paint and difguife the true " Appearance of Things, the chief Recom-"mendation unto Reason, is from the Ima-" gination "." And the judicious Strabo, confistently with this Theory, tells us, that

PDe Aug. Scient. 1. ii.

Ç 3

in

22

SECT. in Fact "the oratorial Elocution was but III. "an Imitation of the poetical: This ap-"peared firft, and was approved: They "who imitated it, took off the Measures, "but still preferved all the other Parts of "Poetry in their Writings: Such were "CADMUS the Milesian, PHERECYDES, and "HECATÆUS. Their Followers then took "fomething more from what was left, and "at length Elocution descended into the

" Profe which is now among us°.

THUS as the Paffions must have an *apparent Object* of Good or Evil offered by the Imagination in order to excite them; fo Eloquence must offer *apparent Evidence* ere it can be received and acquiefced in: For the Mind cannot embrace known Falfehood. So that every Opinion which Eloquence instills, though it be the pure Refult of certain fictitious Images impressed on the Fancy, is always regarded as the Refult of rational Conviction, and received by the Mind as Truth.

 Πρωίιςα γας ή ποικίικη χαίασκευη παρηλθεν ας το μεσον, και ευδοκιμησεν αία εκανην μιμεμενοι, λυσανίες το μείςον, τ΄ αλλα δε Φυλαξανίες τα ποιηίικα, συνεγραψαν οί περ. Καδμον, και Φερεκυδην, και Εκαίαιον αία οί ύς εξον, αΦαιζενίες αα τι των τοιείων, ας το νω αδος καίηγαγον, ώς αν απο ύψες τινος. Strabo, lib. i.

Hence

## Estay on Ridicule.

HENCE we may perceive the just Foun-SECT. dation of the well-known Maxim in rheto-. rical Composition, Artis est celare artem. In every other Art, where the End is Pleafure. Instruction, or Admiration, the greater Art the Master displays, the more effectually he gains his Purpose. But where the End is Persuasion, the Discovery of his Art must defeat its Force and Defign. For ere he can perfuade, he must feem to apply to his Hearer's Reason, while, in Fact, he is working on his Imagination and Affections: Now this, once known, must defeat his Purpose; because nothing can persuade but what has the Appearance of Truth.

HENCE too we may fee where the true Medium lies between the too frequent U/e, and delicate Avoidance of poetical Images, Metaphors, Similies, bold in Eloquence. Figures, and glowing Expressions are proper, fo far as they point the Imagination to the main Subject on which the Paffion is to be excited: When they begin to amule, they grow abfurd. And here, by the way, lies the effential Difference between the Epic and Tragic Composition. For the Epic, tending chiefly to Admiration and Instruction, allows a full Display of Art: But C 4 the - 1



#### 24

## Effay on RIDICULE.

SECT. the Tragic, being of the perfusive Kind, III. must only regard and touch upon poetical Images in this fingle View, as they tend to rowze the Paffions of the Soul. MACRO-BIUS<sup>P</sup> hath collected many elegant Examples of this poetic Elocution from the Eneid: He hath ranged them in Claffes, and pointed out the Fountains whence the great Poet drew his Pathos: And fure, it may with Truth be affirmed, that " the Master-" strokes of that divine Work are rather of " the Tragic, than the Epic Species."

> THESE Remarks will enable us to difcover the Impropriety of an Opinion commonly held<sup>9</sup>; "that the Reafon why Elo-"quence had fuch Power, and wrought "fuch Wonders in *Athens* and *Rome*, was, "becaufe it had become the general Tafte "and Study of the Times: That confe-"quently thefe Cities were more fenfible "to its Charms, and therefore more warmly "affected by it." Now, though with regard to pure *Poetry* or ftrict *Argument*, where either Pleafure or Truth are the purpofed Ends, this Reafoning might hold; yet, when applied to *Eloquence*, it feems to

> Saturnal. 1. iv. paffim.
>  See Mr. Hume's
>  Effay on Eloquence.

þe

be without Foundation. For where Igno-SICT. rance is predominant, there any Application\_ to the Fancy or the Passions is most likely to wear the Appearance of Reason, and therefore the most likely to perfuade. As Men improve in Knowledge, fuch Application must proportionably lose its Force, and true Reasoning prevail. Hence it should feem, that they who make the conftituent Principles of Eloquence familiar to their Imagination, must of all others be best enabled to separate Truth from its Appearances, and diftinguish between Argument and Colouring. An artful Oration will indeed afford great Pleasure to one who hath applied himfelf to the Study of Rhetoric : Yet, not fo as that he shall be perfuaded by it : On the contrary, his Pleasure confists in a reflex Act of the Understanding; and arises from the very Circumstance which prevents Perfunction, a Difcovery of the Master's Art.

THE true Reason therefore, why Eloquence gained fuch mighty Power in these famed Republics was, " because the Ora-" tors addressed themselves to the People as " their Judges." Here the Art triumphed: for it had not Reafon to instruct, but Imagination and Palfion to controul. Accordingly ٠.

25

Ш.

26 Ш.

SECT. ly we find, that no fooner was the popular Government destroy'd, and the supreme Power lodged in a fingle Hand, than Eloquence began fenfibly to languish and decay: The mighty Orators, who could fway the Passions of a mixed Multitude, found their Art baffled and overthrown when opposed to the cool Determinations of cunning Ministers, or the determined Will of arbitrary Masters. Thus with great Judgment, though not much Honefty, the Roman Poet exhorts his Countrymen to difdain the low Accomplishments of Eloquence: He knew they belonged to a Republic:

Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra -

Orabunt causas melius —

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:

Hæ tibi erunt artes'.----

With the fame Penetration he lays the Scene in a popular Assembly, when he gives us a Picture of Eloquence triumphant. Ι mean in that fine Paffage where he compares NEPTUNE stilling the Noise of the Waves, to an Orator appealing the Madnels of the People:

<sup>r</sup> Eneïd, I. vi.

Ac

Ac veluti magno in populo cum fæpe coorta eft S E c T. Seditio, sevitque animis ignobile vulgus;

27

Jamque faces et faxa volant; furor arma ministrat;

Tum pietate gravem ac meritis fi forte virum quem

Confpexere, filent, arrettifque auribus aftant : Ille regit dittis animos, et pectora mulcet : Sic cunctus pelagi cecidit fragor'.-----

'Tis true, we have a supposed Instance on Record, of the Power of TULLY's Eloquence, after Liberty was destroy'd, even on the great Deftroyer himself. When we read the Oration<sup>t</sup>, we stand amazed at its Effects: For fure there is nothing equal to them in the Composition itself: And it appears an Event almost unaccountable, that CESAR, who was himfelf an accomplished Orator, who knew all the Windings of the Art, and was at the fame Time of the most determined Spirit, should be fo shaken on this Occasion as to tremble, drop his Papers, and acquit the Prifoner. Though many have attributed this to the Force of TUL-Ly's *Elocution*'; it feems rather to have been the Effect of CESAR's Art. We

\* En. l. i. \* Pro Ligario. \* Cafaubon, Sir W. Temple, Mr. Hume, &c.

know

SECT. know with what unwearied Application he III. courted CICERO's Friendship; he faw where his Vanity and his Weakness lay: With perfect Address therefore he play'd back the Orator's Art upon himself: His concern was feigned, and his Mercy artificial; as he knew that nothing could fo effectually win TULLY to his Party, as giving him the Pride of having conquered CESAR.

BUT whatever of Truth there may be in this Conjecture; fo much is evident, that the Scene where alone Eloquence can work its mighty Effects, is that of a popular Affembly. An abfolute Monarchy quencheth it at once. Nor can public Freedom itfelf give it any confiderable Play, where the public Freedom hath any firmer Basis, than that of a mere Democracy. For where the Councils of a Nation depend on the united Reafon of elected Representatives, or wife and cunning Statefmen, though the laboured Effays of Eloquence may often amuse, they will feldom determine. This feems to be the Cafe of our own Age and Country; And were it neceffary to enlarge on this Subject, it might be made appear, that they who complain of the Decay of public Eloquence among us, affign a Caufe which hath no

THUS Eloquence gains its End of Perfuation by offering *apparent* Truth to the Imagination; as Argument gains its proper End of Conviction by offering *real* Truth to the Understanding. Mr. HOBBES feems to have been well aware of this Distinction. "This, fays he, viz. laying Evidence be-"fore the Mind, is called *teaching*; the "Hearer is therefore faid to *learn*: But if "there be not fuch Evidence, then fuch "teaching is called *Perfuafion*, and beget-"teth no more in the Hearer, than what is "in the Speaker's *bare Opinion*<sup>x</sup>."

HERE then we perceive, that the Confequences of Eloquence, with regard to fpeculative Inftruction and Inquiry, are of a very different Nature from those which relate to Morals and Action. To Instruction or Inquiry, every Species of Eloquence must for ever be an Enemy: For though it may lead the Mind to acquiesce in a just Opinion, yet

\* See Mr. Hume's Effay on Eloquence. \* Hobbes. on Hum. Nature.

it .

-1-

29-

30

.....

ł

SECT. it leads it to acquiesce upon a false Founa Ш. dation: It puts the Hearer or Reader in the Speaker's or Writer's Power: And though he be fo honeft as to lead him in the Path of Truth, yet still he leads him blind-fold. In this Senfe, and under this Limitation, Mr. LOCKE's Remark is true: "We must " allow that all the Art of Rhetoric, befides " Order and Clearnefs, all the artificial and "figurative Application of Words Elo-" quence hath invented, are for nothing elfe " but to infinuate wrong Ideas, move the ì " Paffions, and thereby miflead the Judgment, " and fo indeed are perfect Cheats"."

> But if we regard what is of more Importance to Man, than mere fpeculative Truth, I mean the *practical Ends* of human Life and moral Action; then Eloquence affumes a higher Nature: Nor is there, in this practical Senfe, any neceffary Connexion between *moving* the Paffions, and *mifleading* the Judgment. For though the Ends of Truth and Perfuafion are then effentially different when the Orator ftrikes the Imagination with fictitious Images, in which cafe Falfehood becomes apparent Truth, and Eloquence the Inftru-

> > <sup>y</sup> Locke on Hum. Und.

ment

### Ellay on RIDICULE.

ment of Deceit; yet the Ends of Perfuation SECT. and Conviction, Opinion and Knowledge\_ concur, when such Impressions are made on the Imagination and Paffions, as confift with the Dictates of right Reafon. In this cafe, Eloquence comes in to the Aid of Argument, and impresses the Truths which Logic teaches, in a warmer and more effectual Manner. It paints real Good and Evil in all the glowing Colours of Imagination. and thus inflames the Heart with double Ardor to embrace the one, and reject the other.

NAY, fo far is Eloquence from being the universal Instrument of practical Deceit; that on the contrary, it should seem, the moral is more natural than the immoral Application of it. Becaufe, ere the difhonest Application can take place, Circumstances must be wrested, and Misrepresentations imposed on the Fancy, in Opposition to Truth and Reafon: Whereas in the proper Application, nothing further is neceffary, than to draw out and impress those Images and Analogies of Things, which really exift in Nature.

IT may be further observed, that as Eloquence is of a vague, unsteady Nature, merely 31

Ш.

SECT. merely relative to the Imaginations and Paf-

. 32

Ш. fions of Mankind; fo there must be feveral Orders or Degrees of it, fubordinate to each other in Dignity, yet each perfect in their The common End of each is Per-Kind. fuafion: The Means are different according to the various Capacities, Fancies, and Affections of those whom the Artist attempts to perfuade. The pathetic Orator, who throws a Congregation of Entbuhafts into Tears and Groanings, would raife Affections of a very different Nature, fould he attempt to profelyte an English Parliament : As on the other hand, the finest Speaker that ever commanded the Houfe, would in vain point the Thunder of his Eloquence on a Quaker-meeting. So again, with regard to the Oratory (if it may be called fo) of the Bar, at a Country Affize (for the higher Courts of Justice admit not Eloquence) it is easy to observe, what a different Tour the learned Council takes, in addreffing himfelf to the Judge or Jury: He is well aware, that what passes with the one for Argument of Proof, would be derided by the other as pastboard Declamation. This Difference in the Kind, with respect to the Eloquence of the Pulpit, is no lefs remarkable

able in different Countries. Thus the very SECT. III. agreeable and fenfible VOLTAIRE observes, that " in France (where Reafoning bath lit-" tle Connexion with Religion) a Sermon is a " long Declamation, fpoken with Rapture " and Enthufiafm: That in Italy (where " Tafte and Vertú give a Tincture to Super-"fition itself) a Sermon is a Kind of de-" votional Comedy: That in England (where " Religion fubmits to Reason) it is a folid " Differtation, fometimes a dry one, which " is read to the Congregation without "Action or Elocution z." And he juftly concludes, that the Difcourse which raiseth a French Audience to the highest Pitch of Devotion, would throw an Englifb one into a Fit of Laughter.

HENCE too, and hence alone, we may account for a Fact, which, however, feemingly improbable, is too well-known to be doubted of: "That although in *France*, "the applauded Pulpit Eloquence is of the

<sup>a</sup> The Paffage in the Original is thus: "Un fermon en France est une longue declamation scrupuleusement divisée en trois points, et recitée avec enthoufiasme. En Angleterre un fermon est une differtation folide, et quelquefois feche, qu'un homme lit au peuple sans geste, et sans aucune eclat de voix. En Italie c'est une comedie spirituelle.

" Entbu-

34

SECT. " Enthusiastic, in England of the severe and III. " rational Species; yet the Tafte of these "two Nations in Tragedy or Theatrical " Eloquence, is mutually reversed : The " English are Enthuliastic; the French fe-" " vere and rational." Now, though this Fact may carry the Appearance of Selfcontradiction, yet on the Principle here laid down, the known Circumstances of the two Kingdoms will explain it fufficiently. In + England, a general Spirit of Reafoning and Enquiry hath extinguished the natural Enthusiaims of the human Mind in religious Subjects; while our unrestrained Warmth of Imagination, and habitual Reverence for the noble Irregularities of SHAKESPEAR, concur to make us defpife the rigid Laws of the Stage: On the contrary, in France, the Severities of the Academy have utterly quenched the high Tragic Spirit; while, as yet, religious Criticism hath made but little Progress among the Subjects of the most Christian King.

In further Proof of this Principle, we may appeal to ancient Fact: To the Progress of Eloquence in *Greece*. There we find, it first appeared, decked in all the glowing Colours of Poetry: afterwards, in an

Sermons the End is Softweeton: In Tragedies Age End is anu/emert. and therfore Enthusie of m may allowed in the one, by those very Perfuns who reject

Age of more polifhed Manners and extenfive Knowledge, when the Rhetors attempted to carry this Kind of Eloquence to a ftill higher Degree, they found the Times would not bear it: They were baffled in their Attempt. As fucceeding Ages grew more knowing, they grew more fastidious and refined: The Orators were obliged gradually to lower and bring down Eloquence from its high Standard: Till at length it gained a Form and Character entirely new, as we find it in XENOPHON's chaftifed Manner of Attic Elegance<sup>2</sup>.

To conclude with one Proof more in Favour of this Principle. It appears that these different Kinds were acknowledged fufficiently in ancient *Rome*; though the true Diffinction between them seems not to have been thoroughly perceived, unless by TULLY himself. The correct and *Attic* Species having gained a Number of Admirers under the Patronage of SALLUST, who first encouraged it in *Rome*<sup>b</sup>, many

• See the Paffage quoted above from Strabo, p. 22.

9 3. \* Sic Sellufio vigente, amputatæ fententiæ, et verba ante expectatum cadentia, et obscura brevitas, fuere pro cuku. Senec. Epist.

D 2

werc

36

 $S \in c \tau$ . were the Debates concerning the fuperior Ш. Force and Propriety of this or the more elevated Manner. The Patrons of the Attic Style derided CICERO, as being loofe, tumid, and exuberant : On the contrary, he too had his Partizans, who defpifed the calm and correct Species, as void of Energy and Power<sup>d</sup>. Thus by overlooking the *relative* Nature of Eloquence, they mutually fell into an Extreme; both forgetting, that either of these Kinds might be of superior Propriety and Force, according to the Imaginations, Paffions, and Capacities of those to whom they should be applied. But TULLY, with a superior Sagacity, faw clearly where the true Distinction lay: For, fpeaking of CALVUS, a Patronizer of the Attic Manner, he fays, "HENCE his Elo-" quence gained a high Reputation among " the Learned and Attentive; but among

> <sup>c</sup> Conftat, nec Ciceroni quidem obtrectatores defuiffe, quibus inflatus et tumens, nec fatis pressus, supera modum exultans, et superstuens, et *parum Atticus* videretur. Dialog. apud Tacit.

> <sup>d</sup> Mihi falli multum videntur, qui folos effe Atticos credunt, tenues et lucidos et fignificantes, fed quadam eloquentize frugalitate contentos, ac manum semper intra pallium continentes. Quintil.

> > " the

" the Vulgar, for whom Eloquence was SECT. " chiefly formed, it was of no Efteem"."

37

Now among these feveral Kinds of Eloquence, Justness of Thought and Expression, firiking Figures, Argument adorned with every pathetic Grace, are the Characters of the bigbeft : Sophiftry and Buffoonry, ambiguous and dishonest Hints, coarfe Language, falfe and indecent Images, are the Characters of the lowest. Between these two Extremes, there lies a Variety of intermediate Kinds, each ascending towards the highest, in Proportion as they abound with its proper Characters. For as the Imagination and Paffions are then most refined and just, when they bear to the fame Point with Reafon; fo, that Species of Eloquence is the noblest which tends to conduct them thither<sup>f</sup>. On this Principle, and on this

\* Sed ad *Caloum* revertamur — ejus oratio, nimia religione attenuata, doctis et attente audientibus erat illuftris; a multitudine autem et à foro, cui nata eloquentia est, devorabatur. In Brut.

<sup>6</sup> Les Egyptiens comparoient ceux qui preferent le coloris au deffein dans la peinture, à ceux qui en matiere d'eloquence et de poefie preferent les penfées brillantes aux penfées justes. Ciceron, le maitre et le modele de l'eloquence latine, a dit en appliquant sa reflexion à l'orateur, que nous laissons bientôt des Tableaux qui nous attirent d'abord par la force du coloris; au lieu que

alone,

Ellay on RIDICULE.

38

SECT. alone, we may with Propriety and Precision III. determine the comparative Excellence and Dignity of those who aspire to the Palm of Eloquence. On this Principle it feems to be, that a fevere, but able, Judge prefers DEMOSTHENES to TULLY<sup>5</sup>: and on this Principle he deserves the Preference.

> Thus we are at length arrived at the Point where Eloquence and Argument, Perfuasion and Conviction unite; where the Orator's Art becomes fubfervient to the Interests of Truth, and only labours to adorn and recommend Her.

WE come now to the third Species of . Composition, that of Argument : Which applying folely to the Reafon of Man, and to the Proof or Investigation of Truth, is of a more fimple and uncompounded Nature in its Principles, and therefore needs not to be fo particularly explained. For Pleasure being the primary End of Poetry, and Perfuation that of Eloquence, the real Nature of Things is often in Part difguifed, and compelled to bend to the Imagination,

> nous revenons toujours à ceux qui excellent par la beauté du dessein, qui est le vrai caractere de l'antique, Sethos, l. ii. p. 80. \* See Dr. Swift's Letter to a Young Clergyman.

and

and the Paffions: But Truth being the End SECT. III. of Argument, the varying Colours of Ima-\_ gination and Paffion must be drawn off; and human Reason itself bend to the real, uniform Nature of Things.

YET on this Occafion it may be proper . to remark, that the rational Faculty in Man cannot be comprehensive or perfect in its Operations, without a Union with a ftrong Imagination. And this, not only in the Arts of Poetry or Eloquence, but in the fevereft Investigations of Truth. For Reason alone cannot fearch out new Ideas, but only compare and diftinguish those which Sense and Imagination prefent to her, and the Senfes being of small Extent, Imagination is therefore the great universal Instrument of human Knowledge and human Action. Without the Aids of Imagination therefore, Reafon works in a contracted Sphere; being deflitute of Materials; unable to make the necessary Excursions into the Immensity of Nature; and wanting that Power which alone can range through the whole Extent of created Being, and bring Home all the poffible and apparent Analogies of Things, fetting them before her difcerning Eye, and fubmitting them to her fovereign Appro-D 4 bation

Effay on RIDICULE.

40

SECT. bation or Diflike. From this noble Union III. arises that boundless Penetration, which so far surpasseth mere Judgment : and which, according as it is exerted in Poetry, Eloquence, Philosophy, Morals, or Religion, strikes into the various and untroden Paths of Nature and Truth ; forms the diftinguished Names of HOMER, SHAKESPEAR, MILTON, DE-MOSTHENES, TULLY, ARISTOTLE, BACON, BAYLE, PASCAL, NEWTON, LOCKE, HOOKER, BERKLEY, WARBURTON, giving that effential Superiority and Preheminence, which hath ever been, first the Envy, and then the Admiration of Mankind.

> THUS as it appeared above, how neceffary the Reftraints of Reason are, to the Perfection of Works of Imagination; so here it is evident, that a full Union of Imagination is necessary to the perfect Operations of Reason. Taken singly, they are each *defective*: When their Powers are joined, they conflitute TRUE GENIUS.

> BUT, however requisite the Force of Imagination may be, to the Perfection of Reafon, and the Production of *true Genius*, yet ftill Reafon remains the fuperior and corrective Power: Therefore every Reprefentation of Poetry or Eloquence, which I only

only apply to the Fancy and Affections, mult SECT. finally be examined and decided upon, mult III. be tried, rejected, or received, as the reafoning Faculty shall determine.

AND thus REASON alone is the Detecter of Falfebood, and the TEST OF TRUTH.

#### SECTION IV.

PURE Wit, when not applied to the Characters of Men, is properly a Species of Poetry. It amufes and delights the Imagination by those fudden Affemblages and pleafing Pictures of Things which it creates: and from every common Occasion can raife fuch

SECT fuch striking Appearances, as throw the IV. most phlegmatic Tempers into a Convulsion

of good-humoured Mirth, and undefigning Laughter.

BUT Ridicule or Raillery, which is the Subject of our Inquiry, hath a further Scope and Intention. It folely regards the Opinions, Passions, Actions, and Characters of Men: and may properly be denominated "that Species of Writing which excites "Contempt with Laughter."

STILL more particularly we may obferve, that as Eloquence in general is but the Application of Poetry to the End of Perfuafion, fo Ridicule in particular is no more than the Application of that particular Species of Poetry called Wit, to the fame End of Perfuafion. It tends to excite Contempt, in the fame Manner as the other Modes of Eloquence raife Love, Pity, Terror, Rage, or Hatred, in the Heart of Man.

Now, that Contempt which certain Objects raife in the Mind, is a particular Mode of Paffion. The Objects of this Paffion are apparent Falfebood, Incongruity, Impropriety, or Turpitude of certain Kinds. But as the Object of every excited Paffion must be examined by Reason ere we can determine whether

## Ellay on RIDICULE.

whether it be proper or improper, real or SECT. fictitious; fo, every Object that excites Contempt must fall under this general Rule. Thus, before it can be determined whether our Contempt be just, Reason alone must examine Circumstances, separate Ideas, distinguish Truth from its Appearances, decide upon, restrain, and correct the Passion.

Thus Ridicule is no other than a Species of Eloquence: and accordingly we find it mentioned and exprelly treated as fuch, by the best Writers of Antiquity. ARISTO-TLE, as in every Subject, leads the Way. "As Ridicule feems to be of fome Ufe in " pleading, it was the Opinion of GORGIAS, " that you ought to confound your Adver-" fary's ferious Argument by Raillery, and " his Raillery by ferious Argument. And " he judged well h." Here he first gives the Sentiments of a Sage; and then confirms them by his own Authority.

To offer all that TULLY hath faid upon the Subject of Ridicule, would be to tranfcribe a confiderable Part of his fecond Book

שנפו לב דמי שנאסומי, נהמלא דוים למצה צרארוי נצמי צי שוב באשרו, צבו לאש בסא רטציובר דאי עבי האטעלאי διαφθμεμν των ενανίιων γελωίι, τον δε γελωία σπουδη. oglas Asyan. Arift. Rhet. 1. iii. c. 18.

De

1

43

IV.

44

SECT. De Oratore. After having gone through fe-IV. veral Topics of Rhetoric, he comes at length to this of Ridicule: and affigns to the elder CESAR the Talk of explaining the Force and Application of this Art. In the Course of his Reasonings on this Subject, he affirms First, That Ridicule is a Branch of Eloquence<sup>i</sup>. 2dly, That certain Kinds of Turpitude or Incongruity are its proper Object<sup>k</sup>. 3dly, That the Orator must be temperate in the Application of it<sup>1</sup>. 4thly, That its Force may confift either in Thought or Expression, but that its Perfection lies in a Union of both<sup>m</sup>. And laftly, That af-

> <sup>1</sup> Est autem plane oratoris movere risum.—Res sæpe, quas argumentis dilui non facile est, joco, risuque dissolvit.

> \* Locus autem et regio quafi ridiculi, turpitudine quadam et deformitate continetur.—Nec infignis improbitas et fcelere juncta, nec rurfus miferia infignis agitata ridetur.—Quamobrem materies omnis ridiculorum est in istis vitiis,— quæ neque odio magno, nec misericordia maxima digna funt.

> <sup>1</sup> In quo, non modo illud præcipitur, ne quid infulse; sed etiam, fi quid perridicule possis: vitandum est oratori utrumque, ne aut scurrilis jocus sit, aut mimicus.

> <sup>m</sup> Duo funt genera facetiarum, quorum alterum re tractatur, alterum dicto.—Nam quod quibufcunque verbis dixeris, facetum tamen eft, re continetur : quod, mutatis verbis, falem amittit, in verbis habet leporem omnem.—maxime autem homines delectari, fi quando rifus conjuncte, re, verbeque moveatur.

> > ter

#### Effay on Ridicule.

ter all, it is but the lowest Kind of Elo-SECT. quence<sup>n</sup>.

45

QUINTILIAN builds chiefly on TULLY, when he treats of Ridicule in the fixth Book of his Inftitutions. He too confiders it as a Branch of Eloquence, and gives Rules for its Efficacy and Reftraint<sup>o</sup>.

Now, in Confequence of these Proofs, a few Observations will naturally arise with regard to *Ridicule in particular*, fimilar to those which were made in the last Section, upon *Eloquence in general*.

As first : Ridicule must render every Proposition it supports *apparently true*, ere it can be received and acquiesced it. Thus every Opinion which Ridicule instills, tho' it be the pure Result of certain Images impressed on the Imagination, by which the Passion of Contempt is excited, is always

\* Eft, mea fententia, vel tenuiffimus ingenii fructus. De Oratore, l. ii. passim.

<sup>o</sup> Rifum judicis movendo, et illos triftes folvit affectus, et animum ab intentione rerum frequenter avertit : et aliquando etiam reficit, et à fatietate vel à fatigatione renovat.—Habet enim, ut *Cicero* dicit, fedem in deformitate aliqua et turpitudine.—Rerum autem fæpe, ut dixi, maximarum momenta vertit, cum odium iramque frequentifime frangat.—Ea quæ dicit vir bonus, omnia falva dignitate ac verecundia dicet : nimium enim rifus pretium eft, fi probitatis impendio conftat. Quint. Infl. I. vi.

regarded

3

ł

SECT. regarded as the Conviction of Reason, and IV. received by the Mind as Truth. And thus by offering apparent Truth, Ridicule gains its End of Persuasion.

46

AGAIN, it may be observed, that the Consequences of Ridicule with regard to *speculative* Instruction or Inquiry, are of a very different Nature from those which relate to Morals and Action. To the first it must ever be an *Enemy*: But to the latter it may be an Enemy or Friend according as it is fairly or dishonessity applied. It comes in to the Aid of Argument, when its Impressions on the Imagination and Passions are consistent with the real Nature of Things: When it strikes the Fancy and Affections with fictitious Images, it becomes the Instrument of Deceit.

THUS Ridicule may befriend either Truth or Falfehood: and as it is morally or immorally applied, may illustrate the one, or difguise the other. Yet it should seem, that the moral is more natural, than the immoral Application of Ridicule; inasmuch as Truth is more congenial to the Mind than Falsehood, and so, the *real* more easily made *apparent*, than the *fictitious* Images of Things.

RIDICULS

## Essay on Ridicule.

47

RIDICULE, therefore, being of a vague, SECT. IV. unsteady Nature, merely relative to the Imaginations and Paffions of Mankind, there must be several Orders or Degrees of it, fuited to the Fancies and Capacities of thole whom the Artift attempts to influence. Among these several Kinds of Ridicule. Justness of Thought and Expression, adorned with striking Figures, is the bigbeft : Coarfe Language, Buffoonry, false and indecent Images, are the Characters of the loweff. For as the Imagination and Paffions are then most refined and just, when they bear to the fame Point with Reafon; fo, that Species of Ridicule is most genuine which tends to conduct them thither.

BUT, however Ridicule may imprefs the Idea of apparent Turpitude or Falfehood on the Imagination; yet still Reason remains the superior and corrective Power. Therefore, every Representation of Ridicule, which only applies to the Fancy and Affections, must finally be examined and decided upon, must be tried, rejected, or received, as the reasoning Faculty shall determine.

AND thus Ridicule can never be a Detestor of Falfebood, or a Test of Truth. SECTION

#### SECTION. V.

SECT. IN further Confirmation of these Truths, V. the direct Proofs of which may possibly lie fomewhat remote from common Apprehension, let us appeal to Experience; to the general Sense and Practice of Mankind. And here we shall find, that Contempt and Ridicule are always founded on preconceived Opinion, whatever be the Foundation of it, whether Reason or Imagination, Truth or Falsebood.

> For in Fact, do not we see every different Party and Affociation of Men defpifing and deriding each other according to their various Manner of Thought, Speech, and Action? Does not the Courtier deride the Foxhunter, and the Foxhunter the Courtier? What is more ridiculous to a Beau, than a Philosopher; to a Philosopher, than a Beau? Drunkards are the Jeft of fober Men, and fober Men of Drunkards. Phyficians, Lawyers, Soldiers, Priest, and Freethinkers, are the standing Subjects of Ridi-Wifdom and Folly. cule to one another. the Virtuous and the Vile, the Learned and Ignorant, the Temperate and Debauched, all

# Essay on Ridicule.

all give and return the Jeft. According to SECT. the various Imprefions of Fancy and Affection, the Afpects of Things are varied; and confequently the fame Object, feen under these different Lights and Attitudes, must in one Mind produce Approbation, in another Contempt.

IF we examine the Conduct of political Bodies or religious Sects, we shall find it of a fimilar Nature. Each of these railly every other, according to the Prejudices they have imbibed in Favour of their own System. How contemptible and ridiculous are the European Forms of Government, in the Eyes of an Ahatic?? And do not we on this Side the Hellespont repay them in their own Kind? Are we a whit more united among ourfelves in our Ideas of the Ridiculous, when applied to Modes of Empire? What is more contemptible to an Englishman, than that flavish Submission to arbitrary Will and lawlefs Power, which prevails almost universally on the Continent? And they are little acquainted with the State

\* A Venetian was introduced to the King of Pegu: When this Prince was informed by him, that the Venetians had no King, he laughed to exceffively, that he loft his Breath, and could not speak for a good while. Recueil des Veyages, Sc.

of

49

50

#### Effay on Ridicule.

SECT. of Affairs abroad, who know not that, v. within the Precincts of Tyranny, English Freedom is one of the commonest Topics of. Raillery and Ridicule: Every Man's judging for himfelf, is the Subject of the Frenchman's Drollery: One Man's judging for all. is the Subject of ours. The Cafe is parallel with regard to religious Tenets, where People are at Liberty to speak their Thoughts. Is there any Species of Invective which the Church of Rome hath not exercifed upon all who have diffented from its Measures? And have not the Divines of the reformed Churches been as arrant Droles, in Vindication of their respective Systems? What Ribaldry and coarse Banter hath been thrown (nay rather, what hath not been thrown) by the Freetbinkers, on Religion and Christianity? And how basely have some of our Divines proftituted their Pens in former Days, by defcending to the fame dirty Level? Even the Soureness of Puritanism, nay, the Sullenness of Quakerism have sometimes relaxed and yielded themselves up to the Love of Joking : And fly Hints, in demure Phrase and sober Countenance, have as plainly fpoken their Contempt of those they pitied, as the loud Laughter and Grimace of

#### Effay on Ridicule.

of worldly Men, the Difdain of those they SECT. profess to hate.

5 I

BUT what need we wonder that a Difference of Opinion in fuch weighty Affairs as those of Government and Religion should infpire a mutual Contempt, when we fee that any confiderable Variation of Manners in the most ordinary Circumstances of Life has the fame Effect? The Cuftoms of ancient Times have been held fo ridiculous by many Moderns, that honeft HOMER hath been branded as a Dunce, only because he hath recorded them. What Raillery hath been thrown on the venerable Bard, as well as the Hero he describes, only because he hath told us, that PATROCLUS acted in the Capacity of Cook for himself, and his Friend Achilles<sup>9</sup>: And that the Prince's Nauficaa followed by all her Maids, went down to wash the King's and Queen's Cloaths along with her own'? Rebecca and her Hiftorian' have fallen under the fame ignorant Cenfure, becaufe she went down to draw Water : And fo have the Daughters of Aucustus, for spinning their Father's Cloaths,

! Ody /. . Gerefis. II.

E 2

when

#### Ellay on RIDICULE.

 $S \in C \tau$ . when he was Master of the World. Thus the undebauched Simplicity of ancient Times, becomes the Jeft of modern Luxury and Folly. From the fame Principle, any new Mode of Speech or Action, feen in our own Times, appears ridiculous to those who give Way to the Sallies of uninformed Contempt and Laughter. What fuperior Airs of Mirth and Gayety may be feen in a Club of Citizens, passing Judgment on the Scotch, the Western, or any other remote provincial Dialect? while at the other End of the Town, the Stream of Ridicule runs as strong on the Manners and Dialect of the Exchange. The leaft unufual Circumstance of Habit, beyond what the Fashion prefcribes, is by turns fo fenfibly ridiculous, that one half of the Expence of Drefs feems to confift in accommodating it to the Dictates and Caprice of the current Opinion. And it is a just Complaint of the greatest Tragic Poet of the Age, that this indulged Spirit of Ridicule is a fundamental Obftruction to the Improvement of the French "We dare not, fays he, ha-Theatre. " zard any thing new upon the Stage, in " the Presence of a People whose constant " Practice

52

1

#### Ellay on Ridicule.

"Practice is, to ridicule every thing that is SECT. "not fashionable"."

53

NEITHER is the Tafte of Mankind lefs Tapricious with regard to the Methods of Ridicule', than the Objects of it. How many Soyings and Repartées are recorded from Antiquity as the Quinteffence of Raillery, which among us only raife a Laugh, because they are insipid? TULLY himself often attempts in vain to extort a Smile from his modern Reader. Even the fales Plautini have in great Measure lost their Poignancy. There is a certain Mode of Ridicule peculiar to every Age and Country. What a curious Contrast to each other are an Italian and a Dutch Buffoon? And I suppose the Raillery of a French and a Ruffian Drole are as different as the nimble Pranks of a Monkey, from the rude Gam-Even the fame Country bols of a Bear. hath numerous and under Subdivisions

\* Nous craignons de hazarder fur la fcene de spectacles nouveaux devant une nation accoutumée à tourner en ridicule tout ce qui n'est pas d'Ujage. Voltaire, Dife. fur la trag.

Quaenam tandem in loquendo, aut in scribendo, quasi titillatione risum lacessure dictum unum, aut alterum: brevicula narratio: nonnihil repentinum, et fortuitum, et recens, et novitate sua primum. Vavassor, De sudicra dictione.

Species

54

SECT. Species of Ridicule. What is high Hu-V. mour at Wapping, is rejected as nauleous in the City: What is delicate Raillery in the City, grows coarfe and intolerable as you approach St. James's: And many a well meant Joke, that paffes unheeded in all thefe various Diffricts, would fet an innocent Country Village in an Uproar of Laughter.

THIS Subject might be much enlarged on: For the Modes and Objects of Ridicule are as indefinite as the imagined Combinations of Things. But from thefe Examples drawn from the Conduct of particulars, it appears no lefs than from the general Nature and Faculties of Man, that Ridicule hath no other Source than Imagination, Paffion, Prejudice, and preconceived Opinion: And therefore can never be the Detecter of Falfebood, or Teft of Truth.

#### SECTION VI.

SECT. THE Caufe might be fafely refted here. VI. Yet, to throw a still clearer Light on the Subject of our Enquiry, let us now examine what his Lordship hath advanced in Support of his new Method of Investigation. And

And as the noble Writer hath not thought SECT. it expedient to defcend often to the argu-. mentative Way; we must make the most of what we find in him that looks like a Reafon.

HE tells his Friend, that " nothing is ri-" diculous except what is deformed; nor is " any thing Proof against Raillery, except "what is handfome and just:--- one may " defy the World to turn real Bravery and "Generofity into Ridicule. A Man must " be foundly ridiculous, who, with all the "Wit imaginable, would go about to ridi-" cule Wildom, or laugh at Honesty or " good Manners"."

HERE we have a Mixture of equivocal Language and pompous Declamation. If he means to affert, that " nothing is ridicu-" lous, except what is apparently deform-"ed," the Proposition is true, but foreign to the Purpofe: Becaufe, through the Error of Imagination, Things apparently deformed may be really beautiful. If he means to affert, that "nothing can be made to ap-" pear ridiculous, but what is really de-" formed," I should be glad to know where the noble Author had converfed: In the

> • Vol. i. p. 128, 129. E 4

۰.

Platonic

55

VI.

#### Ellay on RIDICULE.

SECT. Platonic Republic, it may be fo: But, in our Gotbic Systems, Matters go quite otherwise: So far as common Observation reaches, it is eafieft of all Things to make that appear ridiculous, which is not really deformed : And how fhould it be otherwife, while the human Imagination is liable to be imposed on, and capable of receiving fictitious for real Representations?

THE noble Author tells us next, that " nothing is Proof against Raillery, except "what is handfome and juft."--- Perhaps, Though it be true, that nor that neither. nothing of the oppofite Kind is proof against Raillery; yet fure it is a strange Mistake to imagine, that what is really handfome and just is always Proof against it. For, by fictitious Images impressed on the Fancy, what is really handfome and just, is often rendered apparently false and deformed; and thus becomes actually contemptible and aidiculous.

BUT " one may defy the World to turn " real Bravery and Generofity into Ridi-Safely, my Lord; while they " cule." retain their native Appearance, and Beauty of Proportion. But alas, how easy is it to difguife them! It is but concealing, varying, 20

56

VI.

in adding a Circumfrance that may firike SECT. the Fancy, and they at once affume new VI. Shapes, new Names, and Natures. Thus the Virtues which, feen in a direct Light, attract our Admiration by their Beauty; when beheld through the oblique Mediums of Ridicule ftart up in the Forms of Ideots, Hags, and Monfters.

BUT the noble Writer enforces these general Appeals to Fact, by one extraordinary He tells us, " The divinest Instance. " Man who had ever appeared in the Hea-" then World, was in the Height of witty "Times, and by the wittiest of all Poets, "most abominably ridiculed, in a whole " Comedy writ and acted on Purpose : But " fo far was this from finking his Repu-" tation, or suppressing his Philosophy, that " they each increased the more for it "." It must be owned, this is an extraordinary Affertion, unless he means to affirm, that the Reputation and Philosophy of SOCRATE arofe from his Blood, as "the Christian Sects " fprung from the Blood of Martyrs"." For it appears from all the Records of Antiquity. that the Wit of ARISTOPHANES was the most formidable Enemy that ever attacked

\* Vol. i. p. 31. 7 Vol. i.

the

57

Effay on RIDICULE.

SECT the divine Philosopher: This whetted the VI. Rage of a *milled* Multitude, and dragged to

58

Death that Virtue which hath ever fince been the Admiration of Mankind. In this Opinion, we have the Concurrence of the firft Writer of the prefent Age<sup>z</sup>: And the Confeffion of another, who, although of a Turn conceited and fantaftical enough, is yet of unqueftioned Credit for his Ingenuity and Learning. This Writer, fpeaking of the wild Wit of an ARISTOPHANES, tells us, that "the Comedy inferibed *The* "Clouds, is an execrable Attempt to ex-"pofe one of the wifeft and beft of Men "to the Fury and Contempt of a *lewd* "Multitude, in which it had but too much "Succefs<sup>a</sup>."

<sup>'</sup>TIS true, PALMERIUS, a learned French Critic of the laft Age, had, from the Number of Years between the acting The Clouds of ARISTOPHANES, and the Death of So-CRATES, pretended that ÆLIAN was miftaken in affigning this Play as one of the principal Caufes of his Deftruction. P. BRUMOY, who has wrote fo excellently of the Greek Theatre, after having examined

<sup>2</sup> Ded. to the Div. Leg. of Moses, p. 20. <sup>4</sup> Letters on Mythology, p. 262.

the

# Ellay on RIDICULE.

the Affair with the utmost Candour, con-SECT. cludes thus: "His Account (ÆLIAN'S) " feems only defective, in that he hath not " remarked the long interval that paffed be-" tween the Representation of The Clouds. " and the Condemnation of SOCRATES. "But although the Comedy did not give " the finishing Stroke to SOCRATES; yet it " might have indifpofed the Minds of the " People, fince these comic Accusations be-" came very ferious ones, which at length " destroyed the wifest of the Greeksb." But fince the noble Author feems to have adopted the other Opinion, and, as I am told, fome shallow Mimics of modern Platonism have lately stollen PALMERIUS's Criticism, and revived this stale Pretence, of the Number of Years between the Representation of The Clouds, and the Death of SOCRATES ; it may be necessary to transcribe the following Passage from PLATO's Apology, which puts the Matter beyond all Doubt : " But it

<sup>b</sup> Son recit ne femble defectueux que pour n'avoir pas marqué le long intervalle qui se passa entre la representation des Nuees, et la condemnation de Socrate. Concluons que, bien que fa comedie n'ait pas porté le dernier coup à Socrate, elle a pu indisposer les esprits, puisque les accusations comiques devinrent des accusations tres serieuses, qui perdirent enfin le plus faze des Grees. Tom. v. p. 360.

59

VI.

" is

Ellay on RIDICULE.

60

SECT. " is just, O Athenians, that I should first VI. " reply to the falle Charge of my FIRST "ACCUSERS. Because several laid their " groundless Accusations against me, MANY "YEARS AGO: whom I DREAD MORE than " the Adherents of ANYTUS; though these " too be very powerful in Persuasion: But " those are still more powerful, who have pos-" feffed and fway'd you FROM YOUR VERYIN-" FANCY, in laying false Accusations against "me. Many, indeed, have been thefe my "Accusers, and LONG HAVE THEY CON-"TINUED thus to accuse me, and perfuaded " and mifled you at that EARLY AGE, when " you were most easy of Belief: While "I, in the mean Time, was without one "Defender. And what is worft of all, I "know not fo much as their very Names, " except only that of THE COMEDIAN .----"What then do my Accusers fay?---So-" CRATES is criminal, in that he enquires " too curioufly concerning what is under " the Earth, and in the Heavens, and in " that he can make the worfe appear the " better Reafon; and that he teaches thefe " Things to others. Such then is the Ac-"cufation: For fuch Things you face in " ARIS-

# Essay on Ridicule.

HERE we fee, the Philosopher refers their Accusation to its original Cause: And this he positively affirms, was no other than the old Impressions made against him on the

· Newlow per our discuss oppi anoholizoardai, a ardees Abyraioi, weos ra wewla nou yeudy xalylipynera, xas שנים איז שנשתיע אמאוסנטי --- דעטי אמל שטאעי אשואyogos yelorasi weos upas, nas wata worth a non ern, KAL OUDER WYNDES YEYORLES. ONS EDM MUYYOR OOCONHAR N mus appi Arume, xainte ovras xai rourous deivous מאא בצבויסו למיסובנסו, ש מילנבר, סו טעשי דטור שסאאטיר ex maiden maparapheavorles, emeter te xai xalyyopour ELLOU OUSER anybes. Emela elein onger or xalalobor 200701 אמו שאאאטי אלא אנסיטי אמלאנסראגטובי בוי לב בי דמטא דא nhaua helories meos upas, eun au pahisa emiseurale, wardes orles error upor xar perparia alexros, conpris หล่าทโอออบที่es, สสอกอโอบนะขอบ อบอีะขอร o de สลขโดง ลกอโด-דמלטי, לו טולו דע טיטאבלע טוטי דו עטלשי אלניעו אמו אדמיי Gamer os dia Camorles 3 - Danealns adines, xas weeseela-Celas Cylos Ta TE UTO YAR XAI TA ETOUCAULA" XAL TON ητίω λοίον κεμτίω ποιαν και αλλοις ταυία διδασκων דסומטאון דוב בבוי דסומטאמ קמף בטרמאב אמו מטאסו בי דא Αριςοφαιους καμαδια, Σωκραίην τινα εκα περιφερομενον, φασκονία τε αεροδαίαν, και αλην σολην Φλυαerar Quagourla. Plat. Apol. Soc.

Minds

61

SECT. Minds of the Athenians, by the Comedy of VI. THE CLOUDS<sup>4</sup>.

6z

So much for the Silencing, which is the only Conviction, of Obstinacy and Ignorance. But in Reality, it is a Matter of small Confequence, in the present Question, Whether the Ridicule of the comic Poet was in Fact destructive to the divine Philofopher or not. But as it demonstrably was, it is therefore a Case in Point. However, suppose it was not; what is the Confequence? Why, only this: That dishonest

<sup>d</sup> As fo much flir hath been made about the Cafe of Socrates with regard to Ridicule, it may not be amifs to fnew what bis Opinion of it was in general, when confidered as a *Teft of Trutb.* In the fifth Book of *Plato's* Republic, *Socrates* proposes that Women should engage in all the public Affairs of Life, along with Men. This, to Glauco, appears ridiculous in fome of its Circumstances. Socrates replies, "That may be: But let us " go to the Merits of the Question, fetting aside all " Raillery, advising the Railleurs to be ferious, and put-" ting them in Mind, that the very Practice now ap-" proved in Greece (of Men appearing naked) was, not " long ago, treated there with the higheft Ridicule: " as it is to this Day among many Barbarians."-שספבטדבסי שפסה דם דפשצט דטי יסאסט, לבאטארהו דב דסטלשי, μη τα αυίων σερτίκι, αλλα σπουδαζκι, και υπομιησα-GIN OTI ON WORNS XLONOS EL ON TOIS ENANGIN EDORES AIGX CG erva xai yeroia aπee vur tois σολλοις των βαεβαεωr, yoursous and eas operation. The following Part of this Passage I would recommend to the modern Patronizers of the Way of Ridicule.

Ridicule

63

Ridicule failed of its defired Success, in one SECT. Instance. And how does this affect the VI. Question, so long as Ten thousand other Instances may be alledged to the contrary, which no Man, that is not void of common Sense or common Honesty, can possibly deny?

FROM the Appeals to Fact, already made<sup>c</sup>, may be drawn innumerable Inftances There we fee Truth, Wifof this Nature. dom, Virtue, Liberty, fuccessfully difguifed and derided; by this very means the Caufe of Falsehood, Folly, Vice, Tyranny maintained: If to these it were necessary to add more; we cannot perhaps in Hiftory find a more flagrant Proof of the Power of Ridicule against Virtue berfelf, than in that Heap of execrable Comedies, which have been the Bane and Reproach of this Kingdom thro' a Series of ninety Years. During this Period, the Generality of our comic Poets have been the unwearied Ministers of Vice: And have done her Work with fo thorough an Industry, that it would be hard to find one Virtue, which they have not facrificed at her Shrine. As Effects once established are not eafily removed, fo not only this, but the

• See above § 5.

fucceed-

64

SECT. fucceeding Generation will probably retain VI. the Impressions made in the two preceding ones; when Innocence was the Sport of abandoned Villany; and the fuccessful Adulterer decked out with all the Poet's Art, at the Expence of the ridiculed and injured Husband: When moral Virtue and Religion were made the Jest of the licentious; and female Modesly was banished, to make Way for shameless Effrontery:

> The Fair fat panting at a Courtier's Play, And not a Mafk went unimprov'd away: The modeft Fan was lifted up no more, And Virgins *fmil'd* at what they blu/b'd before<sup>f</sup>.

#### SECTION VII.

**BECT.** HERE then we have accumulated VII. Proofs of the fatal Influences of Ridicule, when let loofe from the Restraints of Reafon.

> YET still his Lordship infist, that "Truth,'tis supposed, may bear all Lights"." To which it is replied, that "Truth will "indeed bear every Light, but a false one." He adds, that "one of those principal "Lights or natural Mediums by which

> > f Effay on Criticifm. <sup>8</sup> Vol. i. p. 61. "Things

<sup>it</sup> Things are to be viewed, in order to a <sup>SECT.</sup> <sup>VII.</sup> <sup>VII.</sup> <sup>VII.</sup> <sup>VII.</sup> <sup>VII.</sup> <sup>VII.</sup> <sup>VII.</sup> <sup>VII.</sup> <sup>VII.</sup>

But the noble Writer afks us, "How " can any one of the least Justness of "Thought endure a Ridicule wrong " placed i?"--- I answer, by being misled or mistaken; and then Men are ready to bear any thing. Shew me him whofe Imagination never received or retained a false Imprefion, and I shall readily allow he can never endure a Ridicule wrong placed. But of this infallible Race I know none, except the Inhabitants of Utopia. 'Tis true, he candidly acknowledges, that "the Vulgar " may swallow any fordid Jest, any mere " Drollery and Buffoonry "." Indeed ! How Voli p. 61. Ibid. p. II. \* Ibid.

F

then

65

SECT. then can he defy the World to turn real Bra-VII. very or Generofity into Ridicule, or laugh fuc-, cefsfully at Honefty or Good-manners? And where was the Wonder or Improbability, that the Wit of ARISTOPHANES fhould incite a lewd Multitude to destroy the divine Philosopher 1?

66

But then he tells us, "It must be a " finer and truer Wit that takes with the "men of Senle and Breeding"." This Sentence it must be owned is artful enough: Because it obliges one to make a Separation that may look like *ill-natured*, before one can expose its Weakness. A truer Wit indeed may be neceffary to take with the Men of Sense; but these, I apprehend, may fometimes be diftinguished from the Men of Breeding: For it is certain, that in most Countries the Vulgar are a much more confiderable Body, than is generally imagined. Yet, although neither Reason nor the Pasfions gain any Advantages from bigb Life,

<sup>1</sup> L'Impudence qu'il avoit de tourner en ridicule la religion, devoit être reprimée : car une refutation ferieuse ne fait pas à beaucoup près tant de mal, que les railleries d'un homme d'esprit. Les *jeunes gens* se la issent gater par ces sortes de moqueurs plus que l'on ne scauroit dire. Bayle, art. BION.

<sup>m</sup> Vol. i. p. 11.

it

67

it must be owned, the Imagination acquires SECT. · VII. a certain Delicacy, which the low Vulgar are\_ generally Strangers to. The coarse Pranks of a merry Andrew that engage the Attention of a Country Fair, would make but a poor Figure at St. James's. But still it is only in the Modes, not the Objects of Ridicule, with regard to which the Courtier differs from the Clown. The Pealant and his Lord are equally fusceptible of false Impreffions; equally liable to have Falsehood obtruded on them for Truth, Folly for Wifdom, Vice for Virtue: The Methods only of Ridicule, the Engines of Deceit must vary; must be accommodated to the different Views of Things and Circumstances of Life, among which they have respectively been conversant. Thus it must indeed be a finer, but by no means a truer Kind of Wit, that takes with the Men of Breeding.

THE noble Writer proceeds to afk, "What Rule of Meafure is there in the "World, except in the confidering the real "Temper of Things, to find which are "truly ferious, and which ridiculous? And "how can this be done, unlefs by applying F 2 "the

#### Ellay on RIDICULE.

70 VII.

SECT. It is only an occasional, though, indeed, a pretty close, attendant, fince this other Maxim was taken for granted, that Reafon was the Teft of Truth. Let once his Lordship's be generally embraced, that Ridicule is fo, and we should soon see Buffoonry as clofe an Attendant on Imposture as now The Tryal has been made; Gravity. and fuccefsfully enough too, by him who has kept the Multitude in Opinion for twenty Years together; and by this Time, perhaps, himfelf, that Learning and Religion are better taught in his Conventicle, than in all the Universities and Churches of Christendom put together. And fure if any thing be the Essence of his Imposture, it is Buffoonry.

> AND here let us not forget to observe, that the noble Writer often (as in the Paffage last cited) confounds Mirth, Urbanity, or Good-humour, with Raillery or Ridicule : Than which, no two Things in Nature are more diametrically opposite. The first, as it arifeth folely from *Judden* and *pleafing Re*femblances impressed on the Imagination, is juftly regarded by all, as the best Mediator in every Debate. The last, as it ariseth folely from Contempt, is therefore no lefs juftly regarded by most, as an Embroiler and Incendiary,

Incendiary. He fets out with a formal Pro-SECT. feffion of proving the Efficacy of Humour and Ridicule in the Investigation of Truth: Yet, by shifting and mixing his Terms, he generally flides infenfibly into mere Encomiums on Good-breeding, Chearfulnefs, Urbanity, and free Enquiry; and then, from these Premises, often draws Consequences in Favour of Ridicule, as if it were an equivalent Term. This indeed keeps fomething like an Argument on Foot, and mifleads the fuperficial Reader.

BUT the noble Author triumphs in another Observation: When speaking of modern Zealots, he tells us, that "whatever " they think grave and folemn, they fup-" pole must never be treated out of a grave " and folemn Way. Though what another " thinks fo, they can be contented to treat "otherwife: And are forward to try the " Edge of Ridicule against any Opinions be-"fides their own "." Now, if this be fo; how is Gravity of the Effence of Imposlure, as he had before affirmed? But whatever becomes of that Proposition, the Remark is just. And whomfoever he means to Compliment with the Name of Zealots, whe-

> 9 Vol. i. p. 60. `F 4

ther

71

VIL

#### Ellay on RIDICULE.

72

Sict ther in Religion or Freethinking, I shall not compliment as Exceptions to the Truth of it. There is scarce a Topic of Religion, either for its Dishonour or Support, that hath not been exposed to the illiberal Jokes of fome Bungler in Controversy. And a much coarfer Advocate in the Caufe of Ridicule', hath wrote an elaborate and most tedious Differtation, to prove that the Way of Raillery hath been fuccessfully applied by. every Sect of Religionists and Infidels, to the Destruction of each other's Tenets, and the Establishment of their own. How he gains his Conclusion, that an Engine which tends to fix Mankind in their preconceived Opinions, and establish to many Species of Error, is of Importance and Efficacy in the Search of Truth, may not be fo eafy to de-In the mean time, in Reply to termine. his whole Treatife, as well as to the laft mentioned Remark of our noble Author, it may be fufficient to observe, that Mankind often retain their own, and oppofe others' Opinions, from an imperfect View of the Nature of Things: Their peculiar Tenets in Religion, as in other Subjects, are often founded in Imagination only: Their Ob-

\* Supposed to be Mr. Collins.

jections

jections to thole of others are often as SECT. groundlefs and fanciful. How natural then is it for them to communicate their Opinions on that Foundation on which they received them? How natural, that they fhould throw the Colours of Imagination on the Tenets they oppofe? That they fhould obtrude the like fictitious Images on others, which themfelves have embraced as Truth? That they fhould hold forth Appearances for Realities; employ Eloquence inftead of Logick; and endeavour to *perfuade* whom they fhould, but cannot, *convince*?

IT feems therefore that his Lordship's Observation (which contains the Quintesfence of his Affociate's Work, and which probably was the Leaven that leavened the whole Lump of Malice and Dulness) instead of being favourable to Ridicule as a Test of Truth, can only tend to difgrace it. For fince every religious and unbelieving Sect hath alike fuccessfully employed it in supporting their respective Tenets, and in rendering those of their Adversaries contemptible; it follows, inafmuch as Doctrines which are effentially repugnant cannot all be true, that RIDICULE IS ONE OF THE MOST POWER-FUL

# 74 Effay on Ridicule.

SECT. FUL ENGINES, BY WHICH ERROR CAN BE VII. MAINTAINED AND ESTABLISHED.

#### SECTION VIII.

**SECT.** WE shall only mention one more of the noble Writer's Arguments in Favour of his new *Teft*: But it is, indeed, the very *Key-Stone* of this visionary Arch, which he hath with such fantastic Labour thrown over the Depths of Error, in order to invite Mankind over it as a short and secure Passage to the Abode of Truth and Wisdom.

HE tells us, that a new Species of Enthufiafts (French Prophets) having lately rifen up among us, "We have delivered "them over to the cruelleft Contempt in "the World. I am told for certain, that "they are at this very Time the Subject "of a choice Droll or Puppet-flow at "Bart'Imy-Fair.--- And while Bart'Imy-"Fair is in Poffeffion of this Privilege, I "I dare ftand Security to our national "Church, that no Sect of Enthufiafts, "no new Venders of Prophecy or Mira-"cles, fhall ever get the Start, or put her "to the Trouble of trying her Strength "with them, in any Cafe'."

• Vol. i. p. 27, 28.

Sa

So far, for Peace fake, we venture to SECT. agree with the noble Writer: But now VIII. comes a finishing Stroke indeed.

75

FOR he proceeds to congratulate the prefent Age, that in the Beginnings of the Reformation, when Popery had got Poffeffion, *Smithfield* was ufed in a more *tragical Way*. And that "had not the Priefts, as is ufual, " preferred the Love of Blood to all other " Paffions, they might in a merrier Way, " perhaps, have evaded the greateft Force of " our reforming Spirit<sup>\*</sup>."

AND now, for Form's fake, let us suppose the noble Author to be what he assume as a Friend to Religion and Reformation: Under this Character, he recommends *Ridicule* to us, as of sovereign Use to investigate Truth, try Honesty, and unmass formal Hypocrify and Error. To prove this Use, he tells us, what we should least have expected, that if, instead of the tragical Way of *Smithfield*, the *Romiss* Priests had preferred the comic Drollery of Bart'Imy-Fair, they had perhaps gained their Point, and *evaded the greatest Force of our reforming* Spirit. Here the noble Writer forgets his Part, which is that of a Believer and a Pro-

Ridiceste then with have Supervised Popular testant.

SECT. testant. But, in his Scarcity of Proofs for

76

VIII. the Use of Ridicule, he has put the Change upon us, and perhaps upon himfelf, and offered at one to shew its Force : Which. without doubt, must wonderfully recommend it to the Favour of all fober Men. Here then lies the Dilemma: Let his Followers then get him off as they can. If their Master be a Believer, he has reasoned ill; if a Freethinker, he has managed worfe. Had he been a little more knowing in the Times he speaks of, he might have found an Instance more pertinent to his Argument, and more conformable to his Character; an Instance which shews, not what Ridicule might be supposed capable of doing, but what it actually effected. And this not to ftop Reformation, but to diferent dit Popery. Bishop BURNET tells us, that in the Year 1542, "Plays and Interludes "were a great Abuse: In them, Mock-"Representations were made, both of the "Clergy and of the Pageantry of their "Worship. The Clergy complained much " of these as an Introduction to Atheism, " when Things facred were thus laughed " at : And faid, they that begun to laugh at " Abuses, would not cease till they had re-" presented

. .

" prefented all the Mysteries of Religion as SEGT. "ridicalous: The graver Sort of Re-VШ. " formers did not approve of it: But poli-"tical Men encouraged it; and thought " nothing could more effectually pull down " the Abufes that yet remained, than the " exposing them to the Scorn of the Na-" tion"."

THIS curious Piece of Hiftory is remarkable; and tends no lefs to fupport our general Argument, than to recommend, what the noble Writer is pleafed to fnear at, the Sobriety of our reforming Spirit. Political men, fays the Historian, whose Bufmefs, and therefore whole aim, was to perfuade, encouraged the Way of Ridicule : But the graver Sort of Reformers, whole nobler Ministry, and confequently whose purpose, was to convince, did not approve of it.

BUT his Lordfhip is to fond of his Reflection, that he pushes it still further. ۹Ì "never heard (fays he) that the ancient "Heathens were fo well advised in their ill " Purpole of supprefing the Christian Re-" ligion in its first Rife, as to make use at " any Time of this Bart'lmy-Fair Method,

. History of the Reformation, A. D. 1542.

" But

-78

#### Ellay on Ridicule.

VIII.

SECT. "But this I am perfuaded of, that, had the " Truth of the Gospel been any way fur-"mountable, they would have bid much " fairer for the filencing it, if they had " chosen to bring our primitive Founders " upon the Stage in a pleafanter Way, than "that of Bear-Skins and Pitch-Barrels"." And as to the Jews, he fays, that " with all " their Malice and Inveteracy to our Savi-" our and his Apostles after him, had they " but taken the Fancy to act fuch Puppet-" Shows in his Contempt, as at this Hour " the Papifts are acting in his Honour; I " am apt to think they might poffibly have " done our Religion more harm, than by " all their other Ways of Severity "."

WHAT a Favourite is that facetious Droll of Wood and Wire, the Bart'lmy Fair Hero. with these modern Advocates for Mirth and Raillery! And indeed, not without caufe, for of him they feem to have learnt their very wittiest Practices. Who taught them to turn their Backs upon their Betters; to disturb the most serious Scenes with an unfavoury Joke; and make a Jest of the Devil? Indeed they have fo well taken off his Manners, that one Description will ferve

Ibid.

\* Vol. i. p. 29.

them

79

them both. And whether you suppose the SECT. fine one which follows to be meant of the VIII. original, or one of the Copies you are equally fure you have a good Likeness.

Sed præter reliquos incedit Homuncio, rauca Voce firepens; — Pygmæum territat agmen Major, et immanem miratur turba gigantem. Hic magna fretus mole, imparibusque lacertis Confisus, gracili jattat convitia vulgo, Et crebro folvit (lepidum caput!) ora cacbinno. Quanquam res agitur folenni feria pompa, Spernit follicitum intractabilis ille tumultum, Et risu importunus adeft, atque omnia turbat v.

Bur to return to our Argument. Be you well affured of this, kind Reader, that whatever Imprefions are made upon a Populace in the Way of Scenery and dramatic Reprefentation, are no more than fo many Kinds of filent Eloquence and Perfuation: That Facts which ought to be proved, are always taken for granted, and Things and Perfons often rendered apparently abfurd, which really are not fo. That the Vulgar (both bigb and low) are apt to fwallow any fordid Jeft or Buffoonry, fo it be but accommodated to their preconceived Opinions: That this Way of Ridicule, like every other,

Mufæ Angl. MACH. GEST. by Mr. Addifon.

80

# Ellay on RIDICULE.

1

SECT. as it is fairly or diffioneftly applied, will VIII. fweep away Truth or Falsehood without Distinction : That it will confound French Prophets with English Reformers, and on the same false Foundation establish the Truths of Protestantism, or the Absurdities That as Virtue herfelf cannot of Popery. bear up against a Torrent of Ridicule, fo neither can Religion : That therefore Christianity had indeed more to fear from the contemptuous Misrepresentations, than the bitterest Rage of its Enemies: That Christianity did in Fact endure this more than firey Trial: That its divine Founder was derided<sup>z</sup> as well as crucified : That they who in fucceeding Times fuffered for the Faith, endured cruel Mockings no lefs than Scourg= ings, Bonds, and Imprisonment : That many a brave Martyr offered up his Prayers to Heaven, that he might be released by Death from the Contempt of his Enemies: And after being baited in the Bear-Skin, found a Refuge in the Faggot, or the Pitch-Barrel.

#### SECTION IX.

SECT. HOWEVER, the noble Writer's Mo-IX. defty must not be forgotten. For while he Prophefy units us, who it was that finite thee ! might

# Essay on Ridicule.

thight have arrogated to himfelf the Glory SECT. of this wondrous Difcovery, he hath in-\_\_\_\_\_IX. formed us of an ancient Sage, whole Idea of Ridicule coincided with his own. ""Twas the Saying of an ancient Sage, that "Humour was the only Teft of Gratr vity"."

The Reader will probably be furprized to find that the Paffage here referred to by the noble Writer, is no other than what hath been already quoted from ARISTO-TLE as a Direction to the Conduct of an Orator. "Tis likewife remarkable, that his Lordship, in quoting the original Paffage in his Margin, has, by the prudent Omission of an emphatical Expression, converted it from a particular Rule of Rhetoric into a general Maxim of Philosophy. But 'tis of all most remarkable, that in his pretended Translation, he hath entirely perverted the Sense of the Author, whose Authority he attempts to build upon.

" As Ridicule (fays the great Philofo-" pher) feems to be of fome Ufe in Plead-" ing; it was the Opinion of GORGIAS,

\* Vol. i. p. 74. \* See above, p. 43.

• The Words, Tory evantion - Adverfariorum - are omitted.

G

" that

8 t

Effay on RIDICULE.

IX.

SECT. " that you ought to confound your Adver-" fary's ferious Argument by Raillery, and " his Raillery by ferious Argument." This is almost a literal Translation of the Paf-But how the noble Author could fo fage. far impose upon himself or others, as to strip it of its native Drefs, and difguise it under the fantastical Appearance of a Maxim, " that Humour is the only Teft " of Gravity, and Gravity of Humour,"---this is not fo eafy to account for.

> However this came to pass, 'tis certain, that the Observation, as it lies in ARI-STOTLE, is a just and a fine one: as it lies in the noble Writer's maimed Translation, it is falle, if not unmeaning.

> THAT an Orator should confound bis Adversary's Raillery by serious Argument, is rational and just. By this means he tears off the false Difguises of Eloquence, and diftinguisheth real from apparent Truth. That he should confound bis Adversary's serious Argument by Raillery, is, if not a just, yet a legal Practice. The Aim and End of the Advocate or Orator is Perfuafion only; to Truth or Falsehood as it happens. If he hath Truth on his Side, it is likely what he will have then to do, will be to confound bis Adver [ary's

82

t

Adversary's Raillery by serious Argument. SECT. If Truth be against him, he will be forced\_ to change Weapons with his Adverfary, wbofe ferious Argument he must try to confound by Raillery. This is all the Mystery there is in the Matter? By which we fee, that whenever in this cafe Ridicule is oppoled to Reasoning, it is so far from being the Test or Support, that it is the Destruction of Truth. And the judicious QUINTILIAN fairly confesses it, where he afligns the Caufe why Ridicule is of fuch mighty Force in Oratory --- "Quia animum ab in-" tentione rerum frequenter avertit"---Because it draws off the Mind from attending to the real Nature of Things. Thus you fee the Propriety and Beauty of the Saying of our ancient Sage, when fairly represented.

BUT as the noble Writer hath translated the Paffage, it is a Curiofity indeed. "Hu-" mour is the only Teft of Gravity, and " Gravity of Humour." He applies it not to Eloquence, but Philosophy; not to Perfuafion, but Conviction. And fo, by the ftrangest Conversion in Nature, makes the Trier, and the Thing tried, each in their turns, become Agent and Patient to one an-But what Artist ever attempted to other.

try

83

IX.

SECT. try the Justness of his Square or Level, by IX. the Work which he has formed by the Affistance of those Instruments? Or was ever

84

fiftance of those Instruments? Or was ever the Gold which hath been put to the Test, reciprocally applied to *try* the Touch-Stone? If therefore *Gravity*, or Reasoning, be the Test of *Humour*; Humour never can be the Test of Gravity: As on the other hand, if Humour be the Test of Gravity, then Gravity can never be the Test of Humour.

SINCE therefore this *fee-faw* Kind of Proof returns into itfelf, and confequently ends in an Abfurdity; 'tis plain, that one half of the noble Writer's Proposition muft effectually destroy the other: Let us see then, which Moiety deserves to be supported. His own Comment on the Pasfage will help us to determine. Which however, he seems desirous his Reader should receive as a Part of the Saying of bis ancient Sage: But whoever will turn to the Passage, as it lies in ARISTOTLE, will find that GORGIAS is entirely innocent of the whole Affair.

"GRAVITY, fays his Lordfhip, is the "Teft of *Humour*: Becaufe a Jeft that will "not bear a ferious Examination, is cer-"tainly falfe Wit." True: here we have a rational

# Effay on Ridicule.

'δ ς

rational Test established. Next he inverts SECT. IX. the Proposition, sets it with its Head downwards, like a Traytor's Scutcheon, and now, fays he, behold "Humour is the Teft " of Gravity." To prove this, Reason requires he should have added, "Because an "Argument, which can be fuccefsfully ri-" diculed, is certainly false Logic." But this was too hardy a Proposition to be directly advanced : He therefore contents himfelf with hinting, that " a Subject which " will not bear Raillery is sufpicious !" Now we know, that Sufpicion is often groundlefs: That what is fulpected to be falle, may yet be true. So that the noble Writer again fuffers this new Teft to flip through his Fingers, even while he is holding it up to your Admiration. But if any thing further be neceffary to clear up this Point, it may be observed in short, that Gravity or Argument is the Test of Humour, because Reafon marks the real Differences of Things: That Humour can never be the Teft of Gravity, because Imagination can only fuggest their apparent Analogies.

THUS the Sentiment of GORGIAS is grofly mistaken or defignedly misreprefented by the noble Writer: as it lies in **G** 3 ARI-

SECT. ARISTOTLE, it is rational and confiften IX. as it is taken up by his Lordship, it is ch merical and groundless.

86

IT might have been difficult to affign Reafon, why the noble Writer should ha attempted to establish this two-fold Meth of Proof, had not he explained his Intenti in another Place. He there <sup>d</sup> wifely r commends the old fcbolastic Manner to t Clergy, as being most suitable to their Al lities and Character: The Way of Ridic. he appropriates to the Men of Taste a Breeding; declaring it ought to be ke facred from the impure Touch of an Eccl fiaftic. For as Clubs and Cudgels have lo been appropriated to Porters and Footme while every Gentleman is ambitious to u derstand a Sword; fo the clumfy Way Argumentation is only fit for Priests a Pedants, but pointed Wit is the Weapon 1 the Man of Fashion : This decides a Quar bandsomely. The pretty Fellow is at yc Vitals in a Moment; while the Peda keeps labouring at it for an Hour togethe and neither gets nor gives fo much as broken Bone.

• Vol. iii. Misc. v. c. 2. § 65, &c.

Br

## Ellay on Ridicule.

BUT still higher is the noble Writer's SECT. Idea of Wit and Ridicule: While he ap-\_ plies it not only to Conquest, but Investigation: And we must own, it was an Attempt worthy of his Genius, to establish this new and expeditious Method of Search and Conviction. In which, by the fole Application of fo cheap and portable an Infirument as that of Raillery, a Gentleman might obtain the certain Knowledge of the true Proportion of Things, without the tedious and vulgar Methods of Menfuration. In the mean Time, we, whom the noble Author hath fo often condescended to diftinguish by the honourable Title of Formalists and Pedants, finding ourselves incapable of this *fublime* Way of Proof, must be content to drudge on in the old and beaten Track of Reafoning. And after all, 'tis probable this new Attempt will fucceed no better than the curious Conceit of the learned Taylor in Laputa: Who being employed in making a Suit for the facetious GULLIVER; difdained the vulgar Measures of his Profeffion, and took that Gentleman's Altitude by the Help of a Quadrant. This, it must be acknowledged, was a Theory no lefs sublime than our noble Author's: Yet it **G** 4 failed

87

### ' Effay on RIDICULE.

SICT. failed miferably when applied to Practice: IX. For the fagacious Traveller informs us, that notwithstanding the Acuteness and Penetration of the Artist, his cloaths were wretchedly ill made.

### SECTION X.

WE have now obviated every thing ma-SECT. terial, that the noble Writer hath advanced in Support of his new System. But as one of his most zealous Followers hath undertaken in Form to explain and defend his Notions on this Subject, it may be proper to examine how far this Gentleman's Argument is confistent with Truth.

> HE tells us, that " to ask whether Ridi-"cule be a Test of Truth, is in other "Words to ask, whether that which is ri-" diculous can be morally true, can be just " and becoming; or whether that which is " just and becoming, can be ridiculous."

> HERE, as the Foundation of all, we fee the fame Kind of Ambiguity lurking, as was observed in the nobleWriter, in the Paffage already remarked on f. For if by " that

> • See a Note on the Pleasures of Imagination, a Poem. Book iii. <sup>f</sup> See above, p. 55.

" which

88

X.

89

" which is ridiculous," he means that which SECT. X. is really ridiculous, it is allowed this can never be morally true: But this is fo far from proving Ridicule to be a Teft of Truth, that it implies the contrary: It implies fome further Power, which may be able to diftinguish what is really ridiculous, from what is only *apparently* fo. On the contrary, if by "that which is ridiculous," he means that which is *apparently* ridiculous, it may be affirmed, this may be morally true: Because Imagination and Passion often take up with Fictions instead of Realities, and can never of themselves diftinguish them from each other. He tells us his Question " does " not deferve a ferious Anfwer." At leaft it wanted an Explanation.

THE Gentleman proceeds: "For it is "most evident, that as in a metaphysical "Proposition offered to the Understanding "for its Assent, the Faculty of Reason exa-"mines the Terms of the Proposition, and "finding one Idea which was supposed "equal to another, to be in Fact unequal, "of Consequence rejects the Proposition as "a Falsehood: So in Objects offered to the "Mind for its Esteem or Applause, the "Faculty of Ridicule feeling an Incongruity "in

**SECT.** "the Claim, urges the Mind to reject it X." "with Laughter and Contempt."

HERE the Faculty of Reason is excluded from the Examination of moral Truths, and a new Faculty, never before heard of, the Faculty of Ridicule, is fubstituted in its Place. Now, when a Stranger is introduced into good Company, and fure these can be no better than the Public, it is usual not only to tell his Name, but what he is, and what his Character: This, the Gentleman hath not condescended to do: 'Tis true, in a preceding Page he tells us, that "the Senfa-" tion of Ridicule is not a bare Perception " of the Agreement or Difagreement of "Ideas; but a Passion or Emotion of the " Mind, consequential to that Perception." In another Place he expressly calls it " a gay " Contempt." Now, if the Faculty of Ridicule be the fame as the Senfation of Ridicule, or a gay Contempt, then by fubftituting the plain old Term of Contempt, inftead of the Faculty of Ridicule, we shall clearly see what the above cited Paffage contains. " As in a metaphysical Proposition, the Fa-" culty of Reason examines the Terms, and " rejects the Falfehood; fo in Objects of-" fered to the Mind for its Efteem and Ap-" plaufe,

90

" plause, the Passion of Contempt feeling an SECT. X. " Incongruity in the Claim, urges the Mind " to reject it with Laughter and CON-" TEMPT!" --- Why was not honeft Reafor admitted of the Council, and fet on the Seat of Judgment, which of right belongs to her? The Affair would then have flood thus: " As in a metaphyfical Proposition, "the Faculty of Reason examines the " Terms, and rejects the Falsehood; fo in " Objects offered to the Mind for its Efteem " or Applause, the fame Faculty of Reason " finding an Incongruity in the Claim, urges " the Mind to reject it with Contempt and " Laughter." This would have been Senfe and Argument; but then it had not been Characterifical.

WE shall now clearly discover the Diftinction that is to be made on the following Passage: "And thus a double Advantage is "gained: For we both *detect* the moral "Falschood *fooner* than in the Way of spe-"culative Enquiry, and impress the Minds "of Men with a stronger Sense of the Va-"nity and Error of its Authors"."--Here 'tis evident, that the Design "of *detecting* § the moral Falschood *fooner* than in the

s ]bid. p. 106,

" Way

**SECT.** "Way of fpeculative Enquiry" is an abfurd Attempt: But that "to impress the "Minds of Men with a stronger Sense of "the Vanity and Error of its Authors," when Reason hath made the proper Search, is both a practicable and a rational Intention.

95

"BUT it is faid, continues he, that the " Practice is dangerous, and may be incon-" fiftent with the Regard we owe to Ob-" jects of real Dignity and Excellence "." Yet this is but a fecondary Objection: The principal one is, that the Attempt is abfurd. However, the Circumstance of Danger is not without its Weight: Nor is the Gentleman's reply at all fufficient ---" that the " Practice fairly managed can never be dan-" gerous." For though Men are not difhoneft in obtruding false Circumstances upon us, we may be fo weak as to obtrude them upon ourfelves. Nay, it can hardly be otherwife, if, inftead of exerting our Reafon to correct the Suggestions of Fancy and Paffion, we give them an unlimited Range, and acquiesce in their partial or groundless Representations, without calling in Reason to decide upon their Truth or Falsehood.

1 Ibid. p. 106.

By

### Essay on Ridicule.

By this means we fhall often "view Ob-SECT. "jects of real Dignity and Excellence," in <u>X</u>. fuch Shapes and Colours as are foreign to their Nature; and then fit down and laugh most profoundly at the Phantoms of our own creating.

93

BUT still he infist, that though false Circumstances be imposed upon us, yet " the " Sense of Ridicule always judges right," or in more vulgar Terms, " The Passion of " Contempt always judges right." Whereas, in Truth, it never judges at all; being equally excited by Objects real or imaginary that present themselves.

OBSERVE therefore what a Number of new Phrases and blind Guides this of Ridicule, if once admitted, would bring in upon us, and all on equal Authority. For with the fame Reafon, as the Paffion of Contempt is styled the Sense of Ridicule, the Passion of Fear may be called the Senfe of Danger, and Anger the Sense of Injury. But who hath ever dreamt of exalting these Passions into fo many Tefts of the Reality of their respective Objects? The Defign must have been rejected as abfurd, becaufe it is the Province of Reafon alone, to correct the blind Sallies of every Paffion, and fix it on its proper Object.

**SECT.** Object. Now, the Scheme of Ridicule is X. of the fame Nature. It proposes the Paffion of Contempt as the Test of moral Falschood, which, from the very Terms, appears to be a Project full as wise, as to make Fear the Test of Danger, or Anger the Test of Injury.

94

THE Gentleman proceeds next to the Cafe of Socrates. He owns " the So-" CRATES OF ARISTOPHANES is as truly ri-" diculous a Character as ever was drawn : "But it is not the Character of Socrates, " the divine Moralist and Father of ancient "Wifdom,"---No indeed: and here lay the Wickedness of the Poet's Intention, and the Danger of his Art: in imposing Fictions for Realities on the missed Multitude; and putting a Fool's Coat on the Father of ancient Wifdom. 'Tis true, the People laughed at the ridiculous Sophist; but when the ridiculous Sophist came to drink the Poison, what think you became of the Father of ancient Wifdom?

BUT then he tells us, that as the comic Poet introduced foreign Circumstances into the Character of SOCRATES, and built his Ridicule upon these; "So has the Reason-"ing of SPINOZA made many Atheists; "he

### Estay on Ridicule.

" he has founded it indeed on Suppositions SECT. " utterly false, but allow him these, and his X. " Conclusions are unavoidably true. And " if we must reject the Use of Ridicule, " because, by the Imposition of false Cir-" cumstances, things may be made to seem " ridiculous, which are not so in them-" felves; why we ought not to reject the " Use of Reason, because, by proceeding on " false Principles, Conclusions will appear " true which are impossible in Nature, let " the vehement and obstinate Declaimers " against Ridicule determine i."

But why fo much Indignation against Declaimers in one who writes in Defence of Ridicule, a Species of Declamation? Then as to rejecting the Use of Ridicule, a very material Distinction is to be made: As a Mode of Eloquence nobody attempts totally to reject it, while it remains under the Dominion of Reason: But as a Test of Truth, I hope the Reader hath seen sufficient Reafon totally to reject it.

NEITHER will the Parallel by any means hold good, which the Gentleman hath attempted to draw between the Abuse of *Ri*dicule and *Reason*. Because the Imagina-

<sup>1</sup> Page 106.

tion,

95

### Effay on RIDICULE.

SECT. tion, to which the Way of Ridicule applies; X. is ant to form to infollow is apt to form to itself innumerable fictitious Refemblances of Things which tend to confound Truth with Falsehood: Whereas the natural Tendency of Reason is to separate these apparent Resemblances, and determine which are the real, and which the fictitious. Although therefore SPINOZA hath advanced many Falsehoods in the Way of speculative Affirmation, and founded his Reafonings on these, yet still Reason will be her own Correctrefs, and eafily difcover the Cheat. But if the Imagination be impreffed with falle Appearances, and the Paffion of Contempt ftrongly excited, neither the Imagination nor the Palfion can ever correct themselves; but must inevitably be misled, unless Reason be called in to rectify the Mistake, and bring back the Paffion to its proper Channel.

NAY, fo far is the Use of Ridicule, when prior to rational Conviction, from being parallel to Reason, or co-operative with it; that, on the contrary, it hath a strong Tendency to prevent the Efforts of Reason, and to confound its Operations. It is not pretended that human Reason, though the *ultimate*, is yet in all Cases an *adequate* Test of Truth: It is always fallible, often erroneoust

96

# Effay on RIDICULE.

97

X.

ous: But it would be much less erroneous, SECT. were every Mode of Eloquence, and Ridi-\_ cule above all others, kept remote from its Operations: were no Paffion fuffered to blend itself with the Refearches of the Mind. For Ridicule, working on the Imagination and Paffions, disposes the Mind to receive and acquiesce in any Opinion without its proper Evidence. Hence Prejudice arifes; and the Mind, which should be free to examine and weigh those real Circumstances which PROVE SOCRATES to be indeed a divine Philosopher, is drawn by the prior Suggestions of Ridicule to receive and acquiesce in those false Circumstances, which PAINT him as a contemptible Sophist.

To conclude: 'Tis no difficult Matter to point out the Foundation of this Gentleman's Errors concerning Ridicule. Thev have arisen folely from his mistaking the Paffion of Contempt for a judicial Faculty: Hence all those new-fangled Expressions of --- " the Faculty of Ridicule" ---- " the "Senfe of Ridicule"--- and " the feeling " of the Ridiculous:" In the Ufe of which he feems to have imposed upon himself new Phrases for Realities, and Words for Things. I cannot better illustrate this Remark, than by

### Ellay on RIDICULE.

98

SECT. by transcribing a Passage from the incom-Х. parable LOCKE .--- " Another great Abuse " of Words is, the taking them for Things. "To this Abuse Men are most subject, " who confine their Thoughts to any one " System, and give themselves up to the " firm Belief of the Perfection of any re-" ceived Hypothefis; whereby they come " to be perfuaded, that the Terms of that " Sect are fo fuited to the Nature of Things, " that they perfectly correspond with their " real Existence. Who is there that has " been bred up in the Peripatetic Philoso-" phy, who does not think the ten Names, " under which are ranked the ten Predica-" ments, to be exactly conformable to the " Nature of Things? Who is there of that " School, that is not perfuaded, that fub-" fantial Forms, vegetative Souls, Abborrence " of a Vacuum, intentional Species, etc. are " fomething real?"---" There is fcarce any " Sect in Philosophy has not a diffinct Set " of Terms that others understand not. "But yet this Gibberish, which, in the "Weaknefs of human Understanding, ferves " fo well to palliate Men's Ignorance, and " cover their Errors, comes by familiar .Ufe " amongst those of the fame Tribe, to feem " the • I

### Essay on Ridicula.

" the most important Part of Language, and SECT. " of all other the Terms the most fignifi-" cant<sup>k</sup>." And now to fave the Trouble of Repetition, the Reader is left to determine how far " the. Faculty of Ridicule " feeling the Incongruity"--- and " the Sense " of Ridicule always judging right"--- may with Propriety be placed among the learned Gibberish above-mentioned.

'Tis strange this Gentleman should have erred so widely in so plain a Subject; when we consider, that he hath accidentally thrown out a Thought, which, if pursued, would have led him to a full View of the Point debated: "The Sensation of Ridi-" cule is not a bare Perception of the Agree-" ment or Disagreement of Ideas; but a " Passion or Emotion of the Mind conse-" quential to that Perception<sup>1</sup>."

### SECTION XI.

TO return therefore to the noble Wri-SECT. ter. As it is evident, that *Ridicule* cannot XI. in general without Abfurdity be applied as **A** Teft of Truth; fo can it leaft of all be

Locke on Hum. Understanding, B. iii. c. 10. § 14. P. 103. H 2 admitted

edmitted 579513A

99

### 100

### Estay on Ridicule.

SECT. admitted in examining Religious Opinions, in XI. the Difcuffion of which, his Lordship seems

principally to recommend it. Becaufe, by infpiring the contending Parties with *mutual Contempt*, it hath a violent Tendency to deftroy *mutual Charity*, and therefore to prevent *mutual Conviction*.

To illustrate this Truth, let us confider the following Instance, which seems clear and full to the Point.

THERE is not perhaps in any Language a bolder or ftronger Ridicule, than the wellknown Apologue of *The Tale of a Tub*. Its manifest Defign is to recommend the *Englifb Church*, and to difgrace the two Extremes of *Popery* and *Puritanifm*. Now, if we

... m Some indeed have pretended otherwife. Thus Mr. Wotton, in his Reflections on Learning, fays, "It is a de-"figned Banter upon all that is effected facred among "Men." And the pious Author of the Independent Whig affirms it was "the fole open Attack that had been "made upon Christianity fince the Revolution, except "the Oracles of Reafon, and was not inferior in Ban-"ter and Malice, to the Attacks of Cellus, or Julian, or Porphyry, or Lucian." p. 399. Where by the Way, the Oddity of the Contrast is remarkable enough 5 that he fhould pronounce the Tale of a Tub to be a Libel on Christianity, while it is in Fact a Vindication of our Ecclesiaftical Establishment; and at the fame Time ensuite his own Book a Vindication of our Ecclesiaftical Establishment, while in Fact it is a Libel on Christianity.

- 5

confider

### Ellay on RIDICULE.

101

XI.

confider this exquisite Piece of Raillery as a SECT. Test of Truth, we shall find it impotent and. vain: For the Question still recurs, whether MARTIN be a just Emblem of the English, Fack of the Scotch, or Peter of the Roman Church. All the Points in Debate between the feveral Parties are taken for granted in the Representation : And we must have Recourfe to Argument, and to that alone, ere we can determine the Merits of the Queflion.

IF we next confider this Master-piece of Wit as a Mode of Eloquence, we shall find it indeed of great Efficacy in confirming every Member of the Church of England in his own Communion, and in giving him a thorough Distaste of those of Scotland and Rome: And fo far as this may be regarded as a Matter of public Utility, fo far the Ridicule may be laudable.

But if we extend our Views fo as to comprehend a larger Plan of moral Ule; we shall find this Method of Persuasion is such. as Charity can hardly approve of: For by representing the one of these Churches under the Character of Craft and Knavery, the other under that of incurable Madnels, # mult needs tend to infpire every Member H 3 of

SECT. of the English Church who believes the Re XI. prefentation, with fuch Hatred of the on and Contempt of the other, as to prevent a friendly Debate and rational Remonstrance.

102

Its effect on those who hold the D ctrines of CALVIN, or of Rome, must 1 yet worse: Unless it can be proved, th the Way to attract the Love, and convin the Reason of Mankind, is to shew that v hate or despise them. While they reve what we deride, 'tis plain, we cannot be view the Subject in the same Light: As though we deride what appears to us co temptible, we deride what to them appear sacred. They will therefore accuse us missing their Opinions, and abh us as unjust and impious.

THUS although this noted Apologue indeed a Vindication of our *English* Churc yet it is fuch as had been better fpared : I cause its natural Effect is to create Prej dice, and inspire the contending Parties wi mutual Distaste, Contempt, and Hatred.

Bur if the Way of Ridicule is th wholly to be rejected in treating every a troverted Subject; it will probably be afke "Where then is it to be applied? Wheth "it is reasonable to calumniate and black

### Ellay on RIDICULE.

"it without Diffinction? And whether it is SECT. " not Impiety, thus to vilify the Gifts of our \_\_\_\_\_XI." " Maker ?"

AND 'tis certain, that to do this, were abfurd and impious. As on the other hand, there is an equal Abfurdity and Impiety in confounding that Order of Things which the Creator hath established, and endeavouring to raise a blind Paffion into the Throne of Reason. One Party or other in this Debate hath certainly incurred the Cenfure: The Cenfure is fevere, and let it fall where it is .deferved. I know none that endeavour to vilify and blacken Ridicule without Diftinction, unless when it prefumes to elevate itself into a Test of Truth : And then, as a Rebel to the Order and Conftitution of Na--ture, it ought to be refolutely encountered and repelled, till it take Refuge in its own inferior Station.

THE proper Use of Ridicule therefore is, " to difgrace known Falsehood :" And thus, negatively at least, "to enforce known "Truth." Yet this can only be affirmed of certain Kinds of Falsehood or Incongruity, to which we feem to have appropriated the general Name of Folly: And among the feveral Branches of this, chiefly H 4 I think, .....

103

۰.

Ellay on Ridicule.

104

X1.

SECT. I think, to AFFECTATION. For as every Affectation arises from a false Pretence to Praise, so a Contempt incurred tends to convince the Claimant of his Error, and thus becomes the natural Remedy to the Evil.

> MUCH more might be faid on this Head, We might run through numerous Divisions and Subdivisions of Folly : But as the Tafk would be both infignificant and endlefs, I am unwilling to trouble the Reader with fuch elaborate Trifles.

IT feems an Observation more worthy of our Attention and Regard; that Contempt, whence Ridicule arifes, being a scifigh Passion, and nearly allied to Pride, if not abfolutely founded on it; we ought ever to keep a frict Rein, and in general rather curb than forward its Emotions. Is there a more important Maxim in Philosophy than this, that we should gain a Habit of controuling our Imaginations and Paffions by the Ufe of Reafon? Especially those that are rather of the felfish than the benevolent Kind? That we should not suffer our Fears to fink us in Cowardice, our Joys in Weaknefs, our Anger in Revenge? And fure there is not a Paffion that infefts human Life, whole Confequences are fo generally pernicious as those of

# Effay on RIDICULE.

105

of indulged Contempt. As the common SECT. XI. Occurrences of Life are the Objects which afford it Nourishment, so by this means it is kept more constantly in Play, than any other Affection of the Mind: And is indeed the general Infrument by which Individuals, Families, Sects, Provinces, and Nations, are driven from a State of mutual Charity, into that of Bitternels and Differion. We procred from Raillery to Railing; from Contempt to Hatred. Thus if the Love of Ridicule be not in itself a Paffion of the malevolent Species, it leads at least to those which are fo. Add to this, that the most ignorant are generally the most contemptuous; and they the most forward to deride, who are most incapable or most unwilling to understand. Narrow Conceptions of Things lead to groundless Derision: And this Spirit of Scorn in its Turn, as it cuts us off from all Information, confirms us in our preconceived and groundlefs Opinions.

THIS being the real Nature and Tendency of Ridicule, it cannot be worth while to defcant much on its Application, or explore its Subferviency to the Ufes of Life. For though under the fevere Reftrictions of Reafon, it may be made a proper Inftrument

870G

SECT. ment on many Occasions, for difgracing XI. known Folly; yet the Turn of Levity it gives the Mind, the Distaste it raises to all candid and rational Information, the Spirit of Animosity it is apt to excite, the Errors in which it confirms us when its Suggestions are false, the Extremes to which it is apt to drive us, even when its Suggestions are true; all these configure to tell us, it is rather to be wished than hoped, that its Influence upon the whole can be confiderable in the Service of Wisdom and Virtue.

> LORD SHAFTESBURY himself, in many other Parts of his Book, strongly infists on the Necessity of bringing the Imagination and Paffions under the Dominion of Reafon. "The only Poifon to Reafon, favs " he, is Palfion : For falle Reasoning is foon "redreffed, where Paffion is removed"." And it is difficult to affign any Caufe that will not reflect fome Difhonour on the noble Writer, why he should thus strangely have attempted to privilege this Paffion of Contempt from so necessary a Subjection. Let it suffice, in Conclusion, to observe; that Inconfistencies must ever arise and be perfifted in, when a roving Fancy, con-. Wit and Humour, Part ii. § 1.

> > ducted

# Estay on Ridicule. 107

conducted by Spleen and Affectation, goes in SECT. Quest of idle Novelties, without subjecting\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ itself to the just Restraints of Reason,

UPON the whole: This new Defign of difcovering Truth by the vague and unfleady Light of Ridicule, puts one in Mind of the honest Irifhman, who applied his Candle to the Sun-Dial, in order to fee bow the Night went.

### ESSAYS

# • . . 1 . -•

,

.

# [ 109 ] **ESSAYS** ON THE

# Characteristics, etc.

### ESSAY II.

On the Obligations of Man to Virtue, and the Necessity of religious Principle.

HAVING confidered the noble Wri-SECT ter's two first Treatifes, so far as they regard the Ufe of Ridicule, we now come to his Soliloguy, or Advice to an Author. And here, bating only a few accidental Passages, which will be occasionally pointed out hereafter, we shall have little more to do, than to approve and admire: The whole Differtation being, in its general Turn, one continued

SECT. tinued Instance of its Author's Knowledge

I. and refined Tafte in Books, Life, and Manners. I could dwell with Pleafure on the Beauties of this Work, if indeed they needed an Explanation: But that noble Union of Truth and Eloquence which fhines through the whole, as it fuperfedes, fo it would difgrace any Attempt of this Kind. To the Work itfelf therefore I recommend the Reader.

THE noble Writer having thus prepared us for the Depths of Philosophy, by enjoining an unfeigned and rigorous Self-Examination; proceeds to that highest and most interesting of all Subjects, The Obligations of Man to the Practice of Virtue. And here it will probably appear, that with a Variety of useful Truths, he hath blended several plaufible Mistakes, which, when more nearly viewed, feem to be attended with a Train of very extraordinary Confequences. What he hath given us on this Subject, lies chiefly in the two Treatiles, which compose his fecond Volume: But as he frequently refers us to the other Parts of his Writings, where he hath accidentally treated the fame Points in a more explicit Manner; fo the fame Liberty of comparing one Paffage with another,

ther, will, I apprehend, be judged reafona-SECT. ble by the candid Reader. Thus we fhall \_\_\_\_\_\_. more effectually penetrate, into his true Scope and Intention; and draw off, as far as may be, that Veil of My/lery, in which, for Reafons best known to himfelf, he hath fo often wrapped his Opinions.

### SECTION II.

'TIS no uncommon Circumstance in SECT. Controversy, for the Parties to engage in all п. the Fury of Difputation, without precifely instructing their Readers, or truly knowingthemselves, the Particulars about which they differ. Hence that fruitless Parade of Argument, and those opposite Pretences .to: Demonstration, with which most Debates, on every Subject, have been infefted. Would the contending Parties first be fure of their own Meaning (a Species of Self-Examination which, I think, the noble Writer hath not condescended to mention). and then communicate their Senfe to others: in plain Terms and Simplicity of Heart, the Face of Controverly would foon be changed: And real Knowledge, instead of imaginary. Conquest, would be the noble Reward of literary Toil.

**В**ест. II.

In the mean Time, a History of Logomachies " well executed, would be no unedifying Work. And in order to open a Path to fo useful an Undertaking, I will venture to give the present Section as an Introduction to it: For fure, among all the Queftions which have exercised the Learned, this concerning the Obligations of Man to Virtue hath given Rife to the greatest Profusion of loofe Talk and ambiguous Expression. The Argument hath been handled by feveral of great Name: And it might poffibly be deemed Prefumption to differ from any of them, had they not fo widely differed among themselves. Much hath been faid. and various have been their Opinions concerning our Obligations to Virtue; but little hath been faid in any definitive Manacr, on the previous and fundamental Question, What Virtue is. By which I do not mean, what Actions are called Virtuous, for, about that, Mankind are pretty well agreed, but, what makes Virtue to be what it is. And till we have determined this with all poffible Precifion, we cannot determine " upon what Foundation Man-

• A Strife about Words.

" kind

"kind are obliged to the Practice of it." SECT. Our first Enquiry therefore must be, concerning the Nature of Virtue: In the Investigation of which, the Moralists of most Ages seem to have been remarkably defective.

LET us first confider what our noble Author hath faid on this Subject. He tells us, " The Mind cannot be without its Eye " and Ear; fo as to difcern Proportion, dif-" tinguish Sound, and scan each Sentiment " and Thought which comes before it. It " can let nothing escape its Censure. It " feels the foft and harsh, the agreeable ' " and disagreeable in the Affections; and " finds a foul and fair, an barmonious and a " diffonant, as really and truly here, as in " any mufical Numbers, or in the outward "Forms and Representations of fensible " Things. Nor can it withold its Admi-" ration and Extafy, its Averfion and Scorn, " any more in what relates to one, than to " the other of these Subjects.. So that to "deny the common natural Senfe of a " fublime and beautiful in Things, will ap-" pear an Affectation merely to any one "who confiders duly of this Affair "." The

> • Inquiry concerning Virtue, Part iii. § 3. I

Per-

SFCT. Perception of this Beauty he calls the moral II. Senfe or Tafle; and affirms, that Virtue confifts in "a perfect Conformity of our Af-"fections and Actions with this fupreme "Senfe and Symmetry of Things." Or, to use his own Words, "The Nature of

"Virtue confifts in a certain just Disposition "or proportionable Affection of a rational "Creature towards the moral Objects of "Right and Wrong<sup>4</sup>."

THE next Writer I shall mention is the learned and amiable Dr. CLARKE. He thinks it neceffary to reject this Idea of Virtue, which the noble Writer had established; and as a furer Foundation, than what mere Affection, Sense, or Taste could produce, lays the Basis of Virtue in Reason: And infifts, that its true Nature lies in "a " Conformity of our Actions, with certain " eternal and immutable Relations and Dif-" ferences of Things. That from thefe, " which are neceffarily perceived by every " rational Agent, there naturally arife cer-" tain moral Obligations, which are of them-" felves incumbent on all, antecedent to all " politive Institution, and to all Expectation " of Reward or Punishment"."

9 Inquiry concerning Virtue, Part iii. § 1. Clarke's Demonfl. paffim.

ł

AFTER

AFTER thefe, comes an ingenious and SECT. candid Writer, and in Oppofition to both II. thefe Schemes of Moral, fixes the Nature of Virtue in "a Conformity of our Actions " with Trutb." He affirms, that " no Act, " whether Word or Deed, of any Being, " to whom moral Good and Evil are im-" putable, that interferes with any true Pro-" pofition, or denies any thing to be as it is, " can be right. That, on the contrary, " every Act is right which does not contra-" dict Truth, but treats every thing as being " what it is'."

There are, befides thefe, feveral other philosophical Opinions concerning the Nature of Virtue: as, that it confists in following Nature---in avoiding all Extremes ---in the Imitation of the Deity. But thefe are still more loose and indeterminate Expressions, if possible, than the former. If therefore the first should appear vague and ineffectual, the latter muss of Course fall under an equal Censure.

Now it will appear, that all the three Definitions of Virtue, which Lord SHAFTES-BURY, Dr. CLARKE, and Mr. WOLLASTON have given us, in defigned Opposition to

" Wollafton's Rel. of Nat. § 1. paffim.

each

115

SECT. each other, are equally defective; "Be-II. " caufe they do not give us any more parti-" cular or determinate Ideas, than what we " have from that *fingle Word*, which with " fo much fruitlefs Labour they attempt to " define."

> LET us first examine the noble Writer's Definition in this View. He fays, that " Virtue confifts in a Conformity of our Af-" fections with our natural Sense of the " Sublime and Beautiful in Things, or with " the moral Objects of Right and Wrong." ---Now, what new Idea do we gain from this pompous Definition? Have we not the fame general Idea from the Word Virtue, as from the more diffused Expression of the Sublime and Beautiful of Things? And cannot we gather as much from either of thefe. as from the subsequent Phrase, the moral Objects of Right and Wrong ?"--- They are all general Names, relative to fomething which is yet unknown, and which is no more explained by the pretended Definition, than by the Word which is attempted to be defined. Indeed, when his Lordship further affirms, that to relieve the Needy, or help the Friendlefs, is an Inftance of this Sublime and Beautiful of Things, we then obtain

obtain a more determinate Idea, with Re-SECT. gard to that particular Cafe. But still we II. are as much as ever at a Lofs for a general Criterion or Teft, by which the Virtue of our other Actions is to be determined. To fay. therefore, that Virtue confifts in acting according to the fair, the bandfome, the fublime, the beautiful, the decent, the moral Objets of Right and Wrong, is really no more than ringing Changes upon Words. We might with equal Propriety affirm, " that " Virtue confifts in acting virtuoufly." This Deficiency Mr. WOLLASTON clearly faw. " They, fays he, who reckon nothing to be " (morally) good, but what they call bo-" nestum, may denominate Actions accord-" ing as that is, or is not the Caufe or End " of them: But then, what is boneftum? "Something is still wanting to measure "Things by, and to feparate the bonefta " from the inbonefta '."

DR. CLARKE'S Definition feems not to include any thing more precife or determinate, than the noble Writer's. He affirms, that "Virtue confifts in a Conformity of our "Actions with right Reason, or the eter-" nal and immutable Relations and Dif-

> Rel. of Nat. p. 22. I 3

ferences

, IL

1.20

SECT. " thing as being what it is." Well: be it fo. Yet the Question still recurs, what is moral Truth? And this demands a Definition no lefs than Virtue, which was the Thing to be defined. Had Lord SHAFTESBURY lived to fee this new Theory proposed, how naturally would he have retorted Mr. Wol-LASTON'S Objection? "You, Mr. Wol-"LASTON, reckon nothing to be morally " Good, but what you call Truth: And you " may indeed denominate Actions, accord-" ing as that is, or is not, the Caufe or End " of them : But then, what is Truth? " Something further is full wanting to mea-" fure Things by, and to feparate Truth "from Falfebood."--- Thus too would Dr. CLARKE have naturally replied: "'Tis " true, that whatever will bear to be tried " by Truth, is right; and that which is con-" demned by it, wrong: But the Manner " in which you have delivered yourfelf, is " not yet explicit enough. You have ra-" ther confounded my Definition, than gi-"ven a new one of your own: All that "you have added, is an Impropriety of "Speech. I speak of the Restitude of "Actions, you of the Truth of Actions; " which I call an Impropriety of Speech, " because

" because Truth relates to Affirmations, not SECT. " to Actions; to what is faid, not to what ₽. " is done. But fuppofing the Propriety of "your Expression, what further Criterion " have you gained? You confess, that Truth " is discovered by Reason only; for you " fay, that to deny Things to be as they are, " is the Transgrellion of the great Law of our " Nature, the Law of Reason y. If so, then "Reason is as good a Guide as Truth: "We can as certainly know what is right "Reason, as what is Truth. If therefore " my Definition is defective, yours must be " fo too. If mine leaves Room for fo many " Disputes and opposite right Reasons, that " nothing can be fettled, while every one " pretends that his Reason is right; yours " must of Necessity be liable to the same " Objection, must leave Room for fo many " Difputes and opposite Truths, that nothing " can be fettled, while every one pretends " that his Idea of Truth is the right one. "Truth, then, can never be a better Cri-" terion than Reason, because our Idea of "Truth must always depend upon our " Reafon."

### 7 Rel. of Nat. p. 15.

THUS

Sест. II.

THUS it should feem, that our three celebrated Writers have not given the Satiffaction which might have been expected in an Affair of fuch philosophical Importance. Their common Attempt is to define the Nature, or fix the Criterion of Virtue: To this End, the first affirms, it confists in a a Conformity of our Actions to the Fair and Handsome, the Sublime and Beautiful of Things: The Second, the Fitnefs, Reafons, and Relations of Things: The Third, the Truth of Things. But inafmuch as thefe general Terms of Beauty, Fitnefs, Truth, convey not any more determinate Idea, than that of Virtue, which they are brought to define; the feveral pretended Definitions are therefore inadequate and defective z.

<sup>2</sup> Let it be obferved once for all, that the Definitions here cenfured as defective, are little more than direct Transcripts of what the old *Greek* Philosophers, and *Tully* after them, have faid on the fame Subject. To shew how generally this Kind of Language infects the Writers on Morality, we need only transcribe the following Passage from a Follower of the noble Writer. "We need not therefore be at a Loss, faid he, for a "*Defcription* of the sovereign Good.—We may call it "*Restitude* of Conduct.—If that be too contracted, we "may enlarge, and fay, 'tis— to live perpetually felect-"ing and rejecting according to the Standard of our Be-"ing. If we are for ftill different Views, we may fay,'tis "— to live in the Discharge of Moral Offices—to live i WHAT

WHAT then is Virtue? Let us confider SECT. its true Nature in the following Section.

### SECTION III.

THERE are few among Mankind, who SECT. have not been often ftruck with Admi-Ш. ration at the Sight of that Variety of Colours and Magnificence of Form, which appear in an Evening Rainbow. The uninstructed in Philosophy confider that splendid Object, not as dependent on any other, but as being possessed of a felf-given and original Beauty. But he who is led to know, that its Place and Appearance always varies with the Situation of the Sun: that when the latter is in his Meridian, the former becomes an inconfiderable Curve fkirting the Horizon; that as the Sun defcends, the Rainbow rifes; till at the Time of his Setting, it encompasses the Heavens with a glorious Circle, yet dies away when he difappears; the Enquirer is then convinced, that this gay Meteor did but shine

according to Nature — To live according to Virtue —
to live according to just Experience of those Things
which happen around us." Three Treatises by
H. Treat. 3<sup>d</sup>. p. 207.

with

Шİ.

SECT. immoral in the one, and nothing immoral in the other, here is an Exception which over-. turns his Principle: which proves that the Morality or Immorality of Actions depends on fomething diffinct from mere abstract, irrelative Truth.

THE fame Exception must be admitted on Dr. CLARKE's System of Expression. For fure, 'tis neither fit nor reasonable, nor agreeable to the Relations of Things, that a Man should talk to a Post. Yet, although it be admitted as *irrational* and *abfurd*, I do not imagine, any of Dr. CLARKE'S Defenders would fay it was immoral. So again, with regard to Lord SHAFTESBURY, 'tis clear there can be nothing of the Sublime or Beautiful in this Action of talking to a Post: On the contrary, there is (to use his own Manner of Expression) an apparent Indecency, Impropriety, and Diffonance in Yet, although his Admirers might it. justly denominate it incongruous, they would furely be far from branding it as vile. Here then the fame Exception again takes place, which demonstrates that Virtue cannot confist either in abstract Fitness or Beauty; but that fomething further is required in order to constitute its Nature.

POSSIBLY

Possibly therefore, the Patrons of these S BC T. feveral Theories may alledge, that Actions III. which relate to *inanimate Beings* only, can properly be called no more than *naturally* beautiful, fit, or true: But that *moral* Fitness, Beauty, or Truth, can only arise from fuch Actions as relate to Beings that are *fensible* or *intelligent*. Mr. BALGUY express this Exception: He affirms, that " moral Actions are fuch as are know-" ingly directed towards fome Object intel-" ligent or fensible<sup>b</sup>."

AND fo far indeed this Refinement approaches towards the Truth, as it excludes all inanimate Things from being the Objects of moral Good and Evil. Yet even this Idea of moral Beauty, Fitnefs, or Truth, is highly indeterminate and defective: Because innumerable Instances may be given, of Actions directed towards Objects fenfible and intelligent, fome of which Actions are manifestly becoming, fit, or true, others as manifestly incongruous, irrational, and falle, yet none of them, in any Degree, virtuous or vicious, meritorious or immoral. Thus to fpeak to a Man in a Language he understands, is an Action becoming, fit, or true;

First Treat, on Moral Goodness, p. 28.

'tis

SECT.'tis treating him according to the Order. Ш. Relations, and Truth of Things; 'tis treating him according to what he is. On the contrary, to fpeak to him in a Language he understands not, is an Action neither becoming, fit, nor true; 'tis treating him according to what he is not; 'tis treating him as a Post. But although the first of these Actions be undeniably becoming, fit, or true, who will call it Virtue? And though the latter be undeniably incongruous, irrational, and false, who will call it Vice ? Yet both these Actions are directed towards a Being that is fenfible and intelligent. It follows therefore, that an Action is not either morally Good or Evil, merely because it is conformable to the Beauty, Fitnefs, or Truth of Things, even though it be directed towards an Object both fenfible and intelligent; but that fomething ftill further, fome more diftinguishing and characteristic Circumstance is necessary, in order to fix its real Effence.

WHAT this peculiar Circumstance may be, we come now to enquire. And the first Lights in this Enquiry shall be borrowed from these very celebrated Writers, whom we have here ventured to oppose. For

For fuch is the Force and Energy of Truth, SECT. that while they are attempting to involve. her in a Cloud of Metaphyfics, the breaks through the mystic Veil they had prepared and woven for her with fo much Art, and diffuseth a Stream of genuine Lustre, which the most obdurate Prejudice can only withftand by winking hard.

AND first, though the noble Writer every where attempts to fix an original, independent, moral Beauty of Action, to which every thing is to be referred, and which itfelf is not to be referred to any thing further': Yet when he comes to an Enumeration of those particular Actions, which may be called morally Beautiful, he always fingles out fuch as have a direct and necelfary Tendency to the Happinels of Mankind. Thus he talks of the Notion of a public Intereft<sup>4</sup>, as neceffary towards a proper Idea of Virtue: He speaks of public Affection in the fame Manner; and reckons Generofity, Kindness, and Compassion, as the Qualities which alone can render Mankind truly Virtuous. So again, when he fixes the Bounds of the focial Affections, he evidently refers

\* Essay on Wit — Soliloguy — Enquiry — Moraliss — Aiscellanies—paffim. 4 Enqu. B. i. p. 2. § 3. Miscellanies-paffim. Κ us

129

Ш.-

SECT. us to the fame End, of human Happinefs. Ш. " If Kindness or Love of the most natural "Sort be immoderate, it is undoubtedly " vicious. For thus over-great Tendernels " destroys the Effect of Love; and exceffive " Pity renders us incapable of giving Suc-When he fixes the proper De-" cour "." grees of the private Affections, he draws his Proof from this one Point, " that by " having the Self-Paffions too intenfe or " strong, a Creature becomes miserable<sup>f</sup>." Laftly, when he draws a Catalogue of fuch Affections, as are most opposite to Beauty and moral Good, he felects " Malice, Hatred " of Society ---- Tyranny ---- Anger ---- Revenge " --- Treachery---- Ingratitude "." In all thefe Instances, the Reference to human Happinefs is fo particular and ftrong, that from these alone an unprejudiced Mind may be convinced, that the Production of buman Happinels is the great universal Fountain, whence our Actions derive their moral Beauty.

THUS again, though the excellent Dr. CLARKE attempts to fix the Nature and Effence of Virtue in certain Differences, Relations, and Fitneffes of Things, to which

\* Enqu. B. i. p. 2. § 3. f Ibid. \* Ibid.

our

our Actions ought ultimately to be referred; SEC 7. yet in enumerating the feveral Actions which he denominates morally Good, he mentions none, but what evidently promote the fame great End, " the Happiness of Man." He justly speaks of the Welfare of the Whole, as being the necessary and most important Confequence of virtuous Action. He tells us, " that it is more fit that GOD should regard " the Good of the whole Creation, than that " he should make the Whole continually \*\* miserable: That all Men should endea-\*\* vour to promote the universal Good and Welfare of all; than that all Men should se be continually contriving the Ruin and " Defiruction of all<sup>h</sup>." Here again, the Reference is fo direct and ftrong to the Happiness of Mankind, that even from the Infances alledged by the worthy Author, it appears, that a Conformity of our Actions to this great End, is the very Effence of moral Restitude.

MR. WOLLASTON is no lefs explicit in this particular: For in every Instance he brings, the Happinels of Man is the fingle End to which his Rule of Truth verges in an unvaried Manner. Thus in the Passage

2

Demonft. p. 45, &c. K 2

already

13I

III.

SECT. already cited, though he confiders the talk-III. in the Bell of the life has in for form ing to a Post as an Absurdity, he is far from condemning it as an immoral Action: But in the fame Paragraph, when he comes to give an Instance of the Violation of moral Truth, he immediately has recourse to Man; and not only fo, but to the Happinels of "Why, faith he, fhould not the Man. " Converse be reckoned as bad; that is, to " treat a Man as a Post; as if he had no " Senfe, and felt not Injuries, which he doth " feel; as if to him Pain and Sorrow were " not Pain; Happines not Happines." At other Times he affirms, that " the Impor-" tance of the Truths on the one and the " other Side flould be diligently compared<sup>i</sup>." And I would gladly know, how one Truth can be more important than another, unlefs upon this Principle, and in Reference to the Production of Happiness. Himfelf. indeed confirms this Interpretation, when: he speaks as follows: "The Truth violated " in the former Cafe was, B had a Property " in that which gave him fuch a Degree of " Happines: That violated in the latter was, " B had a Property in that which gave him " a Happinels vality superior to the other: Rel. of Nat. p. 19.

" The

"The Violation therefore in the latter Cafe SECT. "was upon this Account a vaftly greater \_\_\_\_\_\_" "Violation than in the former<sup>k</sup>."

THESE Evidences may feem fufficient: But that all poffible Satisfaction may be given in a Circumstance which is of the greatest Weight in the present Question, these further Observations may be added.

As therefore these celebrated Writers give no Instances of moral Beauty, Fitness, or Truth, but what finally relate to the Happinels of Man; fo if we appeal to the common Senfe of Mankind, we shall fee that the Idea of Virtue hath never been univerfally affixed to any Action or Affection of the Mind, unless where this Tendency to produce Happiness was at least apparent. What are all the Black Catalogues of Vice or moral Turpitude, which we read in Hiftory, or find in the Circle of our own Experience, what are they but fo many Instances of Milery produced? And what are the fair and amiable Atchievements of Legiflators, Patriots, and Sages renowned in Story, what but fo many Efforts to raife Mankind from Mifery, and eftablish the public Happiness on a fure Foundation?

> E Rel. of Nat. p. 21. K 3

The

SECT. The first are vicious, immoral, deformed, be-III. cause there we see Mankind afflicted or destroyed: The latter are virtuous, right, beautiful, because here we see Mankind preferved and affisted.

BUT that Happiness is the last Criterion or Teft, to which the moral Beauty, Truth, or Rectitude of our Affections is to be referred, the two following Circumstances demonstrate: First, " those very Affections and " Actions, which, in the ordinary Course of " Things, are approved as virtuous, do " change their Nature, and become vicious " in the strictest Sense, when they contra-" dict this fundamental Law, of the greatest " public Happines." Thus, although in general it is a Parent's Duty to prefer a Child's Welfare, to that of another Person, yet, if this natural and just Affection gain such Strength, as to tempt the Parent to violate the Public for his Child's particular Welfare; what was before a Duty, by this becomes immoderate and criminal. This the noble Writer hath allowed: " If Kindness " or Love of the most natural Sort be im-" moderate, it is undoubtly vicious<sup>1</sup>." And hence, he fays, " the Excels of motherly

! Enq. on Virtue.

" Love

"Love is owned to be a vicious Fond-SECT. "nefs". The fame Variation takes Place with regard to every other Relation between Man and Man. Infomuch, that the fuperior Regards which we owe to our Family, Friends, Fellow-Citizens, and Countrymen ---Regards which, in their proper Degree, afpire to the amiable and high Names of domeftic Love, Friendfbip, Patriotifm--when once they defert and violate the grand Principle of univerfal Happinefs, become a vicious Fondnefs, a mean and odious Partiality, juftly ftigmatized by all, as ignominious and unwortby.

SECONDLY, with fuch uncontrouled Authority does this great Principle command us; that "Actions which are in their own "Nature, most shocking to every bumane "Affection lose at once their moral Defor-"mity, when they become subfervient to "the general Welfare; and assume both "the Name and the Nature of Virtue." For what is more contrary to every gentle and kind Affection that dwells in the human Breast, than to shed the Blood, or destroy the Life of Man? Yet the ruling Principle above-mentioned, can reconcile us

> m Enq. on Virtue. K 4

even

4

 $S \in C T$  even to this. And when the Necessity of

III. public Example compels us to make a Sacrifice of this Kind; though we may lament the Occafion, we cannot condemn the Fact: So far are we from branding it as Murder, that we approve it as Justice: and always defend it on this great Principle alone, that it was necessary for the public Good.

THUS it appears, that those Actions which we denominate Virtuous, Beautiful, Fit, or True, have not any absolute and independent, but a relative and reflected Beauty: And that their Tendency to produce Happines is the only Source from whence they derive their Lustre. Hence therefore we may obtain a just and adequate Definition of Virtue: Which is no other than "the "Conformity of our Affections with the

<sup>n</sup> The Gentlemen above examined feem to have miltaken the *Attributes* of Virtue for its *Effence*. Virtue is procuring Happinefs: To procure Happinefs is *beautiful*, *reafonable*, *true*; thefe are the Qualities or Attributes of the Action: But the Action itfelt, or its *Effence*, is procuring Happinefs.

The Reader who is curious to examine further into this Subject, may confult the Prelim. Differt. to Dr. LAW'S Translation of KING'S Origin of Evil: Together with feveral Passages in the Translator's Notes, where he will find Sense and Metaphysics united in a very eminent and extraordinary Degree.

" public

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 137 " public Good:" Or " the voluntary Pro-" duction of the greatest Happiness."

## SECTION IV.

IT may poffibly feem strange that so SECT. much has been thought necessary to be opposed to these metaphysical *Refinements* concerning the Nature of Virtue: But in Reality, 'tis a Point of the utmost Confequence: For these Refinements have given rise to a plausible Objection, which hath been retailed in a popular Manner by a late wordy Writer; whose least merit it is to have supplied our modish Coffee-house Philosophers with such a Variety of fashionable Topics, that they have never felt the least Want of that antiquated Affissance derived from Knowledge, Parts, and Learning.

THIS Gentleman, taking Advantage of these metaphysical Refinements, and particularly of the noble Writer's imaginary Scheme of *abfolute*, *irrelative* Beauty, "the "Hunting after which (he elegantly af-"firms) is not much better than a wild "Goose Chase";" attempts from hence to demonstrate, for the *Benefit* of his *Country*,

• Fable of the Bees, vol. i. p. 380. oct. Ed.

that

IV.

SECT. that we are utterly miltaken, when we " look upon Virtue and Vice as permanent " Realities, that must ever be the same in " all Countries and all Ages<sup>P</sup>:" And thus he profecutes his Argument.

THE Worth or Excellence of every thing, he fays, varies according to Fancy or Opinion. " Even in human Creatures, what " is beautiful in one Country, is not fo in " another .--- Three hundred Years ago, "Men were shaved as closely as they are " now; fince that, they have wore Beards. "---How mean and comical a Man looks. " that is otherwife well-dreffed, in a narrow-" brimed Hat, when every Body wears " broad ones: And again, how monstrous " is a very great Hat, when the other Ex-" treme has been in Fashion for a confidera-" Time?--- The many Ways of laying out " a Garden judiciously are almost innumera-" ble; and what is called Beautiful in them, " varies according to the different Tafle of "Nations and Ages "." Thus capricious. and uncertain, he tells us, are our Ideas of natural Beauty; and these he brings home to the Point of Morals. " In Morals there " is no greater Certainty: Plurality of Fable of the Bees, p. 372. • P. 376. "Wives

Wives is odious among Christians, and all SECT. IV. " the Wit and Learning of a great Genius " in Defence of it, has been rejected with " Contempt. But Polygamy is not shock-" ing to a Mahometan. What Men have " learnt from their Infancy enflaves them, " and the Force of Cuftom warps Nature. " and at the fame Time imitates her in fuch " a Manner, that it is often difficult to "know, which of them we are influenced " by. In the East formerly, Sisters mar-" ried Brothers, and it was meritorious for " a Man to marry his Mother, Such Al-" liances are abominable : But it is certain, se that whatever Horror we conceive at the "Thoughts of them, there is nothing in " Nature repugnant against them, but what " is built upon Mode and Cuftom. A re-" ligious Mabometan may receive as great an " Averfion against Wine"." Hence, with great Stretch of Reasoning he concludes, "that Virtue and Vice are not permanent "Realities," but vary as other Fashions, and are fubject to no other Law, than that of Fancy and Opinion.

AND fo far indeed, this Gentleman feems to have argued justly, while he contends

\* Fuble of the Bees, p. 377, 379.

¢

that

- SECT. that mere Approbation and Diflike, the mete
- IV. Idea of Beauty and Deformity, Truth or Rectitude, without Reference to fome further End, can never constitute a real or permanent Foundation of Vice or Virtue. For, as he hath observed, there bave indeed been confiderable Differences of Opinion upon fome Kinds of moral Beauty and Deformity, in the different Nations and Ages of the World: And each Age and Nation hath ever been alike politive in afferting the Propriety of its own. Therefore, unless we have some further Test, some other distinguishing and characteristic Circumstance to refer to, belides that of mere Approbation and Diflike, how shall we ever know, which of thefe anomalous Opinions are right or wrong? If we have nothing further to appeal to, than the mere Propriety of Tafte; though each may be thoroughly fatisfied of the Justness of his own; yet he ought in Reason to allow the same Right of Choice to the reft of Mankind in every Age and Nation: And thus indeed, moral Beauty and Deformity, Virtue and Vice, could have no other Law, than that of Fancy and Opinion.

BUT when the great End of public Happiness is ultimately referred to, as the one, uniform

uniform Circumstance that constitutes the SECT. IV. Rectitude of human Actions; then indeed, Virtue and Vice affume a more real and permanent Nature: The common Senfe, nay, the very Necessities of Mankind, will urge them to make an unvaried and just Diftinction: For Happiness and Milery make too firong an Appeal to all the Faculties of Man, to be borne down by the Caprice of Fancy and Opinion. That it was either an accidental or a defigned Inattention to this great Principle of Happinels, that gave this coarse Writer an Occasion to call in Question the permanent Reality of Vice and Virtue, the following Confiderations may infliciently convince us.

SHOULD any one afk, whether *Healtb* and Sicknefs are two different Things, no Doubt we fhould anfwer in the Affirmative: And would furely fulpect any Man's Sincerity, who fhould tell us, that what was accounted Health in one Age or Nation, was accounted Sicknefs in another. There are likewife fuch Things as wholefome Food and Poifons: Nor would we entertain a much better Opinion of him who fhould affirm, that all depends upon Fancy; that Bread or Milk are nourifhing or defiructive, that

141

ú

SEC T. that Arfenic and Sublimate are wholefome IV. The second se

\_or poisonous, as Imagination and Opinion dictate. On the contrary we know, their Nature with Respect to Man, is invariable : The one, universally wholesome, the other, Further: we know there have poilonous. been Debates among Phyficians, about Regimen and Diet: That fome have maintained the Wholefomeness of Animal, others of vegetable Food: Some recommended the Drinking of Water, others of Wine. Yet none was ever to weak as to conclude from these different Opinions about wholesome Diet, that the nourishing Qualities of Bread, or the noxious ones of Arlenic, were not permanent Realities with regard to Man; or, that the first could be made poisonous, the latter, wholefome, by Dint of Fancy and Opinion.

Now, the Cafe we are debating is exactly parallel. For fure, the Happinels and Milery of Mankind are Things as diftinct as Health and Sicknels: Whence it follows, that certain Actions, under the fame Circumftances, must univerfally produce Happinels or Milery, as naturally as Food produceth Health, or Poifon, Sicknels, and Death. We have already feen, that whatever

ever tends to the Good of all, is by the con-SIC.T. IV, font of all, denominated Virtue; that whatever is contrary to this great End, is univerfally branded as Vice; in the fame Manner, as whatever nourifhes the Body is called Food; whatever destroys it, Poison. Accordingly, we find the Agreement among, Mankind as uniform on the one Subject, as on the other. All Ages and Nations having without Exception or Variance maintained. Humanity, Fidelity, Truth, Temthat perance, and mutual Benevolence, do as naturally produce Happiness, as Food gives Health to the Body: That Cruelty, Treachery, Lying, Intemperance, Inhumanity, Adultery, Murder, do as naturally give Rife to Milery, as Poifon brings on Sicknefs and Death.

BUT hath not this Author given fuch Inftances as prove, that what is detected as Vice in one Country, is applauded as Virtue in another? That Polygamy and inceftuous Marriages have been in fome Nations reputed lawful, in others meritoricus? And if one Virtue or Vice be imaginary or variable, doth it not clearly follow that all are fo?

Now a Man of a common Turn of Thought would be apt to make a very dif-. ferent

IV.

SECT. ferent Inference. If from the Variety of Opinions among Mankind as to fome Virtues or Vices, he concluded thefe were variable; then from the universal Agreement of Mankind with regard to other Virtues and Vices, he would conclude thefe were fixed and invariable. The Confent of Mankind in the one, proves as much as their Disagreement in the other. And 'tis evident that both their Confent and Difagreement arife from the fame Principle: A Principle which destroys the Tenets, which this Author labours to establish. For, to refume our Illustration, as the various Opinions concerning the fuperior Wholefomeneis of this or that kind of Diet, does not change the Nature of Bread or Poilon; fo neither can the various Opinions concerning Polygamy or Inceft, affect or change the Nature of Benevolence and Generolity, Adultery and Murder. 'Tis plain, these various Opinions have been formed " upon fuch Actions only, " as are not univerfally and clearly con-" nected with the Happiness or Misery of " Mankind." As these Actions have been decmed productive of the one or the other. they have been regarded as Virtues or Vices : But this Variety of Opinions does no more 4

145

IV.

¢

more unfettle the Nature of those Actions, SECT. whole Tendency is clear and certain; than the Debates on the fuperior Wholefomenefs of animal or vegetable Diet can change the Nature of Bread and Poison. Hence it appears, that Virtue and Vice are permanent Realities, and that their Nature is fixed, certain, and invariable.

THUS one Extreme produceth another. For the noble Writer and this Gentleman, through a ftrong Diflike of each other's Systems, have both endeavoured to prove too much, and in Confequence have proved nothing. The one, contending for the permanent Reality of Virtue, and, not content to fix it on its proper Basis, attempts to establish certain absolute and immutable Forms of Beauty, without Regard to any further End; and thus, by laying a chimerical Foundation, betrays the Caufe which he fo generously defends. The other, intent on destroying the permanent Reality of Virtue and Vice, and perceiving how weak a Bafis the noble Writer had laid for their Eftablishment, after proving this to be imaginary, as wifely as honeftly infers, there is no real one in Nature. We now fee the Folly of these Extremes: That as on the L one

ł

SECT. one Part, Virtue and Vice are Things merely IV. relative to the Happinels of Man; fo on the other, while Man continues what he is, all those Relations which concern his Happinels, and arise from his present Manner of Existence, are likewise permanent and immutable.

## SECTION V.

Sест. V.

BUT this idle Objection against the permanent Reality of Virtue and Vice, is not the only one which the Writer last mentioned hath laboured, for the Destruction of Religion and Virtue. For the main Drift and Intention of his Book is to prove no lefs a Paradox than this, that " private Vices are " public Benefits." Now, till this Objection be removed, our Idea and Definition of Virtue can never be thoroughly esta-For if private Vices be public Beblifhed. nefits, then private Virtues are public Mif-And if fo, what becomes of our cbiefs. Definition?

Now, the first notable Circumstance in this formidable Affertion of Dr. MANDE-VILLE, is its utter Inconfistency with all that he hath advanced in order to destroy the Reality of Vice and Virtue. For if indeed these

these be mere Names, the Creatures of SECT. Fancy and Opinion, how can they be attended with any uniform Effects? How can they be either public Benefits, or public Evils?---If on the contrary, they really produce certain uniform Effects, as he hath attempted to prove, how can they be mere Non-Entities, the Creatures of Fancy and Opinion? Here lies a gross and palpable Incoherence: Take which of his two Theories you pleafe, the other abfolutely destroys it. If Vice be a public Benefit, it must be a permanent Reality: If it is not a permanent Reality, it cannot be a public Benefit.

LET us now examine the Foundations on which he hath built this ftrange Hypothefis. His Book may be analyfed into four different Principles, which he hath varioully combined, or rather jumbled together, according as each in their Turn would best ferve his Purpofe.

THE first Principle he lays down, or rather takes up, i. e. for granted, is, " that " Man is a compound of evil Paffions:" In other Words, "that the Gratification of the " natural Appetites is in itfelf a Vice." There ... e in his Book, at least a hundred L 2

Pages >

SECT. Pages of the lowest common-place Declav. \_\_\_\_mation, all founded on this one Principle, brought from the folitary Caves and Vifions. of the Defart. Thus the Defire of being effeemed by others, he ftigmatizes with the Name of Pride: The natural Defire of for cial Converse between the two Sexes, he diftinguisheth by a groffer Appellation. In a word, through the whole Courfe of his Argument, he *fuppofes* that every *felfifb* Appetite (that is, every Appetite which hath regard to our felf) is in its own Nature vile and abominable. This the candid Reader will probably think a little hard upon human Nature: That no Man can be virtuous, while he endeavours to be effeemed. while he loves to quench his Thirft, minister to Posterity, or eat his Dinner. Ön the Weight of these plain Instances, the Value of this first Principle may be fafely left to any Man's impartial Trial.

HAVING thus branded every Gratification of the natural Appetites; he gains from hence a proper Foundation for the fecond Pillar of this Temple of Vice. For he acquaints us with great Solemnity, that, of all other Vices, that of Luxury is most beneficial to a State: And that if this were banished 4

banished the Nation, all Kinds of manual SECT. Occupations would immediately languish and decay. He fays indeed, that Pedants make Objections to this Vice of Luxury, and tell you, that it enervates a People: But he adds, that "fince he has feen the World, "the Confequences of Luxury to a Nation, "feem not fo dreadful to him as they didt." Had he left the Matter here, we should have been at a Loss to know how he would have made out this strange Tale: But the Riddle is cleared up at once, when we hear him fay, that "every thing is Luxury, that "is not immediately necessary to make Man "fubfift as he is a living Creature"."

WE should have been startled perhaps had he assured us, that he had a Wind-mill which laid Eggs, and bred young ones: But how easily had he reconciled us to his Veracity by only faying, that by a Wind-mill he meant a Goofe, or a Turkey?

THUS, when he affirms that Luxury produceth public Happines, we stand ready for some deep and subtile Speculation, to support so wondrous a Paradox. But when he poorly tells us, "that every thing is

· Fable of the Bees, paffim.

' Ibid. p. 247.

! Ibid, p. 108.

L 3.

" Luxury

150

<sup>V.</sup> <sup>V.</sup> <sup>V.</sup> "Luxury that is not immediately neceffary <sup>V.</sup> "to make Man fubfift as he is a living "Creature;" we laugh not fo much at his Impudence, as at our own Folly in giving Ear to fo idle a Prater, whole wide-mouthed Paradoxes fo foon dwindle into a little harmlefs Nonfenfe; and when we thought we had him reforming States, and newmodeling Philofophy, he was all the while playing at Crambo.

> LEST it should be suspected, that the Features of this Man's Folly are here aggravated, take a Copy of his Countenance in one Instance out of many that might be given. "The Consequences, faith he, of "this Vice of Luxury to a Nation, seem "not so dreadful to me as they did"---For "clean Linen weakens a Man no more "than Fiannel"." Now from these Paffages laid together, it appears; first, that Luxury is a Vice; secondly, that to wear clean Linen is Luxury; and, therefore, it comes out as clear as the Day, "that to "wear clean Linen is a Vice."

> SERIOUSLY; the Sophiftry here employed, is one of those Insults that can be fafely offered only to an *English* Under-

> > Tabl: of the Bees, p. 119.

ftanding ;

standing; which though none of the SECT. brightest is always ready to reflect the pre-\_ fent Object. Did ever any Man before --except only a Set of wrong-headed Enthufiasts, whose Visions he is here obliged to adopt --- did ever any Man maintain, that to use the Bounties of Nature, or enjoy the Conveniences of Life was a criminal Indulgence? Did ever any Man maintain, that be could be vicioully luxurious, who neither burt his Neighbour nor bimself? At this Rate, by an arbitrary Use of Words, and putting one Expression for another, we might boldly advance the most palpable Contradictions, and maintain, that Dr. M---D--LE was a Man of Modesty and Virtue.

THUS far we have feen this Writer endeavouring to throw the *falfe* Colours of *Vice* upon the *natural Paffions*, and fuch a *Ufe* of the Gifts of Nature as is really *Innocent*. In examining his two remaining Principles, we fhall find him acting a Part the very reverfe; and with the fame Effrontery, endeavouring to throw the *falfe* Colours of *public Utility* on fuch Actions and Affections as are really criminal and defructive.

To

ISI

152

**б**аст. V.

To: this Purpole he boldly felects fome of the most flagrant Crimes; and affures us, that without their happy Influence the Public would fuffer exceedingly. Who had ever dreamt, that Mankind receives Benefit from *Thieves* and *Houfe-breakers?* Yet he tells us, that "if all People were strictly "honest, half the Smiths in the Nation " would want Employment <sup>\*</sup>."

HIGHWAYMEN too, and Robbers are uleful in their Generation. For " if a Miler " fhould be robbed of Five hundred or a " thousand Guineas, it is certain, that as " foon as this Money should come to circu-" late, the Nation would be the better for " the Robbery, and receive the same and as " real a Benefit from it, as if an Archbishup " had left the same Sum to the Publice."

\* Fable of the Bees, p. 82.

<sup>9</sup> There is a common Error with regard to Mifers, on which this pretended Argument is built. They are generally accounted the greateft Enemies of Sociely, hecaufe they board the Wealth which ought to circulate. Now, to give even a Mifer his due, this is really a groundlefs Charge: For they feldom board more than certain ufelefs Papers or Parchments, in the Shape of Notes, Bonds, and Mortgages: While the Wealth which they thus board in Imagination, circulates freely among sill Ranks of People. The Guilt of the Mifer's Paffion Jies in its being effentially deftructive both of Juffice and Benevolence.

\* Fable of the Bees, p. 83,

He

HE is abundantly rhetorical on " the large SECT. " Catalogue of folid Bleffings that accrue\_ "from, and are owing to intoxicating " Gin \*." Infomuch, that if the Drunkennefs and Frenzy arifing from the exceffive Use of this falutary Liquor were curbed by the Magistrate, he seems to foretel the most fatal Confequences to the public Wealth and Welfare.

HERE then he enumerates feveral real Crimes, which are necessarily attended with great Evils; and these he demonstrates, are accidentally productive of fome Good. And this indeed is the only Part of his Argument, that is attended with any Degree of Plaufibility : For here, it must be owned, there is Room for a difhonest Mind to confound, though by no Means to convince an impartial Reader. Because the Consequences of these Crimes being of a various and discordant Nature, fome having the Ap-. pearance of Good, and others of Ill to Society; a rhetorical Display of the former may poffibly induce a fuperficial Enquirer, who is caught by a Glare of Eloquence, to doubt whether these do not really predomi-But a moderate Share of Attention nate.

\* Fable of the Bess, p. 89.

will

IŢZ

V.

v.

SECT. will convince us, that this is impossible. Because all the real Vices he mentions, though they be accidentally productive of fome Good; yet 'tis fuch as might effectually be obtained without them. Thus the Money taken wrongfully by Stealth or Robbery, is only of Service to the Public by its Circulation: But Money may circulate without Stealth or Robbery; and therefore 'tis neither the Stealth nor Robbery that is of Service to the Public. On the other part, there are great and fubstantial Evils, which these Crimes, and these alone give Rife to. On this Occasion one might be very large on the Terrors and Diffress, the Murders, and confequent Miferies, which the Villanies patronized by this Writer do neceffarily produce. One who was Mafter of Dr. MANDEVILLE's Town-Rhetoric and Town-Experience, might draw a striking Picture of honest and industrious Families rowzed from Sleep at Midnight, only to be plundered and destroyed; of the horrid Attempts of abandoned Wickednefs, let loofe from Fear by the Security of Darkness; the Shrieks of ravished Maids and Matrons: the dying Groans of Brothers, Fathers, Hufbands, weltring in their Blood; the Cries

Cries of innocent and helpless Orphans SECT. v. weeping over their murdered Parents, deprived at once of all that were dear to them, of all that could yield them Confolation or Support; and fuffering every vile Indignity. that unrelenting Villainy can fuggest or perpetrate. And how, think you, does this Scene of domestic Horror change its original Nature, and rife at length into a public Blefling? Why, because the Adventurers, having made off with their Booty, may poffibly " lay it out upon a Harlot, or " squander it in a Night-cellar, or a Gin-" Shop b:" And thus the Money circulates through the Nation. But, in the mean Time, our Philosopher hath forgot the helpless Family reduced to Beggary by the Prowels of his nocturnal Heroes: He hath forgot that the fond and indulgent Parent might no lefs probably have laid out the Money in. the temperate Maintenance and liberal Education of his Children, which is now fquandered in unprofitable Riot and Excess: That these Destroyers of other Men's Happines and their own, had they been employed in honest Labour, in the Cultivation of Lands, or the Improvement of Manufactures, might

have

ł

Fable of the Bees, p. 84,85.

SECT. have done substantial Services to the Pub-V. lic and themselves, without the guilty Alloy of unprovoked Mischief. From these Circumstances impartially compared, 'tis evident, that the only effential Consequence of private Vice, is public Misery: And thus our Author's new fashioned System of Morals falls back again into nothing.

> H1s fourth Principle is much lefs plaufible. Indeed he never applies to this, but when reduced to the last Necessity: When therefore every other Foundation fails him, he attempts to impose upon his Reader's Negligence or Simplicity, by reprefenting. Vice as a Caule, where in Reality 'tis a Confequence. Thus he tells us, "GreatWealth " and foreign Treasure will ever fcorn to " come among Men, unless you'll admit " their inseparable Companions, Avarice and "Luxury: Where Trade is confiderable. "Fraud will intrude. To be at once well-" bred and fincere, is no lefs than a Contra-" diction: And therefore whilft Man ad-" vances in Knowledge, and his Manners " are polished, we must expect to see at the " fame Time his Defires enlarged, his Ap-" petites refined, and his Vices increased ." · Fable of the Bees, p. 201.

> > Sa

So again, having been driven from his other SECT. ftrong Holds by certain impertinent Remarkers, whom he wifely difmiffeth with an Air of Superiority and Contempt, he takes Refuge in the fame ambiguous Phrafes: As that "Vice is *infeparable* from great and " potent Societies, in the fame Manner as " dirty Streets are a neceffary Evil, infe-" parable from the Felicity of London<sup>4</sup>."

Now, though this happy Simile may work Wonders in a Coffee-Houle, amongst those who see every dirty Alley pregnant with Demonstration; yet, 'tis to be hoped, more ferious Readers may diftinguish better. And be enabled to tell him, that before they grant his Position, that private Vice is public Benefit, they expect he should prove, " that the Dirt in London Streets, is " the Caufe or Instrument whereby London " becomes a populous and flourishing City:" A Proposition almost as remote from common Apprehenfion, as that Tenter den Steeple is the Caufe of Goodwin Sands. Thus, we fee how dextroufly he puts the Change upon the unwary Reader; and while he pretends to exhibit an effential Caufe, flurs him off with an accidental Confequence.

4 Fable of the Bees, Preface, p. 9, &c.

Into

v.

INTO these four Principles, all evidently SECT. Falle or Foreign to the Purpose, his whole Book may be justly analysed. Nor is there one Obfervation in the Compass of fo many hundred Pages, which tends to fupport the pernicious Falschood that difgraceth his Title-Page, but what will naturally refolve itfelf into one or other of these wretched Sophilms. 'Tis therefore unnecessary to lead the Reader through all the Windings of this immense Labyrinth of Falschood, 'tis enough, to have given the Clue which may fafely conduct him through them.

### SECTION VI.

HAVING at Length gained an Ade-SECT. VI. quate Idea of Virtue, and found that it is no other than "the voluntary Production of " the greatest public Happines;" we may now fafely proceed to confider, "upon " what Foundations Mankind are obliged to "the Practice of it?"

> AND here we shall find another metaphysical Cloud refting upon this Path, in itself plain and easy to all Mankind. For the very Notion of Obligation to Virtue hath been as much confounded by moral Writers,.

ters, as the Idea of Virtue itself. And here SECT. we might travel through another System of VI. Logomachies; while one afferts, that we are obliged to love and purfue Virtue, because she is beautiful; another, because Virtue is good; another, because Virtue is good in itself; a fourth, because Virtue is Truth; a fifth, because it is agreeable to Nature; a fixth, because it is agreeable to the Relations of Things.

BUT 'tis fuppofed that the intelligent Reader, from a review of the first Section of this Effay, may be convinced, that all these amufing Expressions amount to no more than this, "that there is fome Rea-" fon or other why we ought to practife "Virtue; but that the particular Reafon " doth not appear, notwithstanding all this " refined Pomp of Affirmation." And as it hath already been made evident, that the Effence of Virtue confifts in a Conformity of our Affections and Actions, with the greatest public Happines; fo it will now appear, "that "the only Reason or Motive, by " which Individuals can poffibly be induced " or obliged to the Practice of Virtue, must " be the Fceling immediate, or the Prospect " of future private Happines."

DOUBT-

160 Sест. VI.

DOUBTLESS, the nobleWriter's Admirers will defpife and reject this, as an unworthy Maxim. For fo it hath happened, that in the Height of their Zeal, for supporting his Opinions, they generally ftigmatize private Happinels, as a Thing fcarce worth a wife Man's enquiring after. Indeed, the many ambiguous Phrases of their Master have contributed not a little to this vulgar Error. For in one Place, he brands the modern Philosophers and Divines with the Name of Sophisters and Pedants, for "Fating Life " by the Number and Exquisiteness of the " pleafing Sentations ." At other Times he speaks of Pleasure, with all the Contempt of an antient Stoic<sup>f</sup>. In the fame high Style of the Athenian Porch, he paffeth Judgment on the Hopes of the Religious: " They have made Virtue fo mer-" cenary a Thing, and have talked fo much " of its Rewards, that one can hardly tell " what there is in it, after all, which can " be worth rewarding<sup>g</sup>." So again, he derides those "modern Projectors, who would " new frame the human Heart; and have " a mighty Fancy to reduce all its Motions,

• Wit and Hum. Part iii. § 4. f Moral. Part iii. § 3. • Wit, Part ii. § 3.

" Balances,

<sup>**cc**</sup> Balances, and Weights to that one Prin-SECT. **cc** ciple and Foundation of a cool and deli **cc** berate Selfifbnefs: And thus, Love of **cc** one's Country, and Love of Mankind, **cc** muft also be Self-love<sup>h</sup>."

Now ere we proceed further, it may be neceffary to remark, that in fome Degree there hath been a Strife about Words in this particular too. For these Expressions of Selfishness and Disinterestedness have been used in a very loofe and indeterminate Manner. In one Senfe a Motive is called difinferefled; when it confifts in a pure benevolent Affection, or a Regard to the moral Senfe. In another, no Motive is difinterested: For even in acting according to these Impulses of Benevolence and Confcience, we gratify an Inclination, and act upon the Principle or immediate Feeling of private Happiness. Thus when we fay, "We " love Virtue for Virtue's Sake;" 'tis only implied, that we find immediate Happinefs from the Love and Practice of Virtue, without Regard to external or future Confequences.

ANOTHER Source of mutual Misapprehension on this Subject hath been " the In-

1 Wit, Part ii. § 3.

" troduction

 $\mathbf{M}$ 

SECT. " troduction of metaphorical Expressions in-VI. "ftead of proper ones." Nothing is fo common among the Writers on Morality, as " the Harmony of Virtue" --- " the Pro-" portion of Virtue." So the noble Writer frequently expressed himself. But his favourite Term, borrowed indeed from the Antients, is "the BEAUTY of Virtue." ---- Quæ si videri posset, mirabiles excitaret amores<sup>i</sup>--- Of this our Author and his Followers, especially the most ingenious of them k, are fo enamoured, that they feem utterly to have forgot they are talking in Metaphor, when they describe the Charms of this fovereign Fair. Infomuch, that an unexperienced Perfon, who should read their Encomiums, would naturally fall into the Mistake of him, who asked the Philofopher, "Whether the Virtues were not "living Creatures ?" Now this figurative Manner, fo effentially interwoven into philofophical Difquifition, hath been the Occafion of great Error. It tends to millead us both with regard to the Nature of Virtue, and our Obligations to the Practice of For first, it induceth a Persuasion, that it. Virtue is excellent without Regard to any of <sup>1</sup>Cicero. \* Mr. Hutchefon. <sup>1</sup> Senecæ Epift. cxiv. its



Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 163 its Confequences: And fecondly, that he SECT. must either want Eyes, or common Difernment, who doth not at first Sight fall in Love with this matchlefs Lady.

THEREFORE fetting afide, as much as may be, all ambiguous Expressions, it seems evident, that "a Motive, from its very Na-"ture, must be something that affects our-"felf." If any Man hath sound out a Kind of Motive which doth not affect himself, he hath made a deeper Investigation into the "Springs, Weights, and Balances" of the human Heart, than I can pretend to. Now what can possibly affect ourself, or determine us to Action, but either the Feeling or Prospect of Pleasure or Pain, Happiness or Misery?

BUT to come to the direct Proof: 'Tis evident, even to Demonstration, that no Affection can, in the strict Sense, be more or less felfish or disinterested than another; because, whatever be its Object, the Affection itself is still no other than a Mode either of Pleasure or of Pain; and is therefore equally to be referred to the Mind or Feeling of the Patient, whatever be its external Occasion. Indeed, a late Writer of Subtilty and Refinement hath attempted to M 2 make

SECT. make a Diffinction here. He fays, " It VI. " hath been observed, that every Act of " Virtue or Friendship is attended with a " fecret Pleasure; from whence it hath " been concluded, that Friendship and Vir-" tue could not be difinterested. But the " Fallacy of this is obvious. The virtuous "Sentiment or Paffion produces the Plea-" fure, and does not arife from it. I feel " a Pleasure in doing good to my Friend, " because I love him; but I do not love him " for the Sake of that Pleafure "." Now to me, the Fallacy of this is obvious. For in Fact, neither the Pallion, nor the Pleafure, are either the Caufe or the Confequence of each other; they neither produce nor arise from each other; because, in Reality, they are the fame Thing under different Expressions. This will be clear, if we state the Cafe as follows: " To love my Friend, is " to feel a Pleasure in doing him Good :" And conversely; "to feel a Pleasure in doing "Good to my Friend, is to love him." Where 'tis plain that the Terms are fynony-The *Pleafure* therefore is the very mous. Paffion it felf; and neither prior nor posterior to it, as this Gentleman fuppofeth.

> " Hume's Effays, Mor. and Polit. p. 125. AGAIN,

THE Reafons why the great univerfal Principle of private Happine/s hath not been to clearly feen in the Benevolent, as in the Self-Paffions, feem to be thefe. First, Ambiguous Expressions, such as have been remarked above. 2dly, Perhaps some Degree of Pride, and Affectation of Merit; because Merit seems to appear in what is called Difinteress. 3dly, And perhaps principally, because in the Exercise of the benevolent Passions, the Happiness is effentially concomitant with the Passion itself, and therefore is not easily separated from it by the Imagination, so as to be confidered

> Moralis, Part ii. M 3

as

**SECT.** as a diftinct End. Whereas in the Paffions VI. called Selfifh, the Happinefs fought after is often unattainable, and therefore eafily and neceffarily diftinguished by the Imagination as a positive End. This Circumstance of Union however, as is judiciously remarked by one of the noble Writer's Followers, proves the great Superiority and Excellence of the benevolent Affections, considered as a Source of Happines, beyond the Passions and Appetites, commonly called the Selfish.

BUT although these Observations be neceffary, in order to clear up an Affair, which hath been much perplexed with philosophical, or *unphilosophical* Refinements; yet, on a closer Examination, it will appear, in the most direct Manner, from the noble Writer himself, that "there is no other Principle "of human Action, but that of the *imme*-"diate or foreseen Happiness of the Agent:" That all these amusing Speculations concerning the Comely, Fit, and Decent; all these verbal Separations between Pleasure, Interest, Beauty, and Good, might have been funk in one precise and plain Disquisition, concerning such Actions and Affections as

° Three Treatises, by J. H. Treat. 3<sup>3</sup>. On Happines, p. 189.

yield

yield a *lafting*, and fuch as afford only a SECT. *fkort* and transient *Happinefs*. For thus, after all, his Lordship explains himself: "That *Happinefs* is to be pursued, and, in "Fact, is always fought after; that the "Question is not, who *loves himself*, and "who not; but who *loves* and *ferves himself* "the rigbest, and after the truest Manner.---"That 'tis the Height of Wisdom, no doubt, "to be rightly Selfish"---" Even to leave "Family, Friends, Country, and Society "--- in good Earnest, who would not, if it "were Happines to do for?"

THESE Expressions are so ftrongly pointed, as to leave no further Doubt concerning the noble Writer's Sentiments on this Subject. Indeed, they are the natural Dictates of common Sense, unsophisticated with false Philosophy. In every subsequent Debate therefore, wherein his Lordship's Opinions are concerned, we may fasely build on this as an acknowledged and sure Foundation, "that the Motives or natural Obli-"gations of Man to the Practice of Virtue, "can only arise from a Sense of his present, "or a Prospect of his future Happinels."

\* Wit and Hum. Part iii. § 3.

M 4

SEC-

#### SECTION VII.

SFCT. NOW this Conclusion will carry us to VII. another Question of a very interesting and abstrufe Nature: That is, "How far, and "upon what Foundation, the uniform "Practice of Virtue, is *really* and *clearly* "connected with the Happiness of every "Individual?" For so far, as we have seen, and no further, can every Individual be naturally moved or obliged to the Practice of it.

> THIS is evidently a Queftion of Fatt: And as it relates to the Happiness of Man, can only be determined by appealing to his Constitution. If this be indeed uniform and invariable; that is, if every Individual hath the fame Perceptions, Passions, and Defires; then indeed the Sources of Happiness must be fimilar and unchangeable. If, on the contrary, different Men be differently constituted; if they have different Perceptions, Passions, and Defires; then must the Sources of their Happiness be equally various.

> IT should seem therefore, that "while "Moralists have been enquiring into hu-"man Happiness, they have generally con-"fidered

IF we fpeak with Precifion, there are but three Sources in Man, of Pleafure and Pain, Happinels and Milery: These are Senfe, Imagination, and the Passions. Now the flighteft Observation will convince us, that thefe are affociated, feparated and combined in Man, with a Variety almost infinite. In fome, the Pleasures and Pains of Sense predominate; Imagination is dull; the Paffions inactive. In others, a more delicate Frame awakens all the Powers of Imagination; the Paffions are refined; the Senfes difregarded. A third Conftitution is carried away by the Strength of Paffion : The Calls of Senfe are contemned; and Imagination becomes no more than the neceffary Inftrument of fome further Gratification.

From overlooking this plain Fact, feems to have ariten the Difcordance among Philofophers concerning the Happiness of Man. And while each hath attempted to exhibit one X

SFCT. one favourite Picture, as the Paragon or VII. Standard of human Kind; they have all omitted fome Ten thousand other Refemblances which actually subsist in Nature.

THUS, most of the Epicurean Sect, tho' not the Founder of it, have discarded Benevolence and Virtue from their System of private Happiness. The modern Patronizers of this Scheme, Mr. HOBBES, Dr. MANDEVILLE, and feveral French Writers, after heaping up a Collection of fordid Instances, which prove the fenfual Inclinations and Selfishness of Man, leap at once to their defired Conclusion, that the pretended public Affections are therefore no more than the fame low Paffions in Difguife. That Benevolence makes no Part of Man's Nature; that the human Kind are abfolutely unconnected with each other in Point of Affection: And that every Individual feeks and finds his private Happiness in and from bimself alone.

THE noble Writer, on the contrary, viewing the brighter Parts of human Nature, through the amiable Medium of the Socratic Philosophy; and fixing his Attention on the *public Affections*, as the Instruments both of public and private Happiness;

nefs; rejects the Epicurcan's Pretences with SECT. Difdain: And fully confcious of the high Claims and Energy of Virtue, affirms that the private Affections are, by no means, a Foundation for private Happinefs: That, on the contrary, we must univerfally promote the Welfare of others, if we would effectually fecure our own: And that in every Cafe, "Virtue is the Good, and Vice " the Ill of every one<sup>9</sup>."

'Tis plain, no two Systems of Philosophy can be more *difcordant* than these; yet cach of them have obtained a Number of Partizans in all Ages of the World. The Question relates to a *Fact*, and the Fact lies open to the *personal Examination* of all Mankind. Whence then can so strange an Opposition of Sentiments arise?

. THIS feems to have arifen, not from a *falfe*, but a *partial* View and Examination of the Subject. The *Stoic* Party dwell altogether on the *focial* or *public*, the *Epicurean* no lefs on the *private* or *felfifb* Affections: On thefe refpectively they declaim; fo that according to the one, Mankind are naturally a Race of *Demi-Gods*; according to the other, a Crew of *Devils*. Both forgetting,

,

what

S Enquiry concerning Virtue, paffim.

<sup>1</sup> 

SECT. what is unqueftionably the Truth, that <u>VII.</u> thefe focial and private Affections are blended in an endlefs Variety of Degrees, and thus form an infinite Variety of Inclinations and of Characters. Many of the particular Facts, therefore, which thefe two Sects alledge, are true: But the general Confequence they draw from thefe particular

Facts, is groundless and imaginary. Thus, 'tis true, that Mankind reap high Enjoyments from the Senses, Imagination, and Paffions, without any regard to the public Affections: But the Confequence which the Epicurean would draw from hence, that " therefore the public Affections are never, " in any Cafe, a Source of private Happi-" nefs;" this is entirely void of Evidence: It supposeth Mankind to be one uniform Subject, while it is a Subject infinitely various; that every Individual has the fame Feelings, Appetites, Fancies, and Affections, while, in Fact, they are mixed and combined in an endless Variety of Degrees. So, on the contrary, it must appear to every impartial Observer, that " the Exercise of the " public Affections is a Source of the highest "Gratification to many Individuals." But the Stoic's Conclution, that "therefore the " uniform

173

" uniform Exercife of the public Affections, SECT. " in Preference to every other, is the only " Source of Happinefs to every Individual;" this is a Conclution equally void of Evidence. For, like its oppofite Extreme, it fuppofeth Mankind to be one uniform Subject, while, in Fact, it is a Subject indefinitely various. It fuppofes that every Individual has the fame Feelings, Appetites, Fancies, and Affections, while, in Reality, they are mixed and combined in an endlefs Variety of Degrees.

LET us now affign the most probable Foundation, on which these narrow and partial Systems have been so commonly embraced. For, that two Theories so opposite, and so devoid of all rational Support, should have made their Way in the World, without some permanent Cause beyond the Instability of mere Chance, seems hardly credible.

It should feem therefore, that "while "the Patronizers of these two Systems have "attempted to give a general Picture of the "human Species, they have all along taken "the Copy from themselves: And thus "their Philosophy, instead of being a true "History of Nature, is no more than the "History

SECT. " History of their own Imaginations or Af-VII. " fections."--- This Truth may receive fufficient Confirmation from the Lives and Conduct of all the old Philosophers, from the clegant PLATO walking on his rich Carpets, to the unbred CYNIC fnarling in his Tub. As every Man's Conflictation led him, fo he adopted this or that Sect of Philosopby, and reasoned concerning Fitness, Decency, and Good. Read the Characters of CATO and CESAR, and you will clearly difcover the true Foundation on which the one became a rigid Stoic, the other, a grofs Epicurean. The first, yet a Boy, discovered fuch an inflexible Adherence to the Privileges of his Country, that he refused his Affent to what he thought a Violation of them, though threatened with immediate Death<sup>1</sup>. The latter, yet unpractifed in the Subtilties of Philosophy, and under the fole Dominion of natural Temper, discovered, at his first Appearance in the World, such Traits of Art, Spirit, and Ambition, that Sylla declared, he faw fomething more formidable than MARIUS rifing in him<sup>1</sup>. To bring down the Observation to modern Times; 'tis evident, that the Patronizers \* Plutarchi Cato Utic. • Suetonii Julius Cefar.

of these two Systems inlist themselves ac-SECT. VII. cording to the fecret Suggestions of their 'Tis well known, that feveral Paffions. the Writer of the Fable of the Bees was ncither a Saint in his Life, nor a Hermit in his Diet: He seems to have been Master of a very confiderable Sagacity, much Knowledge of the World, as it appears in populous Citics, extremely fentible to all the groffer bodily Enjoyments; but for Delicacy of Sentiment, Imagination, or Paffion, for an exquisite Taste either in Arts or Morals, he appears to have been incapable of it .---The noble Writer is known to have been of a'Frame the very Reverse of this: His Con*fitution* was neither more nor lefs opposite to Dr. MANDEVILLE's, than his Philofophy. His fenfual Appetites were weak; his Imagination all alive, noble, and capacious; his Paffions were accordingly refined, and his public Affections (in Fancy at least) predominant. To these Instances, a moderate Share of Sagacity and Knowledge of the World may add others innumerable, in observing the Temper and Conduct of the Followers of these two Systems; who always take Party according to the Bials of their own Conftitution. Among the Epicurcans

SECT. curcans we ever find Men of high Health.

**VΠ**. florid Complexions, firm Nerves, and a Capacity for Pleasure: Of the Stoic Party are the delicate or fickly Frames, Men incapable of the groffer fenfual Enjoyments, and who either are, or think themfelves virtu-Now from these accumulated Proofs ous. we may be convinced, that "they who give " us these uniform Pictures of a Subject fo " various as Mankind, cannot have drawn " them from Nature: That, on the con-" trary, they have copied them from their " own Hearts or Imaginations; and fondly " erected themfelves into a general Standard " of the human Species."

BUT although these Observations may afford sufficient Proof, that the Stoic and Epicurean Pictures of Mankind are equally partial; yet still it remains to be enquired how far, upon the whole, the human Kind in Reality leans towards the one or the other: That is, " how far, and in what Degree, " the uniform Practice of Virtue constitutes " the Happiness of Individuals?" Now the only Method of determining this Question, will be to select some of the most striking Features of the human Heart: By this Means we may approach towards a real Likenes,

Likenefs, though from that infinite Variety SECT. which fublifts in Nature, the Draught <u>VII.</u> must ever be inadequate and defective.

To begin with the lowest Temperature of the human Species; "there are great "Numbers of Mankind, in whom the " Senfes are the chief Sources of Pleafure " and Pain." To the Harmony of Sounds, the Beauty of Forms, the Decorum of Actions, they are utterly infenfible. They are fagacious and learned in all the Gratifications of Sense; but if you talk to them of the public Affections, of Generofity, Kindnefs, Friendship, Good-will, you talk in a Language they understand not. They feem, in a Manner, unconnected with the reft of their Kind; they view the Praifes, Cenfures, Enjoyments and Sufferings of others, with an Eye of perfect Indifference. To Men thus formed, how can Virtue gain Admittance? Do you appeal to their Tafte of Beauty? They have none. To their acknowledged Perceptions of Right and Wrong? Thefe they Measure by their private Intereft. To the Force of the public Affections? They never felt them. Thus every Avenue is foreclofed, by which Virtue fhould enter.

THE

**178** S, е с т. VII.

Ŀ

THE next remarkable Peculiarity is, "where not the Senfes, but Imagination is "the predominant Source of Pleafure." Here the Tafte always runs into the elegant Refinements of polite Arts and Acquirements; of Painting, Mufic, Architecture, Poetry, Sculpture: Or, in Defect of this truer Tafte, on the false Delicacies of Drefs, Furniture, and Equipage. Yet Experience tells us, that this Character is widely different from the virtuous one. That all the Powers of Imagination may fubfift in their full Energy, while the public Affections and moral Senfe are weak or utterly inactive. Nor can there be any neceffary Connexion between these different Feelings; because we fee Numbers immerfed in all the finer Pleasures of Imagination, who never once confider them as the Means of giving Pleafure to others, but merely as a felfish Gratification. This the noble Writer feems to have been aware of; and, not without great Addrefs, endeavours to convert the Fact into a Proof of his main Theory, though, in Reality, it affords the strongest Evidence against " The Venustum, the Honestum, the him. " Decorum of Things, will force its Way. "They, who refuse to give it Scope in the " nobler

" nobler Subjects of a rational and moral SECT. VII. " Kind, will find its Prevalency elfewhere, " in an inferior Order of Things --- as either " in the Study of common Arts, or in the "Care and Culture of mere mechanic " Beauties .--- The Specter still will haunt us, " in fome Shape or other; and when driven, " from our cool Thoughts, and frighted " from the Clofet, will meet us even at " Court, and fill our Heads with Dreams of "Grandeur, Titles, Honours, and a falfe "Magnificence and Beauty"." All this is ingenious and plaufible: And the very elegant Allufion, of " the Specter still haunt-"ing us in fome Shape or other," feems at first View to imply, that even the most obstinate Endeavours to get rid of the Force of moral Beauty, are ineffectual and vain. But a nearer Examination will convince us, that the noble Writer applies here to Eloquence, rather than Argument; and puts us off with a Metaphor instead of a Reason. For the Pleafures of Imagination, whether they run in the Channel of polite Arts, Furniture, Planting, Building, or Equipage, are indeed no Specters, but independent Realities fairly existing in the Mind : They have Wit and Hum. Part iv. § 2. N 2 20 

SECT. no immediate or necessary Connexion with VII. the Happiness of Mankind, which is often and *defignedly* violated in order to gain the Poffession of them. 'Tis true, the Pleasures of Imagination and Virtue are often united in the fame Mind; but 'tis equally true, that they are often feparate; that they who are most fensible to the one, are entire Strangers to the other; that one Man, to purchase a fine Picture, will oppress his Tenant; that another, to relieve his diftreffed Tenant, will *fell* his Statues or his Pictures. The Reason is evident: The one draws his Pleafure from Imagination; the other from Affection only. 'Tis clear therefore, that " where Imagination is naturally the pre-" dominant Source of Pleafure," the Motives to Virtue must be very partial and weak, fince the chief Happiness ariseth from a Source entirely diffinct from the benevolent Affections.

> ANOTHER, and very different Temperature of the Heart of Man is that "wherein "neither Senfe nor Imagination, but the "PASSIONS are the chief Sources of Plea-"fure and Pain." This often forms the beft or the worft of Characters. As it runs either, First, Into the Extreme of Selfishnefs,

nefs, Jealoufy, Pride, Hatred, Envy, and SECT. Revenge; or, 2dly, Into the amiable Affections of Hope, Faith, Candour, Pity, Generofity, and Good-will; or, 3dly, Into a various Mixture or Combination of thefe; which is undoubtedly the most common Temperature of human Kind.

Now to the first of these Tempers, how can we affirm with Truth, that there is a natural Motive or Obligation to Virtue? On the contrary, it should seem, that, if there be any Motive, it must be to Vice. For 'tis plain, that from the Losses, Difappointments, and Miseries of Mankind, such vile Tempers draw their chief Felicity. The noble Writer indeed, in his Zeal for Virtue, confiders these black Passions as unnatural, and brands them as a Source of conftant Misery". And fure it would be matter of Joy to all good Men, to find his Proofs convincing. But if indeed this be not a true Representation of the Cafe, I fee not what Service can be done to the Interests of Virtue, by difguifing Truth. 'Tis not the Part of a Philosopher to write Panegyrics, but to investigate the real State of human Nature; and the only Way of doing

\* Enquiry. N 3

this

SECT. this to any good Purpole, is to do it *impar-*VII. *tially*: For with regard to human Nature, as well as Individuals, "Flattery is a Crime " no lefs than Slander."

> WHEN therefore the noble Writer calls these Affections unnatural, he doth not fufficiently explain himself. If indeed by their being unnatural, he means, that "they are "fuch in their Degrees or Objects as to "violate the public Happines, which is the "main Intention of Nature;" in this Sense, 'tis acknowledged, they are unnatural. But this Interpretation is foreign to the Queftion; because it affects not the Individual. But if, by their being unnatural, he would imply, that they are "a Source of constant "Misery to the Agent;" this seems a Proposition not easy to be determined in the Affirmative.

> For the main Proof which he brings in Support of this Affertion is, " that the " Men of gentlest Dispositions, and best of " Tempers, have at fome time or other been " fufficiently acquainted with those Distur-" bances, which, at ill Hours, even small " Occasions are apt to raise. From these " flender Experiences of Harshness and ill " Humour, they fully know and will con-" fefs

" fefs the ill Moments which are passed, SECT. "when the Temper is ever fo little galled "and fretted. How must it fare therefore " with those, who hardly know any better "Hours in Life; and who, for the greatest " Part of it, are agitated by a thorow active " Spleen, a clofe and fettled Malignity and " Rancour "?"

Now, this Inftance is by no means fufficient to support the Affirmation. For 'tis plain, that in the Cafe of the "Men of " gentleft Difpositions, and best of Tempers, "occafionally agitated by ill Humour," there must be a strong Opposition and Difcordance, a violent Conflict between the habitual Affections of Benevolence, and thefe accidental Eruptions of Spleen and Rancour which rife to obstruct their Course. Α Warfare of this Kind must indeed be a State of complete Mifery, when all is Uproar within, and the diffracted Heart fet at Variance with itfelf. But the Cafe is widely different, where "a thorow active Spleen " prevails, a clofe and *fettled* Malignity and "Rancour." For in this Temper, there is no parallel Oppofition of contending Paffions: Nor therefore any fimilar Founda-

> " Enquiry, B. ii. Part ii. § 3. N 4

tion

183

VII.

l

VII.

SECT. tion for inward Disquiet and intense Misery; So much the noble Writer himfelf is obliged to own elsewhere. " Is there that fordid "Creature on Earth, who does not prize " his own Enjoyment ?--- Is not Malice and " Cruelty of the bigbest Relis with fome "Natures \*?" Again, and ftill more fully to the Purpofe: "Had we Senfe, we should " confider, 'tis in Reality the thorow Profi-" gate, the very complete unnatural Villain " alone, who can any way bid for Happines " with the honeft Man. True Interest is "wholly on the one Side or the other. " All between is Inconfiftency, Irrefolution, "Remorfe, Vexation, and an Ague-fit"." Neither is this Acknowledgment peculiar to himself : " To be confistent either in Vir-"tue or in Vice," was the farthest that fome of the most penetrating among the Ancients could carry the Point of Morals. Thus where the felfish or malevolent Affections happen to prevail, there can be no internal Motive, or natural Obligation to Virtue.

> On the contrary, where the amiable Affections of Hope, Candour, Generofity, and

Benevo-

<sup>\*</sup> Moralifs, Part i. y Wit and Hum. Part iv. § 1. <sup>2</sup> See Arrian. Epiel. lib. iii. c. 15.

Benevolence predominate, in this best and SECT. happiest of Tempers, Virtue hath indeed all the Force and Energy, which the noble Writer attributes to her Charms. For where the Calls of Senfe are weak, the Imagination active and refined, the public Affections predominant; there the moral Senfe must naturally reign with uncontrouled Authority; must produce all that Self-Satisfaction, that Confcioufnels of merited Kindness and Esteem, in which, his Lordship affirms, the very Effence of our Obligation to Virtue doth confift. This shall with Pleafure be acknowledged, nay afferted, as "the happiest of all Tempera-"ments," whenever it can be found or acquired. To a Mind thus formed, Virtue doth indeed bring an immediate and ample Reward of perfect Peace and fincere Happinefs in all the common Situations of Life. It may therefore be with Truth affirmed, that a Temper thus framed, is indeed naturally and internally obliged to the uniform Practice of Virtue.

THERE are, befides these, an endless Variety of Characters formed from the various Combinations of these effential Ingredients; which are not designed as a full Expression

SECT. Expression of all the Tempers of Mankind: VII. The sector of Materials and a sector of anti-

They are the Materials only, out of which thefe Characters are formed. They are no more than the feveral Species of *fimple Colours* laid, as it were, upon the *Pallet*; which, varioufly *combined* and affociated by the Hand of an experienced Mafter, would indeed call forth every ftriking *Refemblance*, every changeful Feature of the *Heart* of *Man*.

Now, among all this infinite Variety of Tempers which is found in Nature, we fee there cannot be any uniform Motive or Obligation to Virtue, fave only " where the " Senfes are weak, the Imagination refined, " and the public Affections ftrongly predo-" minant." For in every other Character, where either the Senfes, groß Imagination, or felfish Passions prevail, a natural Oppofition or Discordance must arise, and destroy the uniform Motive to Virtue, by throwing the Happiness of the Agent into a different Channel. How feldom this fublime Temper is to be found, is hard to fay: But this may be affirmed with Truth, that every Man is not *really* poffeffed of it in the Conduct of Life, who enjoys it in Imagination, or admires it in his Clofet, as it lies in the Enquiry J

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 187 quiry concerning Viriue. A Character of SECT. VII. this fupreme Excellence must needs be approved by most: And the Heart of Man being an unexhausted Fountain of Self-Deceit, what it approves, is forward to think itfelf poffessed of. Thus a lively Imagination and unperceived Self-Love, fetter the Heart in certain ideal Bonds of their own creating: Till at Length fome turbulent and furious Paffion arifing in its Strength, breaks thefe fantastic Shackles which Fancy had imposed, and leaps to its Prey like a Tyger chained by Cobwebs.

#### SECTION VIII.

FROM these different Views of hu-SECT. man Nature, let us now bring this Argu-Ment to a Conclusion.

THE noble Writer's Scheme of Morals therefore, being grounded on a Supposition, which runs through the whole Course of his Argument, that "all Mankind are na-" turally capable of attaining a *Taste* or *Re-*" *list* for *Virtue*, sufficient for every Pur-" pose of social Life," seems effentially defective. For, from the Enquiry already made into the real and various Constitution of

VIII.

SECT. of Man, it appears, that a great Part of the

Species are naturally incapable of this fancied Excellence. That the various Mixture and Predominancy of Senfe, Imagination, and Palfion, give a different Caft and Complexion of Mind to every Individual: That the Feeling or Prospect of Happines can only arife from this Combination : That confequently, where the benevolent Affections and moral Senfe are weak, the felfish Passions and Perceptions headstrong, there can be no internal Motive or natural Obligation to the confistent Practice of Virtue.

THE most plausible Pretence I could ever meet with, amidst all the Pomp of Declamation thrown out in Support of this All-Sufficiency of a Taste in Morals, is this. " That although the Force and Energy of " this Tafte for Virtue appears not in every " Individual, yet the Power lies dormant in "every human Breaft; and needs only be " called forth by a voluntary Self-Discipline, " in order to be brought to its just Per-" fection. That the Improvement in our " Tafte in Morals is parallel to the Progress " of the Mind in every other Art and Ex-" cellence, in Painting, Muße, ArchiteEture, " Poetry :

" Picture : In which, a true Tafte, how-SECT. VIII. "ever natural to Man, is not born with " him, but formed and brought forth to " Action by a proper Study and Applica-" tion."

THE noble Writer hath innumerable Paffages of this Kind: So many indeed, that it were Labour loft to transcribe them . And one of his Followers hath affirmed in still more emphatical Expressions, if possible, than his Master, that " the Height of " Virtuofo-fhip is VIRTUE "."

Now this State of the Cafe, though at first View it carries fome Degree of Plaufibility, yet, on a clofer Examination, deftroys the whole System. For if, as it certainly is, the Capacity for a Tafte in Morals, be fimilar to a Capacity for a Tafte in Arts; 'tis clear, that the most affiduous Culture or Self-Discipline can never make it even general, much less universal. One Man, we fee, hath a Capacity or Genius for Painting, another for Mufic, a third for Architecture, a fourth for Poetry. Torture each of them as you pleafe, you cannot infuse a Taste for any, but his own congenial Art. If you at-

Detters of Hydaspes to Phi-· Charact. paffim. lemon, Let. vi.

tempt

SECT. tempt to make the Poet an Architect, or the VIII. Painter a Mufician, you may make a pretending Pedant, never an accomplished Master. 'Tis the fame in Morals: Where the benevolent Affections are naturally ftrong, there is a Capacity for a high Tafte in Virtue: Where these are weak or wanting, there is in the fame Proportion, little or no Capacity for a Tafte in Virtue. To harangue, therefore, on the fuperior Happiness attending the Exercise of the public Affections, is quite foreign to the Purpole. This superior Happiness is allowed, where the public Affections can be found or made predominant. But how can any Confequence be drawn from hence, fo as to influence those who never felt the Impulse of public Affection? Are not the Pleasures of Poetry, Painting, Mufic, fublime, pure, and lafting, to those who tafte them? Doth it therefore follow. that all Mankind, or any of them, can be harangued into a Tafte and Love of these elegant Arts, while the very Capacity of receiving Pleasure from them is wanting? Thus in Morals, where a fimilar Incapacity takes Place through the natural Want of a lively Benevolence, no Progress can ever be made in the Tafte or Relifs for virtuous Enjoyment.

joyment. Though therefore you should SECT. VIII. prove, as indeed one of Lord SHAFTES-BURY's Followers hath done, " that Virtue " is accommodate to all Places and Times, " is durable, felf-derived, and indeprivable " whence he concludes, it has the best Title to the Character of the fovereign Good; yet all the while, the main Point in Debate is taken for granted, that is, "whether the " Poffeffion of it be any Good at all." Now to those who receive no Increase of internal Happiness from it, it cannot be a Good: And where there is a natural Defect of benevolent Affection, it can give no internal Happines: Confequently, though it have all the other Characters of the Summum Bonum, though it be durable, felf-derived, and indeprivable, it can never, by fuch, be regarded as the fovereign Good.

"TIS pleafant enough to obferve the Argumentation of the Writer laft mentioned. After defcribing "the faireft and moft ami-"able of Objects, the true and perfect Man, "that Ornament of Humanity, that god-"like Being, without Regard either to Plea-"fure or Pain, uninfluenced either by Pro-"fperity or Adverfity, fuperior to the World,

"Three Treat. by J. H. Treat. 3<sup>d</sup>. On Happiness

VIII.

SECT. " and its best and worst Events" --- He then raiseth an Objection ---- " Does not this " Syftem border a little upon the Chimeri-" cal?"--- On my Word, a shrewd Queftion, and well worth a good Anfwer; and thus he clears it up.---" It feems to require, " faid I, a Perfection to which no Indivi-" dual ever arrived. That very Transcen-" dence, faid he, is an Argument on its be-"half. Were it of a Rank inferior, it " would not be that Perfection which we Would you have it, faid I, beyond "feek. " Nature? If you mean, replied he, beyond " any particular or individual Nature, most " undoubtedly I would "." 'Tis not therefore to be wondered at, that this Gentleman. wrapped up in Visions of ideal Perfection, should express " his Contempt of those fu-" perficial Cenfurers, who profess to refute " what they want even Capacities to com-" prehend "." Doubtless he means those groveling Observers, who draw their Ideas of Mankind " from particular or individual " Natures," and have not yet rifen to " the " beatific Vision f of the perfect Man." Indeed, the Gentleman frankly owns, "that

> d Three Treat. by J. H. Treat. 3d. On Happinefs, • Ibid. p. 108. f Ibid. p. 215. " Practice

\* Practice too often creeps, where Theory SECT. \* can foar<sup>g</sup>." And this I take to be a true\_\_\_\_\_ Account of the Matter.

THUS, as according to these Moralists, the *Relish* or *Taste* for Virtue is similar to a Taste for Arts; so what is faid of the Poet, the Painter, and Musician, may with equal Truth be said of the Man of Virtue — *Nascitur*, non sit. Hence it is evident, that the noble Writer's System, which suppose the all Men capable of this exalted Taste, is chimerical and groundles.

BUT even supposing all Men capable of this refined Taste in Morals, there would arise an unanswerable Objection against the Efficacy of this refined Theory. Though it were allowed, that all Mankind have the fame delicate Perception of moral, as some few have of natural Beauty, yet the Parallel would by no means hold, that "as the Vir-"twoso always pursues his Taste in Arts "confistently, so the Man of Virtue must be "equally confistent in Action and Beba-"viour." For the Virtuoso being only engaged in mere Speculation, hath no oppofite Affections to counteract his Taste: He

Three Treat. by J. H. Treat. 3<sup>d</sup>. On Happines, p. 108.

Q

meets

SECT. meets with no Obstructions in his Admira-

tion of Beauty: His Enthulialm takes its unbounded Flight, not retarded by any Impediments of a discordant Nature. But the Man of Virtue hath a different and more difficult Task to perform: He hath often a numerous Train of Paffions, and these perhaps the most violent to oppose: He must labour through the furrounding Demands and Allurements of felfish Appetite: Must fubdue the Sollicitations of every the most natural Affection, when it oppofes the Dictates of a pure Benevolence. Hence even supposing the most refined Taste for Virtue common to all, it must ever be retarded in its Progress, often baffled and overthrown amidit the Struggle of contending Palions.

THIS feems to be a full and fufficient Reply to all that can be urged in Support of this fantaftic System from a View of *buman Nature*. But as the noble Writer hath attempted to confirm his Theory by fome collateral Arguments of another Kind, it may be proper here to confider their real Weight.

HE urges, therefore, the Probability at leaft, if not the certain Truth of his Hypothefis from hence, "That it would be an "Impu-

Ł

195

"Imputation on the Wildom of the Deity SECT. " to suppose that he had formed Man so " imperfect, that the true Happiness of the "Individual should not always coincide " with that of the whole Kind ." And beyond Question, the Affertion is true: But the Confequence he draws from it, " that " therefore human Happinefs must always " confift in the immediate Feeling of virtu-"ous Enjoyment," is utterly groundlefs. This Inference feems to have been drawn from a View of the Brute Creation; in which, we find, Instincts or immediate Feelings are the only Motives to Action; and in which, we find too, that these immediate Propensities are *sufficient* for all the Purposes of their Being. In this Constitution of Things the Creator's Wifdom is eminently difplayed; because, through a Defect of Reason or Reflexion, no other kind of Principle could possibly have taken Place. But the Conclusion drawn from thence, " that Man must have a fimilar Strength of " Inftinct implanted in him, in order to di-"rect him to his fupreme Happinefs," this is without Foundation: Becaufe the Deity hath given him not only present Per-

Enquiry.

ceptions,

VIII.

SECT. ceptions, but Reason, Reflexion, and a Forefight of future Good and Evil, together with a sufficient Power to obtain the one, and avoid the other. As therefore Man hath fufficient Notices of the moral Government of God, which will at length produce a perfect Coincidence between the virtuous Conduct and the Happiness of every Individual, it implies no effential Defect of Wifdom in the Creator, to fuppose that he hath not given this universal and unerring Biass towards Virtue to the whole human Species. Man is enabled to purfue and obtain his proper Happiness by Reason; Brutes by Instinct.

AGAIN, the noble Writer often attempts to ftrengthen his Argument, by "reprefent-"ing the external Good which naturally " flows from Virtue, and the external Evils "which naturally attend on Vice i." But fure this is rather deferting than confirming his particular Theory; which is, to prove that Happiness is effential to Virtue, and inseparable from it : " That Miferv is " effential to Vice, and infeparable from " it."---Now, in bringing his Proofs from Happiness or Misery of the external Kind, he furely deferts his original Intention: Be-

Enquiry, B. ii. P. i. § 3.

caule

cause these Externals are not immediate, but SECT. VIII. consequential, not certain, but contingent : They are precifely of the Nature of Reward and Punifoment; and therefore can have no Part in the Question now before us; which relates folely to " that Happiness or Misery " ariling from the inward State of the "Mind, Affections, and moral Senfe, on the " Commission of Vice, or the Practice of And this hath been already " Virtue." confidered at large.

HOWEVER, that nothing may be omitted which can even remotely affect the Truth; we may observe, in passing, that after all the laboured and well-meant Declamation on this Subject, 'tis much eafier to prove, " that " Vice is the Parent of external Mifery, than "that Virtue is the Parent of external Hap-" pinefs." 'Tis plain, that no Man can be vicious in any confiderable Degree, but he must fuffer either in his Health, his Fame, or Fortune. Now the Generality of Moralists, after proving or illustrating this, have taken it for granted, as a certain Confequence, that the external Goods of Life are, by the Law of Contraries, in a fimilar Manner annexed to the Practice of Virtue. But in Reality the Proof can reach no further than to shew 0 3 the

# 198

VIII.

#### Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.

1

SECT. the happy Confequences of Innocence, which is a very different Thing from Virtue; for Innocence is only the abstraining from Evil; Virtue, the actual Production of Good. Now 'tis evident indeed, that by abstaining from Evil (that is, by Innocence) we must stand clear of the Miferies to which we expose ourfelves by the Commission of it: And this is as far as the Argument will go. But if we rigoroufly examine the external Confequences of an active Virtue, in such aWorld as this; we shall find, it must be often maintained at the Expence both of Health, Ease, and Fortune; often the Loss of Friends, and Increase of Enemies; not to mention the unwearied Diligence of Envy, which is ever watchful and prepared to blaft diftinguished Merit. In the mean time, the innoxious Man fits unmolested and tranquil; kves Virtue, and praileth it; avoids the Miseries of Vice, and the Fatigues of active Virtue; offends no Man, and therefore is beloved by all; and for the reft, makes it up by fair Words and civil Deportment. "Thus Innocence, and not Virtue; Ab-"finence from Evil, not the Production of "Good, is the furthest Point to which "Mankind in general can be carried, from " a ReObligations of Man to VIRTUE. 199 " a Regard to the external Confequences of SECT. "Action."

BUT whenever Appearances grow too ftrong against the noble Writer's System, he takes Refuge in an --- apage Vulgus ! ---As he had before allowed, that " the Vul-" gar may fwallow any fordid Jeft or Buf-" foonry," fo here he frequently fuggefts, that among the fame Ranks, " any kind of " fordid Pleafure will go down." But " as " it must be a finer Kind of Wit that takes " with the Men of Breeding," fo in Morals " the Relifh or Tafte for Virtue, is what na-" turally prevails in the higher Stages of " Life: That the liberal and polifhed Part of "Mankind are disposed to treat every other " Principle of Action as groundless and ima-"ginary: But that among these, the Taste " in Morals, if properly cultivated, must " needs be fufficient for all the Purposes of " Virtue<sup>k</sup>."

In reply to this, which is perhaps the weakeft Pretence of all that the noble Writer hath alledged, we need only obferve, that those who are born to *Honours*, *Power*, and *Fortune*, come into the World with the

<sup>b</sup> See Misc. 3<sup>d</sup>. c. 2. and many other detached Pasfages.

O<sub>4</sub> , fame

÷

SECT. fame various Mixture and Predominancy of

VIII. Senfe, Imagination, and Affections, with the loweft Ranks of Mankind. So that if they really enjoy better Opportunities of being compleatly virtuous, these must arise not from their internal Constitution, but their external Situation in Life. Let us examine how far this may give a Biass either towards Vice or Virtue.

Now 'tis plain that, with regard to the Senfes or bodily Appetites, the Poffeffion of Power and Fortune must be rather hurtful than favourable to Virtue. Wealth gives Opportunity of Indulgence, and Indulgence naturally inflames. Hence the Habits of fenfual Inclination must in general be stronger in the Lord than the Peafant: Therefore, as nothing tends fo much to imbrute the Man, and fink every nobler Affection of the Mind, as a fervile Attendance on fenfual Pleasure; fo in this Regard, the Poffession of Power and Fortune is rather dangerous than favourable to Virtue.

THE fame may be affirmed in respect to the *Passions* or *Affections*. Can any thing tend fo much to render any Passion ungovernable, as to know that we *need not* govern it? That ous Power, Riches, and Authority,

thority, raife us above Controul? That we SECT. VIII. Are not the Great, of all others, most obnoxious to Flattery? Does not this tend to produce and nourish an overweening Opinion of themsfelves, an unjust Contempt of others? And is not true Virtue more likely to be lost than improved, amidst all these furrounding Temptations?

THE Imagination indeed is often refined, and Reafon improved, in the higher Ranks of Life, beyond the Reach of the mere Vulgar. But they are little acquainted with human Nature, who think that Reafon and Imagination, among the Bulk of Mankind, are any thing more than the Ministers of the ruling Appetites and Passions: Especially where the Appetites and Passions are inflamed by the early and babitual Possifion of Honours, Power, and Riches.

BUT fill it will be urged, that the Great are under the Dominion of a powerful Principle, which is almost unknown among the *Vulgar*:---The Principle of HONOUR--which is a perfect Balance against all these furrounding Difficulties, and a full Security to Virtue.

WITH

SECT. VIII.

WITH regard to this boafted Principle, a very material Distinction must be made. By Honour, is fometimes meant " an Af-" fection of Mind determining the Agent " to the Practice of what is right, without " any Dependence on other Men's Opi-" nions." Now this is but the moral Sense, under a new Appellation: It ariseth too, not from any particular Situation of Life, but from the natural Constitution of the Accordingly, it is not confined to Mind. any one Rank of Men, but is feen promifcuoully among the Great and Vulgar. 'Tis therefore entirely beyond the prefent Queflion, which only relates to fuch Circumstances as are peculiar to bigb Life.

THE other, and more common Acceptation of the Word Honour, and in which alone it belongs peculiarly to the Great, is " an Affection of the Mind determining the "Agent to fuch a Conduct, as may gain " him the Applause or Efteem of those whose " good Opinion he is fond of." Now this Love of Fame, and Fear of Difgrace, though, as a *fecondary* Motive to Action, it be often of the highest Consequence in Life: though it often counterfeits, sometimes even rivals Benevolence itself; yet as a prin-4

a principal Motive, there cannot be a more SRCT. precarious Foundation of Virtue. For the Effects of this Principle will always depend on the Opinions of others: It will always take its particular Complexion from thefe, and must always vary with them. Thus 'tis a Matter of mere Accident, whether its Confequences be good or bad, wholefome or If the applauded Maxims be pernicious. founded in Benevolence, the Principle will fo far lead to Virtue: If they be founded in Pride, Folly, or Contempt, the Principle will lead to Vice. And, without any defigned Satire on the Great, it must be owned, the latter of these hath ever been the predominant Character of Honour. It were falfe indeed to affirm, that the Principle hath no Mixture of benevolent' Intention ; Set 'tis equally clear, that its chief Defign is not fo much to fecure the Happinels of all, as to maintain the Superiority of a few: And hence this Principle hath ever led its Votaries to abhor the Commission, not fo much of what is unjust, as of what is contemptible. Thus it is clear, that the Principle of Honour, as diftinguished from benevolent Affection and the moral Senfe, can never be a fufficient

202 VIII. 204 Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. SECT. fufficient Foundation for the uniform Prac-VIIL tice of Virtue.

> THESE are the main Arguments by which the noble Writer hath attempted to fupport this imagined All-fufficiency of the Relifb or Taste in Morals. Had human Nature been indeed that uniform and noble Thing, which he feems to have thought it, he had furely been right in fixing the Obligations of Man to Virtue, on fo generous and amiable a Principle. But as on Examination it appears, that he hath all along supposed this human Nature to be what it is not, his System is visionary and groundles; and his applauded Theory only fit to find a Place with the boafted Power of the great old Geometer, when he faid --- dos ars 500, not The you xingow 1.

> Most full indeed and clear to this purpole are the Words of the noble Writer himfelf: Who, in his *miscellaneous* Capacity, and in a *merry* Mood, feems to have spoken more of Truth, than I believe he would care to stand to.---" Such has been " of late our dry Task. No wonder if it " carries, indeed, a *meagre* and *raw* Ap-

> <sup>1</sup>Give me but a *Place* to fet my Foot on, and I will move the whole Earth.

" pearance.

295

" pearance. It may be looked on in Philo- SECT. " fophy, as worfe than a mere Egyptian <u>YIII.</u> " Impofition. For to make Brick without " Straw or Stubble, is perhaps an easier " Labour, than to prove Morals without a " World, and establish a Conduct of Life, " without the Supposition of any thing " living or extant besides our immediate " Fancy, and World of Imagination<sup>m</sup>."

THESE Sallies might poffibly have feemed difficult to account for, had not the noble Writer himfelf faved us the Labour of this Tafk. For he elsewhere tells us, that " all found Love and Admiration is ENTHU-" SIASM: The Transports of Poets, Ora-" tors, Muficians, Virtuofi; the Spirit of " Travellers and Adventurers; Gallantry, "War, Heroifm; all, all Enthusiafm! 'Tis " enough: I am content to be this new En-"THUSIAST"."---And thus in another Place he describes the Effects of this high Passion: That " Enthusiasm is wonderfully powerful " and extensive :--- For when the Mind is " taken up in Vision, --- its Horror, Delight, " Confusion, Fear, Admiration, or whatever " Paffion belongs to it, or is uppermoft on " this Occasion, will have fomething vaft,

" Mifc. iv. c. 2. " Moralifts, fub fin. " immane,

SECT. "immane, and, as Painters fay, BEYOND VIII. "LIFE. And this is what gave Occasion "to the Name of *Fanaticifm*, as it was used "by the Ancients in its original Sense, for "an APPARITION transporting the MIND.","

#### SECTION IX.

SECT. HAVING fufficiently evinced the flimzy, IX. though curious, Contexture of these Cobweb Speculations fpun in the Closet, let us now venture abroad into the World; let us proceed to fomething applicable to Life and Manners; and confider what are the real Motives, by which Mankind may be fway'd to the uniform Practice of Virtue.

> AND first, in Minds of a gentle and generous Disposition, where the sensual Appetites are weak, the Imagination refined, and the benevolent Affections naturally predominant; these very Affections, and the moral Sense arising from them, will in all the common Occurrences of Life secure the Practice of Virtue. To these fine Tempers thus happily formed, the inward Satisfaction of a virtuous Conduct exceeds that of every outward Acquisition; and affords to its Pos-

> > • Letter on Entbusiasm.

seffor

feffor a more true and lasting Happines, SECT. than Wealth, or Fame, or Power can beftow.

SECONDLY, Where the fame Degrees of public Affection fubfift, but stand opposed by fenfual or felfish Passions of equal Violence, even here the Agent may rife to very high Degrees of Virtue, but not without the Aids of *Discipline* and *Culture*. Yet 'tis obfervable, that the Virtues of fuch a Temper are rather *conspicuous* than *consistent*: Without fome strengthening Affistance, the Progress of the Mind towards Perfection is often broke by the Sallies of disordered Passion.

THERE is yet another Character, effentially different from these, but seldom distinguished, because generally taken for the Many efteem themfelves, and are firft. efteemed by others, as having arrived at the most confummate Virtue, whose Conduct never merits a higher Name than that of being innoxious. This is generally the Cafe of those who love Retreat and Contemplation, of those whose Passions are naturally weak, or carefully guarded by what the World calls Prudence. Now, as in the last mentioned . Character, a Curb from Irregularity was requifite, fo here a Spur to Action is equally neceffary

١

1

SECT. neceffary for the Support and Security of IX. Virtue.

> As we descend through more common and inferior Characters, the internal Motives to virtuous Action grow less and less effectual. Weak or no Benevolence, a moral Sense proportionably dull, strong fensual Appetites, a clamorous Train of felfish Affections, these mixed and varied in endless Combinations, form the real Character of the Bulk of Mankind: Not only in Cottages, but in Cities, Churches, Camps, and Courts. So that some stronger Ties, fome Motives more efficacious are necessary, not only for the Perfection of Virtue, but the Welfare, nay, the very Being of Society.

> 'Tis not denied, nay, 'tis meant and infifted on, that among all these various Characters and Tempers, the Culture of the benevolent Affections ought to be affiduously regarded. For though we have seen that the Design of introducing an universal high *Relish* or *Taste* for Virtue be visionary and vain, yet still a lower, or a lower Degree may possibly be instilled. We have only attempted to prove, that the Capacity for this high Taste in Morals is not universally or effentially interwoven with the human Frame,

Frame, but dispensed in various Degrees, in SECT. the same Manner as the Capacity for a Taste\_\_\_\_\_\_ in inferior Beauties, in Architecture, Painting, Poetry, and Music.

200

To remedy this Defect of unerring Inftinct in Man, by which he becomes a Creature fo much lefs confiftent than the Brute Kinds, Providence hath afforded him not only a Senfe of prefent, but a Forefight of future Good and Evil.

HENCE the Force of human Laws, which being established by common Confent, for the Good of all, endeavour, so far as their Power can reach, by the Infliction of Punishment on Offenders, to establish the general Happiness of Society, by making the *acknowledged Interest* of every *Individual* to coincide and unite with the *public* Welfare.

BUT as human Laws cannot reach the Heart of Man; as they can only inflict Punifhment on Offenders, but cannot befow Rewards on the Obedient; as there are many Duties of imperfect Obligation which they cannot recognize; as Force will fometimes defy, and Cunning often elude their Power; fo without fome further Aids, fome Motives to Action more univerfally intereft-P ing,

ι

SECT. ing, Virtue must still be left betrayed and IX. deferted.

> Now as it is clear from the Courfe of these Observations, that nothing can work this great Effect, but what can produce " an entire and universal Coincidence be-" tween private and public Happines;" fo is it equally evident, that nothing can effectually convince Mankind, that their own Happinefs univerfally depends on procuring, or at least not violating the Happiness of others, fave only " the lively and active Be-" lief of an all-feeing and all-powerful Gop, " who will hereafter make them happy or " miferable, according as they defignedly " promote or violate the Happiness of their "Fellow-Creatures." And this is the E/fence of Religion.

> THIS, at first View, should seem a Motive or Principle of Action, sufficient for all the Purposes of Happiness and Virtue. Indeed the Bulk of Mankind seem agreed in this Truth. Yet refining Tempers, who love to quit the common Tracks of Opinion, have been bold enough to call even this in Question. Among these, the noble Writer hath been one of the most diligent: It

> > 1

It will therefore be necessary to confider the SECT. IX. Weight of his Objections.

To prevent Mifinterpretation, it may be proper to observe, that Lord SHAFTEBBURY fometimes talks in earnest of the Noblenefs and Dignity of Religion. But when he explains himfelf, it appears, he confines his Idea of it to that Part which confifts folely in Gratitude to, and Adoration of the fupreme Being, without any Prospect of future Happiness or Misery. Now, though indeed this be the noblest Part, yet it is beyond the Reach of all, fave only those who are capable of the most exalted Degrees of Virtue. His Theory of Religion therefore is precifely of a Piece, with his Theory of the moral Senfe; not calculated for Use, but Admiration; and only exifting in the Place where they had their Birth; that is, as the noble Writer well expressed it, in a Mind taken up in Vihon.

HE fometimes talks, or feems to talk, in earnest too, on the Usefulness of Religion, in the common Acceptation of the Word. With Regard to which 'tis only neceffary to observe, that whatever he hath faid on this Subject I readily affent to: But this is no Reafon why it may not be necessary to ob-P 2 viate

SECT. viate every thing he hath thrown out to the IX. contrary, to prejudice common Readers against Religion, through the Vanity of being thought Original. To invent what is just or useful, is the Character of Genius: 'Tis Folly only and Impertinence to broach Abfurdities.

> FIRST, therefore, he often afferts, that "the Hope of future Reward and Fear of "future Punishment is utterly unworthy "of the free Spirit of a Man, and only fit "for those who are destitute of the very "first Principles of common Honessty: He "calls it *miserable*, vile, mercenary: And "compares those who allow it any Weight, "to Monkies under the Discipline of the "Whip P."

> IN Anfwer to these general Cavils (probably aimed principally at *Revelation*) which are only difficult to confute, as they are vague and fugitive, let it be observed, first; that whatever can be objected against *religi*ous Fear, holds good against the Fear of buman Laws. They both threaten the Delinquent with the Infliction of Punishment, nor is the Fear of the one more unworthy, than of the other. Yet the noble Writer

> > Wit and Humour - Enquiry - &c. him felf

himself often speaks with the highest Re-SECT. IX. spect of Legislators, of the Founders of Society and Empire, who, by the Establishment of wife and wholefome Laws, drew Mankind from their State of natural Barbarity, to that of cultivated Life and focial Happiness: Unless indeed he supposes that ORPHEUS and the reft of them did their Bufiness literally by Taste and a Fiddle. If therefore the just Fear of buman Power might be inforced without infulting or violating the Generofity of our Nature, whence comes it, that a just Fear of the Creator fhould fo miferably degrade the Species? The religious Principle holds forth the fame Motive to Action, and only differs from the other, as the Evil it threatens is infinitely greater, and more lasting.

FURTHER: If we confider the religious Principle in its true Light, there is nothing in it either mean, flavish, or unworthy. To be in a Fright indeed, to live under the Suggestions of perpetual Terror (in which, the noble Writer would persuade us, the religious Principle consists) is far from an amiable Condition. But this belongs only to the Superstitious or the Guilty. The first of these are falsely religious; and to the last, I P 3 imagine 213

IX.

SECT. imagine the noble Writer's most zealous Admirers will acknowledge, it ought to belong. But to the rest of Mankind, the religious Principle or Fear of God is of a quite different Nature. It only implies a lively and habitual Belief, that we shall be hereafter miserable, if we disobey his Laws. Thus every wife Man, nay, every Man of common Understanding, hath a like Fear of every possible Evil; of the destructive Power of natural Agents, of Fire, Water, Serpents, Poison: Yet none of these Fears, more than the religious one, imply a State of perpetual Misery and Apprehension: None of them are inconfistent with the most generous Temper of Mind, or trueft Courage. None of them imply more than a rational Senfe of these several Kinds of Evil; and from that Senfe, a Determination to avoid them. Thus the noble Writer himfelf, when it answers a different Purpose, acknowledges that "a " Man of Courage may be cautious without " real Fear "." Now the Word Caution, in its very Nature, implies a Senfe of a Poffibility of Evil, and from that Senfe a Determination to avoid it: Which is the very

Inquiry, B. ii. Part ii. § 3.

Effence

Effence of the religious Principle or the SECT. *Fear* of GOD.

AND as to the other Branch of religious Principle, "the Hope and Prospect of " higher Degrees of future Happiness and "Perfection :"---What is there of mean, flavish, or unworthy in it? Are all Mankind to be blown up into the Mock-majesty of the kingly STOIC, feated on the Throne of Arrogance, and lording it in an empty Region of CHIMÆRA's? Is not the Prospect of Happiness the great universal Hinge of human Action? Do not all the Powers of the Soul centre in this one Point? Doth not the noble Writer himself elsewhere acknowledge this? And that our Obligations to Virtue itself can only arise from this one Principle, that it gives us real Happines? Why then should the Hope of a happy Immortality be branded as base and slavis, while the Confciousness or Prospect of a happy Life on Earth is regarded as a just and honourable Motive?

THE noble Writer indeed confession, that "if by the Hope of Reward, be understood "the Love and Defire (he ought to have "faid, the Hope) of virtuous Enjoyment, it

P 4

X

<sup>. •</sup> See above, Sect. VI. of this Effay.

SECT. " is not derogatory to Virtue." But that in. IX. every other Senfe, the indulged Hope of Reward is not only mean and mercenary, but even burtful to Virtue and common Humanity : " For in this religious Sort of Dif-" cipline, the Principle of Self-Love, which " is naturally fo prevailing in us (indeed?) " being no way moderated or restrained, " but rather improved and made stronger "every Day, by the Exercise of the Paf-" fions in a Subject of more extended Self-" Interest; there may be reason to appre-" hend left the Temper of this kind thould " extend itself in general through all the " Parts of Life."

> This, to fay the best of it, is the very Pbrenzy of Virtue. Religion proposeth true Happiness as the End and Consequence of virtuous Action : This is granted. It proposeth it by such Motives as must influence Self-Love, and confequently hath given the best Means of procuring it. Yet, it feems, Self-Love being not reftrained, but made stronger, will make Mankind mis of true Happinels. That is, by leading Self-Love into the Path of true Happines, Religion will inevitably conduct it to falle; by commanding us to cherish our public Affections,

مذ

217

fections, it will certainly *inflame* the private SECT. ones; by affuring us, that if we would be IX. happy hereafter, we must be virtuous and benevolent, it will beyond Question render us vile and void of Benevolence. But this Mode of Reasoning is common with the noble Writer.

HOWEVER, at other Times his Lordship can descend to the Level of common Sense: and profecute his Argument by Proofs diametrically opposite to what he here advanceth. For in proving the Obligations of Man to Virtue, after having modelled the inward State of the human Mind according to his own Imagination, he proceeds to confider the Paffions which regard ourfelves. and draws another, and indeed a ftronger Proof from the fe.---He there proves' the Folly of a vicious Love of Life, " because " Life itself may often prove a Misfortune." So of Cowardice, " because it often robs us " of the Means of Safety."---Excellive Resentment, " because the Gratification is no "more than an Alleviation of a racking " Pain."--- The Vice of Luxury " creates " a Nauseating, and Distaste, Diseases, and " constant Craving." He urges the same Ob-

! Inquiry, B. ii. Part ii. § 3.

jections

}

SECT. jections against intemperate Pleasure of the IX. He observes that Amamourous kind. bition is ever " fuspicious, jealous, captious, " and uncapable of bearing the leaft Dif-" appointment." He then proceeds thro' a Variety of other Paffions, proving them all to be the Sources of fome internal or external Milery. Thus he awakens the fame Paffions of Hope and Fear, which, in a religious View, he fo bitterly inveighs againft. Thus he exhibits a Picture of future Rewards and Punishments, even of the most felfilb Kind: He recommends the Conformity to Virtue, on the Score both of prefent and future Advantage: He deters his Reader from the Commission of Vice, by representing the Misery it will produce. And these too, such Advantages and such Mileries, as are entirely diffinct from the mere Feeling of virtuous Affection or its contrary: From the Confiderations of Safe-'ty, Alleviation of bodily Pain, the Avoidance of Distaste, and Diseases. Now doth not his own Cavil here recoil upon him? " That in this Sort of Discipline, and by " exhibiting fuch Motives as thefe, the Prin-" ciple of Self-Love must be made stronger, " by the Exercise of the Passions in a Sub-" ject

"iect of more extended Self-Intereft: And SECT. " fo there may be Reafon to apprehend, left, " the Temper of this Kind should extend " itself in general through all the Parts " of Life." Thus the Objection proves equally against both: In Reality, against neither. For, as we have feen, the Senfe or Prospect of Happiness, is the only possible Motive to Action; and if we are taught to believe that virtuous Affection will produce Happinels, whether the expected Happinels lies in this Life, or another, it will tend, and equally tend, to produce virtuous Affection. The noble Writer, therefore, and his Admirers, might as well attempt to remove . Mountains, as to prove that the Hope and Prospect of a happy Immortality, can justly be accounted more fervile, mercenary, or burtful, than the View of those transient and earthly Advantages, which his Lordship hath fo rhetorically and honeftly difplay'd, for the Interest and Security of Virtue. In Truth, they are precifely of the fame Nature, and only differ in Time, Duration, and Degree. They are both established by our Creator for the fame great End of Happinefs. And what Gop hath thus connected, it

i

220 Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. SECT. it were abjurd, as well as impious, to attempt IX. to separate '.

> THERE is yet another Circumstance obfervable in human Nature, which still further proves, that the Hope of a happy Immortality hath no Tendency to produce felfiss Affection, but its contrary. For let the *floical* Tribe draw what Pictures they please of the human Species, this is an undoubted Truth, " that Hope is the most uni-" versal Source of human Happines: And

> <sup>e</sup> Hence we may fee the Weaknefs and Mistake of those *fulfely religious*, who fall into an *Extreme* directly *oppofite* to this of the noble Writer; who are *fcandalized* at our being determined to the Pursuit of Virtue through any Degree of Regard to its happy Confequences in this Life; which Regard they call worldly, carnal, prophane. For it is evident, that the religious Motive is precifely of the fame Kind; only *ftronger*, as the Happinefs expected is greater and more *lafting*. While therefore we fet the proper and proportioned Value upon each, it is impofible we can act irrationally, or offend that God who established both.

This naturally leads to a further Obfervation, which fhews the Danger, as well as Folly, of groveling in Syflems. Virtue, we fee, comes recommended and enforced on three Principles. It is attended with natural and immediate Pleafure or Advantage:— It is commanded by human Laws:— It is enjoined by Religion. — Yet the Religioni/Is have often decry'd the first of these Sanctions: The fanatical Moralists, the last: And even the fecond bath not chaped the Madneis of an enthusiastic Party; which however, never grew confiderable enough in this Kingdom, to merit Confutation.

" that

" that Man is never fo fincerely and heartily SECT. IX. " benevolent, as when he is truly happy in " himfelf." Thus the high Confcioufnefs of his being numbered among the Children of God, and that his Lot is among the Saints; that he is defined to an endless Progreffion of Happiness, and to rise from high to higher Degrees of Perfection, must needs infpire him with that Tranquillity and Joy, which will naturally diffuse itself in Acts of fincere Benevolence to all his Fellow-Creatures, whom he looks upon as his Companions in this Race of Glory. Thus will every noble Paffion of the Soul be awakened into Action: While the joyles Infidel, poffeffed with the gloomy Dread of Annihilation, too naturally contracts his Affections as his Hopes of Happiness decrease; while he confiders and defpifeth himfelf, as no more than the Beasts that perish.

THE noble Writer indeed infinuates, that there is "a certain Narrownefs of Spirit, " occafioned by this Regard to a future " Life, peculiarly observable in the devout " Perfons and Zealots of almost every reli-"gious Perfuation"." In reply to which, 'tis only neceffary to affirm, what may be

! Enquiry, B. i. Part iii. § 3.

affirmed

22İ

IX.

SECT. affirmed with Truth, that with Regard to devout Perfons the Infinuation is a Fallehood. It was prudently done indeed, to join the Zealots (or Bigots) in the fame Sentence: because it is true, that these, being under the Dominion of Superstition, forget the true Nature and End of Religion; and are therefore fcrupuloufly exact in the Observation of outward Ceremonies, while they neglect the fuperior and effential Matters of the Law. of Justice, Benevolence, and Mercy.

> AND as to the Notion of confining the Hope of future Reward to " that of virtu-" ous Enjoyment only :" This is a Refinement parallel to the reft of the noble Writer's System; and, like all Refinements, contracts instead of enlarging our Views. 'Tis allowed indeed, that the Pleafures of Virtue are the highest we know of in our prefent State; and 'tis therefore commonly fupposed, they may constitute our chief Felicity in another. But doth it hence follow, that no other Sources of Happiness may be difpenfed, which as yet are utterly unknown to us? Can our narrow and partial Imaginations fet Bounds to the Omnipotence of GOD? And may not our Creator vouchfafe us fuch Springs of yet untafted Blifs, as shall exceed

exceed even the known Joys of Virtue, as SECT. far as these exceed the Gratifications of Senfe ? Nay, if we confider, what is generally believed, that our Happiness will arise from an Addition of new and higher Faculties; that in the present Life, the Exercise of Virtue itself ariseth often from the Imperfestion of our State; if we confider these Things, it should seem highly probable, that our future Happiness will confist in something quite beyond our prefent Comprehenfion: Will be " fuch as Eye hath not " feen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it en-" tered into the Heart of Man to conceive."

#### SECTION X.

BUT beyond these Objections, the no-SECT. ble Writer hath more than once touched X. upon another, which merits a particular Confideration. For he affirms, that " after " all, 'tis not merely what we call Princi-" ple, but a Taste, which governs Men." That "even Confcience, fuch as is owing " to religious Discipline, will make but a "flight Figure, where this Tafte is fet " amifs "."

\* Mife. iii. c. 2.

Тне

223

IX.

Sвст. Х.

THE Notion here advanced is not peculiar to himfelf. He feems to have drawn it from a much more confiderable Writer, who hath endeavoured to fupport the fame Proposition by a great Variety of Examples<sup>\*</sup>. Several Authors of inferior Rank have borrowed the fame Topic, for popular Declamation. Nay, one hath gone fo far as to affert, " that Man is so unaccountable a " Creature, as to act most commonly against" " his Principle<sup>y</sup>."

THE Objection, indeed, carries an Appearance of Force: Yet on a near Examination it entirely vanisheth.

IT must be owned, that in most Countries, a confiderable Part of what is called *Religion*, deserves no other Name than that of *Abfurdity* made *facred*. And it were strange indeed, should *Bigotry* and *falfe* Religion produce that Uprightness of Heart, that Perfection of Morals, which is the genuine Effect of *Trutb*.

IT must be owned, that with Regard to religious Principle, as well as moral Practice, every Man has the Power of being a *Hypocrite*. That Knaves, in order to be

\* BAYLE, Penf. fur une Comete. 7 Fable of the Bees.

accounted

accounted boneft, may appear devout. And SECT. we may reasonably suppose, if we confider. the innumerable Artifices of Villainy, that the outward Profession of Religion becomes a frequent Difguife to an atheifical and corrupted Heart.

But though these Circumstances may fufficiently account for the Appearance in many particular Cafes, yet, with Regard to the general Fact, bere feems to lie the proper Solution of the Difficulty. "That even " where true Religion is known, profeffed, " and in Speculation affented to, it is feldom " fo thoroughly inculcated as to become a "Principle of Action." We have feen that Imagination is the universal Instrument of human Action; that no Paffion can be ftrongly excited in the Soul by mere Knowledge or Affent, till the Imagination hath formed to itself some kind of Picture or Representation of the Good or Evil apprehended<sup>2</sup>. Now the Senfes and their attendant Paffions are continually urging their Demands, through the immediate Prefence of their respective Objects: So that nothing but the vivid Image of fome greater Good or Evil in Futurity can poffibly refift and

<sup>2</sup> See above, Effay I. § 3.

over-

225

X.

SECT. overbalance their Sollicitations. The Idea X. therefore of future Happiness and Misery must be strongly impressed on the Imagination, ere they can work their full Effects, because they are distant and unseen: But this Habit of Reflexion is feldom properly fixed by Education; and thus for want of a proper Impression, "religious Principle is fel-"dom gained, and therefore seldom ope-"rates."

BUT where a fincere and lively Impression takes Place; where the Mind is convinced of the Being of a GOD; that he is, and is a Rewarder of them that diligently feek him ; where the Imagination hath gained a Habit of connecting this great Truth with every Thought, Word, and Action; there it may be juilly affirmed, that Piety and Virtue cannot but prevail. To fay, in a Cafe of this Nature, that Man will not act according to his Principle, is to contradict the full Evidence of known Facts. We fee how true Mankind commonly are to their Principle of Pride, or miltaken Honour; how true to their Principle of Avarice, or mistaken Intereft; how true to their Principle, of a Regard to buman Laws. Why are they io? Because they have strongly and habitually

227

tually connected these Principles in their SECT. Imagination with the Idea of their own\_ Happiness. Therefore, whenever the religious Principle becomes in the fame Manner habitually connected in the Imagination, with the Agent's Happiness; that is, whenever the religious Principle takes Place at all, it must needs become infinitely more powerful than any other; because the Good it promiseth, and the Evil it threatens, are infinitely greater and more lafting. Hence it appears, that the Corruption of Mankind, even where the pureft Religion is profeffed, and in Theory affented to, doth not arife from the Weaknefs of religious Principle, but the Want of it.

AND indeed on other Occasions, and to ferve different Purposes, the noble Writer and his Partifans can allow and give Examples of all that is here contended for. Nothing is so common among these Gentlemen, as to declaim against the terrible Effects of *priestly Power*. 'Tis their favourite Topic, to represent Mankind as groaning under the Tyranny of the *facred Order*. Now what does this Representation imply, but "the Force of religious Principle im-" properly directed?" If Mankind can be Q 2 fwayed

SECT. fwayed by religious Hope and Fear, to re-

<u>X.</u> fign their Paffions and Interefts to the Artifice, or Advantage of the Prieft, why not to the Benefit of Mankind? 'Tis only impreffing a different Idea of Duty: The Motive to Action is in both Cafes the fame, and confequently must be of equal Efficacy. Thus if religious Principle were void of Force, the Priefthood must be void of Power. The Influence therefore of the Priefthood, however difficiently applied, is a Demonstration of the Force of religious Principle.

This therefore feems to be the Truth. Although, by timely and continued Culture, the religious Principle might be made more univerfally predominant; yet even as it is, though not fo thoroughly inculcated as to become generally a confiftent Principle of Action; in Fact it hath a frequent and confiderable, though partial and imperfect Influence. None but the thoroughly Good and Bad act on continued or confiftent Principles; all the intermediate Degrees of Good and Bad act at different Times on various and inconfistent Principles; that is, their Imaginations are by turns given up to Impressions of a different, or even I

even contrary Nature. This explains the SECT. whole Mystery: For, hence it appears that the confistent or inconfistent Conduct of Men depends not on the Nature of their Principles, but on having their Principles, whatever they are, counteracted by opposite Although therefore, through a Faiones. lure of timely Discipline, Numbers of Men appear to be of that capricious Temper as not to be steddy to any Principle, yet still the religious one will mix with the reft, and naturally prevail in its Turn. This is certainly a common Circumstance among the loofer and more inconfiderate Ranks of Men; who, although by no Means uniformly swayed by the Precepts of Religion, are yet frequently struck with Horror at the Thought of Actions peculiarly vile, and deterred by the Apprehension of an allfeeing GOD from the Commission of Crimes uncommonly atrocious.

. HERE then lies the effential Difference between the Efficacy of Tafte, and religious Principle: That the first, being a Feeling or Perception difpenfed in various Degrees, and in very weak ones to the Bulk of Mankind, is incapable, even through the most affidnous Culture, of becoming an universal or

SECT. or confistent Motive to Virtue: But the religious Principle, arifing from fuch Paffions as are common to the whole Species, must, if properly inculcated, univerfally prevail.

> 'Tis evident therefore, that in the very first Dawns of Reason, religious Principles ought to be imprefied on the Minds of Children; and this early Culture continued through the fucceeding Stages of Life. But as the noble Writer hath ftrangely attempted to ridicule and difhonour Religion in every Shape; fo here, he hath endeavoured to throw an Odium on this Method of religious Discipline, by representing it as the Enemy to true Morals and practical Philofophy, as it fetters the Mind with early Prejudices. "Whatever Manner in Phi-" lofophy happens to bear the leaft Refem-" blance to that of Catechifm, cannot, I am " perfuaded, of itfelf feem very inviting. "Such a fmart Way of queftioning our " felves in our Youth, has made our Man-" hood more averfe to the expositulatory Dif-" cipline: And though the metaphyfical " Points of our Belief, are by this Method " with admirable Care and Caution instilled " into tender Minds; yet the Manner of " this anticipating Philosophy may make " the

х.

"the After-work of Reafon, and the in-Szcr. "ward Exercise of the Mind at a riper "Age, proceed the more heavily, and with "greater Reluctance.---'Tis hard, after having by fo many pertinent Interroga-"tories and decisive Sentences, declared "who and what we are; to come leisurely "in another, to enquire concerning our real, "Self and End, the Judgment we are to "make of Interest, and the Opinion we "fhould have of Advantage and Good: "Which is what must necessarily determine "us in our Condust, and prove the leading "Principle of our Lives"."

In reply to this most philosophical Paragraph, let it be observed; that it is not the Defign of Religion to make Sophists, but good Subjects of Mankind. That Man being defigned, not for Speculation, but Action, religious Principle is not to be instilled in a philosophical, but a moral View: Therefore with Regard to Practice, nothing can be more fit and rational than to impress acknowledged Truths at an Age when the Recipient is incapable of their Demonstrations; in the fame Manner as we teach the Me-

▪ Advice, &c. Part iii. § 2.

chanic

SECT. chanic to work on Geometric Principles, X. while the Proofs are unknown to him.

> BUT then, the Prejudices of Education---yes, these are the great Stumbling-block to a modern Free-thinker : It still runs in his Head, that all Mankind are born to dispute de omni scibili<sup>b</sup>. Let therefore this minute Philosopher reflect, first, that a Prejudice doth not imply, as is generally fupposed, the Falfebood of the Opinion instilled; but only that it is taken up and held without its proper Evidence. Thus a Child may be prejudiced in Favour of Truth, as well as Falsehood; and in him neither the one nor the other can properly be called more than an Opinion. Further: The human Mind cannot remain in a State of Indifference, with regard either to Opinion or Practice: 'Tis of an active Nature; and, like a fertile Field, if by due Cultivation it be not made to produce good Fruit, will certainly fpring up in Tares and Thifles. Impreffions, Opinions, Prejudices, of one kind or other a Child will inevitably contract, from the Things and Perfons that furround him: And if rational Habits and Opinions be not infused, in order to anticipate Absurdities;

> > • On all Subjects,

Absur-

Absurditics will rife, and anticipate all ra-SECT. tional Habits and Opinions. His Reafon\_ and his Paffions will put themselves in - Action, however untoward and inconfistent. in the fame Manner as his Limbs will make an Effort towards progreffive Motion, however awkward and abfurd. The fame Objection therefore that lies against instilling a falutary Opinion, will arise against teaching him to walk erect: For this, too, is a kind of " anticipating Philosophy:" And fure, a Child left to his own Self-Discipline, " till "he could come leifurely to enquire con-" cerning his real Self and End," would stand as fair a Chance to grovel in Abfurdity, . and bring down his Reafon to the fordid Level of Appetite, as to crawl upon all four, and dabble in the Dirt. Thus the noble . Writer's Ridicule would fweep away the whole System of Education along with the religious Principle : Not an Opinion or Inclination must be controuled, or fo much as controverted; " left by this anticipating " Philosophy, the Work of Reason, and the " inward Exercise of the Mind, at a riper "Age, should proceed the more heavily, " and with greater Reluctance." The Caprice of Infancy must rule us, till the very **Capacity** 

SECT. Capacity of Improvement should be de-X. froyed; and we must turn Savages, in order to be made perfect in the fovereign Philofopby !

> 'Tis no difficult Matter therefore to determine, whether a Child fhould be left to the Follies of his own weak Understanding and nascent Passions; be left to imbibe the Maxims of corrupt Times and Manners; Maxims which, setting aside all Regard to their speculative Truth or Falsehood, do lead to certain Misery; or, on the other hand, shall be happily conducted to embrace those religious Principles, which have had the Approbation of the best and wisest Menin every Age and Nation; and which are known and allowed to be the only Meansof true Happines to Individuals, Families, and States.

> THIS therefore ought to be the early and principal Care of those who have the Tuition of Youth: And they will soon find the' happy Effects of their Instruction. For as' the Child's Understanding shall improve, what was at first instilled only as an Opinion, will by Degrees be embraced as Truth: Reason will then assume her just Empire; and the great, universal, religious Principle, a rati-

a rational Obedience to the Will of GOD, SECT. will raife him to his utmost Capacity of X. moral Perfection; will be a wide and firm Foundation, on which the whole Fabric of Virtue may rife in its just Proportions; will extend and govern his Benevolence and moral Senfe; will strengthen them, if weak; will confirm them, if strong; will supply their Want, if naturally defective: In fine, will direct all his Paffions to their proper Objects and Degrees; and, as the great Master-spring of Action, at once promote and regulate every Movement of his Heart.

IT must be owned, the noble Writer's Caution against this " anticipating Philo-" fophy" hath of late been deeply imbibed. In Confequence of it, we have feen religious. Principle declaimed against, ridiculed, la-The Effect of this hath been, an mented. abandoned Degree of Villainy in one Class of Mankind; a lethargic Indifference towards Virtue or Vice in another; and in the third, which boast the Height of modern Virtue, we feldom fee more than the first natural Efforts, the mere Buddings of Benevolence and Honour, which are too generally blafted ere they can ripen in-This Contempt of Religion to Action. hath

#### 236 Obligations of Man to VIRTUR.

X.

SECT. hath always been a fatal Omen to free States. Nor, if we may credit Experience, can we entertain any just Hope, that this fantastic Scheme, this boasted Relish for Beauty and Virtue, can ever give Security to Empire, without the more folid Supports of religions For it is remarkable, that in the Belief. Decline of both the Greek and Roman States, after Religion had loft its Credit and Efficacy, this very Tafte, this fovereign Philopby usurped its Place, and became the common Study and Amusement (as it is now among ourfelves) both of the Vile and Vul-The Fact, with Regard to Greece, is gar. fufficiently notorious; with Regard to Rome, it may feem to demand a Proof. And who would think, that QUINTILIAN in the following Paffage was not describing our own Age and Nation? " Nunc autem quae vel-" ut propria philosophiae asseruntur, passim " tractamus omnes : Quis enim modo de " justo, AEQUO, ac BONO, non et VIR " PESSIMUS loquitur ?" --- What was for, merly the Philosopher's Province only, is now invaded by all : We find every wicked and worthless Fellow, in these Days, baranguing on VIRTUE, BEAUTY, and GOOD," What

· Quint . Procemium,

this

### Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 237

this Leprofy of falle Knowledge may end in, SECT. I am unwilling to fay: But this may be faid X. With Truth, becaufe it is juftified by Experience; that along with the Circumstance now remarked, every other Symptom is rifing among us, that hath generally attended the dark and troubled Evening of a Commonwealth.

DOUBTLESS, many will treat these Ap-H prehensions with Derifion: But this Derifion is far from being an Evidence of their Falschood. For no People ever fell a Sacrifice to themfelves, till lulled and infatuated by their own Paffions. Blind Security is an effential Characteristic of a People devoted to Destruction. The Fact is equally undeniable, whether it arifeth from the moral Appointment of Providence, or the Connexion of natural Caufes. Though this is feen and acknowledged by those who are conversant with the History of Mankind; yet 'tis hard to convey this Evidence to those who feldom extend their Views beyond their own short Period of Existence; because they fee the Prevalence of the Caufe affigned, while yet the pretended Confequence appears not. But they who look back into ancient Time are convinced, that the public Effects of

#### Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 228

X.

SECT. of Irreligion have never been fudden or immediate. One Age is fallely polite, irreligious, and vile; the next is funk in Servitude and Wretchednefs. This is analogous 'to the Operation of other Caufes. A Man may be intemperate for twenty Years, before he feels the Effects of Intemperance on bis Conftitution. The Sun and Moon raife the Tides; yet the Tides rife not to their Height, till a confiderable Time after the Conjunction of these two Luminaries. We cannot therefore justly decide concerning the future Effects of Irreligion, from its prefent State. The Examples of former Times are a much better Criterion : And thefe are fuch, as ought to make every Man among us, that regards Posterity, tremble for his Posterity while he reads them.

> For this is but too just an Epitome of the Story of Mankind. That TYRANNY and SUPERSTITION have ever gone Hand in Hand; mutually fupporting and fupported; taking their Progress, and fixing their Dominion over all the Kingdoms of the Earth; overwhelming it in one general Deluge, as the Waters cover the Sea. Here and there a happy Nation emerges; breathes for a while in the enlightened Region of KNOW-LEDGE,

### Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.

LEDGE, RELIGION, VIRTUE, FREEDOM: SECT. Till in their appointed Time, IRRELIGION and LICENTIOUSNESS appear; mine the Foundations of the Fabric, and fink it in the general Abyls of IGNORANCE and OP-PRESSION.

239

Possibly the fatal Blow may yet be averted from us. 'Tis furely the Duty of every Man, in every Station, to contribute his Share, however *inconfiderable*, to this great End. This must be my Apology for opposing the noble Writer's fantastic System; which by exhibiting a falle Picture of human Nature, is, in Reality an Inlet to Vice, while it feems most favourable to Virtue: And while it pretends to be drawn from the Depths of Philosophy, is, of all others, most unphilosophical.

#### SECTION

. . . . .

## [ 241 ]

# ESSAYS

ON THE

# Characteristics, etc.

ÈSSAY III.

On revealed RELIGION, and CHRISTIANITY.

#### SECTION I.

N the Course of the preceding Essay, SECT. we have seen the noble Writer assuming the Character of the professed Dogmatist, the Reasoner in Form. In what remains to be confidered, concerning revealed Religion and CHRISTIANITY, we shall find him chiefly affecting the miscellaneous Capa-R city;

SECT. city; the Way of Chat, Raillery, Innuendo, or Story-telling : In a Word, that very Species of the prefent modifh Composition, which he fo contemptuoufly ridicules; " where, as " he tells us, Justness and Accuracy of " Thought are fet afide as too constraining; " where Grounds and Foundations are of " no Moment; and which hath properly " neither Top nor Bottom, Beginning nor " End "." In this, however, his Lordship is not quite fo much to blame as might be imagined. In his Critical Progress, he had treated this diflabille of Composition, as the Man in the Fable did his Pears; unconfcious he should be ever afterwards reduced to diet on them himself. The Truth of the Matter is, that the broken Hints, the ambiguous Expression, and the Ludicroferious of the gentle Effayift, perfectly fecure him from the rough Handling of the Logical-Difputer.

INDEED the noble Author has a double Advantage from this *Cloud*, in which the *Graces* fo frequently fecure their Favourke.<sup>1</sup> He not only eludes the Force of every Argument the Defenders of Christianity alledge in it's Support, but even pleads the Privilege of being

\* See above, Esay i. § 2.

í

**I.** .

being ranked in the Number of fincere Chrif- SECT. tians. He takes frequent Occasions of expressing his Abhorrence of idle Scepticks and wicked Unbelievers in Religion : He declares himfelf of a more refigned Understanding, a ductile Faith, ready to be moulded into any Shape that his fpiritual Superiors shall prefcribe. At other Times, and in innumerable Places, he fcatters fuch Infinuations against Christianity, and that too with all the Bitternels of Sarcasm and Invective, as must needs be more effectual in promoting Irreligion, than a formal and avowed Acculation. For in the Way of open War, there is fair Warning given to put Reafon upon Guard, that no pretending Argument be fuffered to . pafs without Examination. On the contrary, the noble Writer's concealed Method of Raillery, steals insensibly on his Reader ; fills him with endless Prejudice and Sufpicion; and, without passing thro' the 'Judgment, fixeth such Imprefiions on the Imagi-.notion, as Reafon, with all its Effects, will be hardly able afterwards to efface.

THESE inconfistent Circumstances in his Louship's Conduct, have made it a Queltion goog, fome, what his real Sentiments wore concerning Religion and Christianity. · **R** 2 lf ĉ

SECT. If it be neceffary to decide this Queffion, I. we may obferve, that a difguifed Unbeliever may have his Reafons for making a formal Declaration of his Affent to the Religion of his Country: But it will be hard to find what fhould tempt a real Christian to load Christianity with Scorn and Infamy. Indeed, the noble Writer, to do him Justice, never defigned to leave us at a Loss on this Subject. For he hath been so good, frequently to remind his Reader, to look out for the true Drift of his Irony, left his real Meaning should be mistaken or difregarded.

HERE then lies the Force of his Lordship's Attack on *Christianity*; "In exciting Con-"tempt by Ridicule." A Method which, as we have already seen<sup>b</sup>, tho' devoid of all rational Foundation, is yet most powerful and efficacious in working upon vulgar Minds. Thus the Way of *Irony*, and false Encomium, which he so often employs against the blessed Founder of our Religion, ferves him for all Weapons; the deeper he strikes the Wound, the better he shields himself.

WE are not therefore to be furprized, if we find the noble Writer frequently affecting a Mixture of *folemn Pbrafe* and *low* 

" Effay i. paffim.

Buffoonry;

Buffoonry; not only in the fame Tract, but SECT. in the fame Paragraph. In this Respect, he refembles the facetious Drole I have fornewhere heard of, who wore a transparent Masque : Which, at a Distance, exhibited a Countenance wrap'd up in profound Solemnity; but those who came nearer, and could fee to the Bottom, found the native Look difforted into all the ridiculous Grimace, which Spleen and Vanity could imprint.

#### SECTION II.

BUT as natural Religion is the only SECT. Foundation of *revealed*; it will be neceffary, e'er we proceed to the last, to obviate any Infinuations which the noble Writer may have thrown out against the Former.

Π.

As to the Expectation of future Happines confidered, as the natural Confequence of virtuous Action; his Lordship hath not, that I know of, either affirmed, or infinuated any thing against it's Reasonableness. But with Regard to the other Branch of Religion, " the Belief of a future State of Mifery " or Punishment, confidered as the ap-" pointed Confequence of Vice", this he R 4 hath

**5** E c T. hath frequently endeavoured to diferedit in II. fuch a Manner, as would be no finall Degree of Guilt to transcribe, were it not to fhew at once the Impiety and Falsehood of his Affirmations.

In his Letter on *Enthusiafm*, he hath obliged us with several Passages of this Kind. These, it must be owned, are so obscure, that we must be content, to refer them rather to the Reader's equitable Construction, than urge them as direct Proofs.

THE Apprehension and Fear of formething fupernatural, fo universal among Mankind, he feems all along to deride; as a vilionary and groundless Pannic . He adds that, " while fome Sects, fuch as the Py-" thagorean and latter Platonick, joined in " with the Superflition and Ethufialm of " the Times; the Epicurean, the Academic \*\* and others, were allowed to use all the " Force of Wit and Raillery against it "." To convince us how much he approves the Conduct of these libertine Sects, he boldly follows their Example. He affures us that " fuch is the Nature of the liberal, po-" lished and refin'd Part of Mankind; fo \* far are they from the mere Simplicity of 4 Ib. · Let: on Enthuf. paffim. .

" Babes

" Babes and Sucklings; that, inflead of SECT. II. " applying the Notion of a future Reward " or Punishment, to their immediate Be-" haviour in Society; they are apt much " rather, thro' the whole Course of their " Lives, to thew evidently, that they look " on the pious Narrations to be indeed no " better than Children's Tales, and the " Amalement of the mere Vulgar i." He confirms these Opinions by affigning the Reason why Men of Sense should stand clear of the Fears of a Futurity : "God " is fo good, as to exceed the very beft of us " in Goodness : And after this Manner we si" can have no Dread or Sufpicion to render " us uneafy; for it is Malice only, and not \* Goodnefs, which can make us afraid \* Is this the Philosopher and Patriot, the Lover of his Country and Mankind ! This . the Admirer of ancient Wildom, of venerable Sages, who founded " Laws, Conftitu-" tions, civil and religious Rites, whatever " civilizes or polifhes Mankind 1."

Tu Pater et Rerum inventor ! Tu patria nàbis Suppeditas præcepta !

This, sure, is unhinging Society to the. Misc. iii. c. 2. \* Let, on Emphas. Moralists, P. i. § 3. R 4 utmost

1

SFCT. utmost of his Power: For the Force of re-

\_ligious Sanctions depends as much on their being believed, as the Force of buman Laws depends on their being executed. To defiroy the Belief of the one therefore, is equivalent to fufpending the other.

BUT as the prefent Debate concerns not the Utility, but the Truth of Religion; 'tis chiefly incumbent on us, to shew, that the noble Writer's Opinion and Reasoning, on this Subject, are void of all Foundation.

'Tis observable therefore, First, that his Lordship, in other Places, allows that " If " there be naturally fuch a Paffion as Enthu-" fiafm, 'tis evident, that Religion itfelf is of " the Kind, and must be therefore natural to " Man"." And in his Letter on Entbuhafm, even while he derides the Proneneis of. Mankind to the conscientious Fear, he adds, " that the' Epicurus thought these Appre-" henfions were vain, yet he was forced to " allow them in a Manner innate :"---"From which Concession, a Divine, me-" thinks, might raife a goood Argument " against him, for the Truth as well as " Ufefulness of Religion." Now as fome may possibly be at a Loss to determine here, \* Mifc. ii. c. 1.

whether

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 249 whether the noble Writer be in Jeft or SECT. п. Earnest, the Argument he hints at is plainly this: That if we look round the Works of Nature, we shall find an Analogy established, which feems a Proof, that this natural Fear which *preffeth* fo universally on the human Mind, hath a real and proportioned Object. The Argument hath been urged by many of great Name, in Favour of the Hope of future Good; and 'tis furely of equal Force, whatever that Force may be, when apply'd to the Fear of future III. For we fee thro' the whole Creation, every Animal of whatever Species, directed by it's Nature or the Hand of Providence, to fear and thun it's proper and appointed Enemy. We find these Apprehensions universally fuited to the Nature and Prefervation of every Species among Birds, Beafts, Fishes, Infects. Nor is there one Fear, tho' fometimes excessive in it's Degree, that is erroneous with Regard to it's Object. The religious Fear, therefore, which forceth itself to univerfally on the human Mind, in every Age and Nation, ignorant or knowing, civilized or barbarous; hath probably an Object fuited to it's Nature, ordained for the Welfare of the human Species. At leaft, this Argument

II.

SECT. ment must ever be of Weight with those, who draw their Ideas of future Existence from the Inftincts, Hopes, and Expectations of the human Mind.

INDEED, on the noble Writer's refined Scheme of Morals, in which the natural Affections of the Mind are represented, as all-fufficient for the Purpoles of human Happines, this Argument must lose R's \* Force ; because, on this Supposition, the religious Feat is *supernumerary* and ufilefs : But then this flews the Supposition itfelf to be monstrous, absurd, and contrary to the "established Course of Nature; because Na-"ture gives no Power or Paffion, but to forme proper and appointed End: The very Existence of the Paffion, therefore, is a Proof of it's Neceffity. . -

Now, if indeed the religious Fear be neceffary, as, we presume, hath been fufficiently proved in the preceding Effay; then, from hence will arife a ftrong and convincing Proof, that the Object of religious Fear is real. For we find thro' the whole Extent of created Being, that the Author of Nature hath annexed to all his Defigns and Purpofes, the proper Means or Objects, by which they may be fulfilled. - **-** - -As

#### On revealed Religion and Christianity. 251 As therefore the religious Fear is not only SECT. Interwoven with the Frame of Man, but abjalutely necessary to his Happines, it's Object must be real; because, if not, you suppose the Creator to have given a NECESSA-RY Passon, without it's proper and appointed Object; which would be a Contradiction to the universal and known Constitution of Things.

ON this Occasion, we may observe the Weakness of the Epicurean System, concernering Providence: For that Sech hath ever ordeny'd, that the Deity concerns himself with the moral Conduct of Man. But from with the moral Conduct of Man. But from on the wife and benevolent Constitution of the on atural World itself, a strong Proof ariseth trin Support of God's moral-Government of

it, and of the Truth of the Fears and Expestations of the human Mind. For if we allow that he regards and preferves the natural Order and Symmetry of the Creation; that he hath formed this immenfe System of Being, and secured it's Continustance and Welfare, by certain Laws, necefinfary to the Happiness of his Creatures; then are must on the same Foundation gonclude, that he hath likewise established such Monatives and Laws of Action, as may determine 14 4 Man

II.

SECT. Man to profecute the fame End. It were an Imputation on the Wildom of the Deity, to conceive him as doing the one, and cmitting the other : Unlefs Mind and Morals be lets worthy of his Regard, than Matter and Motion.

> BUT still the noble Writer proceeds in the Spirit of Derifion, to expose the Abfurdities and Mifchiefs this mifguided religious Principle hath occafioned; he often expatiates on the *superflitious Horrors*, and furious Zeal which have had their Source in this Principle; and thence, in the Way of Infinuation, concludes it irrational and groundless.

THE Facts, it must be owned, are notorious and undeniable: But the Confequence is no lefs evidently chimerical and vain. Lord SHAFTESBURY himfelf hath observed, that in Failure of a just Prince or Magistrate, Mankind are ready to fubmit themfelves even to a Tyrant : " Like " new-born Creatures, who have never " feen their Dam, they will fancy one for " themfelves, and apply (as by Nature , " prompted) to fome like Form for Favour In the Room of a true " and Protection. " Foster-Father and Chief, they will take " after

" after a false one; and in the Room of a SECT. " legal Government and just Prince, obey "even a Tyrant "." And hence he draws a strong Proof of the Force of the focial or herding Principle, even from despotic Power itself. Again he hath remarked, that " Heroifm and Philanthropy are almost one " and the fame; yet by a fmall Mifguidance " of the Affection, a Lover of Mankind " becomes a Ravager; a Hero and Deli-" verer becomes an Oppreffor and Deftroy-" er "." 'Tis the fame in Religion. Where the human Mind (ever reftless in it's Search for the great Center of created Being, on which alone it can perfectly repole itfelf) feeks, but cannot find the true GoD, it naturally fets up a falfe one in his Place : Here too, Mankind, "like new-born " Creatures, who have never feen their Dam, " will fancy one for themfelves, and apply " (as by Nature prompted) to fome like " Form for Favour and Protection. In the "Room of a true Foster-Father, they will " take after a falle one; and in the Room '" of an all-perfect God, worship even an " Idol." The religious Principle, thus milguided, breaks forth indeed, into Enor-\* Wit. and H. P. iii. § 1. • Ib. § 2. mities

5

**SECT** mities the most pernicious and destructive : <u>IL</u> Hence indeed, "by a small Misguidance of "the Affection, a Lover of Mankind be-"comes a Ravager; a Saint, an Oppressor "and Destroyer." But as from the Abuse of the social Principle, so here, in that of the religious one, no other Consequence can be justly drawn, but that it is natural and ftrong.

But further, the noble Writer finds the Notion of future Punishment, inconfiftent with his Idea of divine Goodness. Therefore, fays he, "We can have no Dread or Suf-"picion to make us uneasy: For it is "Malice only, and not Goodness, which can "make us afraid 9."

YET, on another Occafion, his Lordfhip can affirm, and juftly, that, "a Man of Tem-"per may refut or punifb without Anger." And if so, why may not divine Goodnefs make us afraid? For as divine Goodnefs regards the greatest Happiness of all its creatures; so, if Punishment be neerflars to that End, divine Goodnefs will therefore ORDAIN PUNISHMENT. To this Purpose, a Writer of diffinguished Rank and Perces "Eng. B. ii. Part il: § 2.

a a monta a province and state ral

. . .

" ral and just Object of Fear to an ill Man. SECT. " Malice may be appealed or fatiated :\_\_\_\_ "Humour may change: But Goodness is " as a fixed, steady immoveable Principle " of Action. If either of the Former holds "the Sword of Juffice, there is plainly " Ground for the greatest of Crimes to hope " for Impunity. But if it be Goodness, "there can be no possible Hope, whilst "the Regions of things, or the Ends of "Government call for Punishment. Thus " every one fees how much greater Chance " of Impunity an ill Man has, in a partial "Administration, than in a just and up-" right one. It is faid, that the Interest or "Good of the Whole, must be the Interest " of the universal Being; and that he can " have no other. Be it fo. This Author " (Ld. S.) has proved that Vice is naturally " the Milery of Mankind in this World : " Confequently it was for the Good of the "Whole, that it should be fo. What " Shadow of Reafon then is there to affert, " that this may not be the Cafe hereafter ? "Danger of future Punishment (and if " there be Danger, there is Ground of Fear) " no more supposes Malice, than the pre-" fent Feeling of Punishment does '."

Dr. Butler's Sermons, Preface, p. 21.

THUS

SECT. THUS the noble Writer's Derifion and II. Argumentation are equally chimerical and impious; as it appears, that the natural Fears and Expectations of the human Mind are at least founded in Probability.

#### SECTION III.

SECT. His Lordship's Opinions being fo little III. favourable to natural Religion, we cannot wonder, if we find him, on every poffible Occasion, throwing out Infinuations and virulent Remarks, in Order to difgrace revealed. The First that will deferve our Notice, are such as tend to invalidate the Credibility of Scripture History.

HE tells us, "He who fays he believes "for certain, or is affured of what he be-"lieves, either fpeaks ridiculoufly, or fays in "Effect, he believes ftrongly, but is not fure: "So that whoever is not confcious of Reve-"lation, nor has certain Knowledge of any "Miracle or Sign, can be no more than fcep-"tick in the Cafe: And the best Christian in "the World, who being destitute of the Means "of Certainty, depends only on History and "Tradition for his Belief of these particu-"lars, is at best but a fceptick Christian"."

Now

Now it should seem, that the Dexterity of SECT. this Passage lies in a new Application of III. two or three Words. For, by "certain and "affured" he means more, by "Scepticism" he means much less, than it is ever used to fignify. And thus (as in Dr. Mandeville's Philosophy already criticized) wherever we have not Demonstration, 'tis plain we must needs be Sceptics.

But if indeed we must be Sceptics in revealed Religion, on this Account; the fame Confequence will follow, with Regard to every other Kind of Knowledge that depends on human Testimony. We must be Sceptics too, in our Belief of every paft Transaction; nay of every thing transacted in our own Times, except only of what falls within the narrow Circle of our proper Observation. The Manners of Men, the Site of Countries, the Varièties of Nature, the Truths of Philosophy, the very Food we eat, and Liquids we drink, are all received on the fole Evidence of human Testimony. But what Name would he merit among Men, . who in these Instances should fay, "he does " not believe for certain, or is not affured " of what he believes", till in every Cafe he

> <sup>t</sup> See above, *Effay* ii. S

should

. (

### 258 On revealed Religion and Christianing. SECT. should be impelled by the Force of Demon-

III. fratien, or the Evidence of Senfe?

AND indeed, on other Occasions, where Christianity is not concerned, the noble Writer can speak in a very different, and much juster Manner. For thus he appeals to Nature, in Proof of the Wildom and Goodness of the Creator. " Thus too, in " the System of the bigger World, See there " the mutual Dependency of things : The " Relation of one to another ; of the Sun to " this inhabited Earth; and of the Earth " and other Planets to the Sun! The Order, " Union, and Coherence of the whole ! And " know, my ingenious Friend, that by this " Survey you will be obliged to own the " universal System, and coherent Scheme of " things ; to be *cftablifbed on* ABUNDANT "PROOF, capable of convincing any fair " and just Contemplator of the Works of "Nature"." His Lordship's Argument is furely juft. Yet, is there one to be found among five Hundred of those, who are thus convinced of the wife Structure of the Univerfe, who have ever taken a Survey of this immenfe Syftem, except only in the Books and Diagrams of experienced Philosophers?

\* Moralists, P. ii. § 4-

Ī

How

How few are capable even of comprehend-SECT. III. ing the Demonstrations, on which the Truth of the Copernican System is established; or receiving, on any other Proof than that of buman Testimony, " the Relation of the Earth \* and other Planets to the Sun, the Order, " Union, and Coherence of the whole ?" It cannot be fupposed, that even the noble writer himfelf ever went thro' the tedious Process of Experiment and Calculation, which alone can give absolute Certainty in this extenfive Subject. Yet we find, he is not in any Degree, " fceptical in the Cafe;" but very rationally determines, that the Wifdom of the Deity in "this universal System, " is established on abundant Proof, capable " of convincing any fair and just Contem-" plator of the Works of Nature."

IT appears then, that a Confidence in the Veracity of others is not peculiar to the Belief of revealed Religion : The fame takes Place in almost every Subject. More particularly, we see, that in the History of Nature, as in that of Revelation, the Evidence of human Testimony is the only Sort of Proof that can be given to Mankind : And whoever allows this Proof, as being " abun-" dant and convincing" in the one, and dif-S 2 allows

SECT. allows or defpifeth it in the other, how felf III. fatisfied foever he may be in his own Imagination, is neither a fair nor a just Contemplator of the Works and the Ways of Protoidence.

> If therefore any Objection lies againft the Credibility of the Scripture Hiftory, it must confist in maintaining, not "that "human Testimony is infufficient to sup-"port it," but "that in Fact, it is not suffi-"ciently supported by the Evidence of "human Testimony." If s; this Defect must arise, either from a Want of External Evidence: Or Secondly, because the Facts, Doctrines, and Composition of the Bible, are fuch, that no Testimony whatever can convince us that it is a divine Revelation.

WITH Regard to the first of these, " the " Testimony on which the Authenticity of " the Gospel History is founded:" This the noble Writer hath attacked by a long Chain of Infinuations, in his last *Miscellany*". Where, in the Way of *Dialogue*, he hath indeed amply repaid the Treatment, which in the preceding Chapter he charges upon the *Clergy*. For here he hath introduced two of that *Order*, who, to use his own Ex-

Mifc. v. c. 3.

preflion,

" preffion, are indeed his very legitimate and SECT. " obfequious Puppets, who cooperate in the " most officious Manner with the Author, " towards the Display of his own proper " Wit, and the Establishment of his " private Opinion and Maxims"." " Where " after the poor Phantom or Shadow of an " Adversary, has faid as little for his Cause " as can be imagined, and given as many " Opens and Advantages as could be de-" fired, he lies down for good and all; and " paffively submits to the killing Strokes of " his unmerciful Conqueror y."

To these Gentlemen the noble Writer affigns the berculean Labour, of proving the Neceffity of an absolute Uniformity in Opinion. A bopeful Project indeed ! as his Lordship calls it elsewhere. No Wonder he comes off Conqueror, in such a Debate. But here lies the Peculiarity of his Conduct : That while he pretends only to prove, that the Scripture cannot be a Foundation for Uniformity of Opinion in all things; he hath thrown out such Infinuations, as evidently imply, that there can be no Foundation for believing the Truth of any thing the Gospel History contains. He fays, he \* Ib. c.2.

s 3

began

SECT. began by defiring them " to explain the IIſ. "Word Scripture, and by enquiring into " the Original of this Collection of antient-"er and later Tracts, which in general " they comprehended under that Title: " whether it were the apocryphal Scripture, " or the more canonical? the full or balf-" authorized? the doubtful or the certain? " the controverted or uncontroverted? the " fingly read, or that of various Reading ? "the Texts of thefe Manuscripts or of " those? the Transcripts, Copies, Titles, " Catalogues, of this Church and Nation, " or of that other ? of this Sect and Party, " or of another ? of those in one Age called " Orthodox, and in Poffession of Power, or " of those who, in another, overthrew their " Predeceffor's Authority; and, in their " Turn alfo, affumed the Guardianship and "Power of holy things ? For how thefe "facred Records were guarded in those " Ages, might eafily (he faid) be imagined, " by any one who had the least infight " into the Hiftory of those Times, which " we called Primitive, and those Charac-" ters of Men, whom we styled Fathers of " the Church "."

2 Mife. v. c. 3.

Here,

HERE, as his Lordship drags us into the SECT. beaten Track of Controversy, the best Compliment that can be paid the Reader, is to carry him thro' it by the shortest Way. The stale Objections here raked together by the noble Author have been so often, and so fully refuted, by a Variety of excellent Writers, that, to many, it may seem a needless Task, even to touch upon the Subject<sup>\*</sup>.

HOWEVER, for the Satisfaction of those who may think it necessary, a summary View of the Evidence is here subjoined,

THE Authenticity, therefore, of the Books of the new Teftament, appears to be founded on the strongest moral Evidence, because from the earliest Ages, we find them ascribed to the Apostles and Evangelists, whose Names they bear. Thus St PAUL's Epistles are mentioned by St. PETER, and cited by CLEMENS ROMANUS, who lived in the Reign of CLAUDIUS, even before St PAUL was carried Prisoner to ROME. Po-LYCARP and IRENÆUS were for some Time contemporary with St. JOHN: They both cite

• Du Pin, Le Clerc, Tillemont, Whitby, Lardner, Phil. Lipfienfis, &c. and very lately Mr. Jurtin, in his learned Remarks on Ecclefia/Lical Hiftory.

S 4

the

SICT. the four Gospels, and affirm they were all III. wrote by the Apostles and Evangelists, whose Names they bear. JUSTIN MARTYR and CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS, confirm their Accounts in the following Century: And the great ORIGEN, with whom I shall close the Catalogue, and who lived in the Reign of SEVERUS, in his Book against CELSUS hath cited all the Gospels, and most, if not all the Epifles, under the Names they now bear: And the Words of the feveral Citations perfectly agree with those of the new Testament, now in Ufe. Such a full Proof of the Genuinenefs of these facred Records. as is not to be parallel'd, concerning any other Book, of equal or even of much lefs Antiquity.

The internal Proof of their Genuinenels, arifing from their Style and Composition, is no lefs eminent and particular. The Genius of every Book, is fo perfectly agreeable to the Character and Education of it's respective Author; every Custom described or alluded to, either Jewish, Greek, or Roman, so entirely fuited to the Times; every Incident fo natural, so occasional, so particular, so perfectly identify'd, that it were the very extreme

extreme of Ignorance and Folly, to raife a Szcr. Doubt on this Subject.

THAT the Gospel-History hath been transmitted to us, pure and uncorrupted, we have no less Reason to believe. 'Tis well known how zealous the primitive Christians were in the Prefervation of the Scriptures : We know, they regarded them as their chief and dearest Treasure; and often laid down their Lives, rather than deliver the facred Records to their Enemies, who used every Art of Terror, to feize and deftroy them. Again, the Scriptures were not then locked up from the Laity, as now in the Roman Church : But Copies were taken, dispersed, and became immenfely numerous. They were univerfally read at the Times of public Worship, in different Nations of the To this we may add, that as now, World. fo then, different Sects and Parties sublisted. who all appealed to Scripture for Proof of their feveral Opinions; and thefe, 'tis evident, must have been so many Checks upon each other, to the general Exclusion of Mistake and Fraud<sup>h</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> The JEWS and SAMARITANS were Checks upon each other in the fame Manner, for the Prefervation of the Purity of the Pentatcuch. The Samaritan Penta-THIS

THIS being the real State of the Cafe ; let SECT. Ш. us now confider the noble Writer's Questions. He asks, whether by Scripture be underfood " the apocryphal or more canonical? " the full or half-authorized ? the doubtful " or the certain? the controverted or un-" controverted ?" These Questions are nearly fynonymous, and one fhort Reply will clear them all. There are many Books, concerning which there never was any Doubt. There are fome, concerning which the Doubts have been fully cleared up. There are others, concerning which the Doubts have been confirmed. Of the first Kind are all the Gospels, and most of the Epifles : Of the fecond, are the Epiftle to the Hebrews, the fecond of Peter, fecond and third of John, that of Jude, and the Apocalifie: Of the third Kind, are the apocryphal Books; therefore indeed to called.

THE noble Author goes on. "The "fingle read, or that of various Reading?"

teuch was printed in the laft Century: And, " after " Two thou fand Years Difcord between the Two Na-" tions, varies as little from the other, as any Claffic " Author in lefs Tract of Time has difagreed from it-" felf, by the unavoidable Miltakes of fo many Tran-" ferihers." See Phil. Lipfienf.

My

#### On revealed Religion and Christianity. 267 My Lord, if by fingle read you mean a Book SECT. in which there are no various Readings, there are none fingle read : Nor, probably, was there ever any Book fingle read, that went thro' more than one Edition : at least. before the Invention of Printing. And as the Scriptures were oftener transcribed than any other Book, fo, a greater Variety of of Readings must naturally take Place. But I must inform your Lordship, from the learned Phileleutherus Lipsiensis, that this is the most illiterate of all Cavils: For that in Fact, we have the Senfe of those ancient Authors most entire, where the various Readings are most numerous: As, of those Authors where the Varieties are feweft, the Senfe is most mutilated or obscure<sup>1</sup>. But if by fingle read, your Lordship means an authentic Text collected and composed out of the various Readings, I beg leave to inform you, there is no fuch in the Proteftant Churches. They have been too modeft to attempt any fuch Thing. Nor does the Truth fuffer by it: For as the learned Critic, just before quoted, observes, the most faulty Copy of the new Testament now in

<sup>1</sup> For a full View of this Argument, Sec Phil. Lipfienf.

being,

SECT. being, does not obscure one moral Doc-III. trine or one Article of Faith.

> AGAIN the noble Writer goes on, in a Profusion of fynonymous Terms: "The "Transcripts, Copies, Titles, Catalogues, "of this Church or that? of this Sect or "Party, or another? of those in one Age "called orthodox, or those who in another "Age overthrew them?" What unexperienced Person would not imagine from hence, that different Churches, Sects, or Parties, had each of them a Bible different from the rest? Yet 'tis certain, that however these Parties differed in Opinions, we find from their Writings now subsisting, that they all appealed to one common Scripture for their Support.

> THE noble Writer takes his Leave by paying a Compliment to these primitive Writers called the Fathers of the Church. "How these facred Records were guarded "in those Ages, might be easily imagined," &c. — But to imagine, is a much easier Task than to prove; especially when Imagination is helped forward by Inclination. Guarded indeed they were, as we have seen, from Interpolation and Falshood. But if he means to infinuate, that they were guarded

ed from Inspection and Criticism, he does SECT. great Injustice to Christianity. For what-\_ ever Marks of fecular Views may be difcovered in the Conduct of the ancient Chriftians in the fucceeding Ages, we may fafely bid Defiance to the noble Writer's Admirers, to shew any thing of this Kind in the Characters of those to whose Testimony we have here appealed; and on whofe Testimony, joined to that of their numerous and ingenuous Contemporaries, the Authenticity of the Gospel-History depends. They were far from acting or writing with a View to temporal Advantage; they were ftruggling under the Weight of heavy Perfecutions; had no Motives to preach or write, but the great Expectation of Happiness hereaster, founded on a firm Belief of that holy Religion, which they propagated with an Effect almost, if not indeed, miraculous.

On this Occasion I cannot but observe a strange Infinuation thrown out elsewhere by the noble Writer; which, however, is so glaring a Falshood, that he finds himself obliged to disavow it, even while he labours to impress it on his Reader's Imagination, in all the Colours of Eloquence. "If, "faies

#### SECT. " faies he, the collateral Testimony of other · III. " ancient Records were destroyed, there " would be less Argument or Plea remain-" ing against that natural Suspicion of those "who are called Sceptical, that the holy " Records themselves were no other than " the pure Invention or artificial Compile-" ment of an interested Party, in Behalf of " the richeft Corporation, and most profita-" ble Monopoly in the World "." Now if his Lordship be indeed in earnest in urging this Infinuation, he must believe, that one Set of Men preached, and wrote, and endured Bonds and Imprisonment, Torments and Death; to the End that another Set of Men, some three or four Hundred Years after, might enjoy the rich Corporations and profitable Monopoly of Church Preferments. How far this may be a Proof of the noble

270 On revealed Religion and Christianity.

Writer's Sagacity, I shall leave others to determine. But if he believes not the Infinuation, as indeed he feems to difbelieve it, then we cannot furely hefitate a Moment concerning the Measure of his Sincevity.

THE Gentleman therefore who makes fo ridiculous a Figure in the fuppofed Con-

\* Mifc. v. c. 1.

versation.

versation, had he not been a poor obsequious SECT. Ш. Puppet, might have returned one general, and fatisfactory Anfwer to all these extraordinary Questions. He might have defired his Lordship " to chuse which he should " like best or worst among all these contro-" verted Copies, various Readings, Manu-" fcripts, and Catalogues adopted by what-" ever Church, Sect, or Party." Nay, he might have defired him to chuse any of the almost infinite Number of Translations made of these Books in distant Countries and Ages: And taking that to be the Scripture he appealed to, might fafely have relied on it, as amply fufficient for all the great Purposes of Religion and Christianity.

#### SECTION IV.

SINCE therefore the Scripture Hillory SECT. appears to be fupported by higher Degrees IV. of human Teftimony, than any other ancient Writing; the only Objections of real Weight against it, must be drawn from it's internal Structure: from the Facts it relates, the Doctrines it inculcates, or the Form of it's Composition.

THE Facts related, being as it were the Foundation of all, will naturally come first under

IV.

" Now thefe, fay SECT. under Confideration. " the Enemies of Christianity, are miracu-" lous or out of Nature, and therefore ab-" furd : For as they can prove nothing, fo it " is impossible that Accounts of this Kind " could be fo effentially mingled with a " Religion that should come from God."

On this Foundation the noble Writer hath taken frequent Occasion to deride what he calls the " Mockery of Miracles<sup>1</sup>;" particularly those of our Saviour<sup>m</sup>. Here we shall find him striking at the very Basis of all revealed Religion, while he afferts, that, even supposing the Truth of the Facts, " Miracles cannot witnefs either for God or "Men, nor are any Proof either of Divi-" nity or Revelation"." But that his Argument may be fairly represented, let it appear in his own Words. " The Con-"templation of the Universe, it's Laws " and Government, was ( I aver'd ) the " only Means which could establish the " found Belief of a Deity. For what tho' " innumerable Miracles from every Part " affailed the Senfe, and gave the trembling "Soul no Respite? What tho' the Sky " fhould fuddenly open, and all kinds of " Prodigies appear, Voices be heard, or = Ib. c. 3. <sup>1</sup> Mifc. ii. c. 2. · Meralifts, Part ii § 5. paffim. " CharacOn revealed Religion and Christianity. [271] <sup>64</sup> Characters read? What would this evince <sup>S E C T.</sup> <sup>14</sup> more, than that there was certain Powers <sup>14</sup> could do all this? But what Powers; <sup>15</sup> whether one or more; whether fuperior, <sup>16</sup> or fubaltern; mortal, or immortal; wife <sup>17</sup> or fubaltern; mortal, or immortal; wife <sup>16</sup> or foolifh; juft or unjuft; good or bad: <sup>17</sup> This would ftill remain a Mystery; as <sup>16</sup> would the true Intention, the Infallibility <sup>16</sup> or Certainty of whatever these Powers af-<sup>16</sup> ferted<sup>o</sup>."

'Tis remarkable, that the noble Writer pretends here only to fhew, that Miracles are no Proof of the Existence of God: Yet in the Conclusion of his Argument, he brings it home to the Cafe of Revelation: To " the true Intention, the Infallibility or " Certainty of whatever thefe Powers As-" SERTED." This is clearly the Scope of his Argument: And fo indeed hath it been understood by his Under-workmen in Infidelity, who have with great Industry retailed this Objection. As it is a Circumstance of the last Importance in Regard to the Truth of Christianity, it cannot be an unseasonable Tafk, to shew in the fullest Manner the Vanity and Error of this trite Cavil.

BUT instead, of confidering fingle Acts of of supernatural or miraculous Power, as be-

> • Ib. **\* T** ing

IV.

L

SECT. ing performed in Attestation of any particular Doctrine, (which hath been the general Way of treating this Question)'tis my Defign to confider as one Object, " that vast Series " and Concatenation of miraculous Acts. " recorded in the Old and New Testament, " wrought thro' a long Succession of Ages, " for the carrying on, Support, and Comple-" tion of the Christian Dispensation,

WITH this View therefore let us first confider the means by which Mankind are justly convinced of the Being of a God. Now this Conviction, 'tis allowed by all, arifeth from a Union of Power, Wildom, ann Goodnefs, difplayed in the visible Creation. From this Union alone arifes the Idea of an all-perfet Being : fo that a Failure in any of these three effential Circumstances would destroy the The Goodness of the Deity Idea of a God. is feen in the defigned End or Purpose of the Creation, which is, " The Happiness of all " his Creatures :" His Wildom is feen, in the proper Means employed for the Accomplifhment of this great End : His Power fulfills what Goodness had intended and Wisdom contrived, by putting these Means in Ex-Hence then alone we obtain the ecution. Idea of a Divinity, from a Union of perfect Goodness, Wisdom, and Power.

Тне

'TIS likewife, I think, acknowledged by SECT. IV. all Theifts, that, as to the divine Power, it may work it's Intentions, either by a continued and uninterrupted Superintendency, or Agency on Matter, or by impreffing certain original and permanent Qualities Which of these two Kinds of upon it. Operation may really prevail in Nature, is perhaps beyond the Reach of human Knowledge, clearly to determine. The Newtonian Philosophy indeed renders it highly probable, that the continued Agency of God prevails. But a Determination in this Subject is indeed of no Confequence; fince. which foever of these Methods be ordained. the divine Power is equally difplay'd, while it ministers to the Ends of Goodness and Wisdom.

'Tis equally plain, that, if the divine Goodness should determine to raise Mankind to bigber Degrees of Knowledge and Virtue, than what they could attain to by the pre-established Laws of Nature; or to free them from Defects and Miferies, occasioned by any incidental and voluntary Corruptions, posterior to their Creation ; 'tis equally plain, I fay, that an Exertion of fupernatural Power for the Accomplishment of T

ł

IV.

SECT. of this End, would be a Display, Proof, or Revelation of the Divinity, entirely fimilar to that which arifes from the Works of Nature. For both bere, and in the Works of Nature, the Proof of the Divinity arifeth, not from mere uniform Acts of Power, but from the Subserviency of divine Power to this one great End, the Production of human Happiness. Here then, the noble Writer's Objection is effentially defective : What he affirms is either falle, or foreign to the Question. For if we suppose (and the prefent Question is put upon this Footing only) that the miraculous or fupernatural Effects are evidently fubfervient to fimilar Ends of Wisdom and Goodness, as appear in the Works of the Creation; then fure, we have equal Reafon to conclude, and be convinced, that they are the Effects of one Power; - of one *superior* and *immortal* Power; - of one Power, wife, just, and good; - In a Word, of that Power which first brought Nature into Being, established Laws for the Welfare of his Creatures; and when the Happiness of his Creatures requires an Interpolition, gives still further Evidences of his Goodnefs, Wildom, and Omnipotence,

#### On revealed Religion and Christianity. 275 nipotence, by controuling those Laws which SECT. himself had established.

LET us now apply these Principles to the Christian Dispensation. "This, we "fay, was a Scheme of Providence, which "fill continues operating; whereby the "Deity determined to raise fallen and cor-"rupted Man to higher Degrees of Know-"ledge, Virtue, and Happiness, than what "by Nature he could have attained." In this Design, the divine GOODNESS is eminently display'd.

THE Means, whereby this great Defign was accomplished, was " by feparating a " peculiar People from the reft of Man-" kind; not for their own Sakes, but for " the Sake of all; by preferving them " amidst their Enemies; by leading them " forth into a diftant Country; by establish-" there the Worship of the one God, in " Opposition to the Idolatries of furround-"ing Nations : 'Till, when the Fulnefs of " Time should come, and Mankind be ca-" pable of receiving a more perfect Reve-" lation, a Saviour JESUS CHRIST should be " fent, to free Mankind from the Power of " Ignorance and Sin; to bring Life and Im-" mortality to Light, and communicate to **T** 2 all

SECT. " all Men the most perfect practical Know-" ledge of the true God, and of every moral " Duty."' In this Difpensation is no less eminently displayed the divine WISDOM.

BUT what lefs than Omnipotence itfelf ÷ could fecure the perfect Execution of a Plan to mighty and extensive? Which reaching thro' the Compass of many, and distant Ages, must combat the Power, controul the Prejudices, and work it's Way thro' the discordant Manners and Opinions of all the Kingdoms of the Earth. On this Account the immediate Exertion of divine Power was necessary for it's Proof, Support, and Completion. Accordingly, we find it's omnipotent Author, carrying on this Scheme of Wildom and Goodnels, with a mighty Hand, and an out-stretched Arm. "He fent a " Man before his People, even JOSEPH, " who was fold to be a Bond-Servant : He " increased his People exceedingly, and " made them stronger than their Enemies. " He fent Moses his Servant, and AARON: " And these shewed his Tokens among them ; " and Wonders in the Land of Ham. He " fent Darknefs, and it was dark ; and turned " their Waters into Blood. Their Land " brought forth Frogs, yea, even in their "King's

"King's Chambers. He gave them Hail-SECT. IV, " Atones for Rain, and Flames of Fire in. " their Land. He fpake the Word, and " the Locusts came innumerable, and de-" voured the Fruit of their Ground. He " fmote all the first-born in their Land, " even the chief of all their Strength. He " brought forth his People from among "them: He fpread out a Cloud to be a " Covering, and Fire to give them Light in " the Night-Seafon. He rebuked the Red-" Sea alfo, and it was dried up; fo he led . " them thro' the Deep as thro' a Wilder-" nefs. At their Defire he brought Quails, " and filled them with the Bread of Heaven. " He opened the Rock of Stone, fo that "Rivers ran in dry Places .- Yet within a " while they forgat his Works, and tempt-" ed God in the Defert : Then the Earth " " opened, and swallowed up Dathan, and " covered the Congregation of Abiram. "They joined themfelves unto Baal-Peor, " and provoked him with their own Inven-Stions; to the Plague was great among "" them : Then, being chastised, they turn-11 fed to their God. He led them over Jor-" dan; the Waters divided to let them pais. "He discomfited their Enemies : At his **T**<sub>3</sub> " Word, 1. 14 2

SECT. "Word the Sun abode in the midfl of IV. "Heaven; and the Moon ftood ftill, and "hafted not to go down for a whole Day. "So he gave the Kingdoms of *Canaan* to "be an Heritage unto his People; that all "the Nations of the World might know "that the Hand of the Lord is mighty, "and that they might fear the Lord con-"tinually."

> HRRE then we see, that this mighty Sories of miraculous Acts recorded in the Old Testament, being the very Means of preserving and separating the ISRAELITES from the rest of Mankind, and at the same time designed to impress them with a lasting Idea of the uncontroulable and immediate Power of God; were generally 'awakening Instances of Omnipotence, often of Justice and Terror, in the Punishment of cruel EGYPTIANS, rebellious JEWS, and idolatrous Nations.

> In purfuing this vaft Concatenation of divine Power thro' the Series of Miracles recorded in the New Teflament, and wrought for the fame End, the Completion of Chriftianity, we shall find them of a very different Nature and Complexion : Yet still, admirably fuited to accomplish the fame defigned Ends of Providence. For now the Fulness of

of Time was come, in which the Wildom of SECT. IV. the Deity ordained the immediate Establishment of a Religion of perfect Purity and boundless Love. Accordingly, the Series of miraculous Acts wrought for this great End, were fuch as must naturally engage Mankind to a favourable Reception of Christianity; were the very Image and Transcript, expressed the very Genius of that most amiable Religion they were brought to *jupport* and effablifb; in a Word, were continued Instances of Omnipotence, joined with unbounded Charity, divine Compassion and Benevolence.

THE Birth of JESUS was proclaimed by a glorious Apparition of fuperior Beings, who declared the End of his coming in that divine Song of Triumph, "Glory to God " in the highest, and on Earth Peace, Good "Will towards Men !" His Life was one continued Scene of divine Power, Wifdom, and Beneficence. He gave Eyes to the Blind; Ears to the Deaf; and Feet to the-Lame: He raifed the Dead to Life, rebuked the raging Elements, and made the Winds and Seas obey him. When to fulfill the Decrees of Heaven, and complete the great Work of Man's Redemption, he fubmitted to an ignominious Death, the Vail

Т 4

SECT. Vail of the Temple was rent in twain: A IV. géneral Darkness involved, and an Earthquake shook, the City. The fame Omnipotence by which he wrought his Miracles, railed him from the Grave; and after a fhort stay on Earth, during which he ftrengthened and confirmed his defponding Followers, translated him to Heaven. And now, a new and unexpected Scene of divine and miraculous Power opened on Mankind, for the full Establishment of Christianity. The Spirit of God came down, and dwelt with the Apoftles; they were all filled with the Holy Ghoft, and spake with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them Utterance. They were invefted with fupernatural Power to heal Difeafes; were impowered to ftrike dead the deceitful ANANIAS and SAPPHI-RA; and when imprifoned, were delivered by the immediate Hand of God. By these Means, Christianity gained a numerous Train of Profelytes among the JEWS; but the great Work of converting the Gentiles was not yet begun. To this End the Apostle PAUL was destined; and converted to Christianity by an amazing Act of supernatural and divine Power. In this important Ministry he was frequently preferved by

by the miraculous Care of Providence; did SECT. himfelf perform flupendous Acts of Power and Beneficence; by these Means converting Multitudes among the Gentiles, and planting Christianity in the most knowing and polished Nations of the Earth.

To this irrefiftible Chain of Evidence, arifing from the miraculous Exertion of divine Power, we may add another collateral Proof, arifing from the miraculous Emanations of divine Fore-knowledge, recorded in the Bible, and delivered in PROPHECY thro' a Series of Ages, all centering in the fame Point, the foretelling the Completion of this immenfe Plan of Wildom and Good-These Predictions were fulfilled in nels. the Advent, Life, Death, and Refurrection of our Saviour; who himself foretold the Success of his Apostles among the Gentiles, and the final Diffolution of the Jewish Polity. This came to pass in the Destruction of the Temple : And when a bitter Enemy to Christianity attempted to make void the Decrees of Heaven in rebuilding this Temple, (the only Circumstance of Union that could ever make the JEWS once more a People) the very Foundations were rent in Pieces by an Earthquake,

SECT. Earthquake, and the mad Affailants against IV. Omnipotence buryed in the Ruins.

> FROM this mighty Union, therefore, arifeth a Proof fimilar to that which we obtain from the Works of Nature. For as in thefe we fee the Happiness of the Creation intended, plann'd, and produced, and from hence discover the Agency of the Deity: So in the Progress and Completion of Christianity we find a parallel Display of the divine Attributes : We fee the Advancement of Man's Happiness determined by divine GOODNESS, plann'd by divine WIS-DOM, foretold by divine KNOWLEDGE, accomplished by divine Power: and hence, as in Nature, obtain a full Manifestation, Proof, or Revelation of the DEITY.

> As this feems to be the true Light, in which the Evidence arifing from the Scripture-Miracles ought to be placed, it may be proper now to add a few Obfervations on what hath been offered on this Subject, both by the Defenders and the Adverfaries of Christianity.

> I. As to the Degree of Proof or Evidence arifing from a *fingle Miracle* in Support of any *particular Dostrine*; whatever Force it may carry, 'tis a Point, which we are

are by no Means at prefent concerned to de- SECT. IV. termine : Because, as we have seen, in the Progress of the Christian Dispensation, there is a vast Series or Chain, all uniting in one common End. It might be confidered, in the fame Manner, by those who write in Proof of the Being of a God, "What Evi-" dence of his Being would arife from a " fingle Vegetable or Animal, unconnected " with the reft of the Creation." But however fatisfying a fingle Fact of this Kind may be to impartial Minds, it were furely weak to argue on this Foundation only, while we can appeal to that mighty Union of Defign which appears in the Works of Nature. It should therefore feem, that the Defenders of Christianity have generally fet this Evidence in too detached and particular a Light : For tho' the Proof arifing from a fingle Miracle, in Support of a particular Doctrine may be of fufficient Force to convince an equitable Mind; yet fure, 'tis infinitely ftronger and more fatisfactory, if we view at once the whole Chain of Miracles, by which the great Scheme of Chriftianity was propagated, as one vast Object : Becaufe in this View, we discover innumerable Circumstances of mutual Relation and Agreement,

#### 284 Onrevealed Religion and Christianiny. SECT. Agreement, fimilas to those which are Proofs of final Caules in the natural World : In a Word, we discover that Union of Defign, that Concurrence of infinite Goodness, Wifdom, and Power, which is the fave Indication of the Divinity.

II. IF in a Difpensation thus proved to be from God by all these concurring Signatures of Divinity, any incidental Circumfances should be found, which are amaccountable to human Reason, 'tis the Part of human Reason to acquiesce in this mysterious and unknown Part, from what is clear and known. Because in a System or Dispensation planned by infinite Wildom, there must of Necessity be something which finite Wifdom cannot comprehend. This the noble Writer allows with Regard to the Works of Nature. " If, faith he, in this " mighty Union, there be fuch Relations of " Parts one to another as are not eafily dif-" covered ; if on this Account, the End and " U/e of Things does not every where ap-" pear, there is no Wonder ; fince 'tis indeed than what must bappen of " no more " Necessity. Nor could fupreme Wifdom " have otherwife ordered it. For in an In-" finity of things thus relative, a Mind " which

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 285 "which fees not infinitely, can fee nothing SECT. "fully"."

III. HENCE therefore may be evinced the Vanity of this Cavil, " that nothing can " be proved to be a divine Revelation which is " not discoverable by human Reason; fince " whatever is reafonable needs no Miracle " to confirm it, and whatever is beyond the "Reach of Reason cannot be made to ap-" pear reasonable by any Miracle whatfo-"ever "." Hence, I fay, the Vanity of this Cavil is evident. Because, as in Nature, to in Revelation, the full Evidence of Divinity is founded, not on fingle detached Circumstances, but on a mighty Union or Concatenation of Facts, implying the most perfect Wildom, Power, and Goodnels. This Foundation being once laid, if any thing incidental in either Cafe appears unaccountable as to it's End or U/e, it is naturally and properly involved, or taken in as a Part of this immense Design, which thro' it's vast Extent, must needs be incomprehensible to buman Reason.

IV. As to the Objection, " that Mira-" cles may be wrought by inferior or fub-

<sup>f</sup> Moralists, P. ii. § 4. <sup>s</sup> An Objection urged by Tindal, Morgan, and others.

altern

SECT. " baltern Beings:" This vanishes at once ĮV. with Regard to the Christian Dispensation, on the Evidence as here stated. For as the miraculous Acts of Power recorded in the Bible were wrought for the Support and Accomplishment of a Dispensation full of Goodnefs and Wildom, we have the fame Proof that they were the Work of the fupreme God, as we have, that Nature is fo. 'Tis true, that in either Case, for aught we know, inferior or subaltern Beings may have been commissioned by the Supreme, as immediate Agents. But this Poffibility, in either Cafe, can be a Matter of no Confequence to us, while it is manifest that the delegated Beings, whatever they might be, acted in full Subferviency to the Goodnefs, Wisdom, and Omnipotence of the one eternal God.

V. To the noble Writer's Objection, "that, while we labour to unhinge Nature, "we bring Confusion on the World, and "deftroy that Order from whence the one "infinite and perfect Principle is known<sup>h</sup>." — the Reply is eafy and convincing. For while the fupernatural Power is directed to advance the Happiness of Mankind, 'tis so <u>h Moral. P. ii. § 5.</u>

far

far from destroying any Principle from SECT. whence the one perfect Being is known; that, on the contrary, it gives us still clearer and more fatisfying Notices of the divine 'Tis allowed on all Hands. Providence. that there are Imperfections in the Creation: And tho' there may be, and doubtlefs are, good Reafons unknown to us, why these should not in every Instance be removed by a particular Exertion of supernatural Power; yet when the divine Wifdom fees fit thus to interpole, for the further Advancement of his Creatures' Happines; can any thing be more irrational than to fay, that " this is bringing Confusion on the "World ?" The only Queftion is, Whether " Happinels shall be destroyed for the fake " of a pre-established Law; or a pre-esta-" blifhed Law be fulpended for the lake of "Happinels?" In other Words, whether Power shall be subservient to Goodness, or Goodnels yield to Power? A Question which no found Theist can be left at a Loss to As therefore the Exertion of dianswer. vine Power, in Nature, is for the Production of Happines; the miraculous Exertion of Power, for the further Advancement of Man's Happinels, is fo far from " bring-" ing 5

IV,

SECT. "ing Confusion on the World, either the IV. "Chaos and Atoms of the Atheifts, or the "Magick and Dæmons of the POLYTHE-"ISTS," that it is even the clearest Preef, or Revelation of the DIVINITY.

VI. WITHOUT this apparent Subferviency to the Defigns of Wildom and Goodnefs, all Accounts of miraculous Facts muft be highly improbable. Becaule we have no Reason to believe that the Deity will ever counteract the established Laws of Nature; unless for the Sake of advancing the Happiness of his Creatures.

VII. On this Account, most of the pretended Miracles recorded in the Heathen Story, are highly improbable. For it doth not appear, they were ever faid to have been wrought in any Series or Chain: they never were directed to the Accomplishment of any one End, thro' different Periods of Time: Were frequently far from being beneficent: Seldom accommodated even to any rational Purpose; but generally, mere pretended Acts of arbitrary and unmeaning Power. Thus they are effentially diffinguished from the Scripture Miracles; and are utterly destitute of that INTERNAL Evidence

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 289 Evidence which ariseth from an Union of SECT. IV. Defign.

VIII. HENCE we may clearly discover the Reafon, why the wifer Heathens ridiculed the Jews, even to a Proverb, for their extravagant Regard to Miracles. They knew their own to be abfurd and irrational; this at once prevented them from enquiring into the real Nature of the Jewifb Miracles; and at the fame Time, led them to deride and reject these boasted Wonders, as being no better than their own.

IX. BUT on the Evidence as here flated, the Scripture Miracles become even probable, from the Circumstances under which they are recorded. As they are beneficent : As they were wrought thro' different Perieds of Time in Support of one Dispensation full of Wildom and Goodnefs : As it is highly improbable that this Dispensation could have been completed in all it's immense Variety of Circumstances without such an immediate Interpolition of divine Power.

X. AND now we fhall plainly fee the Reafon why we reject the Accounts of Miracles given by Heathen Writers, while we believe the other Parts of their Story; and yet cannot reject the Jewish and Christian

IV.

. .

SECT. tian Miracles, without rejecting at the fame Time the whole History in which they are contained. For in the first Case, as the Miracles are ufelefs, unmeaning, and unconnecled with the reft of the Facts, it appears they are merely political. But the Jewish and Christian Miracles make an effential Part of the feveral Events related; they are strongly connected with this great H1s-TORY of PROVIDENCE, and are indeed the very Means by which Providence completed it's gracious Purpose, "the Establishment " of Christianity," We cannot therefore reject these miraculous Accounts without rejecting all the natural Events with which they are thus intimately intervooven : And this we cannot do, without deftroying every received Principle of Affent, and shaking the Faith of all ancient History.

> I cannot conclude this Argument without transcribing a noble Passage from the Book of Wildom, where feveral of these Truths are finely illustrated : And which may convince us, how just an Idea the JEWS entertained of miraculous Interpolition, beyond what their Enemies have industrioufly represented. The Writer, after recounting the stupendous Chain of Miracles' wrought

wrought for the Deliverence of the chosen SECT. People, concludes thus. " In all things, " O Lord, thou hast magnified and glori-" fied thy People, and haft not defpifed to " affift them in every Time, and Place .----"For every Creature in it's Kind was fa-" fhioned a new, and ferved in their own " Offices enjoyned them, that thy Children " might be kept without Hurt .-- For the " things of the Earth were changed into " things of the Water, and the thing that " did fwim went upon the Ground. The "Fire had power in the Water, contrary " to his own Virtue; and the Water forgat " his own Kind, to quench. --- Thus the " Elements were changed among themfelves " by a Kind of Harmony, as when one Tune " is changed upon an Instrument of Music, " and the Melody still remaineth.

THUS he nobly expressed the Subserviency of the Elements to the divine Will: And under the Image of a musical Instrument, which the skilful Master tunes, changes, and directs to the one Purpose of Harmony, he aptly and beautifully represents the whole Creation as an Instrument in the Hands of GOD, which he orders, varies, and con-U 2 trouls. 292 On revealed Religion and Christianity. SFCT. trouls, to the one unvary'd End of HAPPI-IV.\_\_\_\_NESS.

#### SECTION V.

HAVING vindicated the Scripture Miracles from the noble Writer's Objections; and shewn that they are so far from being ufeless or abourd, that the grand Scheme of Providence could neither have been evidenced nor accomplified without them; we have destroyed the chief Foundation on which his Lordship hath attempted to fix his Cavils against Christianity on another Subject; I mean, that of Entbuhalm; which naturally offers itself next to our Confideration. As this is the noble Writer's favourite Topic, we may reasonably expect to see him thine in it: And in one Respect indeed He never touches on the Subject, he does. but he riseth above himself: His Imagination kindles; he catches the Fire he defcribes; and his Page glows with all the Ardors of this high Passion.

IT will, I presume, be unnecessary to make any Remarks on the large and eminent List of *Enthusias*, Poets, Orators, Heroes, Legislators, Musicians, and Philosophers,

# 8

THE only Circumstance we are concerned calmly to examine, is that of religious Enthusiafm: Chiefly, to point out the effential Qualities and Characteristics which diftinguish this from divine Infpiration: Hence to prove, that our Saviour and his Apostles were not religious Enthusiasts, as the noble Writer hath fuggested.

"Tis indeed, as his Lordship observes, a great Work to judge of Spirits, whether they be of God." We shall willingly join him in this Principle too, "that in order to this End, we must antecedently judge our own Spirit, whether it be of Reason or found Sense, free of every byassing Passion, every giddy Vapour, or melancholy Fume. This is the first Knowledge, and previous Judgment; to understand ourselves, and know what

v.

SECT. " Spirit we are of. Afterwards we may "judge the Spirit in others, confider what " their perfonal Merit is, and prove the Va-" lidity of their Testimony by the Solidity " of their Brain." On this Principle then let the Caufe be determined.

> In examining this Subject, therefore, we shall find, First, that in fome Respects, Enthusiasm must, from it's Nature, always refemble divine Inspiration. Secondly, that in others it hath generally attempted a further Refemblance, but hath always betrayed Thirdly, that in other Circumitfelf. fances it is diametrically opposite to divine Infpiration, and void even of all feeming Resemblance.

FIRST, Entbusiasm must, from it's very Nature, in some Respects always resemble divine Inspiration. They both have the Deity for their Object; and confequently must both be attended with a devout Turn of Mind. They must both be subject to ftrong and unufual Impressions; the one *Supernatural*; the other *præternatural*, that is, beyond the ordinary Efforts of Nature, tho' really produced by Nature ; thefe, thro' their uncommon Force, will often refemble, and not eafily be diftinguished from these which

which are the real Effect of *fapernatural* Siccr. Power: This Circumstance deferves a particular Attention: For these two Qualities which are common to both, have induced many to reject the very Notion of divine Inspiration, as mere Ethusias. Whereas we see, that, supposing such a thing as divine Inspiration, it cannot but resemble Enthusias in these two Characters.

BUT tho' it were ftrange, if Counterfeits did not hit off fome Features of their genuine Originals; yet it were more ftrange, if they fhould be able to adopt them all, by fuch a perfect Imitation as to prevent their being detected.

THERE are, therefore, fecondly, other Circumstances in which *Enthusiafm* hath generally attempted a further Refemblance of divine *Inspiration*, but in these hath always betrayed itself spurious.

The first of this Kind is, "A Pretence "to, and Perfuasion of the Power of work-"ing *Miracles.*" This Perfuasion must needs be natural to the Enthuliass is because he imagines himself in all things highly favoured of Heaven: The Notion of a Communication of *divine Power* will therefore be among the chief of his *Deliriums*. U 4 In

SECT. In this the Enthuliast hath been detected? fometimes by the Abfurdity of the Miracle attempted, always by his Inability to perform what he proposed. There is scaree an Abfurdity fo great, but what hath fome Time or other been aimed at by Enthufiasts, in the Way of miraculous Power. Their Attempts have ever been void of all rational Intention, void of Beneficence, void of common Discernment : And hence manifeftly the Effects of a heated Imagination. That they have always failed in their Attempts is no lefs known. But these are Truths fo willingly allowed by the Enemies of Religion, that we need not enlarge on them. On the contrary, we have seen, the Miracles of the Gospel are rational, beneficent, united in one great End; performed before Numbers, before Enemies; recorded by Eye-Witneffes. His Lordship indeed objects or infinuates, that the Teftimony even of Eye-Witneffes cannot in this Cafe be a Foundation for Affent, unless we know them to have been "free both from any " particular Enthufiasm, and a general Turn " to Melancholy." But with Regard to the Miracles of the Gofpel, we know that many were converted by them, from their former Prejudices:

# 1

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 207. Prejudices; and therefore could not pof SECT. fibly be under the Influence of the Ghriffian \_\_\_\_ Enthuliafm; fuppofing it fuch. And as to their being free from Melaneboly; for this we may fafely appeal to the rational and confistent Accounts given by the facred Penmen. Melancholy and Enthufiafm must ever produce inconfistent: Visions. For a Proof that the Scripture Miracles are not of this Nature, we appeal to what hath been already faid on this Subject in the preceeding Section. · · · · ٠. . · •

But there is one miraculous Gift. the Gift of Tongues, which hath more generally been supposed the peculiar Effect of Inspi-We have an Account of this Kind ration. recorded in holy Writ<sup>1</sup>. And this Account the noble Writer hath thought it expedient to turn to Ridicule; by representing this supposed miraculous Gift, as the mere Effort of strong Melancholy, and natural Inebriation. To this Purpole, having observed from Dr. MORE, that "the Vapours and "Fumes of Melancholy partake of the Nz-"ture of Wine;" he adds, "One might " conjecture from hence, that the malicious " Oppofers of early Christianity were not un-

AETS ii.

" verfed

1

SECT. "verfed in this Philosophy; when they fo-V. "phistically objected against the apparent "Force of the divine Spirit speaking in di-"vers Languages, and attributed it to the "Power of new Wine<sup>k</sup>." Agreably to this infinuated Charge, he tells us of "A Gen-"tleman who has writ lately in Defence of "revived Prophecy, and has fince fallen "himfelf into the prophetic Ecstafies." The noble Writer adds, "I faw him lately un-"der an Agitation (as they call it) uttering "Prophecy in a pompous Latin Style, of "which, out of his Ecstafy, it feems, be "is wholly incapable<sup>1</sup>."

HERE we may fee, how ready fome People are to firain at a Gnat, and yet fwallow a Camel. The noble Writer ridicules the Gift of Tongues from divine Infpiration, as abfurd and impoffible: Yet he believes, you fee, or affects to believe, that this Man could fpeak Latin by the fole Force of Imagination and Enthufiafm. A compendious Method this, of learning Languages! I have fomewhere met with a very rational Remark, That whereas it was charged by FESTUS upon St PAUL, "that "Learning had made him mad," this No-<u>\* Mifc. ii. § 2.</u> <u>Let. on Enthu.</u> § 6.

" tion

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 299 tion inverts the Charge; for thus "Mad-SECT. "nefs may make a Man learned."

BUT leaving his Lordship's Admirers to determine which is the greater Miracle, a Gift of Tongues from Gad, or a Gift of Tongues from Melancholy; 'tis our Part to shew the effential Characters of Distinction between the Reality of one, and the Pretences of the other Now this will appear most evident, if we compare them, both in their Manner, and their End. As to the Manner of this new prophecying Sect, the noble Writer himfelf tells us, it was that of Ecflacy and Convulsion; and that he faw this Gentleman under an Agitation when he had the Gift of Tongues. As to the End pretended in this miraculous Gift; it appears there was really none: For the pompous Latin Style was uttered among a People who, in general, understood the English Language only : It could therefore ferve to no rational On the contrary, it appears that Purpose. the miraculous Gift of Tongues conferred on the Apostles, was rational both in its Manner and it's End. There is not the leaft Hint of it's having been attended with Ecftafies or Convulsions; nay, it appears from the

SECT. the Account, that it could not have been fo attended : And from the Occafion it appears how proper it was, with Regard to it's End. The Recital is noble and rational: Let " And there were it answer for itself. "dwelling at Jerufalem, JEws, devout " Men, out of every Nation under Heaven.-" And they were all amazed, and marvelled, " faying one to another, Behold, are nor " all these which speak, Galileans? And " how hear we every Man in our own Tongue; " wherein we were born ? Partbians, and " Medes, and Elamites, the Dwellers in Me-" sopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappodocia, " in Pontus and Afia, Phrygia and Pam-" phylia, in Egypt, and in the Parts of Libya " about Cyrene : And Strangers of Rome; " Jews and Profelytes, Cretes and Arabians " we do hear them speak in our Tongues " the wonderful Works of God !" How just an Effort of divine Power! which should at once give Instruction to those who most wanted it; and be the natural Means of conveying and difperfing the glad Tydings of the Go(pel, to every Nation under Heaven!-It should seem probable, therefore, that the Men who " mocked and faid, these Menare " full of new Wine," were the Natives of Judea.

Judea. For PETER, we find, immediately SECT. arole, and addreffed himfelf to these in particular. "Ye Men of Judea," &c. And it was natural for them to entertain this Suspicion; because they neither understood what the Apostles uttered, nor could imagine how they should obtain a Knowledge of so many various Tongues. They must, therefore, naturally suspect, that the Apostles were uttering unmeaning Sounds: And this they segarded as the Effect of Wine.

ANOTHER remarkable Circumstance, in which Enthusiasts have often pretended to refemble the divinely inspired, is " the Gift " of Prophecy." Which, indeed, is no more than another Kind of Miracle. In this too, Enthusiasm hath always betrayed itself. First, and principally, with regard to the Event. The frequent Attempts of this Kind, and their perpetual Failure, need not here been umerated: They are known fufficiently. This cannot be charged on the Apofiles with the least Appearance of Reason : For it is a Gift they hardly ever pretended to. Our Seviour indeed foretold many and great Events- the Defection of PETER; his own Sufferings, Death, Refurrection, and Afcenfion; the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the Perfecution T

SECT. Perfecution of his Disciples, the Propagation.

of his Religion among the Gentiles, the approaching Miferies and final Deftruction of *Jerufalem*. Now all these Events were clearly accomplished : So far, therefore, are they from proving him an *Entbufiast*, that they demonstrate him possessed of *di*vine Fore-Knowledge.

BUT befides the *Event*, there is a notable Circumstance in the *Manner*, which hath ever diftinguished *real* from *pretended*, *true* from *falfe* Prophecy: And which the noble Writer's groundless Affirmations have made it neceffary to infish on.

HE fays, "I find by prefent Experience, "as well as by all Hiftories facred and pro-"phane, that the Operation of this Spirit "is every where the *fame* as to the *bodily* "Organ<sup>m</sup>." In Confirmation of this he cites a Paffage from the Gentleman who was fubject to the prophetic Ecftafies, which informs us " that the ancient Prophets had "the Spirit of God upon them under Ec-"ftafy, with divers ftrange Gestures of Body "denominating them Madmen (or Enthu-"fiafts) as appears evidently, fays he, in "the Instances of Balaam, Saul, David,

<sup>™</sup> Let. on Enth. § 6.

"Ezekiel,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 303 " Ezekiel, Daniel"," &c. And he adds, SECT. the Gentleman " proceeds to justify this by " the Practice of the apostolic Times, and " by the Regulation which the Apoftle " himfelf applies to these seemingly irregu-" lar Gifts "." In this Inftance it is not unpleasant to observe the different Views of his Lordship, and the Gentleman he refers to, in their Endeavours to establish this pretended Fact. The one was zealous to fix a Refemblance between the old and the new prophetic Manner, in order to ftrengthen the Credit of the revived Prophecy: The other's Intention plainly was, by that very Resemblance, which he was willing should pais for real, to destroy the Credit of the Scripture Prophecies, well knowing that the other deferved none.

BUT fo it happens, that the noble Writer's Friend proves as bad an *Historian*, as he was a *Prophet*: And fails as miferably in relating *past* Events, as in foretelling *future*. The Truth is, that both his Lordship and the Gentleman seem to have been in a *Fit of Enthusias*, and have therefore been induced to mingle a little *pious Fraud*, thro' a Zeal for their respective *Theories*.

• Ib. • Ib.

For

SECTOFor in Reality, this protended Refemblance V. is utterly fictitious. There is not the leaft Hint in Scripture, that any of the Persons mentioned as true Prophets, were ever febject to these Ecstatic, convulsive Miginons, which the enthusiastic Gentleman and his. Tribe were always feized with. As to the Regulation made by the Apostle PAUE ; whoever confults the Place " will find, thereis no Mention made of Ecflaties, Convultions. or extraordinary bodily Motions. And its: clear, that our Saviour always delivered his: Prophecies on every incidental Occasion. under all the common Circumfances of heman Life ; calm, ferene, and with unaffected ? Deliberation. So that the whole Charges is a bold, continued Falshood, void of Truthe and even the Appearance of it.

INDEED, from the Inftances which the noble Writer cites from VIRGIT and LIVY, 'tis evident that the old beathen Protenders: to Prophecy were affected in the fame convulfive Manner, as the modern Christian Ess. thusiafts. His Lordhip might have cited ' twenty more from ancient Writers. And what can be rationally inferred from them? What but this - "That this convulsion

P 1 Corinth. c. xiv.

" Agitalion

#### One prove ale of Religion and Christianity. 305 " Agitation of the bodily Organs is a Cir- \$ 207. " cumfunce that effectually betrays Entim-" fiefor; and diftinguitheth it from the real " Infpirations recorded in holy Writ."

THESE are the Circumfances in which Enclusiafm will generally feem to refemble real Infpiration : the' on a nearer Scrutiny, these very Circumstances will always detect it. We come now to enumerate those other Qualities peculiar to Enthusiasm, in which it bears no Refemblance to divine Infpiration, and in which they are, at first View, clearly diftinguished from each And here it is remarkable, that, as other. the achie Writer dwells on the former, fo he fcarce ever touches on these following Characters of clear diffinction. This pecuhar Conduct can hardly be judged accidental: For a Man of Wit can eafily improve a partial Refemblance into a complete one : But to have added other Features, of ablohue Difimilatity, would have weakened the Likenefs, and confequently have difgraced the intended Representation.

THE chief Qualities, which clearly, and at first View, diftinguish Enthusiafm from divine Infpiration, I find enumerated by the X fine

SECT. fine Writer of the Letter on St. Poul's Catverfion. These are, "Heat of Temper, Me-"lancholy, Credulity, Self-Conceit, and Ig-"norance." So far as these relate to St. PAUL, the Reader is referred to the excellent Work here cited. 'Tis our Part to confider them as they may affect our Saviour, and the rest of his Apostles. And a brief Confideration may suffice: For all (except the last) are so repugnant to their Characters, that the very Mention of them refutes the Imputation.

WITH Regard to the first of these Qualities, "uncommon Heat of Temper," is of all others most abhorrent from our Saviour's Character. He is every where sedate, cool, and unmoved, even under the most bitter Circumstances of Provocations, He every where appears a perfect Model of Benevolence, Meekness, and mild Majssty. The same Temper generally prevails among his Apostles: More particularly we may observe of the Evangelis, who are the immediate Evidences, that in their Writings they discover the most perfect Coolness. Had they been of a fiery Disposition, they had

• See Dr. Low's Life of Chrift : Where his Character is described at large.

not

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 307 not failed to load the Enemies of their STCT. crucified Lord, with the bittereft Sarcesims. WITH as little Reafon can Melancholy be charged on the Founders of Christianity. Our Saviour came, " eating and drinking:" So entirely open, unreferved, and focial, that be was branded by his Enemies, as a Friend t of Publicans and Sinners. Another Circomstance, besides the Passion for Solitude, hath ever diftinguished Melancholy : That 14, " an Over-Fondnefs and Defire to Juffer " in the apprehended Caufe of Truth, bevond the just and rational Ends of Suffer-"" ing." Now this is diametrically opposite. "to the Character of our Saviour and his Apostles: For even JESUS himself was in an Agony at the Apprehension of his approaching Sufferings. So far were his Difciples from being tainted with this Melancholy, that they discovered unmanly Fear; for they all for fook bim and fled. 'Tis true, they afterwards endured the feverest Trials with unshaken Constancy; yet still, with " the refigned Spirit of Martyrs; not the Eagernefs and fanatic Vounts of all known En-. sbusiafts".

<sup>1</sup> For a remarkable Instance of this, see a Story relating to SAVANOROLA. Charact. Misc. ii. c. 1. in the Notes.

X 2

THE

The Charge of Gredulary hath no better Szcr. Foundation. To our Saviour himfelf it for in it's very Nature utterly mapplicable "The Disciples have been often charged with Ortur dulity. But on impartial Examination it will appear, that the Charge is groundle is ! For this is an unvarying Circumstance in Plice Credulity of an Enthulian, "at that it never "admits a Doubt?" But H is evident from the united Accounts of the Cofeel-Hittory that they often, nay always doubted of our Saviour's Death, the himself forcesitt". 'Tis equally evident, they not only doubted ? of, but almost diffelieved this Refurrection? till overcome by irreliftible Bvidence. Theie Circumftances afford another collateral Proof.) that the Apofles were not Brithufiafts : Beri cause it is effentially of the Nature of Enthufiafin, "" to run on headlong in the open" " Channel of the First conceived Opinion " Now 'tis' evident, they 'thanged their firft' Opinion concerning the temporal Dominion of CHRIST, into the firm Belief of his Deard, Refurrection, and forritual Kingdom "We" cannot therefore justly charge them with that Gredulity, which is the Characteriftic of. 4 1 3 Entbuha/m'.

• See this Point treated with great Particularity of

Тнв

THE BEXT Circumstance, Self-Concert, SECT. which hath ever been one of the maft diftinguishing Qualities of Enthysias, is fo distant from the Character of JESUS and his Apolies, that it hath never, I believe, been laid to their Charge, The Enthuliaft, is perpetually boafting of immediate Conn. verfe and Communication with the Deity :and overflows with a Contempt of all, who are not of his own System. In our Saviour. we difcover the moft unfeigned. Humility and Compassion towards all Man. When urged to show his Pretaufons to a divine Million, for far is he from refolving them into inward Feelings, Impelfer, or Netices, from. God (the constant Practice of every Enthufiait) that, on the contrary, he calmly appeak to his Workstand Doctrines; adding. in a Strain the Rover far of all Entonhafmat that in what we bear Witness only to "Jourfelves, our Witness cannot be esta-"blifhed as a Truth ".". The fame Turn of Mind appears in the Apostles. They affect no. Superiority, themselves, nor express or

Proof. in a Pamphlet intitled, " A Difcestr fe proving " that the Apofiles wars no Enthusiofts." By A. Campbel, S. T. P.

1 Mat. vii. 16. • John v. 31 X 3 difcover

3'10 On revealed Religion and Christianity. SEC +. difcover any Contempt of Spinitual Bride

> THE last Quality common to Eathuliastay is that of Ignoranor. This hath been former times charged on our Saviour himfelf anften on his Apofiles with an Air of Triumphy But to it is, that feeming Objection caghing Truth become often the formest Existence in Support of it. This will conservely and pear in the prefent Cale, lif we confider " that Ignorance or Want of Lettern, delide " joined with Enthusiasing similer always "produce the most heanfiltent Villans " whimfical Conduct, and permission Dash " trines." Thefe Effects, Ignorance and Ras thuhafm have wrought wherever they app peared, in every Age and Nation ... Nos man it indeed be otherwise : For a lattered Enthufiaft may be fuppoled to have an shirtennal Balance, which must in fomo Degree counteract and regulate his Wifions ; while the unlettered is fubject to no Controul, but must become the Sport and Prey to the da-Frious Flights of an Unreined Imagination !:

> Now, that the Apofiles and Evangelists were unlearned, mail needs be granted: And the the noble Writer hath taken upon him to deride them on this Account i yet this

#### On revealed Religion and Christianity. 33 4. this very Circumstance; compared with their SESTE Conduct and Writings; clears thein at once, from the Charge of Enthuliafinitel So far were they from the prings of this Pation. sommon to all ignoratt Enthulialts that we may defy the Enemies of Christianity to produce any Instance either of Speech or Practice, that bath the intellect Tincture of But managemon at Their Conduct man isgue hound exemplary hours Words were the Words of Trub and Sternefs record 1849 1 evalue to the Charge of Ignorance sgainst our Saviour, the Enquies of Christianity have been more continue Ver it bath been infinuated. And indeed, that he had not the common Aide of puman Learning, is sot only acknowledged, but infifted on. Could egionant and blind Entbyight the have ... .produced the fublitate eligious Defir was and moral Precepts which the Evangelifte have remanded from this Mouth ?. With as much . Fruthe in might de affirmed that the Cree--tion is the Bradues of Ghance With Realan then may we als the noble Writer this "Runstion, Howboace then had this Man : H fuch Wildom, Isning he Spake as never, Man art faster's And the Answer fure is me only, 14 That an Ait Who not from Man it must X 4 have ani

31,3	Ownerschiled Religion grot Christianing
SAC.T.	have been from Gonal Berieren the Diese
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	mice of Chaiftianity iband boon Witmelatt
	it's Exoclepessors when they intended to
	difgrace it zo While with Stuitless Labour
	they have attempted an prover " thetabe
	" most exalged Truths and Prospessofishe
	" Gofpel may be found furthered atnong the
	"Writings of the keathen Sagen!" .: 1000
	ERGH dele concurrent Ciscurdanges,
	therefored the obtains full internal Boof;
	that the Founders of Christianity meno dot
	Enthyfafty, as the mile Writer hath; by
	the mail laboured and reposted Infinantions,
	stempted to represent them. an increase and
	a provide a construction of the construction of
	SECTION KLU MARINA
	A grand and a march of the
SECT	. 8 I.N.C.E therefore we have appealed
V1.	to the religious and Mored Doctrines of.
	Christianity, as a concurrent Proof of it's
	divine Original ; it will be necessary now to
	examine what the noble Writer; hath all
	ledged or suggested against this most reffere
	tial Part of our Religion and mailin
	AND first, it appears from the general
	Turn of the Characterifics; that the mobile
	Author regards religious Effablishments
	being quite at a distance from Philosophy
	and

Onvooraled Religion and Christianing. seg. and Track, while which the telle Us the actent SI CAL Times they never immediated a The therefore derides wery Atterny to makes them of alefrei .- Thus he telly us ..... Not only Files "marier and Emphylafts of all Kiels wines Salerated by the Ancients Post on the Sother Side, Philosophy had as free a " Courle, and was permitted as Balance "againft Superflition .--- Thus Matters were "happily balanced; Reafon had fair Play ? "Learning and Science flouisified. Won "derful was the Harmony and Temper Suchich arole from all these Contrarieties "?" Such therefore being his Lerdin 3 Idea of a public Religion, which he ever opposes to private Opinion and Philosophy; 'tis no Wonder he should infinuate the Folly of Christianity, which promise th to all it's Pro- or 2 3 4 felytes, " that they fhall know, the Trath # and the Truth shall make them frac? on Bur notwithstanding the noble Writer's Partiality to the System of ancient Paganism, which he had deeply imbibed from his familiar Converse with ancient Writers; not unpreindiced Mind can helitate a Moment, in determining the fuperior Excellence of the Christian Religion, compared with these vertes N. Letter Entbuf. well-4 1

SECT. well-meant, but defective Schemes of bearben-

+

Policy. For, as gross Error, and Milapi prehension of the divine Nature and Attributes, was deeply interwoven with ancient Paganism ; 10, 'tis well known, that in Fact, the most horrid Enormities were committed upon Principle, under the Authority and Example of their pretended Gods. Lord SHAFTESBURY himfelf owns, what indeed it were folly to deny, that the Initation of the Deity is a powerful Principle of Action : If fo, it follows, that to communicate a juff Idea of the divine Perfections to all Mankind, must tend to fecure their Firtue, and promote their Happinefs. "Tis therefore equally ungenerous and 'impolisic, to hiffer Mankind to live in Ignorance and Idolatry, Hence 'tis evident, that Reformations in Religion are not the ridiculous Things his Lordship would represent them ; and that Christianity, if indeed it reveals the Trath, is a Religion in it's Tendency much mot beneficial to Mankind than ancient FUR pation of an early area yani/m. "Tis no difficult Talk to allign the oris ginal Caule of this fo different and even posite Genius of the pagan Systems from this · • • • • • • • COREW DEA. \* Eng. on Virtue.

of

Operevealed Religion and Christianity. 315. of Christianity In early and ignorant SECT. Ages, the Neceffity of religious Belief and religious Establishments was feen by the Leaders of Mankind : On this Account they inftituted the most falutary Forms and Doctrines, which their unexperienced Reafon could suggest. As Nations grew wifer and more polithed, they faw the Weakness and-Ablardity, of these established Systems ; but thro' a Regard and perhaps a miliaken one, to the sublic, Good, were unwilling to dif. quyer these, Defrets and Absurdices to the Reple. Hence probably the Rife of enateric and efsteric Doctrines. For the furthen that human Policy dered to go, was to a few initiated : While the Bulk of Mankind, even in the wijeft and politest Ages, continued the Dupes to the Regulices, and Superflitions of the mant ignorant anes. On the contary, it was a main Delign of the Christian Difpenfatiparto difpel this Cloud of Ignorance which excluded Mankind from all Participation of divine Truth ; to reveal those just and fulling Ideas of the Diquinity, which are the pobleft, as they are the fureft Foundation not only of Piety but of Moralse And which, fo far as they can affect either Piety **`**...

#### 37 6 On rovealed Roligion and Elmikinsing SECT. Piery or Morals (fuch is the Triumphe of) -Christianity over the labouted Refearches of falle Wifdom) are no les intelligible conhe" Peafant than the Phile opber. 1. On this As. count, Christianity wis perfect (relationly" perfect) in it's first Delineation : All As. tempts to change or add to its Dofirines." have but discovered their own Abfurdites: And Experience every Day more and more convincethus, that the only Method of obtaining a pure and uncorrupt System of practical Religion and moral Precepte, is to: fearch for them in the uncommented Pages of the Göfpel. Public out

Trius, what was the Effect of Nosifity among the Heathens, the noble Writer very partially attributes to Choice + He unifiakes a Defect for an Excellence + And blindly prefers the Weakness of Maris to the Will dom of God.

ANOTHER Cavil frequently urged of main finuated by his Lordhip against Gorifianity, feems to have been the natural Confequence of the last-mentioned. He much admires the Pagan Religions, as having been fictually and mutually *incorporated* into each other of And often represents Christianity, as of use unfociable, furly, and folitary Complexion, tending

#### On revealed Religion and Shifthanity. 31 7: reading to defiron every other but itfelf. The SECTO Confoquence of this he selle us, heth been " a new Sart of Policy, which extends it + " felf to another World, and hath made usy "deep the Bounds of matural Hymanity " and out of a fipernatural Charity has " saught us the Way of plaguing one and " other most devoutly," Now with Regard to this pretended unfociable Temper of Christianity 1 it must be owned indeed, that ous Religion tends to fwallow up and deres ftroy every other, in the fame Manner as Tereb in every Subject tends to deftroy? Falfebood : That is, by rational Conviction. The lame Objection might be urged against the Newtonian Philosophy, which dattroyed. the Gartefian, Fables : Or against the Copernight Sylen, because the clumly Visions of Ptotosy and Tycke Brabe vanished before it. The fame might be urged against the Ufers fulncie, of the great Source of Day, because it, Hensand extinguiffees every inferior Luftre : . Forsbeglimmering Lemps of human Knowledge 231 lighted up by the Rhilofophers,. ferrid indeed to conduct, them as a Lighter Spining in a dank Place, but these must naturally be lank in a Superior Lustre, when noixolgino 2 " Latin Enthu. Ann Marsha goiton. the

**5.5** cT- the Sun of Righteousness should arife. The VL Gospel therefore is so far unsociable, as to "difcredit Error; and is incompatible with this, as Light with Darkness : But not so unfociable, as to compel the erroncous. As to the religious Debates, then, which Christianity hath occasioned, and the Wars and Maffacres confequent upon them, which the noble Writer fo justly detests; Christianity flands clear of the Charge, till it can be shewn that it countenanceth the inhuman Principle of Intolerance : And this, it's bittereft Enemies can never do ''Tis true, that if we be fo irrational as to take our Idea of Christianity from the Representations of Enthufiasts and Bigots, nothing can appear more abfurd and milchevious: As, in like Manner, if we confider the Heavers under the perplexed Revolutions and malignant Afpects of the old Aftronomers and Aftrologers, nothing can be more unworthy either of divine Wifdom or Goodnefs. But how can these falle Images affect the noble Simplicity, and Benignity of the Gofpel, or the Solar System ? To the Works and the Word of God, we must repair, for a true Idea of their undifguiled Perfection : And there we shall read their divine Author; in the

#### Onvevealed Religion and Christianity. 319 the brighteft Characters of Wildom and Szcr. Goodnefs. So far therefore is Christianity VI. from encouraging Wars and Massacres, on Account of a Difference in Opinion, that it's divine Founder hath expressly warned his Followers against the Suggestions of this horrid Temper : Nor can these fatal Consequences ever arise among Christians, till they have divested themselves of Christian Charity, and mistaken the very Principles of their Profession.

Bur the noble Writer proceeds to still more bitter Invectives, if possible, against " Christianity. For he often infinuates, that the Prospect of Happiness and Milery in another Life, revealed in the Golpel, tends to the Destruction of all true Virtue. Indeed we cannot much Wonder that his Lordship should treat Christianity in this Manner, when we confider what he hath thrown out against Religion in general, in this Respect. These Cavils have already been confidered at large : Whatever therefore he hath infinuated against our Religion in particular, will naturally be refer'd to, and effectually be, refuted by these more general Observations . However, there are \* Euke ix. \* Ib. Wit and H. p. in § 3. \* See . **bove,** Eff. ii. § 9.

two

#### 310 On revealed Religion and Christianity. SICT. two or three Paffages on this Subject to re-VI. markable, that they may form to deferve a feparate Confideration.

AFTER having ridiculed and branded Christianity, as destroying the diffaterested Part of Virtue, he tells us " The Jews as " well as Heathens were left to their Philo-" fophy to be inftructed in the fublime Part " of Virtue, and induced by Reafon to that " which was never enjoyn'd them by Com-"mand. No Premium or Penalty being " inforced in these Cases, the difinterested " Part sublished, the Virtue was a free " Choice, and the Magnanimity of the Act " was left intire "."

HERE, again, the noble Writer hath got to his Peculiarities. What other Title this Paffage may deferve, we shall foon discover. For, first, supposing his Affertion true, what he notes in the Jewifb and Heathen Religions as an Excellence, had certainly been a Defect. For are not Hottentots, wild Indians, and Arabs, " left to their Philoso-" phy, to be induced by Reafon to that " which was never enjoined them by " Command? No Premium or Penalty •••

• Wit. and H. p. ii. § 3.

" being

# (Innersite Millie in the fill of the film of the second of

. But in Fact, neither the Jaws nor civilized Heathens were ever tained with They faw the Necessity of this Phrenzy. religious Belief; and as they faw it's Neceffity, fo they inforced it. With Regard to the laws, the noble Writer contradicts himself within the Compass of ten Lines : For there he fays, " their Religion taught 15 no future State, nor exhibited any Rewards Stan Rünishments, besides fuch as were tem-"derah" a This is the very Truth. Here shen showns a temporal Sanction of Pregeiner and Penalty, Reward and Punifbment : Yet in the Paffage above cited, and fine above, Effer ii. § 10. 1 Meralifts, Part i. § 3. Y which

Set e T. which stands close by the other in the Ori-VL ginal, he fays, "there was no. Premium "for Penalty inforced, no Reward or Pun-"ishment!" His Lordship deals as fairly and confistently by the civilized Heathens: For, could he indeed have forgot the diftinguished Rank; which, in the Elysian Fields, was assigned to those who fell to save their Country?

> Hic Manus ob PATRIAM pugnando vulnera paffi-Omnibus bis nivea cinguntur tempora vitta.

> AND now let the Impartial determine, whether the noble Writer's Observation hath more of Sagacity or of Truth in it.

> But the Christian Doctrines relating to an bereafter, are to undergo a yet severer Inquisition from the noble Writer: They are to be tortured and mangled on the Rack, of Wit shall I say, or of Buffoonry? "The "Misfortune is, we are seldom taught to "comprehend this SELF, by placing it in "a distinct View from it's Representative "or Counterfeit. In our boly Religion, "which, for the greatest Part, is adapted to "the very meanest Capacities, 'tis not to "be expected that a Speculation of this

> > s Eneid. lib. vi.

"Kind,

VI.

"Kind should be openly advanced. "Tis SECT. " enough that we have Hints given us of a " nobler SELF, than that which is commonly " fupposed the Bafis and Foundation of our "Actions. Self-Intereft is there taken as it " is vulgarly conceived — In the fame Man<sup>1</sup> "ner as the celeftial Phænomena are in " the facred Volumes generally treated ac-" cording to common Imagination, and the " then current System of Astronomy and " natural Science; fo the moral Appear. "ances are in many Places preferved " without Alteration, according to Vulgar \* Prejudice. - Our real and genuine Self " is fometimes fuppofed that ambitious one, " which is fond of Power and Glory; fome-" times that childifb one, which is taken " with vain Shew, and is to be invited to M Obedience by Promife of finer Habitations, " precious Stones, and Metals, thining Garsi ments, Crowns, and other fuch dazling " Beauties, by which another Earth, or " material City is reprefented "."

THIS Paffage contains two infinuated Charges of a very different Nature. The one is true, but no Objection : The other would indeed be an Objection, but that it is

11 1

Solil. Part ill. § 1. Y 2

absolutely

SECT. absolutely groundless. 'Tis true " that but VI. " Religion is for the greatest Part adapted \* to the very meaneft Capacities; and that " the celeftial Phænomena are in the facred " Volumes generally treated according to " common Imagination," &c. And would the noble Writer indeed have had it otherwife ? Would he indeed have had them spoken of, according to the Philosophical Construction of the Universe, rather than the received Notions of Mankind? With how little Reafon, we may foon be convinced, if we confider, First, that the End of Revelation was not to make Mankind Proficients in Philosophy, fince the Situation of the Generality can never admit it: And had the Scriptures supposed this, fas indeed fuch a Conduct would have supposed it) this very Circumstance had been 'an Argument of their Falishood. Secondly, even Philosophers themselves, tho intimately acquainted with the Construction of the Universe, do still descend to the Level of Mankind, when they speak of the Phanomena of Nature : The Sun fets and rifes, as it did three thousand Years ago . The Moon thanges, wains, is new, and old : The Stars are in the Firmament, the Sun. Aill

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 325 ftill rules the Day, and the Moon the Night. SECT. The Reason is evident: Becaule astronomical Discoveries have not the least Influence on the Practice of Mankind: Because, altho' the natural Appearances of things are merely relative to the Imagination only, yet they are, for that very Reason, necessary to be referred to, as the Imagination is the great universal Instrument of Life and human Action.

AN Objection therefore to the Scriptures on this Account, betrays either a großs *Mifapprehenfion* of human Nature, or the most unpardonable *Infincerity*; yet we find Objections of this kind frequently urged : as if, because the facred Penmen were impowered by God to reveal to us a certain Measure of *religious* and *moral* Truth, fuited to our present State, they must therefore be endued with *Omnifcience*; in order to make all Men not only good Subjects, but good Altronomers too !

But the' it were Folly to object against the facred Penmen, because they appear not to have been omnificient; yet I cannot conof clude this Argument, without producing a remarkable Instance, wherein their very Igmorance of these speculative and unnecessary Y 3 Truths

÷

VI.

SECT. Trathy becomes a convincing Proof of their VERACITY': A Circumstance which much more nearly concerns as. We read in the Book of Jolhua, " And he faid in the Sight " of Ifrael, SUN, flay thou in Gibson, and " thou Moon, in the Valley of Ajalan: "" And the Sun abode, and THE MOON stoop still,-and hafted not to go \* down for a whole Day ... Here, the fanding still of these Luminaries is related in fuch a Manner as concurs with the common Appearances of things; and yet confifts with the best Discoveries in Astronomy, tho' unknown to the Writer. For we are now affured that, if the Sun flood fill, it must have "been by fufpending the diarnal Rotation of the Earth: The flanding fill of the Moon Was therefore the neceffary Confequence. This the Writer appears not to have known; "Yet he relates the Fast, tho' it was of no Importance with Regard to that Event for which the Miracle was wrought. It is therefore of fingular Force in proving the Feracity of the Writer, because, had it not been true in Fact, it is a Circumstance which could never bave occurr'd to bim. 1. 17.1

THE noble Writer's other Charge re-Isting to the moral Representations of the

+ Johna x.

Scriptures,

Scriptures, would indeed be of Weight, if SE of. it were founded in Truth : But fo far from VI. this, that he hath utterly reverfed the Fact. For in Reality, these fensible Representetions of visible Beauty and Glory, are only occasionally or accidentally hinted; while the whole Weight and Energy of the Gospel is employed in inforcing the Idea of moral Perfection, of our nebkr SELF, of Self-Interest in the bigber Senie. of the Neceffity of extirpating every meaner Passion, and cherishing the great one of unbounded Love, as the necessary and only Discipline that can qualify us for future Happiness. 'Tis evident that the noble Writer lays the principal Strefs of his Charge, on the Apocalypfe; a Work in it's whole Turn strictly allegorical, and therefore necessarily convertant in Imagery and visible Representation. To this he hath most perver by added a figurative Expression of St. PAUL, who writing to a People among whom the Prize-Races prevailed. represents the Christian Progress as a Contest of this Kind; and shews it's Superiority over the Former, "because, saith he, " they labour to obtain a corruptible, but . " we an incorruptible Crown." In the mean Y 4 Time

Sac z. Time he hath omitted the many Diftour fee;

VL Parables, Maxims, of our Seviour, in which

he perpetually exhorts his Disciples to endeavour after unfeigned Virtue and univerfal Benevolence, as the only Means that can bring them to future Perfection. He hath forgot too the repeated Exhortations of St. PAUL, who fets CHARITY fo high above every other Gift or Possession, and adds, the Reafon of it's Preheminence. " becaufe " it shall never fail." 'Tis true indeed, as the noble Writer observes (with what Intention, 'tis no difficult Matter to determine) " that our holy Religion is for the greatest " Part adapted to the very meanest Capa-" cities :" We may add, " and to the very " worft of Dispositions too." And 'tis one of it's chief Glories, that it is fo. Therefore we find it inforcing every Motive that can work on every Mind : Which must furely be acknowledged as the Character of the Religion that should come from him: who knew what was in Man. But if the noble Writer would further infinuate, that. the Idea of future Happinels ought to be confined to that of virtuous Enjoyment, whereas the Christian Religion doth not fail " confine it ; we have already feen, that, from the

#### On research Religion and Christianity. 325 the Nature of chings, this Relinement is Ferrar usionary and groundles to contain the VE

We now come to the Examination of a Paflage more extrair dinary and original than any yet produced. The noble Write? tels us. " I could be almost tempted to think d " that the true Reafon why fome of the mon " beroic Virtues have to little Notice taken ? " of them in our boly Religion, is, becaufe? " there would have been no Room left for " " Difinterestedness, had they been entitled " to a Share of that infinite Reward, which" " Providence has by Revelation affigned to" "other Duties. Private Friendship, and " Zeal for the Public and our Country, are " Virtues purely voluntary in a Christian. " They are no effential Parts of his Charity. " He is not fo tied to the Affairs of this " Life; nor is he obliged to enter into flich"? "Engagements with this lower World, as"23 " are of no Help to him in acquiring a better. "His Conversation is in Heaven. Nor has " he Occasion for such fupermumerary Cares " and Embarrafiments here on Earth, as <u>م</u> " may obstruct his Way thither, or retard " him in the careful Talk of working out " his own Salvation !!" ..... :.23 \* Septaboye, Bifey ii. § 9. Wit. and H. Part ii. § 3. 1.13 WE

VI.

WE have already feen, that the real **Бест.** Nature of Virtue confifts " in procuring or " promoting the greatest public Happi-"nefs:" And that this Truth is often, occafionally, acknowledged by Lord Shaftefbury himfelf. Confequently, the bigbeft or most beroic Virtue, is that which tends to accomplish this great End: Nor can any pretended Virtue be either great or beroic that tends to obstruct or destroy it.

On this plain Principle, felf-evident to unbyassed Reason, let us examine the Passage now before us. And first, as to private Friendsbip, which, the noble Writer fays, " is a Virtue purely voluntary in a Chrif-" tian :"-Let us confider how far it may be regarded as a Virtue at all.-- Now, on ftrict Enquiry we shall find, that the extreme Degree of Friendship recommended and applauded by the Ancients, and here patronized by the noble Author, is effentially repugnant to true Virtue: In Friendfloip they placed the Chief Happines: - And if this confifts in the fupreme Love of one, it must needs diminish, if not extinguish, the Love of all; becaufe our chief or whole Mention must be employed, our every View and Design centered in giving Pleasure or procuring Happine(s

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 331 Happiness to one Individual. And this is SECT. the very fairest Light it can be view'd in. VI.

For we shall further fee, how little it generally partakes of the Nature of true Virtue, if we confider whence it hath it's This is univerfally allowed to be Rife. " a Similarity of Disposition, Will, and " Manners." This Circumstance demonstrates, that in general it must be controry to Virtue: For hence, the general Good must be often facrificed to gratify the Will of one. Of this dreadful Effect, Instances might be produced almost innumerable. Let one suffice. "Between TIBERIUS "GRACCHUS and C. BLOSIUS, a dear and " perfect Friendship subsisted : The latter " being feized for aiding the former in his " Confpiracy, was brought before the Con-" fuls. He pleaded his Friendship to GRAC-" CHUS in Excuse for his Crime." He was then asked, "What, suppose he had bid " you fire the Capitol, would you have done "it?" To this he boldly replied, "He "never would have laid me under fuch a " Necessity; but if he had, I would have " obey'd bim "." A thorough Friend fure : But a vile Citizen; notwithstanding the " Cic. Lalim.

artful

#### 332 Ouxevraled Religion and Christianity: SECT. artful Glois of an ingenious Modern, what VI. bath attempted to make out the Innover

hath attempted to make out the Innocence of his Intentions", 10 sector of 10 30 sener "Tis true, the Advocates for this Attachn ment fometimes affert, that it cannot confift but with Virtue. That it ought not, is seen tain: That it cannot, or doth not is a groundlefs Conceit; unlefs they chufe to make this Circumstance a Part of the Definition. which were idle Sophiftry. But if by Friendthip be meant, what indeed is always means, " a violent Love and Attachment to another " on Account of a Similarity of Manness in this, 'tis certain, hath often, nay most commonly fublished without Virtue 1. Among Savages, Robbers, Heroes, and Bandittiv In LUCIAN's Tract on Friendship, we find, that out of Twelve notable Inftances alledged, near half the Number were fugported at the Expence of Justice or Human nity; either by the Commission of Rapine. Adultery, or Murder, or by aiding the Efcape of those who bught to have fuffered for these enormous Crimes, Will any one alledge the Emperor TIBERIUS or his Favourite SEJANUS as Patterns of Wirtha? Yet their Friendship was to remarkable, See Montaigne's Effay so this Subje Country

that

1

Vİ.

that, in Honour of it, Altars were dedicated SECT. to Friendship by a senatorial Decree. Nay, fome of the applauded Inftances appealed to, by the noble Author in his Comment on this Pallage, are even notorious in this Refpect. Such were THESEUS and PIRI-THOUS, equally remarkable for Friendship, Rapes, and Phander. And fuch Instances may fill be found in every favage Country; where the strongest Friendships are commonly formed : Where Men thus leagued, go upon bold Adventures; and hazard and give up Life for each other without Reluctince, while they ravi/b their Neighbours Wittes, and carry off their Cattle. - With as little Reason can it be urged; that

Friendships in general are difinterested, to as to afpire to the Name of Merit. For Merit, if it exifts, can only arife from Virme And Virtue, we have feen, doth not effectially belong to Friendthip. Nay, in LUCTAN'S Tract, 'tis warmly debated beween the contending Parties, whether Affettion or private Advantage hath a more échsiderable Share in this applauded Union. 'Indeed the civilized and haughty Greek Ands upon the Punctilio of Honeur, and piques himself on the Notion of Diffiterest : 2:15 But

SECT. But the undifguifed Scythian infifts that mu-

VI. tual Advantage and Support are the ruling Metives. However, in Conclusion they fairly agree, in comparing a fet of fait Friends to GERYON with three Heads and fix Hands, enabled thro' this Increase of Strength, to overturn all Opposition . But fuppose Affection the ruling Principle, as unquestionably it often is; where is the Merit, while confined to one Perfon? Nay, it must rather lean towards Demerit, because it appears, 'tis rather dangerous than favourable to public Affection and Virtue. 'Tis evident then, that the friendly Affection is no more meritorious than the conjugal, paternal, or filial Affection; which being of a contracted Nature, are often consistent with great Baseness of Mind, and destructive of a more enlarged Benevolence, And

• Luciani Toxaris.

P Thus a Writer of diffinguished Abilities: "Many 44 Inftances occur in Hiftory and daily Experience, of 45 Men, not afhamed to commit bale and felfish Enor-46 Men, not afhamed to commit bale and felfish Enor-46 mities, who have retained a Tenderness for their 47 Pofterity by the firong and generous Inftinct of Na-46 ture. The Story of Licinius Macer, who was Father 46 to Calous the great Orator, is very remarkables at 46 related by a Roman Annalist. Having gone thro 46 the Office of Przetor, and governed a Province, he 46 was accused, upon teturning Home, of Execution

what

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 339 what Degree of Merit or Difinterest there SECT. is in Regards of this Nature, when separate from more extensive ones, we may learn from the noble Writer himself, who says, "there is a Selfishness in the Love that "is paid to a Wife, and in the Attendance "on a Family, and all the little Affairs of "it, which, had I my full Scope of Action "in the Public, I should hardly have sub-"mitted to':"

So far then is clear, That Friendship, or "a violent Affection founded on a Simila-"rity of Disposition and Manners," is more likely to produce Vice than Virtue; as it tends to fix such Habits of Mind as must lessen our Concern for the general Good. And in Fact, every one's Experience will point out to him Numbers of Men, naturally benevolent to all, but so strongly byassed and drawn in by particular Attach-

<sup>45</sup> and Abuses of his Power. The very Morning of <sup>45</sup> his Tryal he ftrangled himself, after having sent <sup>46</sup> Word to *Gicere*, who was preparing to plead againft <sup>46</sup> him, that, being determined to put an End to his <sup>45</sup> Life before Sentence (tho' the Penalty did not extend <sup>45</sup> to taking it away) the Profecution could not go on, <sup>46</sup> and his Fortune would be faved to the Benefit of his <sup>45</sup> Son,"---- Confiderations an the Law of Porfeiture; <sup>41</sup> 32-

... . LA. S's Let. to Mr. Melefworth, Let. ix.

16.2.97

ments,

VL

SICT. ments, that their Regards and Beneficence are centered wholly on a felect Few; while the reft of Mankind pass unheeded and unaffifted, and have no Share in their Benevolence, further than what Self-Deceit throws out, in unmeaning Wisbes for their Welfare.

'TIS no lefs evident, that, thro' the natural Advantages of this partial Alliance, Mankind must ever be prone to embrace it, in Exclusion of more extensive Affections, where no fuch Advantages can follow. It would therefore have been a Defect in the Christian Religion, to have enjoined or even recommended it in this Extreme. Accordingly we find, in the Gospel, every Attachment of this Kind, however natural and alluring it may be, fet very little above the lowest Selfishness, and justly represented as entirely confistent with it. " If ye do " do good to them which do good to you, " what thank have ye? Do not the Publi-" cans even the fame ??

BESIDES; there is fomething fo extraordinary in the noble Writer's Scheme of " enjoying Friendship," as sufficiently exposeth it's own Weakness. Friendship, his

" Mat. v.

Lordship



Unrevealed Religion and Christianity. 337. Lordship allows, can only arise "from a SECT. "Confent and Harmony of Minds". How then could Christianity have enjoyned us the Practice of this supposed Virtue? What must it have enjoyned us? Why, to go in Quest of a Mind resembling our own. It might with equal Propriety have enjoyned us to go in Quest of a Face resembling our own: And with as much Reason, for all the Purposes of true Virtue.

But if by Friendship be meant, what indeed is not generally meant, "A particular Love and Efteem for the virtuous or worthy," in which Senfe alone it can have any Tendency to produce true Virtue; then we may justly affirm, that it is recommended in the Gospel, both by Example and by Precept. It is naturally involved in that all-comprehensive Command of universal Charity: For tho' many have been zealous in their Friendships, while they were infenfible to publick Affection; yet, fuch is the Temperament of human Nature, that no Instance was ever known, of a Man zealous for the Happiness of all, yet remis in or incapable of a true Friendship for the wortby. It is recommended by St. PAUL,

who

VI.

SECT. who fays, that "peradventure for a good " Man, one would even dare to die." It is recommended by our Saviour's Example, who felected a beloved Difciple as his bofom Friend, whole Writings are the overflowings of a Heart filled with the pureft and most unbounded Love ... Above all, it is recommended by our Saviour in that noble and divine Paffage; "Who is my Mother " or my Brethren ? Even be that doth the " Will of my Father which is in Heaven, he " is my Brother, and Sifler, and Mother "."

So much for the fpurious Virtue of private Friendship: Let us next confider the noble Writer's Charge against Christianity, on Account of it's not enjoyning " a Zeal " for the Public and our " Country:" For this too, it feems, " is a Virtue purely vo-" luntary in a Christian." Now all the Abfurdities which load his Charge with Regard to Friendship, fall with equal Weight on this groundless Imputation. For if by " Zeal for the Publick and our Country," be meant, a Zeal that is inconfistent with the Rights and common Welfare of Mankind, 'tis fo far from being a Virtue, that, as in the cafe of Friendship, it is really a

· St. John. " Matt. xii.

Crime,

Crime, because it tends to produce the most SECT. fatal Confequences. And an Army of VI. victorious Warriors returning triumphant on this vile Principle, however graced with the flattering Title of *Heroes*, and Enfigns of *Glory*, are in Truth no better than a Band of *publick Robbers*: or, as our great *Poet*, a Christian and a Lover of Mankind, finely expressed it.

An impious Crew Of Men conspiring to upbold their State, By worse than hostile Deeds, violating the Ends For which our Country is a Name so dear ".

Now 'tis evident beyond a Doubt, that at the Time when our Saviour appeared, this deftructive *Partiality*, this avowed Confpiracy against the common Rights of Mankind was univerfally prevalent among the most civilized Nations. The JEWS were not exempted from this common Excess. " Inter ipfos Fides obstinata, adversus alios " bostile Odium," was their Character among the Heathens. The Greeks and Romans committed and boasted of the most cruel Enormities, conquered and inflaved innocent Nations, plundered Cities, and laid

> \* Sampson Agonistes. Z 2 waste

SECT. waste Kingdoms, thro' this abfurd and impious Love of their Country; a Principle no better in many of it's Confequences, than the most horrid and accurfed Bigotry. It had therefore been an effential Defect, nay rather a mischievous Absurdity, in the Christian Religion, to have enjoyned, encouraged, or countenanced a Partiality unjust in itself; to which, from Views of private Advantage, Mankind must ever be prone; and which, at the Time when Christianity began to spread, was indeed the reigning and predominant Error.

> BUT if by "Zeal for the Publick and "Love of our Country" be meant, fuch a Regard to it's Welfare as shall induce us to facrifice every View of private Interest for it's Accomplishment, yet still in Subordination to the greater Law of universal Juffice, this is naturally, nay neceffarily involved in the Law of universal Charity. The noble Writer indeed affirms, " it is no effen-" tial Part of the Christian's Chariy." On the contrary it is a chief Part of the Chriftian's Charity. It comes nobly recommended by the Examples of JESUS and St PAUL: The one wept over the approaching Defolation of his Country: The other declared his

his Willingnefs to be cut off from the Chrif- SECT. tian Community, if by this Means he might fave his Countrymen. And that it necessarily ariseth from the Principle of universal Love will be evident, if we confider the Nature and Situation of Man. His Nature is such, that he inevitably contracts the ftrongest Affection for those with whom he converseth most intimately; and whose Manners and Relations, civiland religious, are most nearly connected with his own. His Situation is fuch, that he feldom hath an Opportunity of doing good Offices to any Society of Men, fave only those of his own Country; all others being naturally removed beyond the narrow Sphere of private Beneficence. Hence the great Precept of universal Charity doth effentially involve "a Zeal for the " Publick and Love of our Country :" At once it curbs the Exorbitance of this natural Partiality, and carries it to it's full Perfection.

THE Necessity of this great Regulating Principle will further appear, if we confider, that with Regard to the Conduct of feparate States and Kingdoms towards each other, no Sanctions of human Law can ever take place. In this respect all Nations must ever be in a State of Nature. There was therefore

VI.

SECT. therefore a more particular Necessity, on this Account, of regulating their Conduct towards each other, by the great Law of univer (al Charity.

IT may feem strange that the noble Writer should be ignorant of these Truths. But after the Imputations he hath here thrown on Christianity, it will furely appear more strange that he was not ignorant of them : And that these bitter Sarcasms were thrown out against the clear Convictions of his own Mind. Yet nothing is more evident, as will now appear. That he understood the Nature of Christian Charity, is indifputable: He defines it, and properly, in the Note annexed to the Paffage here refer'd to. In another Place, he calls it " the " Principle of Love, the greatest Principle " of our Religion "." In a following Paragraph he calls it " that divine Love which " our Religion teaches "." But what is of all most remarkable; he fets it, under the new and whimfical Denominations of Good-Nature and Friendship to Mankind, far above private Friendship and Love of our Country. Take the Paffages as they lie, in the noble Writer. " Can any Friendship be fo beroic,

\* Moralifs, Part ii. § 3.

" as

y Ib.

#### On revealed Religion and Christianity. 343 " as that towards Mankind ? or particular SECT. " Friendship well subsist, without such an " enlarged Affection 2?" Again. " Theocles " had almost convinced me, that to be a "Friend to any one in particular, 'twas " necessary first to be a Friend to Man-"kind "," Laftly, and above all. "And " can your Country, and what is more, your "KIND, require lefs Kindnefs from you, " or deferve less to be confider'd, than even " one of these Chance-Creatures ?- O Phi-" locles, how little do you know the Extent " and Power of Good-Nature, and to what " an heroic Pitch a Soul may rife, which " knows the thorow Force of it; and distri-" buting it rightly, frames in itself an equal, " juft, and universal Friendship b?" Here then we see the former Paragraph utterly reversed. For " universal Love is now the " only beroic Principle:" And " private " Friendship and the Love of our Country " are only commendable, as they make " subordinate Parts of it."

To this aftonishing and wilful Perverfion of the Moral Principles of Christianity, we may add the fubfequent Part of the fame invenomed Paragraph. For he pro-• lb. § 2. <sup>b</sup> Ib. § 1.

5 Ib. § 1.

Z 4

ceeds

SECT. ceeds to infinuate, as if Christian Charity VI. were no active Principle; but fuch as leads it's Profelytes to a State of mere Contemplation and Inaction, without Regard to focial Life, and the Affairs of this lower World. We may defy the noble Writer's most zealous Admirers to find any other rational Construction for the following Passage. " The " Christian, he fays, is not obliged to en-" ter into fuch Engagements with this lower " World, as are of no Help to him in ac-" quiring a better. His Conversation is in " Heaven. Nor has he Occasion for such " *fupernumerary Cares*, and Embarraffments " here on Earth, as may obstruct bis Way " thither, or retard him in the careful Tafk " of working out bis own Salvation." Unexampled Prevarication ! thrown out against that Religion which enjoyns an active Virtue, a Regard to the present Happiness of Man in every possible Relation, as the only Way to obtain Felicity hereafter : Against that Religion, whose Founder did not idhy barangue in a Closet upon Beauty, Virtue, and Decorum, amidst the Indolence and Pride of Life; but practifed the Divine Truths he taught, and " went about doing Good," amongft

Ourrevealed Religion and Christianity. 345 monght the meaneft and most despised of SECT. Nis Fellow Citizens.

To be unmoved on this Occasion were Stupidity; not to confeis it, Cowardice. Error should be exposed with Calmnes; but Disbonesty merits our Abhorrence.

YET from these Cavils the' groundless, and Misrepresentations the' voluntary, we may draw an Observation which highly recommends Christianity. We may hence see the superior Excellence and Dignity of it's moral Precepts, above the most applauded among the Heathen: And how nobly, by one great Principle, it rectifies every little Partiality to which the human Heart is subject. For this is clear; that in one Age or Nation, Friendship hath been idolized as the superner Virtue; in another, Hospitality; ' in a Third, the Love of our Country;

<sup>c</sup> Indeed the noble Writer, purfuing the fame kind Intention to Chriftianity, pretends that the Law of Hofpitality, or Regard to Strangers, among the ancient Heathens, was equivalent (nay he gives a very difingenious Suggeftion, as if it was far fuperior) to Chriftian Charity. "Such, fays he, was ancient Hea-"then Charity, and pious Duty towards the whole of "Mankind; both those of different Nations and diffe-"rent Worfhips." (Misc. iii. c. 1. in the Notes) For Instances of this, he is forced to go back as far as Homer, who indeed hath given us fome fine Pictures of ancient Manners of this kind, in his Odyfry. The

SECT. in a Fourth, enthulialtic Contemplation; in VI. a Fifth, the Austerities of the Hermit; in a Sixth, the external Practice of Religion; in a Seventh, which is the fashionable Peculiarity of our own Times, occasional Acts of Humanity and Compassion, while the more extensive and Publick Views of Beneficence are neglected or even derided. How different, how superior, is the great Christian Principle of universal Love ! Which rifing gradually, by a Progress thro' all the

> noble Writer might have found others, in no Refpect inferior, in the Old Teltament, recorded long before universal Charity was ever thought of, in the Stories of Abraham and Lot. The Truth is, the Guelt or Stranger was held facred, because he was under the Protestion of his Hoft : It was therefore deemed criminal, to violate a Truft thus reposed. But it happens unfortunately for his Lordship's Argument, that in these Old Times Rapine and Plunder were as much in Vogue as either Friend/hip or Hofpitali, and equally creditable. These phantom Appearances of Virtue are still to be feen in the Arabian Defert: as frequently as ever. If a Traveller comes to the Door of a wild Arab's Tent at Night, he is received with fo boundlets an Hofpitality, that the Hoft would expose himself, his Wife, and Children to certain Destruction to fave the Life of his Gueft. Had this hofpitable Savage met the Traveller in the Deferts at Noon, he would have frip'd him to the Skin, and on the heart Refiftance laid him dead at his Feet. And this was the true Extent of the noble Writer's boafted Heathen Charity.

less enlarged Affections towards Parents, SECT. VI. Children, Friends, Country, and fpreading till it embraceth all Mankind, and every Creature that hath Life, forms that perfect Virtue in which human Weaknefs is most prone to be defective, and which implies and includes every moral Perfection. Chriftianity alone hath kindled in the Heart of Man this vital Principle; which beaming there as from a Center, like the great Fountain of Light and Life that fustains and chears the attendant Planets, renders it's Profelytes indeed " burning and shining " Lights," fhedding their kindly Influence on all around them, in that just Proportion, which their respective Distances may demand.

#### SECTION VII.

THE preceding Remarks may fuffici-SECT. ently obviate every Cavil of the noble Writ-VII. er against the *effential* Parts of *Christianity*. But as his Lordship hath cafually intersperfed several Random Infinuations, we must be content to receive them as they happen to appear, fince they are of that disjointed Kind as to be incapable of Connection.

ΙN

Sвст. VII.

In a marginal Note, he gives an Account of the Migration of the *Ifraelites* from Egypt, under the Conduct of Moses. He

thinks proper to reject the clear Account which the Jewish Legislator himself gives, " That they departed, in order to worship " the true God;" and prepofteroufly prefers what TACITUS and JUSTIN have faid on that Subject; who affirm indeed, but without Proof, "that the Jews were driven " out of Egypt on Account of their Leprofyd." This Partiality might of itfelf appear mysterious enough, when we confider the particular and confistent Account given us by the very Leader of the Expedition : For, what should we think of the Man, who should prefer the random Conjectures of an ignorant Modern, to XENOPHON'S Retreat, or CÆSAR'S Commentaries? But the noble Writer's Partiality will appear still more unaccountable, if we confider the following Passage of STRABO; a Writer as much beyond TACITUS in Candour, as beyond JUSTIN (if indeed JUSTIN and not TRO-GUS POMPEIUS, be answerable for this Slander) in true Judgement. This Author STRABO, second to none in Antiquity, Misc. ii. c. 1. Notes.

fpeaks .

fpeaks thus : " Moses, an Egyptian Prieft, SECT. VII. " retreated along with a number of religious\_ " Followers. For he affirmed and taught, " that the Egyptians were miftaken, who " imaged the Deity under the Forms of the "Brute-Creation; as likewife the Libyans " and Greeks, who represented the Gods " under the buman Shape. He held that " alone to be God, which comprehends eve-" ry living Creature, the Earth, and Sea: " which is called Heaven, the World, or the " univerfal Nature; whole Image, who " that is in his right Mind, would dare to " form out of any earthly Materials? Re-" jecting therefore all use of Images, he de-" termined to dedicate to him a Temple " worthy of his Nature, and worfhip him " without Images. - On this Principle he " perfuaded and brought over many well-" difposed Men, and led them forth into " that Country where now Jerusalem is " built"." A noble Teftimony, fure, from

• Μωσις γαρ τις των Αιγυπλιων ιερεων — απηρεν εκασε. — Εφη γαρ εκανος και εδιδασκεν ως υκ ορθας Φρονυσιν οι Αιγυπλιοι θηριοις απαζονίες και βοσκημασι πομορθυς τυπυνίες από γαρ εν τυτο μονον θεος πο περισχον ημας απανίας και γην και θαλατίαν, ο καλυμιν α Heathen

#### 350 On revealed Religion and Christianity. SECT. a Heathen Writer: Lefs he could not fay, VII. if he was well informed; and, unlefs he had embraced the Jewish Religion, he could not have faid more.

THERE is another Paffage (Misc. v. c. 1.) which discovers somewhat of unfair dealing in the noble Writer. In the Margin, he prettily enough criticizes the Preface to St. LUKE'S Gofpel. But in the Text he hath paraphrafed the Evangelist's Expression, in a Manner fo distant from any thing St.LUKE either wrote or meant, as must not a little aftonish every candid Reader. St. LUKE fays, " It feemed good to him to write in Or-" der the Things that he knew." To which the noble Writer adds, "As there were " many, it feems, long afterwards, who did; " and undertook accordingly, to write in " Order and as feemed good to them, &c."-What shall we fay of the noble Writer on this Occafion? Why, this only; "That

ουρανον και κοσμον, και την των ούλων Φυσιν. Τυτυ δε τις αυ εικονα πλατίειν θαρρησειώ νων εχων ομοιαν τινα των παρ' ημιν; απ' έκν δει πασαν ξοανοποιίαν, τεμενος αΦορισανίας και σηκον αξιολογου τιμαν edus χωρις.—Εκεινος μεν ωυ τοιαυία λεγων επεισεν ευγιαμονας ανδρας ωκ ολιγως, και απηγαγεν επι τον τοπον τωίον, σπυ υμυ εςι το εν τοις Ιεροσολυμοις κτισμά. Strabo, l. xvi.

in-

#### On reveated Religion and Christianity. 35 t "inafmuch as it feemed good to bim to inter-SECT. "pret this Preface of St.LUKE, he therefore "thought himself at Liberty to interpret it "as it feemed good to bim."

THERE are three more Subjects which his Lordship hath thought fit to represent in the Manner which feemed good to bim. These are, first, the divine Foreknowledge communicated to JOSEPH in the Interpretation of PHARAOH's Dreams. Secondly, the Rife of Bigotry, or religious Intolerance and Perfecution. Thirdly, and principally, The Relation which the Jewish Institutions bear to the Egyptian<sup>f</sup>. In all thefe, the noble Writer hath employed every Art of Infinuation and Address, that he might throw an Odium on the Mofaic Difpenfati-These Passages might well merit a on. particular Confideration, had I not been happily prevented by my most learned Friend, who hath fully exposed their Weakness in that inestimable Treasure of all true Knowledge, The divine Legation of Thither the Reader is referr'd; Moses. where he will find these Questions treated

f See Mife. ii. c. I.

with

252 On revealed Religion and Christiansty. SECT. with that Reach and Mastery fo peculiar to VII. the Author of that great Work<sup>s</sup>.

IT may now be necessary to examine the third Chapter of the noble Writer's fecond Miscellany; where he makes it his Pretence, " to prove the Force of Humour in Religion." Of which it may be faid, that it is the trueft Piece of Random-Work, the most genuine Farce, that is perhaps to be met with in any Writer of whatever Age or Nation. He divides it (as every Farce ought to be divided) into three Asts. In its Progress we are carry'd into a very Fairy-Land of Thought, if not more properly a confused Chaos. For first, he fets about with great Solemnity to prove, "that Wit and Humour are " corroborative of Religion, and promotive " of true Faith:" To prove this, a Story is told, by which it appears, that not Wit and Humour, but good Humour or Eafiness of Temper is thus corroborative and promotive : Then, in Conclusion, Wit and Humour come in again, to overturn all that hath been done, and fhew that good Humour hath fuffered itself to be ridiculously imposed upon.

With Relation to the first of these Points, fee the Div. Leg. Vol. ii. p. 164. For the second, see id. Book ii. § 6. For the third, see Book iv. § 6. patim.

THO'

Tho' it doth not appear that our mo-SECT. VII. dern Advocates for Wit and Humour are fo nearly interested in their Fate as they seem to think themselves; yet it must be owned their Generolity is fo much the more to be applauded, in thus pleading the Caufe of Clients who never employed them. However, taking for granted what feems to be the real Foundation of their Writings on this Subject, " that talking in Praise of Wit " and Humour is a Proof of their being " poffeffed of them, and that confequently " they are Parties in the Caufe ;" I shall not envy the noble Writer any Man's Admiration, who may think proper to effeem him a Wit, on account of the grotefque Appearances he affumes throughout this pre-'Tis my Intention only to fent Miscellany. convince the plain Reader, that this fupposed Wit is by no means Philosophical.

THE first Head therefore, he tells us, is "to make it appear, that Wit and Humour "are corroborative of Religion and promo-"tive of true Faith." To this Purpose he tires us with a Story, not the most elegantly plann'd, in my Apprehension, of a "Club "of merry Gentlemen, who in a travelling "Expedition meeting with forry Roads and A a "worse

VII.

SECT. " worfe Fare, laugh'd themselves into a " Belief, that both Roads, Accommodations, "and Cookery, were perfectly good." What follows is the Moral or Application " Had I to deal of this curious Conceit. " with a malicious Reader, he might per-" haps pretend to infer from this Story of "my travelling Friends, that I intended " to represent it as an easy Matter for Peo-" ple to perfuade themfelves into what " Opinion or Belief they pleafed."

> Now without troubling ourfelves to enquire how far this Story is a Proof of the noble Writer's fundamental Maxim, "That "Ridicule is a Test of Truth;" let us proceed to the intended Moral; which feems evidently calculated to throw a false Light on religious Belief; by reprefenting it as the mere Effect of Prejudice, Self-Imposition, and Deceit. To rescue it, therefore, from this infinuated Calumny, we need not deny, but infift, that the Passions, false Interests, and Prejudices of Mankind must indeed for ever hang as a Byass upon their Opinions. But it must be farther observed too, that these Paffions and false Interests will at least as often prejudice them against Religion, as in its Favour. 'Tis true, there are Prejudices

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 355 dices in Favour of Religion, arifing from SECT. Education ; but there are Prejudices against\_ it too, arifing from vicious Palfions. Some are fanguine in their Hopes, and hence, while their Conduct is virtuous, wilk, and therefore believe Religion to be true: Others are fanguine in their Hopes, but abandoned in their Conduct, and therefore live themselves into a Belief that Religon is falle. Some, thro' a Dread of Annihilation, perfuade themfelves beyond the Strength of Evidence: Others, thro' the Prevalence of a suspicious cast of Mind, reject even what Thus Paffions and Prejudices is probable. work powerfully indeed; but they work both for and against Religion. It should feem then, that the noble Writer's Moral, which he aims at Religion, may with equal Force be apply'd to Infidelity: For it is but fuppofing a Man given up to Vanity or Vice, and we shall foon " fee him enter into fuch " a Plot as this against his own Under-" ftanding, and endeavour by all poffible " Means to perfuade both himfelf and o-" there of what he thinks convenient and " useful to DISBELIEVE." 'Tis idle therefore to infift on the Prejudices either for or against Religion: they will both naturally A 2 2 arife:

SECT. arife; and it is the Part of Reason to con-VII. troul them. But we may fafely leave it to any one's Determination, which Temper of Mind is the most *amiable*, that which entertains Prejudices in Favour of Religion, or against it.

> THE noble Writer proceeds to his fecond Head; but feems at the fame time confcious how little it was to any good Purpole. However, in Failure of Truth and Method. he again hath recourse to what he seems to think Wit and Humour; and which, for aught I know, may pais for fuch among "However, fays he, left I his Admirers. " should be charged for being worfe than " my Word, I shall endeavour to fatisfy my " Reader, by purfuing my Method pro-" pofed; if peradventure he can call to " Mind what that Method was. Or if he " cannot, the Matter is not fo very impor-" tant, but that he may fafely purfue his "Reading, without further Trouble."

> But tho' it was prudently done in the noble Writer, to throw the Subject of his fecond Head into Shades; yet for the Sake of Truth, we must drag it into Light. It was therefore to prove "That Wit and Hu-" mour are used as the proper Means of " pro-

#### On revealed Religion and Christianity. 357 " promoting true Faith, by the holy Foun- SEOT. VIL. " ders of Religion." But when we come to the Point, for Wit and Humour, by Virtue of a certain Dexterity of Hand, the Reader is again unexpectedly prefented with good Humour in their Stead. This. it will be faid, is nimble dealing; but what of that, fo long as it may tend to difgrace Christianity and its Founder? The noble Writer's Application, therefore, is still more Extraordinary. " The Affection and Love " which procures a true Adherence to the " new religious Foundation, must depend " either on a real or counterfeit Goodness in " the religious Founder : Whatever ambitious " Spirit may inspire him; whatever savage " Zeal or perfecuting Principle may lie in " Referve, ready to difclose itself when Au-"thority and Power is once obtained; the " first Scene of Doctrine, however, fails not " to prefent us with the agreeable Views " of Joy, Love, Meaknefs, Gentlenefs, and " Moderation."-To fpeak my inmost Sentiments of this Passage, it is of too black a Nature to deferve a Reply. There are certain Degrees of Calumny fo flagrant, as injured Truth difdains to answer; and this is of the Kind. On this Occasion, there-Aa 3 fore,

SECT. fore, we fhall leave the noble Writer to the VII. Reflections of every *bone/t Man*; in Conformity to the Example of that bleffed Perfon, "wbo, when he was reviled, reviled not " again h."

> THE next Circumstance in holy Writ, that falls under his Lordship's Animadverfion, is what he calls " The famous Entry " or bigb Dance perform'd by DAVID in " the Proceffion of the facred Coffer." In which he hath again represented Things as it feemed good to him. Here, by confounding ancient, with modern Manners (in fuch a Way as is quite unworthy of his Character, and fuited only to the Genius of a Coffee-house Freethinker) he hath endeavoured to bring down the folemn Procession of a grand religious Festival, to a Level with the \* Merriments of an Apish Dancing-Master. This Representation may very probably pass current among many of his Admirers; fo that it had been necessary to fet the Matter in its true Light; but that here too, I am happily prevented by a judicious Writer, who hath done all imaginable Juffice to the Argument; and effectually ex-

> > \* See above § 3. of this Estay. p. 269.

posed

## On revealed Religion and Christianity. 359 posed the noble Writer's Weakness and In-Sect. fincerity<sup>1</sup>.

H1s Lordship now proceeds to the Story of the Prophet JONAH, which he hath burlefqued and turned to Farce with that Delicacy, fo peculiar to himfelf. The Story itself is indeed authenticated by our SAVIour's mention of it, as emblematical of his own Death and Refurrection. Its Moral is excellent; being an illustrious Difplay of the divine Mercy to penitent and returning Sinners, exemplify'd in GoD's remitting the Punishment denounced, and sparing a devoted City on its fincere Repentance; as alto of the Frailty and Imperfection of the -best of Men, set forth in the Prophet's Behaviour on the Occasion. To this we may add " the Propriety of the Miracle record-" ed," which was itself an extraordinary and most awakening "Instance of Punishment " inflicted on Disobedience, and remitted on " Repentance;" and therefore bearing a frong Relation to the Event for which it was wrought; being peculiarly adapted, when made known to the Ninevites, to in-

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Leland's Anfwer to the Moral Philosopher, p. 291, &c.

Aa 4

: :

duce

# 360, Opycocaled Religion and Christianing?

SECT. duce them to hearken to the Prophet's VII. Preaching, to believe what he denounced and promised, and rouze them at once into a Fear of Gop's Justice, and a Reliance on his Mercy.

> SUCH then being the real Nature of the Fact; the Secret of the noble Writer's polite Representation lies in his burlesquing the Circumstances of the *supposed Dialogue* between Gop and the Prophet; an eafy Task for any one who is difingenuous or ignorant enough to represent as strictly litteral, what is evidently parabolical; according to the frequent and known Manner of Composition in the earliest Ages k. This his Lordship seems to have been aware of: "Whatfoever of this Kind may be allego-" rically understood, or in the Way of Pa-" rable or Fable, &cc." Now had he treated the Scripture Story with the fame Candour which he affords to other ancient Writers, he would not have abused this Paffage in fo unworthy a Manner. A Writer of no Abilities, if provided only with a fufficient Quantity of Spleen and falle Con-

> \* See the Div. Leg. Vol. ii. where a full Account is given of the Origin and Progress of this kind of Writing.

> > ceit,

12

ceit, might eafily ridicule his favourite Piece, S E c. 4 " The Judgment of HERCULES :" And to VI. a raw Imagination, difgrace that instructive Fable, by burlefquing the fuppoled Conference between the Goddeffes and the Heroe. VIRGIL hath in Fact been fo ferved. And if Works of mere Invention, and of the heroic Kind, studiously contrived to avoid every thing low, obscure, or equivocal, are fubject to this Abuse; can we wonder, if the fuccinct Hiftory of an ancient Fact. recording the Dispensations of Providence, a Matter very obscure in itself, and relative to ancient Manners fo diftant from our own. should be liable to the false and dishonest Lights of Buffoonry? We may further obferve that the noble Writer's Ridicule fometimes falls on divine Providence itfelf: "His " Tutor had good Eyes, and a long Reach : " he overtook the Renegade at Sea, &c."-Could an Epicurean have used more indecent Language?

His Lordthip goes on, to ridicule " the " Descriptions, Narrations, Expressions, and " Pbrases" of holy Scripture: But these we shall pass over at present, as they will deferve a separate Consideration. He touches once more on the Patriarch ABRAHAM; and

VIL for the Objection, may find a full Answer to it, in the Place here referred to <sup>1</sup>.

> THE next; and only remaining Circumftance worthy of Notice in this Mifcellany, is a pretended Tranflation from PLUTARCH: In which the noble Writer deals as honourably by that Author, as before by GORGIAS or ARISTOTLE<sup>m</sup>. But here too, I am prevented by the learned PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS: However, as his Lordship's Conduct is remarkable on this Occasion, it may not be improper to exhibit a View of it in the great Critic's Words; who, it must be owed, hath chastifed the noble Writer fomewhat roughly, and Ariftarchuslike.

"HE (Mr. COLLINS) quotes the Place as it is translated forfooth in the Characteriftics, a Book writ by an anonymous, but, whoever he is, a very whimfical and conceited Author. O wretched Grecians (fo that Author renders Plu-Grecians (fo that Author renders Pluranch) who bring into Religion that frightful Mien of fordid and wilifying Devotion, ill-favoured Humiliation and

<sup>1</sup> Div. Leg. Vol. ii. p. 620. <sup>•</sup> See above, Effay i. § ix. <sup>(Con-</sup>

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 383

VIL

" Contrition, abject Looks and Countenances, SECT. " Consternations, Prostrations, Disfigura-" tions, and, in the Act of worship, Distor-" tions, constrained and painful Postures of " the Body, wry Faces, beggarly Tones, " Mumpings, Grimaces, Cringings, and the " reft of this Kind. - Thus far that name-" lefs Opiniatre: And our worthy Writer " (Mr. COLLINS) introduces it with a grave " Air, that PLUTARCH thus fatirizes the se public Forms of Devotion; which yet are " fuch, as, in almost all Countries, pals for " the true Worship of God. - This would " partly be true, if those were really the " Words of PLUTARCH: But as not one " Syllable of them is found there, what " must we think of this Couple of Corrup-" ter's and Forgers ? There is nothing in all " this, but their own Disfigurations and " Differtions of the Original; their own " Mumpings, and beggarly Tones, while " they pretend to speak in PLUTARCH's " Voice. - PLUTARCH having observed, " that Superstition alone allows no Eale " nor Intermission, even in Sleep; their " Dreams, adds he, do as much torment " them then, as their waking Thoughts did " before; they seek for Expiations of these " Vifions

304 On revealed Retigion and Christianity. SECT. "- Vision's nocturnal; Charms, Sulfurations, " Dippings in the Sea, Sittings all Day on " the Ground. 1. 1. 1.

"O Greeks, Inventors of Barbarian Ills,

« whofe Superstition has devised Rowlings " in the Mire and in the Kennels, Dippings " in the Sea, Grovelings and Throwings " upon the Face, deformed Sittings on the Earth, abfurd and uncouth Adorations. " This is a verbal Interpretation, of that " Place - and now I dare alk the Reader. ". if he has feen a more flagrant Instance of " Unfaithfulness and Forgery, than this of " our two Writers? Humiliation and Con-" trition, known Words in your English " Liturgy, are to be traduced here under " PLUTARCH'S Name. Where do those " and their other Phrases appear in the " Original? or where do the Rites, he \* really speaks of, appear in your Form of " Worship ? who among you rowl them-? " felves in Mire, or wallow in Kennels? a " Ceremony fit only to be enjoyned to fuch " crackbrained and scandalous Writers "."

THE remaining Part of this random Effay, is fo completely vague and unintelligible, that although it be evidently de-"Pbil. Lipfienf. p. 210 &c.

figned,

On revealed Religion and Christianiny. 365 figned, as a continued Sneer at Christia. SECT. Vįll; nity, 'tis impossible to pick fo much as an-Objection, or even an Idea out of it. 'Tis therefore below Criticism. To conclude ; when I fee the noble Writer debafe himfelf in this Arange Manner, exercifing at once the lowest Derision, and inflicting the deadlieft Wounds on Religion and Christianity; I must own, the Appearance he makes, call up to my Imagination a Remark of his own, " That there cannot be a Sight more shock-" ing and contemptible, than that of a " Man acting at once the Part of a Merry-" Andrew, and an Executioner "."

It may be neceffary, finally, to obviate his Lordship's perpetual Sneer at the Myfteries of our Religion. These, when particular Topics fail him, are the standing Objects of his Raillery. To cite particular Passages of this Kind, were needless, because they are innumerable. The plain Implication of all his gross Banter, is, "That "because in the Cbrissian Dispension, "there are some things, which superstand there is the standard standard standard standard fore absurd and ridiculous."

With Regard to this Cavil, therefore, • Wit. and H. Part i. § iii.

· . . .

'tis

VII.

SECT. 'tis not my Intention to infift on proving the " Difference between Things being above " Reafon and Things being contrary to Rea-" fon; or that Propositions may be true, " though they are above our Reafon, fo " long as they are not contrary to it." Full enough has been faid on this Subject, and by no body better than by the excellent 'Tis a Question of more Im-Mr. Boyle. portance to decide, "Why any thing myf-" terious should be admitted into a Religion, " revealed for the Use of Man?" And in Answer to this, we need only observe, that revealed Religion being defigned for Man's Ule, its essential Doctrines are plain, intelligible to all. accommodated to the Nature and Faculties of the buman Kind. But as this System not only reveals to us our Duty, but all Motives too which may induce us to practife it; fo, in Order to inforce thefe, and convince us of the Truth of their divine Original, it was necessary, that a History of Providence, or GoD's Difpensation, should be revealed along with them. Hence fomething mysterious must needs arife; unless you suppose Man infinite in Knowledge. For as this System reveals to us several Particulars (fo far as they stand connected with Piety and

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 267 and Morals) which relate to the Nature of SECT, Gon, the State of other, and fuperior Beings, the original Condition of Man, the Interpolition of Providence for his Redemption, the Change of his Nature and Faculties, through the future Periods of his Exiftence; in all which Circumstances, his prefent Reach of Thought could give him no Information; 'tis evident, that in these Accounts, many Subjects must be touched upon, and other Systems of Being occasionally glanced at, the full Knowledge of which, must be far beyond his present Comprehenfion. Now fo far as these Truths and Facts, though imperfectly revealed, have any Tendency to enlighten his Mind, as to the general Plan of Providence, or stand connected in any other Manner with Religion and Virtue, fo as to encourage and promote them, they must furely be admitted as Circumstances of great Propriety and Use. Or even fuppofing fome of them to be of none, yet if they stand so effentially connected with others which are, fo that the one cannot be destroyed without the other; this very Circumstance of effential Union, effectually destroys every Objection against their being of divine Original. Ľ There La.

# 368 On retrakt Raligion and Christianity.

SECT. VIL

There may be, likewife, and undoubredly are some few Mysteries of another Kind in the Molaic Difpensation : Such, I mean, as may feem, to fome Apprehenfions, not to eafily reconcileable to the moral Attributes of Gov: Of which Kind there are some too, in the Constitution of the natural World. Now here in Revelation, as in Nature, 'tis the Part of human Reason to acquiesce in this mysterious and unknown Part, from what is clear and known P. Of this Kind, perhaps, is the Expulsion of the Canaanites under Joshua, which the noble Writer hath taken fuch Pains to vilify 9. He might with as much Reason infult the Creator, for the Admission of Storm. Famine, or Pestilence. For as in Nature, fo in revealed Religion, we are not to judge of the whole Constitution or Dispensation of Things, from *[mall* and *feeming* Exceptions: On the Contrary, 'tis the Part of Wifdom to determine concerning these feeming' Exceptions from a full View of the whole Dif-If this evidently tend to Good, penfation. the unprejudiced Enquirer into Nature, and Revelation attributes the Doubt and Dark-

P. See above, § iv. of this Esfay. 9 Advice, P. iii. § iii.

ness,

inefs, which may involve any particular SECT. Part, to his own Incapacity and Ignorance. And juftly; for as the noble Writer hath told us on this very Occasion, "In an In *if finity* of Things thus relative, a Mind, " which fees not infinitely, can fee nothing " fully ".

LET us therefore, while as yet we fee but as through a Glass and darkly, contemplate the Works of God with Reverence and Submiffion. Let us wait the happier Hour, when we shall know even as we are known: when we shall be raifed to a more enlarged Comprehension of our Creator's immense Defigns; and the whole intelligent Creation shall joyn, in confessing and adoring the unerring Rectitude of all his Dispensations.

#### SECTION VIII.

HITHERTO we have feen the SECT. noble Writer buffooning and difgracing VIII. Chriftianity, from a falle Representation of its material Part: we shall now confider what he hath thrown out against the Composition, Style, and Manner of the facred

> Mor. Part ii. § iv. B b Scriptures;

#### 

He tells us, in the ironical Tone, " that " the Scriptural Descriptions, Narrations, " Expressions, and Phrases, are in them-" felves many Times exceedingly pleafant, " entertaining, and facetious. - That " our Saviour's Style, --- his Parables, Si-" milies, Comparisons, - his Exhortations " to his Disciples, the Images under which " he often couches his Morals and pruden-" tial Rules - carry with them a certain " Festivity, Alacrity, and good Humour " fo remarkable, that I should look upon " it as impossible not to be mov'd in a plea-" fant Manner at their Recital"." To these general Cavils he hath added a Simile in another Miscellany, which, as is usual with all fanciful Writers, is to stand for an Argument. He fays "'tis no otherwife " in the grammatical Art of Characters, and " painted Speech, than in the Art of Paint-" ing itself. I have seen, in certain Chris-" tian Churches, an ancient Piece or two, " affirm'd on the folemn Faith of prieftly "Tradition, to have been angelically and " divinely wrought, by a supernatural · Mifc. ii. c. 3.

" Hand

" Hand and facred Pencil. Had the Piece SECT. VIII. "happen'd to be of a Hand like RAPHA-, " EL's, I could have found nothing cer-" tain to oppose to this Tradition. But " having observed the whole Style and " Manner of the pretended heavenly Work-" manship to be fo indifferent, as to vary " in many Particulars from the Truth of "Art, I prefum'd within myfelf to beg " Pardon of the Tradition, and affert con-" fidently, that, if the Pencil had been "Heaven-guided, it could never have been " fo lame in it's Performance"." This ingenious Conceit, in the fublequent Paragraph, he very clearly, tho' flyly, applies to the holy Scriptures.

'Tis the Province of Wit to form Comparifons; of Philofophy, to detect their Weaknefs, when they are obtruded on us as a Test of Truth. On Examination therefore I will venture to fay, the noble Writer's Parallel will be found highly irregular and defective.

FOR there is an *effential* Difference between *Paintings* and *Writing*, both in their *End* and *Execution*. Paintings, with Regard to their End, are things of mere A-

> Mife. v. c. 1. B b 2

1

musement

SECT. mufement and Tafte: Confequently all their VIII. Value lies in the Exquisiteness of the Art, and the fine Hand of the Master. 'Tis likewise a Species of Art, that lies chiefly among the Few; the Bulk of Mankind (or in the noble Writer's more elegant Phrase, the mere Vulgar) being incapable, thro' a Want of Leisure, of gaining any Proficiency in this Taste; or of acquiring that curious Discernment in Ordonnance, Drawing, and Colouring, which is at once the Pride and Pleasure of the Virtuoso-Tribe.

> - Bur with Respect to Language the Affair is otherwise : It's Ends are various. From the Four different Kinds of literary Composition, as explained above", there must arise a correspondent Variety of Style, the Poetical, the Oratorial, the Historical and Didactic. The First of these Kinds alone partakes of the Nature of Pieture, and therefore can alone be properly compared with it; as they are both referr'd to the Imagination, for the End of Pleasure : The other three Species of Composition, tending chiefly to Utility, by the Means of Perfuation or Instruction, draw their prime Value from Plainnefs, Clearnefs, and Pre-\* See Effay, 1. § 3.

cifion :

cifion: From being adapted, not to the SECT. Tafle of the faftidious Critic, but to the Capacities of those who are the intended Objects of Perfwafion or Instruction. Here then, the noble Writer's Parallel is effentially defective: Since it was the Intention of Providence, in the facred Scriptures, to condescend to what his Lordship's Quality and refined Wisdom intitle him to discuir, even to instruct the mere Vulgar: Whereas the End of Painting, is only the Anuscement of the Few.

In Regard to the Execution, we shall find as wide a Difference. There is, in Philosophical strictness, but one anvary'd Language or Style in Painting; which is " fuch a Modification of Light or Colours as " may imitate whatever Objects we find in " Nature." This confifts not in the Application of arbitrary Signs; but hath it's Foundation in the Senfes and Reason of Mankind; and is therefore the fame in every Age and Nation. But in the literary Style or Language, the Matter is far otherwife, For Language being the voluntary Application of arbitrary Signs, according to the Confent of different Men and Nations, there is no fingle uniform Model of Nature to be follow-Bb a

SECT. followed. Hence Gracefulnels or Strength VIII. of Style, Harmony or Softness, copious Expression, terfe Brevity, or contrasted Periods, have by turns gained the Approbation of particular Countries. Now all thefe fupposed Beauties of Speech are relative, local, and capricious; and confequently unworthy the Imitation of a divine Artift; who, to fit the Speech he ordains, to the great Work of universal Instruction, would, we may reasonably suppose, strip it of every local, peculiar, and grotefque Ornament; and convey it unaccompany'd by all, but the more univerfal Qualities common to every Tongue.

THE noble Writer, then, might with fome shew of Reason have objected to the Style of Scripture, had the Writers boasted it's Elegance, as MAHOMET did that of his Koran, and defy'd all his Opposers to write any thing approaching it in this Respect. But the facred Penmen discover no Defign or Defire of excelling as fine Writers: On the contrary, St. PAUL fays, "they came not with the Power of human "Speech," and gives a Reason for it which does Honour to his Mission.

3

Тно'

THO' this Scrutiny alone might be fuffi- SECT. cient to detect and discredit the Wantonness of the noble Writer's Comparison; yet it will further lead us to a full Disclosure of the Truth; by shewing that to be the peculiar Characteristic of the Scripture Composition, which hath ever held the first Rank among the Qualities of human Writings; I mean, that of unadorned SIMPLICITY.

As much hath been faid by many Writers on the Subject of Simplicity, with very little Precifion; and particularly by the noble Writer, who feems to feparate the fimple Manner from the Sublime, as if they were incompatible \*; and indeed in his own ·Compositions preposterously deferts the one, when ever he attempts the other': It may be neceffary here to fix the Idea of a just This may be faid to confift SIMPLICITY. " in Truth and Weight of SENTIMENT, " cloathed in fuch IMAGES and STYLE, as " may most effectually convey it to the Read-" er's Mind." If any of these Circumstances be wanting; if the SENTIMENT be falle or trifling, if the IMAGES or STYLE be fuch as tend rather to fix the Attention on

\* Advice, Part ii. § 2. " See the Moralifis, pafim.

them

1

VШ.

VHI.

S = CIT. themfelves, than on the Sentiment they are employed to convey, the just Simplicity is deftroyed. This, as might be proved by a large Induction of Particulars, is the Circumfance in which the best Critics of Antiguity placed the supreme Excellence of Writing. MAnd, in this Ufe of the Terra, it appears, that not only the familiar, the marrative, the didactic, but the pathetic, and fublime Manner too, are fo far from being inconfishent with Simplicity, that they are then only in their Perfection, when founded on it.

> "Tis true indeed, that the facred Records are, as the noble Writer calls them, " multifarious, and of different Characters, " varying according to the Situation, Inten-" tion, and natural Capacity of the Writers "." Yet amidst all this Variety of Manner, the reigning Quality of Simplicity is to uniform and confpicuous, that the boldeft Enemy of Christianity will not be forward to hazard the Credit of his Take, by calling it in Question.

> IF we examine them in this Light, we shall find, that, according to the Division. made above ', they confift of Four diffe-? rent Kinds, the poetic, oratorial, bistorical,

? Mifc. v. c. 1. \* Esoys i. § 3. 12

and

#### On revealed Religion and Christianiny. 277 and didactic Forms. The poetic lies ohief. SECT. ly in the Book of Plalms, of Job, and feveral detached Passages in the Prophets, particularly of Ifaiab. They contain many noble Efforts of unmixed Poetry or pure Imitation; yet thefe, being all centered in one Intention, that of extolling the Works, and celebrating the Power, Wildom, and Goodnefs of the Deity, do generally partake of the Character of Eloquence, being chiefly of the hyric Kind<sup>b</sup>. In all thefe, the great Character of Simplicity is fo strongly predominant, that every Attempt to embellish them. by adding the fupernumerary Decorations of Style in Translation, hath ever been found to weaken and debase them.

As to the oratorial or pathetic Parts, innumerable might be produced, equal if not fuperior to any recorded by prophane Antiquity. In these, the leading Character of Simplicity is no less remarkable. Our SA-VIOUR'S Parables and Exhortations are generally admirable in this Quality: Filled with unseigned Compassion for the Weakness and Miseries of Man, they breathe nothing but the purest Benevolence. St. PAUL's last Conversation with his Friends

• See *E fay* i. § 3.

st

SECT. at Ephefus, on his Departure for Jerufa-VIII. Lower his Difeourfor on the Reference

lem<sup>c</sup>; his Difcourfes on the Refurrection and on Charity; his Reproofs, his Commendations, his Apologies, especially that before AGRIPPA<sup>d</sup>, are wrote in the nobleft Strain of Simplicity. And as a perfect Model of this Kind, we may give the Story of Jo-SEPH and bis Bretbren, which for Tendernefs, true Pathos, and unmixed Simplicity, is beyond Compare superior to any thing that appears in ancient Story.

BUT as the most important Part of Scripture lies in the bistorical and preceptive Part; efpecially in the new Testament, whence chiefly our Idea of Duty must be drawn; fo we find this uniform and fimple Manner eminently prevailing throughout, in every Precept and Narration. The Hiftory is conveyed in that artlefs Strain which alone could adapt it to the Capacities of all Mankind; the Precepts delivered by our SAVI-OUR are drawn from the Principles of common Sense, improved by the most exalted Love of GoD and Man; and either expreffed in clear and direct Terms, or couched under fuch Images and Allusions, as are every where to be found in Nature, fuch as are,

· Acts, c. xx. · Ib. c. xxvi.

and

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 379 and must ever be universally known, and fa-SECT. . VIII. miliar to all Mankinde; in which, we may further observe, his Manner of teaching was greatly superior even to the noble Writer's justly applauded SOCRATES, who for the most part drew his Images and Allusions from the less known ARTS and MANNERS of the City, tho' indeed not without Rea-He did not aim at the Instruction of fon. Mankind, but of the more literate Part of his fellow Citizens. His proper End was rather reforming the Minds of those who had been ill taught, than inftructing those who had never learnt. To return ; thro' all this Variety of striking Allusion and moral Precept, the Style ever continues the fame, unadorned, fimple, and, even by the noble Writer's own Confession, " vehement " and majestic ";" yet never drawing the Reader's Attention on itfelf, but on the divine Sentiments it conveys.

To this we may further add, that thefe feveral Kinds of Composition are mixed and united with such Propriety and Force, as is fcarce to be equalled in any other Writings.

• See Newton on Daniel; — Mr. Jortin's Difcourfes; — Dr. Law's Life of CHRIST. f Mifc. ii. c. 3.

The

VIII.

1

٤•,

SECT. The poetical Parts are heightened by the great Strokes of Eloguence and Presept; the pathetick, by the nobleft Imagery, and justof Morals ; and the preceptive is frengthened and inforced by all the Aids of Poetry, Eloquence, and Parable; calculated at once to engage the Imagination, to touch the Poffions, and command the Reafon of Mankind.

'Tis true, this unadorned Simplicity fo confpicuous in the Scripture Composition, hath often given Offence to puerile Critics. The noble Writer hath but revived the Objection; it was weakly urged by CELsus in the Infancy of the Christian Religion 5. At the Period when Letters revived in Europe, the florid Taste was so prevalent in Italy, under the Pontificate of LEO the Tenth, that the Composition of the Scriptures was on this Account held in general Contempt; and one of the fine Gentlemen in Literature<sup>h</sup>, of those Days, is known to have declared, " that he dared " not to read the Bible, left it should en-" danger bis Style." We may eafily form a Judgment of the Tafte of that Age from

this

<sup>. . 67</sup> \* Origen contra Celf. 1. vii. \* Cardinal PIETRO BEMEO.

#### On revealed Religion and Christianity. 381 this one Circumstance, " that their most SECT, VIII. " elaborate and celebrated Compositions. " were all wrote in a dead Language :" For thus they became mere Imitators, even to a Degree of Servility. And 'tis fufficient for the Defenders of the Bible to observe, that along with it, every other great Model of antient Writing fell into the fame Difgrace at the above-mentioned Period; while the general Taffe and Attention was turned from weight of Sentiment, and strength of Image and Expression, to the local and capricious Decorations of Style and Language. But the Reign of this falle Tafte was of fhort Duration; fo that for a long Time past, the comparative Merit of ancient Writers hath been weighed in a jufter Scale.

Now if we examine the Writers whole Composition hath stood the Test of Ages, and obtained that highest Honour, "the "concurrent Approbation of distant Times "and Nations," we shall find that the Character of Simplicity is the unvarying Circumstance, which alone hath been able to gain this universal Homage from Mankind. Atmong the Greeks, whole Writers in general are of the fimple Kind, the divinest Poet<sup>1</sup>,

Homer.

the

SECT. the most commanding Orator k, the finest VIII. Historian1, and deepest Philosopherm, are, above the reft, confpicuoufly eminent in this great Quality. The Roman Writers rife towards Perfection according to that Measure of true Simplicity which they mingle in their Works. Indeed they are all inferior to the Greek Models. But who will deny, that LUCRETIUS, HORACÉ, VIRGIL, LIVY, TERENCE, TULLY, are at once the fimplest and best of Roman Writers? Unlefs we add the noble Annalift<sup>n</sup>. who appeared in after Times; who, notwithstanding the political Turn of his Genius, which fometimes interferes, is admirable in this great Quality; and by it, far fuperior to his Contemporaries. 'Tis this one Circumstance that hath raised the venerable DANTE, the Father of modern Poetry, above the fucceeding Poets of his Country, who could never long maintain the local and temporary Honours bestowed upon them; but have fallen under that just Neglect, which Time will ever decree to those who defert a just Simplicity for the florid Colourings of Style, contrasted Phra-

	<sup>k</sup> Demosthenes.	<sup>1</sup> Xenophon.	- Ariftoile.
8	Tacitus.	· •	•

fes,

#### On revealed Religion and Christianity. 383 fes, affected Conceits, the mere Trappings SECT. of Composition, and Gothic MINUTIÆ. 'Tis this hath given to BOILEAU the most lasting Wreath in France; to SHAKESPEAR and MILTON in England; especially to the last, whose Writings are more unmixed in in this Respect; and who had formed himfelf entirely on the fimple Model of the best Greek Writers, and the facred Scriptures<sup>o</sup>.

• Mr. DRYDEN fomewhere observes " that MIL-"TON never finks so far below himself, as when he " falls on some Track of Scripture." 'Tis equally true, that he never rises so far above himself, as when he falls' on some Track of Scripture. 'Tis easy to guess what was the Drift of Mr. DRYDEN'S Remark. But the Observations made above (Essan is 3) will easily reconcile these feeming Contradictions. When MILTON adopts the poetical Parts of Scripture, he rises above himself. But by an injudicious Application of the bistorical or didattic Parts, he often falls indeed.

THIS naturally leads us to an Obfervation on Mr. HUME'S Effay "on Simplicity and Refinement in Writ-"ing." He hath attempted to fix a certain Union of these two Qualities, which, he fays, conflictutes the most perfect Form of Composition. It were to be wished he had given us forme better Reasons in support of this Opinion, which itself seems to be a mere Refinement. The Progress of his Argument is remarkable. —He draws all his Instances from Poets; and having given forme Examples of Poets who are both simple and unpoetical in the Extreme, he arbitrarily throws the Censure on the too great Degree of Simplicity, instead of fixing it where he ought, viz. on the too great Mixture of the bistorical, oratorial, or argumentative Species. In Proof of this, we need only alledge the As

SECT. VIII.

As it appears from these Instances, that Simplicity is the only universal Characteriftic of just Writing; so the superior Eminence of the facred Scriptures in this prime Quality hath been generally acknowledged. One of the greatest Critics in Antiquity, himself conspicuous in the *fublime* and *fimple* Manner, hath born this Testimony to the Writings of Moses and St. PAUL<sup>9</sup>. And by Parity of Reason we must conclude, that had he been conversant with the other facred Writers, his *Taste* and *Candour* would have allowed them the fame Encomium.

Examples of Homer, PINDAR, and CALLIMACHUS, where Simplicity, and at the fame Time Sublimity and the true poetic Forms, are in their last Perfection. Thus all he proves is, " that a Poet ought not to be " unpoetical."-Next, he puts VIRGIL and RACINE on a Level, as having attained the nearest to this imagined Union of Simplicity and Refinement. Here he obligeth us again to call his Tafte in Question: For every Page of RACINE is full of Turns, both of Pbrafe and Sentiment : Whereas we fcarce meet with three Inftances of this Kind in all VIRGIL'S Writings .- He then gives us his Idea of Simplicity : " Those Com-" politions which have the Recommendation of Sim-" plicity, have nothing furprizing in the Thought, " when divelted of that Elegance of Expression, and " Harmony of Numbers, with which it is cloathed."-From these extraordinary Premises, we are naturally prepared to expect his Conclusion, " that CATULLUS " and PARNEL are his favourite Authors !"

P Longinus.

Bur

VIII.

BUT we need not have Recourse to Au- SECT. thorities, for the Proof of the superior Weight and Dignity of the facred Scriptures, in this great Quality. 'Tis evident to Demonstration from the following Circumstance. It hath been often observed. even by Writers of no mean Rank, that " the Scriptures fuffer in their Credit by " the Diladvantage of a literal Version, " while other ancient Writings enjoy the " Advantage of a free and embellished Trans-" lation." But in Reality these Gentlemen's Concern is ill-placed and groundlefs. For the Truth is, " That most other Writ-" ings are indeed impaired by a literal Tranf-" lation; whereas, giving only a due Re-" gard to the Idioms of different Languages, " the facred Writings when literally tranf-" lated, are then in their full Perfection." Now this is an internal Proof, that in all other Writings there is 'a Mixture of local, relative, exterior Ornament; which is often loft in the Transfusion from one Language to another. But the internal Beauties which depend not on the particular Construction of Tongues, no Change of Tongue can destroy. Hence the Bible-Composition preferves its native Beauty and Strength, Cc alike

SECT. alike in every Language, by the fole Ener-VIII. gy of unadorned Phrase, natural Images, weight of Sentiment, and great Simplicity.

> 'Tis in this Respect, like a rich Vein of Gold, which, under the severest Trials of Heat, Cold, and Moisture, retains its original Weight and Splendor, without either Loss or Alloy; while baser Metals are corrupted by Earth, Air, Water, Fire, and assimilated to the various Elements thro' which they pass.

> THIS Circumstance then may be justly regarded as sufficient to vindicate the Composition of the facred Scriptures; as it is at once their chief Excellence, and greatest Security. 'Tis their Excellence, as it renders them intelligible and useful to all; 'tis their Security, as it prevents their being difguifed by the false and capricious Ornaments of vain or weak Translators.

> WE may fafely appeal to Experience and Fact for the Confirmation of these Remarks on the superior Simplicity, Utility, and Excellence of the Style of holy Scripture. Is there any Book in the World, so perfectly adapted to all Capacities ? that contains such fublime and exalting Precepts, convey'd

> > 3

in

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 387 in fuch an artlefs and intelligible Strain? that SECT. VIII. can be read with fuch Pleafure and Advantage, by the lettered Sage and the unlettered Peafant? To whom then would the noble Writer fend Mankind for religious and moral Instruction? To the divine PLATO, it may be supposed; or, more probably, to the inraptured Strains of Philocles and The-And fure, Mankind must reap OCLES. much Instruction and Advantage from the puffed Epithets and fusion Style of a philosophical Romance. We may reasonably hope indeed, foon to fee (nay, do we not already fee?) the happy Effects of this high Difci-For in Fact, the noble Writer's pline. Characteristics are now the standing Oracle in the Office, the Shop, nay, as I am informed, fometimes even in the Cobler's Stall. We need not wonder therefore, that in these new Habitations of Taste, sublimed Phrase, and abstruse Philosophy, the simple Strains of the Gospel are damned and discarded.

To return then to the noble Writer's Comparison (if indeed we have departed from it) these united Observations may convince us, that the only circumstance in Painting, which can with any Propriety be compared to literary Style, is that of C c 2 colouring.

 $S_{ECT}$  colouring. And on this principle we may VIII. farther confirm all that hath been faid on the superior Excellence of the fimple Man-For 'tis well known, and the noble net. Writer knew it, that while the Mafters in this fine Art confined the Pencil to the genuine Forms of Grace and Greatnefs, and only superadded to these the temperate Embellishments of a chastifed and modest co-; louring, the Art grew towards its Perfection: but no fooner was their Attention turned from Truth, Simplicity, and Defign, to the gaudy Decorations of a rich and luscious Colouring, than their Credit declined with their Art : and the experienced Eye, which contemplates the old Pictures with Admiration, furveys the modern with Indifference or Contempt.

To conclude. We fee there are two Kinds of Composition, effentially opposed to each other. The one turns the Attention on *itfelf*; the other, on the Truths it conveys. The first may be justly compared to a Sun-Beam playing on the Surface of the Water, which attracts and dazzles the Beholder's Eye by its own useles Splendor. The last is like a Sun-Beam darting to the Bottom; which, while itself is unstend, or unobserved,

## On revealed Religion and Christianity. 389 unobserved, communicates its brightness, and SECT. illumines every Object on which it falls.

How far the *first* of these may belong to to the noble Writer, let others determine. 'Tis sufficient to have proved, that the last, is the unvaried Style and Manner of the facred Scriptures.

#### SECTION IX.

IT would have been strange, had his SECT. Lordship emptied fo much of his Gall on *Christianity*, without bestowing a Share on its *Ministers*. It may therefore be expected, that something should be faid on his Treatment of the *English Clergy*.

So far as his Spirit of Satire may have been provoked by the perfecuting and intolerant Principles of fome of the *Clergy* in his Time, 'tis highly commendable. It matters not in what Rank, Order, or Profeffion, the Enemies of *Freedom* may appear. What fhape or Pretence foever they may affume, 'tis a work of true Charity to ftigmatize and difgrace them, as the Enemies of Mankind.

BUT it appears too evidently, that the noble Writer's Spleen arole from another Foundation. For his Satire is not to often C c 3 pointed

#### 300 On revealed Religian total Christianity SECT. pointed against them, as being the Enemies IX. of Freedom, as the Friends of Christianity. With a view of difgracing them in this Regard, he hath ridiculed and abused their Writings, their Preaching, and even their Perfons. It will only be necessary to felect a few Instances of this kind, from an infinite Number; in all which, the Delicacy of the Raillery is fo confpicuous, as to need no Illustration.

In his Soliloquy, he hath paid his Compliments to the Writings of the Clergy, under the Title of " Candidates for Authorship " of the fanctify'd Kind." " Thefe, he " fays, may be termed a fort of Pfeudo-" Ascetics, who can have no real Converse " either with themfelves or with Heaven". - " And although the Books of this fort, "by a common Idiom, are called good "Books, the Authors for certain are a for-" ry Race" ----- " A Saint-Author, of all " Men, least values Politeness .--- He is above " the Confideration of that, which in a " narrow Senfe, we call Manners : nor is " he apt to examine any other Faults, than " those which he calls Sins ?." wicha "

Solil. Part i. § 1.

#### Thuş

Thus he deals with the Clergy, when SICT. they are dull enough to write ferioufly on the most interesting Subjects. But if any of the Order happens to fall into a gayer turn of Composition, the Charge is renewed under another Form. Then, "the "burlesque Divinity grows mightily in "vogue; and the cry'd up Answers to He-"terodox Discourses are generally such as "are written in Drollery — Joy to the Re-"verend Authors, who can afford to be f thus gay, and condescend to correct us in "this Lay-Wit","

THEIR Preaching is another ftanding Subject of Derifion : and ridiculed they muft be, whether they divide their Difcourfe, or divide it not. If the first, then the following stroke of Raillery is prepar'd for them a "Come we now (as our authentic Rhetori-"cians express themselves) to our fecond "Heads." If the latter, then "our religious Pastors have changed their Manner of distributing to us their Spiritual Food "--they have run into the more favory "way of learned Ragout and Medley. The "elegant Court-Divine exhorts in Miscel-

Mife. v. c. 2. Mife. ii. c. 3.

Cc4

" lany,

٦

## 392 On Revealed Religion and Christianity, BECT. " lany, and is alliamed to bring his two's

IX.

"and three's before a failtionable Affem-

The Defenders of Christianity are baited in their Turn. "For Brample, let a "sealous Divine and flaming Champion of "our Faith, when inclined to flew him-"felf in Print, make choice of fome tre-"mendous Mystery of Religion, opposed "heretofore by fome damnable Herefiarch" - "A Ring is made, and Readers gather "in Abundance. Every one takes Party "and encourages his own Side. "This "shall be my Champion 1 - This Man for my "Money! - Well bit on our Side !- Again, "a good Stroke! - There he was even with "him !- Have at him next Bout !- Ex-" cellent Sport !""

The fame familiar Elegance of Compolition, joyned with a furprifing Effort in the noble Writer's own Sublime, runs through the following Paragraph; where he compares a Controverly in Divinity, to a Match at Foot-Ball. "So have I known "a crafty Glazier, in time of Froft, pro-"cure a Foot-BALL, to draw into the "Street the emulous. Chiefs of the robust Mife. ii. c. 3. Mife. i. c. 2. "Youth. On revealed Religion and Christignity, 393 "Youth. The tunid Bladder bounds at SBET? "every KICK, burfts the withfanding "CASEMENTS, the Chaffys, Lanterns, and "all the brittle vitreous WARE. The Noife of Blows and Out-cries fills the, "WHOLE NEIGHBOURHOOD; and the "Ruins of Glafs cover the flony Pavements r till the bloated battering Engine; fubdued by Force of FOOT and FIST, and yield-"ing up its Breath at many a fatal CRAN-"NY, becomes lank and harmlefs, finks "in its Flight, and can no longer uphold "the Spirit of the contending Parties"."

Not content with these fevere Strokes of Raillery, the noble Writer prepares a more deadly Blow at the Clergy; even no less than ruining their Fortunes among the Fair-Sex. And here the differing Reader will readily guess, that his Ridionle must be needs levelled at their Perfanss-He introduces, or drags in, the Story of OTHELLO and DESDEMONA; represents the one as a miraculous Story-teller, the other as a credulous Hearer. He then adds, "But why the Poet, amongst his Greek "Names, should have chosen one which is denoted the Lady fuperstitious, I can't Misc. is 5.2.

.

" imagine ;

# :394 On revealed Religion and Christianing.

SECT. "imagine; unlefs, as Poets are fornetimes IX. "Prophets too, he fhould figuratively; uni" der this dark Type, have reprefented to i" us, that, about a hundred Years after his if time, the Fair Sex of this Island should, if by other monstrous Tales, be fo feduced, as it to turn their Favour chiefly on the Talei Tellers; and change their natural Incliin nation for fair, candid, and courteous if Knights, into a Passion for a mysterious if Race of black Enchanters"."

I CANNOT think this elegant Passage deferves a particular Reply. "Tis supposed, the noble Writer designed it only as a Proof, "That the Saint-Author of all Men least "values Politeness;" as a Proof how incapable he was of violating bis own Rule, or exercising any Degree of "that gross fort of "Raillery, which is so offensive in good Com-" pany"."

Indeed all the *delicate* Paragraphs here cited are much of the fame nature; and afford an undeniable Proof, how great a Master his Lordship was, in the true; rèfined Manner of Attic Wit. I shall only add, that if, according to the noble Writer's projected Scheme of Constation, the \*.Solil. Part ii. § 3. Y Wit. and H. Part I. § 2. English On revealed Religion and Christianity. 395 English Clergy should ever be baited in the SECT, way of Puppet-show at Bart'I mew-Fair; I would recommend the above Passages, with many parallel ones in the Characteristics, to the Managers of the Drama; as being admirably suited to the Genius of their wooden DROLE, whether he should chuse to swagger in the Sock, or strut in the Buskin.

WERE the Clergy disposed to return these Compliments in Kind, it may be questioned whether his Lordship's Admirers would acquit them of coarse Manners. But however some of that Body may blindly bate, and others as blindly admire the Author of the Characteristics; yet the best and wisest of the Profession, so far as I have been able to learn from their Conversation, would probably rather chuse to return his Salutations in the following Manner.

Notwithstanding the fuperior Airs of Contempt, which on all Occasions your-Lordship is pleased to assume, we cannot think you of such Ability, as you seem to appear in your own Eyes: neither can we think this overweening Opinion of your felf, this Disdain of all who adopt not your peculiar Tenets, is any Proof of real Wisdom, fince yourfelf have taught us

SECT. to believe, "that as we grow wifer, we IX. " shall prove lefs conceited." Though we ' scorn to revile you, yet we judge our-' felves well insitled to tell you the Truth on ' every Subject. We regard, therefore, a ' fine Imagination, an extensive Knowledge. ' and a commanding Judgment, as three · Qualities independent of each other. In the first, we think you eminent; in the ' fecond, confiderable; in the last, we must ' be excused, if we think you neither emi-" nent nor confiderable : And on this Account " we can allot you no bigb Rank, in the Scale Suitable to this, your ' of true Genius. " Tafte in Arts is much superior to your " Talents for Philosophy. The only Chain ' of Reasoning you have exhibited, is found ' in your Enquiry concerning Virtue : nor is even this fastened to the Throne of Truth. ' but hangs trembling from a fbadewy and earial Fabric, blown up by a fportive " Imagination. You have indeed obtained? ' the Character of an original Writer in Phi--· lofopby : how little you deferve this must " needs be known to all who are verfed in ' the Greek Schools; for thence the rational. Part of your System is chiefly drawn. ۱. What you borrow, you aften embellish, fome-

ì

times difguise, flever strengthen: but SECT: when you attempt to become original, 'you only convince us how ill qualified vou are for fuch a Talk. Accordingly, • we find in the general turn of your Writ-' ings, meagre Sentiments studiously adorned ' by a glare of Words, and a wafte of Ima-' gery : with these you amuse the common Reader; like the unqualified Painter, who, ' unable to reach the Beauties of a just and ' vigorous Expression, covers a lifeles Fi-'gure with gaudy Draperies. And we ' cannot but think, that had you studied the · Writings of that great and excellent Man " whom you fo weakly deride", your Vo-' lumes, whatever they had loft in Bulk, ' would have gained in weight and splendor." ' With regard to the Buffoonries, which

'you have occafionally exercised on Chrifitianity, in what you call "your Random "Effays;" they are so much below the Character of the Philosopher, that it is matter of Surprize to us, that you could think they can become the Main of Wit. It is true, among those whom you most despise, the mere Vulgar, they have gained you the Character of an inimitable Author; Mr. Loche, Su Advice, for Pertiji, S.

Mr. Locke. See Advice, St. Part iii. § 1. 1 'among

#### **598** On revealed Religion and Christianity. SECT. ' among Readers of that Rank " who are IX. " ready to fwallow any low Drollery of " Info " emerge the further way here alfo

" Jeft;" among those whom you have else-' where described, " who; while they pre-" tend to fuch a Scrutiny of other Evidences; " are the readief, to take the Evidence of " the greatest Deceivers in the World, their "own Paffions z." But whatever these ' Paffages may be in their Confequences, we ' cannot but think them, in their own Na-' ture, even contemptible. For, to use your ' own Attic Phrase, " to twitch, fnap, fnub "up, or banter, to torture Sentences and " Phrases, and turn a few Expressions into " Ridicule, is not fufficient to constitute " what is properly effected a Writer "." "On this Account we look upon these ' boasted Passages in your Book, to be of ' that Kind which are calculated only " to " create Diverfion to those who look no fur-" ther b;" and in which, as you elfewhere 'observe, "the most confused Head, if " fraught with a little Invention, and pro-" vided with Common-Place-Book Learning, " may exert itself to as much Advantage, " as the most orderly and well-fettled Judg-" ment<sup>c</sup>." We cannot therefore express any \* Mor. P. ii. § 1. \* Mifc. v. c. 2. \* Mifc. i. c. 1. \* Ibid. ' Efteem In revealed Religion and Christianity. 399 • Esteem either for the Scurrilities of the SECT. • coarse JESTER, or the trim Delicacy and IX. • Self-Admiration of the literary NARCIS-• sus.

'Bur, my Lord, there lies a heavier ' Charge against you, than that of bad Writ-'ing. We mean, the Indecency and Immo-' rality of your Conduct, in your Manner of ' attacking Christianity. You would be "thought a Lover of your Country; vet ' you pour Contempt upon its Laws and In-"fitutions. You allow the Propriety of a • religious Establishment; yet you take every You contend for a " Occasion to *deride* it. · public Leading in Religion; yet you per-' petually infinuate, that Mankind are led by You fay, " The Public ought • the Nofe. " not to be infulted to its Face;" yet your . Writings are one continued Infult upon its " Opinions. Our excellent and unrivaled ' Conftitution allows a perfect Freedom of " Enquiry ; had you then argued ingenuouf-" ly and fairly against Christianity, without 'attempting Ridicule; whatever Opinion " we might have entertained of your Head, " we might at least have thought favourably ' of your Heart. But in direct Opposition ' to this Rule, you always ridicule, fcarce ' cver

SICT. ' ever argue; you endeavour to inftil illegal IX. ' Opinions, without bringing any Evidence ' to support either their Usefulness or Truth : 'You give these crude Buffoonries to the "World in Print; and is not this infulting " the Public to its Face? - In this Instance, ' we must think you a bad Citizen; and to ' be ranked among those, whom a Writer, • by no Means prejudiced in Favour of Re-' ligion, thus justly stigmatizes : " Who, I " hardly know for what End, have written " against the Religion of their Country; " and without pretending to fubftitute any " thing better, or more practicable, in its "Place, would deprive us of our happy " Establishment, merely, as it should seem, " for the Pleafure of pulling down and do-" ing Mischief"." Befides this, my Lord, ' we must take the Liberty to fay, that you <sup>6</sup> betray fuch frequent Marks of Infincerity ' and defigned Misrepresentation in your "Treatment of Christianity, as but ill con-' fifts with that Reverence which you owe to "Trutb and to yourfelf; fuch as becomes 'not a MAN, much lefs a Man whom " the Public confent hath diftinguished by ' ' the Title of RIGHT HONOURABLE.

> " Enquiry into Homer's Life and Writings, § 6. WHAT

<sup>6</sup> WHATYOUR particular Motives may have SECT. <sup>5</sup> been to this Treatment of Christianity, you <sup>5</sup> beft know. The most excusable Tempta-<sup>6</sup> tion to this Arange Conduct, that we can <sup>6</sup> affign, must have been the natural Preva-<sup>6</sup> lence of Spleen. For, as you observe, "all <sup>6</sup> filenetic People have a necessary Propen-<sup>6</sup> fity to Criticism and Satire." — "The <sup>6</sup> Spirit of Satire rifes with the ill Mood; and <sup>6</sup> the chief Passion of Men thus difeased and <sup>6</sup> thrown out of good Humour, is to find Fault, <sup>6</sup> censure, unravel, confound, and leave no-<sup>6</sup> thing without Exception and Controversy f."

<sup>6</sup> FAR be it from HS to derogate from your <sup>6</sup> private Virtues; tho' we cannot but with, <sup>6</sup> that in your Treatment of Christianity, you <sup>6</sup> had given better Proofs of that univerfal Cha-<sup>6</sup> rity, which you fo warmly profefs; even <sup>6</sup> while you are reviling that Religion where <sup>6</sup> alone it is to be found. — There is another <sup>6</sup> Circumstance, that fure the more humane <sup>6</sup> Part of your Admirers would hefitate up-<sup>6</sup> on; we mean, that extreme Contempt you <sup>6</sup> express for those you call the mere Vulgar. <sup>6</sup> Your Regard seems folely centered in esta-<sup>6</sup> blishing your peculiar System among those <sup>6</sup> you call "Men of Fashion and Breeding;" <sup>6</sup> Misc. ii. c. 3.

Dd

while

**BECT.** ' while you give up the Vulgar, that is (to IX. ' fpeak with due Reverence of the Works ' of GoD) the Bulk of your Fellow-Creatures, as a proper Prey to the fupposed Def lufions and Tyranny of those, whom you <sup>e</sup> brand as the Enemies of Mankind. How " this Contempt for the greatest Part of your \* Species can confift with true Virtue or ' Charity, we are at a Lofs to comprehend. "Tis certain, Christianity would have taught Nay, my Lord, a great vou otherwife. \* Roman, as much your Superior in Station, ' as in Genius and active Virtue, would have ' told you, " that true Goodneis extends it-" felf to the Multitude; that Virtue is not " disdainful or proud; but regards all Ranks " of Men, and confults their Welfare; " which it could not do, if it despised the " Vulgar <sup>s</sup>." Christianity hath nobly 'heightened this Principle; and recom-' mends the Weak, the Poor, the Ignorant, s as the proper Objects not only of our Cha-"rity, but Instruction. And however mor-\* tifying it may be to proud Minds, we must fay, that we frequently meet with Men ' in the lower Ranks of Life, fometimes even in Cities, often in Cottages, who when & Cicer, Lal.

17-

#### On revealed Religion and Christianity. 403 instructed in the Principles of true Christi- SECT. instructed in the Principles of true Christi- SECT. instructed in the Principles of true Christi- SECT. instructed in the Principles of true Christianity. 403 instructed in the Principles of true Christianity.

WITH Regard to your Treatment of ' our felves : It gives us no Concern. For. ' in one Word, Calumnies thrown on whole 'Bodies of Men, are unmeaning and felf-' confuted. "You may therefore proceed " in your Invectives; beftowing as free " Language of that Kind, as your Charity " and fuperior Breeding will permit. You " may liberally deal your courtly Compliments " and Salutations in what Dialect you think " fit; fince for our own Part, neither the " the Names of Bigots, Impostors, Pedants, " Formalists, Gladiatorian Penmen, Flaming " Champions of the Faith, Black Tribe, or "Black Enchantersh, will in the least scan-" dalize us, while the Sentence comes only " from the Enemies of our Master. On the " contrary, we rather strive with ourselves " to suppress whatever Vanity might natu-" rally arife in us, from fuch Favour be-" ftow'd. For whatever may, in the Bot-" tom, be intended us, by fuch a Treatment,

<sup>b</sup> Names bestowed on the English Clergy throughout the *CharaEterifics*.

D d 2

" 'tis

404 On Revealed Religion and Christianing. SECT. "'is impossible for us to term it other than ·IX. "Fovour ; fince there are certain Emmities, " which it will be ever efteemed a real Ho-" nour to bave merited "."

•

' You have indeed wifely and artfully - ; endeavoured to intimidate us from exposing the Folly of your Infults on Religion ' and Christianity; by representing such an Attempt as being in itself Contemptible. For thus you are pleafed to fpeak : "It " must be own'd, that when a Writer of " any Kind is to confiderable as to deferve "the Labour and Pains of fome forewd " Heads to refute him in Public, he may, in " the Quality of an Author, be justly congra-" tulated on that Occasion. "Tis supposed " necessarily, that he must have writ with " fome kind of Ability or Witk."

' To obviate this Remark, is the only fur-' ther Trouble we shall give your Lordship ' on the prefent Occasion. And here without ' any particular Application to yourfelf, we " must beg Leave to offer the plain Reason ' why we think your Obfervation, however ' plaufible and commonly received, is yet ' entirely groundless. Indeed, with regard ' to Writings of mere Speculation or Criti-" cifm, which affect not be Hay mails of Sce Ali c. v. c. 3 č. in je . . 2. S Manaind,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 405 Mankind, "if Authors write ill they are SECT. "defpifed" and forgotten. At least, as "the Satirist observes, they ought to be sol: And on this Account, many Parts of the "Characteristics will, probably, pass for ever "uncenfured by us.

BUT there are other Kinds of bad "Writing, which will ever bid fair to live " and be admired. We mean, fuch as minifter to the low Paffions and Vices of Man-'kind; among which, RIDICULE on RE-"LIGION is of all others the most favourite ' Topic. And even where these Affections ' do not prevail, the generality of Men, thro' the Weakness of Nature, are easily misled ' in Matters even of the nearest Concern-"ment, by Sophiftry or Buffoonry; by a " Hint, a Sarcasm, or an Allusion. Now in ' this Cafe, 'tis furely a proper and rational, ' tho' perhaps no eafy Talk, to detect Mifre-" presentation, and lead Mankind back again • to the Paths of Truth and Happines. For ' the Effects of Ridicule on the Mind, re-' femble those of Venom on the Body; which,

<sup>1</sup> Quel Demon vous irrite, & vous porte à medire? Un Livre vous deplait : Qui vous force à le lire? Laissez mourir un Fat dans son Obscurité. Un Auteur ne peut il poussis en Sureté?

Boileau, Sat. ix.

' tho

SECT. ' tho' ftruck into the Blood by a pury Rep-IX. ' tile, may yet demand, nay even baffle the ' Power of the strongest Medicines. How ' then can you affirm that an Effect of this 'Kind "implies either Ability or Wit," if ' Buffoonry and Sophistry can do the Buff-'nefs? And that they may, we have your ' Lordship's full Acknowledgment; for, to ' adopt and conclude with your own Ex-' preffion, " In the fame Manner as a ma-"licious CENSURE, craftily worded and " pronounced with Assurance, is apt to pais "with Mankind for firewd WIT; fo a " virulent (or a visionary) MAXIM, in bold " Expressions, the' without any Justness of " Thought, is readily received for true PH1-" LOSOPHY "."

Moralifts, P. ii. § 5.

#### FINIS.

#### ERRATA.

Page 65. 1. 6. for emerge read immerge. P. 336. 1. penult. for enjoying read enjoining.



Dr out W (J.) Essays an Shaftsbury's Cha-1 ractasistics, Statute Statute area.








÷

•

•

•





