

TREATISE

O N

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY,

IN WHICH ALL DIFFICULTIES STATED BY ANCIENT
AND MODERN SCEPTICS, ARE DISPASSION-
ATELY DISCUSSED.

HALIFAX:

PRINTED BY JOHN HOWE and SON.

1808.

TO THE HONORABLE

HENRY AUGUSTUS DILLON,

Colonel of the 101st, or DUKE of YORK's Irish Regiment, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

IN these few sheets you will see the universally admitted principles of Christianity clearly stated, and all exceptions taken by the Heathen Philosophers, *Celsus, Crescentius, Lucian.* and *Julian*, the apostate, and from them transcribed by their successors, modern sceptics, or, as they are called, modern Philosophists, fairly discussed. No expression, offensive to any description of Christians, has escaped the writer's pen, which he recollects; his strictures are confined to Anti-Christian Works; the authors he has not named, not through any respect for their persons, which the reader will easily perceive, but he did not think proper to point out sources of immorality and error to idle curiosity; nor would he flatter the vanity of an insignificant scribbler by inserting his name, though it were but to expose him to contempt.

He thinks a work of this nature may with great

great propriety be recommended to the protection of a Statesman, whose eloquence in the Senate, and pen in the Cabinet, have been consecrated to the defence of the general rights of all descriptions of Christians; and whose conduct, as a military character, has received from this town a most honorable testimony.

The writer having no claims nor expectancies from power or protection; no fears nor apprehensions from enmity or malignity, pays this tribute of personal esteem, and begs leave to inscribe the work to a Nobleman, who is perfectly capable of appreciating its value. And is,

With great respect,

Your most obedient humble servant,

E. B. V. C. QUE.

HALIFAX, Nov. 8th, 1808.

LAUS CHRISTO DEO NOSTRO EJUS QUÆ MATRI SEMPER
VIRGINI. E. B.

“ Invisibilia enim ipsius a creaturâ mundi, per ea quæ facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur : sempiterna quoque ejus virtus et divinitas : ita ut inexcusabiles sint.” Ad. Rom. C. 1. V. 20.

THE Apostle, in his epistle to the Romans, speaking of the Heathen philosophers, says, that they were not only criminal but inexcusable in their infidelity : this terrific sentence he founds on the most simple, yet irresistible reason : the invisible power of God, and his divinity, are so manifest in his works that no excuse is admissible in extenuation of the sin of infidelity. His words apply with double force to the pretended philosophers of our days, men, the light of whose understanding has been totally extinguished by the depravity of their hearts ; and the strong impressions made in their early days by a Christian education, entirely effaced by profligacy surpassing that of the Heathens whom St. Paul paints in such strong colouring.

By a train of reasoning to demonstrate the existence of a God, a Supreme Being, all wise, all powerful, and eternal, a first cause, which gave existence to us, and to all the other Beings, which compose the universe ; and continues to support that beauty, that harmony, which we admire in the world, is useless : all reasoning is lost on the man who denies it : his heart is callous, and his head insane. The man whose understanding is not warped by the perverseness of his heart sees and feels it.

A

In

In compliance with custom the writer simply indicates principles of demonstration which enforce conviction :

1st. Let any man now existing be considered as the last term of a series composed of individuals in continued succession from the commencement ; in that series each individual has been father to his successor ; except the last who has no successor ; and also each individual has been son to his predecessor, except the first, who had no predecessor, the first man therefore in this succession must have received an existence from an almighty cause not included in the succession ; the writer says, almighty, because nothing short of omnipotence could give existence to a Being, which had no previous existence radically in some other. To pretend that in this succession there was no first man is inconsistent with reason : a regular succession of Beings of the same species without a commencement is impossible : there is a last term, therefore a first : first and last are relative terms. To assert that this first man made himself, is ridiculous in the extreme, and not less absurd to think him the work of chance : a positive effect pre-supposes a positive cause, and a cause capable of producing the effect. Chance is an empty sound, it conveys no idea, produces nothing. If you suppose him the work of nature, you are to consider that nature signifies neither less nor more than the mechanical laws by which the material world is governed ; that these laws have an immediate reference to a Being infinite in power and wisdom to establish these same laws, and execute them. Every part and particle of the material world is subject to these laws, and, placed in the same circumstances, act invariably in the same manner, and thus declare, to the intelligent world, their dependence on, and implicit obedience to, the orders of their God. “ *Cæli enarrant Gloriam Dei.*” Ps. 18, v. 2. Let us now consider this
argument

argument, the force of which is not to be eluded, in another light :

All the individuals who compose the series in regular succession have existed ; the number was not infinite, because it admits an increase, and is, in fact, continually increasing ; infinity admits no increase, therefore, there must have been a man to begin the succession, and as he could not by any possibility be son to himself, or to any of his successors, he must have had his existence from some Being not included in the succession. This reasoning is applicable to the different species of animated Beings, which succeed each other by generation, and as not one of them is capable of giving existence, by generation, to a Being of a different species, it is manifest that they must all have received an existence from a Being included in none of those successions. To have recourse to *chance*, to *hazard*, to *nature*, to *some unknown powers in matter*, to the *fortuitous concurrence of atoms* and such like causes, which, have no existence but in the imagination of wild speculators, is unphilosophical : a philosopher assigns no cause incapable of producing the specific effect, which he examines : What ignorance does the man betray who assigns a cause incapable of producing any effect at all.

A second principle of demonstration :

All the Beings which we see or know in this visible world, are contingent, that is, they may or they may not exist : we may conceive them in a state of possibility, not one of them all is capable of giving itself an existence, and much less of giving existence to all the other Beings, which form this visible world ; there must therefore be some one Being, self-existent, which we cannot conceive, in a state of mere possibility. Why so ? Because it would be possible and impossible at the same time : possible from the supposition, and impossible as it could not give itself existence, and could

not receive existence from any other Being, all being supposed non-existent. A first cause therefore must be self-existent, on which all the Beings, which compose this visible world depend for their existence.

A third principle of demonstration :

Infinite perfection is possible ; we reason on some of its properties, though our limited understanding cannot form an adequate idea of the whole ; an impossible Being, a *square circle*, for example, has no properties ; all we conceive of such a repugnant Being is, that the parts of which it is said to be composed, or the properties with which it is invested, exclude each other. If infinite perfection be possible it must necessarily exist. Why so ? Because existence is not only the first, but the foundation of all perfection.

Whether the belief of a Deity be innate in man, that is impressed on his mind, at his entrance into the world, by the author of his being or not, a question which the writer does not undertake to determine, it is certain that there is not, that there never was, a man of sense free from the influence of prejudice or passion, who did not believe the existence of a God, and his interference in human affairs ; hence, even amongst the Heathen nations the mind of man though shackled with false opinions, absorbed in sensuality, subservient to fictitious divinities, depressed by the tyranny of universal custom, yet, upon a sudden emergency, as if awakening from a dream, called on the God of nature : *God knows it, God sees it, God will requite*, and such like exclamations, not looking to the temples of false deities, but to the Heavens, the throne of that God, whom the soul of man naturally adores. If there be, as is pretended by a modern writer, some savage herdes in the wilds of Africa, or America, who know no Being superior to man, and pay no homage to any divinity, it only shews that uncivilized man is capable of being degraded from

from the rank which he was intended to hold in the order of created Beings ; and the cause must be desperate indeed which has recourse to the savage authority of such men.

From passing that bold assertion, or rather wild conjecture, of this modern anti-christian, unnoticed, it must not be inferred that the writer believes it true : with respect to the wildest Savages in America, it is absolutely false, and, if we may judge by analogy, and the report of unprejudiced travellers, it is not more true with respect to their uncivilized brethren in the deserts of Africa and in the Asiatic Islands.

From the principles of demonstration already proposed, it is incontrovertibly true that there is a self-existent primary cause possessed of all perfection, from which all the Beings which compose the visible world derive their existence, and on which they essentially depend for that portion of time, and space, which they occupy in the world ; that this primary cause is neither matter, nor any particle or element of matter, is equally evident : for whether matter be composed of indivisible elements, or of elements infinitely divisible, a question foreign to the subject, on which we reason, it is most certainly composed of parts, it therefore essentially depends on some agent, which is not matter, to effect this composition, if it be not thought that matter has not only made, but composed itself according to its own fancy, which is offensive to common sense. We see matter composed and decomposed according to fixed and invariable laws ; we see matter set in motion, the direction, the composition, and decomposition, of its motion are so regular, that they are subject to mathematical calculation, and we see the smallest particle of matter subject to the same laws which are invariably observed by the heavenly bodies ; the man who from these facts is not convinced of the absolute dependance
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of matter on its maker, and of its blind submission to the laws, which he has established, for its composition, decomposition, for its motion, and the direction of its motion, must be stupidly ignorant of the first principles of reasoning, or perversely obstinate, and persevering in an opinion, not simply groundless, but insulting to reason.

What is said of matter in general, is applicable to every parcel, and particle of matter : no reason can be assigned why one particle should possess power, wisdom and independence exclusively, to have recourse to latent powers in matter is ridiculous : we know that matter is capable of receiving impressions from external agents, and of making impressions according to established laws, the extent of this capacity we do not know, but from this very capacity we know that matter is dependant, that it is passive, incapable of forming any plan, or acting in consequence of any pre-conceived design, of course incapable of composing that order, which subsists in the visible world, the beauty, the harmony, and, the almost boundless extent of which so loudly proclaim the power, the wisdom and the magnificence of its author.

The writer passes in silence the senseless jargon of Atheistical writers, who seem to vie with each other in the extravagant absurdity of the different systems, which they invent, in order, as they pretend, to account for the present order of things, without having recourse to a primary cause.

To the inventive faculties of these gentlemen the world is indebted for knowing, that man is a sort of monkey, in cunning surpassing the common baboon ; as they advance in knowledge we may expect to hear, how a goat made a horse, or a table built a house.

These men, in general, extremely ignorant, yet ambitious of literary fame, conscious of their inability to succeed in common pursuits, endeavour to attract
notice

notice by the affected singularity of their conceits ; to this they add strong declamation charged with invective, which, from the irritability of human nature, is well calculated to insure success. It is useless to enquire if there be Atheists in the world : that there are men who affect to believe there is no God is certain ; that there are many who live as if they do not believe the existence of a God is equally certain : that there are men who, on pretended principles of demonstration, do not believe a God to exist, is uncertain.

We know that of civilized Heathens none were so impious as to deny the existence of some powerful and immortal Being, which superintends this visible world either immediately or by subordinate agents, if you except those sects, whose abominable maxims were known to excite public indignation, who from the practice of such maxims had every thing to fear and nothing to hope. Though the Heathens, absorbed in sensual pleasures, did not ascribe omnipotence, and all perfections, to the Deity, yet the idea of a God, however disfigured, was not totally effaced from their minds. Of apostates from the Christian faith there may be such monsters : God in punishment of their crimes may so far extinguish the light of their understanding as to efface his own impression from their minds.

An Atheist, can he be an honest man ? Yes, if he be not exposed to a delicate or dangerous temptation, with which he may by dishonesty comply, and escape public notice with honor and impunity : if he be honest in such a conjuncture he is a fool : why may not the actions of an Atheist from some impulse of nature be inconsistent with his principles at times, since we see men who believe a God the avenger of crimes, act inconsistently with this belief ? The Atheist therefore may at times be honest and upright through an impulse of nature, notwithstanding the perverse tendency of his principles,

etiples, as the Theist may at times notwithstanding the purity of his principles be depraved through the corruption and instability of human nature.

This primary agent, on which the visible world depends, is of necessity self-existent, eternal and independent: these are perfections, which must be ascribed to a Being possessing all possible perfection: for if you exclude any one of them, you annihilate the idea of a Being infinitely perfect: non-existence destroys all sorts of perfection; and a dependent or temporary existence argues absolute imperfection, from which a Being infinitely perfect is free; our imagination cannot reach eternity, nor can our understanding form an adequate idea of infinite perfection. True, for this simple reason, these faculties in us are limited and cannot extend beyond their sphere; but our understanding easily conceives that some agent must be eternally existent, to give existence to the many Beings which now exist; that this agent must be omnipotent, as nothing less than omnipotence can give existence to a Being, which had none; that this agent must be omniscient, to determine the nature, the properties, the qualities, the place and position of such an immense variety of Beings forming one whole, in all its parts so wonderfully diversified by the useful and the ornamental; that this agent, infinite in power and wisdom, is infinite in all perfections, because infinity excludes all limitations, and the perfection of any Being is correspondent to its nature, hence boundless perfection in any Being, limited in its nature, is impossible, and any limitation of perfection in a Being infinite in its nature, is equally impossible.

These are simple truths within the sphere of human understanding. To pretend that we know nothing of a Being, because we cannot form an adequate idea of all its properties, or because our limited understanding cannot

cannot clearly and distinctly conceive the nature and qualities of any Being, to say that such a Being does not exist, is to contradict the sense of mankind: Thus for example though we do not know all the properties of a Dog, we know that a Dog is not a Horse; and though we cannot form an idea of the nature, or physical constitution of that animal, or determine the springs which give it motion, we know that there are dogs, and many in the world, and that they are frequently in motion. On the same principles, though we cannot conceive a distinct idea of the nature and perfections of a primary cause, yet as we see a visible world, which is not self-existent, which has not made itself, and as we see the different parts, which compose this world placed in a certain order, and preserving for ages their relative position, knowing that not one of these parts was capable of assuming or preserving its relative position, and in fine as we see all the Heavenly Bodies, these vast masses of inert matter, placed at such an amazing distance one from the other, yet mutually connected and dependent in their motions, we must be ignorant indeed, if we do not know that there exists a primary cause eternal, independent, omnipotent and omniscient, which gave this visible world existence, which formed its different parts, placed them in their respective positions, established these laws of motion by which the symmetry and harmony of the whole is preserved.

To have recourse to an infinite succession of causes and effects without a primary cause, strongly marks the ignorance of the Atheistical writer. For if it be impossible for an effect to exist without a cause, it will be at least equally impossible for many effects to exist without a cause, and the height of absurdity to pretend, that an infinite number of effects could exist without a cause; which must be the case in the supposition of an

infinite succession, as all the causes in that succession must have been effects of preceding causes. Hence the Atheist under pretence of removing a difficulty encreases it, or rather makes it infinitely great. To say nothing of the absurdity of an infinite succession continually increasing, as if infinity were capable of any increase.

The immutability of this primary cause is an immediate and necessary consequence of the absolute necessity of its existence: for as this cause is essentially self-existent, it cannot possibly cease to exist, no more than a circle can cease to be round; and as no being either created or increated is in existence without properties correspondent to its nature, hence it follows that the properties or perfections of an increated and eternal Being are increated and eternal, the perfections of a Being essentially existent, are essentially existent, cannot of course cease to exist, can neither increase nor diminish, this primary cause therefore cannot cease to be, nor are its perfections subject to the shadow of mutation.

Justice, wisdom, goodness, &c. in created Spirits are accidental qualities, because their spirits are in their nature contingent, and from a state of non-existence, have been by the almighty power of a primary cause brought into existence; their qualities are correspondent to their nature, they may exist, or cease to exist, and consequently increase or diminish; but in God this primary cause there are no accidental qualities: They are incompatible with the divine nature. God is not said to be good and just as if goodness and justice were qualities inherent in him; but because that he is in himself the source of all goodness, and the fountain of all justice.

He is equally immutable in his decrees: for as he cannot increase in knowledge, he can have no motive to change, and to change without a motive is an argument of levity inconsistent with his nature.

This

This primary cause is infinite in its nature and in all its perfections : limitation argues a dependence on some other cause or receptacle, which in a primary cause is repugnant, and since the primary cause has not given, nor could not give itself existence, nor properties correspondent to its existence, it can give them no limitation. The infinitude therefore of its nature and perfections is manifest.

Some perfections, such as justice and mercy infinite, may seem inconsistent. To obviate this difficulty, which may embarrass the uninformed mind, it must be considered that justice is not said to be infinite because it never remits any part of the penalty, it would confound justice with cruelty, and totally exclude clemency. In the case of vindictive justice, the only species of justice which can at all be thought inconsistent with mercy, the punishment of the criminal is intended to secure tranquility, to satisfy the injured, and prevent future aggression ; if these objects be attained without inflicting the whole of the punishment, is not clemency consistent with justice ? God is said to be infinitely just, not because he never forgives, nor remits any part of the punishment due, but because he never remits without some cause known to his wisdom, which is his rule of action ; in like manner he is said to be infinitely merciful, not because he never punishes ; but because there is no crime so great, which he may not pardon, when he is to forgive, or when he is to punish his infinite wisdom and sovereign will determines. A temporal Prince either through ignorance, or inattention (the respect due to God's representative, does not permit the writer to make use of a more harsh term) frequently pardons regardless of justice ; and as frequently punishes in prejudice of clemency, forgetting that he is himself subject to the natural law, and accountable to God, if not to his subjects, for the use or abuse of the
power

power with which he is invested : the abuse of power is impossible in our God : he is neither subject to ignorance, prejudice, precipitation nor malice : they are incompatible with his nature, he pardons or he punishes according to the dictates of fovereign wisdom ; so that mercy and justice are so far from being inconsistent in him, that they are not even distinct, but all one and the same identified with his essence. This primary cause is one simple and indivisible : if more than one, they would be distinguished by some perfection or imperfection, all imperfection is excluded from a Being infinitely perfect, and one cannot possess a perfection which the other does not, it would argue a defect, hence there could be no distinction, consequently no plurality.

This primary cause essentially self-existent and giving existence to all other Beings must possess the plenitude of being, therefore there cannot be a second : because in that supposition neither would possess the Being possessed by the other, neither formally, nor eminent-ly, as the Creator possesses all the perfections of his creatures, consequently neither the one nor the other would possess the plenitude of being.

This reasoning is applicable to the wisdom, to the knowledge, to the power, to all the attributes of the Deity : their plenitude evidently excludes a plurality of Gods.

A second principle of demonstration is assumed from the unity of the world ; the disposition of all its parts, their mutual connection, and dependence, shew them to have been formed and placed in their respective positions by the same Architect : if they had been formed and placed by different architects that mutual dependence, which Astronomers calculate with mathematical precision, could not subsist. To have recourse to a mutual agreement between agents equal in power shews the dependence of each on the other and excludes a supreme and independent power.

The

The Heathen philosophers from the unity of the world, the harmony and symmetry, the mutual connection and dependence of all its parts, saw the necessity of admitting one supreme and independent God, it is astonishing, that they did not see the absurdity of fictitious Deities, subordinate and dependent, as if subordination and dependence were not totally irreconcilable with the divine nature.

In this visible world there are so many appearances, which seem to contradict the idea of the whole being disposed by sovereign wisdom; and in the moral world so many actions which seem inconsistent with the general principles of human nature, that some Philosophers unable to account for these appearances in the visible world, and much less for the innumerable evils, which are manifest in the moral world, thought there were two principles equal and independent. The one sovereignly good, the other sovereignly evil. This opinion absurd in itself, and contradictory in the terms, as one first principle, evidently excludes a second, has been revived, and embellished by some modern writers, no absurdity is too gross for men, who grasp at particular applause. *Popularis auræ vile Mancipium.* To obviate the difficulties which are proposed by these writers, and invalidate all the reasons, which are offered in defence of this ridiculous opinion, it must be considered that a primary cause acts by general laws, it gives motion to all secondary causes, but does not deprive them of that action which is correspondent to their nature, hence whenever any defect appears, it must proceed from the obstruction which one secondary cause gives the other, the primary cause does not produce the defect, nor indeed the secondary, a defect has no efficient cause, it argues a deficiency, which must be found in all secondary causes, because they are limited. As to any monstrous appearance or
any

any derangement in the visible world, they are evidently defects ; for where there is no defect, there is nothing monstrous, no derangement. Hence we easily conceive that, all these defective appearances are natural consequences of the plan, which the great Architect of this visible world proposed, and the laws, which he in consequence established.

This reasoning is applicable with equal force to the moral world : for all the disorders, all the crimes, and evils consequent and antecedent to these crimes, all the miseries, of which they are productive, are the natural consequences of that liberty of determination, and action, which is natural to man, and without which he would not be a man, but an automaton, a machine set in motion by springs ; at the option of an external agent.

But why not deprive man of that liberty which is so pernicious to himself and others ? This simple reply may suffice. Because man is not a machine, nor was he intended to be set in motion by springs, or the laws of attraction and adhesion, which inanimate matter obeys.

This question proposed under a thousand different forms, and incessantly repeated, betrays an inexhaustible fund of ignorance. It might be asked with equal propriety, or rather with less absurdity, why man is not deprived of his legs and arms, for he frequently abuses both : and a man deprived of reason, the foundation of free agency, is a more deplorable object, than a man without legs or arms.

To say that a God sovereignly good is obliged to avert all evil from his creatures is an assertion which surpasses if possible the former in absurdity. Why so ? Because evil is not a positive existing Being, it consists in some defect, and all creatures are essentially defective. To oblige him then to avert all evil, is to oblige him to create.

create Beings infinitely perfect, which is impossible. But is he not obliged to avert moral evil, *that is*, the perverse actions of intelligent creatures, and the miseries consequent thereto? From himself unquestionably. Hence he can do nothing inconsistent with sovereign wisdom, which is his rule of action; nor can he command, exhort, advise, consent to, or countenance any moral action in his creatures inconsistent with the dictates of right reason, or what is called the natural law. To oblige him to deprive man of that liberty of determination, and action, which as man he possesses; which is not simply a gift of the greatest value to man, as the right use of it founds his happiness here and hereafter; but one of the constituent attributes of man, to oblige him, I say to deprive man of that liberty is, in other terms. to say, that he ought not to have made man a rational Being. But could he not prevent the abuse of liberty? Most certainly. He wants neither power nor wisdom to do it. Why not prevent it? For reasons known to his wisdom. This last question is not less impertinent than if it were asked, why he did not make the Frog as pleasing to the sight as the Peacock. And the answer equally simple. Because he thought proper to make the one a Frog, and the other a Peacock.

That liberty is grossly abused, we know by experience; that it is not abused with impunity, the man, who does not know it now, will certainly know it hereafter, the man, who does not believe it, thinks a God of infinite sanctity capable of encouraging iniquity, an opinion more absurd never insulted the sense of mankind.

But supposing a criminal abuse of liberty foreseen, and a perseverance to the end of life, entailing endless misery, is it consistent with sovereign goodness to create a man in this supposition? It would be inconsistent,

ent, not only with goodness and mercy, but with justice and sanctity, to create a man for that end, and with that view, or to bestow on man liberty, the proper use of which would be impossible, and the abuse natural and necessary; but to create a man a free agent, the proper use of whose liberty is natural, though not necessary, and the abuse of which is unnatural, though not impossible, is perfectly consistent with goodness and mercy. Why so? Because the abuse of any thing good in itself does not make it bad, it only shews the perverseness of the person, who abuses it. The very abuse of liberty shews the excellence of the gift: for what is bad cannot be abused. The corruption of the mind, by the perverseness of the will, shews the native goodness of human nature. Why so? Because corruption deprives a substance of a certain degree of goodness, it must therefore possess, it and though reduced in goodness, whilst it remains in existence, the substance is yet good, because it is yet corruptible. If it be not said that corruption renders a substance incorruptible, the greatest of all absurdities.

From this reasoning it is evident that all substances are good in themselves. That evil is nothing positive; that it consists in the corruption of what is good, argues a deficient, not an efficient cause. If a previous knowledge of the abuse of any gift were a sufficient inducement to retract it, there are but few of the gifts of God, to his creatures, which would not be withdrawn: are not the very necessaries of life abused? Yet what man in his reason will pretend that these gifts are not good in themselves, and worthy of their Author? If therefore an intelligent Being, through the perverseness of his own will, abuses that reason, which constitutes it intelligent, and distinguishes it from all creatures, which are not intelligent, giving it a decided superiority, in the order of created Beings, it is but just and reasonable

reasonable that it should be excluded from the ranks which it was intended to hold ; and though this exclusion, and the misery consequent to it, be not a good to the Being which suffers, it is good that it should suffer : because justice requires it, and in all this there is nothing which is not perfectly consistent with the idea of a Being sovereignly good, and sovereignly opposite to evil, which it can neither encourage nor countenance.

To conclude, there is no inconvenience that God should create a Spirit, active and intelligent, free from external or internal restraint in its determinations, though he foresees that, this Spirit will abuse its powers, and persevere in that depraved state : why so ? Because however perverse, malicious or depraved, it yet surpasses all inanimate Beings ; in the dignity of its nature it is superior to the material world, and there is but the dignity of its nature to be ascribed to its Maker, its malice and depravity to itself. The furious tyger is superior to the inoffensive stone, and the drunkard to the wine which intoxicates him. The wine is good, the man, though intoxicated, better. If it be consistent with sovereign goodness to create the wine why not the man ? Non-existence may appear preferable to endless misery. Disposed as the writer is at present he would not hesitate nor deliberate on the choice ; yet if we judge by experience the contradictory is true : for all men are exposed to inevitable misery, and few, who are not actually involved in it ; yet life in misery is preferred to death, and the Atheist, of all wretched men, the most wretched here, fears death most, notwithstanding that state of non-existence, which he fondly promises himself.

From what has been said on this subject, appears the extravagance of ascribing to a Being sovereignly malignant, what is called evil, whether physical or moral,

for such a Being, if a substance must be good, all substances are, and if not a substance, cannot be an agent, can produce nothing.

Besides all the evils, of which the world complains, are natural consequences of the plan proposed and the order established by its great Creator. The very complaint of evil is an acknowledgment that the order itself is good ; because evil is nothing else but a deviation from this order. As to the objections drawn from the premature death and sufferings of children, and the pains, to which unoffending beasts, are subject, they will be discussed in the course of this work.

It may not be unnecessary to observe that a state of trial, in which an intelligent Being acting with rectitude according to the dictates of that reasoning faculty, which distinguishes it, may attain happiness, and if perverting this faculty and abusing its powers of determination and action, it may be exposed to misery, is perfectly consistent with the idea which we have of the wisdom, the goodness and justice of the Supreme Being.

Wisdom is the source and principle of order : order requires, that rectitude of conduct, when freely chosen, should be rewarded, and that depravity, if obstinate and persevering, when rectitude is possible, should be chastised, a state of trial is therefore consistent with wisdom.

It is equally consistent with goodness, to reward virtue when free from restraint, is an effect of goodness, a state in which virtue and vice are equally possible, is therefore consistent with it. An action if not free from external or internal necessity, may be virtuous or vicious, but not the agent. The agent and not the action deserves reward or punishment ; it is therefore of indispensable necessity that to deserve either reward, or punishment, the action should be the effect of choice.

choice. That this state of trial is consistent with justice is evident on the exposition: justice gives to every man that, which of right belongs to him. If he be not master of his actions, he has no title, he deserves neither reward nor punishment. Is a man who falls from a house, though he may escape unhurt, entitled to a reward? Or a soldier who does not fly over a rampart deserving of punishment?

To obviate numberless difficulties proposed by wild speculatists and practical Atheists, who from the irregularity of their conduct, having nothing to hope, and every thing to fear, endeavor to persuade themselves, and others, that there is not a God; or if there be, that he must be indifferent to actions, as they pretend, of inevitable necessity. It must be considered that philosophers proceed to demonstrate the existence of any cause *à priori* as they term it, that is by shewing immediately that the cause does exist, and why it exists, or *à posteriori*, that is, concluding from the effects, the existence of the cause. The former is the more forcible and the more persuasive: the conviction, which it impresses on the mind is not to be effaced; the latter mode of demonstration if inconsistent with the former, must contain a fallacy, whether the human mind detects it or not, because truth is not incompatible with truth, but verisimilitude is reconcilable with falsehood; hence it follows that all the difficulties, which are proposed, or the objections, which can possibly be stated against a truth founded on immediate demonstration are ineffectual. Whether these objections appear capable of an immediate and decisive solution, or incapable, they only argue the fertility of the inventor's imagination, or the limitation of his understanding, but they cannot affect the truth.

It must be also remarked that there are numberless truths capable of immediate demonstration, with respect

pect to certain classes in society, which, with respect to others, are not only incapable of demonstration, but absolutely repugnant to their ideas: thus an Astronomer demonstrates on physical, and mathematical principles, the magnitude of any planet, its density, if there be an attendant satellite, its attractive force and extent, the figure of its orbit, and time of its revolution, all which truths are as mysterious to the unlettered Captain, as the most inconceivable truths of religion. Mathematical and physical truths he implicitly believes, because they lay him under no restraint, the truths of religion he denies, because they contradict his vicious inclinations; against the former he offers no objection, because he does not understand the subject; against the latter, though equally ignorant, he states a thousand difficulties. The gratification of his sensual appetites, is therefore the motive of his judgment, and his only rule of action, so true it is, that no man ever denied the existence of a God but he, who feared his justice; nor did any man ever think him insensible or indifferent to his actions, if they were not vicious. To this may be added that, there are truths, capable of the most rigid demonstration, not only inconceivable to the unlettered but to the informed part of mankind, and which in fact appear repugnant to reason; thus, for example, the Mathematician demonstrates the hyperbolic curve, if extended to infinity, incessantly approaches its asymptots, but cannot touch them. The demonstration of this truth, however repugnant it may appear to our ideas, is mathematically exact, therefore all objections against this truth in whatever form they are stated, whatever appearance of demonstration they may assume, whether capable of solution or not, are fallacious.

These principles solve in the most decisive manner, all the objections stated by Atheists against the existence

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ence of a God, and by Deists against his superintending providence : they give a simple and satisfactory answer to all their enquiries. If there be a God the Creator of all things, why create the tyger, the rattle-snake ? Why the fly or the beetle ? The writer does not know why he created them ; but as they are not self-existent, have not made themselves, could not be made by any other Being equally impotent, they must have been created, and, as there is no action without an agent, there must be a Creator, though the writer does not know for what immediate end he created a vast number of creatures disgusting to our sight, and taste, and noxious to our bodies, yet in their proportions, their preservation, and propagation, he sees the most evident marks of his power and wisdom.

This answer is applicable to the enquiries of the Manichean, and modern Philosopher. If there be but one principle sovereignly good, why does he suffer moral evil ? We do not know why he permits it, but we know that a Being sovereignly malignant is a mere chimæra : for by a Being supremely malignant is understood, either a Being infinitely opposite to a Being sovereignly good, or a Being possessed of the same perfections, substituting malevolence in the place of benevolence. There is but a non-entity destitute of every perfection and infinitely opposite to a Being possessed of all perfection, a non-entity cannot be an agent either good or bad. Wisdom, power, justice, mercy and malevolence are attributes which exclude each other. So that no such Being exists or can exist. Hence then whether we can or cannot account for the existence of moral evil under the direction of one God sovereignly good, to admit a malevolent principle independent of equal power, wisdom, &c. is a gross absurdity.

That pretended indifference, which the modern Philosopher has introduced, with which he feeds his fancy,
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and flatters his sensuality, is equally absurd : the vigilant attention of the Creator to the inanimate, and irrational part of this visible world, is evident in the motion of the Heavenly Bodies, the invariable laws to which they are subject ; in the preservation, and propagation of the several species of brutes. What extravagance to pretend that he should neglect the rational part of the world ? That his cares should be confined to the more ignoble part of his works, and the intelligent part, from which only he can obtain his tribute of praise and gratitude, be neglected ? But says the Deist if his providence superintends the world why permit so many disorders which are evident in the world ? The writer replies once more we do not know why he permits them ; but since they are disorders, therefore there is an universal order, for a disorder is neither less nor more than a deviation from order, and where there is no order there can be no deviation from it, an universal order argues an universal cause to establish and support it ; the man who pretends that in the world there is neither order nor disorder, that human actions are neither virtuous nor vicious, all equal and indifferent, to murder a loving mother not more criminal than to save her from the jaws of a hungry lion, is not to be reasoned with, but either confined in a mad house, or hunted from society like a wild beast of the most destructive kind.

The Christian Philosopher assigns the most satisfactory reasons to justify providence in the distribution of good and evil in the present life, and from that distribution concludes the immortality of the soul with the utmost certainty. That subject will be discussed in the course of this work. We shall now proceed to consider our God, this primary cause, under another point of view, *that is*, as infinitely intelligent.

It is said of man that he knows, when he sees, hears, feels

feels or remembers, what he has seen, heard or felt, or draws conclusions from his ideas and sensations. This is not applicable to God : in him there is no mutability of thought, no transition from thought to thought, no conclusions drawn from principles, no train of reasoning : that mind is most comprehensive, which contemplates the greatest number of objects at the same instant, and by the same act. God being infinite in all his attributes, his mind infinitely comprehensive, views all objects past, present, future and possible by the same act and at the same instant, this act of contemplation in God is not any thing distinct from the divine nature, it is God himself contemplating. The science of God being identified with the divine nature, is infinite as the divine nature, and immutable ; science in man is an inherent quality, from the limitation of the human mind it cannot exceed a certain measure, God is known to us in part, we know him to be incomprehensible to any created understanding, but the science of God being identified with the divine nature God perfectly knows himself, and sees himself, immediately in his own nature, from the infinitude of the divine nature no created object can represent it, hence God sees all his creatures in himself, that is, in his essence ; but he cannot see his essence in his creatures, for even collectively taken they cannot possess that perfection, which is necessary to represent the divine essence, God therefore sees himself immediately in his own nature. It is manifest that all his creatures are known to him, whether they actually exist, are to exist, or remain in a state of mere possibility. Why so ? Because as he perfectly knows himself he knows his power of creating, and his will : the existence of all created Beings being solely dependent on the will of God, he must know them, or they could not exist, and all the effects of causes determined by the laws, which he has established for the preservation

preservation and direction of the material world are equally dependent on his will, there are therefore but the determinations of free agents, the actions of intelligent Beings subject to any difficulty ; but as the existence of many creatures depends eventually on these determinations of free agents, and the existence of all creatures depends essentially on the will of God, it is impossible that he should foresee the one without foreseeing the other : the existence of all his creatures he must know, he must of course know the determinations of intelligent and free agents, by which as secondary causes, he gives existence to many of his creatures. This prescience in God is infallible, eternal and immutable : there is nothing in God which is not so, nothing which is not identified with his nature ; but it imposes no sort of necessity on the free agent : for at the same time that God knows that, such or such an agent will form such or such a determination, produce such or such an act, he knows that the agent will determine itself, and act freely, if the agent be active and free in its nature ; or be determined by some external cause, if the agent be incapable of determining itself. Why so ? Because all secondary causes act according to their nature ; hence though the prescience of God be immutable, the action is contingent, because the prescience of God is identified with his nature, and immutable as he is himself ; but the action which is the object of this prescience, is inherent in one of his creatures, contingent as all creatures are, free if the creature be free, and necessitated, if it be a blind cause.

What God foresees will infallibly happen. True, but it will happen as he foresees it, that is, freely if the agent be free from restraint, or necessarily if the agent be subject to internal or external necessity. But what God foresees must of all necessity happen ; yes, for it is not possible to foresee an event which will not happen,
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If therefore the event be foreseen, it will infallibly happen ; but this prescience imposes no necessity on the agent, nor is it the mediate, or immediate cause of its determination : thus for example if I see a man fall from a house, the man must of all necessity fall, or it would be impossible for me to see him fall ; but my sight imposes no necessity on the man, nor is it the mediate or immediate cause of his fall : it is not because God foresees the man's determination that the man determines to act in such or such a manner ; but it is because the man determines, that God foresees it ; as in the case of the fall, it is not because I see him that the man falls ; but it is because he falls that I see him.

But if the man did not come to that precise determination God would be deceived ! No, for he would not have foreseen it, it is impossible to foresee an event which will not happen.

To obviate a difficulty, which may seem embarrassing, that is, how it is possible to foresee the determination of the mind, which is in itself indetermined, and mistress of its actions, it must be considered that the mind is itself dependent on God for its existence, and that all its inclinations are known to him, as are also the particular circumstances in which it is placed, this is certainly more than sufficient to shew a Being of infinite intelligence, what will be its determination. This prescience of God sees the effect which is not yet in existence, but will infallibly happen, though it is not the cause of that effect, nor does it impose any necessity on the agent, as if by revelation I know that it will rain on a certain day : can any previous knowledge be considered as the cause of the rain ? If the medium assigned be thought insufficient to justify the infallibility and immutability of God's prescience, let it be considered also that God is independent on his creatures, that they are all dependent on him ; that his prescience

identified with his nature is immutable and infallible as the divine nature ; he therefore invariable in himself, sees all things vary, unchangeable in himself he sees all things change, without any succession of thought, or transition from thought to thought, he sees all things in succession. In what medium? In himself, that is, in his will, all those beings, which are determined to have an existence in any circumstance of time ; in his power, all Beings, which are merely possible, and all their possible relations ; in the order of causes he sees their effects, and as the human will is the immediate cause of its own actions, and determinations, in the will he sees its determinations. The existence of an immense variety in the succession of Beings, depends on, or rather results from the determinations of the human will ; does it follow that, God in giving existence to these Beings, is dependent on the determinations of the will in the execution of the plan which he has proposed in the creation of the world and the succession of the Beings which compose it? No! but it follows that, from eternity he saw at the same instant, and in the same view, all causes and effects whether naturally resulting, or free determinations, that of course he is dependent on the order which he himself established in the execution of his plan ; and since in the order of Beings there are many intellectual causes, he owes to himself to preserve their nature entire, taking the result of their determinations into the plan of his operations.

As in his essence God sees all his creatures, has a clear, a distinct and adequate knowledge of their nature, and operations, it may be suspected that evil being a corruption of nature God may not know it, as in the divine essence there is no example of evil : to this the writer replies that evil is known by its opposite good, as falsehood is known by its opposite truth, neither

ther evil nor falshood can be known in themselves, or in any representation, falshood is a negation of truth, and evil a negation of goodnes, negations have no qualities, of course cannot be represented.

It is useles to remark that this primary cause infinitely perfect is not matter, nor any particle or element of matter : matter is so far from being infinitely perfect, that it is subject to all sorts of imperfections ; all matter is composed. A more powerful agent is therefore necessary to effect this composition, every element of matter is circumscribed and dependent on the circumjacent elements for the place which it occupies in this visible world, which is inconsistent with the nature of a primary cause infinite and independent.

It was formerly asserted by an impious Atheist, under the assumed title of Philosopher, that in this visible world there was but one indivisible substance, that all other things were but modifications of this one substance, which he qualified with the title of God, so that the ox's horns and the ass's ears were but modifications of this pretended God. They might serve to adorn the head of the inventor of a system, in which it is difficult to determine whether impiety or absurdity prevails.

No absurdity can be greater than to pretend that an universal substance exists, and not individuals in which it exists, as if humanity existed, not men, as if men composed of bones, flesh, &c. were not substances, but modifications of this imaginary universal substance ; nor is there any impiety greater than to pretend that, this imaginary substance, in which modifications are supposed inherent, which exclude each other, as heat and cold, the cruelty of the tyger, and the meekness of the lamb, is a God. The writer passes unnoticed his axioms, definitions, and pretended demonstrations : against rank nonsense it is useles to reason.

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From the principles hitherto laid down, it is manifest that there exists a primary cause, almighty, independent, infinitely perfect, sovereignly wise and intelligent, seeing from eternity all future events, whether resulting from natural causes, or the determinations of free agents, permitting all secondary causes to act according to their nature, and disposing all events according to the order of that general plan, which in his wisdom he has formed; it is also manifest that this primary cause is one, simple and indivisible, excluding multiplicity, and composition, whether physical or metaphysical; that in this cause there are no inherent qualities, no attributes distinct from the divine nature, or from each other; that when we speak of the mercy, the justice, the power, the wisdom, &c. of the Divinity, it is the same divine nature, which we consider under different points of view, the limitation of our understanding preventing us from taking in all these attributes at the same view.

That in the order of Beings, which compose the universe, there are many intelligent Beings subordinate to this first great cause, is manifest from the idea which we have of truth, of goodness, of justice, &c. which are merely intellectual, and fall under none of our senses: truth for example has neither colour, taste, smell nor sound, nor can it come into contact with us: it consists in the conformity of the attribute with its subject; of it we have a clear, a distinct idea, not from any one of our senses, it is therefore purely intellectual, and shews that this intelligent faculty is inherent in us.

We are now to consider whether this thinking principle within us, this intelligent Being, which reasons and directs, and to which many, though not all the movements of our bodies, when well disposed are subject, be material or something distinct from matter.

If we believe the Materialist there is nothing in this universe but matter ; of course our reasoning faculty is an attribute of matter ; our most elevated thoughts our most abstract ideas are modifications of matter. A Philosopher celebrated in certain schools, the once silent retreats of truth and science ; but from which both have been banished, at first by the iron hand of power, and in succeeding ages by prejudice, passion and penal statutes, pretends, that matter, though composed of parts, may receive from almighty power the faculty of thinking ; he might as well pretend that, a circle without ceasing to be a circle, might become a triangle ; the power of God extends to every thing which is possible, that is, to every thing the constituent parts, or attributes of which, do not exclude each other, such chimeras are not the objects of power. If the principles of this Philosopher be admitted, we may expect to hear a dissertation on the nature and effects of fire, by a learned pot : for if one particle of matter be possessed of the faculty of thinking, no reason can be assigned why all others should be excluded.

The operations of the mind essentially exclude the idea of matter. Of whatever nature the primary or component elements of matter be whether divisible or indivisible a question as yet undetermined, matter is itself most certainly divisible and composed of parts. The operations of the mind are indivisible, and as the modifications of any subject are of the same nature with the subject itself, being nothing else but the subject modified, if the modifications or operations of the mind are indivisible, of all necessity the mind must be so. We have an idea of truth, an idea of thought. Truth is not divisible nor is thought half a truth, or half a thought is a mere chimera of which we can form no idea

Add to this that matter can never act on what is not immediately

immediately present, the mind reflects on the past, and foresees future events, it reflects on itself and on its own operations, of this matter is totally incapable. The mind conceives that it is impossible the same thing should be and not be at the same time, and this operation is absolutely impossible to any subject composed of parts: if it be said that the idea of what is, is in one part of the subject, and the idea of what is not, in another part of the subject, neither the one nor the other can pronounce the impossibility of their co-existence; if it be thought that the idea of what is, and the idea of what is not, be in the same part of the subject, no reason can be assigned why that part should possess these ideas excluding all others, moreover this part in which both ideas are supposed to exist, must be indivisible or it would itself be composed of parts and the question again recur; if it be asserted that these ideas are in every part of this composed subject, there will be as many judgments pronounced as parts in the subject, and after all there is but a simple and indivisible Being which can pronounce the judgment.

This reasoning which bears no reply, against which nothing can be offered, which does not carry absurdity on the face of it, is applicable to every assertion whether affirmative or negative: in the affirmative the idea of the attribute is identified with that of the subject, and in the negative excluded from it, both these ideas must be in the same simple and indivisible Being, or it would be impossible to pronounce the consistency in the affirmative, or the inconsistency in the negative; thus for example supposing one man has a just idea of gold, no idea at all of silver, and another man an idea of silver, and no idea at all of gold, neither the one nor the other can pronounce this negative judgment, gold is not silver. The man who pronounces the judgment must have an idea of both the one and the other,
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he compares these ideas and finds them inconsistent, and then declares that the one is not the other. Again the mind is unconfined in its operations, limited neither by time, nor space, and frequently ranges in the regions of imaginary space; from the knowledge of one thing it proceeds to that of another, it forms abstract ideas, considers Beings in a state of mere possibility, reasons on Beings confessedly immaterial, virtue, vice, truth, falsehood, calculation of numbers. Of all these operations matter is totally incapable: neither motion nor rest, situation nor figure, nor any possible operation of matter, will give an idea of truth, of mercy or benevolence, nor place matter itself in the regions of imaginary space or institute a mathematical demonstration.

But says the Materialist we do not know all the properties of matter, the faculty of thinking may be amongst these latent properties.

It is true we do not know all the properties of matter, but we know that amongst the unknown properties of matter there are none which exclude these we know, none inconsistent with these we know, and of the properties, which we know there are some which exclude the possibility of thought, that is extension and figure.

But says the celebrated Philosopher so dear to the Materialist, our conceptions do not confine omnipotence, we are not to conclude that matter does not think because we do not conceive it possible. True! our conceptions are not the measure of almighty power. Many things are possible of which we can form no idea at all, and many things do exist which appear repugnant to our senses. We do not conclude that matter cannot think, because we do not conceive it possible that matter should possess the faculty of thinking; but we conclude that matter does not possess this faculty,

faculty, because we clearly and easily conceive that it is impossible it should, and we know that this impossibility is founded in the nature of things ; that a thinking pan or kettle is a ridiculous chimera, we know that the object of power is a Being, the component parts of which, or the constituent attributes, do not exclude each other, as a true falsehood, or a triangular circle, or a thinking pot.

Matter we conceive to be a solid substance composed of parts, the idea of vegetation or sensation is not included in the essential attributes of matter ; yet we find matter capable of vegetation and sensation, why not of thought ? For this simple reason, that the essential attributes of matter exclude the possibility of thought, not of vegetation or sensation, which may be effected by motion, and a different disposition and configuration of the component parts of the sensitive or vegetating substance ; both vegetation and sensation may be increased or diminished, they may of course be modifications of a divisible subject, the idea of truth, an affirmation or negation can neither be increased nor diminished, it is essentially indivisible and cannot exist but in an indivisible subject.

As it is impossible for matter, any part or particle of matter to think or reason, and that, that thinking principle in man, which we call a soul, thinks, and reasons, it necessarily follows that the soul is a spiritual substance. This truth founded on the most irresistible reasoning will appear evident to any man, who examines minutely its power of reflection, that is, when the soul forms a thought, and proceeds to examine it, and at times to examine its reflection on the thought, which it undertakes to examine, this power appears more wonderful when the soul reflects on herself, and examines her own operations, she is then the subject of her own examination, an operation evidently spiritual,

itual, of which matter can by no possibility be, or be conceived capable.

As to the union of this spiritual substance with the body composed of matter, we know it exists, the manner in which this surprising union is formed we do not know. That the soul acts on the body and the body on the soul is equally certain ; the principles on which their mutual operations depend as assigned by different Philosophers are some absolutely false, and others uncertain, this argues a defect in our understanding, but does not affect a truth, which is known by incontestible experience.

But in fine says the Materialist the souls of brutes are capable of thought, and yet composed of matter. To this last refuge of the Materialist the writer replies if it be true, as he pretends, that, that principle of action, or rather that passive principle, which he calls a soul in the brute, be capable of thought, it is not composed of matter ; or if it be composed of matter it is not capable of thought : whatever system be assumed to account for the appearance of reason in brutes, it is metaphysically true, that simple and indivisible thought cannot be a modification of any subject composed of parts, if therefore this active or passive principle in the brute thinks it is not matter, and if it be matter it does not think.

Some Philosophers celebrated in the schools pretend that brutes are mere automats, and reduce all their operations to mechanism. Though the writer does not believe this system true, the possibility is incontrovertible : such machines being evidently within the reach of infinite power and wisdom. In the principles of these Philosophers the Materialist's objection vanishes. If the brutes be mere machines set in motion by springs; whatever appearance of reason be in their operations there is neither thought nor reflection, these Philoso-

phers confirm their opinion by arguments drawn from the human body, which may be considered as an hydraulic machine, in which the powers of mechanism are wonderfully combined. In the human body there are innumerable latent springs, which are never called into action but by accident; it is by these dormant springs that, when a leg or an arm is taken off, a new communication between the arteries and veins is formed, for the conveyance of the blood; this is an effect of mechanism, totally independent on the will, why may not the brutes, say they, be composed of springs so contrived as by the impression of external objects to produce all these operations, which we admire? To this may be added that the operations of all individuals of the same species are invariably the same. The young squirrel, that has not yet seen a winter, makes as ample a provision of nuts as the old. This sameness in the operations of the young and the old shew the mechanism to be the same.

As to the instruction, of which some brutes are capable, it depends on the organization of the animal, which may be rendered more or less perfect by practice, not precept, of which the brute is incapable, if words be added, they are applied as sound, which act on the animal's sense of hearing, not as signs to convey ideas to its understanding, hence no general principles, no mathematical demonstrations, no new inventions, in a word no intellectual operation is within the animal's reach, because it possesses no intelligent faculty. The whole of the animal's knowledge is confined to its senses, and the senses are acted on by present objects, no conclusions drawn from principles, no retrospect, no forethought.

Whether the animal be considered as an automaton, or possessed of some passive cognoscent principle, it is manifest that a certain order, and appearance of reason must appear in its motions, because it is under the immediate

immediate direction of sovereign reason, and intended to fulfil some end ; thus an arrow though destitute of sense and reason, passes with the utmost regularity, to the mark intended by the archer. The arrow, you will say, is subservient to the established laws of motion, does not change its own direction, not so the animal. True, but if you compare the limited power and reason of the archer, to omnipotence and omniscience, and conceive that effects are always correspondent to the power of action in their causes, you will find that the regularity in the flight of the arrow is more wonderful than the motions of the most cunning animal.

Man being composed of substances essentially different, and substantially united, the active and intelligent principle is, in many of its operations, dependent on the disposition of the body, more particularly in the acquisition of ideas, a great number of which are not attainable but through the medium of some one or other of the senses, this dependence of the soul on the disposition of the body furnishes the Materialist another pretence. The soul, says he, is weak in the child, strong in the man, it grows with the body, languishes and dies with it. The very dependence of the soul on the disposition of the body, in many of its operations, from which the Materialist draws his objection solves the difficulty, because it follows of necessity, that the operations of the soul, dependent on the disposition of the body, must be more or less perfect according to that disposition, that its knowledge must increase with its years, and that every derangement in the organization of the body, must produce a correspondent derangement in the operations of the soul, but this mutual dependence does not shew that they are similar substances, or that the active principle, in which there is no principle of dissolution, may not exist after the union, by the destruction of the body, is dissolved.

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To conclude this article : there is not an operation of the mind, which does not argue its simplicity, which does not shew it to be an uncomposed, indivisible and active principle, it is not the eye that judges of colours, nor is it the ear that examines the nature of sounds, all the senses are inlets, and the same indivisible Being sees, hears, tastes and smells. If this principle be supposed material how take in such an immense quantity of objects at the same view ? Where stow all the objects contained in the memory ? How extend its researches in futurity ? Where place the ideas of truth, of virtue, of vice, of dishonesty, which affect no sense ? How compare ideas and draw conclusions from fixed and eternal principles ? These operations of the human mind shew, in the strongest light, the ignorance, absurdity and impiety of the Materialist. It is a melancholy truth that such monsters in human shape do exist amongst us, and that the gratification of sensual appetites degrades a man so low as to deprive him of the light of reason.

As this intelligent Being, which we call a soul, is not self-existent, cannot receive an existence from any Being equally imperfect and impotent, it argues the existence of an omnipotent and eternal cause, on which it depends for its existence and preservation in that state of existence.

The soul of man, not being composed of jarring elements like the body, has no principle of dissolution within it, it is therefore immortal of its own nature, and as it cannot give itself existence, when in a state of mere possibility, nor receive it from any other Being equally impotent, so, when placed in a state of existence, it cannot deprive itself of existence, nor be deprived of it by any power inferior to that from which it holds existence, it therefore cannot be destroyed but by annihilation.

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That the soul must exist, when the union with the body is dissolved, is evident from this, that in its most perfect operations it is independent on the body, that is, in reasoning on universal principles, which though eternal and immutable cannot affect any one of its senses, hence it follows that a separation from the body only serves to perfect the soul, and as perfection and corruption are essentially opposite, what perfects cannot corrupt, or destroy, the soul therefore must exist when the union with the body is dissolved, if not reduced to non-existence by annihilation.

To pretend that the soul, immortal of its own nature, capable of greater perfections in its highest operations in a state of separation, than when united with the body, should be destroyed by almighty power is rash and extravagant. No reason can be assigned for this pretended annihilation, whilst reasons not simply plausible but conclusive and incontrovertible shew the contrary.

In the first place the desire of immortality is natural to man. It is universal, and has been so from the commencement; in vain does the Atheist, or the Materialist, pretend that this may be the effect of prejudice or education: he might as well pretend that the desire of life or the means to support it, is the effect of prejudice or education.

Prejudices are variable, so is education, and the opinions depending on them as variable as the principles, on which they depend; the desire of immortality is invariable, as universal as the desire of meat and drink; it is therefore founded in our nature, impressed on the soul by its author, consequently it cannot be vain, if the author of nature, in whom veracity, wisdom and power are infinite, be not supposed to sport with his creatures, and amuse himself with deceiving them, which surpasses absurdity.

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There are many who do not desire immortality. Perhaps there may be some impious, profligate, and unprincipled characters, who have nothing to expect but the punishment due to their crimes, to whom of course immortality is not desirable. There are men without noses, and some without eyes, does it follow that an eye or a nose is not natural to man? No! but that, through the interposition of some secondary causes, there are monsters in the physical world; in like manner if there be an Atheist, or a Materialist, who does not desire immortality, it only proves that there are monsters in the moral world, so absorbed in sensuality as to be deprived of the light of reason. The qualities natural to any species are not to be sought for in monsters, in which there must be either an excrescence, or a defect, but they are found in the more perfect individuals of the species. That this desire of immortality is deeply implanted in the minds of all good men was never denied even by the Atheist.

In the next place, the mind of man is unlimited in its desires, the more it knows, the more it desires to know, the greater its possessions the more it extends its views. One object attained is but an incentive to pursue another; it is therefore manifest that nothing short of infinitude can fill the capacity of the mind, and equally evident that infinitude is not attainable but by immortality, where truth is seen in its source, and fills the capacity of the understanding, and infinite excellence fixes the desires of the will, there being no other object which it can desire. This unlimited capacity, in the mind of man, shews that he has been intended for the possession of infinite excellence. Whence these terrors in the mind of the vicious or rather flagitious man? Whilst with impunity and horror he oppresses innocence, and increases his possessions with the spoils of the defenceless? And whence this secret satisfaction
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in the soul of the just man, when he relieves the distress of his most inveterate enemy, forgetting in the day of his distress that he is an enemy, and remembering that he cannot cease to be his brother? Does not that sense of rectitude implanted in the mind of man, point out an immortality, in which the just man expects the reward of his virtue, and the oppressor of innocence and weakness fears the punishment of his crimes? But virtue says the Materialist is its own reward, the sense of having done a virtuous act rewards the action. It is true the sense of virtue soothes in affliction, and pleases in prosperity; but it is from the prospect of futurity, in which that reward, which is here denied, will be obtained. Virtue without a reward either here or hereafter, either in fact, or in hope, though good in itself, is not the source of any thing that is good. Vice rewarded here, and having nothing to fear hereafter, is preferable; hence it follows that the Atheist, and Materialist must be a flagitious man or a fool; that any appearance of virtue in such a character is mere hypocrisy, a mask assumed to impose on the unwary.

Now let us suppose that virtue from its innate beauty, and the satisfaction which attends virtuous actions may, without any prospect of immortality, be an inducement to practice virtue in some instances, will it in all possible conjunctures? And supposing it a reward in some instances will it in all? What is the reward of the virtuous man whose innocence is oppressed by power, his reputation ruined by calumny, his family degraded and reduced to beggary, and he himself dragged as a criminal to a gibbet? In this life he can have no reward, because he is deprived of life, in a future he can have none, if we believe the Materialist.

And what is the punishment of a merciless Tyrant,
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who sacrifices thousands to his amusement? Who, insensible to the cries of defenceless women and children, buries them in the ruins of the cities which his ambition levels with the ground? An immortality is indispensably necessary to reward the unmerited and unrewarded sufferings of the former, and to punish the ferocious cruelty of the latter.

It is therefore manifest that the soul, immortal of its own nature, will not be annihilated by the power of its Creator. Add to this that a creature does not attain its ultimate end until its natural desires are satisfied, the soul of man naturally, and invincibly, desires happiness, and a perpetual continuation of happiness. The author of human nature does not withdraw that, which perfects nature, that without which it cannot attain its ultimate end. The possibility of annihilation is indisputable: the power which creates can annihilate; nothing less than infinite power can do either. The distance between non-existence and existence whether infinite or not, is manifestly insuperable to any limited power, but that it is inconsistent with the present order of things to exercise this power is manifest from the reasons already assigned and will appear more clearly in the course of the work.

If it be asked why the soul being independent on the body in its highest operations, and more capable of exercising its intellectual faculties in a state of separation, has been united to the body? The reply is simple and satisfactory. In all that depends on the absolute and sovereign will of the Creator he acts according to the dictates of his wisdom. Conjecture assigns two plausible reasons. The first that the soul united to the body, in its struggles with Beings of an inferior order, may be prepared for a more noble end as gold is tried in the fire; and through this appears the goodness of its author, in not only giving man a being, but also enabling

enabling him by his own efforts and the exercise of his faculties to attain a more exalted end, than that for which human nature seems intended. And the second, that the body itself elevated by its union with the soul, and purified by the practice of these virtues, of which it is the instrumental cause, may be placed in a more sublime situation, so that the soul may be to the body, what God is to the soul.

As it is impossible that a Being which is itself destitute of intelligence could give existence to intelligent Beings, from the existence of so many spirits in the intellectual world, that man must be ignorant indeed who does not see that there must be a primary cause sovereignly intelligent, a pure intellectual Being eminently possessed of all the powers and perfections, which it so bountifully; and abundantly bestows on its creatures. This primary cause is what in common language we call God, the first object of his will is his own infinite goodness: in this he sees all that is pleasing in his creatures, as it is natural for goodness to communicate itself to these he gave existence at the commencement of time, yet to shew his sovereign independence from eternity he was equally happy and glorious without them, their existence, or non existence, argues no change in him, who is eternal, and immutable, but in them, who are from the necessity of their being imperfect, subject to change. According to our limited mode of conception a sort of progress may be remarked in the love of God, his own excellence the first and principal object, the excellence and beauty of the universe as reduced to it, and the goodness of each particular object in reference to the whole, hence it is clear that what may appear to us a defect may be a perfection considered with respect to the whole, of which it is a part.

The excellence of God, to which nothing can be compared;

pared, is a sufficient reason for his loving himself; his goodness also is a sufficient reason for creating the world; but a reason of mere convenience, not of necessity: for it is convenient and consistent with sovereign goodness to communicate itself in some measure, yet it is totally independent because it is neither encreased nor diminished by the goodness of its creatures.

Fear, hope, desire, sorrow, repentance, or any other passion, which argues a change in the subject, are inconsistent with the divine nature. Love is not; God loves himself and all his creatures, the beauty of the object attracts our will, the love of God is not attracted by the goodness of the object, it is efficient, not affective, it infuses goodness and beauty in the object, and though the love of God to his creatures be one simple act identified with his essence, and incapable of encrease or diminution, from the greater or less excellence, which he communicates, it may be denominated greater, or less, in this sense he does not love all his creatures equally. Some Philosophers have taught that God from the necessity of his Being, is determined to create this world, and that a more, or less perfect, he could not create, this is perfectly impious, and hardly deserves a refutation.

A christian Philosopher admitting the liberty of God to create, or not to create, pretends that of all possible systems, the present one is the most perfect, this opinion though not so impious as the former, is equally absurd, as if the perfection of the whole, does not consist in the perfection of its component parts; and as if there be any one part of the visible world, or even the intellectual world, at its ultimate point of perfection, so that omnipotence could not add one degree of perfection more to it.

The creation of a world more, or less, perfect, is an effect of choice, so that God is perfectly free to create or
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not to create, to create a world more or less perfect, God loves himself necessarily : it is impossible that sovereign wisdom should not direct him to love sovereign goodness, his creatures he loves because he created them, not because they are necessary to his happiness, his existence, his goodness, his sanctity are independent on his creatures ; on the contrary all his creatures depend on him. Moreover that liberty, which is enjoyed by many of his creatures, he must possess in a more eminent degree, else he could not communicate it. It may be said that, the divine will, as the divine knowledge, being identified with the divine nature, God wills of necessity all that he wills, as he knows of necessity, all that he knows. The difference consists in this, that the knowledge of objects, has a reference to the understanding, in which they are known, but the will has a reference to the objects as they are in themselves.

Though the will of God be eternal, and immutable, and the efficient cause of all his creatures, it does not follow that his creatures should exist from eternity, but that they should exist in the successive order, in which, by a free act of his will, he predisposed them, nor does it follow that their existence is necessary, but hypothetically, that is, in the supposition of God's determination to create them.

In God there is no passive indifference, nor is it necessary in us ; an instant previous to action is indispensably necessary to examine motives, and decide in consequence. This instant is called the instant of election. God, whose knowledge is infinite, decides immediately, without any examination of motives, and his decision, or decree, is the exercise of the most perfect liberty, being an effect of active indifference; under no influence of any external cause, or preponderating motive capable of necessitating the will ; his
goodness

goodness may be considered as an inducement to create a world, on which his own happiness, the only object capable of influencing his will, is totally independent.

From this reasoning it appears that the immutability of God's decrees is perfectly consistent with his liberty : for the exercise of this liberty requires no passive indifference, no previous examination of motives, no succeeding change, in a word nothing which argues the shadow of inconsistency. A discussion of any kind, an enquiry into the efficacy of means, a decision contrary to a former decision, are inconsistent with God's immutability ; all these are excluded from the exercise of his liberty.

God, being the first great and universal cause, it is manifest that all secondary causes are dependent on him in their actions, of course that nothing can happen contrary to his will, hence it does not follow that the actions of men are not free, and contingent ; it only argues the efficacy of God's will in constituting all secondary causes so that they may produce their effects according to their nature, yet all subordinate to his supreme will. Arsenic poisons, and bread nourishes. These are blind causes, their effects are invariably the same ; they are determined by the Author of their being, whose sovereign will constitutes the nature of all his creatures. The man thinks, speaks and acts free from co-action, from without, or necessity from within, but not liberated from his dependence on the primary, and universal cause ; without the concurrence of which no secondary cause can act ; hence it follows that, notwithstanding the existence of moral evil in this world, the will of God is always fulfilled. It is true, the malice, or deformity of moral evil, is contrary to the will of God ; but the permission of the act in which this deformity, or, if you will, this non-conformity with the law is found, is not contrary to his will : as the nature
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of man, is imperfect and defective, and that, in his wisdom, he permits him to act according to his nature, and moreover as the result of this act, morally bad, is always directed by God to something which is good, the permission of the act is good, and consistent with sovereign goodness. From this permission, or rather non-prevention of evil, it does not follow, that God is the cause of sin either directly, or indirectly, or even by accident, as Philosophers speak. He is not the direct cause of sin, because he does not intend it, the proper use of liberty is intended by him, not the abuse of it, not to say that a non-preventing cause, and more particularly a cause not obliged to prevent, was never thought an efficient cause of any act, either directly, or indirectly, or by accident, in a word the malice of any human act consisting in its non-conformity with some law, is a defect not an effect, it argues a deficient cause not an efficient one.

- A question of great importance comes next under consideration, that is, if man be a free agent. However strange it may appear that, an opinion absurd in itself, contradicting the sense of mankind, degrading man from the rank, which he holds in the order of Beings, annihilating vice and virtue, rendering rewards and punishments ineffectual, subversive of social order and destructive of all society, should be adopted, and publicly avowed, by men styling themselves Philosophers, and pretending to correct old errors, and dispel that illusion, which deceived the world from the commencement, it is not the less true : our modern Philosophers have discovered that man is a well regulated piece of clock-work ; an animated machine ; that all his thoughts, his ideas, his sensations, his words, his actions, are necessarily connected, and succeed each other in order, from the necessity of his Being, as the links in a chain or the movements in a clock.
- Risum teneatis amici.* It

It is irksome to reason against nonsense, yet the consequences of this opinion, publicly avowed, and obtruded on a deluded people, in a thousand different forms, oblige us to examine the sophistry of its abettors, and the different fallacies which with unparalleled effrontery they call conclusive reasons.

It must be observed in the first place that external force produces co-action, an internal impulse irresistible, is called necessity, impulse however strong, if not irresistible is an inducement to act, but not inconsistent with liberty. Co-action and necessity are incompatible with freedom of action, or determination.

Beings exist from the necessity of their nature, which cannot be supposed non-existent. Men's actions, in the opinion under consideration, are of that character, each succeeding act being necessarily connected with the preceding, so that, it is as necessary that the highwayman should murder the innocent, and unsuspecting traveller, at that precise point of time, and in that very place, where the murder is committed, as that there should be an eclipse of the Moon, at that precise time, and in that part of the expanse, where the Earth's place in the ecliptic, is in the right line drawn from the Moon's place in its path to the Sun.

Beings are said to be contingent, when they may be supposed to exist, or not, thus if man be a free agent, the highwayman might, without absurdity, be supposed to abstain from the murder. This supposition is so very natural that, a Judge, upon conviction, will order the highwayman for execution, thinking not only that he might, but that he ought to have abstained from the murder.

If man has any object in view, if he pursues an end, the object may be attainable by one, or different means, if the end be attainable but by one mean, that mean is called necessary, not simply, as if the mean existed

existed from the necessity of its being, but it is necessary to the attainment of the end in view, thus a vessel is necessary to cross the ocean, if a man intends to do so, and food is necessary to support life.

If the same end may be attained by different means, they are called useful, not necessary. A carriage is useful in a long journey.

There is also a twofold indifference, passive, and active, this passive indifference is peculiar to all inanimate Beings, which are indifferent to rest or motion in any direction, and will remain in any state, in which they are placed until removed by some external agent.

Active indifference is the result of reason, the foundation of liberty in man, and in all intellectual Beings.

This active indifference, or power of self-determination, enables a man to pursue an object, or its opposite, or cease from the pursuit; to assume or reject any mean, or choose between two, or more, means equal, or unequal.

Does man possess this power of self determination? This active indifference? Is he master of his actions? Are they the result of choice, or the effect of irresistible impulse? The world was in possession of believing man a free agent. What an effort of generosity in our modern Philosophers to attempt to undeceive it? But if the deception be natural to man, a link in the chain of his ideas, our Philosophers have to lament his fate, leave him to his destiny, and thank their stars that they themselves are but animated machines, monkeys of a larger size; and that they have the candor to acknowledge it, whether the world believe them or not.

The writer believes the modern Philosopher a factitious monkey: his babbling resembles the chattering of his brother brute, his pretensions to honor, honesty,
integrity

integrity or any other human virtue is mere grimace; the factitious brute however surpasses the natural, in folly, impudence and vanity. Of this picture he must not complain; he knows that every impulse is irresistible, the writer is, therefore, irresistibly impelled to class these hitherto non-descripts called modern Philosophers amongst factitious monkeys.

God being infinitely perfect, and perfectly free, either from co-action or irresistible impulse, may create man a free agent: it is not impossible to omnipotence, nor inconsistent with goodness, nor repugnant to man's dependence on his maker; for though his desires are boundless, he cannot attain the different objects, which he desires without the concurrence of his maker, so that notwithstanding his liberty of determination and action, he is always in a state of dependence.

The majesty, the wisdom, the mercy, and the justice of God, are manifest in that indifference of action which man enjoys, his majesty in being served by choice, his mercy in forgiving offences on condition of penance, his justice in rewarding virtue, when vice is practicable, and punishing vice whilst virtue is possible, and his wisdom, in establishing moral laws, the observance of which constitutes true happiness here, and conducts to endless happiness hereafter.

It is in vain to pretend that mere spontaneity is sufficient to constitute liberty. If so a wolf in pursuit of prey would be a free agent, and his liberty increase with his hunger, because it is certain that his pursuit of prey is eager and spontaneous in proportion to his hunger.

And it is yet more ridiculous to pretend that external co-action alone destroys liberty. Irresistible impulse from within is evidently more inconsistent with it. Why so? Because the will cannot be forced
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by any external power : the body may be laid under any restraint but not the mind, whereas internal impulse irresistible restrains the mind, deprives her of the power of accepting or rejecting the object proposed to the will, or of pursuing another at that time ; hence appears the indispensable necessity of active indifference in a free agent, that is, that the agent be not determined by any cause, either external, or internal, but determines itself according to election. This necessity of election argues the necessity of some previous knowledge of the object : the mind can neither desire nor hate an object, of which it has no idea at all, the pursuit of such an object, must be the effect of blind impetuosity, or impulse, not of choice.

Hence absolute necessity destroys liberty of action, because it is totally inconsistent with active indifference, as it determines the mind on pursuit of the object ; with previous knowledge as it is implanted in our nature ; and with choice or election, it leaves room for none.

Hypothetical necessity is reconcileable with free agency, thus a vessel is necessary for me to cross the Atlantic, but this necessity supposes my determination to cross it, and a previous knowledge, discussion, and choice of the motives, which induced me to make the voyage.

The exercise of reason is absolutely necessary to liberty : it is reason which directs the mind in the choice of motives, in the choice of means to attain an end, or in the choice of objects, which to pursue, or which to avoid ; without reason there is no election, there is no liberty, nothing but blind instinct or natural and irresistible impulse. Hence fools and children are not accountable for their actions. Though the will be the subject of liberty, reason is the cause of it. Hence it follows that any thing not subject to the judgment of

reason, cannot be the object of liberty, as the desire of happiness in general, it is implanted in the mind of man, from this desire of happiness in general we pursue particular objects, which we think conducive to happiness, in the choice of these objects, and in the choice of means to attain these objects, consists the exercise of our liberty. The pursuit or aversion of any object pre-supposes a knowledge of the object, a discussion of motives, an election and consequent determination, all which are necessary to constitute a free act of the will.

Motives however strong are but inducements to act: they give no irresistible impulse; the mind from its innate activity is free to reject or re-consider them; but if the mind ultimately determines to act in such or such a manner, in consequence of such or such a motive, its active indifference with respect to that particular act of the will, no longer subsists, because it has been exercised, the act itself is no longer indifferent to exist or not exist, because it in fact exists; yet it is manifestly a free act, because it is the effect of free and active determination, upon consideration of motives, and choice, hence Philosophers say that a man necessarily acts in consequence of his last practical judgment, which is true, but it is a necessity induced by the exercise of his liberty, as it is impossible that he should act and not act at the same time.

The assent of the understanding to certain truths, which are irresistible, is not repugnant to liberty: it is true the mind cannot refuse its assent to truths, which are evident on the exposition; but the mind is under no necessity of contemplating these truths, the necessity of believing them, is therefore a consequent necessity induced by an act of choice, in which the exercise of liberty consists.

That the will of man is unrestrained in its determinations

tions, either by external force, or internal impulse, is the universal sense of mankind if you except a few vain men, who to acquire a name, affect to believe the contrary of what their actions shew to be truth; the very jargon of these scribblers is the effect of liberty, and its greatest abuse.

If man be not master of his actions to what end have laws been established in all countries and at all times? To what end propose rewards or punishments? Why praise the fortitude of the one, or despise the dastardly cowardice of the other? Why erect a statue to the deliverer of his country, or a gibbet for the betrayer? It is evident as the Sun at mid-day that no man deserves reward, or punishment, for what he cannot possibly avoid.

To pretend that men's actions are under the influence of fate is a ridiculous absurdity: fate is an empty sound, it conveys no idea to the mind, to assign an imaginary Being, which has no existence, as the director of man's will, surpasses folly. That the will of man is subject to the influence of the Stars is equally absurd. Are the Stars intelligent? Do they direct the mind of man according to fixed or variable laws? In reasoning on moral principles, on mathematical truths, on universal principles, on virtue, vice, &c. are we to consult the relative positions of the Planets?

But says the Astrologer the influence of the Moon is manifest in the case of lunatics. Yes and in many other cases too: its influence is great on all sublunary bodies. It is not difficult to assign the reason. The attractive force of the Moon encreasing, or decreasing, in a certain proportion, as its distance from the Earth encreases or decreases, augments or diminishes the pressure of the atmosphere on the human body, as on all other sublunary bodies, and thereby encreases or diminishes that de-
rangement

rangement in the lunatic's frame, which is the cause of his lunacy, the effects of the Moon and of all other Planets on the atmosphere and on the waters are subject to mathematical calculations. No doubt our pretended Philosophers will begin to calculate the operations of the mind proportioned to these effects : the data are sufficient for men accustomed to swallow all sorts of absurdity, or, if you will, worthy the attention of these men who are come to undeceive the human race, pardon the expression, the *Baboon race*. Unfortunately certain events shew that the influence of the Planets is not invariable on the human mind : at the same instant a drunkard steps into the tavern, and a sober man passes it unnoticed, the influence was not the same on both. No matter. That will only encrease the difficulty of calculation, and the glory of the modern Philosopher will still be greater.

The mind of man is conscious of its liberty, the man who denies it, believes this truth as the writer does : he is convinced that when he turns his thoughts on any object, he may remove the object from his mind, and make some other a subject of consideration, or continue to contemplate the former, when he walks, he knows he may sit at his will, or continue to walk, and if he continues to walk, it is an effect of choice, or if he sits, it is equally an effect of choice. It is true he cannot walk and sit at the same time. Liberty does not require impossibilities, but it is enough that he walks or sits at his option, to convince him that his determinations are free from restraint. It is in vain to reason with a man who does not admit a truth, of which he is conscious.

It is true certain thoughts occur, for which we cannot account, and our ideas at times succeed each other without any sort of connection. Images are proposed to our imagination which we bear with reluctance, and
from

from which we find it difficult to disengage our mind ; but all this so far from being inconsistent with liberty shews that there is within us a power of action and determination uncontrouled. Why so ? Because the virtuous man rejects these objects proposed to his imagination, with horror, regardless of the strong impressions made on animal nature. Whilst the intemperate sensualist pursues them with an eagerness, which approaches fury. The power therefore of rejecting or desiring such objects is free from restraint ; this not only proves the liberty of man, but also the total independence of the soul on the body in its operations. For if the strongest impressions on the sensual appetite be not irresistible, it is manifest that the soul is mistress of her will and independent on the body.

Finally the object of desire is either real, or apparent good, and the object of aversion, is either real, or apparent evil, there is no object inferior to sovereign happiness, which may not excite desire, or aversion, which the will may not pursue, or relinquish, because there is none in which there is not some appearance of good, and some appearance of evil, no particular object therefore can irresistibly attract the will.

The man, who dreams, says the Materialist, is conscious of his liberty, why not the man who wakes ? May not his life be a perpetual dream ? Such nonsense shews the Materialist to be a dreamer. If it be true, as some Physicians pretend, that dreams are caused by a certain commotion in the brain from the irregular flowing of the animal spirits, and presenting ideas to the mind as if a real impression were made on the organs of sense, it is easy to conceive that the mind enjoys no liberty in its dreams, because there is no comparison of ideas, no previous knowledge of objects, no examination of motives, consequently no choice, no exercise of liberty. To pretend that man in his sober senses and active employments

employments is in the same state as if he dreamed is an absurdity beneath notice.

Nothing exists without a sufficient reason, no effect without a cause, true, but the cause may be determined to act by some external power, as a stone gravitates according to the laws of motion, or the cause from innate activity determines itself, as a man walks, or sits, at his option, any inducement is a sufficient reason for either.

All secondary causes are dependent on the primary cause in their operations. That is admitted; but the primary cause directs secondary causes according to their nature, because God preserves and does not corrupt the nature of his creatures, hence as he has created man intelligent, an active and free agent, in the direction of his operations, he does not deprive him of that liberty of action, which is a privilege of human nature, the very characteristic which distinguishes him from the brute.

As man is not self-existent, he must depend on the same great cause which gave him an existence for a continuation of that existence. At the first instant of existence he may be considered as merely passive, but nothing prevents him from exercising that activity, which he received with existence in all succeeding instants: for whether his preservation be considered as a continuation of the act of creation, or rather a maintenance in received existence, or simply a permission to continue, it is certain, that he is not taken a second time from a state of non-existence, and that being in existence, he may exercise the natural powers which he possesses.

In children, and some superannuated persons reason appears weak, hence the Materialist imagines that, the operations of the soul are the effects of motion, with which active indifference is irreconcilable.

It is true the senses are the inlets of most sensations, and many ideas, and any derangement in the organs of sense must affect the soul in many of her operations, whilst united with the body. In the child the organs are not sufficiently formed to use them with efficacy, and in extreme old age they are decayed. Liberty is an inherent power of the soul, but as the exercise of this power requires a previous knowledge of objects, if through any defect in the organs, these objects are not represented, the exercise of the power must be suspended, as in children or persons insane through age or infirmity.

A Philosopher of note unable to explain the motions of the body subservient to the will, or the impressions of the senses on the mind, pretends that the soul is but the occasional cause, and God the sole mover. Thus for example the soul desires to move the finger, and God gives it motion, in like manner an external object makes some impression on the organs of sense, and God produces in the soul a correspondent sensation, if he had confined himself to say that the operations of the one or the other, were consequences of the physical and personal union of the soul with the body, according to laws established by the Creator, there would be nothing reprehensible in his opinion. How this union is formed we do not know, it is not the only part of God's work which our understanding cannot reach, that it subsists we know, and that it may be dissolved we will know.

Another Philosopher unrestrained in his opinions by divine authority, pretends that the soul and body both act independent; that a series of movements succeed in the body correspondent to a series of ideas in the soul; to justify some appearance of free agency in the soul, of which we are all conscious, he pretends that this correspondence is pre-established between the perceptions

ceptions of the mind, not its volitions, and the movements of the body, whereas the movements of the body in reality correspond to the volitions and not the perceptions: for whatever ideas or images are represented to the mind, it is the volition, or order of the will which gives motion to the hand. To pass in silence the absurdity of supposing that the soul and body are so constituted, that, if the soul were in China and the body in Peru, the same perceptions would succeed in the one, and movements in the other, as in their present union.

In vain the Philosopher has recourse to the prescience of God to foresee the volitions of the soul, and to his omnipotence to form a correspondent automaton, it is well known that both is possible, and equally well known that in his system the soul in its volitions is confined to the motions pre-established in the body, and no others, which is destructive of its liberty. It is quite otherwise with the prescience of God: for though the soul will not form any other volition, but that which is foreseen, the possibility, and power of forming any other subsists, and is totally unrestrained.

However incorrect the opinions of these Philosophers, they unanimously admit the liberty of man, and endeavor to reconcile it with their principles, they are not to be numbered with Atheists or Materialists.

The power of God comes next under consideration, it is infinite being unrestrained by any external cause, God being totally independent, nor can it be circumscribed by God himself, as he has not given himself existence, nor perfection, it is identified with his essence, because there is nothing in God which is not, it is therefore the principle, not of action, which is not distinguished from power in God, but of effects, and these effects not being infinite, shew the liberty of God in all his works, for any effect from the necessity of
nature,

nature, is correspondent to the power of the agent, thus a stone falls with all its weight, a man begets another and no other Being.

Within the sphere of omnipotence are all these Beings which do not involve a contradiction, that is, whose constituent parts or attributes are not incompatible. Beings composed of attributes which exclude each other can have no existence, they are not the objects of power.

The immensity, or omnipresence, of God argues no spiritual extension in him, for where there is extension, there must be a plurality of parts, which is repugnant to the perfect simplicity of the Divine Nature. God is in all things and places, by his power: all things are subject to it; by his presence: all things are open to his view; and by his essence: from him all created Beings have an existence. God is present to all things, not as a part of their essence, nor as an accident, but as the agent is present to the subject, on which it acts, and as all things have from him an existence, and the continuation of that existence than which nothing is more intimate to any Being, hence it follows that God is intimately present to all Beings whilst they do exist. "In him we live, we move, and are."

The arguments adduced in favor of the opinion that, the present world is of all possible systems the most perfect, hardly deserve refutation, as it is manifestly injurious to the power, the wisdom and the goodness of God, and totally destructive of the divine liberty.

It is admitted by the partizans of this absurd opinion, that the power of God is not exhausted by the production of this present world, or the perfection of its component parts. Why confine the wisdom of God to this order in preference to all others? Does God not know the extent of his power? Or to speak more correctly does he not know that his power is infinite, that no

creature which he has produced, is at the ultimate point of perfection, to which his infinite power could not add one degree of perfection more? Why pretend that his wisdom could not prefer a system, in which all the component parts, would receive an additional degree of accidental perfection? Does not the perfections of the whole result from the relative perfections of all its parts? In a word if his power, his wisdom and his goodness be confined to the present system, neither the one nor the other is infinite, for the present system has its limits; and the man who limits the power or wisdom of God is not far remote from an Atheist.

We come next to examine these attributes of the Divinity, which are called relative by Philosophers, because they import, or rather indicate, a sort of relation to its creatures; the first of these is the creation, or that act of the divine will, which gives existence, this act of omnipotence is in every sense impossible, and incommunicable to any created Being: in the order of agents and actions, the most excellent action is confined to the most excellent agent, that action, which gives existence is of all others the most excellent, because it is the first, it is therefore confined to the first, and most universal cause, the Divinity.

Nor can any creature be assumed as an instrumental cause, for all instruments dispose by that action, which is proper to them, the subject matter, for the action of the principal cause: in the creation of any Being there is no pre-existent matter, no subject, which the instrument can dispose, and though all creatures are limited, yet the production of any one of them requires unlimited power, a power incommunicable to any creature.

Though we cannot represent to our imagination a Being transferred from a state of mere possibility to a state of existence; yet as our reason is convinced that

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all the Beings, which now exist in this visible world, are subject to change, and continually changing, we are forced to conclude that they are not self-existent, that they must therefore have been educed by a cause self-existent, and all-powerful, from a state of non-existence. We are also forced to conclude that, God in the formation of the world did not dispose any pre-existent matter, which he himself had not created, for as all matter is manifestly created, if there had been any pre-existent matter not created by God, it must have been by some other Being of superior power, that power which furnishes the matter is evidently superior to that which disposes it; to admit a power superior to omnipotence is ridiculous.

The laws of motion, to which all bodies are subject, and which they invariably observe, shew a superintendant power, which is implicitly obeyed, in other words a Providence, which conducts this visible world. From certain disorders which happen, and events, which seem inconsistent with our notions of a superintending power, some Philosophers pretend to conclude that Providence does not extend to human actions, though these very disorders, and events, from which they pretend to draw the conclusion, are conclusive evidence of the contrary: for order is an effect of wisdom and power, and if order be not established, there can be no disorder. To pass unnoticed the extravagance of supposing a God all-bountiful, all-wise and all-powerful, neglecting that part of his works, from which he has a right to expect his tribute of gratitude, and external glory, whilst a man who plants an orchard, or even a tree, without any object in view and neglects it must be thought an idiot.

The causes of Providence extend to the most minute parts of the creation, for the beauty and order of the whole results from the beauty and order of all its parts.

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To obviate a difficulty, which is drawn from the prosperity of the wicked, and adversity of the just, from the oppression of innocence and the haughty insolence of power, it is sufficient to remark that if all crimes were immediately punished there would be no room for repentance, none for the exercise of clemency and mercy, the destruction of a great majority of the human species would be instantaneous. It is true great crimes, are sometimes punished immediately to terrify others, and if virtue does not immediately obtain its reward, it will in due time, patience and perseverance enhance the merit of all other virtues.

God in his providence directs all his creatures to their ultimate end immediately, and each creature to its immediate end, but in the execution of this direction the intervention of secondary causes is admissible, each acting according to its nature, yet so as not to disturb or derange the plan proposed by God as *supreme provider*, and though all his creatures are immediately subject to God's providence, intelligent Beings are more particularly the objects of his care, they are the only spectators of his works, the only creatures capable of knowing and loving him, and as he is himself the last end of all his creatures they alone can attain this end, it is therefore manifest that they are the first objects of his care; hence it follows that intelligent Beings are under the direction of Providence, not only for the good of the species, but also for the good of the individual, whereas of all other creatures the individuals are directed to the good of the species. Hence also it appears that the number of individuals of any species, except the human, though known to God as nothing is unknown to him, is not immediately intended for the individuals but for the support and propagation of the species.

As God, in the production of many effects, admits
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The intervention of secondary causes acting according to their nature, order requires that inferior Beings should be subject to the direction of superior, non-intelligent to intellectual, and as amongst intellectual Beings some are superior to others, order requires that the more noble should direct ; yet whatever effects are produced by secondary causes may at times be produced by God immediately, as at the creation all effects were produced by the Divine Power without the intervention of any secondary cause ; and the powers of all causes are from him, nor is the production of any effect without the intervention of a secondary cause, a disturbance of the established order : because even that is subject to order, and within the sphere of his providence. Moreover the order established in the production of effects by secondary causes is not absolutely invariable, but subject to interruptions through the interference of other causes, as when a child is born without hands or with six fingers, if therefore the established order may be interrupted by the interference of secondary causes, it may by the primary cause, this sometimes happens for the manifestation of God's glory ; and to shew that the order, which now subsists was an effect of choice, not of necessity. Effects produced by the Divine Power without the intervention of secondary causes, though not in the common course of nature, are not contrary to nature : for all secondary causes are but the instruments of Divine Power, and the nature of all Beings is totally dependent on the Divine Will. The universe therefore, and all the Beings which compose it, is a piece of mechanism, and God the artist, however well finished the piece may appear, the artist may yet make changes according to his will. A prodigy therefore though not in the common course of nature, as known to us, is perfectly natural, because it is according to the disposition

position of the Divine Will which determines the nature of all things.

Though God in his providence be infallible, and that will certainly happen which he has ordered, all causes whatsoever being within the sphere of his providence, yet the infallibility of his providence imposes no necessity on the determinations of man's will, because his providence infinitely perfect disposes not only all events, but also the manner in which these events will happen; necessarily, if the causes be under any natural necessity, as an eclipse of the Moon upon passing through the shadow of the Earth, or contingently, when the causes producing such an effect are free agents, as the late French Revolution. In this appears the boundless power, and infinite wisdom of God, that permitting a thousand free and concurring causes to act according to their nature, and imposing no necessity upon any one of them, he yet directs them all so as to produce infallibly that event, which is pre-disposed in the order of his providence.

Though it may appear difficult to reconcile the infallibility of Providence with the free agency of man, yet, if it be considered, that there is no created object of man's pursuits, which has not its beauties and deformities, the difficulty will vanish. May not the deformities of the object be strongly impressed on the mind and deter from the pursuit? Or may not the beauties of the object be so exposed as infallibly to attract the notice? Do we not every day see the effects of human persuasion? Yet what man in his reason pretends that an Orator, who obtains his suit imposes any necessity on the minds of an audience? But this you will say would make the infallibility of God's providence dependent on the will of man. No. But on its own infinite perfection; for it does not depend on the mind of man to see all the beauties or deformities of
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the object, if they be not impressed on it by that all powerful agent, who directs the wills of all men without necessity, or coercion to his own views. “*Pertingens a fine usque in finem fortiter and suaviter omnia disponens.*”

Hence it appears manifestly inconsistent with God’s providence that man’s liberty should be destroyed, or even impeded, as the distinguishing characteristic of Providence is to preserve, and not to corrupt the nature of his creatures; hence it appears also that the permission of moral evil, or physical corruption is consistent with Providence, because in the execution of its decrees it makes use of secondary causes acting according to their nature; all free agents may use, or abuse, their natural liberty; in the abuse consists moral evil. All material causes being composed of parts, are from their nature subject to dissolution, and corruption, to say all in a word, God is the author of all that is good; evil he neither produces, suggests nor countenances; but from evil he always draws good and directs the result to the accomplishment of his own views.

The motion of the Heavenly Bodies, and the communication of motion from one sublunary body to another, is such conclusive evidence of the incessant vigilance of Providence, and of the attention of a God, all-wise, and powerful to the preservation of his creatures, that even to doubt it, argues the most stupid ignorance or obstinate perverseness.

The Planets, inert matter, move in their orbits with the utmost regularity; if any body in motion strikes another either at rest or in motion, the body which strikes communicates a part of its motion to the other, proportioned to its mass with mathematical precision. It therefore implicitly obeys the power which directs it.

Does this invisible power which preserves order in the universe, and by incessant action prevents confusion, preserve its creatures also in a state of existence, so that

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if the upholding hand of infinite power be supposed withdrawn, but for an instant, the universe would cease to exist? Yes, the same power which gives existence, continues to preserve it, and that Being which is originally from nothing, without a continuation of that action which gave it existence would return to its primitive state. It is true a spiritual substance has no internal principle of dissolution; but it is equally true that as it did not give itself existence, it cannot continue in its existence, because it cannot without absurdity be supposed independent at any instant of its duration, it is therefore as dependent on the creating power for the continuation as for the commencement of existence.

It is manifest that the same power, which creates, can annihilate, and as the goodness and wisdom of God is totally independent on his creatures, he may, at his will, either continue, or cease to continue them in existence; yet as the power, the goodness and wisdom of God appears more evidently from the preservation, than from the destruction of his creatures it is certain that he will not annihilate any one of these Beings, to which he has given an existence.

His dominion over all his creatures is absolute, and inalienable: from him they have not only that they exist, but that they do not cease to exist. All irrational creatures implicitly obey, and pursue that path, which in his wisdom he has traced for them, intelligent Beings abusing that liberty of determination, and action, which distinguishes them from the irrational part of the creation, seem to disobey, yet even these are reduced to the most perfect obedience: in all his precepts there is an alternative, either expressed or implied, obedience to the precept is expected from the intelligent creature, if refused the alternative depending on the absolute will of the Creator will most certainly take effect.

We have now taken a cursory view of the perfections of God as known to us by the light of reason, and shewn the absolute dependence of all his creatures on his bounty, not only for their existence, but for the continuation of their existence. Of his creatures some are inanimate, some, though animated, irrational, these have their places determined, their paths traced, from which, they neither do, nor can depart, being incapable of choice and blindly obedient to impulse, intelligent creatures blessed with the light of reason are alone capable of acknowledging the obligation, and paying a voluntary homage to their Creator, to them laws are given; rewards promised to obedience, and disobedience threatened with punishment. Amongst them the terms *virtue* and *vice* are heard and understood, to feed the hungry was thought a virtuous act by the simplicity of our ancestors, and to oppress innocence by power, or ruin reputation by calumny, was considered not simply a vicious act but an atrocious crime. Thanks to the new fangled philosophy of modern scribblers these notions are grown obsolete: these pretended teachers of mankind gravely tell us that there is no essential difference between virtue and vice. That is in other terms. Reason qualifies the murder of an innocent, and loving parent, a *virtuous act*, as laudable as the defence of innocence against oppression. Against absurd extravagance, or shameless impudence all reasoning is vain. And the man who believes, or pretends to believe such disgusting nonsense is incapable of listening to reason.

To act according to the dictates of unprejudiced reason is perfectly consistent with human nature: for, since man is a rational creature, to act according to the dictates of reason is answering the end of his creation, it is therefore consistent with his nature; if, on the contrary, his actions be inconsistent with the dic-

tates of reason, he does not answer the end of his creation, he strays from the path, which has been traced, and stands accountable to the Author of his Being for the perversion and abuse of the most excellent of his gifts, hence it must be inferred that virtue is consonant to the nature of man, and vice repugnant to it, yet as all moral virtues are habits consonant to reason acquired by a repetition of virtuous acts, virtue is not implanted in the nature of man, though the capacity of being virtuous is: this reasoning applies with equal force to vice. Man is not born vicious, but the capacity of acquiring vicious habits is manifestly implanted in that sensuality, to which from its union with the body, the soul of man is naturally addicted.

Is man obliged to worship his God in spirit and truth? Is he indispensably obliged to pay him internal reverence and external homage? The answer to this question seems extremely simple, something is due from man to that God, from whom he has received an existence, and all that is necessary to support that existence, and on whose almighty power he depends for a continuation of that existence. This truth is founded on the first principles of common sense. The least possible payment is an acknowledgment of the debt: man is therefore obliged to acknowledge him for his Creator, his conservator, and his benefactor. And as God is good, and the fountain of all goodness, he is the great object of man's love, which can have no other object but either real or apparent good, to prefer any limited object to infinite goodness is inconsistent with reason. A love of preference is therefore indispensably necessary, and, as he is truth itself, incapable of deception, or deceit, if he proposes any truth, though it may transcend the sphere of our limited understanding, we are strictly obliged to believe it; but we are also obliged to enquire if, what is proposed as truth, be revealed by
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him, we thus confine our reason to its proper object; for to enquire, if what is revealed by God, be truth, or not, surpasses impudence. Hence it appears that faith is an essential part of that homage which man owes his God.

That man, if his actions be consistent with the dictates of right reason, has a right to expect a reward from sovereign power and infinite goodness, is indisputable; and if his actions be inconsistent with reason, that he may justly fear chastisement, from supreme justice is equally certain.

Besides the internal respect, reverence and love which a man owes his God, he is obliged to pay external homage: because man is composed of soul and body, the homage which he pays must be correspondent to the nature of his Being, that is, it must be composed of the internal act of reverence within the soul, and the external act of the body, which signifies it, that it may not be simply the homage of the soul, nor simply of the body, but the homage of the man. To confine the divine worship merely to the internal act is to mistake the nature of man, and also the nature of the homage, which he owes to his Creator as a man; because God is a Spirit he must be adored in spirit, and because he is truth itself, and sanctity, no mixture of falsehood is admissible, nothing inconsistent with purity, nothing unworthy his majesty: the external homage must be expressive and significative of that internal respect, and reverence, which a man has for his God, as a Being infinitely perfect, pure and holy, it must, therefore, exclude every thing which is inconsistent with truth and sanctity. Hence appears not only the absurdity and extravagance, but the abominable impiety of the Heathen rites, of the Mahometan, and of several sects, who perverted the Christian worship by rites correspondent to these opinions.

opinions, which flattered their pride or sensuality.

That there are certain human actions laudable in their own nature, and others reprehensible, independently on all positive laws, was never denied but by the most corrupt and impious amongst the Heathens. From these our modern Philosophers have borrowed that nonsensical jargon, which they call demonstration, of an opinion the most extravagant that ever insulted the public ear, to wit, that vice and virtue, right and wrong, are totally dependent on human laws; that no action considered in itself previous to some human law which forbids it, is wrong.

Nor is any action right if not ordered. What! these actions which tend to the public good, and public safety, would not be right if a malicious Tyrant forbid them! and actions evidently destructive of society would be right if ordered by him! it is not in the power of any Legislature to make that which is just and laudable in itself, and advantageous to the public, disadvantageous to it, or to make that which is subversive of society, useful to it. A law to order all mothers' to destroy their offspring would shew the malice of the Legislator; but would not make the act lawful, and if any man be so lost to shame or so impudently obstinate as to deny this truth, it is useless to reason with him.

As the nature of all the different species, which form the universe is determined, the actions consistent with the nature of each species, are also determined, thus it is natural for a horse to carry burthens, and a bird to fly. A flying horse or a bird carrying burthens is unnatural. Hence since man is possessed of reason, it is natural that he should act according to the dictates of reason. And since order requires that the inferior Being should be directed by the superior, it is manifest that all man's
senses

senses are to be directed by reason if reason be not thought inferior to one or other of the senses, which is worse than epicureism; hence it follows that intoxication, the immoderate use of food, the gratification of any sensual appetite, which disturbs the free exercise of reason, is by nature forbidden independently on all human laws. Moreover, all that depends on mere human laws, on prejudices of education, or different institutions are subject to change, and are in fact different in different countries, according to the difference of the prevailing opinions, but there are certain fixed principles subject to no variation, they are and have been the same in all times and places; these are of course implanted in our nature; nor is this speculative principle, the whole is greater than any of its parts, more evident than this moral principle, do not to another what you would think injurious to yourself. It is true the mind of man absorbed in sensual pleasures, blinded by passion or prejudice, may mistake and frequently does the distant consequences and sometimes the more immediate consequences, which are drawn from first principles. Hence the Indian, knowing that he is obliged to love his friend, thinks it lawful to hate his enemy, on a principle of retaliation, and to express his hatred the more strongly, if he takes a prisoner, will exercise on him the most wanton cruelty, hence also some of them put their aged and helpless parents to death through a mistaken principle of commiseration. The application of general principles to particular circumstances is sometimes difficult; to evade this difficulty the great bulk of mankind think themselves authorized to follow the example of others, hence the most absurd customs have been introduced and continued for ages, the absurdity of these customs does not argue the want of reason in the men, but their indolence and inattention to the voice of reason. Thus for example all

men know that some Being superior to man exists, and think it necessary to serve him. The Heathens not conceiving it possible that any one Being was sufficiently wise and powerful to frame and direct the universe parcelled it out amongst Deities: a multiplicity once introduced, flattery added every Potentate to the number; least these pretended Divinities should be too severe, they were painted by their makers subject to all the vices, for which they themselves were remarkable; hence, the most shameless passions had their patrons amongst the Gods. The general principle was strictly true, that there is a Being superior to man, to whom homage is due, but the application of this principle was detestable; it was made by passion without consulting reason.

In the like manner even Philosophers and Legislators frequently disagree in opinions, which are not immediate consequences of intuitive principles, but they never taught that good was to be avoided, and evil pursued, though evil under the appearance of good has been more than once proposed.

To pretend that men are by nature inimical to each other, from different causes, is to insult mankind, an offence against the human race, which only demonstrates the unparalleled malignity of the man who dares to make use of such an impudent assertion. Men, so far from hating each other, are formed by nature to love each other, they are formed for society and cannot subsist without it: the wants of the infantine, infirm, and aged portions of the human species cannot be supplied without the cares of society. That all men have formerly lived without any bond of society like beasts in the woods, and that they have been gradually formed into civil societies, is a wild unfounded conjecture, contradicted by experience: we have known some men who from civilized society transferred to uncivilized

lized regions, they themselves and their descendants became Savages ; but we know of no Savage nation who without the influence of religion planted by the labors and sufferings of its ministers have become civilized.

As reason is natural to man, and the dictates of reason constituting what is called the natural law, or in other words man's immediate rule of action, the author of man's Being must be the author of the natural law, it is not necessary to publish this law either by word or writing, because it is implanted in human nature, and as necessary for the support of the intelligent world, as the laws of motion to the continuance of that order, and harmony, which exists in the physical world ; a transgression therefore of the natural law is manifestly an offence against its author.

The natural law in its first principles is immutable, it commands nothing but what is essentially good, and forbids nothing which is not essentially bad ; in its more remote consequences, circumstances may render it subject to variation, thus though it be forbidden to kill, it is lawful for the public Magistrate to put a criminal to death. But it is never lawful, nor can it, by any change of circumstances become lawful *to decline from good and do evil.*

Remote consequences of the natural law are not known to all immediately, the first principles are, and cannot be effaced but by the extinction of reason. The application of these principles to particular cases is sometimes defective : thus the Indian knows that good is to be done, and evil avoided, he thinks it just to kill his aged and infirm father. The principle he knows but blindly misapplies it.

As it is natural for man to act according to the dictates of reason, all virtues as such, are according to the natural law, and all vices against it. The former are
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acts of obedience to the Author of Nature, laudable in themselves; the latter acts of disobedience, reprehensible, and consequently inductive of punishment.

Is God the avenger of crimes? The question is extremely simple: common sense answers in the affirmative.

If he be the avenger of crimes, when does he exercise his vindictive justice? Sometimes in ~~this life~~, more frequently and effectually in the next.

Many of the Heathen Philosophers, and all these impious writers, who now assume the title, confine man's happiness to the present life. They disagree as to the constituent elements of happiness. Some of the Heathens placing it in the pursuit of virtue, others in the gratification of the senses, these and their followers, the modern squad, are justly called hogs of Epicurus's sty. The Stoics thought cold insensibility productive of true happiness. It can hardly be denied that, the exercise of virtue contributes to private and public advantage: the virtuous man enjoys a peace of mind free from the terrors of conscience, which invade the wicked man, sometimes in the midst of riot and tumult, and at all times in the silence of solitude: for as virtue is according to nature, and vice against it, nature approves the one, and censures the other; it is therefore as impossible for a man to free himself from a remorse of conscience as it is to divest himself of human nature. Virtue therefore contributes to private happiness and vice destroys it.

That the exercise of virtue contributes to the public welfare and tranquility, must be admitted; if it be not thought that, highwaymen, traitors and murderers are to be constituted Judges, that men destitute of prudence, of justice and equity, are to be appointed Governors, that drunkards, profligates and spendthrifts are to possess all places of trust and confidence. That man's
understanding

understanding must be horribly perverted, who thinks it ; and he must surpass the demon in impudence who dares to assert it. There are some so barefaced as to pretend that the vices of individuals are useful to the community ; it is true the intemperance of the spendthrift enriches the keeper of the brothel, and the hounds and horses of the fox-hunter, enhance the value of the farmer's grain, but it is equally true that they withdraw from the common stock the industry of so many idle hands, whilst they consume a double portion of the fruits of the earth : on the principles of these wild speculatists death and disease are beneficial to society : death, brings money to the heir, and sickness, to the physician.

Though the exercise of virtue contributes much to happiness, it neither does, nor can, make the man truly happy in this life. True happiness excludes all anxiety, pain, sickness and death, and satisfies man's desires to their fullest extent. The most virtuous man is subject to pain, to sickness, to death, his desires of full and permanent happiness neither are nor can be satisfied in this life. Moreover we frequently see virtuous men in the most abject state, their innocence oppressed by power, their reputation blasted by calumny, they themselves the objects of derision, and though a consciousness of rectitude may alleviate their sorrows, it cannot make them happy. Stoic insensibility is an imaginary quality, which is not in human nature. The reward of virtue is, therefore, neither to be obtained, nor expected in this life ; nor is vice punished in proportion to its malice : the hypocrite is, of all vicious men, confessedly the most vicious : under the mask of virtue he deceives simplicity, seduces innocence, oppresses weakness, supplants and excludes men of real merit, obtains preferment, honors, rewards and applause. In what appears the punishment of his crimes ? He is tor-

tured by his conscience. True, the terrors of his conscience diminish his felicity, perhaps annul it ; but it is not less true that, the wicked man has a malignant satisfaction, in the success of his projects, that he enjoys a diabolical pleasure in sacrificing innocence to his private views, of course, that to diminish his happiness by the feeble voice of conscience is not a punishment proportioned to his crimes.

Hence it appears that, in the present life, the virtuous man cannot be truly, and fully happy, nor the vicious man truly unhappy: for as true happiness excludes all anxiety and pain, true misery excludes all comfort and hope. The most wicked man though reduced to the last stage of misery is not quite bereft of hopes, for death he thinks, at least, will deliver him from his present misery.

These principles evident on the exposition, shew that virtue cannot have its due reward, nor vice its due punishment in this present life. There is no true happiness without, at least, the fear, or rather certainty of its cessation, nor misery without some ray of comfort or hope of alleviation.

If it be true that virtue is seldom rewarded in this life, and never according to merit, and also true, that vice frequently escapes punishment, and is never punished in proportion to its malice, it follows of course that, the reward of the one, and the punishment of the other is to be referred to a future life. It has been justly remarked that no man ever denied the existence of a God, but he, who has every thing to fear from his justice. This remark is applicable to a future life: that man must be flagitious in the extreme to whom annihilation is a desirable object, and no other man ever denied or disbelieved a future life: the Heathens believed it, the savage Indians believe it. The disciples of Epicurus the most corrupt of all Heathens rather doubted

doubted than denied it. It is useless to cite authorities, the truth is indisputable, there is nothing so deeply impressed on the mind of man as the belief of futurity. Our modern Philosophers, though they pretend not to believe it, cannot cease to fear it. For, if they have no certainty that there is an after life as they pretend, they must admit that they have no certainty that there is not. A state of uncertainty is a state of anguish and anxiety, and having nothing to hope, they must have every thing to fear. Nor can this fear be extinguished but with reason.

Setting all authority apart, let us consult reason on this subject, of all others the most important.

It has been already clearly shewn that the human soul has no principle of dissolution in it, that it is independent on the body in its highest operations; that it is immortal of its own nature, that the dictates of right reason are its immediate rule of action, and that every deviation from the dictates of right reason, is an offence punishable by the author of reason. For it is a general rule that, he who gives the law or rule of action, rewards the observance of the law, or punishes the transgression. This observance of the law is not always rewarded in the present life, nor the most capital transgressions always punished, they must therefore in the future; if not, the sanctity, justice and providence of God would be exposed to censure, his sanctity, in the encouragement which impunity gives to vice, and wickedness, his justice in not rewarding obedience to his law according to its merits, his providence in not taking the necessary measures, that all should receive according to their deserts. He does not deserve the name of ruler, much less of sovereign ruler, who does not. In vain the Deist pretends that God's justice, sanctity and providence is not similar to that of man. It is true, all the imperfections of human justice, sanctity

ality and providence are excluded, the sanctity of God infinitely surpasses that of man in perfection, so does his justice and his providence? Does a man's sanctity increase by encouraging vice? Is his justice more perfect by discouraging virtue? Is he more provident in permitting the worst of bad subjects, to obtain greater privileges than the best?

If justice requires that virtue should be rewarded, it is yet more consistent with justice, that vice should be punished according to its demerits. Why so? Because virtue is according to nature and vice against it, the virtuous man therefore, follows the plan which the author of his Being has traced and answers the end of his creation; the vicious man does not. It is strictly just that he should suffer: and as it is a disorder that he should act according to his own will regardless of the will of his Creator. Order and justice require that he should suffer according to the will of his Creator though against his own.

The fear of punishment in a future life, says the Deist, was introduced by politicians to restrain their subjects. It is therefore useful to mankind, if anarchy, the worst of all evils, be prevented by it, or even insurrection, which is in itself so great an evil, that oppression cannot authorise it. It is an attempt to remove a head-ache by a dose of arsenic.

But when did these politicians meet? Where? By what means have they duped not only the unthinking croud, but the Philosopher, the man of sense, the man of science, the whole world for ages back, if you except a few two-legged hogs of Epicurus's herd and their worthy successors the modern Philosophers?

God, says the Deist, is immutable, man's actions therefore cannot offend him, True, man's actions cannot offend God so as to introduce any change in his dispositions; but it is equally true, that man does
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what he can to offend him, and thereby introduces a change in himself, instead of being a virtuous man according to rule and order, he becomes a vicious man contrary to rule and order, and is by that same rule brought to order. The immediate rule of man's action is the light of reason, which is an emanation of the divine reason, the universal rule, all actions inconsistent with this rule are disorderly.

Man has an innate desire of happiness, it is implanted in his nature, it is therefore from the author of nature, punishment hereafter is inconsistent with this desire, renders it ineffectual, which cannot be said of a desire implanted by God himself. Hence the Deist pretends to exclude all punishment from a future life. But this innate desire of happiness shews that future happiness is attainable by man, not that all men will attain it, as a horror of future punishment shews the possibility of avoiding it, not that all men will avoid it, God, the supreme ruler, directs all Beings according to their nature, inanimate Beings by fixed and invariable laws, but man possessed of reason is left to his own direction, within certain limits, it is true, that he may not derange the general plan; if then man conducts himself according to the plan traced out by his Creator, he will arrive at the end, if not, it is not surprising that he should be excluded; it would be surprising if he were not: because he would arrive at the term by forsaking the path.

In a word, God by every possible right is man's lawful superior; a lawful superior has a strict right to exact obedience to just and equitable laws, of which the inferior cannot be ignorant but through culpable neglect; the light of reason points out the great principles of the law; a law without proposing either rewards or punishments, without any inducement to observe it, is ridiculous, and argues ignorance and stupidity in the
Legislator;

Legislator ; hence it is manifest that obedience claims some reward and disobedience calls aloud for punishment. In this life rewards are frequently obtained without merit, sometimes by the most atrocious crimes, and punishments inflicted on innocence. This therefore is not the time of retribution. This doctrine justifies Providence in the distribution of these temporal advantages which are thought to constitute happiness in the present life. For as man is composed of a mortal body and an immortal soul, is possessed of reason to direct the choice, and a power of self-determination to make a proper choice, it is perfectly consistent with our ideas of Providence that he should be allowed a certain time of trial, during which, if he not only makes an improper choice, in making an immortal soul subservient to a corruptible body contrary to the dictates of reason, but obstinately perseveres in it, abusing both liberty and reason to the end of the time, that he should receive punishment proportioned to the abuse. Immediately to punish would exclude repentance on the part of man, and clemency on the part of his Judge. Never to punish would encourage iniquity and make a God of sanctity, the accomplice of crimes. This reasoning is applicable to virtue : it is tried in adversity, and perseverance shews it to be solid, its reward therefore must succeed the time of trial, and not immediately accompany it. Hence the belief of a future life justifies Providence in the very unequal distribution of prosperity, and adversity, which to the Heathens was inconceivable, and, as their views were confined to the present life, induced many to doubt, and some to deny the interference of Providence in human affairs. There is nothing which so visibly shews the little value, which God sets on wealth and power, as the distribution he makes, and the sort of characters to whom these gifts are granted. Heliogabalus and Sardanapholus have.

have been masters of the world ; quære were there two more contemptible wretches in it ?

Having thus shewn, by a train of the most conclusive reasoning, that an after life must be admitted, to justify the providence, the justice and sanctity of God, it is not difficult to shew that the resurrection of the body is perfectly consistent with reason : man is a composed Being, the soul is not a man, much less the body, the soul and body united constitute the man. Though the soul makes use of the body as an instrument in many of its operations, more particularly in the practice of virtue or vice, yet the body cannot be considered simply as an instrument, but as a part, it is the man, not the soul, that relieves indigence or oppresses innocence, to the man therefore the reward of virtue or the punishment of vice is due, the body therefore must be re-united to the soul that, the whole man, and not a part of him may receive the reward of his virtues or the punishment due to his crimes.

It is in vain to pretend that by death the union is dissolved, and the body reduced to ashes, as if greater power were necessary to re-unite these parts, which though dissolved, exist, than to create, and unite them originally. To deny the possibility of the resurrection is to deny the omnipotence of the Divinity, and turn Atheist. The only reason offered against the resurrection, which deserves a reply, is, that, men are known to feed on human flesh, that, of course, the same particles serve to constitute the bodies of different men. To obviate this, and all similar difficulties, it must be considered that, though the same identical body must be united to the soul, else it would not be a resurrection of the fallen body, but an assumption of another, it is not necessary that all the different particles of matter which have successively served to form the body should be united in its resurrection : of these the superfluous
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must be rejected as useless, hence then if the particles of one body, which have served to constitute another, be necessary to the former, they may be restored, and their place supplied in the latter, by others, which would have been superfluous. There is no Savage whose food is confined to human flesh: he must consume other things also, as water, fruits and vegetables, his body of course, cannot be entirely formed of the flesh of his fellows. In the resurrection all excrescences will be retrenched, and defects supplied, by the power of God.

A question of no small importance presents itself; that is, whether this future life, in which the just man obtains the reward of his virtues, and the impious man the punishment of his crimes, be eternal and immutable or terminable after a certain time.

If the resurrection of the just be admitted and a state of happiness assigned, as the reward of their virtues, no possible reason can be assigned why they should be deprived of it. The privation of sovereign happiness is a most severe punishment, punishment always supposes a crime, which in a state of consummate happiness is impossible. Add to this, that a state of consummate happiness excludes every evil, and every apprehension of evil. The loss of sovereign happiness is the greatest of all evils, and the certainty of losing it, an object of the greatest and most just apprehension.

Moreover man does not arrive at his ultimate end until all his natural desires are satisfied, he not only desires happiness, but the continuation of happiness, for since he desires happiness but for himself, he must desire it to continue, as long as he himself continues to exist, and as he is himself immortal his happiness must be so too.

Nothing short of consummate happiness can satisfy
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the natural desires of man : whilst happiness is incomplete it is capable of some addition, and the mind of man, boundless in its desires, must continue to desire what is wanted, until its happiness be consummate. Hence it appears that no created object can make man happy, because all created objects are limited ; limitation argues a want of some perfection, which is the object of desire. Hence also it follows that consummate happiness cannot be obtained in this life : for this life is subject to many and unavoidable evils, ignorance, inordinate attachments, infirmities and death, no wealth, no power, can ward off these.

True and consummate happiness consists in the contemplation of God, no limited object can make man truly happy. God alone is infinite, he is the source of true happiness : in him the understanding sees all truth, and in him the will finds all that is good, in him terminate all the pursuits of man, he is his last end as he is his first beginning. The will always tends to its object whilst absent, and rests in the possession of the object when present.

Though happiness consists in the contemplation of God, and is rather the operation of the understanding contemplating the object, and proposing it to the will, than of the will, which is pleased in the possession, yet true happiness does not consist in that confused knowledge, which all men have of the Divinity ; whether the idea of a God, be innate in man, that is, impressed on the soul at the instant of its creation, as some pretend, or so easily attained that the least reflection suffices to form it, it is certain that this confused knowledge is subject to numberless errors : it is useless to speak of the errors of the Heathens, they are known to every man, who knows any thing, error is an evil, which true happiness excludes.

Nor does consummate happiness consist in that know-
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ledge of God, which is obtained by demonstration : the Philosopher demonstrates that the divine essence is one eternal, immutable, infinitely wise and powerful, unlimited in all perfection, but, as reason, nor even imagination cannot reach infinity, the mind is yet desirous of having a more adequate idea of all these perfections, and of an infinite number of perfections, of which we have no idea at all.

Finally, consummate happiness does not consist in the knowledge of God as obtained by faith : though many of God's perfections be known to us by faith, which human reason could not attain, and even these perfections, which reason may attain, are more clearly known by faith, as is manifest from this that many of the divine perfections clearly known to the Christian Philosopher, were but obscurely known, if at all, to the Heathen : yet, as by faith, these perfections transcending reason, and founded on external evidence, are not clearly conceived, the mind is yet desirous of a more consummate knowledge. The light of faith does not make the object visible to the understanding, but it makes it visibly credible, what we see is the object of science, not of faith ; hence it follows that consummate happiness consists in seeing God as he is in himself : until this object is obtained the mind is in pursuit, consequently never at rest ; but this view of God as he is in himself terminates all pursuits : in him the understanding sees all truth, it can desire no more ; in him the will finds all that is good, it can seek no more. All the desires of the soul may be reduced to four, that of knowledge, of excellence, of pleasure, and a perpetual continuation of it. By a distinct view of all truth, the desire of knowledge is perfectly satiated, no greater excellence can be sought than a participation of the divine ; which is attained by the adhesion and quiescence of the understanding to truth in its source, and of the will to sovereign

vereign goodness ; for when one Being is united to another both by distinct knowledge, and boundless love, no union can be more strict, hence the Saints absorbed in the excellence of God participate in it, and all desires of greater excellence must cease. Pleasure results from the possession of the object of desire, and is proportioned to the object. The possession of infinite goodness must produce unlimited pleasure. Happiness would not be consummate if any apprehension of losing it remain, but a clear and distinct view of God removes all apprehension, for in this view consists eternal life.

This distinct view of the Divinity is not attainable by the soul of man from its natural powers. For that object which infinitely transcends the human understanding cannot be clearly conceived by it ; no exertion of its natural powers can reach infinity. Hence an influx of the divine light is indispensably necessary to enable any created understanding to see the Divinity : if an agent be rendered capable of an action, which surpasses its natural powers, it must be by extending the power, which it formerly possessed, or by the addition of some new power, which it did not possess ; there is no extension of a finite power, which can raise it to an action infinitely transcending its nature, hence it is essentially necessary to add a power, which the understanding does not possess, to enable it clearly and distinctly to see the Divinity. This addition of intellectual power is called the illumination of the understanding.

Though the understanding of man cannot by its natural powers have a distinct view of the Divinity, yet it is his last end and the only object capable of fixing all his desires: the last end of the principal agent is that of all subordinate agents ; the understanding is in man the principal agent : it proposes all objects to the will, the will directs the inferior appetites, and these set the body in motion.

motion. The last end of man is therefore that of the understanding. The object of the understanding is truth, and its ultimate end, primary truth in its source, that is, in the Divinity, thus every man seeing any effect is naturally desirous of knowing the cause, and this desire is never satisfied until the first great cause of all things is known. In this first cause all enquiries terminate; hence man's last end is to know his God, and in this distinct vision of God he obtains possession of eternal life. The act is specified by its object, and partakes of the perfection of its object, the contemplation of eternal truth is not merely in time, the object is itself eternal, the light by which the understanding contemplates the object is also eternal, and the soul is immortal, hence possession of eternal life is obtained by a distinct view of God. Nor can it be lost. In its consummate happiness consists, it must therefore exclude every apprehension, every possibility of its cessation. They who see God immediately cannot cease to love him, for, as the immediate vision of the Divinity constitutes perfect happiness, it excludes every evil, the understanding is free from error, seeing truth in its very source, it therefore cannot propose a more lovely object to the will, and the will itself possessed of the source of all goodness can pursue no other object.

Nor will God withdraw that divine light, by which they see him, nor otherwise conceal himself from them: either the one or the other would be a severe punishment, must therefore suppose some crime, which in a state of consummate happiness is impossible.

From all we have said on this subject it appears perfectly consistent with reason that the reward of the just should be eternal. From the natural desire of man and his capacity to attain happiness, consummate happiness must be his last end. If this end were impossible, and

to be attained by no man, the desire impressed on the soul of man would be vain, and illusive ; it would argue the malice of its author, not that sovereign goodness which is characteristic of the Divinity. If this end be attainable, it is but reasonable that these, in preference and exclusively, should attain it, whose actions have been in the course of life conformable to that rule of conduct, which they have received from their author, that is, the light of reason. To exclude these, and admit others, whose actions have been invariably influenced by passion, regardless of the dictates of reason, or even to admit both indiscriminately, is inconsistent with the justice, the sanctity, the wisdom and providence of God.

The next question which presents itself is of all others the most important and the most violently contested by all the partizans of pleasure, that is, the punishment of vice. Is it in a future life eternal ?

It must be admitted that man by acting contrary to the dictates of reason, at least, withholds that obedience which he owes his maker ; that he shews a contempt of the law, or rule of action impressed on his mind, and consequently of the Legislator ; that though no action of his can at all affect his good, who from his nature is incapable of being effectively injured, the injury as far as in man's power is offered by a formal act of disobedience and contempt, add to this that an injury is effectively offered, and sustained, either by the person who commits the crime, or some other person who is under the direction of God's providence, and consequently under his protection. These truths are incontestible and from them it evidently follows that sin is offensive and displeasing to the Divinity.

The offence may be greater or less as it is more or less consistent with rule, thus, a small excess is not so inconsistent with the rule of temperance as absolute intoxication.

toxication. The stoic Philosophers and some modern speculatists think all sins equal, as sin is a privation of rectitude, and privations, say they, are neither increased, nor diminished. This is one of the many paradoxes, which the spirit of innovation has introduced, which puts common sense to the blush. What ! a jocular lie to amuse a company is as grievous an offence as the massacre of a city ! No, there is a total and a partial privation. Death is a total privation of life, and disease but a partial privation, or if you will take disease for a privation of health, it most certainly can be increased or diminished. The privation of rectitude in sin is of this nature, it may increase or diminish, it may be more or less consistent with rule, consequently more or less grievous.

If there be a total deviation from the last end, that is, if a man formally prefers the pursuit, or possession of any created object, to the pursuit or possession of consummate happiness, in the contemplation of the Divinity, the sin is called mortal because it is a total privation of spiritual life. If the deviation be not absolute, that is, if a formal preference be not given to some created object, but some act committed, which though defective, through inadvertence, or levity, is not formally and maliciously against rule, the offence is called venial, because it does not destroy man's tendency to his last end, though it may retard and impede him. If the offence be mortal, it is in its own nature irreparable : as after death there remains no principle in the body, which can restore life, so after the perpetration of a mortal crime, there remains no principle in the soul, which can reinstate it. If the offence be venial it may be effaced, as in the body, whilst life remains, a disease may be removed, so whilst the tendency to the last end continues in the soul, the impediments may be removed ; but if by a total deviation that tendency

dency be lost, the attainment of the end is impracticable. If the human body be put in contact with certain substances, it contracts a stain, and loses its native beauty, so the soul from an inordinate attachment to forbidden objects, contracts the stain of sin, and loses its beauty. There is a two-fold beauty in the soul unfulled by sin; the first resulting from the light of reason, and the second from the light of grace. This stain remains, though the act which produced it passes, as the stain contracted by the body, from being in contact with some foul substance, remains, though the substance be removed. As the stain of sin is contracted by an attachment to some forbidden object which causes a deviation from the last end, it is necessary not only to renounce the attachment, but also to resume a direction to the last end, as it is necessary not only to remove the foul substance which stains the body, but also to cleanse the stain; hence the immutability of the will immediately on the termination of life. The last instant of life being the last of the time of trial, the soul has arrived at the end, which in life she pursued: if her pursuits were directed to the proper end according to the dictates of reason, her reward is certain; if on the contrary abusing reason, and liberty, her pursuits during the time of trial, were directed to some end, which reason condemns, her punishment is unavoidable. As mortal sin extinguishes every principle of life in the soul, it has not power within itself to resume its tendency to the last end. During the time of trial an assistance both natural, and supernatural, is offered to enable the soul to resume the strait path, if rejected in the time of trial, when that time ceases, such assistance would be useless, and is offered no more; hence the will is immutably fixed on evil. Add to this that it is natural for every thing when it comes to its last term to rest in it, if it be not set in motion and removed

moved from it by some more powerful agent. The man, who in the course of life has directed his pursuits to the attainment of some created object, or the gratification of some passion, regardless of the last end of his creation, is, at death, arrived at the term, the affection of his mind is therefore immutably fixed to the object of his pursuits, and cannot be changed but by some exertion of divine power. It is in vain to expect such an exertion : it would extend the time of trial beyond its term, and confound it with the time of reward, and punishment ; hence it is manifest that the punishment of sin must be eternal : because in the sinful soul there is no power of destroying that affection to an improper object, which induces punishment, nor any disposition to be disengaged from it by the divine power.

Every transgression of the law is inductive of punishment : it is the sanction of the law, without which no law can exist ; this punishment is from the nature of things two-fold, an exclusion from the possession of the last end, and sensible pain. Justice proportions the punishment to the offence : there is no punishment better proportioned to a contempt of the last end, than an absolute exclusion, but as the transgression does not simply consist in a contempt of the last end, but also in an adherence to some improper end, or sensible object, justice adds a sensible pain, correspondent to this inordinate attachment. If no sensible pain were inflicted, the punishment would not be proportioned to the offence : it might be considered as null, in the idea of the criminal, however great in itself : an exclusion from that, which is not desired, is not thought a punishment by any man : hence sensible pain, besides an exclusion from the possession of God, is essentially necessary to sanction the law. Both the one and the other must be eternal : for since that disposition of the soul, which
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prefers some sensible object to the possession of consummate happiness in the contemplation of God, is inductive of punishment as an abuse of reason, whilst that disposition continues the punishment correspondent to it must continue, death the last term immutably fixes this criminal disposition, makes it eternal, and consequently the punishment due to it. It is true the soul has, from its nature, a capacity of receiving grace in this life, and glory in the next. It has no natural power of acquiring either the one or the other because they transcend the order of nature and hence are called supernatural; but there is this essential difference that, in the course of life, the will is not immutably fixed, hence though the soul has no power of resuming that life of grace, which sin has extinguished, it has yet the capacity of receiving this life from the divine power, but in death the will is immutably fixed, and the capacity of receiving either grace, or glory, may in some sense be said to remain, there is an insuperable bar, that is, the immutability of the will in its affection to some forbidden object.

A thousand difficulties have been started against this doctrine, which however simple and founded on the most solid principles of reason it may appear, is yet in itself so terrible, that the mind of man, as by instinct, endeavors to invalidate or avoid it. And all these men, whose pursuits are confined to pleasure, unanimously reject it.

Some pretend that to inflict an endless punishment for an instantaneous transgression, is inconsistent with justice, with goodness, with mercy or even with power. These men seem to imagine that the punishment of a crime should be of the same duration with the transgression, a rule observed in no Court of Equity: the punishment is proportioned to the malice of the crime, not to its duration, and the malice of an offence is pro-

portioned to the dignity of the person offended, an offence of the Divinity is of unbounded malice, and deserves endless punishment, it is therefore perfectly consistent with justice. In all countries, for any enormous crime against society a man is for ever retrenched from that society whether by death or perpetual banishment; an offence against charity, the bond of union amongst the blessed, is a capital offence against that society, and of course deserves a perpetual exclusion.

Add to this that not only the act but the desire, and the attachment to any forbidden object, is criminal, and consequently deserving of punishment. The man who perseveres until death in pursuit of any created object, however flattering to his vanity, his ambition or his sensuality, has made his election: he has not only preferred that object to the possession of consummate happiness in the contemplation of his God, in opposition to the dictates of reason, but obstinately persevered in that disposition to the end, and since death immutably fixes his affection, it must be perpetual, and the correspondent punishment of equal duration. Hence to inflict endless punishment is a necessary effect of justice. It is also perfectly consistent with sovereign goodness: to countenance or encourage evil, is not an effect of goodness, it would rather argue a defect; infinite goodness is infinitely opposite to evil, infinitely remote from evil, and of course infinitely inimical to evil. Whilst this opposition continues, sovereign goodness will exclude and discountenance evil; and since by death the sinner's will is immutably fixed on evil, this opposition must be perpetual.

An act of mercy always proceeds from love, and, as God is sovereignly good, and therefore infinitely inimical to evil, neither does nor can love that soul, which is immutably fixed on evil, he can extend no act of mercy

to her, perpetual punishment is therefore consistent with mercy. This reasoning is applicable to clemency.

All comparisons between God and sovereign Princes, or parents, are defective: a comparison might as well be instituted between *time* and *space*. Princes and parents are men, are bound by certain laws to their subjects and children, strictly obliged to attend to their welfare, an offence against them considered as such is limited as they are themselves. An offence against the Almighty is of course illimited in its malice, as he is infinite in goodness, if therefore an offence against an indulgent parent, or beneficent Prince argues a certain malice in the offender, which deserves a temporal punishment proportioned to the offence, an offence against the Almighty, the universal Sovereign, Parent and Benefactor, from whom the offender holds life and all that contributes to support life, to whom on the title of creation, of conservation, of subjection, of gratitude, of love and dependence, he owes himself, and to whose glory he is obliged to contribute, such an offence, and obstinate perseverance in it to the end, deserves unquestionably a punishment endless as is the offence.

A temporal Prince in inflicting punishment may be guilty of cruelty, though the punishment does not surpass the enormity of the offence, because he may intend the sufferings of the criminal, not the satisfaction due to justice. This is inconsistent with divine goodness. It is the satisfaction due to justice, which is intended, and in it there is no cruelty.

In a word, if the man, who perseveres in sin to the end, ceases to sin, it is because he ceases to live. His desire of sin is perpetual and the punishment also.

Hitherto we have reasoned on the attributes of the Deity as known to us by the light of reason unassisted by any superior light, and shewn that God is the first principle, and the last end of all his creatures: that all the

the Beings which compose the universe, hold from him their existence, and the continuation of their existence; that his providence superintends and directs all creatures, the inanimate by fixed and determined laws; the irrational by unerring instinct, presenting rules for the rational part of his creatures to direct themselves, never allowing them to disturb the general plan, which in his wisdom he has formed for the manifestation of his glory; we have also shewn that reason and free agency are excellent gifts worthy of their Author, of these the proper use and not the abuse was intended, from the abuse results moral evil, the existence of which argues the malice of the evil doer, but does not affect the sovereign goodness of God, who though he can neither encourage nor countenance evil, is not obliged to prevent it.

We have also shewn that a state of trial, in which, if man acted consistently with the dictates of reason, he should obtain a reward, or, if he abused and perverted reason, he should be exposed to punishment, was reconcilable with the idea of Providence, and then proceeded to shew that the reward obtained by virtue or the punishment inflicted on vice must be without end.

In the course of the work we have remarked that man's innate desire of happiness, which he invariably pursues, however mistaken in the object, and the boundless capacity of his mind, shew that he was intended for consummate happiness, which is to be attained but in the contemplation of the Divinity, in which truth seen immediately satisfies the understanding, and goodness in its source satiates all the desires of the will. We have also clearly shewn that, there is no natural power in man equal to the attainment of this object, that no extension of his natural powers can arrive at it, that, what is called the light of glory, is indispensably necessary. An example of this we have

in the natural order. The eye, however well constituted, or however its visual powers may be increased or extended, cannot see an object even the most visible, if totally destitute of light. How this light of glory is to be obtained is not immediately known to man from the light of reason, hence the absolute necessity of revelation to enable man to attain the end, for which he was originally intended, as that capacity of arriving at the end with proper assistance manifestly shews.

The Heathen Philosophers, whose powers of reasoning were certainly great, and whose studies were intense, were notwithstanding subject to the most gross and ridiculous errors. The unity of the Divine Being they knew, yet dared not avow it; of his providence they spoke in ambiguous terms; their frequent consultation of oracles shew their belief of his prescience, but this they thought dependent on the decrees of fate, by which all their pretended Gods were shackled. Their modes of worship were indecent and the whole plan of religion, which they had formed, composed of senseless errors and ridiculous practices, to say no more.

Flattery first introduced a multiplicity of Deities, as these were fashioned by the makers according to their own fancies they were made subject to all the vices, to which the Heathens themselves were addicted, hence there is no passion, however extravagant, which had not its patron or patroness amongst the Heathen Deities; this abuse was so universal that one of their most severe moralists thought intoxication laudable in honor of Bacchus, and public prostitution commendable in honor of Venus. Our modern Philosophers, men absorbed in sensuality, must regret these happy times, when they could with impunity and honor give a loose to the most blind and senseless desires. Hence they unanimously reject a revealed religion, well know-
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ing that reason, unassisted by a superior light, is not more strong now than in the days of Heathen superstition, consequently incapable of restraining the violence of passion, and frequently acting in concert with it. A revealed religion with its promises of rewards, and punishments, is a most powerful restraint for these men, it has no attractive: it holds out nothing to them but confusion here and torments hereafter. These thoughts produce a certain anxiety, which disturbs them in the enjoyment of their pleasures, to quell this anxiety they exhaust their imagination in pursuit of some plausible reason to think this revealed religion with all its terrors a mere bug-bear. They have recourse to what remains of the writings of the Heathens and glean all they have said against revealed religion. This they obtrude on the ignorant, who form a vast majority in all societies, as the productions of their own brains, gratifying at the same time both their malice and their vanity. It is in vain to class them as some writers do. They are all engaged in the same pursuit, that is, Epicurean pleasure, all equally adverse to that revealed religion, which condemns, and terrifies them, all declared enemies to subordination and order, and as such enemies both to God and man. These unfortunate men endeavor to persuade themselves, and others, that revelation is impossible, that it is useless, that it is totally unnecessary, that it is not credible. Reason in their opinion is more than sufficient to direct man to attain the end of his creation, and to pay the Supreme Being the homage which he exacts.

By revelation is understood a certain knowledge, which God communicates of the divine nature, or the divine will, hence many things are known from revelation, which reason cannot attain.

To reason against the possibility of revelation, argues the most stupid ignorance, as if God, whose understand-
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ing is infinite and possessed of an infinity of truths, to which man's reason cannot reach, were incapable of making any of these truths known to him ; one man communicates his ideas to another by the intervention of sounds, or letters, which are material, though ideas are spiritual ; and omnipotence, which has formed the tongue, the eye and the ear, the air which conveys sound, and the light which impresses the image of the object on the optic nerve, will be deprived of this faculty !

But these truths transcend the knowledge of man. Yes, if unassisted by a superior light, as the satellites of Jupiter escape the naked eye, but are clearly seen by the assistance of the telescope.

We every day see men learn from other men truths, of which they had no previous idea, which seem to contradict their ideas, though these men, from whom they learn, have no power of infusing light in their minds. What absurdity then to pretend that from almighty power, and infinite wisdom, they may not learn truths, of which they neither had nor would have any previous knowledge ?

These truths, it is true, are not in the natural order or the common course of things, but they are perfectly consistent with it, for there is nothing more natural than for an artist to make any change, which he thinks proper, in a piece of mechanism, and with respect to God the whole universe is such. This also shews that the present order of things was an effect of choice, not of any natural determination. By the interference of secondary causes we every day see deviations from the established order of things, or, if you will, from that order which frequently happens, to that which rarely happens, without prejudice of Divine Providence. Is the power and efficacy of the primary cause all-wise and omnipotent, more confined than that of a secondary cause ? The idea is ridiculous in the
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extreme. But continues the Deist we have no certainty of any revelation made to man, these who pretend to have heard truths revealed might have been dupes or impostors : it cannot be proved that they did not intend to deceive us ; nor can it be proved that they themselves were not deceived. To this the writer replies that there are proofs the most satisfactory, that the men, who transmitted revealed truths of religion to us, were neither deceived nor deceivers ; that they did not intend to deceive, and if they did, that they could not. These proofs are taken from the nature of these truths themselves, which breathe nothing contrary to reason, nothing, which does not give man elevated ideas of his Creator, nothing, which does not inspire sanctity and virtue, nothing, which does not tend to man's perfection here, and happiness hereafter, in a word nothing, which does not shew the divinity of the Author : these may be considered as the internal evidence of revealed truths, and the external proofs are taken from the character of the writers, and the impossibility of their imposing on the world ; they were men under the influence of no temporal interest, had no sinister views ; simply and unequivocally they attested the truth, knowing it must be at the expense of their lives. They foretold what it was not possible for man to foresee, and in confirmation of the truths, which they announced, the laws of motion, at other times invariable, were frequently suspended. That there have been miracles supposed, and revelations feigned intentionally to deceive, is true, but that indiscriminately all have been dupes and impostors ; that of the many thousands who attest, of the many men of the most profound erudition, and great penetration who assert that they themselves were witnesses, there has not been one honest man, is a most impudent and shameless assertion, an assertion which a man who has any remains of modesty would
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not dare to make : he might as well pretend that because some men tell lies, no man tells truth, or because there are some bank notes forged there are none of any value, or, if you will, because there are some men blind, there are none who can see ; but he is told that there are certain rules for detecting falshood, that these must be applied, and the deceit, if any there be, must appear. These supposed miracles and feigned revelations so far from shewing that all are so, evidently argue the contrary : for falshood is the fiction of truth, and copies, however faithless and faulty, shew the original true, hence if there were no true miracles, there never would have been a false one, nor would there be a fictitious revelation, if there had not been a real one previous, which the fiction counterfeits.

The revelation of mysteries, that is, of truths to reason inconceivable, is, if we believe the Deist, totally impossible. Yet we know, and the Deist must know, if he knows any thing, that many truths even in the natural order, and within the limited sphere of human reason, are evident to men of science, which to the illiterate Mechanic, are as mysterious as any revealed truth whatsoever. Will not the unlearned Mechanic believe the Astronomer that the Earth performs its revolution round the Sun, though his senses tell him, and seem to assure the contrary. The assertion he must believe simply on the credit of the Astronomer, because he has not the most distant idea of the principles on which it is founded, the Deist surely will admit that the divine understanding as far surpasses the human, as that of the most learned man, does the reasoning faculty of the artisan ; if then the credit of the Astronomer be sufficient to establish a truth, which contradicts sense, why may not the infallibility of the divine word establish a truth which transcends reason ?

Mysterious truths are not evident in themselves, that is, they do not appear immediately to us, but they are evidently certain, because they are founded on the divine word, which excludes falsehood. The object of reason is to determine whether the truth proposed be revealed or not ; and, as that is matter of fact, it is determined as all other facts are by concurring testimonies : if the motives of credibility be sufficiently strong to induce a well-founded belief, that the truth proposed has been revealed, the enquiries of human reason cease : why so ? Because there is nothing more reasonable than to believe infallible authority, however mysterious the truth may appear.

These miracles by which revealed truths were first established, are yet continued, not in themselves, but in their effect, the conversion of the world, which is of all others the greatest, a visible miracle which flashes conviction on the understanding : that the learned and the ignorant, the Prince and the peasant, men of all nations, and times, whose names and customs are as different as their faces, should unanimously admit truths inconceivable, inductive of the most severe and mortifying restraints, contradicting the most violent inclinations of corrupt nature, is a miraculous effect of almighty power, and if this conversion of the world be effected without a miracle, it is itself greater than any possible miracle. Add to this, that the revelation of truths transcending reason is indispensably necessary to direct man to a supernatural end, for which we have already shewn him to be originally intended. As man can never desire that, of which he has no idea, nor can he have recourse to means, which are to him not known, it is therefore necessary, that this supernatural end should be revealed to him, and the means by which it may be attained, and since the means are always proportioned to the end, the end being supernatural, that

that is, transcending the natural powers of man, the means must be so too.

It is true mysterious objects are not visible to the eye, but we believe many things, which we do not see, nor cannot see, our thoughts are not visible to the eye, nor are the thoughts or secret dispositions of others visible even to our minds, yet we believe that other men think, of this we have indications sufficiently strong to remove all doubts. It is from such indications that we believe mysterious truths revealed, which are visible neither to our eyes nor to our minds, truths of course, which give us a more sublime idea of our God, and a more distinct knowledge of the divine nature. The most distinct knowledge that we can have of the divine nature, is, that it infinitely surpasses the utmost stretch of any limited imagination, such is the idea, which certain revealed mysteries convey.

▲ If, says the Deist, a revealed religion be substituted to the natural religion common to all, and at all times, it argues a change incompatible with the immutability of God. To this it may be replied that God's decrees are eternal, but the execution of these decrees is successive, according to the order which he himself has determined.

It is not more strange than true that men are found so blinded by prejudice as to assert that revelation is not useful to man, as if it were useless to man to learn, by a simple, concise and unerring method, all that in this life he can know of the divine nature, of the worship which the Deity expects, and exacts, and all his relative duties as a man, and a member of society. If inconveniences have happened, and different sects have been formed, disagreeing in opinions, this is not imputable to revelation, but to the depravity of man, who endeavors to warp revelation from its true and natural signification, and make it subservient to his private views :
revelation

revelation is not more abused than reason. Will any man be so perverse as to pretend that reason is useless because it is so often abused, and sometimes to the worst of purposes?

The advantages which result from revelation are innumerable and invaluable : without it a great majority of the human species could never attain a competent knowledge of the Divinity, or of their own relative duties, some through a natural indisposition are incapable of acquiring this knowledge, others, whose whole time is absorbed in pursuit of the first necessities of life, food and raiment, many whose time is devoted to pleasure, youth in general is incapable of the intense study and the abstruse and metaphysical disquisitions necessary. To obtain by dint of reasoning, even a slender knowledge of the divine attributes, to pass in silence the mutability of the human mind, continually changing its opinions if it be not fixed by infallible authority. There are in revelation many obscure passages, some from the nature of the truths which they disclose, some, which at the time, and in the places, where they were first disclosed, were perfectly intelligible, at this distance from both, appear to us obscure, and some obscurities intended by the writers themselves to exercise the mind of the reader, and suppress his pride, but the attributes of the Divinity are clearly and distinctly revealed ; the end of man's creation ; the great principles of morality ; the means, by which, this end is to be obtained, and many other things, which human reason could not discover, are announced without any ambiguity. If these principles of morality are by some neglected, it only proves that passion in some men overpowers all restraints, not that the restraint imposed by revealed religion is weak or useless.

From what we have said appears not only the utility
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but the necessity of revelation. The insufficiency of reason to direct man in the pursuit of true happiness is known from the experience of all ages : not one of the Heathen Philosophers, after all their researches, discovered that, which constitutes it ; not one who did not, both by precept and example, authorise intolerable errors in morality. The idolatrous superstitions of all the different nations whom revelation did not enlighten attest this truth ; that there is but God himself, who can teach his creatures to honor and adore him in spirit and truth ; the most sensible and convincing proof may be taken from the men who oppose this truth. Whilst they boast the sufficiency of human reason, they confound vice with virtue, they authorise licentiousness, applaud suicide, encourage rebellion, remove all restraints, break down all the barriers. The principles taught in this new school are not simply subversive of social happiness but absolutely destructive of the human species. There is between our modern Philosophers and their predecessors the Heathens, this remarkable difference, that in the Heathen schools truth was sought but through the inability of reason not assisted by revelation not to be found, in our modern schools truth presents itself and is expelled whilst the most absurd falsehoods supply its place.

The revelation of some supernatural truths was indispensably necessary at all times, and must have been co-eval with the creation. For since man was intended for a supernatural end, and could neither by his natural powers know the end, nor the means, to attain the end, he must have known them from revelation, else that innate desire of consummate happiness implanted in his nature, and that capacity of enjoying it, would have been illusive, which is blasphemy to assert ; the end therefore of his creation, and the means to obtain the end, must have been revealed to our first Parent,
 who,

who, being the immediate principle of the human species, must have been perfect both in body and mind, in body, to pro-create, and in mind, to instruct, and from him this primitive revelation must have been transmitted to his posterity, whether by oral tradition, as seems probable, or by written documents, which seems more probable. To convey our thoughts to the eye by signs, as to the ear by sounds, being equally a gift of the Creator, in the opinion of the most intelligent men.

Add to this, that a certainty of pardon for sins committed on certain conditions is a strong incentive to virtue; this certainty cannot be obtained but from revelation: by the light of reason we know that God is infinitely merciful, but we know also that he is infinitely just, it is impossible to know from reason on what conditions his justice may be satisfied, so as to extend his mercy to the man, who has been guilty of a capital offence, hence despair would be a necessary consequence, and despair removes all restraints, this we know from experience; and the conduct of our modern Philosophers evinces the truth: in despair these unfortunate men give themselves up to all sorts of uncleannesses.

That God is infinitely good we know, and consequently that he can forgive offences, but we know also that it is not consistent with goodness to encourage evil by impunity; we know that the divine goodness does not exclude the divine justice: that justice must be satisfied, and what are the conditions we cannot know but from revelation. The conditions, on which a capital offence is forgiven, must be known but from the injured party, not presumed by the offender.

If it be asked why a more explicit revelation was made at the time of Moses? A reason may be assigned: it was then more necessary to check the progress of idolatry,

idolatry, which the pride and licentiousness of man had authorised to an intolerable excess, and though this revelation, or rather the ceremonial law instituted by it, was confined to the descendants of Jacob, the prodigies attending this revelation were known to all surrounding nations, and sufficient to shew the weakness and vanity of the Heathen idols, and the shameless blindness of these, who sacrifice to, or confide in them.

To enquire why this revelation was made to the descendants of Jacob, and not to other nations, is useless : such a preference depends on the absolute will of God, whose distribution of gratuitous favors to some is an effect of goodness not injurious to others, who have no title or claim on him. Where there are no claims there is no acceptance of persons. An enquiry might be instituted with equal propriety why he created the angel superior to man, or man to the mouse.

The law established by the ministry of Moses was an extraordinary favor to the Jews, because it explicitly pointed out all the great principles of the natural law, it was therefore a simple and infallible rule of action, though these principles might have been known to the Heathens, they were not : prejudice, passion, example, interest and other reasons had effaced them from their minds in a great measure, few, if any observed them ; these amongst the Heathen nations, who observed the precepts of the natural law, were not obliged to observe the ceremonial precepts of the Jewish law : these precepts obliged but the Jews themselves and proselytes to their religion.

To this may be added, that as God always grants to every one of his creatures all that is necessary to the attainment of its end, if there be no impediment given, if any man remote from times or places, in which the revelation of supernatural truths is manifest, strictly observes the
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the dictates of unprejudiced reason, and all the precepts of the natural law, God will either enlighten his understanding immediately, or send some other agent to instruct him, as Peter was sent to instruct Cornelius.

The experience of ages shews that even men of extraordinary abilities, and intense study, though knowing the most common principles of the natural law, have been subject to the most gross errors in remote consequences, and in the application of first principles, if then, reason be insufficient to direct the learned few, a supplement is indispensably necessary for the bulk of mankind, this supplement, which perfects reason, is the infallible authority of revelation.

That a law founded on revelation has been announced, is a fact, which is not subject either to mathematical, or metaphysical demonstration, nor is it an intuitive truth, which is evident on the exposition, it is known, as all other facts are known, by moral evidence; that is, by the testimony of unexceptionable witnesses corroborated by circumstances. Whether a truth founded on moral evidence be more certain than that which is founded on metaphysical reasoning is left to Logicians to decide; but it must be admitted that to deny the one is more dangerous and detrimental to society than the other: thus for instance, in England a man may, with impunity, deny the spirituality of the soul, but if he were to deny that George the Third is King, it might procure him a halter. The former is a truth founded on metaphysical reasoning, the latter on mere moral evidence, the internal evidence of revelation as it is called by some, or perhaps more properly by others, corroborating evidence, is taken from the nature of the doctrine considered in itself; in it are truths, which man's imagination could not discover, truths which mortify his pride, contradict his most violent inclinations, teach him to subdue his passions, to eradicate

cate the spirit of self-love and private interest, inculcate the indispensable necessity of universal benevolence without distinction of friends or enemies. In a word, truths which condemn every possible vice, even in thought, and enforce every virtue; such doctrine and the plan of religion formed on it, attests the divinity of its author.

The external evidence of revelation is taken from these stupendous effects of divine power, called miracles, and of the divine prescience called prophecies. By a miracle is understood an effect of omnipotence, to which no inferior power is competent; a work transcending the established order of nature, which no secondary cause can produce, but as an instrument. Effects surpassing the power of man, but not that of angels, whether good, or bad, are said to be admirable but not miraculous. By the superior intelligence and activity of the agent, effects are produced, which excite admiration, though they do not transcend the established laws, these may be considered as the productions of art.

An effect may surpass the mechanical powers, or the known established laws of nature, either considered in itself, as if two bodies were to occupy the same place, the Sun to retrograde, or in the subject, in which the effect is produced, as the resurrection of the dead, or the illumination of the blind, or in the manner of production, as if a fever be instantaneously removed, which by the powers of nature might be removed in the course of time.

That God may produce miraculous effects is incontestably true: for since all the several Beings, which compose the universe, have been created by him, the nature of each different species is established by his will, its powers of producing effects confined within certain limits, may be extended by that omnipotent

will which grants them, or restrained without being destroyed. By such an extension of power or restraint an effect transcending the order of the particular nature of that cause may be produced, as when Sampson pulled down the temple of Dagon, or the fire did not affect Sidrach, Misach and Abednego in the furnace. These effects, inconsistent with the nature of these particular causes as known to us, are perfectly consistent with universal nature, for there is nothing more natural than for an artist at times to make use of an instrument according to his will, and for an omnipotent artist to produce any effect by any instrument, or to produce the effect immediately without any instrument at all.

We have already shewn that the creation of this world was an effect of choice ; that God was under no necessity either externally or internally to create, that he might have created this or any other, or no world at all ; the world depends on him, not he on the world, hence the order of all causes and effects depends on his absolute will. To pretend that God may not produce an effect without the interference of any secondary cause, or that he cannot increase, or diminish the powers of secondary causes, is to make God dependent on his creatures not them on him, which would be an inversion of all order. Hence it follows that no created agent, however great its power, can produce a miraculous effect : the agent cannot exceed the limits of its power ; all effects therefore, which it produces, must be according to the order of its nature. The powers of the angelical nature are superior to the powers of human nature : powers of agency are correspondent to the nature of the agent, the angelical nature is superior to human nature, in which the soul is embarrassed in its operations by a dependance on the body, hence an Angel, either of light, or of darkness, from its superior intelligence,

intelligence, and the rapidity of its motion, in the application of active to passive principles, may produce an effect which excites admiration, because it is unusual, but such an effect must be produced according to these mechanical laws, by which the material world is governed. Thus, according to the law of gravitation a stone descends, a man, from his locomotive powers, will cause it to ascend ; but as his powers are confined within certain limits his action is confined to stones of a certain magnitude, and the ascent to a certain height ; an invisible agent of greater powers will cause a stone of greater magnitude to ascend to a greater height, or keep it suspended in the air ; such an effect must excite admiration, yet in this there is nothing miraculous because the effect is correspondent to the power of the agent, according to the established laws, but no extension of man's power, or of any created agent, can animate a dead body, because this transcends the established order of things. The resurrection of a dead body is manifestly miraculous.

A miraculous deviation from the established order of nature in particular causes, argues no change in God's decrees, because all these deviations have been foreseen, and pre-ordered, in the general plan of Providence ; there is nothing more common, than deviations caused by the interference of secondary causes, yet all these are under the direction of that Providence, which superintends the whole.

In vain does the Deist pretend that we do not know all the powers of mechanical causes ; that we cannot distinguish a miraculous effect from that, which is produced by some mechanical cause ; we see wonderful effects produced by chemical operations, say they, it is true we do not know all the powers of mechanical causes, nor the effects, which one body produces on the other, in virtue of the laws of gravitation, of attraction,

traction, of election or repulsion, nor is it necessary that we should, but we know that no mechanical law can produce life in a dead body, or enable a man to walk on the seas as on dry land, to command the winds, because these effects are contrary to the mechanical laws, and powers, which are known, and these, which we do not know, are not contrary to these, which we do know. It is not therefore so difficult to distinguish a miraculous effect from a production of art.

At least, say they, the power of spiritual agents escapes our knowledge, yes, but we know their powers are confined within certain limits, and in a certain order : for no agent can act on any subject, not subject to its action, nor suspend the laws established by a superior power, hence no spiritual created agent can effect a miracle. The reason, why increased power effects miracles, is, because all nature is subject to, and dependent on it, and that all particular causes are but its instruments ; as to the miracles which were pretended to be wrought amongst the Heathens it is sufficient to say that, the authors, from whom we learn these pretended miracles, did not believe them ; Livy relates some, but he says in the preface of his work, “ that he was not disposed either to affirm or refute, “ what was said to happen, either before, or at the “ building of the city, and which was rather adorned “ by poetical fables, than authentic monuments of fact.” “ It is pardonable,” says he, “ in antiquity, to admit “ some things divine, thereby to render the foundation “ of their cities more venerable, and no more pardonable “ than in the Roman people.” In the 24th B. and 12th C. he says, “ many prodigies were published this “ year and the more the simple and credulous people “ believed them, the more they were increased.” In the 24th C. he says, “ that the Consuls having raised
“ two

“ two city legions, and filled up the other legions, did
 “ not move from the city until they had procured pro-
 “ digies.” These pretended prodigies were therefore,
 in the opinion of the authors who relate them, intended
 to encourage the soldiers, or secure the approbation of
 an ignorant and superstitious populace.

Valerius Maximus, in his 1st. B. having related many
 pretended miracles, adds, that “ as these were not late
 “ transactions, but depending on hearsay tradition, let
 “ the authors vouch for them.” *Fidem auctoris vindicent.*
 Suetonius, in the life of Claudius, says of these mira-
 cles, “ I have related them not that I believe them true,
 “ or verisimilar.” And Pausanias, in the 6th B. says,
 “ I have related, what the Greeks have circulated, but
 “ nothing obliges me to believe them.”

It was currently reported that great cures were per-
 formed in the temple of Æsculapius, and inscriptions
 expressive of these miraculous cures on brazen tablets were
 hung up to commemorate the events. The artifices of the
 officers of all the Heathen temples to impose on a super-
 stitious people are well known, the officers attendant on
 the temple of Æsculapius were physicians, and perform-
 ed cures, as our physicians do, but with greater ceremo-
 ny and mystery, the effects of their medicines ascribed to
 the pretended God, and certain persons hired to pretend
 indispositions, which were instantaneously cured,
 rendered the temple famous, and increased the con-
 course of votaries and wealth of the ministers.

Suetonius and Tacitus say that, Vespasian wrought
 miracles in Alexandria. A blind man directed by Se-
 rapis, and a lame man says Suetonius, if we believe
 Tacitus he was not lame but maimed of an arm, that
 is a trifling difference, were instantly healed by that
 Prince. In answer to this it must be remarked that
 the Egyptians were extremely superstitious and consi-
 dered Serapis as their great divinity, the crafty Prince
 could

could not endear himself more to them than by pretending to be a favorite of their beloved Serapis, and there was nothing more simple than to engage the ministers of Serapis, or his own ministers, to procure a counterfeit blind man to play a role, his unwillingness to undertake it was a mere artifice. The very relation of Tacitus shews it. He thought it would not succeed. Why then attempt it in public? He was told by the attendants that he was a favorite of the Gods. He knew it would succeed or he would not, and he must have known it from the actors, who knew his interest, and their own, was strengthened by the success, of which they could not doubt. Tacitus and Suetonius both agree that, these pretended miracles were intended to confirm the authority of that Prince, after his election, and that he was told by flattering courtiers that his election was pleasing to their Gods. It is true, Suetonius adds that some who were present attested the fact without hopes of reward. Undoubtedly a great majority of the people were duped as was intended by the actors. The same thing may be said of the pretended miracles of Hadrianus. Spartianus says that he cured a blind man, and woman, who were sent by the Gods to prevent him from putting himself to death. The motive shews the fraud, and Marius Maximus, as Spartianus himself says, relates it as a fiction. Marius's works are lost. To this may be added that, many things have happened amongst the Heathens, which surpass the power of man, but nothing surpassing the locomotive powers of the demons.

As to the miracles of Apollonius related by Philostratus. The whole of his composition is a tissue of absurdities, resembling our Arabian Nights' Entertainments, and deserves the same credit: he makes Apollonius understand the voice of birds and beasts, and says, that he learned that science from the Arabs, and adds other
tales

tales equally ridiculous. If any man wishes to know the Heathen tales and miracles let him read Ovid's *Metamorphoses* which because they could not happen did not happen.

Moses says in the book of Exodus, that the Magicians in Egypt cast their rods in presence of Pharaoh as Aaron did, and that there were serpents. The immediate disappearance of the rods, and the substitution of serpents, which were numerous in Egypt, does not surpass the powers of an angel either of light or darkness. The conversion of a rod into a real serpent does. The very matter, of which the rods was composed, might be instantaneously so disposed as to exhibit the appearance of a real serpent, and though not living it might appear in motion as an automaton, this seems more consonant to Moses's relation, because he says that Aaron's rod devoured the rods of the Egyptians, which seems to indicate that the component parts of the rods remained, though the form was changed; this was not a miracle but an artificial operation. The intelligence and active powers of the demon being fully competent to such an operation.

Hence appears the necessity of that warning, which Moses gave the Jews, to beware of impostors, whose diabolical signs, surpassing the powers of human nature, might induce them to swerve from the obedience which they owed their God; in like manner Christians were warned both by Christ and his apostle to beware of all impostors, more particularly that great impostor Anti-Christ, whose prodigies will be according to the extent of Satan's power.

It is said in the book of Kings that Saul applied to the witch of Endor to raise Samuel by her incantations. It is true, Samuel appeared to Saul, but not by the witch's incantations, for he appeared before she began them, but by the power of God, who sent him to
prophecy

prophecy Saul's fate, and the fall of his army, and to reproach him with his disobedience. This is evident from the whole passage, and is confirmed by the authority of Ecclesiasticus who says that Samuel prophesied after his death. Though the demon has no power whatsoever over the souls, or bodies of departed saints, it is not inconvenient that when the demon was consulted God himself should give an answer by one of his prophets, as when the king Ochozias sent to consult Beelzebub, the pretended God of Accaron, the prophet Elias was sent to meet his messengers and announce his death.

There are certain rules to distinguish true, from pretended miracles, which though not within the reach of the simple and illiterate parts of society (a strong prejudice against our innovators) are yet infallible. The first rule. No miracles can be wrought in proof of positions contradicting each other, none to invalidate truths already established by divine authority, because God cannot contradict himself, none to establish impiety or irreligion: this is inconsistent with the sanctity of God. Second rule. True miracles must surpass the force of mechanical causes. Third rule. They must be wrought by the invocation of the true God, and in confirmation of some truth proposed by him. The most simple and at the same time the most universal is a happy combination of circumstances: if it be manifest that the fact has happened; that it surpasses the known powers of natural agents, and mechanical causes; if the instrumental cause be sincere, incapable of deceit; if it tends to establish piety and sanctity of morals, and to glorify God; if it be analogous to previous miracles and tending to the same end, if it sustains the critical examination of intelligent men. A fact accompanied by all these circumstances is manifestly supernatural and miraculous. It excites and confirms our belief of revealed

vealed truths: for as by natural effects we arrive at the knowledge of natural truths, so by supernatural effects, we attain a knowledge of supernatural truths. That miracles have been wrought in confirmation of revealed religion is evident from this circumstance, that in revealed religion there are many supernatural truths, as the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, which could not be imposed on the credulity of the world but by supernatural means: to believe these, and other, truths of revealed religion, we must believe that miracles were wrought in confirmation of these truths, which are themselves miraculous, and to believe all this without any miracle would be of all miracles the greatest. But, says the Deist, Christians now see no miracles, and yet they believe all these truths. It is true they see no miracles in themselves, but they see them in their effects; and the Deist must be miserably blind, if he does not see them also: for there is no effect without a cause, and to pretend that so many nations renounced the Heathen superstitions, which flattered all their passions, to embrace a religion severe in its maxims, full of restraints, contradicting all the inclinations of man, and in which there are so many mysterious and miraculous truths proposed, without having seen a miracle at all, is to believe a most extraordinary effect without any cause.

Miracles may be wrought by vicious men in confirmation of truth, not in confirmation of that sanctity, which they do not possess: for though faith not animated by charity be dead, it may yet be an instrument to a living power to produce any effect, as a man makes use of an axe. God may therefore confirm truths of faith at the invocation of a vicious man, but not that sanctity which the man has not, because God cannot attest a falsehood.

In reply to a number of impertinent questions such

as these : why should God suspend the physical laws which he has established ? Why work great miracles upon trifling occasions without a great necessity ? Why so many repeated miracles to establish the same truth, as in the case of Balaam, of Gideon, of Elias, of Elisha, of Ezechias ? It must be observed that God in the creation of the world could have no other object in view, but the manifestation of his power, his wisdom, his goodness, &c. to intelligent Beings from whom, he could exact his tribute of glory ; that matter in this visible world is incapable of good or evil, of pleasure or pain, of perfection or imperfection : the polished diamond derives its value from use or fancy : in itself it is inert matter, as is the unpolished pebble. The earth, the sea, the sun, the moon, all the Heavenly bodies, composed of matter are incapable of contemplating any of God's works, or paying him any tribute of glory ; they must therefore have been created for intelligent Beings, as a mean to attain the end which God had in view in the creation of the whole ; the absolute and relative position of all these bodies, and the mechanical laws, to which they are subservient, must have been established for the same end, hence if the perfection of many, or even of one intelligent Being, required a deviation from one or more of these laws, it was perfectly consistent with the original plan of the Creator to pre-dispose such deviation for the stated time. Why so ? Because one intelligent Being is superior to the whole mass of inanimate matter, and all the classes of irrational creatures. And since the perfection of intelligent Beings consists in moral rectitude, and intellectual excellence, if this end be not attainable but by a deviation from accustomed physical laws, the deviation must have been pre-disposed in the plan of the Creator. That miracle appears great to us, which far surpasses the power of visible

visible agents, to almighty power all miracles are equal : no miracle is great when omnipotence is the agent : to open the Red Sea, to suspend the motion of the earth or moon, to raise the dead, to exterminate all the inhabitants of the earth by water, or fire, is not an effort of power for him, who by an act of his will gave existence to all the Beings, which compose the universe.

The effect of repeated miracles at the instance of Gideon, of miracles, which God wrought for the immediate relief of his servants, as the feeding of Elias by a raven in the wilderness, the causing the borrowed axe to swim, at the prayer of Elisha, of the sign given to Ezechias, of the many miracles in favor of Tobias, Daniel and others, was not confined to them : there have been, are, and will be millions, who believing these miracles, praise and glorify a God so bountiful, so condescending, so attentive to the wants of his servants. If the Atheist rejects these facts, as supposed, it is because he does not believe the author to exist ; if the Deist refuse his assent it is because, that God whom his corrupt life dishonors, and his impious tongue blasphemes, has in punishment of his crimes withdrawn the light of his understanding and abandoned him to a reprobate sense.

The miracles related of Balaam were wrought on him, not by him, he was the subject, not the instrumental cause ; they have the same tendency with the other miracles related by Moses to establish the truth of revealed religion, moral rectitude, intellectual excellence ; the perfection of man, the great end of the creation.

Prophecy is of all proofs the most unequivocal, and least liable to objection. That future events may be known was universally believed by the Heathen nations, hence their augurs and soothsayers were in great
repute

repute, and their oracles were religiously consulted. But as all future events dependent on indetermined causes escape the knowledge of limited intelligence, their knowledge was merely conjectural, and their oracles equivocal. There is but God, whose infinite understanding sees the order of all causes to their effects, and consequently all future events in their causes, as also in themselves, who can announce with the utmost certainty a future event depending on the combination of an indefinite number of free and concurring causes. *Isaias* speaking of idols says "tell us future events, and we shall know that you are Gods."

This knowledge of future events, called prophecy, consists in some supernatural illumination of the mind, on which truths, to which human knowledge does not extend, are impressed. As truth conveyed from the teacher to the disciple is the same in both, prophecy being impressed on the mind of the Prophet by primary truth, is infallible.

Truths remote from the knowledge of one man, though known to others, may be known by the spirit of prophecy; truths intelligible in themselves, but not to the limited understanding of man, may also be known, as the mysteries of religion, and truths entirely remote from the knowledge of all creatures, because they are not intelligible in themselves, as future contingencies dependent on the free determinations of man, may be known by the spirit of prophecy, these are more properly its object.

There is no limited understanding which knows the order of indetermined causes to their effects, consequently no limited understanding, which can foretel an event depending on the combination of such causes, the spirit of prophecy is not therefore natural either to men or angels; but God being the first author of all Beings must know them before they have an existence,

he therefore knows all future events and he alone can foretel them.

To pretend that God cannot instruct the Prophet in truths, to which his understanding cannot naturally extend, is absurd : there is nothing more common than to see one man teach another truths, of which by any exertion of his mind unassisted, he never could have formed an idea, though the teacher can do no more than to convey some image by sounds, or signs, without infusing any light in his understanding, whilst the Almighty God not only enlightens the understanding, but increases its powers of action, at the same time that he conveys the images.

An angel either of light, or darkness, from its superior sagacity, and more extensive knowledge, combining circumstances, may form a strong conjecture of some future event not far distant, but uncertainty is essential to conjecture, there is but infinite sagacity, and unlimited knowledge, which excludes conjecture.

In vain does the Deist think that because some events were foretold, or rather threatened in the scriptures, which did not happen, as the death of Ezechias, and the destruction of Nineveh, that these were merely conjectural, and all others of the same nature. God sees all future events in themselves, as they depend on him for their futurity, and he also sees the order of all causes to their effects, and knows whether these effects will be produced, or prevented by other causes. He saw that the disposition of Ezechias's body was tending to a dissolution, this truth he impressed on the mind of the Prophet, he saw at the same time, that in consequence of Ezechias's prayer, his death would be postponed for fifteen years, this he did not at that time communicate, he did after ; the same reasoning is applicable to all menaces in the scripture : they
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are all conditional, whether the condition be expressed or implied. The crimes of Nineveh deserved the destruction of the city, the penance of its inhabitants saved it. The Ninevites understood the prophecy in its true sense as a menace.

It is true, in many prophecies of the Old Testament there is great obscurity, and in some, seeming contradictions, more particularly these which regard the Messias, whose power and glory is announced in strong imagery, and whose humiliations and sufferings is related in the most pathetic manner. Power, majesty, and glory, humiliations, sufferings and death, must have appeared to the Jews inconsistent in the same person, and would have been so in fact, if in one person the Messias had not united the divine and human nature. Another cause of obscurity was that, at the same time, events ages distant, one from the other, were foretold, as if they were to happen at the same time: thus the destruction of Jerusalem, and the consummation of the world seem confounded. Many things are said of Antiochus, which are applicable to Anti-Christ, of whom that tyrant was an image, or, if you will, a figure; moreover the total ruin and destruction of the Jewish nation, their rejection and the assumption of the Heathen nations was foretold, obscurity was indispensably necessary, or they would have not only murdered the Prophets as they did, but also destroyed the scriptures. However there are in the Old Testament many prophecies as intelligible as language can make them.

By prophecy, as by miracles, our faith is confirmed: it is natural to man to reason from effects to causes, if the effect be supernatural, the cause must be so too, otherwise it might be said that a natural cause had produced a supernatural effect, which is absurd in the extreme. Prophecy is manifestly supernatural; to foretel a future event at a distant period of time, result-

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ing from different combinations of an indefinite number of free and concurring causes, surpasses all the powers of nature.

Prophecy is more effectual to confirm the truth of revelation than miracles. Why so? Because a miracle is but a momentary suspension of the established order, and may be eluded by ascribing it to magic, or some occult causes, but prophecy is permanent and can be ascribed to no power inferior to the divine. Hence that invincible argument of the apologists of the Christian religion against the Heathen philosophers, who admitting the miracles of Christ and his apostles upon incontrovertible evidence, ascribed them to the powers of Satan. Was Christ, said the apologists, a magician before he was born, to foretel all the circumstances of his life, or was it in the power of a magician to foretel what has happened since his death? To the evidence of this argument there is no reply, nor can the force of it be eluded.

To determine, says the Deist, if any religion be founded on revelation, it is necessary to examine minutely the tenets of all the different religions, which contradict each other, and pretend to miracles, such an examination requires a length of time, intense study, a knowledge of many, if not all different languages, an intimate acquaintance with the inhabitants of all different countries, a toil of which few, if any, are capable, and to which none will submit. This argument is incontestible against the Deist, who believes nothing but on the testimony of his eyes, or ears, so far from having any force against the Christian it goes directly to shew the necessity of revelation; since reason unassisted by it, is incapable of conducting a man to his last end. It is not necessary for the Christian to institute this examination, or to wander through different nations: the truths of revealed religion are found in
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that revelation, and that they have been revealed is a fact, of which there is moral evidence capable of convincing any man, who reasons; that there can be no contrary revelation is evident from this simple principle, that God cannot contradict himself, it is useless to visit foreign countries to know if that does exist, which cannot exist, he might as well enquire if bread which nourishes in his own country, poisons elsewhere, or if dogs which run in England fly in Spain.

It is not inconvenient that the prophetic spirit as well as the power of working miracles may be sometimes given to the vicious: both the one and the other being intended for the public good, and a man however vicious may be an instrument to serve others as a charitable master gives alms by the ministry of an impious servant. Sensuality seems inconsistent with the spirit of prophecy: because it absorbs the mind, and renders it subservient to the flesh, other vices of a spiritual nature, as ambition, vain glory, &c. are not so opposite.

If the spirit of prophecy be intended to illustrate the understanding of the Prophet, as also to inform the public it does not rest on immoral characters: habitual grace, which is not granted to immoral men, enlightens the understanding; actual graces only excite and are transitory.

We come now to enquire, if any revelation be contained in the books of the Old Testament? If the motives of credibility be sufficient to induce a well-founded belief, that a revelation was made; and that this revelation is in the whole, or in part, contained in the books of the Old Testament? Whether the truths revealed be consistent with our notions, or surpass the powers of our understanding, is useless to enquire: because there are two truths evident to the meanest capacity: that God can neither deceive, nor be deceived is one; and that,

that, in the range of infinity, there are numberless truths, to which the human mind cannot extend is another ; any one therefore of these truths may be revealed by God, who perfectly knows them all. In a word, the least homage we can pay the almighty power of God is, to admit that he can do, what we cannot conceive. It is the summit of pride, to pretend to bound the power of God by our conceptions.

That there did exist some ages ago a nation of Jews is universally admitted ; that the nation possessed books, which they believed to be written by men inspired is equally certain ; they yet exist and they yet believe their scriptures divinely inspired, though these very scriptures contain the most severe strictures on the conduct of their ancestors, and the most dreadful menaces against themselves. In these scriptures are contained the most sublime ideas of the Divinity, and of all the attributes of the Deity known to us ; they also contain rules of moral conduct superior to all that the Heathen philosophers imagined : in conduct these philosophers resembled their children of the present day, they were more reserved in their writings. This Jewish nation firmly believed that their ancestors had been for some centuries in a state of slavery in Egypt ; that Moses had been expressly sent to deliver them from their captivity ; and the very laws delivered by Moses were the public laws of the nation, all causes civil, criminal, religious and matrimonial, were decided according to these laws.

This law of Moses, or, if you will, the books in which it is contained, have such internal marks of the divinity of its origin, that there is but the most blind stupidity, or perverse obstinacy, that can resist them. Language cannot afford terms more strong than these, by which he expresses the eternity, the wisdom, the power, the immutability, the independence and the self-

existence of the Divinity, *Jehova* signifying a Being which possesses independent existence, the incommunicable name of God. *Elohim* indicates his judicial power and the sovereignty of his Being. *El* conveys a particular idea of the power of God. *El Sabaoth* the God of armies on whom the event of battles depends. *El Sadi* the all-powerful Being. The truth the justice the sanctity of God in these terms of Deut. 32. C. 4. v, "God's works are perfect, all his ways are judgments: God is faithful without any iniquity, just, and upright." The unity, the power, the providence of God in these terms. V. 19, "See that I am alone, and there is no other God beside me: I will kill, and enliven, I will strike and I will heal, and there is none who can rest out of my hand." In the original tex, *I, I am he*, there is no God with me. *Ani ani hou ve ein elohim imadi.*

In this law, the most pious, the most tender sentiments of devotion are inculcated, the fear of a God the avenger of crimes; the reverence due to Sovereign Majesty; the boundless confidence to be placed in the power and goodness of God are proposed in expressive terms. Deut. 6. C. 5 v, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength. These things, which I now command, will be in your heart, and you will tell them to your children, you will meditate on them sitting in your house, and walking in the way, lying and rising." And Deut. 10. C. 12. v, "And now, O Israel, what is it that the Lord your God requires of you, but that you should fear the Lord your God and walk in his ways, that you should love him, and serve the Lord your God, with your whole heart and soul; that you should observe the precepts of the Lord and his ceremonies, which I this day command you, that it may be well with you Do not harden your necks more

more : because the Lord your God is the God of Gods and the Lord of Lords, a God great, and powerful, and terrible, he accepts neither persons nor gifts The Lord your God you shall fear, and him alone shall you serve. He is your praise and your God, who has done for you these great and terrible things, which your eyes have seen." The 32 C. 3. v, " Give Glory to your God. God's works are perfect and all his ways are judgments."

In this law, the most sublime perfection of man is recommended and strictly enjoined. Deut. 18. C. 13 v, " You shall be perfect and spotless with the Lord your God." And, Levi. 19. C. 2. v, " Be you holy because I am holy, the Lord your God."

In the external rites and sacrifices, which were ordered, the greatest purity both of soul and body was strictly enforced ; all superstitious rites, and sacrifices to idols, forbidden under the most severe penalties.

The moral precepts of that law enforce every social virtue and prohibit every vice : " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This precept is frequently repeated in the law of Moses. Exod. 20. C. 17. v, " Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not desire his wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing which is his." Moses did not confine himself to these general precepts, but to obviate these difficulties, and prevent false interpretations, he descends to the most minute particulars. Levit. 19. C, " Let every one fear his father and his mother. When you reap your standing corn you will not cut to the very surface of the earth, nor will you collect the remaining ears, nor will you collect the bunches, which remain in your vineyard, nor the grains which fall, you will leave them for the poor and for strangers. I am the Lord your God ; you will not steal, you will not lie, you will not deceive your neighbour

neighbour. You will not calumniate your neighbour, nor oppress him. The labour of the mercenary will not remain with you until morning. You will not curse the deaf, nor place a stumbling block before the blind. You will not do what is unjust, nor will you judge against equity; you will not consider the person of the poor, nor honor the countenance of the rich. You will judge justly. You will not be an informer nor tale bearer amongst the people. You will not stand against the blood of your neighbour. You will not hate your brother in your heart, but publicly reprimand him. You will not seek revenge nor will you be mindful of an injury from your fellow-citizens, you shall love your friend as yourself, I am the Lord." Again in the book of Deut. C. 22. v. 1, and seq. "You will not see your brother's ox or his sheep straying and pass it by, but you will bring it back to your brother; if your brother be not near, and that you do not know him, you will bring them to your house, and they will remain with you, whilst your brother seeks them, and he will receive them. You will do so with his ass, with his garment, with every thing, which your brother may lose, if you find it, you will not neglect it, as if not pertaining to you. If you see your brother's ass or ox fall in the way, you will not pass by, but assist him to lift it."

Is this the language of an impostor? What man, who has any remains of reason, can think him an impostor, who thus enforces the fear, the love, the reverence of Sovereign Majesty, and all the virtues, which make man great and good? Such an impostor would be a more extraordinary character than Moses himself.

The writer passes unnoticed the errors of all the Heathen philosophers, and the absurdities of the different systems of religion, which prevailed, and continue to prevail in all these unfortunate countries, which

which revelation has not enlightened, or which have perverted revelation to their own destruction.

Moses describes the creation in the most simple and satisfactory manner: "in the beginning God made the heavens and the earth." He then proceeds to relate the formation of certain parts, as the sun, the stars, the formation of the first man and his assistant the first woman in a most beautiful garden. Their disobedience to the precept of the Creator and the fatal consequences of that disobedience to them, and all their posterity.

As the angels make a part of the universe, not a separate universe, they were created at the same time with the material world. The ruin of some we know from revelation; and the perseverance of others, in their obedience and consequent exaltation to glory. Why that angel of darkness called Satan, the adversary, was permitted to tempt our first parents is a secret known to God, not to us, why in particular that disobedient Spirit was permitted to make the serpent the instrument of his malice is equally unknown to us; the fact we know, and its effects we feel.

It has been asserted by some, that the immortality of the soul was not known to the Jews before the captivity of Babylon, because Moses does not speak of an after life. Never was assertion more groundless: Moses might have passed it unnoticed as a truth publicly known by all. It is not necessary to tell a man it is day, when he sees the sun shine. Yet he did not: God says to him, I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. These patriarchs were therefore in existence, for he is not the God of non-existing Beings; not their bodies: they were crumbled to ashes, and, if entire, God would not have called himself the God of the dead, their souls therefore must have been living. And when the patriarch Jacob was told that his son Joseph was

was devoured by a wild beast, "I will," said he, "descend to him with sorrow." *Sheolab*. That is to the peace of souls. *Queber* in that language signifies a grave, in which he could not think that Joseph's body was laid, as he thought him devoured by a wild beast. And what signifies that sentence so often repeated at the deaths of the patriarchs: "He was gathered to his fathers?" Can it imply any thing else but that their souls were all collected, their bodies certainly were not: Abraham was buried in Ephron's field in the land of Canaan and his ancestors in Chaldea.

It is true Moses proposed temporal rewards and punishments to sanction the law. These were better proportioned to the obstinate, and perverse disposition of a great majority of the Jews, as in speculative truths the means of demonstration ought always to be proportioned to the understanding of the learner. Moreover the Jewish law was but preparatory to the Christian law, which was to give it its ultimate perfection, and in which rewards and punishments are proposed proportioned to its perfection, that is, Eternal. In all the books of the Old Testament the immortality of the soul is supposed as a truth, of which there was no doubt. It is said that Esau's wife afflicted the spirit, *Rouach* of Isaac and Rebecca. Saul desires that Samuel might appear to him. The prophets speak of the happiness which the just will enjoy in a future life and the torments of the wicked. In a word, to pretend that the Jews did not believe a future life argues an intolerable ignorance of their history. The assertion deserves contempt not a serious refutation.

From the order which Abraham received to sacrifice his son Isaac and the actual sacrifice of Jephtha's daughter; as also of the death of Agag by the hands of Samuel in presence of the Lord, it would seem that human sacrifices were authorized by the law, more particularly

cularly, as it is said in Levit. 27. C. 28. and 29. v, That whatever is consecrated to the Lord, whether man, animal or field, shall not be redeemed. That every thing so consecrated shall die. Notwithstanding these seeming difficulties there is nothing so strictly prohibited in the law as human sacrifices. Deut. 12. C. 30. v. and seq. "Take care not to imitate them (the Canaanites) "they have committed all the abominations which the Lord detests, offering their sons and their daughters to their Gods, and burning them with fire.

With respect to Abraham, his obedience, by an immediate compliance with a precept so difficult, was made known to the world, and his faith: "for he hoped even against hope," says the apostle to the Hebrews "knowing that God was able to raise from the dead." These his virtues are proposed as models, and the sacrifice of his son was not permitted.

Jephtha's vow was indiscreet, and precipitate, and the observance of it, if he in reality put his daughter to death, which seems extremely probable, a detestable act. It is thought by some that he only condemned her to perpetual celibacy, which in them times was an uncommon sacrifice. Be that as it will, the scripture relates the fact, as it does the murder of Uriah after the seduction of his wife, the scandalous multiplication of Solomon's wives and concubines, and several other facts, which it sometimes severely censures, but never approves, though the authors are for other reasons, highly approved.

Samuel put Agag to death, whether by his own hand, or the hands of others is useless to enquire: he was ordered by Agag's natural Judge, who had justly condemned him: he did not sacrifice him for Samuel was not one of the priestly tribe; but as that tyrant's sword had made many a childless widow he put him to death in an exemplary manner. In

In the 27. C. of Levi. there is a distinction made between things which were offered to God according to the mode of devoting them. If they were offered by a simple vow *Neder*, they were redeemable, if by an absolute consecration *chërem* they could not be redeemed. Animals used in sacrifice were sacrificed without redemption, others were confined to the service of the temple, men thus consecrated were considered as dead in the same manner that houses and lands were, because the men could never be set at liberty, nor the houses or lands return to their former proprietors. In our law language they were in mortmain.

It has been stated by some writers that the Israelites were guilty of an act of injustice in borrowing gold and silver vessels and other things from the Egyptians on the eve of their departure. It might be said with equal propriety, that the creditor, who by sentence of a Court, takes a debtor's moveables in payment of a just demand is guilty of injustice: the children of Jacob had been reduced to a state of slavery without cause; obliged to labour without reward, and all the fruits of their labours were taken by the Egyptians; God, the natural Judge of both nations, had ordered payment in that manner. The sentence was perfectly just, and the execution free from blame; God as Sovereign Lord and disposer of all things might have transferred the right of property from the Egyptians to the Israelites, and his order is the best of all possible titles.

The sublime morality of the old law shews the divinity of its author. In the ceremonial law there is nothing reprehensible: it was adapted to the natural disposition of the people. They were extremely prone to idolatry at all times. When Moses delayed a few days on the mountain, they made a molten calf, the idol
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which the Egyptians adored, and resolved to return to Egypt under its protection. Exodus 32. C. 1 v, "Rise, said they, to Aaron, make us Gods to conduct us." And on the borders of Canaan they formed the same project. Numbers 14. C. 3. v, "Is it not better to return to Egypt?" V. 4, "They said one to the other let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt." In the land of Canaan they were always addicted to idolatry: Joshua when dying reproached them with it. Joshua 24. C. 14. v, "Now therefore fear the Lord and take away the Gods, which your fathers served in Mesopotamia and Egypt." It is manifest from the prophet Ezechial, C. 20. that a strong propensity to idolatry always subsisted amongst the Jews, v. 31, "You are defiled in all your idols until this day." The ceremonial law was well calculated to check this propensity. In this law were marked with the greatest accuracy the sacrifices, by which they were to acknowledge the supreme dominion of God over all his creatures, and their entire dependence on him; the tabernacle and sacred vessels solely appropriated to the divine worship, were capable of inspiring a due respect and veneration for the Divinity, and their different sacraments, by which they themselves were consecrated to the services of God, and their priests in a particular manner, as the public ministers of the established worship, were well adapted to excite and support the spirit of piety and devotion. And from this consecration to the service of the Divinity, it was necessary that in their manners and customs they should be distinguished from the Heathen nations, amongst whom they were at times obliged to live, hence the distinction between clean and unclean animals in their food, and some other things in their dress. As to their sacrifices, no religion either true or false can exist without a sacrifice: it is that act of re-

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ligion by which a man offering to his God, a part of his possessions, publicly acknowledges by this oblation, that he himself and all that he possesses is from God ; that God is his first principle and last end. Add to this that the sacrifices ordered in the old law were figurative of the great sacrifice of the new law, and from their variety and multiplicity they served as barriers against the many different species of idolatry, and superstition, to which that people was addicted. It is true that in many of the ceremonial precepts of the old law, the reason on which the precept is founded, does not immediately appear, because the ceremony itself may have but a figurative signification and consequently is not founded on any immediate reason in itself. This is the great advantage of the new law, that all its precepts are rational, and that the reason of the precepts immediately appears. Hence St. Paul to the Romans, 12. C. 1. v, calls our obedience rational. And St. Peter, 1. Epist. C. 2. v. 2, says, " Like new born children desire rational milk," as if he had said, having by your profession abjured the Heathen rites, which are false and superstitious, and the Jewish ceremonies which were merely figurative, confine your thoughts and desires to the Christian law, all the precepts of which are evidently founded on reason.

That the Jewish ceremonies were essentially different from the Heathen rites is evident from this, that God strictly forbid them to imitate the Heathen nations in their mode of worship. Deut. 12. C, " Take care that you do not imitate these nations which are subverted before you ; that you do not learn their ceremonies, saying, as these nations worshipped their Gods so will I worship, you will not do so to the Lord your God : for all the abominations, which God hates they done for their Gods, offering their sons and their daughters and burning them with fire. What I command,

mand, that only will you do for the Lord : you shall neither add nor diminish." And Levit. 18. C, " I am the Lord your God. You shall not do according to the custom of the land of Egypt, in which you have dwelt, nor according to the custom of the land of Canaan, into which I am going to introduce you." When therefore St. Paul says, Acts 13. C. v. 18, " That God supported the manners of the Children of Israel forty years in the desert." He does not pretend that God permitted them to worship him, as the Heathens worshipped their idols, but he commends the patience of God in their frequent revolts to idolatry, their continual infractions of the divine law, and their murmurs against himself and Moses. " The house of Israel irritated me in the wilderness," said the Lord by Ezechial, C. 20, " They did not walk in my precepts and my eye spared them." Nor did the Apostle pretend, when he said to the Galatians, C. 4. v. 3, " We were under the elements of the world," that the Jews had sacrifices and ceremonies of the same nature with the Gentiles, but that they were under the law, which promised temporal rewards to obedience, and threatened disobedience with temporal punishments. Whenever any science is to be taught, the elements are first proposed, hence the law was called by the Apostle a pedagogue because it shewed the way to Christ. The elements of the world, under which the Jews were, may be considered as these corporal, external and figurative rites and ceremonies, as their new moons, their sabbaths, &c. with this essential difference between them and the Heathens, that the Jews served God under these elements of the world according to his orders, and the Heathens served these elements contrary to the express command of God, and the voice of reason.

It is not necessary to take a view of the judicial law of Moses : it is universally admitted that there never was

a code of laws so simple, so wise, so equitable, so few in number, and which so effectually provides for every possible case. All the different relations of man are foreseen, and rules of action prescribed; for the Prince, for his Judges, for subjects, as such, as members of society, as fathers, as husbands, as friends, as enemies, as masters, as servants, as acquiring, possessing, and disposing of real, or personal property; punishments are exactly proportioned to the enormity of offences, not to be inflicted but by order of the public magistrate on conviction of the criminal, no torture admitted, no confession extorted, no discretionary powers vested in the magistrate, his authority clearly defined, private revenge strictly prohibited, equal justice ordered for the stranger as the native, for the poor as the rich. Natural enemies as the Moabites and Amonites for ever excluded from the public Councils, to prevent the fatal consequences of their innate animosity, though admitted to a participation of the public worship least it should be thought that they were excluded from salvation; more friendly nations, as the Egyptians, and the Children of Esau, to be admitted not only to a share of the public worship, but into the Councils of the nation at the third generation. Marriages with idolatrous women forbidden, more particularly with the Canaanites, and others, who were obstinately attached to idolatrous superstition, and from whom the danger of seduction was greater, marriages with other strangers was allowed and indeed with all, in case they abjured idolatry and conformed to the Jewish worship.

The writer passes unnoticed the silly arguments of some modern writers, who through the vanity of appearing well versed in the scriptures, which they never read, and which if they did they cannot understand, take from the writings of men of real science certain objections, which are proposed and solved by the authors
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for the sake of elucidation, and propose them to ignorant people as the fruits of their own deep researches. If men of science shewed a proper contempt of such scribblers, it might check their vanity, and though they themselves may be incurable, it might restrain others from imitating them; but when a man assuming the title of Prelate undertakes to give an answer, to a low, ignorant and scurrilous buffoon, it stamps a sort of respectability on the blockhead, feeds his vanity, and encourages him to continue. as

We are now to enquire whether the old law w of divine institution attested by miraculous works, that is, whether Moses and Joshua wrought miracles in confirmation of the truths, which they taught or not. It may not be amiss previously to examine the force of these motives of credibility, on which opinions are founded, and also these motives, which extort the assent of the understanding.

The affections of the mind are known by the impression, which results from them, and is absolutely inseparable from them: they are of two kinds: these which have no reference to external objects, as joy and sadness, these are, by logicians, called passions; and these, which have an immediate reference to some external object, and are conveyed to the mind through the organs of sense, as the impression of sounds, of colours, &c. these are called sensations. These latter infallibly attest the state of the mind, but the judgment, which is formed of the external object, in consequence of the impression on the mind, may be false. Thus, though a man at a distance may mistake a sheep for a dog, he cannot mistake that the object has made an impression on his mind; the mistake lies in attributing the impression to a dog which is an imaginary object, not to the sheep which is the real object.

Truth in general consists in the agreement of the attribute

tribute of any proposition with its subject. Thus, in this proposition, "*man is mortal,*" the idea of mortality, the attribute of the proposition, is perfectly consistent with the idea of man, which is the subject of the proposition; and of course falsehood, which is the negation of truth, is manifest from the disagreement of these ideas. Thus, this proposition, "*a man is a horse,*" is manifestly false, because the idea of a horse does not coincide with that of a man. Evidence consists in a clear perception of the agreement of these ideas. That proposition is evidently true, in which the idea of the attribute is clearly perceived to be consistent with the idea of the subject. As this proposition, "*God is immortal.*" And that proposition is evidently false, in which the idea of the subject excludes that of the attribute, as this proposition "*God is mortal,*" hence all judgments founded on evidence are infallibly true; errors are founded, not on evidence, but on the supposition of evidence: thus a man thinks a proposition evidently true though he has not a clear perception of the subject or attribute of the proposition and consequently cannot determine whether they agree or disagree, the assertion may be true, but made by him it is a mere conjectural opinion.

There are many truths, which, though not founded on evidence, are evidently credible. Thus for example, "*London is a capital city.*" The proposition is not evident, but it is evidently credible because it is founded on the testimony of many witnesses. Truths like this, which are founded on the testimony of man, are said to have moral evidence.

Truths founded on the mechanical laws, by which the material world is governed, are said to have physical evidence, thus, by the law of gravitation, a stone, if not supported, will fall towards the attracting centre. From the interference of either visible, or invisible agents, temporary suspensions of some mechanical laws may be effected. That

That there are bodies, and many in the material world, though not evident, is evidently credible : no man ever seriously disbelieved it : the arguments offered by some writers against the existence of bodies, only argue the vanity of the men, affecting to acquire fame by the singularity of their opinions. All men naturally believe that there are bodies, this judgment is the natural effect of the impressions on their minds through the organs of sense ; and as God is the author of this impression, he is also the author of the judgment necessarily connected with it. To pretend that he is the author of falshood is blasphemy.

The certainty of any proposition depends on its connection with the motive, which induces a belief of the proposition : to put the proposition beyond all doubt, the motive, which induces the belief, must be infallible in itself, and manifestly connected with the proposition.

Propositions founded on evidence are said to be metaphysically certain.

Propositions founded on the mechanical laws are said to be physically certain.

And these depending on the testimony of man are said to be morally certain.

The intelligent world is subject to certain general laws, as the material world is, with this difference, that in the material world all the Beings, which compose it, are blind causes, and are of course determined to produce their effects by the prime mover ; their effects in similar circumstances are invariably the same ; they are said to be under a physical necessity ; intelligent causes have, within themselves, a power of determination, they do not at all times act according to the whole force of agency, or power of action, which they possess, as the former do, hence, though in similar circumstances they do not always produce similar effects ; yet there

there are certain general rules, which they invariably observe, in these cases they are said to be under a moral necessity. Thus, it is morally certain that a prudent sober man will not murder an only child; indeed it is morally certain, that he will not be guilty of murder at all; it is also morally certain that an upright Judge will not, at the loss of his reputation, pronounce a sentence manifestly contrary to law.

In particular cases physical and moral certainty are nearly of equal force: it is physically certain that water in a river will not revert against the current, there is a distant possibility of its being compelled by an invisible power, there is also a distant possibility of prudence and equity forsaking the upright Judge at that critical juncture, when he pronounces a sentence manifestly iniquitous. There is no probability of either; but the latter is more improbable than the former, because a momentary suspension of any mechanical law is not inconsistent with any attribute of the Divinity, whereas to concur directly or indirectly to iniquity is incompatible with sanctity. If then even in particular cases moral certainty be of greater force than physical, there are certain cases, in which the testimony of witnesses totally invalidates any arguments, which may be drawn from mechanical laws, and amounts to what logicians call a metaphysical certainty, which is absolutely incapable of falsehood. These are the cases in which the testimony of witnesses is indispensably necessary for the support of order and the establishment of religion, this testimony is founded on the laws of Providence, and is warranted by the wisdom and veracity of God, which can neither deceive nor be deceived.

That moral certainty is founded on the disposition of Providence is manifest from this, that society, of which God is the author, and governor, cannot subsist without it. By the testimony of witnesses we know
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our Magistrates, our superiors, our very parents are not otherwise known to us. All the different sciences are dependent on moral certainty. The mechanic, the chymist, the astronomer, the navigator, must rest his hopes on the testimony of others. There is no mathematical demonstration, to which the mind of man more firmly adheres, or more readily assents, than to this truth, dependent on the testimony of witnesses, that Quebec was taken from the French by Great-Britain. To deny this truth argues something more than stupidity, that is a perverse obstinacy of the will: hence to reject truths founded on moral evidence is more absurd, and inexcusable, than to deny mathematical demonstration; the latter may be the effect of mere stupidity, the former results from a depravity of heart.

Against a fact founded on moral evidence no metaphysical arguments are admissible. This is an axiom amongst Philosophers, because it is impossible that a fact should happen and not happen, and it is equally impossible that the fact should be morally certain if it did not happen, all reasoning to the contrary is useless. Moral evidence therefore cannot be invalidated by any arguments drawn from mechanical laws: a fact cannot be supported by moral evidence if it has not happened; and if it has, it is ridiculous to pretend any impossibility. To conclude that any fact is founded on moral certainty, we must enquire if the fact be possible: nothing can induce a wise man to assent to an impossibility; but if neither the possibility nor impossibility of the fact be manifest, from the testimony of man we must conclude the possibility; the suspicion of impossibility is not sufficient to invalidate moral evidence, it only argues the weakness of our understanding. The fact must be related by several witnesses, who were not themselves deceived

nor can any motive be assigned why they should combine or conspire to deceive others. The mere suspicion of a distant possibility of deception is no argument at all. Thus in every individual there is a possibility of deception. He may deceive or he may be deceived, thence to infer that a number of witnesses may be deceived is ridiculous. It is that fallacy which Logicians call a conclusion from a particular to a general sense. As if because a soldier is not able to storm a fort, an army could not do it.

If the fact be momentous, it must be connected with other public facts, and known monuments, admitted by those, who are inimical, or, if contradicted, the variety and futility of their opposition must be shewn; finally, if the fact be of ancient date, it must be transmitted by witnesses in regular succession from the very time the fact has happened, any fact vested with these conditions is incontrovertible. To contradict it argues an insuperable fund of impudence, and to attempt by reasoning to disabuse an ignorant or impudent scribbler is folly. Thus for example, a man who under pretence that ancient facts are not so certain now as they were formerly, would deny the existence of Julius Cæsar, or Alexander the Great, would deserve a place in Bedlam, not a serious refutation. Whilst the motives of credibility continue the same, the certainty is the same, and we at this day are as well assured of the existence of Julius Cæsar as we are of the existence of Bonaparte—on the credit of witnesses we know both the one and the other.

A fact vested with the conditions which have been already marked, must be founded in truth: it cannot be the work of man to deceive the world: no man has any such power, and it is inconsistent with the Divine nature to be the author of universal deception, or even to countenance it, which must be
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the case, if Providence did not furnish any means of detecting the deceit; it is true, the impression made by any fact is stronger on the mind of the spectator, than on any other person, but the conviction on his understanding is equal, the impression of terror, of joy, or any other passion, diminishes, but the conviction of the fact is unalterable, the impressions of terror excited by the cruelty of Nero is effaced, it no longer subsists; but that Nero was a sanguinary tyrant is universally believed and will until the end of time.

Besides these motives, which exclude a possibility of deception, there are many others on which opinions are reasonably founded. The testimony of a man of known probity, who has no motive to deceive, is sufficient to found a highly probable opinion of any fact. Even the opinions of men of real science, where prejudice does not interfere, have great weight, and if the opinions of many coincide, they form a strong probability of the truth of any assertion when the falsehood does not appear. In experimental philosophy and astronomy the opinions of great masters are sometimes assumed, as principles; nor is any man allowed to deviate from them without assigning sufficient reasons, the same practice is observed in courts of law: former decisions founded on the opinions of men of eminence, serve as precedents: the writer passes unnoticed these opinions, which the unlearned borrow from others without discussion, of which they are incapable. These rest solely on the authority of the first author. If they be inconsistent with the received opinions of the public, the presumption is against them, the proof lies on the author, if it appear that prejudice, passion, precipitation or interest, was the spring, or the author's inducement to contest the received opinions, the presumption against him amounts

mounts to positive proof. The credit given to such opinions is unwarrantable, and they who adhere to them are inexcusable.

All these judgments, which are founded on motives of probability are but opinions subject to discussion. Judgments founded on motives in themselves certain and manifestly connected with them, are not in the class of opinions, they exclude the possibility of deception, discussion may serve to illustrate but cannot invalidate them.

Having taking this cursory view of the motives which found our unerring judgments, and our opinions subject to error, the writer now proceeds to examine, whether we have motives of credibility sufficiently strong to support a reasonable and well-founded belief that the law of Moses was of Divine Authority; in other words did Moses authenticate his mission? Did he by miraculous works attest and demonstrate to the Children of Israel that he was sent by God? And have we sufficient reason to believe it? Miraculous works are known, as other facts are, by the testimony of their senses to these, who are present; and by the testimony of witnesses to all others. Thus for example, the resurrection of a dead man is known to these who are present by the testimony of their senses. They see the man dead, they feel him cold, they smell the cadaverous odour of putrefaction. The fact is unquestionable; again they see him, at the will of another, rise, they hear him speak, they feel him warm, they converse with him, they eat with him, this fact is equally incontrovertible as the former; that a man who was dead and lives again has been raised from the dead is absolutely certain; and that he could not be raised by any secondary cause, according to any mechanical law, is equally certain: for though Nature may produce life in a foetus pre-
disposed

disposed according to the established order, it cannot produce life in a dead body, in which every disposition to life is extinct, and which is tending to putrefaction. The miracle therefore may be considered as resulting from two facts, which are natural, and these facts must be known, as all others are, by testimony.

That Moses did exist; that he conducted the children of Israel from Egypt; that he taught the ceremonies and rites of the Jewish worship; that he assumed the whole tribe of Levi as ministers of religion, and confined the office of high Priest to Aaron and his posterity exclusively, are facts of public notoriety, which the whole Jewish nation at all times believed, and which they continue to believe, and which the whole Christian world believes; no fact either ancient or modern is better established. That he wrought the most stupendous prodigies in Egypt, and during the space of forty years in the wilderness, is believed in the same manner, a particular description of these prodigies is contained in the very books, which describe the rites and ceremonies of their religion, the public laws of the land, by which all judicial proceedings were determined, the authentic records of all their rights and possessions; these books were written and published at the very time in presence of an army of six hundred and fifty thousand fighting men, and an immense body of people, who were witnesses to these prodigies, without any contradiction or suspicion of deception; these books were then given to the public ministers of religion, and to all the Elders of Israel, with an express order, that on the seventh year at the great festival of the Tabernacles, when all the people were assembled, men, women, and children, they should be read in their hearing, "that," said Moses, Deut. 31, Chap. "hearing they

may learn and fear the Lord your God." And as it was impossible for Moses to impose on such a body of people, and persuade them to believe that they had seen all the prodigies which were wrought, if they had not seen them ; that they had seen the earth open and devour Cori, Dathan and Abiron, the fire issue from the Tabernacle and consume two hundred and fifty men, the accomplices of their crime, that they themselves had been forty years in the desert, that their cloaths were not worn, nor their shoes grown old ; that they did not eat bread nor drink wine nor beer: Deut. 29 Chap. 1 v. The immense number of copies given to the Levites and all the Elders with this order to have them read in presence of all the people on the seventh year precluded every possibility of deception and interpolation in future.

A dissertation on the miracles wrought by Moses, by Joshua, and the other Prophets, in defence of each in particular, is totally unnecessary : they all tend to the same end, that is, to establish the truths of revealed religion, to inspire sublime ideas of the God, whom we adore, and enforce obedience to his precepts. No contradiction, no discordance, though wrought at different periods of time, in different countries, and by different men, they have all the same tendency ; their coincidence forms a sort of proof against which impiety declaims in vain.

That some have been deceived is admitted ; that some impostors have supposed miracles intentionally to deceive others, is equally true ; but that of all the miracles related by Moses and the Prophets not one has been real ; that of all these Prophets so eminent for piety, not one has been sincere ; that all the witnesses who attested, and all the men of science who believed them, have been impostors or dupes is an assertion, which surpasses impudence, which no man would dare

dare to make, who has any remains, not simply of modesty, but even of common sense or common honesty; and if it be admitted that any one of these miracles was wrought, impiety falls defenceless: because it is impossible that God by an immediate effect of his Almighty Power should attest a falsehood.

But after all, says the Deist, if Pharaoh and the Egyptians saw the Prodigies wrought by Moses why did they not believe them? Why did they persist in refusing to permit the Children of Israel to depart?

The spirit of interest blinded them; the immense advantages, which they obtained from the labour and industry of a numerous people, which they could not prevail on themselves to renounce, whilst there was the most distant hope or even possibility of retaining them. This appears from the supplications and promises to Moses during the continuance of the public calamity, and their refusal to perform these promises as soon as the calamity ceased. "I have sinned," said Pharaoh, "even now, the Lord is just; I and my people are impious; pray to the Lord that the thunder and hail may cease," Exodus 9 Chap. 27 and 28 v. Yet after the cessation of that terrible plague, the spirit of interest inducing them to believe that it might have been some unusual accident he refused to dismiss them. However after the death of the first born, "Pharaoh calling Moses and Aaron at night, says, arise and depart from amongst my people, you and the Children of Israel; go and sacrifice to your God as you say and going bless me: the Egyptians pressed the people to depart quickly, saying, we shall all die." Chap. 12, v. 31, yet so great was the obstinacy of Pharaoh and his people, and such the blindness of understanding produced by the spirit of interest and desire of domination, that notwithstanding all the calamities they had endured, when they saw the Children

children of Israel on their way, to return no more, they regretted the permission which had been extorted from them. "The King of the Egyptians was told that the people fled, and Pharaoh's heart and the heart of his servants was changed, and they said: what have we done to dismiss the Children of Israel from serving us?" Exodus 14th Chap. 5th v.

The obstinacy of the Egyptians was not greater than that of our modern Deists, who, though they do not see these prodigies in themselves, as the Egyptians did, see them in their effects, with an additional prodigy, which the Egyptians did not see, a prodigy the more capable of convincing the understanding, as it is subject to no possible illusion, that is, the conversion of the world according to the express prediction of Jesus Christ, and the literal accomplishment of many other prophecies contained in the New Testament, and written at a time when every thing conspired to extinguish Christianity, when the doctrines of Christianity, and Christians themselves, were in public execration; if then the spirit of pride and infidelity, blinds the Deist so far as to induce him to refuse his assent to truths established beyond the possibility of doubt, by palpable evidence, manifest as the Sun at mid-day, why should it appear surprising, that the same spirit of infidelity, united to the spirit of interest, blinded the Egyptians.

To suppose that natural causes, acting according to mechanical laws, could produce the stupendous prodigies related in the book of Exodus, and other books of the old law, is ridiculous in the extreme. Moses lifts up the rod, which he held in his hand and immediately a scorching wind blows a whole day and night, and in the morning, the wind collects and brings with it locusts in such numbers that they covered the surface of the ground, destroying every thing

thing. Exodus 10. chap. Was the elevation of a rod a sufficient cause to produce such an effect? With the same facility, on Pharaoh's promise of obedience, a westerly wind is raised, collects all these locusts, and sweeps them into the Red Sea, not one remaining behind. Are the winds subject to man's command? Or how did the wind so carefully collect the locusts that not one was left behind? What natural cause can be assigned for the death of all the first born in Egypt? A pestilence makes no distinction between the first and second, or third. What cause inferior to omnipotence can be assigned for the waters in the Red Sea dividing and forming themselves like walls on both sides of the passage, through which the Children of Israel passed? It is well known that water and all other liquids form themselves to an horizontal level as far as the curvature of the earth permits. The simple narration of the sacred writer confounds all the different opinions which are offered by Deistical critics in order to invalidate, or at least to reduce the force of this miracle. The Israelites, says one, took advantage of an ebb tide, which was greatly increased by a strong wind, which continued all night; yes, but the wind did not blow the water out of the passage and form it like walls on both sides, that instead of diminishing would have increased the prodigy. "The Children of Israel," says the writer, "passed through the middle of the dry sea, and the water was as a wall both to the right hand and the left." Exodus, 14th Chap. 22 v.

They did not pass through the sea, says another, they only went a certain distance and then turned back to the same desert from which they had entered it. Moses says they passed through it; David thought so too, Ps. 104 and 113; and *St. Paul* believed it, and the Jews, to whom he addressed his epistle, did not

doubt it: "by faith they passed through the Red Sea as on dry land." Epist. to the Heb. Chap. 11. v. 29.

The absurdity of these opinions is such, that it is matter of surprize that the authors themselves, however ignorant they may be supposed, did not remark it; that they did not observe in contradicting the simple narration of the sacred writer they contradicted the principles of common sense: for to give the greatest possible weight to their opinions, let us suppose that the tide was greater than usual, that the ebb continued twelve or fourteen hours, or more, if they wish to have a miracle to support the absurdity of their reasoning; that the waters retired not three or four hundred, but twelve or fourteen hundred yards. Did the ebb continue long enough, and was the space sufficient, to give a passage out of the reach of Pharaoh and his army, to a body of six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty men, upwards of twenty years old, to all the women, children and old men, to all their flocks and their herds, and their baggage? "We will depart, said Moses, with our little ones and our old people, with our sons, and our daughters, with our sheep, and our herds." Exodus, 10 Chap. 9 v. And Pharaoh said, dismissing them: "take your sheep, and your herds, as you desired." 12 Chap. 32 v. Was Pharaoh and his people so ignorant as not to know that if the Children of Israel followed the tide, they must return to the same shore again? Was it not more simple to wait their return than to pursue them? If he had not seen an immense passage open and clear of incumbrances would he have entered it with his chariots? To give some colour of probability, or rather of possibility, to these opinions, let it be supposed, that the passage was effected near the northern extremity of the Red Sea,

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or, as it is now called, the Isthmus of Suez ; even in that extravagant supposition, both time and space would have been deficient, and Pharaoh most certainly would not have lost himself and his army in the pursuit : he might have passed on the Isthmus, and found them on the other side. Every supposition made in defence of these opinions, only serves to shew their absurdity, the ignorance and obstinacy of their authors. To pretend that Moses was an impostor ; that he prevailed on his people to believe that they had passed through the Red Sea, though no such thing had happened, is such an extravagant assertion that it deserves contempt, not a serious refutation.

It is said that the Children of Israel “ departing from Phthahiroth, passed through the middle of the Sea into the wilderness, and, walking three days through the wilderness of Etham, they pitched their camp in Mara.” Numbers 33 Chap. 8 v. And in the 6th verse of the same Chapter, as also Exodus 13 Chap. 20 v, it is said, “ that they passed from Socoth and pitched their camp in *Etham*, in the extremity of the wilderness :” hence it is inferred that they only went a certain distance into the Sea and returned to the same desert again. To this the writer replies that *Etham*, where they pitched their camp, signifies a particular place in the extremity of the wilderness, not the wilderness itself, if it be not thought that the whole be comprised within a part, an absurdity too gross even for the credulity of a Deist. On the opposite side, the whole of the wilderness is called *Etham*, not a particular spot of it. Add to this, that Moses says, in that very text, that they passed through the middle of the Sea, “ *Bethok ha jam ha midbarah*, into the wilderness, in the most expressive manner.

To give some colour of truth to this opinion it is said that the dead bodies of the Egyptians, which were
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seen by the Children of Israel on the shore, must have been brought back by the flood tide. The appearance of the dead bodies only serves to confirm Moses's relation; for as the Egyptians pursued the Children of Israel so closely, that they would have overtaken them, but for the interposition of the cloud, which prevented the junction, the van of the Egyptian army must have been close to the rear of the Israelites, during the whole passage, and consequently near the shore, on which they landed at the time of its destruction. This accounts for Pharaoh's rashness in the pursuit: the passage must have been immensely large and clear, perhaps the waters at such a distance, on each side, that he did not attend to them in the eagerness of the pursuit, or if he did, he must have concluded that a junction of the waters must involve the Israelites with his army in one common ruin: "it stood (the cloud) between the camps of the Egyptians and the camps of Israel so that the whole night they could not approach each other."

If Moses's description of this event be minutely discussed, it will appear extremely probable, that Pharaoh and his Egyptians did not know that they had entered on the bed of the sea: they arrived at Pharaoh's chariot, which is the point at which the Israelites crossed the sea, there the cloud rested between them and the fugitives, the cloud was dark on the Egyptian side, whilst it enlightened the night on the opposite side, the Egyptians naturally continued the pursuit of an immense multitude of people upon dry land without suspecting that they were on the bed of the sea, the pursuit continued the whole night long, at the morning watch their destruction commenced and the junction of the waters completed it.

However great this prodigy, it was not greater than that which we find in the book of Joshua, nor
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more violently contested by men, who, to free themselves from the restraints of religion, are disposed to swallow any absurdity rather than admit the truth. Joshua, by God's order, directs the Priests, who carried the Ark, to proceed to the brink of the River Jordan, and rest their feet in the water. Instantly the waters above were stopped and swelled as a mountain, and the waters below descended to the sea of the desert, or the Dead Sea; and "the people passed over against Jericho, whilst the Priests, who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord stood on dry land in the midst of Jordan. and the people passed on the dry bed of the river." Joshua Chap. 3, v. 17. Against this passage over the river Jordan under the conduct of Joshua no suppositions are admissible. A direct contradiction is full of absurdity: Joshua did not, nor could not impose on such a numerous body of people; by him the lands were parcelled out amongst the tribes; forty eight cities set apart for the Levites, which division continued to the destruction of the Jewish nation. The book of Joshua is the public register of the nation, contains the titles, on which their lands were held, describes their boundaries, never was book more authentic, and in no book of the Scriptures are there more astonishing prodigies recorded.

The destruction of the walls of Jericho by the sound of a trumpet, Jos. 6 Chap. 20 v. The suspension of the diurnal motion of the Earth and Moon, Jos. 10 Chap. 13 v. "And the Sun stood in the midst of the Heavens and did not hasten to set for the space of one day." 14th. "There was not before nor since a day so long, God obeying the voice of a man."

This last prodigy gave rise to many suppositions each inconsistent with the other, and all of them inconsistent with truth, which is to be found in the

now a-days believe that the Earth describes its orbit round the Sun as the centre of its motion, and they believe it on sufficient grounds ; they also know that the Earth, in its diurnal motion, turns round its own axis, exposing an entire hemisphere to that blaze of light, which the Sun emits continually, enjoys all the blessings of light on that hemisphere, whilst the opposite is involved in darkness ; they know that the Sun neither sets nor rises, but is said to rise when any point on the surface of the Earth comes to the light, and is said to set, when that point describes a semi-circle and is again immersed in darkness, yet all Astronomers say that the Sun rises and sets, that its daily motion is from the east to the west. Thus in fact is its apparent motion, being in an opposite sense to the real motion of the earth, which is from the west to the east. But this is the language which mankind understands, and if a man were to speak a different language he would not be understood.

The second reason given is frivolous. Though the Sun was not vertical to the Valley of Gabaon, it might have been in, or near, the circle, which was vertical to it, and that authorised Joshua to say it was over it, over and under are relative terms. The next reason is passed unnoticed, the author seems disposed to give advice to his Creator. As to the ensuing reason, it is true, the sacred writer says the prodigy is written in the *Book of the Just*, but he does not refer us to that book for the truth of his assertion. Whether that book was poetical or not, which is mere matter of surmise, there is no figurative expression in the book of Joshua, where this fact is recorded. That Joshua did not pray until after Sun Set because he ordered the Moon to stand over the Valley of Ajalon is a strange assertion. What has the author never seen the Sun and Moon above the horizon

zon at the same time? If Joshua had ordered the Moon to stand over the Valley of Gabaon with the Sun the observation would have been judicious, but that the Sun should be in the verticle over or near the Valley of Gabaon, and the Moon near the verticle of Ajalon is matter of surprize but to a man, who is unacquainted with their motions.

In his last observation he introduces a new sort of evidence, that is, the probability of inconvenience to one nation is sufficient to prove that a fact, which is publicly known, and authentically recorded by another nation has not happened. As to the inconvenience, to which the inhabitants of the other hemisphere were exposed, it was possible there might be some, but it was not injurious: if a man be deprived of that to which he has a strict right, the inconvenience he suffers is injurious and unjust; but if a man be deprived of that, which he holds from the mere bounty of another, however great the inconvenience, there is no injury, no injustice. The inconvenience complained of was not great, nor was there any derangement in the order of the Heavenly Bodies: a suspension of the diurnal motion of the Earth, whilst the annual motion continued the same, was all that was necessary to effect that stupendous prodigy. The motion of rotation about the axis of the Earth, which produces day and night, is unconnected with its influence on the other celestial bodies: it can at least neither increase nor diminish it.

From these words of Joshua, and similar expressions, in other parts of the Scripture, to infer that the Earth is immoveable, and that the Sun effects a revolution round it in twenty-four hours, is injudicious. These expressions signify no more than the apparent motion of the Sun, and the apparent immobility of the Earth, it is the language of science and of ignorance,

it is the language of all mankind, the sacred penmen must have spoken it, if they wished to be understood. We say now, as Solomon did, that the Sun rises and sets, that it comes to the meridian, &c. Eccl. 1st Chap. 5 v. In the preceding versè it is said, that the Earth stands for ever. This has no reference to the immobility of the Earth: it simply signifies that the Earth continues to exist, or subsists. *Hamadeth*. Though generations succeed each other.

The Pentateuch of all works the most simple, the most sublime, the most satisfactory, is by our modern Philosophers set in competition with the romantic tales of Sanchoniaton, a Phenician author, who lived, if at all, about two thousand years before the Christian æra, of which some fragments remain, thought to be supposed by Dodwell and Dupin, with the rhapsody of Zoroaster, a Persian tale writer, whom Iluet demonstrates to have been a fabulous personage; with an Indian work called *Hanscrit* or *Sanscrit*, of which they pretend to understand a few words; they might have added *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, if the work were not in the hands of children, and they are desirous of passing for men of profound learning; of some of these pretended works they give what, they call versions, the ravings of their own fancy, and cite manuscripts which do not exist but in their own imagination. From all this they conclude the immense antiquity given to the world by Egyptian and Chinese tales, to be well authenticated, and thence infer that Moses's account of the Creation is fabulous. A man of real science, would draw a contradictory inference, for having as we have already seen, the most incontestible evidence of the authenticity of the Pentateuch; he would conclude, without hesitation, that all accounts inconsistent with it were fabulous. Our modern critics are extraordinary men; in the most absurd

ſurd fables they ſee nothing but truth, and in ſimple truth they diſcover impoſſibilities; the vanity of the men is a glaſs, which diſtorts every object.

In the Book of Genesis, ſay they, there are many things which appear fabulous, the creation of the world in ſix days, which might have been done in an inſtant, the ſeduction of Eve by a ſerpent ſpeaking her language, the folly of Adam, the founder of the world, to think that by eating a fruit he ſhould become equal to God.

A man of ſenſe judges of facts by the authenticity of the book which relates them, he does not judge of the authenticity of the book, by the facts which it records; if we were to reject all the facts, of which we do not clearly conceive the reaſons, nine tenths of all hiſtories ſhould be at once ſuppreſſed.

Nothing obliged the Almighty God to create all the Beings which compoſe the Univerſe at the ſame inſtant; he yet continues to create, and will continue until the end of time, he thereby ſhews his independence on his creatures, and their total dependence on him. To enquire why he gives exiſtence to ſuch a man, at ſuch a point of time precisely, and not either before, or after, is impertinent: he is not obliged to give the man an exiſtence at any time: it is a matter of grace, not of right, when granted; this reaſoning is applicable to every Being, which contributes to compoſe the Univerſe.

That a woman's vanity may expoſe her to temptation is not matter of ſurpriſe; and that the organs of the ſerpent ſet in motion by ſo powerful an agent as the Demon, ſhould form articulate ſounds is not difficult to conceive. Adam did not think that eating the fruit would make him equal to God, he well knew the contrary. "Adam was not ſeduced." Epift. to Titus, 2. Chap. Nor did Eve expect an equality

equality but a similarity of knowledge: she was miserably deceived, as are her children, our modern Deists, whose vanity and curiosity resembles that of their mother.

Why did not Moses begin his recital with the ruin of the Angels? He did not write their history. The Jews in his time knew it; it was not necessary to inform them, he expressly forbid them to consult Evil Spirits, Deut. 18 Chap. 11 v. "There will not be amongst you a man to consult *Ob*," that is a Spirit speaking as through the navel, a Ventriloque.

The existence of these Evil Spirits was known to the Heathen world as to the Christian; the nature of the crime inductive of their perdition is known but by mere conjecture, the text of Isaias, which is applied by some to the chief of these rebel spirits, literally regards the King of Tyr. The whole text is strongly metaphorical. "I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the highest stars, I will sit in the mountain of the testament, in the sides of the north." Isaias, 14th Chap. 13 v. If this Evil Spirit, proud of his own excellence, pretended a sort of equality with, or rather independence on, his God, it is not more surprising than to hear the Atheist dispute even the existence of his God. It is for this reason that Job calls him "King over all the sons of pride." Job, 41 Chap. 25 v.

The pretended antiquity of the Chinese monarchy is offered by our modern Deists as totally subversive of Moses's account of the Creation, they may add the Babylonian annals, which give four hundred thousand years to their empire, and the Egyptian, which equal them in absurdity. The account given by Moses has every possible mark of authenticity, the Chinese, Babylonian and Egyptian annals are puerile fables. Mr. Goguet says, in his origin of laws, "that the astronomical

nomical observations, with which some have endeavoured to support the pretended antiquity of the Chinese are manifestly supposed, that some of their literati, though the Chinese in general have no idea of criticism, remarked it ; that it may be said with confidence that there is no credit whatsoever to be given to their history, previous to the year 206, before the Christian æra ; that until that time it is a tiffue of fables and contradictions, a monstrous chaos, out of which nothing, that is reasonable, or connected can be extracted." Such is the work, which in the idea of the Deist is sufficient to condemn the plain simple narrative of Moses.

" The Chinese historians," say the authors of the Universal History, " have applied in a ridiculous manner to the ancient state of their monarchy the confused notions transmitted to them by vague tradition concerning the creation of the world, the formation of man, the deluge, the institutions of arts, of all this they composed a monstrous system of history."

The reader may rest satisfied with the following specimen of the boasted history of the Chinese :

Toby was conceived by his mother in contact with a rainbow, his body was partly that of a serpent, and Chin-nung had the head of an ox. If the reader desires to know more of this remarkable history he must consult some modern Sciolist who is accustomed to swallow monstrous absurdities, the writer is not disposed to lavish time on nonsense.

The Chinese calculation of eclipses during the space of four thousand years is merely imaginary ; about a century and a half ago they were obliged to have recourse to the Mahometans for the calculation of their almanacks ; and in 1772, they were forced to call for some Jesuits to fill the tribunal of mathematics,

were covered with water, the whole earth was covered not successively but at the same time, and the waters were raised above the present surface of the Sea to the height of the highest mountains, the naturalist forgot to tell us how this immense quantity of water was disposed of, nor has he deigned to inform us how the human species, or land animals, which are not accustomed, at least in our times, to live in water, managed to subsist during them ages. It is true one of his admirers tells us that men were at that time fish, and that when the waters retiring they were left on dry land, their tails opened and became legs: we must thank this gentleman for the information he gives, whether we acknowledge a fish or a monkey for an ancestor is of little consequence. These are the teachers of the world! These are the men, whom nature has been endeavouring to form for millions of years, they now come at length to undeceive the world!

The Naturalist adds an observation, by way of proof, that the re-entering angles on one side of the mountains, are opposite to the salient angles on the other. This like the former is an effect of his imagination: in some places they are, in others they are not. There are many mountains insulated immensely distant from any other. Mountains and valleys formed as they are argue the wisdom and bounty of the Creator: mountains break the current of air—make the winds variable, which would without them, blow always in the same direction. In them are placed receptacles for waters, which the clouds convey to their summit, and when condensed, so that they become specifically heavier than air, fall in drops of rain, this rain collected into these receptacles, issue from the sides of the mountains through springs, which uniting in the valleys form rivulets, and there uniting form rivers, as the valleys are intended for conveying the

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the waters, their sinuosities are necessary to prevent the too great rapidity of the waters, which descending from the mountains with an accelerated velocity, if not broken in their course would ravage the country. Mountains were previous to the Deluge, they were then necessary as they are now. Perhaps the Flood may have formed some, or broken others, but in general from their necessity they must have entered into the plan of the Creation.

The Naturalist pretends that the sea has formed the mountains, though the Flood in his opinion could not, the Flood if we believe him had made no change in the surface of the earth. The assertion is rather bold: what, the sea rising fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, in the greatest possible agitation, made no change! St. Peter thought there was a total change. "The then World flooded with water perished the Heavens and Earth which now are."
 Epist. 2, Chap. 3, v. 6 and 7.

If, says the Naturalist, the surface of the earth had been dissolved by the Flood, the different substances, which compose it, ought to have been deposited by the waters when settled, descending according to their specific gravity, yet we see rocks of granite placed over sand and mud, and light substances deep in the earth, whilst the most weighty are found on the very surface. If this had been universally the case this difficulty would appear serious, but the contrary is true in general, the more heavy substances are found at the greatest depth. In so great a commotion a mathematical exactness was not observed, moreover these rocks, which are now found at the surface of the earth, immediately over lighter substances, were they rocks at that time? An immense rock never did swim in water. If these have been deposited they must have been then of a lighter nature, sand or slime,
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which in the course of time has been coagulated by the intervention of some fluid, or some other natural agent. Petrifications are not uncommon.

Banks of shells, which are frequently found far distant from the sea, evince the truth of the Flood; these shells are formed of a certain substance, which is not subject to decay, from the immense quantities found in some places the Naturalist infers that the sea must have rested longer than is consistent with Moses's account of the Flood. Here he offers mere conjecture as evidence against a well-known fact. Is it not possible that the waters of the Deluge might have been restrained in these valleys by some obstacle which time had removed? Incalculable quantities of shells are collected in a short time, and, what concludes evidently against the Naturalist, bones of animals have been found in countries where they do not breed, where they cannot live, the bones of elephants in Siberia, and in 1772 the bones of a rhinoceros were found there. It is well known that the elephant and rhinoceros are inhabitants of hot countries, that their bones must have been transported to Siberia by some such inundation as the flood; the waters which deposed their bones in Siberia must have taken them up in Africa or Asia, far south of Siberia. These animals are not inhabitants of the sea as the shell-fish of Touraine.

An English traveller, intending to extend the sphere of human knowledge, by his own experiments, found by examining the different layers emitted in the eruptions of Mount *Ætna*, that the world is at least fourteen thousand years old. There are, he says, to be seen in some places seven layers, or beds, one over the other, each covered with an excellent bed of soil, two thousand years are not more than sufficient to convert one of these layers into a good mould: Hence
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this mathematician infers there must have passed fourteen thousand years to convert these seven layers into earth. But if these layers are converted into mould, how did he find the seven yet entire, and a bed of earth between each layer and the next to it? It seems fourteen thousand years have not yet converted the first of the seven into mould, as this wonderful calculator found it entire, thus, instead of enlarging the science of mankind, he adds his mite to that immense stock of ignorance, and vanity, which we find in the writings of our modern travellers. Let us, however, suppose that this our traveller intended to say, that each bed of volcanic matter required two thousand years to cover it with vegetative earth, his observation would then coincide with the conjectures made by more intelligent men on the eruptions of Mount Vesuvius, the layers of volcanic matter say they, are found in some places to the number of six, with a bed of vegetative earth between the layers of volcanic matter, hence they infer that ages without number must have elapsed before this accumulation could have been formed. One of these travellers however relates a fact which totally destroys these conjectures. The city of Herculaneum, buried by an earthquake, is in some parts seventy feet, in others one hundred and twelve feet under the present surface of the earth. Between the surface of the earth and the city, or rather the ruins of this city, are several layers of volcanic matter, and between these layers are beds of vegetative earth. Our English traveller would have found many thousands of years in this phenomenon, yet we know that eighteen hundred years have not yet passed since Herculaneum was a flourishing city.

The vegetative earth is placed in a short time over the volcanic matter by many uniting causes: ashes, earth,

earth, dust and other substances, are emitted by the volcano, the rains wash down earth from the sides of the mountains, men and animals bring substances which are soon converted into earth, the industrious husbandman covers the most barren rock with vegetative mould. Thus simple facts confound the wild conjectures of wondering, and wonder-telling travellers.

But there are many extinguished volcanos found of which no writer speaks, these at least speak the remote antiquity of the world.

True, there are many found, and many more may be found if sought for in the wilds of America, of Africa and Asia, where no writer is to be found; phænomenons sometimes pass unnoticed even by good writers, and of the writings of many, who might have noticed them, some have fallen victims to the ravages of time.

There is no ancient fact more authentic than the Deluge: Moses describes it 856 years after it happened when the fact was fresh in the memory of man; when it was impossible for him to impose on the world; the Son of Sirach speaks of it as an undoubted fact, Eccl. 44th Chap. 18th and 19th v. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, Chap. 11. v. 7, ascribes Noah's preservation to his faith. The Saviour himself, Matthew 24 Chap. 38 and 39 v. compares his last coming to the time of Noah, when the flood destroyed mankind. The same is repeated in St. Luke, 17 Chap. 26 v. St. Peter, in his 1st Epist. 3 Chap. 20th v, says there were but eight souls saved in the Ark; and in his second Epist. Chap. 2, v. 5, he says that God did not spare the primitive world, that he saved Noah, eighth, the preacher of justice, and brought the Flood on the impious.

On this subject the Heathen writers agree with the sacred penmen: Berosus the Chaldean tells us that
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the Ark, near the end of the Deluge, stopped on a mountain of Armenia; this testimony is not offered as authentic, though cited by some writers. Berofus was cotemporary with Alexander the Great, Priest of the Temple of Belas, in Chaldea. Some fragments of his history remain in Josephus, the work itself is lost, and no loss to the world. The romance published in his name under the title of Antiquities, is a supposed piece. See Hist. des G. Hom. Nicolas, of Damascus, in the 96th book of his history, says that one man escaped in a vessel from the universal flood, and that the remains of the vessel were preserved a long time on a high mountain in Armenia; Abydenus, in his history of the ancient Medes and Assyrians, describes the Flood nearly as Moses did; Ovid, in his Metamorphoses, attempts a description of the Flood, which he intermixes with ridiculous fables, as he did every other event, which he describes, and Varro speaks of the time which elapsed from Adam's creation to the Flood, "from the commencement of mankind to the Flood; finally the Chinese say that a man whom they call Puencuus escaped with his family from the universal deluge. This agreement of sacred and profane writers, attesting the tradition of the world, is surely more than sufficient to authenticate a fact, in which the whole world was interested. It is not wild suppositions, and impertinent questions which invalidate public facts.

From the dimensions of the Ark, as described by Moses, it is not difficult to demonstrate that there was in it a sufficient space to contain the animals preserved from the Flood, together with the necessary provisions for the time they were enclosed.

It is also certain that there is a sufficient quantity of water to cover the highest mountains on the earth without any increase, which if necessary was easy to omnipotence.

omnipotence. It is well known to the judicious philosopher that there is an incalculable quantity of water suspended in the atmosphere, we see with what rapidity a high wind dries up small pools of water, because every layer of air, which comes in contact with the water, instantly absorbs a quantity of water, necessary to saturate that layer, and these layers succeed each other in proportion to the velocity of the wind: a quantity therefore necessary to saturate the whole atmosphere may remain suspended, if an extra quantity be raised it must again descend in rain, or, if condensed by cold, in snow or hail. Dissertations have been written by other men on this subject, and the most satisfactory solutions given to all the difficulties, which wild speculatists propose.

As to the existence of whole nations of giants and pygmies, they exist in the imagination of Atheists; some have been, and some few are, of an extraordinary size, and some others extremely little; but these do not form nations, nor are they of a different species, their ancestors are known. The term Gibor which has been translated by that of Giant signifies a powerful and violent man. They are numerous now as they were before the Flood; and now as then we call virtuous, pious men, the sons of light, the children of God; and vain, capricious, dissolute girls may well be called the daughters of men, marriage contracts between such characters, were censured by Moses, and the consequences marked in the similarity of manners between the children and their mothers. This we see every day. The children of God marrying the daughters of men gave rise to many ridiculous tales and wild conjectures. Ignorance finds mysteries where common sense can discern none.

Difficulties are stated by some pretenders to science
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against Moses's account from the different colours of the human species in different countries. These are as frivolous as the former. Difference in colour as in height, in strength, in activity, in understanding, is merely accidental, the human species, is, in all individuals essentially the same. The black man in Ethiopia, the copper-coloured savage in Canada, the white man in Europe, is the same man, tinged with the colour of the climate, in which he lives, his food and manner of living contribute to increase or diminish the effect of the climate. Some anatomists imagine that the pores in the scarf skin of the black, dilated by the burning heat of a vertical sun, absorb a greater quantity of light; others think that the effect is produced by the great porosity of the inner skin; and some think that there is a liquid substance between the scarf skin and the inner skin, which absorbs the light. It is manifest, without consulting optics, that any body which absorbs the light must appear black. A dissertation on this subject may be curious, but is totally useless: reason says that a black man and a white man, a big man and a little man, a lame man and a blind man, a fool and a knave, are men, individuals of the same species, differenced individually not specifically. A man and a horse are individuals of different species, differenced specifically, not individually. This may serve as a general answer to all the difficulties, which are founded on the difference of size, of colour, of wit, of strength, &c. of men in the same or in different climates.

We have now examined the most material difficulties stated by Atheists and Deists against Moses's account of the Creation, and shewn them to be frivolous in the extreme. That remote antiquity which they ascribe to the world, and all the marks of this antiquity are merely imaginary, the offspring of
 ignorance

ignorance and vanity : the discerning philosopher discovers the most sensible indications of the contrary : the late invention of many arts and sciences, the increasing population, yet leaving one half the world a wild and uncultivated desert, are stubborn truths which forced that infamously famous Atheist *Lucretius*, to acknowledge that the present world was not of remote antiquity. He thought that other Poets would have sung wars previous to that of Thebes or Troy, at least that some monuments of that remote antiquity would be found. It has also been shewn that Moses did attest his legation by miraculous powers ; that the prodigies recorded in his Books could not be supposed ; that the great number of authentic copies given by his order to all Elders and Levites, who were the ministers of the established worship, with express directions to have them read before all the people, at the great festival of the Tabernacles, precluded even a possibility of interpolation. It is therefore certain that the truths contained in these books are divinely revealed, or else that God by an act of his almighty power has attested a falsehood, a blasphemy so impious, so daring, that even the Deist, impious as he is, dare not assert it.

We shall now proceed to state a second proof, as yet more forcible, of the authenticity of the Scriptures, that is, the prophecies contained in them, which were neither supposed nor inserted after the accomplishment, and of the accomplishment of which there is the most incontrovertible evidence.

We have already remarked that contingent events depending on the concurrence of innumerable causes possessing a power of self-determination, are not within the reach of limited intelligence ; to foresee and foretell such events with the utmost certainty is the exclusive prerogative of the Divinity. Conjectural powers

powers increase in proportion to the sagacity of the intelligence; but all conjectures in respect to contingent events are uncertain. There is but God only, whose sagacity is infinite, and who of course pronounces with unerring certainty. That there are many such events foreseen, and foretold, and of the accomplishment of which there can be no doubt, is manifest to every man, who reads the Scriptures.

Thus that Noah foresaw the Deluge is evident from his building the Ark and preparing for it; that the patriarch Jacob foresaw that Ephraim the younger son of Joseph would give his name to one of the Tribes, and to a more numerous Tribe than his elder brother Manasses, is equally certain from his announcing it when they were children, of this event the whole Jewish nation are witnesses; that Joseph foresaw that seven years of famine would succeed seven years of abundance is incontrovertible, from his being taken out of a prison in a strange country—placed at the head of the State, and preparing for the famine in the abundant years, of this the Egyptians had, to the destruction of their empire, the most unequivocal proof, that is, a tax of one fifth of the produce imposed on all the lands, excluding all the lands appropriated to their Priests, who were fed from the King's granaries during the famine, and did not sell their lands to the Crown, as the other landholders did; he also foresaw that God would withdraw the descendants of his father from Egypt, and conduct them into the land which he had promised to their ancestors, or he would not have adjured them to take his bones with them.

Moses foresaw and foretold the many calamities of Egypt; the destruction of Pharaoh and his army: these were facts of the most public nature, to which both nations were witnesses; he foretold, Deut.

17th, that the Children of Israel would get possession of the land of Canaan, and in the course of time elect a King. Of this event there is no doubt; he foretold that they and their King would be carried into captivity, in consequence of their disobedience to the laws which he established. This also happened.

Joshua foretold that, the man, who would re-build Jericho, would be accursed, that he would lose his first born in laying the foundation and his youngest son in erecting the gates. Jos. 4th Chap. This event took place many ages after, when Hiel of Bethel re-built that city he lost Abiram his first born in laying the foundation, and Segub his youngest in placing the gates, "according to the word of God, by his servant Joshua," said the writer 3d Book of Kings, 16th Chap.

The writer passes unnoticed many other events which were foretold, and cites no fact but such as were of such public notoriety that not even the shadow of a doubt can fall on them, nor any thing, which has the appearance of a difficulty, be stated against them. In like manner in the Books of the Prophets are events foretold, against the accomplishment of which no objection can lie: Isaias, Chap. 5th, foretells the destruction of the Jews, and enumerates the crimes, which caused the calamity; Chap. 7th he foretold that the Kings of Syria and Israel would not take Jerufalem, and added that in sixty five years Ephraim would cease to be a people, which prophecy was fulfilled by Sennacherib sending a new colony to Samaria, 4th B. of Kings, 17th Chap. 24th v.

The destruction of Babylon by the Medes he foretold, and its devastation for ever, Chap. 13th, the ruin of Moab, Chap. 15th, the devastation of Tyre during the space of seventy years and its re-establishment after, Chap. 22d.

He told the King of Juda, Ezechias, that God had added fifteen years to his life, Chap. 38th, and he added, Chap. 39th; that all the treasures which he had shewn through vanity to the Babylonian ambassadors, would be carried into Babylon, and that some of his children would be eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon, though at that time Ezechias had no child, this was not the language of a flattering courtier. He foretold the success of Cyrus in his wars two hundred years before his birth, and named him, he also added that Cyrus would re-build the city and the temple, which were then in a flourishing state, Chap. 44th and 45th. The writer passes in silence all these prophecies against which the imagination of the Deist may offer the shadow of an argument and simply adduces these, of the event of which there can be no possible doubt.

Jeremias foretold many calamities which happened according to his word, and for which he suffered severely. The writer gives an instance, but one the most remarkable, Chap. 25th. He foretold that the inhabitants of Juda would be transported into Babylon, and serve the Babylonians during the space of seventy years, that at the expiration of these seventy years God would judge Babylon and that it would be destroyed for ever. "Behold (saith the Lord) I will send and assume the kindred of the north and Nebuchodonosor my servant on this land and on its inhabitants, and these nations shall serve the King of Babylon seventy years, and when these seventy years are expired I will visit on the King of Babylon, and on that nation, their iniquity, and on the land of the Chaldeans, and I will make them an everlasting solitude." Of the accomplishment of this prophecy there can be no doubt, the writer of the 4th Book of Kings gives a particular description of the event

event, 25th Chap. and the author of Chronicles concludes thus, v. 17th, "he brought on them the King of the Chaldeans and he transferred the treasures of the temple, of the King, and of the Princes, into Babylon, the enemy burned the House of God and destroyed the wall of Jerusalem if any man escaped the sword, he was carried into Babylon, and served the King and his sons until the King of Persia reigned until the seventy years were fulfilled in the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia he ordered to be proclaimed in his whole kingdom, even by writing, thus saith Cyrus, King of the Persians : the Lord God of Heaven gave me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he commanded me to build him a house in Jerusalem." fulfilling at the same time the prophecies of Isaias and Jeremias.

What shadow of objection can imagination suggest against the prophecies of Daniel ? The events, which he foretold were of the utmost importance to the whole civilized world. Chap. 2. he tells Nebuchodonosor the vision which he had forgotten, and all the events which were signified in it. Chap. 4th, he told the King the severe sentence which was passed against him, and the execution of which shortly after followed. Chap. 5th, he explained to Baltassar a more dreadful sentence, which was written in mysterious characters on the wall, announcing the death of that unfortunate prince, and the destruction of his empire the same night. Zenophon's account of that event agrees perfectly with the Prophet's. "Baltassar," says the Prophet made a great feast for his nobles, a thousand, and they drank each man according to his age they drank wine and praised their gods ; gold and silver, brass and iron, wood and stone, "when," said the historian, "Cyrus heard that there was a great festival in Babylon, and that all the Babylonians

Ionians drank and eat the whole night long, as soon as it was dark he opened the channels which were previously cut near to the river, and turned the water into the marsh Nictiris. Thus Babylon fell in a drunken fit. The accounts of both writers coincide, Chap. 8th, he relates a vision and explains it: "The ram is the King of the Medes and Persians, and the goat the King of the Greeks, the great horn between its eyes the first King (Alexander) and the four horns which rose when the first was broken four Kings of the same nation but not in his strength." Josephus the historian says that when Alexander saw this prophecy in which he himself was so clearly foretold, and his conquest of the Medes and Persians under the figure of the goat breaking the ram's two horns, and trampling on the body, he spared the city of Jerusalem, which he intended to have destroyed. And Chap. 11th, Daniel seems to write a history of succeeding Princes, and their wars, which the events have literally verified, his account is so minute, and correct, that some Heathen Philosophers pressed by the primitive Christians on the subject, finding it impossible to decline the force of Daniel's authority, pretended that the history had been supposed by the Christians, and written after the events had happened. However the Jews, who are pressed by Daniel's authority more forcibly than the Heathens, never accused the Christians of any supposition or interpolation.

The Prophet Ezekiel not only foretold events in the most simple manner, but his very actions were expressive of the events. Chap. 12th, v. 7, "I done," says the Prophet, "as God commanded me; I produced my vessels as a man going into captivity by day, and in the evening, I made an opening in the wall with my hand, and I went forth in the dark,
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and was carried on men's shoulders in their fight." 10th v, "say to them, thus saith the Lord God of Israel, this burden is on the Prince, who is in Jerufalem, and on the whole House of Israel, who is in the midst of them as I have done, so will be done to them; they will remove from their dwellings and go into captivity, and the Prince, who is in the midst of them, shall be carried on shoulders, he shall go forth in the dark, they shall dig through the wall to bring him out, his face shall be covered that he may not see the ground with his eyes, and I will spread my net over him and he shall be taken in my net, and I will bring him to Babylon into the land of the Chaldeans, and he shall not see it, and there he shall die." The Prophet is more explicit if possible, in the 17th Chap. he there assigns the reason why the King of Babylon would put out Sedecias's eyes, because he was to break his oath of fidelity. We know from the writer of Chronicles terminating his work that this prophecy was literally fulfilled. In the 29th Chap. is foretold the destruction of Egypt during the space of forty years, and after that time its re-establishment, but never in its former power or splendor. Of the truth of this prophecy we ourselves are witnesses. In the 35th Chap. he announces the perpetual destruction of the Idumœans, which happened accordingly.

A number of prophecies, against which no objection can be stated, are passed in silence, they all have the same tendency, that is, to authenticate the mission of the prophets, and enforce obedience to the law of God. In these Prophets we find men born at different periods during a space of many centuries, and in different countries, differing in their occupations, placed in the different ranges of life from the Prince on the throne, to the Shepherd in the field, yet no contradiction

dition in their writings, no inconsistency, a perfect coincidence in all, evidently shewing that the same spirit animated them all. Compare this agreement of the Prophets to the disputes, the dissentions, the contradictions of Philosophers ancient and modern ; silence, prejudice, passion and party spirit consult unbiassed reason, and it will tell you that the Prophets were directed by the spirit of truth, which is one and the same in all times, and places ; and the Philosophers under the influence of the spirit of error, which shifts with every wind.

From some texts in the Pentateuch, which appear to have been written after Moses's death, it was inferred that he was not the author of that work ; but if it be considered that Moses foretold many things which happened after his death, this difficulty vanishes ; he foresaw and foretold his death, and the manner of his death, why not his funeral ? It is true that Moses speaks of himself in the course of the work as of an indifferent person, and even says that he was the most meek of men ; it is not unusual for a writer to speak of himself in the third person : Cæsar gives us a specimen in his commentaries. As to the praise which Moses bestows on himself it was not from himself, but from the spirit of truth, which influenced and directed him, he in the same simple manner tells his infidelity at the waters of Meribah, and its consequent punishment death, before he entered the land of promise, which he so ardently desired. Never was book more authentic than the Pentateuch, nor author more certain than Moses : the whole Jewish nation attest it now, as they did at all times without a dissentient voice ; their different sects of Pharisees, and Saducees and Libertines, Jews and Samaritans, though disagreeing in every thing else, all agree in this.

All the books, which have been written posterior

to the Pentateuch ascribe it to Moses: God says to Joshua, 1. Ch. "take courage, and be very valiant to observe, and to fulfil the whole law, which my servant Moses has commanded thee let not the book of this law depart from thy mouth, and thou shalt meditate on it day and night, that thou mayest observe and do all things written in it. The law was therefore written before Joshua took the command of the Children of Israel, and Moses had delivered it. Four hundred and thirty eight years after, David immediately before his death says to his son Solomon, 3d. B. of K. Ch. 2. v. 3, "take courage, and be a man, that you may observe the observances of the Lord your God, that you may walk in his ways and keep his ceremonies, his precepts, his judgments, his testimonies as is written in the law of Moses." The writer of the 4th B. of K. Chap. 21, enumerating the crimes of Manasses, says, that "he placed an idol of the grove, which he had made in the temple of the Lord, of which the Lord had said to David and to Solomon his son, in this temple and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel I will put my name for ever; and I will not remove the foot of Israel from this land, which I gave to their fathers, only if they will observe to do all, which I have commanded them according to the law, which my servant Moses commanded them." The writer of the 2d. B. of Chronicles, speaking of the celebrated Passover, which was observed in Josias's reign, says that the ceremonies were observed "as is written in the book of Moses."

In the 1st Esdras, Chap. 3d, it is said, "that they (the Jews) built the Altar of the God of Israel, that they might offer *holocausts* upon it, as is written in the law of Moses, the man of God." It is useless to cite more: all the writers of the Old Testament as well

as all the writers of the New Testament ascribe the Pentateuch to Moses. The Heathen authors ascribe the Jewish religion to Moses as do the Jews themselves : Josephus against Appion, Book 1st, adduces proofs of the Jewish antiquity from the writings of Phenecians, Egyptians and Greeks ; and in his Antiquities of the Jews he establishes that truth beyond the possibility of doubt.

Justin, the martyr, in his exhortation to the Greeks, proves to them, from the writings of their ancestors, that Moses was far more ancient than their sages, their historians, their philosophers or legislators. No. 19, he says, these things, O Greeks, writers, strangers to our religion, have written concerning the antiquity of Moses, and they said that they had them from the Egyptian priests amongst whom Moses was born.

Tatian, in his oration against the Greeks, says, No. 26, " let Homer be present at the Trojan war, and let him have fought with Agamemnon, or let him, if any man desires it, have lived before letters are said to be found, it is yet manifest that Moses was many years prior to the destruction of Troy, as he flourished long before the building of that city, as witnesses of this truth I shall adduce Chaldeans, Phenecians and Egyptians. He proceeds to cite these authors, Nos. 36, 37, 38, and No. 41, shews that Moses is more ancient than all the writers known to us before Homer.

Theophilus, in his third book to Autolicus, No. 20 and 21, shews the antiquity of Moses from the writings of Manethon, a famous Egyptian priest, which were then extant, but are now lost. " Though," says Theophilus, " he tells many fabulous tales in favour of the Egyptians, and uttered blasphemies against Moses, and the Hebrews who followed him,

yet from his account it appears that they were nine hundred years before the Trojan war.

Origenes, in his memorable work against Celsus the Heathen philosopher, writes thus, B. 1, No. 16; "I wonder that Celsus, who ranks the Odryses, the Samothracians, the Hyperborean Clusini amongst the most wise, and ancient nations, does not deign to give the Jews a place either amongst wise, or ancient people, though there be many Egyptians, Phenicians and Greeks, who attest their antiquity. It would be useless to adduce these writers whom any person may see in Josephus' two books of the Antiquities of the Jews: there many are collected by the author, who give testimony of the antiquity of the Jews. The book of the younger Tatian against the Gentiles is in every body's hands; in it he, with great erudition, adduces the historians who attest the antiquity of Moses and the Jews. It is therefore certain that Celsus has no regard to truth, that he is influenced by a spiteful hatred to the Christian religion, which derives from the Jews." A man would imagine that this intelligent writer reasoned against a modern philosopher. There is however this difference between Celsus and our modern scribblers, that Celsus was deeply versed in all the sciences taught in the Heathen schools; and offered in defence of error the plausible reasons, which his imagination furnished; they on the contrary, ignorant in the extreme, are reduced to collect the fragments of his works which yet remain. These they obtrude on the uninformed as the fruits of their deep researches into antiquity.

Men of real science minutely discussing every expression of the Pentateuch, in order to remove that obscurity, in which events of remote antiquity must appear immersed to the generality of readers, have indirectly enabled our Sciolists to add to these fragments

ments some other seeming difficulties against the authenticity of that work : thus, for example, it is said in Deut. i. 1, " these are the words which Moses spoke to Israel beyond the Jordan." Hence it is inferred that this book was written by some person after the Israelites had passed the Jordan, but in the original text it is *Beheber* which signifies in the passage, or opposite the passage of Jordan, and the sense is determined by the context : the author immediately adds : " in the wilderness in the solitude opposite *Suph*, the Red Sea, between Pharan, and Thiophel, and Laban, and Chaforeth," that is in the wilderness where Moses had given his instructions to the ancestors of these men, to whom they were then repeated.

As the laws, which Moses recapitulated in the book of Deuteronomy and others, which he then subjoined, were to be read on every seventh year for succeeding generations, the sacred penman speaking of himself, might with great propriety have said, " these are the words, which Moses spoke beyond the Jordan," hence the translator was perfectly correct, though he did not give precisely the sense of the original text.

From this and similar expressions some thought Esdras author of the Pentateuch, though in his writings the contrary be manifest : it is said, 1st Efd. iii. 2, " Joshua the son of Josedee arose and his brethren the priests and they built an altar of the God of Israel to offer *holocausts* on it, as it is written in the law of Moses *Bethorath Moscheb*, and v. 18, they appointed Priests in their orders, and Levites in their turns over the works in Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses." The text says " as the book of Moses has written." *Cbi chatbab sepber Moscheb*. This order was given by Moses, Num. iii. and viii. In

In the 2d. of Efd. viii. we read: "the Scribes said to Efdras, bring the book of the law of Moses: *Lehabi eth Sepher Thorath Moscheb* And Efdras the Priest brought the law and they read in the book, in the law of the Lord, *Befepber Bithorath*, distinctly, and intelligibly. In the text *som sechel*, that is giving the sense of its contents. After the captivity, few if any of the people taken from Judea remained, their children born in Chaldea had corrupted the language of their ancestors; mixing it with Chaldaic terms, and phrases, they formed the Syriac language, which they continued to speak to the destruction of their Republic. The Hebrew text written by Moses many of them did not understand, Efdras explained it to them in the language which they understood, but left the written text as he found it. This appears evidently from the many Chaldaic words in the books written by Efdras, not one of which are to be found in the Pentateuch. It is probable that many copies of the Scripture were destroyed when the city and temple were consumed by fire, but there was an immense number of copies in the hands of the Prophets, Priests and Levites who escaped. It was ordered by Moses, Deut. XVII. that the King should transcribe the law from a copy attested genuine by the Priests of the Levitical Tribe. Their attestation was sufficient to authenticate the copy. Many copies must have been in their hands, nor were they confined to the Tribe of Levi: Moses gave copies to all the heads of families, Deut. XXXI. It is not in the nature of things that so many copies, and authentic transcripts, of a book, which contained the public records of the nation, determined the rites and ceremonies of the national religion, should have perished.

Names of cities grown obsolete might have been changed with great propriety, though of this we have

have no certainty ; the names now in the text might have pre-existed : thus it is said in Gen. XIV. 14, " Abraham pursued them (the men who had taken Lot) as far as *Dan*." It would appear from Jud. XVIII. that, this city, in Moses's time called *Lais*, received the name of *Dan* from the 600 men of that Tribe, who robbed Micha of his idol. If Moses had written *Lais*, *Dan* might have been substituted in after times without any inconvenience. It is more probable that Moses spoke not of the city but of the fountain called *Dan* : we know from Josephus, Lib. 1 Cap. 10. de Ant, that the Jordan took its name from two fountains the one called *Jor* the other *Dan*. Moses adds, *ibid.* " that Abraham overcame them, and pursued them as far as Chobah to the left of Damascus, which place is near the sources of the Jordan."

In like manner, Hebron which is frequently mentioned in the Pentateuch, is thought to have received its name from *Hebron*, son to Caleb after Moses's death, it had been called of old *Cariath Arbe*, Joshua XIV. It is plain from the context that it was called Hebron before Caleb's son possessed it ; it was not from him therefore that it took the name, but from some chieftain of the Canaanites. Joshua marks that it was called originally *Cariath Arbe*, which might have been long before Moses, as the city was built seven years before *Tanis*, the most ancient city in Egypt, Num. XIII. 23.

An expression, not uncommon in Scripture, *the name continues to the present day*, seems to indicate a great lapse of time between the event and the relation of it, yet we find it in St. Matthew who wrote shortly after the events, which he relates : " for this the field was called *Haceldama* the field of blood to the present day, XXVII. -8. And XXVIII. 15, " this

was divulged among the Jews to the present day." In the same manner Moses had said, Deut. III. 14, that the possessions of Jair, son of Manasses, were called *Havoth Jair*, that is the villages of Jair, *to the present day*, thereby signifying that no change had taken place in the name during the lapse of some years previous to his writing.

Other expressions are found in the Pentateuch, which seem to indicate that the writer had lived after the expulsion of the Canaanites: thus it is said, Gen. XII. 6, "Abraham passed over the land to the place of Sechem. The Canaanite was then in the land." And XIII. 7, "the Canaanite and Pherizite were then in the land." The writer if properly understood says simply that they were then established in that country, as *Josheb Baarets*, he neither says nor insinuates that they had been expelled; he indirectly shews the Patriarch's faith and confidence in God, who ventured to sojourn amongst a wicked people, from whose enormity and rapacity he had every thing to fear.

Facts are related in the Pentateuch, which are thought to have happened after the death of Moses, hence it is inferred by some Sciolists that he was not the author, thus we read, Gen. XXXVI. "These are the Kings who reigned in Edom before the children of Israel had a King." And in the XVI. of Exodus, "the Children of Israel eat manna 40 years until they came to the habitable land. They were supported by this food until they came to the borders of Canaan; we know from Joshua, V. 12, that the manna did not cease until after the death of Moses, in the V. 12. of Deut. it is said, "the Horrei dwelt in Seir, whom the Children of Esau expelled, and destroyed and dwelt there, as Israel did in the land of their possession." It is true many facts and events are related by Moses, which happened

happened after his death, the natural inference is that he was divinely inspired: for there is but the prescience of God, which extends to distant events depending on contingencies. Moses therefore might have related the events adduced though taking effect after his death with the same certainty that he did many others at more distant periods, he foretold that the people of Israel after taking possession of the promised land would constitute a King to reign over themselves, and then prescribed his duties, Deut. XVII. that they and their King would be carried into captivity, Deut. XXVIII. that there would be a certain place chosen by God for the building of his temple, in which he orders them to offer their sacrifices not elsewhere, Deut. XII. he also charged them to exterminate Amalick when God would give them rest in the country, which he would subject to them, this order was executed by Saul and David. It is not unusual with the Prophets to speak of events, which they know will infallibly happen, as already past. Hence Moses might have related events, which he knew to be at hand, as if they had already happened. Thus he relates his death, the manner of his death, and the circumstances attending it. In the same manner he might have related the events adduced, though it is probable that some of them happened before his death: from the death of Isaac when Esau took possession of Edom to Moses's appointment to the supreme command of Israel, two hundred and thirty six years had elapsed, in that time eight Kings might have reigned in Edom, and eleven Chieftains in different departments. That Moses was King in Israel is manifest not only from his exercising regal authority, but because he is expressly called *King* in the XXXIII. 5. of Deut.

va jahi bejishboovour melek.

Long before his death the Children of Israel, had
taken

taken possession of the kingdoms of Og and Sehon. Moses had said, Deut. III. 12, 13, "at that time we passed the land from Aroer, which is on the bank of the brook Arnon, to the middle of the mountain of Galaad, these cities I gave to Reuben and Gad; the remainder of Galaad, and all Basan of the kingdom of Og, I gave to the half tribe of Manasse." He might therefore have said that the Children of Israel had expelled the former possessors of that land, as the children of Esau had expelled the Horrei from Seir.

Joseph in prison had said to Pharaoh's cup bearer that he was brought clandestinely from the land of the Hebrews, Gen. XL. This shadow is seized by our philosophists: the land, say they, belonged to the Canaanites, it was called the land of Canaan. This is true of the country at large, but the Hebrews possessed a part: Abraham's descendants were then numerous from the lands which they possessed. Joseph had been stolen. Add to this that Joseph well knew that whole country had been promised to the Hebrews by God the Sovereign Disposer of all countries. He therefore justly called it the land of the Hebrews.

There are in the Pentateuch expressions obscure in themselves, which are easily distorted from the intended signification. They have been minutely discussed, and all seeming inconsistencies satisfactorily reconciled, by men the most intelligent, and of the most profound erudition, a Tostat, a Calmet, &c.

The malignity of a Celsus, of an apostate Julian, had recourse to the fables of a Manethon, of a Cheremon; a man is surprised to hear Tacitus assert that the object of the Jewish worship was an ass's head, this tale he borrowed from Appion's furious declamation against the Jews, who refused to erect statues to Caligula, or to swear by his name. All these
fables

fables have been solidly refuted by Josephus, in his books against Appion, by Origines against Celsus, by Cyril against Julian the apostate, and other early writers. It was reserved for modern Sceptics to collect all the fragments of Heathen impiety from these works, in which they have been refuted, and to add all, that restless imagination can suggest in order to diminish, if possible, the force of that Divine revelation, which denouncing vengeance against sensuality and vanity, the Philosophist's idols, fills him with terrors and anxiety in this life, and devotes him to excruciating torments in the next.

A man, famous in the annals of modern philosophy, writing to a brother Atheist, wishes him sleep and a good appetite, the only Gods, said he, which I adore. His Divinities were ungrateful: restless ambition, and its consequent cares, and fatigues, had banished sleep from his wearied eyes, and satiety had depraved and ruined his voracious appetite, so true it is that the impious man is always the victim of his crimes: "*persecutionem passi ab ipsis factis suis.*"

The five books of the Pentateuch are perfectly correspondent, a partial interpolation in one, would have introduced an inconsistency with the others, and a total change was impossible. Why so? Because in these books the religious rites and ceremonies of the Jewish people, and their civil polity were defined, and the miracles recorded in them were commemorated by solemn festivals; their deliverance from Egypt, by the festival of Easter, or, as they called it, the *Pass over*, because the exterminating Angel, seeing the blood of the Paschal Lamb, passed over the houses of the Israelites, whilst he slew the first born in every house in Egypt, a pestilence makes no distinction between the first born, and the second or third. Hence the offering of the first born in the Temple, and the

assumption of the whole tribe of Levi in place of all the first born then in being. By what possibility could this whole tribe have been selected for the service of the tabernacle and the temple, and continue in that service until the total destruction of the Jewish republic, in commemoration of this miracle, if no such prodigy had been effected? In like manner the promulgation of the law on Mount Sinai was commemorated by the solemnity of Pentecost; and the Jews were taught to remember that their ancestors lived in tents, by the Feast of Tabernacles. All the books of the Old Testament pre-suppose the law of Moses, refer to it, teach the same morality, which is contained in it, though written in different ages there is a perfect coincidence. Copies of the Pentateuch were given to all heads of families, Deut. XXXI. They were ordered to meditate on the law, and instruct their children in it, Deut. VI. It is cited in a special manner by Josua I. III. XXIII. in the 3 Kings II. in the 4 Kings, XIV. XXIII. Esdras, VIII. Eccl. XXIV. and elsewhere, such was the zeal of the Jews in defence of this law, that they sacrificed life itself rather than renounce it: read the history of the Maccabees: we know with what relentless fury they persecuted the Christians, who first taught that the ceremonial part of the law was abrogated, no change therefore or interpolation was possible during the Jewish dispensation; after the establishment of christianity, if the Jews intended to interpolate or falsify, the Christians would not permit them.

Moses after he had given copies of the law to the priests and to all the heads of families, and ordered it to be read for the people every seventh year at the festival of Tabernacles, directed the Levites to deposit the original in the side of the Ark of the covenant, "it will, said he, be there a witness against you, *haja*
sham

šam leēd beka, Deut. XXXI. This original *by the hand of Moses*, 2 Par. XXXIV. 14, which probably was concealed from the fury of Manasses and Amon in some recess of the temple, was found by Helkias the high priest in the reign of Josias, 4 Kings, XXII, that Prince amazed and terrified ordered Helkias and others to inquire of the Lord by some Prophet, if the calamities denounced against the disobedience of the Jews in the law were then impending. It was answered by Hoida the prophets in the affirmative, *ibid.* From the amazement and terror of this pious Prince, it is inferred by some, that the law had been then forgotten, not reflecting that these calamities were at all times known to be denounced against disobedience, yet caused no apprehension until the appearance of that original by the hand of Moses, which was deposited as a witness against them, from which it was very natural to conclude that the threatened evils were then at hand. Josias had an additional motive to fear the impending calamities: his father Amon, and his grand father Manasses, had publicly professed idolatry, had erected altars to the heathen deities in the temple, and had filled the city with the blood of the faithful who steadily adhered to the law, 4 Kings XXI.

To imagine that, because this original in the hand-writing of Moses was concealed during the turbulent reigns of Manasses and Amon, the numberless copies and authentic transcripts in the hands of the Priests, of the Prophets, of the heads of families in the different cities and towns of Judea, were all destroyed, is a mere groundless conjecture. We know that Josias was himself instructed in the law before he saw this original: it is said of him, 2 Par. XXXIV. That in the eighth year of his reign, the sixteenth of his age, he began to seek the God of his father David,
and

and the writer of the 4th of Kings, says, XXII. That he walked in all the ways of his father David, he declined neither to the right nor the left," He must have been well instructed in that law, which he so scrupulously observed from the 8th year of his reign to the 18th when the autograph of Moses was found in the temple, *ibid.*

It is said of Joas, that, at his inauguration, the *testimony*, that is, the Book of the Law, was put into his hands when he was anointed by the High Priest Joiada, 4. K. XI. 13. This ceremony must have been observed at the inauguration of all their Kings, as it was expressly commanded, Deut. XVII. By this law the King was obliged to transcribe the whole of Deuteronomy from a copy delivered to him by the High Priest, though some of their Kings may well be supposed not to comply with the precept, the greater number did, hence the law could not be forgotten in the court, much less in the temple, and the public schools, where it was diligently taught and explained by the Jewish Priests and Doctors. During the long reign of Ezechias the law was strictly observed, and though his immediate successor Manasses, in the early part of his reign, had introduced idols into the temple, and persecuted the faithful, yet after his captivity he removed them, and steadily persevered in the observance of the law to his death, 2. Par. XXXIII. His successor Amon reigned but two years, during which time, however well disposed, he could not obliterate the law. Josias's reign was long. From his death to the invasion of Nabuchonosor but four years elapsed; this short space, and the whole time of the captivity, which followed, was celebrated by the writings and instructions of the great Prophets Jeremias, Ezechiel, Daniel, Habaccuc, &c. who not only observed the law of Moses, and preserved that, and the writings of former

former prophets, but added to them the books which bear their names.

Daniel was yet living when Cyrus took possession of Babylon, Dan. V. Who in the first year of his reign sent Zorobabel son of Salathiel, and Josua the son of Josedee, the high priest, with all the Priests, Levites and others, who were desirous of returning to Jerusalem, in order to build the temple. That these were well versed in the law we know from, 1 Efd. III. 2, where it is said, "and Josua the son of Josedee, and his brethren the Priests, stood up, and Zorababel son of Salathiel and his brethren, and they built an altar of the God of Israel, to offer on it *holocausts*, as is written in the law of Moses the man of God." That the records of the nation were regularly kept is plain from this, that some, who ascended could not prove their descent; and that the sons of the Priests, that is the children of Hobai, who could not produce the record of their geneology were dismissed from the Priesthood: "They sought the writing of their geneology, and did not find it, and were rejected from the Priesthood." 1 Efd. II. 62. If the registry of births and marriages was kept, it is a wild conjecture to think that the book of the law, the public record of the whole nation, was lost, or that the scriptures, in the hands of both Priests and Prophets, were destroyed.

In Zorobabel's time we find the Prophets Aggeus and Zacharias instructing and encouraging the people. These men did not lose sight of the law, nor did they permit the prophetic writings of their predecessors to be forgotten, destroyed or interpolated; shortly after Esdras was appointed to conduct the Jews. He was thought by some good men, deceived by rabbinical fables, to have reinstated the whole of the Scriptures; there might have been inaccuracies in
different

different copies through the neglect, inadvertence or ignorance of transcribers, which he corrected; and he is thought, upon good grounds, to have substituted the Chaldaic to the primitive Hebrew characters, in order to break the intercourse between the Jews and Samaritans, who always retained the old Hebrew character in the Pentateuch, the only part of the Scriptures in their hands; but the Scriptures were in the hands of the Priests, the natural guardians, and keepers of right of these public records before his time, in his time, and after it, and they will continue in the hands of their successors in office, until the end of time.

The authenticity of the *Old Law* received additional force from the *New*: the latter being the completion and perfection of the former. All the Mosaic rites and ceremonies were figurative of the Christian dispensation. It was promised by all the Prophets, the most remarkable event, immediately preceding the establishment announced by the patriarch Jacob, Gen. XLI. 10. The time determined by Daniel, IX. 24. The institution, therefore, literally verifying these prophecies, shews them to have been divinely inspired, it is therefore more than sufficient to silence impiety, if impiety, the result of ignorance, vanity and sensuality, could be silent.

The revelation contained in the books of the New Testament, if considered attentively, and dispassionately, will appear of divine original. The simplicity of its style invites and charms, whilst the sublimity of its truths, the perfection of its maxims, the obscurity of its mysteries, astonish the true Philosopher; it intelligibly instructs him in all his duties, whilst it teaches him to captivate his understanding, and fix the inconstancy of his will; it shews him the necessity of confining his reason to objects within his sphere, and

and the danger of launching out into the regions of imagination in pursuit of discoveries, which reason cannot make.

In this revelation the Philosopher finds, and the child with equal certainty and ease, that God is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible : all things were made by him, John i. that he alone possesses immortality from the necessity of his nature, that to the created intelligence he is incomprehensible : “ who alone possesses immortality and dwells in inaccessible light,” 1st. Tim. VI. 16 ; that his power and divinity is eternal, Rom. i. 20 ; that he is perfectly immutable in his decrees as in his nature : with whom there is no change nor shadow of vicissitude, James i. 17 ; that he is perfectly free and totally independent on his creatures : “ who was his counsellor ? Or who hath given to him previously, and a recompence shall be made ? From him, and by him, and to him are all things,” Rom. XI. 35, 36. That as first beginning and last end he is also the Sovereign Arbiter of all his creatures, disposing of them according to his will : “ who worketh all things according to the counsel of his will, Eph. i. 11 ; that his providence superintends and directs the universe, so that nothing can happen without his immediate direction : a sparrow is not forgotten by him, Luke xii. 6. He feeds the birds of the air, *ibid.* Not one of them falls to the ground but by his order, Matt. x. 29. The hairs of our heads are numbered by him, and under his inspection, *ibid.* ; that he alone is possessed of immensity : “ in him we live, and are moved, and exist,” Acts XVII. 28 ; that his mercy knows no bounds ; hence the Apostle calls him Father of Mercies, 2. Cor. i. 3 : “ be you merciful as your father is merciful,” Luke vi. 3, 6 : “ for the Lord is merciful and compassionate,” James v. 11 ; “ that he

is just and true in all his ways : " thy ways are just and true, King of Ages," Rev. XV. 3 ; that he is the avenger of crimes : " vengeance is mine and I will repay," Rom. XII. 19 : " the Lord knows how to deliver the godly from temptation, but to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be tormented," 2d Pet. ii. 9, in a word, that he is possessed of all perfection. This revelation after having given the most sublime idea of God, which the mind can conceive, states man's original dignity, and destination ; then adds the source of all the calamities, to which he is subject in his fallen state ; the prevarication of our first parents : " by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death," Rom. v. 12, hence ; that innumerable train of consequent evils, which terminate in that greatest of all evils death. Thus the unlearned find, what the Heathen Philosophers sought in vain, the cause of that violent inclination to sensible objects, the emptiness and vanity of which, though known to the Heathens was not sufficient to check the ardour of their wild pursuits. In this, however, they were more excusable than their successors, our modern Sciolists, of whom it cannot be said that they did not know, but that perverse obstinacy, and unbridled sensuality has effaced from their minds a truth which they must have known.

If it be necessary to know the source of our woes, it is of yet greater consequence to know the remedy ; in this revelation we find it ; the boundless mercy, and inexpressible goodness of God, has given us a Redeemer, who at the expence of his blood has reconciled us. From this revelation we know that his satisfaction was full and sufficient ; that when applied to us by faith, and the sacraments of his institution, it perfectly reinstates us ; that we may have recourse to it, if necessary, more than once in the course

course of life. From this revelation we know the homage which God exacts : “ God is a Spirit, and they who adore him must adore him in spirit and truth,” John IV. 24. “ Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind,” Luke X. 27,” that is, in two words : thou shalt love the Lord thy God sincerely, and in preference to every thing which is not God. Though this precept, which radically includes all other precepts, be extremely difficult, yet the reason is irresistible, and the precept is indispensable on the principles of reason : our love to any object ought to be proportioned to the goodness of the object in itself, and our gratitude proportioned to favours received. God is in himself the source of all goodness ; from him, and at his will, we hold all, that we possess, our existence, and its continuance ; to him, therefore, we owe the homage of our souls and bodies, of our understanding, our will, of all that we possess. To our obedience he promises a reward great beyond measure : that is, the light of glory, which will shew us truth in itself, goodness and beauty in its source ; against disobedience this revelation denounces the most terrific sentence, that is an eternal exclusion from this light of glory accompanied with other torments proportioned to the number and enormity of transgressions. “ That you may be judged worthy of the kingdom of God, for which also you suffer ; seeing it is just with God to repay affliction to those, who oppress you, and to you, who are oppressed relaxation with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with the Angels of his power in a flame of fire, giving punishment to those, who know not God, and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,

who shall suffer eternal pains in destruction from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2. Thess. I. 5. and seq.

To create man's confidence, it represents this our God so great, so powerful, so rich in mercy, as an indulgent father : our father who art in Heaven, Matt. vi. 9. "see the grace which the father has given us, that we should be called the children of God.....we are now the children of God," 1 John. iii. 1, 2.

To engage us to have recourse to him, it promises that whatever we ask conducing to our welfare, now and hereafter, he will grant it, "whatever you ask the father in my name, that will I do," John xiv, 13.

To prevent despair when passion overpowers, or the tempter seduces, it promises pardon to sincere repentance, nor does it confine this grace to any limited number of transgressions, or to any limited number of times, "whose sins you forgive they are forgiven," John xx. 23.

The incertainty of the term of accompt, is proposed as a check to presumption : "Be you then also ready, for at what hour you think not the son of man will come," Luke xii. 40.

In this revelation we find all the perfections which human reason, neither warped by prejudice, nor clouded by passion, may discover, and others to which reason unassisted by a superior light cannot extend, we find all the duties which these perfections impose, and also all the relative duties, which man's place in the creation, and his original destination, assign him. As a child of God and heir to his Kingdom, he is ordered to persist in the exercise of all these virtues, which adorn the soul, and give it a distant resemblance to its heavenly father, universal benevolence without distinction of friends or enemies : "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," Matt. xix. 19 ;

" Love

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who calumniate you...and you shall be the children of the most high, for he is beneficent to the unthankful and to the wicked,” Luke vi. 33...Mercy: “Be you merciful because your father is merciful,” 36. Humility and meekness: “Learn from me for I am meek and humble of heart,” Matt. xi. 29.

In this quality of child of God sanctity is strictly enjoined, which excludes every possible vice: “seek peace with all men, and sanctification, without which no man will see God,” Heb. xii. 14. Chastity is in a particular manner enjoined: “the opposite vice being from its nature incompatible with sanctity excludes from the inheritance of the children of God,” 1. Cor. vi.

In this revelation man is taught his absolute, and relative duties, in every situation of life; as a prince, as a subject, as a magistrate, a citizen, as a father, a husband, as a free man, a bondman; every age, every sex, every range of life, find in it rules of conduct, which extort the approbation of impiety. It is true our sciolists complain of the rigid severity of its maxims; highway-men complain of the severity of the laws. The laws, which proportion punishments to the atrocity of crimes are not the less wise though the highway-man may think otherwise; the maxims of the Gospel are not the less venerable because impiety disregards them: if they countenanced impiety, they would cease to be what they are, that is, maxims of holiness, worthy the sanctity and wisdom of their author; they also complain of the obscurity of its mysteries. In this they shew their ignorance: of all mysteries that of the Trinity is the most obscure; yet 'tis not more difficult to conceive the divine nature in three persons than in one: the divine nature is in itself and in all its attributes impenetrable to the created

ted understanding. It is not more so in three persons than in one : the man who pretends to measure the immensity of the divinity by his own limited understanding exposes both his pride and ignorance at the same time.

From some expressions in the inspired writings, which intimate that God extends his mercy to some, whilst he exercises the severity of his justice on others ; that he seems desirous of saving some, not others ; that he confers extraordinary favors on some, and sends afflictions and calamities to others, the spirit of error pretends to conclude against the authenticity of the work, such partiality being, say its abettors, inconsistent with justice. It has been already observed that justice does not exclude clemency ; that God is not said to be sovereignly just because he never pardons, but because he is strictly observant of the rules of justice in his judgments : he never condemns the innocent, nor does the punishment, which he inflicts on the delinquent, exceed the malice of the offence. If on condition of sincere repentance he forgives an offender, it is an act of mercy, from which none are excluded, but these, who exclude themselves. The obstinate delinquent, and sincere penitent are not equally entitled to mercy : clemency pleads for the one, while justice claims the other. In this there is nothing which reason does not approve.

That God desires to save some, not others, is not true : he sincerely desires to save all, as is expressly marked in the Scriptures : St. Paul directs his disciple Timothy to have prayers and supplications offered up for all men : “ for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who wills all men to be saved,” 1. Tim. II. 3—4. Why then are not all men saved, since God’s will is irresistible ? God’s absolute will is irresistible ; but he does not absolutely will to save

save men against their will ; he sincerely desires them to be saved, if they will co-operate with the assistance which he offers, and have recourse to the means which he has instituted for that end. There is nothing more reasonable.

That he confers extraordinary favours on some is true, that he afflicts others is equally true. In the distribution of extraordinary favours there can be no injustice, no acceptance of persons : where there is no title there can be no claim. In this distribution he manifests the riches of his magnificence, and his perfect independence on his creatures, liberally bestowing favours without merit, or title, according to his will. If he afflicts the just man, it is to chastise past iniquity, or to prevent foreseen transgressions, or perhaps to disengage his affections from a life, in which there is nothing but emptiness and vanity ; if he sends calamities to the impious, it is to punish, or restrain evil, rightly considered it is rather an act of mercy than of justice. The untimely end of a remorseless Tyrant prevents him from adding to his iniquity, and thereby encreasing the measure of his torments, which Divine justice will proportion to the number and enormity of his excesses.

Words being the signs of ideas, as we can have no adequate idea of the Divinity, or of the Divine attributes, we can have no terms to express them correctly. From this limitation of our ideas, and consequent defect in our language, the terms in use being appropriated to objects, which we know, convey our thoughts, but are not sufficiently expressive of the Divine nature ; hence the necessity of understanding all expressions applied to the Divinity in the most perfect sense, and excluding every imperfection and limitation which the expression applied to its appropriate object may convey. This defect in
language

language has introduced the necessity of having recourse to metaphorical expressions, these are multiplied for ornament, as well as use, in all languages, more particularly amongst the Orientals. The Scriptures abound with strong metaphors, thereby supplying the native defect of language, and conveying an idea of the magnificence and power of God, which though not commensurate with either, is the utmost effort of the human mind. In these metaphorical expressions, the different passions of anger, of jealousy, of indignation, of repentance, &c. are ascribed to the Divinity, by which no more is signified, or intended, but that God's conduct to the obedient, or disobedient, appears such as ours, in similar circumstances, under the influence of these passions, which are incompatible with the Divine nature, which of course he cannot feel.

Ignorance only can mistake these metaphorical expressions, which ascribe hands, eyes, &c. to the Divinity: when, in common discourse, we say of a man that his head is good, we are understood to speak of the strength of his understanding, or if we say, his heart is bad, it is understood of the perverseness of his will. Thus the arm of God, conveys an idea of his power, the throne of God, signifies his majesty, the eyes of God, his providential vigilance over his creatures, and attention to them.

In the new law are found ambiguous expressions, which are thought favourable to dissenting sects of Christians, even to Deists, Mahometans and Atheists. This, if we believe our Sciolists, is a prejudice against the law.

In the new law are some expressions, which, from the nature of the sublime truths which they convey, are obscure, others, which the perverse obstinacy of dissenting sects, distorts from their intended signification,

tion, affixing to them a sense, which coincides with their pre-conceived opinions ; many, who will not shape their conduct according to the maxims of the law, impiously endeavour to shape the law according to the maxims of their conduct. In the law there is no defect, no danger ; in the perverseness of their own will they find ruin. If instead of distorting the law to their opinions, and bending it to their will, they would correct their errors by the law, and conform their will to its dictates, they would find in it a source of happiness, and all dissensions would cease.

To institute a comparison between the heathen morality, and that of the christian law, is a gross absurdity : their pretended divinities were the inventions of fancy, infected with all the vices, to which their inventors were addicted ; the most violent and destructive passions were personified, and honored with temples, in which crimes, at which nature recoils, were committed, not only with impunity, but with religious solemnity. Amongst their great divinities were parricides, prostitutes, drunkards, bullies. Even the highway-man had recourse to his mercury for success in his undertakings.

These pretended divinities by their example authorized and encouraged licentiousness, and the ministers of their temples by their precepts and their religious rites. Tatian, in his oration against the Greeks, No. 20, says : "I disregarded your institutions, because there ought to be but one common form of living ; amongst you there are as many different institutions as there are cities ; actions infamous in the one are honorable in others." Matrimonial connections with mothers are forbidden amongst the Greeks, they are honored by the Persians ; sodomy is condemned by the Barbarians, authorized by the Romans, for whose pleasures flocks of boys are brought to market

market like horses. Such was the morality of the predecessors of our modern philosophers. The man who approves will imitate when the occasion offers. It is rather unlucky for the modern race of heathens, that in christian countries the laws will not permit them to imitate their ancestors with impunity.

That in the works of the Heathen philosophers there are some precepts of morality is true. First principles of the natural law are deeply impressed in the mind ; they are not easily effaced ; the consequences, which are immediately inferred from these principles, the heathen philosophers found, not in accredited fables, but in the light of reason, which was not totally extinct ; remote consequences are of more difficult access : their precepts did not extend to them ; if any did, they were borrowed from the scriptures : “ which of your poets, or which of your sophists,” said Tertullian in his apology, “ did not drink of the fountain of the prophets ?” The moral precepts of Epictetus are manifestly borrowed from the Gospel, which he must have seen, yet the pretended virtues of this celebrated stoic are as opposite to true christian virtues as darkness to light : Virtuous actions are distinguished by their motives ; that of the christian is universal benevolence ; that of the stoic, the most refined self love and cold insensibility, his invariable maxim is “ think of yourself ; sacrifice every thing to yourself.” In the corrupt system of Epicurus there is no maxim more base or dangerous to society.

To their moral precepts the heathen sages added the most gross errors ; thus we find the famed Plato directing the inhabitants of his imaginary republic to take their wives in common ; add to this, that their precepts were confined to men of science, the eloquence of a Plato, or of a Cicero, the philosophical reasoning

reasoning of an Aristotle, the lectures of a Socrates, or a Seneca are useless to the unlettered Peasant. In the inspired writings rules of action are taught in language intelligible to all classes without distinction; and by the institution of ministers, ample provision made for the instruction of the most illiterate; hence the unlettered christian knows all his relative duties with greater precision than the heathen philosopher.

It is frequently urged against the evangelical law, that its precepts are severe; that they prescribe a total mortification of our senses and passions; that an exact observance of them is inconsistent with the laws and welfare of society; ruinous to trade and population; inimical to arts and sciences; encouraging apathy, insensibility, alienation of affection from our parents, friends and country.

It is admitted that the precepts of the evangelical law are strict and even severe; they enjoin every virtue, and prohibit every vice, denouncing vengeance against iniquity under the purple or in rags, without distinction, or discrimination. They exact sanctity, because their author is holy, and their object is to sanctify; if they countenanced vice they would be unworthy of such an author, and unfit for his purpose.

There is nothing more reasonable than the mortification which they enjoin: to repress the tumultuous passions of anger, avarice, ambition, envy, jealousy, sensuality, and vanity, so fatal to mankind, argues the perfection of the Law, and the wisdom of the Legislator, who applies the remedy to the source of the evil. The man, who pretends that to gratify these passions is either lawful, laudable, innocent or useful, is not to be reasoned with, but confined with lunatics, or malefactors.

If the Christian be told in the Gospel that he must

hate his father and mother, the sense of the precept is obvious : that is, if they order any thing contrary to the Law of God, or the Law of the Land, he must not obey them ; if they endeavour to divert him from the duty, which he owes this Universal Father, he must disregard their injunctions, but yet remember that in all things, not contrary to the Law of God, he must love and obey them : the Christian, who knows that he must love his enemies, cannot think of hating his parents or friends, but he must not prefer them to his God ; hence the Redeemer says, Matt. X. 37 : “ he that loves his father or his mother better than me, is not worthy of me.”

This reasoning is applicable to many other precepts of the same nature : thus the injunction of renouncing all possessions in the world to be a true disciple of Christ is understood of the disposition of the mind, and preparation of the heart, to sacrifice every thing, even life itself, rather than disobey the Lord or deny him ; than which there is no precept more reasonable : a man of honor would rather sacrifice his life than betray his King or Country. The actual renunciation of wealth, or power, lawfully acquired, is not of precept, but of counsel, to which none are obliged but they who chuse a more perfect state of life : without it salvation is attainable : this appears from the Saviour's answer to the young man, who asked what he should do to be saved ? “ If you wish to enter into life keep the commandments.” After telling him the commandments, which must be observed, he adds, “ if you desire to be perfect, go sell all you have, give to the Poor. Come and follow me,” Matt. XIX. The Saviour clearly distinguishes the precepts of indispensable necessity to enter into life, from this counsel, by the observance of which, the young man would have arrived

arrived at a greater degree of perfection, and obtained what the Saviour called *a Treasure in Heaven*.

There are other precepts in the Gospel, which appear extremely severe, yet upon investigation they are found perfectly consistent with reason, and wisely instituted. Thus, when the Saviour says, Matt. V, "If a man strike you on the right cheek turn to him the other; if he contends with you in judgment for your coat, let him take your cloak also." Patience in injuries is enjoined; individuals are prohibited from doing themselves justice by private authority, than which there is nothing more reasonable. The public Magistrate is not forbidden to redress injuries, and do justice to the sufferer, on the contrary, he is ordered to do it: "he is the minister of God he does not hold the sword in vain the avenger to execute wrath on him who doeth evil," Rom. XIII. 4—5. As the minister of God he exercises on criminals that vindictive justice, which belongs to God, and, of course, to these exclusively who are authorized by him: "Vengeance is mine and I will repay," Rom. XII. 19. Nor is the sufferer forbidden to have recourse to the public Magistrate for redress, if he be influenced by the love of justice, not by a desire of revenge, which is never lawful, and is at all times strictly prohibited. Vexatious law-suits are strictly forbidden. If redress can be obtained in justice without fraud, without injury to the adverse party, without hatred, animosity, slander, disunion, or breach of christian charity, it is not forbidden to institute a law-suit for redress of injury; if not it is prudent to decline it: because no redress, which can be obtained, is an equivalent for the Divine displeasure incurred by sin. This shews the wisdom of these counsels, which

which our Sciolists think severe, and even unreasonable.

That the evangelical law is inimical to arts and sciences is a groundless surmise, refuted by experience: if arts and sciences be known, it is in these countries where that law prevails; in the eastern countries the most barbarous ignorance has succeeded its suppression.

If fraud, usury and circumvention, be useful to trade; honesty, sincerity and plain dealing, destructive; or if unbounded licentiousness encrease population, whilst regularity ruins it, the evangelical law must be acknowledged defective; he must be fond of delusion who believes such nonsense, and may be consigned to his dreams without interruption.

That stoical apathy, insensibility and alienation of affection, which philosophers find in the evangelical law, was remarked by the heathens—its disciples were absent from the orgies of Bacchus; they were strangers to the mysterious rites of Ceres; their wives and daughters were not brought in solemn procession to the temple of Venus, nor did they range themselves amongst Gladiators; these fashionable amusements they resigned to the memorable ancestors of our modern sciolists. Why complain of us? We imitate our ancestors. They were insensible to criminal excesses, which the voice of reason condemns; but their affection to their parents, to their friends, to their country, their anxiety for their welfare, their exertions to procure relief in the public calamities, in a word, their charity knew no bounds; that is the apathy enjoined in the new law: this is a language which vanity and sensuality dislike.

Some have secluded themselves from society in penitential silence to atone for past offences, or to avoid dangerous occasions; others to contemplate the
works

works of the divinity, the joys of heaven, the horrors of hell, the abyss of eternity. The reader will pardon this unseasonable intrusion of terms so offensive to the atheist, the deist, the modern philosopher; for this seclusion there is no precept; we may admire, but are not obliged, in many cases not allowed, to imitate them: what is laudable in one, is not so in all: if a man be free from all engagements he may live in retirement; if his cares be necessary to society, he cannot do it with propriety, amongst the disciples of the evangelical law no man lives for himself: that privilege they resign to pretended philanthropists. The perfection, which the law requires, consists in a strict observance of its precepts. The observance of its councils may, and frequently does, remove impediments, it is therefore lawful and laudable but not necessary.

In this divine law the man of reflection discovers the source of all his calamities; he sees the state of infirmity, to which the unprovoked transgression of the founder of the human race has reduced all his descendants; the clouds, which it has diffused in the understanding, and that state of debility and inconstancy, in which it has placed the will; the irresistible inclination to sensible objects, the overbearing pressure of concupiscence, against which reason speaks in vain: "I see and approve what is right, and do what is wrong," and what is yet of greater consequence, in this law, he finds the only effectual remedy; he is taught to have recourse to a God of mercy for assistance, whose grace dispels the clouds of the understanding, fixes the inconstancy of the will, heals its infirmity, insures a power of resistance superior to the pressure of concupiscence, softens these tumultuous passions, which torment the impious man, imposes on them an absolute silence, or at least makes them subject to reason.

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There are truths announced in this law which transcend reason, hence the sciolist infers that they are contrary to reason. The inference only speaks his ignorance: all truths, which regard the divinity, and the divine attributes, must of necessity transcend reason: because the divine nature is not within the sphere of reason's activity.

An assertion is contrary to reason, and contrary to truth, when the idea of the subject and the idea of the attribute, both precisely known, exclude each other; thus to assert that a circle is a square, is a manifest absurdity, because the known properties of these figures exclude each other; but if the essential properties of the subject, or of the attribute, be not accurately known, reason cannot pronounce whether they be consistent or inconsistent, whether they exclude each other or not: thus when it is said that in the divine nature there are three divine persons, as the divine nature and the divine persons are totally incomprehensible to us, reason, unassisted by a superior light, can neither pronounce the proposition true nor false; and as reason can institute no comparison between objects, which are known, and these which are not, so it can institute no comparison between objects within its grasp and these which transcend it, the length of a mile might be compared to the heat of the sun with equal propriety, or rather with less absurdity.

Though by reasoning we cannot arrive at truths, which transcend the force of reason, or, if you will, of our limited faculty of reasoning, yet there is nothing more reasonable than to believe these truths on the authority of Revelation: a peasant would be thought inconsiderate, if he refused to believe an inference deduced by an able mathematician from principles as inconceivable to the peasant, as the truths of religion;

if

if he refused to believe the truth inferred until he clearly conceived the principles, he would be dismissed with contempt as an obstinate blockhead. The allusion is just : many revealed truths are inferences from principles evident to the divinity, incomprehensible to us. Men of true science modestly admit the truth on the authority of the divine word ; the sciolist in imitation of the peasant, whose obstinacy is the natural result of pride, and ignorance, will not believe if he does not comprehend. The man of science confines his reasoning to the proper object : he does not presume to contradict the divinity : he inquires whether the truth proposed to his belief be revealed or not ; whether the proofs adduced be sufficient to found a prudential assent, if so he does not doubt the veracity of his Creator, knowing well that God can do what he cannot conceive, of this he has unquestionable evidence in all the works of God, not one of which he comprehends. The Sciolist on the contrary consults his pride not his reason : he does not inquire whether the proposed truth be revealed or not, but as he cannot conceive principles, which are inconceivable, and will not admit that Almighty power transcends his own, or that truths are known to God of which he is ignorant, he rejects the truth without farther discussion. It is doubtful whether pride or ignorance be the more prominent feature in impiety. Nothing is wanted to make it contemptible.

The sanctity of the law, and its tendency to perfect human nature, is manifest from the reasons on which the Sciolist founds his objections against it : the mortification which it prescribes, says he, destroys the natural liberty of our will and all our faculties of action ; the proposal of incomprehensible doctrines deprives us of the use of our understanding ;

ing ; the injunction of resting all our cares on Providence, reduces us to a state of torpid insensibility. The contradictories would have been logically deduced from the principles admitted, if the Sciolist knew how to reason. More than once we have been told by these scribblers, that man is a sort of monkey. Their wild declamation resembles the chattering of that mischievous animal. However, as it is reason, which distinguishes man from all other animals, even from Atheists and Deists if they be classed with monkeys, it is reason which determines human nature, hence whatever is under the direction of reason tends to perfect human nature, and whatever transgresses the bounds of reason, and contradicts its dictates, vitiates and corrupts it. If disorderly affections be called passions, as they are contrary to order and the dictates of reason, they vitiate and corrupt ; virtue must exist without them. The mortification of these is therefore indispensably necessary to perfect human nature ; but if the inclinations of the sensitive appetite be thought passions they are the subject matter to which the exercise of virtue is confined : virtue consists in directing them to their proper objects, and preventing transgressions of the bounds, which reason prescribes : in this consists that mortification, which the evangelical law recommends. To direct the operations of the will, and all the powers of action subject to the will, is not to destroy its liberty, but to deliver it from slavery. Thus a man's liberty is not restrained because he is not allowed to seduce his neighbour's wife, or forcibly seize his possessions ; he possesses no such liberty ; in the act his will is a slave to a disorderly affection, which corrupts nature, because it is contrary to that reason, which constitutes it.

Nature has wisely annexed to all the operations
 necessary

necessary to the preservation of the individual, and the conservation of the species, a certain pleasing sensation. Excesses and defects are forbidden by reason, as destructive of the end: hence intoxication and licentiousness are evidently vicious: that mortification which retrenches them perfects human nature, or, at least, prevents its corruption. The writer speaks of men, not of monkeys, or of two-legged animals of the monkey kind

This reasoning is applicable to the human understanding: It is perfected by truth, corrupted by falsehood; if truths be proposed which transcend its limited force of action, and light be infused to increase its powers, instead of enslaving the understanding this frees it from the dominion of error, enables it to act with greater energy, and discuss, with greater accuracy, subjects within its own sphere. Thus objects, which are invisible to the naked eye, become visible by the assistance of a glass; and objects which are already seen, become more clearly defined: in like manner the understanding, assisted by a superior light, not only discovers truths, which transcend its native powers, but also sees more clearly these which are within its investigation.

All faculties are to be confined to their proper objects: the eye is not made to hear, nor the ear to see, however the force of either may be increased; no extension of its powers can enable the eye to hear, or the ear to see, nor can they act at all without the assistance of light for the eye, and sound for the ear.

As to that state of insensibility to which religion reduces its votaries, it is merely imaginary: vain solicitude and excruciating anxiety are forbidden, the necessary cares and vigilance prescribed. It is forbidden to make wealth or power the ultimate end of our pursuits: "do not lay up treasures on earth.....but in

Heaven," Mat. VI, 19-20—It is not allowed to serve God in view of these ; it is also forbidden to despair of divine assistance in lawful pursuits ; " Your father knows that you want those things," *ibid.* Confidence in our own exertions, independently on the divine assistance, is strictly and justly prohibited ; " Which of you can add to his stature one cubit ?" *ibid.* An over anxious care, previous to the necessary time, is also forbidden : " Be not solicitous for to-morrow," *ibid.* The man who believes a Providence to exist, to superintend and direct human affairs, attends to all the relative duties of his condition with vigilance and attention, and rests on Providence for success without anxiety or agitation.

As the great object of the evangelical law is to instruct, and conduct its votaries, by sanctity of life, to a holy and supernatural end, its precepts are proportioned to that end ; they enforce sanctity beyond the reach of human laws ; they, in order to eradicate evil, forbid all unlawful desires, from these iniquitous actions result. Human laws are confined to actions which are public, they cannot reach the mind nor what is concealed. They punish the effect, but leave the cause untouched. Add to this, that the moral precepts of the Gospel, which enforce the practice of virtue, are always proportioned to the powers of action in its disciples, which in some are greater, in others less ; for the powers of action in every agent result, or, at least, are increased by the habit acquired, and this habit is strengthened by a repetition of acts ; hence a person advanced in virtue finds no difficulty in that which to the vicious is impracticable, and to these, who enter on a virtuous life, if not impracticable, extremely difficult. What is tolerable in the one is reprehensible in the other. Human laws are made for the multitude, of whom a great majority are imperfect,

fect, if not vicious ; they prohibit but such actions as are prejudicial to society : they cannot enforce the practice of virtue. The precepts of the divine law not only prohibit every possible vice, whether public, or private, whether in act, thought, word or desire, but enjoin every virtue, in proportion as the powers of action, which are incessantly augmented in the virtuous man, encrease : “ performing truth in charity, let us encrease in all things, in him who is the head, Christ,” Eph. IV. 15. “ Encrease in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ,” 2. Pet. III. 18.

The sanction of all human laws is defective ; they can neither proportion punishments to the malignity of delinquents, nor rewards to the virtue of claimants ; the motives and intentions of both escape the eye of human justice ; hence actions, in themselves vicious and reprehensible, are sometimes thought laudable, and as such deemed worthy a reward, whilst acts of heroic virtue are passed unnoticed, and not unfrequently treated with contempt.

The sanction of the divine law is perfect, and speaks the wisdom of its author ; vengeance is denounced against vice, by him, from whom no vicious thought is concealed ; “ all things are naked and open to his eyes,” Heb. IV. 13. He will proportion the punishment to the number and the malignity of the delinquent’s offences : “ he will render to every man according to his works,” Rom. II. 5. As an inducement to virtue, rewards are proposed more than adequate. If justice measures the punishment and the offence, liberality distributes rewards ; “ the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor has it entered the heart of man, what God has prepared for those who love him,” 1. Cor. II. 9.

To engage the just to sanctify their bodies, as well as their souls, they are informed that, if they
 preserve

preserve them pure and unpolluted, they will, after paying the debt of nature, rise again in glory.

“ We know that when he (Jesus Christ) will appear, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is,” 1. John III. 2.

To deter them from the sin of uncleanness ; from all excesses, and irregularities, they are told that their bodies are the temples of God, and that God will destroy the man, who presumes to profane his temple, 1. Cor. III. 17.

If many who profess Christianity, or rather pretend to profess it, be subject to vice and irregularities, it is because they disregard its precepts ; of such materials Atheists, Deists, and Philosophists are moulded ; brothels are their schools, there they have been taught, and there their lectures are received with applause. The Atheist does not become a profligate ; but the profligate becomes an Atheist.

Effects are always proportioned, though not always equal to the efficacy of their causes. It is simply impossible that any effect should surpass the power of action in its cause. This principle admitted, the divinity of the evangelical law is manifest in its effects : the means employed for the establishment of the law are so disproportioned to the effects produced, that the success must be ascribed to the divinity of the law, or, if you will, to the almighty power of its author.

Men are expressly chosen for the purpose as disqualified as men could be for such an arduous undertaking : wealth or power they had none ; to all human science they were strangers ; of the lowest order of a once powerful, but then degraded nation, they are sent : upon what errand ? To suppress idolatry, in which the whole world was immersed, and in the rites and ceremonies of which
they

they found the gratification of all their passions, and most violent inclinations ; to abolish superstition interwoven with the laws of all nations, in many, the very basis of empire ; to confound the vanity of all the sects of Heathen Philosophers ; to repress abominations, authorised by immemorial custom, countenanced by law, and practised, not only with impunity, but with applause ; to substitute a law, sublime in its speculative doctrines, incomprehensible to human understanding, beyond the utmost stretch of imagination ; in its moral precepts severe, extending its restraints to every faculty of the mind, to every desire of the soul, declaring that to be corrupt and vicious, which was universally thought lawful and laudable, and promising its disciples nothing in this world but persecutions and calamities. To ensure success, impediments innumerable, to human power insurmountable, were to be removed ; the laws of nations changed ; the attachment of idolaters to their rites and customs, sanctioned by the example of their ancestors, and flattering all their passions, to be effaced ; difficulties to any power inferior to that, which knows no bounds, irresistible, were to be encountered : the perverse obstinacy of the jews ; the intrigues of the officers of the heathen temples, who, seeing their impending ruin, had recourse to every artifice, which the spirit of darkness suggests ; the insidious arts of politicians, supported by the ferocious cruelty of despotic power ; the sophistical declamations of Heathen philosophers, in a word, the united powers of all the Spirits of Darkness, and their emissaries. What would a Plato, who with all his wisdom and eloquence, could never prevail on a village to adopt his opinions, have thought of such an undertaking ? What would a Cicero have done if chosen for such a mission ? Would he have

have dared to undertake it? No, though conscious of the vanity of idols, he would not acknowledge it; though convinced of the unity of God, he dared not assert it; yet it would have been more meritorious to speak well of truth, than to speak ill of Anthony; death would have been more honorable in defence of truth, than in support of personal enmity.

If all the Heathen Philosophers and Orators had united their efforts to reform the Heathen world, would they have been successful? No, because they would have to contend with the most powerful interests and passions of man, and in them there was nothing more than man. They never reformed a village, not even themselves. This great work was reserved for the instructions of a Fisherman, and a few associates, destitute of human science, and every human assistance. These we see surmounting all difficulties, removing all impediments, changing the face of the world, softening the manners of Barbarians, abolishing abominable rites and customs: “these who inscribe their name for this discipline, do not contract matrimony with their mothers; nor do the Scythians, to whose country the word of Christ has reached, eat human flesh; nor do other barbarous nations incestuously defile their daughters; nor do men disregarding the rights of nature abuse each other; nor do they expose to dogs, and birds, as was their custom, the bodies of their relatives and friends; nor do they strangle the old and infirm; nor do they feed on the flesh of their dearest friends, as their ancestors did; nor do they sacrifice men to their idols, as their institutions prescribe; nor do they, deceived by a false opinion of piety, stab their best beloved friends—with these and many such customs was life infested.”—*Euseb.*

“ In Parthia, christians though Parthians have not many wives ; in Media they do not give the bodies of the dead to the dogs, nor in Persia, though Persians, do they espouse their own daughters ; nor in Gaul do men contract with men disregarding the rites of nature ; nor in Egypt do they adore a calf, a dog, a buck-goat or a cat ; wherever they live they are not overcome by the torment of custom, the wickedness of laws, or the turpitude of immoral institutions ; nor can they be forced by power, or induced by solicitation, to commit any of these monstrous crimes, forbidden by the laws of their master,”
Bardesane.

As the powers of human persuasion were totally incapable of producing these changes, the success of the Apostles must of all necessity be ascribed to the divinity of the law, which they announced. *Lex Domini immaculata convertens animas.* The irresistible power of the Deity, was alone adequate to such an arduous task : any power, inferior to omnipotence, would have been inefficient. The man who does not see it, is miserably blind.

For the rapid progress of Mahometan impiety, and the extraordinary success of other sectaries, we find a sufficient cause in that violent inclination to sensual pleasures, which is flattered by these teachers, their deluded followers vainly imagine that the removal of all restraints proposed by these impostors is no impediment to future happiness. To the severity of the Gospel they have substituted a system of voluptuousness, little, if at all, inferior to that of the famed Epicurus. Mahomet surpasses him : for this arch impostor flatters his followers with a continuation of that voluptuousness, in which Epicurus had placed supreme happiness in this life ; he promised nothing after death, but annihilation. Quere, to which of these classes do our modern Sceptics belong ? A

A man of solid sense, and true science, sees in the establishment of Christianity, a miracle of all others the most convincing ; a subsisting miracle, against which all suppositions are vain ; a miracle, which could neither commence, nor be continued, but by almighty power ; a miracle, which renders impiety odious, and inexcusable, and baffles the vain efforts of its abettors.

The sophistical declamation of some impostors against the miracles related in the Gospel comes next under consideration, one of the most virulent of these, who from an intense hatred of truth, and refined malignity of heart and soul was best qualified to be an emissary of the spirit of darkness, the irreconcilable enemy of man, pretends that the miracles related in the Gospel, though understood in the literal sense, do not sufficiently evince the divinity of Jesus Christ ; to this he adds that the miracles related, if understood in the literal sense, involve a contradiction, of course, as he pretends, they are to be understood as allegorical, symbolical, or prophetic ; finally that when Christ referred to miracles, he did not speak of things, which he had done in the flesh, but of things which he was to do in the spirit. Our modern Sceptics have borrowed their ideas from this Sophist, as he did from Julian, the apostate, and Celsus, the Heathen philosopher, to whom he was as far superior in malice, as he was inferior in science.

To what has been said on the subject of miracles already, the writer only adds, that every event out of the ordinary course of things may be considered in some sense miraculous : it is truly so, or apparently so ; relatively miraculous, or absolutely so : the production of any substance immediately, which did not exist before, either in itself, or in its subject,

is absolutely miraculous, such a production is the immediate effect of omnipotence. The instantaneous conversion of one substance into another, the sensible qualities of which are both different and dissimilar, may or may not surpass the power of created agents; it manifestly surpasses the power of any visible agent known to us: whether it be absolutely or relatively miraculous is useless to enquire, and impossible to determine: for if all matter be homogenous in its elementary parts, and specific difference be the result of the relative position of these parts, such a change does not seem to surpass the power of created agents; if on the contrary the elementary parts of matter be specifically different, and independent on relative position, the conversion of one substance into another is beyond the limits of created power: because it is not within the course of the established order, which no created Being is allowed to transgress.

To communicate life to a body, in which it has been totally extinguished, is an absolute miracle. The truth of this observation is manifest from this simple consideration, that in the foetus there is a disposition, an immediate tendency to life, it is of course enlivened in due time, according to the order established by the Creator; but the extinction of life introduces a contrary disposition, a tendency to corruption. To restore life by any created agent would require the establishment of a new order directly contrary to that, which the Creator himself has established, which is manifestly impossible.

The healing of a disease, though incurable by any means or remedies known to man, does not seem to surpass the power of created agents: whilst life subsists, the springs on which it depends, however weakened, may be reinitiated by some powerful,

agent, removing obstacles, and applying remedies to us unknown.

The instantaneous restoration of perfect health, without the application of any remedy, in the case of a long and lingering disease, though curable in due course of time, and by ordinary means, may be classed with the former, and is relatively miraculous.

It is an invariable rule that the powers of created agents are great in proportion to the excellence of their nature, but never of such extent as to subvert the order established by the Creator; the supposition is ridiculous: because their powers of action, however great, cannot equal his, who gave them; they must therefore be subject to the controul of the laws established by him. As the spiritual or intellectual world is essentially different from the material world which we inhabit, the laws to which they are subject must be different, many laws, on which the symmetry, harmony, and beauty, of this visible world depends we know by experience; thus we know the laws of motion, others we conjecture from analogy, the most essential escape our observation.

Spirit and matter formed into one principle of action by a substantial union, is the link in the chain of Beings, which unites the intellectual and material world; man is therefore in part subject to the laws of both, not strictly, and exclusively to the laws of either: thus, though the human body be affected by the laws of motion, it is not so strictly so, as the inanimate stone; for being not merely the passive instrument of the soul, but an essential part of the man, the principle of action, it partakes in some measure of his locomotive powers, of this the inanimate stone is incapable; in like manner the human soul not being a complete spirit, and independent agent,

agent, but the substantial form, which animates matter, and informs the human body, it must depend on the body in many of its operations: it is therefore in some measure subject to the laws of motion, which govern this visible world.

What are the laws, which govern the intellectual world we do not know; what are the powers of action in spirits, in themselves complete and independent agents. we are left to conjecture. From analogy we conclude that they possess locomotive power, because we possess this power from the inherent activity of our soul, a quality of which matter is destitute, and which to matter is incommunicable; this power is great in proportion to the superior excellence of their nature, but circumscribed by the established order, which they are not allowed to destroy.

How a spirit acts on matter we do not know; or how impressions are made on spirits by material objects we are yet to discover; that both is common we know, but the manner is, and in all appearance ever will be, an impenetrable secret.

From experience we know the mutual actions of all bodies: it is in a certain ratio, in certain distances invariably the same. This is the result of laws, depending solely on the will of the Creator, so constant in their operation, that they are subject to mathematical precision; if we may judge by analogy, the actions of spirits on material objects, and the impressions made on spirits by such objects, or on one spirit by another, must be the result of laws established for the government of the intellectual world.

One created spirit having from its nature no authority over another in the intellectual world, the impressions, which it makes, or any authority which

it exercised, must depend solely on the will of the Creator, and on the rules established by him for the government of pure intelligences; the intervention of sensible objects is therefore totally unnecessary. Matter so far from assisting an intelligence in its operations, would only impede. Whether such intervention be necessary to enable a disengaged spirit to make impressions on the human mind, whilst informing the body, or not, is uncertain, the writer thinks such intervention total useless: for since many operations of the mind are independent on the senses, no reason can be assigned, why a disengaged spirit, acting according to the laws established for the intellectual world, should not make impressions on the mind, whilst informing the body, as when disengaged, the mind whether informing the body, or disengaged, being the same in all its essential properties. Hence, when it is said in the scriptures, that angels have appeared to men, spoken to them, &c. the assumption of bodies composed of air, or any other material substance, seems totally unnecessary, as they might, without deviating from established rules, make the same impressions on the minds of the persons, to whom they appeared, without the intervention of any sensible object.

That the powers of action inherent in disengaged spirits, whether of light or darkness, are far superior to ours is clear from the foregoing observations; that therefore they may produce effects in appearance miraculous must be admitted; but these effects, however great, must be under the controul of the general order established by the Creator, which they cannot subvert. Thus, for example, to raise a tempest confined to a certain space, by causing an unusual commotion in a certain portion of air, nay, and in all appearance is, within the power of an Angel
of

of Light or Darkneſs; but to ſtop the motion of the moon, the ebbing or flowing of the ſea, is not within the reach of either: it is beyond the limits of created power, becauſe it is a general order, which no created power can deſtroy.

Whatever powers Angels of Light, or Spirits of Darkneſs, may poſſeſs, they cannot exerciſe them to the deſtruction of God's Works without his permiſſion; let their powers of deſtruction be ever ſo great, they cannot deſtroy a fly without his permiſſion: for, being all ſecondary cauſes, they muſt depend on God, the primary cauſe, in all their actions. Hence it follows, that they can produce no extraordinary effects, ſurpaſſing the power of viſible agents, in ſupport of error not diſcoverable by reaſon, becauſe ſuch effects would unavoidably ſeduſe men from truth, which perfects the mind, and lead to criminal errors which corrupt it—It would be the deſtruction of God's greateſt work in this viſible world.

That in the times of heathen ſuperſtition, the Spirits of Darkneſs, did effect ſome things ſurpaſſing the power of viſible agents, is extremely probable: but the error, which theſe extraordinary events were intended to authoriſe, that is, idolatry, was in itſelf ſo abſurd, ſo oppoſite to the light of reaſon, that none could be deceived who conſulted reaſon. The permiſſion of ſuch events was one of theſe dreadful judgments which God, in his juſtice, exerciſes on thoſe who make their reaſon ſubſervient to their paſſions. Where the error is not ſenſible, or not ſo manifeſt that reaſon may without difficulty detect it, ſuch events are not permitted: they are inconſiſtent with the general order of Providence, which will not permit God's creatures to be unavoidably ſeduſed, and his works corrupted.

Of falſe teachers, ſince the eſtabliſhment of chriſtianity.

anity, few have appealed to supernatural effects to warrant their mission ; they who did were miserably disappointed : some arch impostors, who, to countenance their errors, did pretend to supernatural powers, were detected ; they had prevailed on some deluded wretches to feign themselves dead, when they pretended to raise them they were found in reality lifeless. The relatives of these wretches published the cheat.

It has been already observed that miracles, as all other facts, are known, not by metaphysical disquisition, but by the testimony of their senses to the immediate witnesses, to us, at a distance from the times, and scenes of action, by the testimony of the witnesses authentically transmitted. Thus we know that Cæsar was murdered, with as unerring certainty as the men who assisted at that tragical scene ; the conviction of the truth is as strong on our minds, but the impresson of horror is diminished.

Facts, which are not uncommon, are believed without discussion ; if they be not interesting, the discussion is minute in proportion as facts are interesting, yet whilst they remain in the ordinary course of events, there must be strong prejudices against a witness to ruin his credit. Extraordinary facts are not admissible, nor are they ever universally believed, without strict enquiry ; the least prejudice against a witness, will invalidate his testimony, hence we may conclude that facts extremely interesting, which surpass the power of visible agents, cannot possibly obtain credit if the witnesses, who attest them, be not found upon strict investigation, free from suspicion, of surprise, fraud or design.

Man is by nature so constituted that he easily believes

believes what flatters his passions, if it be not out of the ordinary course of things, if so, however flattering the event may appear, a wise man must suspend his opinion, until after discussion; but man is inaccessible to a truth, which mortifies him, if not forced by incontestible evidence to admit it. As miracles in general have been offered in proof of truths mortifying to human nature, contradicting man's most violent inclinations, captivating his understanding, and curbing his imagination, it would have been more than a miracle if they had obtained credit without discussion, or if, upon the most exact and critical discussion they had not been supported by irresistible evidence: hence St. Austin says: the man, who does not believe these prodigies to have been effected, which the world believes, is himself a prodigy.

To found an assent in prudence it is necessary to be well assured that the witnesses of miraculous events were not deceived, nor disposed to deceive; if to these conditions a third be added, that is, that any attempt to deceive would have been fruitless, the testimony is unexceptionable: it impresses conviction on the mind; to refuse an assent is the effect of perverse obstinacy.

These principles pre-supposed, let us proceed to examine the miracles of Jesus Christ. As man he was the most humble, meek, humane and innocent, of Adam's race; his life so free from blemish, or even suspicion, that he submitted it to the criticism of his enemies; "which of you," said he, John iv. 46, "will charge me with sin?" that the traitor who sold him, acknowledged his innocence "I have sinned, betraying innocent blood," Matt. xxvii. 4; the charges brought before Pilate by his most malignant enemies were so manifestly calumnious, that, from them, without hearing a word in his defence, Pilate was convinced

convinced of his innocence: "I find in him no cause," John xviii, 38; and when forced by the clamors of the Jews to consent to his death, he washed his hands saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man," Matt. xxvii, 24. The sanctity of his doctrine was perfectly correspondent with the sanctity of his life, a sketch of his morality has been given, and, contrasted with that of the heathen philosophers; he shewed the folly and impiety of idolatry; the necessity of honoring one God, Creator of all things; the boundless submission due to his orders, in the most trying circumstances. Impostors do not sacrifice their lives to enforce obedience to the law of God, their lives were never remarkable for sanctity; the blaspheming Sciolist, who pretends that Jesus Christ was an impostor, ought to assign some private interest, which he had in view. Impostors, who have no other object in view but the glory of God, and the welfare of man; who sacrifice themselves to the happiness of others, are of such an uncommon character, that they are to be sought for in the wild imagination of modern scribblers—there are no such phenomena in nature.

To pass unnoticed the miracles attending his birth, by which his mission was announced, let us examine minutely some of the many, which he wrought to attest the truth of his doctrine, the first we find upon record is the conversion of water into wine at Cana in Galilee, John II. The witnesses were numerous, the disciples were present: "he manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him," v. 2. The disciples were not philosophers, no, nor were the waiters who drew the waters, and filled the six stone pots, each containing two or three *metretas*, or measures; but the most illiterate peasant knows the difference between wine and water, as well as the
 most

most acute philosopher. The water might have been removed and wine substituted by some artifice. Yes, if there had been but an ounce or two, or even a few pounds, by some stratagem might have been removed; but the impossibility of deception in so great a quantity is manifest: the Greek *metreta* and the Hebrew *batus* was a measure of a cubic foot; a cubic foot of water weighs sixty two pounds and half avoirdupoise, or $76\frac{5}{12}$ Troy weight, the philosopher may consult any writer on hydrostatics, the unlearned may believe it on the credit of the author. Hence confining each pot, to two *metretas*, or measures, the quantity of water converted into wine was nine hundred and seventeen pounds, Troy. The instantaneous removal of such a quantity unknown to, or unobserved by spectators, is not within the reach of stratagem or artifice.

A chemical preparation might give the appearance of wine to a small quantity of water, and impose on the simplicity of persons unaccustomed to wine; but a chemical preparation to convert two hogheads of water instantaneously into wine, unobserved by the spectators, must be extracted from the feculence of a modern sceptic's brain. As the wine was not consumed, nor intended to be consumed, immediately, in a company where there was a president of the sacerdotal order to prevent the effects of intemperance, as was the custom of the Jews upon such occasions, the deception, if any had been, must have been detected.

To remove every suspicion of fraud, the waiters were ordered to draw the water, to fill the stone pots, which being intended for the Jewish purifications, were always to be filled with pure elementary water; from this water untouched by Jesus Christ to present to the president of the company, who, from his

office, must have been perfectly sober, he declared it wine of a superior quality.

The fact was publicly asserted by some of the witnesses whilst they were all, or at least a great majority of them living, and not contradicted by avowed enemies, no fact was ever authentic if this be not. Let us pass to another equally authentic, and not less surpassing the power of man, Matt. xiv. We read that with five loaves and two fishes 5000 men besides women and children were fed, and that twelve baskets were filled with the fragments, which remained. Here there was no room for deception, or collusion : 5000 men were not taught to believe that they had dined, and dismissed with hungry bellies, words do not satisfy hunger : something more substantial than sound is necessary to appease its cravings. Why were such numbers collected ? because they had already seen the most unheard of prodigies. "And Jesus, answering, said to them, (John's disciples) go and relate to John what you have heard and seen, the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again." Matt. xi. 4—5. St. Luke adds : " at that hour he relieved many from diseases, and infirmities, and gave sight to many, who were blind : " vii. 21. He had already raised to life the widow of Naim's son, of which miracle the whole country was informed : Luke vii. 15. These miracles were public ; John's disciples had seen them, or he would not have ordered them to relate what they saw, it would have been a most ridiculous injunction. It is not matter of surprise that some thousands were collected ; but it is a melancholy reflection that the inveterate and incurable envy of the Pharisees prevented greater numbers from attending to the instructions of such a teacher ; they, who did, were not disappointed : " and he, coming forth, saw

saw a great multitude, and had compassion on them, and healed their sick," Matt. xiv. 14 ; " And there came to him great multitudes, having with them the dumb, the blind, the lame, and many others, and they cast them at his feet, and he healed them," Matt. XV, 30 ; " so that the multitudes wondered seeing the dumb speak, the lame walk, and the blind see, and they glorified the God of Israel," *ibid.* Of these multitudes many attended for instruction ; some in gratitude for past relief from infirmities ; others in hopes of present ; of the Pharisees, and their adherents, some attracted by simple, perhaps faultless, curiosity, others to scrutinize, and detect, if possible, some word or action, on which to found an accusation, and diminish the credit of a man, who unmasked their hypocrisy, of this last class it does not appear that many were in the desert.

But why withdraw into this desert place ? Herod had just put John to death, and, hearing the report of Christ's miracles, was desirous of seeing him, Luke IX. 9. Christ did not think proper at that time to expose himself to the fury of that tyrant, moreover the place was not far distant from a populous country, in which there was no scarcity of provisions. Hence St. Luke says, IX. 12, " the day began to decline, and the Twelve came, and said to him : dismiss the crowds that, going into the towns and villages about, they may lodge and find provisions."

But why remain three whole days without provisions ? It is not said that they were without provisions, but that they were three days attending to Christ's instructions: the quantity, which they brought, appears to have been consumed before the evening of the third day, and as they delayed until perhaps it might have been inconvenient to some, and impossible to others, to find provisions, that night in the adjacent

djacent towns and villages, had they been dismissed without food, some of them would have fainted on the way. But why remain until evening? Christ's will, to which all his creatures are obedient, was a sufficient reason, the attractive powers of his divine presence, and his heavenly voice, easily detained them.

In this miracle, the authenticity of which is unexceptionable, the almighty power of God is manifest. It does not appear that the loaves were increased by any additional matter, whether immediately created, or pre-existing in some other form, and super-added: St. John says, expressly, that the twelve baskets of fragments, which remained were of the barley loaves, (vi) of these, not of any additional matter, the men must have eaten, and, as they were ranged in companies of fifties and hundreds, (Mark vi) these five loaves must have been present, and eaten at the same time by these different companies, less than five loaves, was not sufficient for a company of fifty, they must also have been present in the baskets, after the company had dined. This observation may serve as a corrective to the wild declamation of some new fangled teachers, who, though believing the power of God to be infinite, pretend to confine it by their own imagination, as if infinite power cannot produce an effect beyond the range of limited imagination.

Of these raised from the dead, three are particularly mentioned by the Evangelists, perhaps they were of greater note, or the facts, from their nature, were less liable to objection. The widow of Naim's son, Luke VII. 15; the daughter of Jair, prince of the synagogue, Matt. IX, Mark VI, Luke VIII; and Lazarus, John XI. Modern Sceptics, in imitation of their ancestors, the Heathen philosophers, under the influence of the same spirit of darkness, " who is
King

King over all the sons of pride," Job XLI. 25 ; " at whose will they are held captives," 2d Tim. II. 26 ; " by whose envy death entered into the world, and whom all these imitate, who are of his party," Wisdom II. 25, have exhausted invention to throw some obscurity on these miracles ; their efforts have only served to elucidate them.

The first is thus related by St. Luke : " as he approached the gate of the city a dead man was carried out, an only son to his mother, and she a widow, a great multitude from the city with her ; whom when the Lord saw he was moved with compassion for her ; and said to her do not weep ; and coming up he touched the coffin, (these who carried it stood) and said young man, I say to thee, arise ; and he who had been dead sat up, and began to speak, and he gave him to his mother : fear seized them all, and they magnified God," Luke VII.

There might have been a collusion, says the Sceptic, between Christ and the Widow, it is said that a drowning man will catch at a rush, despair suggests subterfuges, which carry improbability and sometimes impossibility, on their face, such is the present : it does not appear that Christ's possessions in Judea were great, or that he made any valuable acquisitions for the aggrandizement of himself or family. The pretended collusion would require no trifling sum : to purchase the perpetual silence of a woman of some note, of her son, of all persons concerned in a public funeral, was not easy, to pass unnoticed the impossibility of imposing on his disciples, of whom we shall speak hereafter.

To this first subterfuge the Sceptic adds a second : perhaps, says he, the young man was in a lethargic fit. Why not inform us by what extraordinary combination

combination of events Christ arrived at the very instant of his recovery? What amazing sagacity he must have had to discover that this young man, whom he had not seen, and who was thought dead by those, who saw him, was but in a lethargic fit, and that he would awake precisely at that instant of time, and in that place? What penetration of mind does our Sceptic display in his different suppositions?

His last subterfuge yet remains to be examined: St. Luke is the only Evangelist who relates this fact, and he was not present at it. True, but he is not the only one who believed it. The fact was never denied by the Jews, nor contradicted; if we may judge by his writings, St. Luke was not a man open to seduction; he must have had the fact from unquestionable authority, or he would not have related it: Men of sense are not impostors without private views.

The Evangelists did not write a history of Christ's miracles: their object was to shew that he was the Messias, promised and expected by the Jews, and to engage both them, and the Gentiles, to believe in him, and observe the maxims of his divine law, to evince the truth of his mission, and the indispensable necessity of obedience to his precepts: they spoke in general of his miracles, specifying some, which to them, and to us also, appeared unexceptionable, in this we admire their wisdom: Why so? because any one miraculous effect, beyond the reach of created power, is sufficient to authenticate his mission, and all the other miracles, which he wrought; as it was impossible that God, by an immediate interference, should authorize deception, or permit any deception in his name, without affording sufficient means to detect it.

But why did not all the Evangelists relate the same miracles?

miracles ? They did : for they say in general that he healed the sick, the lame and blind ; that he raised the dead, and cast out evil spirits. They did not always specify the same miracles because they did not consult each the other, nor act in concert having no imposture in view, hence each of the Evangelists insisted more particularly on what he thought sufficient for his purpose. Three of the Evangelists relate the resurrection of Jair's daughter : their simple narration leaves no room for suspicion : Christ on his return from the country of the Geraseni, who were displeas'd for the loss of their hogs, was met by the Prince of the Synagogue, a man of great note in the country, he tells Christ that his daughter was dying, and, prostrate at his feet, he pray'd him to come and heal her, on the way a messenger arriv'd, who inform'd them that the girl was dead. Christ tells the disconsolate father not to fear, and continues his journey ; at their arrival they found a tumult, tears and lamentations, some musical instruments playing, as was customary with the Jews ; Christ orders them all out, saying, the child is not dead but sleeps, thereby signifying that it was as easy for him to raise her from death, as to awake her from sleep : he then takes with him the girl's parents, and three of his disciples, as witnesses, whilst the croud derided him for attempting to awake a girl from death, which they thought impossible ; he then takes the girl by the hand, and order'd her to rise, which she did immediately ; the sarcastical derision of the multitude only serv'd to silence obloquy, and remove the most distant suspicion, or even colour of deception. This simple narration sets the powers of invention at defiance : there could have been no collusion with the prince, and his whole family. An impostor, on the news of her death, would have interrupted his journey ;

ney ; he would not dare to promise relief, which he must know was not within his power ; he could not presume that the girl was in a trance, and would recover at the very instant that he ordered, not before, all these circumstances leave no room for cavilling.

To set the vanity of our modern Sceptics in a clear light, the conjectures, on which they pretend to invalidate the truth of miracles, which have stood the test of ages, and obtained the suffrage of all polished nations, are here inserted :

They are, say they, related in such order as gives room for suspicion. The resurrection of Lazarus, the greatest of Christ's miracles, is omitted by Matthew, Mark, and Luke ; related by John, who wrote his gospel at an advanced age, when the witnesses were dead, he might then have invented this fact in honor of his master. It is not probable that the other three would have omitted it if the fact had not been supposed. The widow of Naim might have agreed with Christ, and her son might have feigned himself dead, or he might have been in a lethargy, and roused at that critical instant ; Jair's daughter might have been subject to vapours ; Christ himself said that she slept ; as he directed them to conceal the miracle, he did not think it unexceptionable ; the circumstances of Lazarus's resurrection render the miracle doubtful : Christ is said to have wept, to have called with a loud voice ; and Lazarus to have risen, his face covered with a towel, these circumstances found a suspicion of imposture, and the presumption is increased by the fury of the Jews, who resolved to put both Christ and Lazarus to death.

If to establish facts, or to efface pre-conceived opinions, the Evangelists had offered suspicions and surmises,

surmises, they would have been objects of universal derision : wild conjectures either for, or against history, are treated with contempt. The suspicions against the resurrection of the widow's son, and Jair's daughter, have been already discussed ; the injunction of silence is an indirect censure on vanity ; if the three Evangelists do not make special mention of the resurrection of Lazarus, it is not the only fact, which they pass unnoticed, it was not necessary to their purpose. They had assigned other miracles authentic, sufficient and equally effectual to establish the truth of Christ's mission : the resurrection of a dead body, whether four months or four minutes lifeless, is beyond the range of limited power ; the feeding of four or five thousand people with a few loaves of bread is not less so. If the three Evangelists had denied the fact, their denial would have been sufficient to invalidate St. John's relation ; their silence is totally immaterial : the silence of ten witnesses on a fact, of which they do not speak at all, does not affect the testimony of one, who asserts it.

It is true John was old when he wrote his Gospel, his authority must have been indisputable to obtain credit ; it is not possible that any man relating miraculous events of public notoriety, within the memory of man, of which the world had not heard before, should obtain credit on his bare assertion. If Lazarus was not living when John wrote his Gospel, of the immense number of Jews who embraced the christian religion in Jerusalem, Judea and elsewhere, some hundreds were yet living, who knew the fact, either on the testimony of their own senses, or from the relation of ocular witnesses.

The circumstances, which in our sophist's opinion found a suspicion, are calculated on principles of

common sense to remove every suspicion : the Saviour asked the Jews where they had laid him, in order to extort from them an acknowledgement of his death, and that he had lain four days in the grave ; he ordered them to remove the stone that they might see the corpse, which they had interred ; he called aloud that they might be witnesses of the power, which he exercised over death ; Lazarus came forth bound as he was buried, Christ ordered them to loose him, to convince them it was not a phantom, but the very man, whom they had deposited in the grave.

As St. John had written his Gospel expressly to demonstrate the divinity of Jesus Christ against the errors of Ebion, Cerinthus and others, it was natural for them to insist more particularly on these miracles, in which, the independent and almighty power of Christ was most visible. In his relation of the resurrection of Lazarus the true character of Christ is manifest, that is, the unity of his person in the divine and human nature : he wept, which is a function peculiar to man ; he groaned in spirit, indignant at the cruelty of the demon, by whose envy sin, and death the wages of sin, had entered the world ; the destruction of these enemies was the great end of his mission. He lifted up his eyes to the father, that they might see it was in the name of the true God he taught ; by his own almighty power he ordered the dead man to rise, and was instantly obeyed, shewing that he himself was God, one with the father, as he had said, and exercising the same power ; in all this there could have been no deception, nor could God permit a deception in his name, which was inaccessible to detection.

In like manner all the circumstances of the cure of the blind man, John IX, shew him to have been the Creator, he made clay with his spittle, put it on the
blind

blind man's eyes, thus forming the most delicate organ of the human frame of the same matter, of which he had originally formed the whole body. Considered as a medical application, clay is better calculated to destroy sight, than to produce it. He sent the man through the city, to the pool of Siloe, at the foot of Mount Sion, that the citizens might be witnesses of the power, which he exercised, absent as well as present ; after he had washed in the pool his eyes were opened, or, to speak more correctly, the organs of sight were then formed. The man's return with his eyes open, entire, and perfect, surprised all those, who knew him from his birth, and who saw him go blind to the pool ; the Pharisees alarmed, interrogate him in the most artful manner, to obtain something from his answers to veil a truth destructive of their own authority ; their malice only served to remove every exception ; in despair they have recourse to the circumstance of the sabbath, pretending that making clay with the spittle, and putting it on the eyes, was a violation of the sabbath. However ridiculous the pretence it had the desired effect on some ; but the resurrection of Lazarus was open to no pretence ; hence they resolved to murder him, and Jesus Christ also, thinking that, the only effectual means of removing a censor of such authority. At his entrance into Jerusalem, hearing the croud attest that he had called Lazarus from the tomb, all efforts, say they, are vain : " the whole world follows him," John IX. 19. In the Council which they assembled, the only accusation brought against him was, that he wrought miracles, and if they permitted him to continue, that all would believe in him, John XI. 47. But if these miracles were not supposed, why did not the priests and Pharisees, who were best qualified

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to examine such facts, believe in them? Some did, many did not; some who did, dared not avow it, for which the Evangelist assigns a very simple reason, "many of the princes believed in him, but, because of the Pharisees, they did not confess, lest they should be expelled the synagogue, they loved the glory of men, more than the glory of God," John XII. 42—43.

The seeming regularity of the Pharisees, that appearance of sanctity, which they assumed, gave them an ascendant over the minds of the people, who believed them such as they appeared; this ascendant was to them a source of wealth and power; it fed their ambition, and their avarice, these two great springs of action. Christ was in their mind a most importunate rival, his doctrine destructive of their ascendancy, cancelling at once their honors and interests: he unmasked their hypocrisy, undeceived the people, ruined their credit; they of course considered him as their capital enemy, and to prevent their own ruin, resolved on his. As the same causes, acting in similar circumstances, invariably produce the same effects, we find an opposition made to the Gospel, in all ages, on the very principles, on which the opposition of the Pharisees to Christ himself was founded. Thus when Paul preaches against idolatry in Ephesus, Demetrius the silver-smith, who employed many workmen in the fabrication of small silver temples, like the great temple of Diana, said to them: "you see, and hear, that, not only at Ephesus, but all over Asia, this Paul persuades, and averts, a great multitude saying they are not Gods, which are made by hands, the temples of the great Diana will be thought nothing of," Acts XIX. 26. To enflame their zeal for the honor of the goddess, he had pre-
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faced his discourse by saying, " you know that our gain is by this trade." v. 25.

From authentic history we know the arts, which were practised by the ministers of the heathen temples to support the credit of their Idols, and preserve them from that destruction, which the christian system threatened ; the pretended responses of their oracles desiring the extermination of christians as enemies not only to the Gods, but to their Kings. Was it pure zeal for the glory of their idols ? No. These impostors could not be ignorant of the vanity of their Idols, and of the falsehood of the responses, which they themselves, had forged, but they masked their private views under the cloak of zeal for the honor of their Idols, the same is true of all the different leaders of factions amongst christians : not one of these new teachers, who had not the gratification of some favourite passion in view, the pretended discovery of some abuse was a mask to conceal the real motive of the revolt. The simple were deluded with the idea of reform, the more clear sighted saw a field open to ambition, a removal of restraints was a strong allurements to the sensual ; novelty an inducement to many. A party is soon formed ; to encrease the party, recourse is had to artifice : the passions of the great are flattered ; misrepresentation of the tenets of the primitive system industriously circulated, the indiscretion of any of its ministers maliciously exaggerated ; the crimes, whether real or pretended, of individuals, ascribed to the whole body, the most calumnious invectives published with effrontery, every art practised that imagination can suggest to efface the light of truth, and excite an aversion to the abjured communion. The ministers of the new order, in self defence, must endeavour to continue the deception. They incessantly

incessantly repeat the same calumnious misrepresentations, and, though a thousand times refuted by authentic documents, they continue to amuse their deluded followers by the same idle tales. The opposition of the Pharisees continues to the present day in their successors, the sons of pride ; our modern Sophists are more inexcusable, for they have had more unequivocal proof of the divinity of Christ, than the Pharisees had : all the miracles, which the Pharisees saw, are yet visible in their effect, the destruction of idolatry, and the conversion of the world, as was foretold. This effect, of which our Sophists are witnesses, against their will, the Pharisees did not see, their obstinacy, therefore, however criminal, was not so inexcusable, nor will its punishment be so great.

In the incredulity of the Jews our Sophists pretend to discover another cause of suspicion : if, say they, the miracles, which are said to be effected at the birth of Christ be combined with these which he is said to have wrought in his life time, the Jews must have believed in him. Could we, says a Jew, who have told the world that one would come from God to punish the wicked, treat him ignominiously when he came ? To the Jew the writer replies as he does to his brother the Deist, that the question argues a fund of stupidity : the magistrate, who sacrifices justice to his private views ; the woman who dupes and dishonors her husband ; the highway-man who robs, the assassin, who murders for hire, disregard truth, justice and all the restraints of reason and religion ; so did the Jews ; the miscreants, who brought Christ before Pilate, wrapped up in self-created importance, thought their appearance sufficient to convict him of their calumnious charges ; their confidence was great in proportion to the injustice
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of their cause: "if this man were not a malefactor would we have delivered him up to thee?" John xviii.

The appearance of the Angel to a few shepherds, men of little note, made no impression on the public at large; the arrival of the wise men was public and threw the whole city into confusion; they said that they were come to adore him, who was born King of the Jews. It was thought that this young prince was cut off by Herod in the general massacre of the children; few if any knew his escape into Egypt: Joseph and Mary were strangers in Bethlehem and had retired in silence before the massacre, on their return from Egypt they lived in a different part of the country in great obscurity. Christ was thought son to a mechanic, by none suspected to be that King, whom the wise men came to adore.—Thirty years were more than sufficient to efface the remembrance of these events when nothing occurred to refresh it. The disappointment of the Jews at seeing a Messias, whom they expected to reinstate their monarchy in Solomon's glory, and make them masters of the world, preaching poverty and humility without a place to repose his wearied limbs, embittered their minds and indisposed them against himself and his miracles, if he were to come again with the same appearance of poverty and humility, teaching the same doctrine, working the same miracles, he would meet the same opposition.

Passages are cited, mutilated, unconnected with antecedents and consequents, which determine the sense, some distorted from the intended signification, and others totally supposed, in order to mislead the uninformed, and induce them to believe that early writers, Origen, Eucher, Ambrose, Hilary, Irenæus, Jerome and others, did not think the miracles of
Christ

Christ real, or to be understood in the literal sense, though from his miracles they unanimously demonstrate his divinity, to enforce this truth citations are useless. They have written whole books to demonstrate the truth and reality of Christ's miracles; in their different explications, from which passages are artfully extracted, they pre-suppose the historical truth, from it they deduce different significations: the miracles of Christ were instructive as was his words; they have their language, if they be understood: but this silent language, which miracles speak, suppose, of all necessity, the reality of the facts: thus St. Paul says that Abraham's two wives, Agar and Sarah, signify the old and new testament, as Agar was a slave, and Sarah a free woman, but if Abraham had not these two wives in reality, the one a slave and the other a free woman, they could not be figurative of the old and new testament. A non-entity is no sign. In like manner, St. Austin says, that Jair's daughter raised from death, signified the Jewish people, but if she had not been raised there could have been neither sign nor signification.

Some loose expressions of Origen, in a work which abounds with errors, are artfully distorted against the sense of the author. There are, he says, some things written, which have not happened, which could not happen. The assertion is true: it is written that at the coming of the Messias, the wolf, that fierce and ravenous animal, would feed with the lamb; that the panther would sleep with the kid; that the calf, the bull, and the lion, would pasture together, that the ox and the bear would have their young in the same cavern; that the lion would eat straw with the ox. These things have not happened, nor will they happen. In these expressions, manifestly

festly figurative is announced the peace of the world at Christ's birth, and the conversion of the Heathens from the savage cruelty, natural to these ferocious animals, to the meekness of the lamb.

From an exuberance of imagination, Origen thought he found allegorical significations where they were not ; but the historical truth of miraculous facts recorded in the scriptures he never denied ; from the historical truth he deduced his fanciful significations : his works against Celsus contain conclusive evidence of the truth of miracles ; in them, the teachers of our professed Sceptics have found all their pretended difficulties against truth, there also they might have found the most satisfactory solution. The writer does not accuse the modern fry of having recourse to Origen's Works : to ignorance and dissipation they are unintelligible.

As the jaundiced eye refers the yellow hue to every object it sees, so impiety ascribes the confusion of its own dreams to the truth, which condemns it. Mole hills are mountains ; shadows are metamorphosed into substances, in the delirium of impiety. There is no fact, however authentic, in which it does not find some circumstance to found a suspicion, and the most distant suspicion is in its idea convincing evidence. The narration of the Evangelists is not sufficiently detailed ; if more circumstantial, our Sceptics would find greater cause of suspicion ; the persons raised from death, or relieved from diseases, are not exactly described ; the accounts they brought from the other world are not transmitted ; why were not these miracles wrought in favor of men of note in Judea ? Why were not their Princes, their Nobles, raised from death ? Was it not unjust, and injurious, to permit the demons to destroy the swine ; an usurpation of authority to drive the traders' out

of the temple ; a flagrant injustice to overturn the money changer's tables, and scatter their money on the floor ? Unlawful to take figs from a tree without the owner's permission ? Why expect to find them on the tree when it was not the proper season ? In the transfiguration there was room for imposture : he retired to a mountain, where the refraction of light, through some cloud, might have dazzled his disciples. He might have artfully engaged the Samaritan Woman to disclose her own secrets, and then pretend to have known them by the spirit of prophecy. The women, who are said to be cured of different diseases, might have been subject to vapours, sick, in imagination : from which they might have been relieved by the confidence they placed in his assurances. To these impertinent questions, and wild conjectures, which is, in substance, all that Sceptics find to censure, or suspect, the reply is extremely simple : the Evangelists were not public notaries, nor did they write for Sceptics : they were plain men, who told plain truth in plain language ; a circumstantial history of Christ's miracles, or of the persons relieved, was foreign to their purpose, and entirely useless : circumstances of time, place or person, are immaterial ; a fact, beyond the limits of human power, is at all times, in all places, and with respect to all persons, impossible to man. To God neither time, place, person, or situation, give opposition : there is nothing difficult when omnipotence is the agent.

The attestation of persons raised from the dead would be suspected, as is their resurrection ; their observations, on the other world, might gratify idle curiosity, they could answer no other purpose. The joys of Heaven, the horrors of Hell, the narrow path, which leads to the former, and the broad way and rapid descent, through which all Sceptics roll on to the

the latter, are described by Christ himself, who was better informed.

The destruction of the swine seems rather an act of justice : swine's flesh was forbidden by the Jewish law, the Samaritans furnished both the temptation and means to disobey the precept. From this event we learn some important truths : the intense malice of the demon, his destructive powers ; his irreconcilable enmity even to his slaves ; but we learn also that, however great his natural powers of destruction may be, he cannot exert them without an immediate permission.

In the expulsion of the money changers and traders from the temple, there is no room for censure. It was the house of his father, which they prophaned, he very justly expelled them. It is one of these instances, in which his power, even over the wicked, is conspicuous : one of their princes, perhaps, would not have done it with impunity ; their ready compliance with his injunction, submission to an ignominious chastisement, and silence, when publicly charged with injustice by an obscure individual, possessed of no place, to which political power is annexed, must have been the effect of an invisible power. In the course of natural events it is impossible. The fig-tree, being on the way, was perhaps for the use of the public, if it had an owner, by his absolute will, he might have disposed of the tree, and its owner. His humanity, united to the divinity, was subject to the natural affections of human nature, according to his will. His hunger was then voluntary, a strong indication of his ardent desire of the fruits of justice and sanctity ; his access to the tree at an unseasonable time, shews that he expects these fruits at all times, and his prohibition to bear fruit in future, at which the tree immediately withered, shews the danger

danger of his finding nothing but leaves, that is vain projects, or ineffectual resolutions. He himself said, in the parable of the fig tree, Luke XIII, "It bears no fruit, cut it down."

To shew that he was Creator of the different classes of Beings, which compose the Universe, he gave signal instances of his power over them all: the demons he expelled, the sick he healed, the dead he raised, the sea and wind obeyed his order. The instances of his power, in conferring favors, are numberless; of inflicting punishments there are but three: the chastisement of the Money Changers, which was extremely moderate, from which we learn, that he punishes with regret, and sparingly, whilst his favors flow from the fulness of his heart, and are without measure. The Swine irrational, and the fig tree inanimate, he totally destroyed, intimating that his power extended over the whole of the Creation. As common father his cares extended to all his children, without distinction or discrimination; the poor were more frequently relieved, because they were numerous, and their wants were greater; the rich were not excluded, if they did not exclude themselves, as too many of them, engaged in pursuits of pleasure, or something worse, unfortunately did. If his enemies complained that he was more profuse of his favors to strangers, than to his fellow citizens, he replied, that in the days of Elias there were many widows in Judea, and that he was sent to a Sidonian; and that, in the days of Naaman, the Syrian, there were many lepers in Israel, and not one of them cleansed. There is no title to extraordinary graces; where there is no title there is no claim, consequently no acceptation of persons, which is a sin against distributive justice.

To refer the transfiguration of Christ to the refraction of light, argues the most contemptible ignorance:

ance : refracted light shews the object, from which it is emitted, in the direction in which the refracted ray comes to the eye ; thus, from the refraction of its rays, by the atmosphere, the sun appears above the horizon, when it is in reality below it, this is called, by Astronomers, “ *the sun’s apparent rising* ;” but refracted light will not form articulate sounds ; it will not shew three men speaking aloud and intelligibly, where there is but one : our assent to the truth of the fact rests on the sincerity of the witnesses ; which will be discussed in the course of the work.

Three witnesses were chosen as necessary to attest the fact, Moses from the place of souls, and Elias, from the place of his rest, appeared with him ; the former attesting his power over the dead, and the latter his supreme authority over the living ; both shewing that he was not one of the Prophets, as was thought by the Jews ; but the Messias, whom the law, of which Moses was the minister, and the Prophets, of whom Elias was the chief, had promised. They spoke of his departure, which he was to make at Jerusalem, the term *Exodos*, employed by St. Luke, may signify, indifferently, his departure from life on the cross, or his departure from this visible world by his ascension ; of all important subjects, the most important.

Their sudden disappearance, leaving Christ alone on the mountain, indicates that the law and prophets were no more ; that to Christ alone the world must look for salvation and instruction ; that in him all types and figures were fulfilled.

They appeared in glory to inform us that Christ’s elect will be similar to him ; to engage us to persevere in the rugged path, which he has traced, in order to arrive at the end, a glimpse of which had thrown the witnesses into an extacy. Other reasons

sions are assigned, but these are sufficient to evince not only the truth, but the necessity of this miracle.

It is with great propriety called a transfiguration ; the Greek term *morphè* uniformly signifies the exterior appearance, or figure, not the essential parts which constitute the substance, both in the old and new testament : thus, Daniel iv, 33, " my shape returned," *morphè mou*, and V. 6. " then the King's countenance" *morphè* " was changed," Mark xvi, 12, " he was shewn in another shape, *etere morphè*."

In his transfiguration the change was confined to the exterior form : " his face was resplendent as the sun, and his clothes were white as snow.

Christ's instruction to the Samaritan woman was not intended for her exclusively ; millions have learned from it " that God is a spirit, and must be adored in spirit and truth ; that the time was come when sacrifices, either in the temple of Jerusalem, or the mount of Garazim, would be no longer acceptable." Was it from the Samaritan that Christ had learned these secrets ? If so she was a most intelligent woman. These imaginary diseases, which our sceptics have detected, are strong indications of some mental derangement at home : in all imaginary distempers there is something real, the patient mistakes it. Moral remedies may engage him to have recourse to proper physical remedies, and so remove the disease ; our sophists are diseased at heart, the head feels it, but mistakes the nature and seat of the distemper. Obstinacy, the eldest daughter of pride, renders their disease incurable. Is the imagination of a dead man easily rectified ? of a man born blind ? his imagination must be a most powerful agent to form the organs of sight instantaneously. Does imagination cure the deaf, the dumb, the maimed ? Women afflicted, the one eighteen years, another twelve,

twelve, with no uncommon disease, an issue of blood? There is something so stupidly impudent in pretending to invalidate a well attested fact, by a surmised possibility, that it is irksome to discuss it.

We are come to the last subterfuge of impiety, the miracles of Christ are not attested by the Jews; the controversial writings of the Jews, in which these miracles were refuted, might have been suppressed by the Christians; it appears, even from the Evangelists, that he did not heal all the sick, who were brought to him; that he healed but one at the Pool of Bethesda, though there were many sick there at the time; that he could not work miracles in his own country. All these circumstances, say our sophists, found a suspicion that his history was supposed by the Evangelists, and that there was nothing real in his pretended miracles.

How these sublime writers discovered that Christ's miracles were not attested by the Jews, we plain men are at a loss to conjecture, the Apostles were Jews, the primitive Church in Jerusalem, consisting of many thousands, of whom a great number were of the sacerdotal order, was entirely composed of Jews: all these believed, and attested, the miracles of Christ. The Scribes and Pharisees, his avowed enemies, did not deny them: they had recourse to artful evasions to elude the force of them. Cavilling on the circumstance of the Sabbath, as if it were unlawful to heal the sick on that day, if they found no circumstance to censure, ascribing them to Beelzebub; but the facts they did not deny, nor do their descendants, to the present day.

When we are told who were these Jewish writers, who refuted the miracles of Christ, how, when, by whom, or where, their works have been suppressed; why the Jews connived at such suppression, we shall discuss

discuss that article. We have yet the works of Josephus, an able writer, and more able statesman, who never failed to sacrifice truth to his political views : a striking instance we have in his History of the Jewish Antiquities. In it he artfully diminishes the force of the miracles recorded in the Old Testament, and throws a shade over every thing he thought might give offence to the Heathens. His application of the prophecies concerning the Messias, to Vespasian, a Heathen Emperor, has damned his memory, without redemption. Yet in his works, however grateful it might have been to his patrons, we find no refutation of the miracles of Christ, or his Apostles ; nor do we find any such refutation in the works of Philo, a better man, though not more favourable to Christianity ; its doctrines he professedly rejects : in that book, which he entitled, " Abraham's Migrations," he says, there were amongst the Jews a sort of people, who thought the laws were nothing else but signs of spiritual things ; that they condemned the letter to seek the spirit ; that they endeavoured to abolish the sabbath, circumcision and festivals, introduced by Moses ; that, in their opinion, true circumcision consisted in repressing evil desires and affections. He accuses these innovators of inconsistency and levity, exhorts his fellow Jews to resist these new opinions, and make no change in what had been wisely established by their ancestors.

The severity of his censure, on the new doctrine, as subversive of the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic Law, which the Christians uniformly taught to have been figurative, and to have ceased on the establishment of the new law, is decisive evidence that he would have attempted to invalidate the miracles, by which its divine original is attested, if he saw any probability of success. To have mentioned them, without

without a solid refutation, would have been ruinous to his cause, he therefore wisely passed them unnoticed. This reasoning is applicable to Josephus, though the more intelligent Critics judge that passage, in which he speaks of Christ and his miracles, genuine; it is in his style; the occasion required it: speaking of Pilate, he could not with propriety have omitted the most remarkable event of his administration. Eusebius, a most diligent writer, cites it, *Demon. Evan. Lib. 3, N. 7*, and also. *Hist. Ecc. Lib. 1, Cap. 1.* Nicephorus—*Hist. Ecc. Lib. 1, Cap. 1.* Suidas—*Lex. Art. Josephē*, and Jerom, cite it. Josephus speaks of John Baptist, *Lib. 18, Cap. 5, N. 6.* and of St. James, the brother of our Lord, *Lib. 20, Cap. 9. N. 1.* Of these testimonies, though rejected by some modern Critics, there is conclusive evidence: Origen cites them, in his book against Celsus, No. 47, which he would not dare to have done, if they were not genuine. They are also cited by Eusebius, *Hist. Ecc. Lib. 2, Cap. 23*, and by St. Jerom, *De. Scrip. Eccl.*

The passage is found in the 18th Book of Jewish Antiquities, Chap. 3, No. 4, and is thus conceived: “at that time (that is in Pilate’s time) was Jesus, a wise man, if it be just to call him a man: for he was the effector of wonderful works; the teacher of men, who receive truth with pleasure; he attracted many Jews and many Gentiles. This was that Christ, whom Pilate, on the delation of our chief men, crucified; they who had loved him before did not cease to love him; he appeared to them on the third day, returned to life. These and a thousand other wonderful things, had been foretold by the Prophets; from him arose the nation of Christians, which continues to the present day.”

There are strong reasons to suspect an interpolation, but none conclusive. Josephus did not believe in

Christ—true, he did not believe him God equal to his eternal father, as the disciples did ; but it is not clear that he did not believe him to be the Messias announced by the Prophets : he most certainly did not believe Vespasian, a professed idolater, to be the Messias, though, courtier like, he flattered him with the title. He might, like his brethren of whom St. John speaks, have believed in him, and not avow it : because, says the Evangelist, they “loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.” John xii, 43.

This testimony has not been cited by the primitive apologists of christianity. True : they did not rest the justice of their cause on the authority of a court flatterer, whose duplicity they abhorred. His authority would have no force against the heathens, with whom they reasoned ; it might have some weight with the Jews ; but they did not dispute the truth of Christ’s miracles ; they ascribed them to magic, which they had learned in Egypt, and endeavored to elude the force of them under different pretences.

It is said that the christians, in the third century, inserted the passage in Josephus’s work. That is extremely improbable : no reason can be assigned why the christians should interpolate a work, which they at all times disregarded, and continue to disregard. The authority of a court flatterer, who sacrifices truth to private views, is of little weight for, or against, any cause. Christian writers adduce vouchers of an unblemished character. It is highly probable that the passage was retrenched from many copies by the Jews, because it is not very honorable to themselves, or their ancestors.

That Christ did not work miracles, at the requisition of the Pharisees, is true ; he disregarded the desire of Herod also. It was inconsistent with his wisdom to gratify idle curiosity. The miracles, which
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the Pharisees had seen, only served to increase their animosity : “ There came to him the blind and the lame, in the temple, and he healed them. The Chief Priests, and Pharisees, seeing the wonderful things which he did, and hearing the children crying out, and saying—Hosanna to the Son of David—were moved with indignation.” Math. xxi, 15-16. The signs, which they required, would not diminish the virulence of their ulcerated minds.

If he could not work miracles in his own country, it was not through impotence, but because he could not, with propriety, work miracles amongst an incredulous people, which would have no other effect but to render them inexcusable, we find him reward the piety of some, even there : “ he did not work many miracles, on account of their incredulity.” Matth. xiii, 58. And Mark, who says that he could not work any miracles, there adds, in the same sentence, that he healed a few sick persons. Mark vi, 5. In the same sense the Angel said to Lot, Gen. xix, 22, “ I can do nothing until you go there (to Segor.) The Angel’s power was independent on Lot’s safety ; but he could not, with propriety, exercise his terrible commission until Lot was in a place of safety.

The immediate effect of Christ’s miracles was to manifest, to the Jews, the divinity of his mission, and, by necessary consequence, the truth of his doctrine : when he changed the water into wine at Cana : the Evangelist says “ he manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him,” John ii, 11 ; and he adds, v, 23, “ when he was at Jerusalem, at the Passover upon the Festival Day, many believed in his name, seeing the signs which he effected.” Hence Nicodemus came at night, and said to him : “ Rabbi, we know that you came from God a teacher : for no one can do these signs, which you do, if God be not with him.” John

iii, 2. For the truth of his mission Christ frequently appealed to his miracles. Thus, John v, 36, he said to the Jews: "But I have a greater testimony than that of John: the works, which the father hath given me, that I may effect them: these works, which I do, they give testimony of me, that the father sent me. Immediately before he ordered Lazarus to rise from the tomb, he lift up his eyes to his father, saying: "I thank thee that thou hast heard me; I knew that thou hearest me always, but because of the people, who stand about, have I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." John xi, 42.

His miracles, attesting the divinity of his mission, and thereby rendering the truth of his doctrine unquestionable, afford conclusive evidence of his divinity. To raise to life, or form the organs of sight, is not within the limits of created power. Hence the blind man, in reply to the Pharisees, says: "From the age it has not been heard that any man opened the eyes of one born blind." John ix, 32.

It was not by invocation, but by his own inherent power, that Christ effected these works, which transcend the limits of created power. Hence St. Luke says, vi, 19, "a virtue (*dunamis*) went out from him, and healed them all." Heltaught expressly that he was God, one with the father, possessed of the same independent and almighty power; and, in confirmation of this truth, he frequently appealed to his miracles. Thus when the Jews surrounded him, in Solomon's porch, and said: "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you be the Christ (the Messias) tell us plainly. Jesus answered them: I speak to you, and you do not believe me; the works, which I do, in the name of the father, they give testimony of me." John x, 25. After declaring that he would give eternal life to his sheep,
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that no power could wrest them out of his hands, he assigns the reason—because no power can wrest them out of the hand of the father—he immediately adds: *I and the father are one*; that is, one in essence, one in power. The Jews took up stones to stone him for blasphemy: because, said they, “that, being a man, you make yourself God.” To which he replied, that in their law the Prophets were, in a certain sense, called Gods, without blasphemy; that it was not blasphemy in him, whom God had sanctified, and sent into the world, to call himself Son of God: “If I do not the works of my father,” said he, 37, “believe me not; but if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works: that you may know, and believe, that the father is in me, and I in the father.” John x.

He in the same manner offered his miracles in proof of his divinity when Philip desired to see the father: “do you not believe said he, that I am in the father and the father in me? Otherwise believe me for these works,” John xiv, 11.

And because these his miracles were irresistible proofs of his divinity, he declared that the Jews who persisted in their incredulity, were inexcusable, “if I did not come and speak to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates me, hates my father. If I had not done works in them, which no other did, they would not have sin; but now they have seen, and they hate both me and my father,” John XV. 22, &c.

The divinity of Christ, manifest in his works and words, the Jews refused to acknowledge. This article of his doctrine they clearly understood, and of all others most strenuously opposed. They persecuted him for a pretended violation of the sabbath, because he had healed a sick man at the pool of Bethsaida

Bethsaida on that day ; but their indignation was increased beyond measure at his reply, in which his equality with the father was stated : “ Christ replied to them : my father worketh until now, and I also work. For this, therefore, the Jews sought yet more to kill him, not only because he broke the sabbath, but because he said that God was his proper father, “ *Patera idion,*” making himself equal to God,” John V. 17, and seq.

The Jews therefore understood his doctrine in the true sense, that he was Son of God by nature, not by adoption : in this latter sense there could have been no accusation of blasphemy : for the Jews called themselves the Sons of God by adoption : “ They said then to him : we are not born of fornication, we have one father, God.” John viii, 41.

That it was the intended sense is manifest—the words can bear no other signification—“ The father worketh until now, and I work as if he had said though the father had ceased on the Sabbath Day, from the works, which he had created, he yet continues to create, and to preserve his creatures, without a violation of the Sabbath—this, his operation, is mine, in it there is no violation of the Sabbath. So far from diminishing the force of an expression, which had excited their indignation, he continued to explain it more clearly : “ Then Jesus answered, and said to them : Amen, amen, the Son cannot do any thing of himself but what he sees the father do : for what things soever he does, these the Son also does in like manner as the father raises the dead, and gives life, so the Son gives life to whom he will that all men may honor the Son as they honor the father—he who does not honor the Son does not honor the father, who sent him Amen, amen, I say unto you, the hour comes, it is now, when the dead shall hear the

the voice of the Son of God, and they who will hear shall live : for as the father hath life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have life in himself." *ibidem*.

In the whole of this discourse he claims the same power, the same honor, the same life in himself, that is, the same eternity, in a word, the same divine nature with the father ; and, for the truth of this doctrine, he refers them to the testimony of the father, manifest in his works : " I have," said he, " a greater testimony than that of John—the works which the father gave me to effect, these works, which I perform give testimony of me, that the father sent me," *ibidem*. Their incredulity he declared inexcusable, because it was the result of groundless, and virulent animosity, condemned by the voice of reason : for where there is an exercise of the divine power, reason, says the agent, must be God ; they saw this power in its effects, and obstinately refused to acknowledge the divinity of the agent.

As Christ taught by word and example he frequently recommended secrecy to those, whom he relieved, giving his disciples to understand that vanity is to have no share in their works. The desire of popular applause is a vice which he severely censured in the Pharisees. It is at present, as it was then, the spring of action in the sons of pride. Our modern sceptics, in imitation of their ancestors, the Heathen Philosophers, think it a virtue.

Of the miracles of Christ many were of such a nature as not to be concealed. The feeding of four or five thousand people, with a few loaves, the resurrection of the widow of Naim's son, that of Lazarus, and many other miracles, were facts of public notoriety, which could not be concealed.

So public, so well attested, and so universally believed were the miracles of Christ, that the heathen writers

writers against Christianity admitted them : we learn from Origen's first book against Celsus, No. 49, and seq. that this irreconcilable enemy to Christianity believed the miracles of Christ genuine, he endeavoured to invalidate their force, under pretence that such prodigies had been effected by magicians.

Porphyrius, not less inimical than Celsus, inadvertently acknowledged Christ's power over their pretended Gods : " since that Jesus is worshipped," said he, *Ab. Euf. Prefl. Evan. Lib. 5°. Cap. 1°*, " we can obtain no advantage from the Gods, nor is it wonderful if, after so many years, the city be afflicted, since *Æsculapius* and the other Gods are absent from it.

" That philosopher," says St. Austin, *De. Liv. Dei. Lib. 19, Cap. 23, No. 2*, " speaks well of Christ, as if forgetting the contumely of which we have spoken ; or, as if the Gods in a dream had blasphemed Christ, and, awaking, knew him to be good and worthy of praise. Finally, as if going to pronounce something wonderful and incredible, Porphyrius says it will appear to some extraordinary what we are going to say : the Gods have pronounced that Christ most pious, and made immortal, and remembered him with good words. He then," continues St. Austin, " subjoins some oracles of the Gods blaspheming Christians, and after this he says : to those who asked if Christ was a God, Hecate replied : since you know how the immortal soul walks after the body, but that which is cut off from wisdom for ever wanders. That soul is of a most excellent man for piety, this they (the Christians) adore, truth being far from them." After St. Austin had cited some other oracles, from Porphyrius, to the honor of Christ, though not so to Christians, he thus concludes, *No. 3*, " who does not see that these oracles were
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torged by this artful enemy, who, whilst he praises Christ, traduces Christians, or, if such answers were given by these unclean spirits, they were intended to preclude the way of salvation, in which a man must be a Christian.

Hierocles, who, under Dioclesien, persecuted Christianity with his sword and his pen, in the book which he inscribed *Philalethe*, inveighs against Christians, who praised Christ for restoring sight to the blind, and doing other things equally wonderful. He institutes a comparison between the miracles of Christ, and those of Apollonius, of Tyane, after adducing many pretended miracles of this celebrated impostor, he thus concludes: "to what end have I commemorated these things? That our solid and accurate judgment of all things may appear, and the levity of Christians: we do not think him, who has done these great things a God, but a man dear and pleasing to the Gods, they on the contrary for a few prodigies call their Jesus *God*."

As to the pretended miracles of Apollonius of Tyane, which are said to have been written by his colleague Darias, and repeated by Philostratus two hundred years after, from some memorials furnished by Julia, wife to the Emperor Septimus Severus. They are a tiffue of absurd fables, offensive to common sense. Philostratus, who seems to have the most profound respect for his hero, makes him understand the language of birds and beasts, which, he says, he learnt from the Arabs. In the 8th chapter of his 4th book, he says, that Apollonius, invited to the wedding of his friend Menippas, whilst they were at table, informed his friend that the bride was a she demon, the she demon immediately disappeared, leaving them all in consternation and fear. In this rhapsody there are many tales equally absurd.

A judicious critic, speaking of Philostratus, says: his work excites a contempt for the historian, and indignation against the impostor, whose history he writes. In defence of the historian, some pretend that it was a romance, which he composed for the amusement of the Empress, his benefactress.

Even Julian, the apostate, whose hatred knew no bounds, though he affected to despise Christians, whom he called Galileans, admitted the miracles of Christ. It is true that ill-fated miscreant was so infatuated with the mysterious rites of augurs, soothsayers, and magicians, that he thought greater miracles might have been effected by them. Hence he says that Christ done nothing great, "if it be not thought a great matter that he cured the lame and blind, and adjured some people possessed by demons, in the streets of Bethsaida and Bethania," Ap. Cyr. Lib. 6, Con. Jul.

Whatever signs apparently transcending the power of man, and exciting his astonishment, the artful illusions of Anti-Christ, or other false Prophets, may seem to effect, or the Demon, by his sagacity in discovering natural agents, and his power of transferring them almost instantaneously from places however distant, and applying them to subjects naturally disposed for their reception, may in reality effect, none can be deceived by these signs, but those who are willing to be deceived, because they have been told that such signs would be given by false Prophets, in order to deceive. In the pretended miracles of Anti-Christ there will be nothing real: St. Paul expressly calls them *lying prodigies*, 2. Thes. ii. 9. He there assigns the reason why God will permit these illusions to impose on the wicked: "because," says he, "they did not receive the charity of truth," that is, the truth in charity. It has been already observed, that

that the operation of the Demon, in order to deceive, is one of God's most severe judgments ; but he permits no such operation in his own name, nor in any conjuncture, in which reason cannot discover the cheat.

Of all facts upon record, in the annals of the world, there is not one so well attested as the resurrection of Christ, and his ascension into Heaven ; his greatest enemies have, by their exertions to efface his name, rendered the fact of his resurrection incontrovertible : shortly after his interment the Jews, who had conspired against him, came to Pilate, and told him that *the Seducer*, as they called Christ, had promised to rise from the dead after three days, if the body should disappear, this would establish all the errors, which he had taught. Pilate directed them to take the guard, and secure the sepulchre. Nothing was omitted which prudence could suggest. The effect of these precautions was to remove the most distant suspicion of illusion, and make the most inveterate enemies of Christ, the first witnesses of his triumph. They did not attest the fact ; true. Few men are fond to give evidence of their own guilt ; but their only subterfuge is equal to a confession ; the disciples, say they, stole the body whilst the guards slept. The testimony of a sleeping witness is a mockery, to pass unnoticed the improbability of a guard of well disciplined soldiers all sleeping on their post at the same time, and the impossibility of removing a great stone from the entrance of the sepulchre, and carrying off the body, without awaking any one of them.

The falsehood of the supposition is manifest ; if the disciples had stolen the body, they must have known that he did not rise from the dead ; that he was an impostor, who imposed on their simplicity ;
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and, as for his sake, they had exposed themselves to the enmity of their nation, they must have then at least abandoned him. The contrary has happened; though they basely deserted him before his death, whilst they had great expectancies from his power; and could hardly prevail on themselves to believe his resurrection real, after they had seen him, yet, upon conviction of the truth, they were no more to be deterred by threats or tortures, by torments or death. Their words and actions breathe nothing but sincerity. They did not remove to a distant country, nor did they wait until time had effaced the memory of the transaction; but whilst it was yet recent, whilst the impression of his ignominious death was yet strong on the public mind, they appeared in the temple, where the Priests presided, who were his accusers, there they attested the truth: it was believed by thousands, and not denied by Christ's most inveterate enemies. Their charge against the principal Jews was of the most atrocious kind: "The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his son Jesus, whom you delivered over, and denied, before Pilate, who judged him to be dismissed; but you denied the just and the holy one, and desired a murderer to be granted to you; but the author of life you killed, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses," Acts iii, 13, 14, 15. An accusation of a more heinous nature is not upon record in the annals of mankind. And this accusation is founded on the fact of Christ's resurrection: for if he did not rise he was an impostor, and the Jews were perfectly justifiable in putting him to death. The chief priests and magistrates of the temple assembled, and put Peter and John into confinement; the day following the accusation was repeated, and the fact of the resurrection, on which it rested, was asserted

asserted in public council before Annas, Caiphas, John, Alexander, and all who were of the Sacerdotal order; there was no denial of the fact, nor any attempt whatsoever to refute it. To pretend that the principal Jews, men of wealth and power, possessed of every possible means of information, would not refute an accusation, reflecting dishonor on themselves, if it were possible, is to mistake the nature of man. Their acquiescence is more than juridical evidence of the truth. It is equally absurd to imagine that Peter and John would make such a charge, and so confidently assert the resurrection of Christ in confirmation of the charge, if they were not well assured of the truth of the fact, and the impossibility of invalidating it by any artifice or evasion.

The candour of the apostles, their labours, their sufferings, their deaths, is conclusive evidence of their sincerity. The bold, and open manner, in which they attest truths destructive of the honor of their nation, damning, without redemption, the memory of the principal Jews, in whose presence they spoke, is equally convincing that, if they intended to deceive, they could not have done it. Impostors have interested views: they had none, they were men of truth. The man who reads their history and denies it, does not know the truth.

Why did not Christ shew himself to all the Jews after his resurrection? There was no necessity. He did not rise for the conviction of the Jews, but for the justification of Christians until the consummation of time; it was therefore necessary that he should convince competent witnesses of the truth of his resurrection; that it should be ascertained to them, and by them, to all nations, beyond the possibility of a doubt: this was effectually done. It was declared by angels, the messengers of Heaven: "He is risen he

is not here." Luke xxiv. 6. He heard them; he answered them; he eat with them; he instructed them; he shewed them his wounds, from the nails and the spear; they touched them; by every possible argument he convinced them, that he was risen in the same solid body, in which he suffered. If he had shewn himself in the temple it would have convinced the Priests: many of them were convinced, and embraced the faith on the testimony of the apostles; they, who obstinately persevered in their incredulity, would not have been convinced by his appearance, and from the abuse of the favors, which he had shewn were not deserving of more, add to this that the question would again recur if he had shewn himself in the temple why not in the court? Why not in every street of the city? Why not in Samaria? And, as the effect of the resurrection was not to be confined to the Jewish people exclusively, why not in Rome, in Athens, &c.? And as all succeeding generations were equally interested with the then existing generation, on the principle laid down by modern sceptics, Christ's appearance would have been necessary at all times, and in all places. A leader of the squad thought it incumbent on Christ to appear to himself; the writer ventures to assure him that he will, in due time, not to gratify idle curiosity, but to chastise arrogance and impiety.

The credulity of an ignorant populace is the last resource of our sophists. There is nothing, say they, which the populace will not easily believe, if it be told by men of influence: thus the Romans believed Julius Proculus, that Romulus had descended from the Heavens to inform him, that he was amongst the Gods; not only the populace, but the senate ordered a temple to be built in honour of the new God, Alexander declaring that Hephestion, was deified,

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was believed by the courtiers, and shortly after it was believed by himself : thus the Apostles imagined that Christ rose from the dead, and the populace believed them without farther discussion.

It is true, a credulous populace easily believes what flatters their passions, if asserted by men of confidence. The enrolment of Romulus, Hephestion, or any other pretended divinity, only encreased their amusements, and was accompanied by no restraints, they were of course received with acclamation, without examination or discussion. The Senators were strongly, and in all probability justly, suspected of having disposed of Romulus in a clandestine manner, it is not matter of surprize that they pretended to believe Proculus, who was employed by them for the express purpose of removing the suspicion ; but when we see the Jewish Priests, not the populace, silent under an accusation reflecting the utmost dishonour on themselves, the most intelligent amongst them convinced of the Resurrection, on which the charge was supported, the idea of popular credulity vanishes, an emotion of surprize at the perverse obstinacy of the incredulous succeeds. How our Sceptics discovered that the Disciples were of the lowest orders of society, we are a loss to conjecture : was Gamaliel, Nicodemus, or Joseph, of Arimathea, of the lowest order ? Were Stephen, Barnaby, Luke, and Paul, of the populace ? Was that immense body of the Sacerdotal order, who embraced the faith of the credulous herd ? If we may judge of a writer by his works, Luke and Paul were men of science, as far superior to Sceptical scribblers, as these are to their brother monkeys.

Let us admit the Disciples were such as our Sceptics suppose them, ignorant and credulous, how did these ignorant and credulous men impose their apparently

apparently and incredible doctrines on the most incredulous of men, the Heathen Philosophers? How did they enforce obedience to their injunctions, which are confessedly full of the most mortifying restraints? These are embarrassing questions.

The resurrection of Christ, and other speculative doctrines of his religion, were in direct opposition to the received opinions of the world, its moral maxims equally inimical to the established maxims of the world, beatifying poverty, humility, chastity, modesty, meekness and patience; denouncing the divine vengeance, against avarice, ambition, incontinence, and all the prevailing passions of man; it proposed, nothing less than the total abolition of idolatry, the destruction of all the Heathen temples, the suppression of all superstitious rites and ceremonies, which had been universally established by immemorial custom, authorized and confirmed by Legislatures, interwoven with the fundamental laws of Kingdoms and States, flattering all the inclinations of man. Add to this, that these doctrines, so apparently incredible, and these moral maxims, in reality so inimical to corrupt nature, were taught by men of no influence; in their own country, hated and persecuted; amongst the Heathen nations despised; opposed by wealth, power, interest, science, and every artifice, which the malice of the Demon could invent. These difficulties, to human power invincible, were surmounted by the irresistible evidence of Christ's Resurrection.

His ascension is a fact attested as forcibly, and with the same success. In it there is no room for deception: the witnesses were numerous; they could not have been all subject to the same illusion at the same instant of time. He had spoken to them, he had eaten with them, he had conducted them from
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The city through Bethania to the mountain of Olives, and there, blessing them, he ascended in their view. See the relation, Acts i.

It is not in the nature of things that so many witnesses would conspire to attest a fact, knowing it to be a fiction, without having some great interest in view. The Apostles could have no temporal interest in view: from the Jews, whose sanguine hopes of the re-establishment of their empire, they blasted, and whose total destruction they foretold, they could promise themselves nothing; from the Heathens, whose rites they suppressed, whose augurs, soothsayers, oracles and temples, they taught the people to despise, the vanity and emptiness of whose pretended Gods and Goddesses they exposed, the folly of whose suppliants they ridiculed, the artifices of whose officers they disclosed, from these once more they could expect nothing but what they obtained, that is, chains, tortures and death. Their object therefore must have been, as they asserted, the conversion of souls, and the sanctification of their own. It is true, they promised happiness to their disciples, as they did to themselves, but not in this world, and it would have been madness to expect happiness in an after life, for teaching that for truth, which they knew to be false. The doctrine they taught was therefore true; and when they declared that "the anger of God is revealed from Heaven against impiety," Rom. i. 18, our Sceptics will find it but too true.

From Justin's apology, addressed to the Emperor, the Senate, and Roman people, we learn that Tiberius had been informed by Pilate of the principal occurrences of Christ's mission in Judea; after relating many of these transactions, he says, No. 7, "that these things have happened you may learn

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from the acts of Pontius Pilate." The same assertion he repeats, No. 48. We know that it was invariably the custom for the Governors of Provinces, to transmit to the Emperor a circumstantial account of singular incidents. Pilate cannot be presumed to have omitted it, and Justin would not have dared to appeal to the public records if he were not well assured the facts were registered, nor would his adversary, Crescentius, the cynic, a most malignant censor, have passed such a mistake unnoticed.

Tertullian also, a writer well versed in the Roman laws, says, in his Apologetic, Cap. 21^o, No. 7, "that Pilate himself, a Christian in conscience, had reported to the Emperor Tiberius the most memorable occurrences of Christ's mission." He adds, in the same Apology, that Tiberius proposed the Divinity of Christ to the Senate, "with the prerogative of his own suffrage." The Senate refused to ratify it. Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, cites these facts from Tertullian, whose authority he thought unexceptionable: "when," says Euf. Lib. 2, Cap. 2, "the wonderful resurrection of Christ and his ascension into Heaven was published by the voice of all people, as it was an old custom with the Governors of Provinces to transmit an account of every new occurrence to the Emperor, that nothing might be concealed, Pilate informed Tiberius of the resurrection of Christ, the fame of which was celebrated over all Palestine; he at the same time signified to the Prince, that he had heard of many other miracles, and that after his return to life he was held by many to be a God; it is said that Tiberius referred the matter to the Senate, and they rejected the proposal, because he had been declared God without waiting their authority, and there was an old law forbidding any person to be a God without a decree

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of the Senate. This was the apparent reason, but in reality because the preaching of the divine doctrine did not want the authority or the counsel of men. Though the Senate had rejected the proposal, as was said, Tiberius, persisting in his opinion, decreed nothing harsh against the doctrine of Christ. These things Tertullian, a writer well versed in the Roman laws, and amongst Latin writers the most celebrated, states in his Apologetic."

Some of our modern Legislatures declare that no doctrine is true but that which they find convenient to approve; the Roman senate went one step farther: they made the divinity self dependant on their decree. The impiety of this law is surpassed, if possible, by its folly. The candidate is introduced canvassing for votes, if he cannot obtain a majority he falls from all his pretensions to the divinity. *Si hominibus non placet deus non erit.*

There is a letter from Pilate to Tiberius reporting the miracles of Christ; it is thought by some modern critics to be supposed though cited by Tertullian. The writer has not seen conclusive evidence of the supposition. There is no modern critic better versed in the history of Rome, and its laws than Tertullian, a professed lawyer, and eminent in the profession; no modern critic has, or can pretend to have the same sources of information, which he possessed, if the letter transmitted to us be that, which he cites, and is cited on his authority by Eusebius, a most intelligent author, the writer is strongly inclined to prefer their authority to the silly conjectures of any modern, or of all modern critics. Whatever objections may be stated against Tertullian, none can be against Justin, who appealed to the public acts.

Tiberius, though corrupt in his morals and sanguinary in his dispositions, was neither ignorant, nor inattentive

inattentive to the duties of an Emperor ; and Pilate, who, if Philo and Josephus tell truth, was little inferior to his master, was too deeply versed in politics to conceal from the tyrant's ear transactions, which he knew must reach it through some other channel. It cannot be supposed, with any appearance of probability, that Christ's death and the rumour of his resurrection was not reported to the Emperor.

Whether the letter be genuine, or supposed, is of little consequence : the truth of christianity does not rest on the authority of a Tiberius or a Pilate ; it is totally independent of the testimony of a Justin, a Tertullian, or an Eusebius.

However unexceptionable the miracles of Christ, however candid and sincere the Apostles, yet as the religion, which they taught, was destructive of all the systems of religion then established by laws and customs in the world ; in its speculative doctrines inconceivable, and in its moral precepts full of mortifying restraints, they never could obtain credit on their bare assertion in these countries, where Christ himself or his miracles were not known ; their testimony therefore must have been accompanied by signs, which authenticated their mission, and insured their followers against illusion. In Judea where they first began to preach, the descent of the Holy Ghost under the appearance of fiery tongues, and the permanent effect of this temporary appearance, was a sufficient voucher ; the assembly was too numerous to be subject to any illusion, and the effect, such as omnipotence alone could produce : it is not possible that an ignorant man, by any powers inherent in human nature, should instantaneously acquire a knowledge of different languages : and, much less, that he should be understood by men of different languages at the same time. This was the first miracle in attestation of
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the truth of the Apostle's mission ; and its immediate effect was the conversion of three thousand. Acts ii. If the reader wishes to see the miracles, which God wrought by his Apostles, in many different countries, let him read the Acts of the Apostles written by St. Luke, and attested by the acceptance of all the Churches in the different countries where, and in whose presence, these miracles were wrought.

Impiety is forced to admit that the Apostles did convert many thousands in different countries to the faith. To pretend that these conversions were wrought without miracles ; or that so many thousands of men, who had eyes and ears as we have, were taught to believe that miracles were wrought in their presence, though no such thing had happened, is a manifest absurdity, which is refuted by contempt. There have been supposed miracles. True, the writer is willing to admit that some dupes have been deceived by impostors : there are many such in all countries to this present day, and in all appearance will continue to the end ; but that of all the men so celebrated for science, sanctity, and disinterested views, who have attested these miracles of the Apostles, and of their disciples, there was not one honest man ; and that all these thousands of thousands of Christians, who composed the primitive Church, were dupes and impostors ; there is something so wild in the thought, so extravagantly impudent in the assertion, that a man who has any remains either of modesty or common sense, would not dare to make it. And if it be admitted, that any one of all these, told truth, impiety falls defenceless. How desperate the cause, in defence of which, even the impudence of the Atheist, and the effrontery of the Deist, is abashed !

From the miracles of Christ and his Apostles, let us pass to his prophecies. It is universally admitted that,

that, contingent events depending on the joint action of many free and concurring causes, are not within the range of limited prescience. Such events were foretold by Christ, and promises made by him, which almighty power alone could fulfil. The events have happened as foretold, and the promises fulfilled. Our Sceptics, however unwilling, are witnesses to both.

The writer passes unnoticed all these predictions, and promises, which were fulfilled before the Gospels were written, to obviate the pretence that these might have been supposed by the writers, the falsehood of this calumny is manifest, not only from the sincerity of the Evangelical writers, but because they wrote nothing but the doctrine, which they had already taught verbally; and if their writings contained a doctrine differing from what they had verbally taught, or included predictions, or promises, of which, the Churches had not previously heard, they would have been rejected as spurious. The acceptance of all the Churches is the most authentic evidence of the truth of the New Testament, and the veracity of its writers. The same doctrine, which the Evangelists wrote, was taught by all the Apostles, who did not write, and continues to be taught in the same manner, by their successors.

Christ expressly foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, the manner of its destruction, and even limited the time. "The days will come on thee, said he, and thy enemies will surround thee with a line of circumvallation, 'charaka' and they will encompass thee and straiten thee on every side, and will level thee to the ground, and thy children, *who are in thee*," Luke xix. 42. We know that Jerusalem, the 40th year after Christ's death, was destroyed by Titus. He cast up entrenchments, and a wall, which so closely

closely invested the city that none could escape. In that memorable siege 1,300,000 souls perished. See Josephus, Lib. 6 and 7. Such an event could not have been foreseen but by him, who has all events on his disposal.

As the Jews were numerous, obstinate and discontented, subject to be deluded by impostors, who assumed the title of their expected deliverer, a man of great sagacity might suspect a rebellion; but that the city would be surrounded by a line of circumvallation, and totally destroyed by the first army, that invested it, as Christ said Luke xxi. 20. "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by an army know that then its desolation is near," whilst the then generation lived. "I say unto you all these things will come on this generation," Luke xii. 36, was contrary to all rules of probability and beyond the range of conjecture.

To this, first, Christ added a second prediction, more remote from probability, that is, that though Jerusalem would be destroyed, and not one stone left on the other, her sons and daughters dispersed, would continue to exist until the consummation of time: after giving a description of that alarming scene, he adds, "Amen, I say unto you, that this generation (the Jewish people) will not pass away until all these things are done," Matt. xxiv. 34. Hence we find St. Paul declaring that blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fulness of nations should come in, and thus all Israel shall be saved," Rom. xi. 25, 26. Will our Sceptics condescend to admit the first part of this prophecy, that is, the fulness of nations is coming in, and that the blindness of the Jews continues yet? For their conversion we must wait the consummation.

If the Jew were not invincibly obstinate he could hardly

hardly resist the evidence of another prophecy, the truth of which he knows by 1800 hundred years experience : “ the law and the Prophets, said Christ, Luke xvi, 16, until John” or, as it is in Matthew: “ for all the Prophets, and the law prophecied until John,” xi. 12. During the Jewish dispensation their law was supported, and the observance of it enforced by the Prophets, who appeared in regular succession at different intervals, until John began to preach. The succession was then interrupted, and the mission of Prophets to the Jews ceased, according to the words of Christ, so that the Atheist or the Deist is not more steeled against conviction than the unfortunate Jew.

This unanswerable argument, drawn from the dispersion of the Jews, and their obstinate adherence to their law, has exercised the imagination of our modern Sceptics, whose inventive faculties are stretched but to deceive themselves. They find, or pretend to find, many reasons for this continuation of the Jews, distinct from all other people. Their fancy, say they, is fed by the hopes of a deliverer, who will reinstate their empire, and their temple ; they carefully avoid inter-marriages with other people ; they are firmly attached to their law ; and though they see the Christian religion flourish, yet they think their own rites and ceremonies more majestic. To these reasons the reply is simple : hopes disappointed, in course of years subside. A continuation of the Jewish hopes after eighteen centuries continued disappointment, is neither natural, nor reasonable, the source of such extravagance must be found elsewhere, that is, in the malediction attached to that ill-fated race. They are the descendants of those ancestors, who, thirsting after the blood of innocence, to which Pilate, a sanguinary tyrant, with reluctance gave his sanction, exclaimed :

claimed : " let his blood be on us, and our children,"
Matt. xxvii, 25.

Their several attempts to build the temple have proved ineffectual, and ruinous to themselves : Julian's project, in opposition to Christ's prophecy, only served literally to verify it.

That Julian did intend to rebuild the temple, we have incontrovertible evidence in his letter to the Jews, still extant in his works, No. 25. It is mentioned by Sozomen, and translated by Doctor Cave, in his life of St. Cyril. In it, after relieving them from all taxes, and burdens, he enjoins diligence, and promises that, after his Persian expedition, he would fix his residence in Jerusalem, and offer his joint prayers with them. The artifice and hypocrisy of the apostate, and consequent exertions of the Jews, have rendered the truth of Christ's prediction incontestible : Christ had declared, Matt. xxiv, 2, that one stone of the temple would not be left on the other. After the destruction, by Titus, the foundations and some ruins of the walls remained : Eusebius says, Dom. Evan. Lib. 8o. that in his time the inhabitants frequently carried off the stones for private buildings. All these ruins, and the very foundations, were removed by the Jews, under Julian's direction, in order to recommence the work, from which they were deterred by flames issuing from the foundations, which at first only destroyed the works ; but when the Jews obstinately persisted in the design, they consumed the workmen also. This fact is authentic if there be truth in man : Ammianus Marcellinus, an unprejudiced Heathen, says, Lib. 3, Cap. 1, that Julian undertook the work to immortalize his reign ; he adds, Lib. 23, Cap. 1, that tremendous balls of fire, issuing from the earth, near the foundations, rendered the place inaccessible

to the workmen. His terms are strongly expressive —*hocque modo elemento destinatus repellento*—in this manner the element in a more determined manner repelling them. The concurring testimony of contemporary writers, removes all suspicion. Chry. adv. Jud. Or. 2, and Hom. 4 in Matt. Nazian, Or. 2, and 4, in Jul.

Chryostome says that the Jews at three different times attempted the building of their temple, under Adrian, which increased the enmity of the Heathens, and brought destruction on the Jews ; again under Constantine, who dispersed them, cut off their ears, and branded them with the mark of rebellion ; and finally, said he, in our time, not above twenty years ago, in which God himself baffled their endeavours, to shew that no human power could reverse his decrees, and that at a time when our religion was oppressed, lay under the axe, and had not the liberty to speak, that impudence itself might not have the least shadow of pretence. See a circumstantial account of this memorable event, in the life of St. Cyril, by Butler.

That the Jews avoid inter-marriages with christians is true, but whether from choice or necessity is doubtful : in christian countries such marriages are prohibited by law, and in all countries they are null of right. As to their rites and ceremonies, however majestic, whilst the temple existed, since its destruction, they cannot be performed : these, therefore, cannot fix the attention of the Jews. Finally, whatever reasons may be assigned for the continuation of the Jews, as a distinct people, the force of the prophecy is not the less invincible : because to foresee that these reasons would be permanent, and the effect perpetually correspondent, is beyond the sphere of limited science.

Let us now pass from the Jews to the Gentiles :
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Christ ordered his Apostles to teach all nations, or, as it is in the Greek text, *to make them disciples*—"Mattheusate"—promising that he would be with them until the consummation. Matt. ult. They immediately commenced the work, and carried his faith and name beyond the limits of the Roman Empire, into nations where the Roman name was not known: of this the monuments are universal, and the work as yet continues in the hands of their successors. In this short sentence there is a promise which Omnipotence alone could fulfil, and a truth announced which God only could foresee—that is, that Christ's missionaries would continue until the consummation, and that they would form his disciples in all nations. He was promised all nations as an inheritance, not all the men of all nations; if there be a nation, which was not yet enlightened by his gospel, it will before the consummation: the past ensures the future. Christ said to his disciples: "You will be brought before Kings and Governors for my sake, in testimony to them, and to nations," Matt. x, 18. Impiety will not dispute the accomplishment of this prophecy. Christ, therefore, foresaw that his disciples would persevere in the doctrine, which he taught in the face of persecution, in defiance of despotic power. He also foresaw that Kings and Governors would persecute his disciples: if he had consulted the rules of probability, and offered a conjecture, he would have said, that Epicureans, whose principles are subversive of order, and whose conduct sets decency at defiance, or Peripatetics, who teach that prayers and sacrifices are useless, would be arraigned before Kings and Governors; but that his disciples, whom he ordered to be as harmless as doves, whose whole line of conduct, as prescribed by him, and strictly observed by them, breathed nothing but meekness, humility, submission, fidelity and obedience, to the ruling powers, should be the objects of hatred,

of calumny and persecution, is not matter of conjecture : there is but God, who knows the intense malignity of man, and the depravity of his heart, who could foresee, that truth, innocence and justice, would be exclusively and universally the object of his hatred.

The writer adds one prediction more, against which even the effrontery of the modern sciolist will not venture to state an objection. When Mary, sister to Lazarus, had poured the precious ointment on Christ's feet, and Judas expressed his indignation at, what his avarice called a profusion, Christ said : " Amen, I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel is preached in the whole world, that also, which she has done will be told in memory of her," Mat. xxvi, 13, John xii. In this short sentence there are two solemn promises : That the Gospel would be preached all over the world ; and that Mary's piety would be remembered in all places where the Gospel is preached. These promises, which nothing short of Almighty power could fulfil, are so manifestly accomplished, that the obstinacy of the modern Philosopher is not more odious than contemptible.

If sanctity, established by miracles, authenticated by prophecy, confirmed by the accomplishment of promises beyond the sphere of limited power, speak the divinity, the scriptures are divinely inspired. In them are many things impervious to human reason ; but there is nothing more reasonable than to believe on the testimony of infallible authority, though reason from its limited nature cannot detect the principles, from which the proposed truth results. Thus in human science the Astronomer shews the density of the earth to be greater than that of the planet Jupiter. The principles from which he deduces this truth, though evident to the astronomer, are as impervious to the unlearned peasant as any mystery in religion.

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The mathematician demonstrates, that the branches of the hyperbolic curve approach incessantly its asymptotes, but can never touch them ; this last proposition, though mathematically true, has all the appearance of a contradiction ; that God as far surpasses man in knowledge as the astronomer does the peasant, is denied but by him, who does not believe a God to exist ; that truths are known to him, of which man can form no idea is equally certain ; to pretend that, he, who has enabled man by sounds to convey his ideas to other men, or with his pen to paint them for future generations, cannot make himself understood, is an absurdity which is refuted by contempt not by argument. As truth, is not opposite to truth, if we clearly conceive a truth, which we think opposite to revelation, we are not thence to conclude that there is any thing false in revelation, but that we have mistaken the intended sense of the inspired writer ; that the truth, which we think opposite to revelation is only opposite to that sense, which we ourselves affix to it. Thus we are frequently deceived, and yet more frequently in thinking that a manifest truth, in which there is a latent fallacy, which our reason cannot detect. Truths revealed by God are not subject to the examination of human reason ; the proper use of reason is to inquire whether the proposition proposed he revealed by God or not ; or whether it be proposed in the sense intended by the inspired writer ; but to inquire whether a proposition revealed by God be true or false is a stretch of impudence, which no term in language can express.

There are in the scriptures many truths revealed, which, though in appearance within the sphere of human reason, have not been discovered by reason in its degraded state : the unity of God, his immensity, many of the divine perfections, which the christian philosopher

philosopher, previously instructed by revelation, demonstrates on sound principles of reason without recourse to religion. We do not find that the most intelligent amongst the Heathens had a distinct idea of these perfections: their language is always obscure, and ambiguous on the subject, and interspersed with ridiculous errors.

The clemency of God, and his vigilant attention to the perfection of his creatures, is manifest in the relation of these very truths, which reason, unassisted by a superior light, might, perhaps, with great exertions, discover, and making them objects of faith; thus at once removing every shade of error, and illusion, to which human reason is subject in the investigation of truth. If truth were attainable but by demonstration, many essential truths, or to speak correctly, all truths, which have for their object the divine nature, or its perfections, would remain in total obscurity amongst the unlearned, who compose an incalculable majority of the human species: they do not understand the force of demonstration, and even amongst the learned, these truths would remain in a state of uncertainty; however intelligent, and even unprejudiced they may be supposed, from the limitation of the human understanding, and the versatility of the imagination, there is a character of uncertainty inseparably annexed to it. A shade of error is latent in whatever is investigated by human reason. Probable, or sophistical reasons, are mistaken for demonstration, and erroneous conclusions set in opposition to simple truth.

The irreconcilable differences and altercations of the Heathen philosophers, and their descendants the modern squad, not only on abstruse, and difficult questions, but on first principles and intuitive truths, sufficiently justify the observation.

If reason acting within its own sphere, be an uncertain guide in abstruse inquiries, it must of necessity mislead, if it transgresses the bounds, which God and nature have prescribed. However in referring us to proper authority it seldom misleads : thus reason tells us, that we must consult witnesses to be assured of the truth of facts ; in like manner it hands us to revelation for truths, which God only knows, and makes known. These divine perfections, which transcend human reason, the origin of the world, the creation of man, his primitive destination, transgression and punishment, the incarnation of the divine wisdom for his reconciliation, an event so remote from man's ideas, so far transcending his thoughts, that it never could have entered into his imagination, the divinity of which is manifest on the exposition ; these, and many other truths, intimately connected with our being, on which our happiness essentially depend, are not subjects of metaphysical disquisition : they are facts, and known, as all facts are, by testimony : in the scriptures we have the testimony of God, an unerring authority : to it reason must refer us.

The writers of the New Testament are Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James and Jude. There is a difference in their style, but a perfect coincidence in the principal facts, which they relate, and in all the maxims of religion and morality, which they inculcate. The rage of modern scepticism, which substitutes suspicions and surmises to proof, suspects, or pretends to suspect, that they were not the authors of the books ascribed to them. This surmise is refuted by contempt. The works of Cæsar, of Curtius, of Terence, of Plautus, are believed authentic, without a contradiction, we do not dispute the works of Collins, of Tindal, of Priestley, of Price, and to descend to the most ignorant
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of scurrilous scribblers, we leave Tom Paine in peaceable possession of his Age of Reason.

The Heathen writers against Christianity admitted the books to have been written by the Evangelists, and Apostles, to whom they are ascribed, nor did they deny absolutely the miracles related in them: they endeavoured to elude the force of Christ's miracles, by ascribing them to magic.

“Celsus,” says Origen, Lib. 2, No. 48, “now very often, because he could not deny the miracles which it is written that Christ performed, calumniates them as the effect of magical delusions, we have often times shewn the contrary, now he asks us why we judge him to be God, and he imputes to us this answer; because he cured the lame and blind, to this adds, and because, as you say, he raised the dead. That the lame and the blind were cured by Jesus, that hence we believe him Son of God is manifest from this, that it is written in the prophecies: “then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear, and the lame shall bound like the roe,” Isa. xxxv, 5.

Julian, the apostate, as cited by St. Cyril, Lib. 10, in prim. says: “neither Paul dared to call that Jesus, God, nor Matthew, nor Luke, nor Mark; but the good man John, when he discovered that a great multitude, in most cities of Greece and Italy, were caught with that disease, and heard, I think privately, it is true; but yet he heard that the monuments of Peter and Paul were worshipped, first dared to assert it.”—That is, John first dared to say that Jesus was God. The apostate, like our modern sophists, contradicts himself: for if numbers were taken with that disease, as he calls it, in most cities of Greece and Italy, before John wrote, he could not have been the first to avow it.

From

From Celsus and Julian, the most irreconcilable enemies of the christian name, we learn that the primitive christians believed Christ to be God, and that a religious respect was paid to the relics of the saints. No heathen ever denied the Gospels to have been written by the Evangelists, or that they were thought divinely inspired, by Christians. The first apologists of christianity cited them incessantly without a contradiction; cotemporary writers cite the Gospels, and ascribe them to the Evangelists; Clement, in his epistle to the Corinthians; Polycarp, in his letter to the Philippians; Ignatius, in his seven epistles, which are confessedly genuine; Papias, as cited by Eusebius.

St. Irenæus, in his third book against heresies, says: "Matthew, amongst the Hebrews, wrote the Gospel in their language, when Peter and Paul preached at Rome, and founded the Church. After their departure, Mark, who was Peter's disciple, and interpreter, delivered to us in writing, what was taught by Peter. Luke, who was Paul's disciple, wrote the Gospel which was preached by him, and John, the disciple of the Lord, who had leaned on his breast, wrote the Gospel at Ephesus, in Asia.

There were Gospels supposed by impostors, whilst some of the Apostles were yet living, but they were immediately rejected as spurious. An imposition was impossible, because the autographs of the Evangelists were in the hands of the Churches, which they had formed, and attested copies in the hands of all other Churches.

The immense number of authentic copies, and the care with which they were preserved by the Church, at all times, shews the impossibility of supposition or interpolation, in every age of the Church since its first establishment. On this principle Irenæus says:

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“ we know the disposition of salvation but through those, by whom the Gospel came to us,” and Clement, of Alexandria, Lib. 3, Stro. speaking of some pretended Gospel of the Egyptians, says ; “ first we have not this saying in the four Gospels, which are transmitted to us, but in that which is according to the Egyptians.”

Tertullian, writing against Marcion, who admitted but the Gospel of St. Luke, says, Lib. 4, Cap. 5 : the same authority of the Apostolical Churches authenticates the other Gospels ; “ it is by them, and through them, that we have the Gospels, that is of John, of Matthew, that of Mark is said to be of Peter, whose interpreter he was ; that digested by Luke, is usually ascribed to Paul.” And in the 26th chapter of his Prescriptions, he says that the autographs of the Apostles were yet in the hands of the Apostolical Churches : “ Pass through the Apostolical Churches where the Sees of the Apostles hold a Presidency in their places, where their authentic letters are yet recited, sounding their voice, and representing the face of each of them. If Achaia be near, you have Phillippi, you have Thessalonica. If you go to Asia, you have Ephesus, if to Italy, you have Rome.”

Origen, as cited by Eusebius, Lib. 6^o, Hist. Eccl. cap. 25, says : “ From tradition I have received four Gospels, which are admitted by the universal church without a controversy—the first was written by Matthew, formerly a publican, and afterwards an Apostle of Jesus Christ, who wrote it in Hebrew, and published it to the Jews converted to the faith : the second is that of Mark, who wrote as Peter had preached : and, for that reason, Peter, in his catholic epistle, acknowledges him as his son : ‘ The Church elect of God, which is in Babylon, salutes you, and my son Mark ;’

Mark ;' the third Gospel is that of Luke, recommended by St. Paul, and written for the Gentiles ; the last is that of John."

And in his first homily, on St. Luke, he says, " that as there were some false prophets amongst the Jews, so there were some pretended prophets amongst Christians." " Many," says he, " endeavoured to write Gospels, but were not all received ; that you may know that, not only four Gospels, but many have been written, from which the four, which we have, were selected and delivered to the Church."

Attend to St. Luke's preface, which is thus stated : " since many endeavoured to order a narration as he says ' endeavoured,' it contains a latent accusation against these, who undertook to write a Gospel without a grace of the Holy Ghost. Matthew, Mark, John and Luke, did not endeavour to write, but, full of the Holy Ghost, they wrote the Gospels. Many, therefore, *endeavoured* to form a narration of these things. The Church has four Gospels, heresy has many, of these, one is according to the Egyptians, another according to the twelve Apostles. Basilides dared to write a Gospel, and entitle it with his own name. Many endeavoured to write, and many endeavoured to form a narration, but four Gospels are approved."

Eusebius, in the third book of his Ecclesiastical History, Ch. 24th, says : " of all the Disciples of the Lord, Matthew and John alone left us written commentaries. It is said that they were impelled to write by some necessity : for when Matthew had first preached the faith to the Hebrews, and was prepared to go from thence to other nations, he wrote his Gospel in his country language, to supply by that instrument, which he left, what seemed wanting to his presence. After this, when Mark and Luke had
written

written their Gospels separately, it is said, that John, who had hitherto preached by word only, betook himself to write. The three former Gospels he is said to have approved and confirmed by his testimony."

The historian assigns the reason, which induced John to write his Gospel. It is perfectly consistent with the author. He only relates some events, which they omitted, and omits some, which they related.

The Acts of the Apostles were written by St. Luke: they are addressed to Theophilus, as was the Gospel, and by the same writer, and are of equal authority. They are cited by all early writers. St. Austin, in his Treatise on St. John, says: "that canonical book is to be read in the Church every year."

Our sceptics complain of the style of the evangelists; that they did not observe the same order in their narration; that they cite passages from the old testament which are not to be found; thus Matthew says, ii, 23, "That might be fulfilled what was said by the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarean;" and, xxvii, 9, he cites a passage from Jeremy, which was written by Zachary. They add, that the salutations, and some exhortations, in the epistles, do not favour of the gravity of an inspired writer; for instance, Paul desires Timothy to bring him a short coat, some books and papers; they find other causes of suspicion, which the writer passes unnoticed, as he finds them impertinent, tedious, irksome, and beneath the notice of a serious man.

It has been already observed that the evangelists did not write for the amusement of sceptics, but for the instruction of christians: their style is commensurate, and perfectly well adapted to their purpose; if the

the order of time be neglected in their narration, it is because it was not necessary to substantiate the facts which they relate, in these the coincidence is exact.

Matthew correctly cited the prophets : for the Messias is called *Netzer*, that is a Nazarean, by Isaias, xi, 1. Or if Nazarean be understood to signify a person separated and consecrated to God, as was Samson, to whose mother the Angel said, that he would be "*Nazer Elobim*," consecrated to God : Christ was so called by all the prophets.

The passage cited by Matthew is neither in Zachary or Jeremy—part of the passage is in one, and part in the other—the evangelist united them, citing the sense not the sound, as all good interpreters do. Thus Mark began his Gospel citing from the prophet Isaias, what is written partly by him and partly by Malachias ; though it is extremely probable that the whole passage as cited by Matthew was formerly in the prophecy of Jeremy, but omitted, as were many other things, through the neglect of copyists.

It was not inconsistent with the gravity of the apostles to salute the persons, to whom their letters were addressed, or others whose spiritual welfare they sincerely desired ; an immediate inspiration to every word in scripture was not necessary ; a special assistance to prevent error in these things, which the apostles knew on the testimony of their senses, was fully sufficient.

The silence of heathen writers is the last refuge of our sciolists. The cause is desperate which seeks protection from a silent witness. The apologies for christianity are yet in our hands, from these we know with what virulent animosity the heathen philosophers persecuted the christian name ; if the facts stated by the christian writers had not been incontrovertible, their adversaries, possessed of every means of information,

formation, would have detected the shadow of imposition, and undeceived the world, their silent acquiescence is equivalent to a formal avowal.

Chalcidius, in his commentaries on the *timē* of Plato, speaks of the star which appeared to the wise men of Chaldea, and of their journey to Jerusalem; and Macrobius, in the second book of his *Saturnalia*, says: "that when Augustus heard that amongst the children under two years old, whom Herod king of the Jews in Syria, ordered to be massacred, was one of his own sons, he said, it was better to be Herod's hog than his son." Macrobius relates this anecdote, as he does many others, from the works of Heathen writers, extant in his time, which have since been lost.

The eclipse, which happened at the death of Christ, in direct opposition to the established order, as it was at the full moon, when an eclipse of the sun is naturally impossible, is thus described by Phlegon in the 13th book of his *Chronicles*, or *Olympiads*: "on the fourth year of the 203 Olympiad was a very great eclipse, surpassing all which have happened: the day at the sixth hour was turned into night, the stars were seen in the heavens, an earthquake threw down many houses in Nice, a city of Bithynia." The same is repeated in the *Chronicle* of Eusebius and St. Jerom.

Exceptions have been taken against the testimonies of these Heathen writers, by Anti-Christian Sophists of modern times. These exceptions have been discussed and elucidated by men of science, their futility, and the vanity of their inventors, exposed to the contempt of the learned world: as they are only intended to divert the attention of the uninformed, from the more glaring absurdities of our Epicureans, and to introduce obscurity in a subject,
which

* which is totally independent of the testimony of credulous Heathens, or incredulous Sophists, the writer passes them unnoticed.

Against Tertullian's appeal to the public records no exception can lie: "at the same instant," said he, Ap. Ch. 1, No. 6, whilst the sun marked the midst of its orbit, the day was withdrawn This event, (*mundi casum*) you have in the public archives."

Origen, in his second book against Celsus, No. 83, says: "of the eclipse, which happened under Tiberius Cæsar, in whose reign it is certain that Christ was crucified, and of the commotion, by which the earth was shook, I think Phlegon makes mention in the 13th or 14th book of his Chronicles."

Lucian, the martyr, a man well versed in history, sacred and profane, told his Judges with confidence: "consult your annals, and you will find that in Pilate's time, when Christ suffered, the sun fled at mid-day, and the day was interrupted." See Ruf. Lib. 9, Cap. 6^o, Hist. Eccl.

The fact was indisputable, known to the world, to friends and enemies, hence the apologists of Christianity incessantly appealed to it, and without a contradiction.

We know that Christ foretold that his disciples would be exposed to sufferings, and we know from Heathen writers, that this prediction was literally verified: Suetonius, in the life of Claudius, Ch. 15; Tacitus, in his annals, book 15; Pliny, the younger, in the 10th book of his epistles, Ch. 94, describe, in part, the sufferings of Christians: if they had not, the persecutions are of such notoriety that even Atheistical effrontery does not dispute them.

The testimony of these heathen philosophers, who embraced the christian faith, were its apologists, and its victims, is unexceptionable: men of sense and science,

ence, who renounce pleasures and honors to profess a religion, which promises its votaries nothing but sufferings and death in this world, must have irresistible evidence of its truth.

Quadratus, a philosopher converted by the Apostles, esteemed and honored by the heathens as an ornament to the city of Athens, in the apology which he offered to the Roman Emperor Adrien, shews the difference between the miracles of Christ, and the delusions of magicians: "the miracles of our Saviour," said he, "were permanent, because they were real and true—the sick healed, and the dead raised, did not only appear reinstated, but continued so, and that not only whilst Christ remained on earth, but long after he had retired, so that some of them came down to our times." See Euseb. Ecc. Hist. Lib. 4, Cap. 3; and St. Jerom, in Cato. 19, and Ep. 84.

Aristides, a platonic philosopher, presented an apology to the same Emperor. It was extant in St. Jerom's time and thought by him a master-piece of eloquence and erudition.

Theophilus, a man deeply versed in all the science of the heathen philosophers, and in their different systems of mythology, as appears from his books to Autolycus, yet extant, vindicating the christian religion from the calumnious invectives of his heathen friend, says: "Do not be incredulous, I did not believe the resurrection of the dead formerly, but now I do, since I have more attentively considered the subject, after falling on the writings of the Holy Prophets, who foretold things now past as they have happened, things now present, as they do happen, and future events in the same order as they will happen." See B. 1, No. 14.

Athenagoras, also an Athenian philosopher, wrote a defence of the resurrection of the dead, a solid and methodical

methodical work ; in it he solves all the difficulties which have been stated against that article of doctrine so mortifying to the sons of pleasure, so terrible to our epicurean sceptics and sciolists.

It is stated against the authority of St. Luke, that the enrolment of the people of the Roman Empire, which he mentions to have been ordered by Augustus, is not noticed by any heathen writer in the life of that Prince ; nor does it appear that Cyrinus was then President of Syria : to this the writer replies, that whether noticed by heathen writers or not, which he leaves to historians and chronologists to discuss, it is not the less true that this enrolment was made by Cyrinus, who was, whether then, before or after, is useless to inquire, President of Syria : for Josephus says : Ant. Lib. 18, Cap. 1, No. 1, " In the mean time, Cyrinus, one of the Roman senators, came into Syria with a few soldiers, sent by Cæsar to do justice to the people, and also that an enrolment of their possessions should be made . . . though the Jews at first could not bear the name of enrolment, with patience, they, by little and little, ceased to give it any opposition." If it be true, as some modern chronologists, who agree in nothing but the phrenzy of contradicting antiquity, pretend, that Cyrinus was not yet appointed Governor, he must have been sent by an extraordinary commission, and it is unquestionably true, that he was President of Syria, and dead some time before St. Luke wrote his Gospel. The Evangelist did, therefore, with great propriety, call him *President*. All writers designate a man by his most honorable title.

If St. Luke had been an impostor, he must have been senseless to publish a supposed event of such a public nature, that the imposition must have been immediately detected, nor would the Jews have

mitted it. We find even Julian, the apostate, acknowledge it : “ that Jesus, says he, whom you preach was one of Cæsar’s subjects, if you do not believe this, I will demonstrate it : you say that he and his father and mother were enroled under Cyrinus.” See Cyril, Lib. 6°.

The divine original of the scriptures established beyond the possibility of a doubt, renders the Atheist, the Deist, the Sceptic, in a word, the whole tribe of modern anti-christians, inexcusable.

Whether they have been transmitted entire or interpolated ; whether some entire books or parts of books have been supposed or not, is a question which is not to be discussed with the Atheist or the Deist : for if it be true that any one book, or any one verse of a book, be divinely inspired ; or that any one miracle has been wrought to authenticate revelation, the Atheist and Deist are defenceless.

To pretend that all the Scriptures have been lost, or interpolated, through the neglect or malice of man, is to deny a Providence, and turn Atheist : however great the malice of man, or criminal his neglect, it can neither counteract the views of providence, nor render its cares ineffectual. To these cares the world was not more subject when God, in his mercy, enlightened it by a revelation of his divine will than since. The measures immediately adopted for the preservation of the scriptures, and since pursued, rendered a material loss, or interpolation, impossible : They were entrusted to a priesthood divinely instituted, to men of sense, of science and influence, who were officially obliged to study them, and explain them to the people at large, in whose hands were numberless copies. This priesthood, though confined to one tribe in the old law, is, in the new law, composed of men of science promiscuously taken from

from all the different tongues and nations of the world. These, immediately on the establishment of christianity, possessed the scriptures, and continue to possess them, in the original languages, and in their different versions. They are officially obliged to prevent interpolations or suppositions; if any such be attempted, either through the malice of impostors, or the neglect of transcribers, it is immediately detected; its disagreement with authentic copies proves it spurious, and it is of course rejected.

Many facts and circumstances, interesting at the time of their insertion, have long since ceased to interest the world; these cannot be considered objects of providential protection, which does not extend to things absolutely useless: it protects the fly while it exists, but not its memory. Such objects do not claim a strict attention in transcribers: the names of persons, of towns, of birds, of beasts, of fishes, and many other things, which do not at all interest us, may be subject to alterations. The similitude of some letters of the Hebrew alphabet, in which a difference is scarcely discernable, must have caused some changes, more particularly, in numbers expressed by these letters. These being matters of indifference easily escape notice. In different versions a difference is unavoidable, from the nature of the Hebrew language, which has no vowels: the masoretic points are of late invention. Affixing different points to the same consonants, must give a different sense. It is a peculiarity of this language, and its derivatives, that the same sentence conveys many literal senses equally true, and perhaps equally intended by the writer. But leading facts, speculative doctrines, and moral maxims, are at all times equally interesting, the objects of a protecting providence, commanding the attention of transcribers and readers, and are invariably the same. The

The creation of the world, the prevarication of Adam, the deluge, the vocation of Abraham, the legation of Moses, the miraculous passage through the Red Sea, the institution of the Levitical priesthood; the birth, ministry, miracles, the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, the great maxims of his morality, the descent of the Holy Ghost, the mission of the apostles, their success in establishing christianity according to Christ's promise. These, and many other facts, are described in the same manner in originals, versions, transcripts, in a word in all languages, to make any alteration in these is not, nor was not, at any time, within the range of human power.

The writer here dismisses the Atheist, the Deist, the modern Sciolist, the whole squad of Anti-Christian scribblers from his mind and his paper, without even a distant hope of their conversion. "The fool said in his heart there is no God." This language was spoken in David's time; the fool continues to speak the same language still, and will whilst the world continues. All reasoning is lost on the wretch whom God despises; "speak not, says the wise man, in the ears of fools, they will despise the instruction," Pro. xxiii. 9.

E. B. V. G. QUE.

