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Sir Tho. Pope Blount's
ESSAYS
ON SEVERAL
SUBJECTS.

Conamur Tenues Grandia.
Hor. Lib. 1. Od. 6.

*The Third Impression; with very
Large Additions.*

*Besides a New ESSAY of Religi-
on:*

*And an Alphabetical INDEX to
the Whole.*

L O N D O N,

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July 17. 1900
L.

Reader,

I Here present you with
the **Third Impres-**
sion of my ESSAYS;
to which there is now ad-
ded above a **Third Part.**
I shall only tell you, That
they are intended purely
for your Service, and there-
fore if they can afford you
either Instruction or Di-
version, I am Satisfied.

Header

I have present you with
the Third Impri-
son of my ESSAYS
in which there is now ad-
ded the second Part
I shall only tell you that
they are intended partly
for your diversion and there-
fore if they can afford you
either Instruction or Di-
version I am satisfied.

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ESSAY

ESSAY I.

*That INTEREST governs the
WORLD: And that Popery is
nothing but Priest-Craft, or an
Invention of the Priest's to get
Money:*

INTEREST is that *Univer-
sal Monarch*, to which all o-
ther Empires are Tributaries.
It is the great *Idol* to which
the World bows: To *this*
we pay our devoutest Homage, and
give it not only our *Knees* but our
Hearts.

Interest is of that *Magnetick* Qua-
lity, that our Affections are almost
irresistably attracted by it: It is
the *Pole* to which we turn, and we
commonly frame our Judgments ac-
cording

cording to its direction. Men generally look more after the *Dowry*, than the *Beauty* of Truth, its correspondency to their *Interest*, than its evidence to their Understandings: And therefore whenever *Truth* and *Interest* are put into the balance, *Interest* still turns the *Scale*; most Men judging of *Truth*, just as *Brutus* did of *Virtue*, that it is but *Nomen inane*, a meer empty sound; And that no wise Man would ever suffer himself to be canted out of his Profit and Advantage. An useful Error (then) hath often found free Admission, when important Truths, but contrary to Mens Preconceptions or *Interests*, have been forbidden entrance. Temporal Expectations bring in whole Doves to the *Mahometan* Faith; and we too well know the same holds Thousands in the *Romish*. An advantagious Cause never wanted Profelytes. The Eagles will be where the Carcase is: And that shall have the Faith of most which is best able to pay 'em for't.

In

Governs the WORLD. 3

In all Ages of the World, *Interest* govern'd Mankind, and therefore we see the wisest Law-makers still built upon this Foundation; making it the *Interest* of the Community to put their Laws in Execution; hence *Plutarch* reported *Solon* to have said, That he had so fram'd his Laws, that the Citizens were sensible, it was more their *Interest* to observe them, than to violate them. Almighty God, when he first gave Laws to his own People the *Jews*, was pleas'd to consider them as a worldly covetous sort of People; and therefore to make their Obedience the more easie, he gives 'em a Constitution agreeable to their Genius, promising 'em all sorts of Temporal Blessings, such as *Possession of the Land*, *Freedom from Bondage*, &c. He very well knew, that *worldly Interest* would go a great deal further, than the pure, Intrinsic worth of Vertue and Goodness; and therefore that the surest way to enforce his Laws, was

B 2

by

4 That INTEREST

by striking upon their Affections. Thus is God fain to deal with Man, just as the *Husbandman* in the *Gospel* did; by proffering his *Penny* before he can prevail with 'em to work in his *Vineyard*. Christ observ'd, That the Multitudes throng'd after him more for the *Loaves* and *Fishes*, than for his *Doctrine*; intimating that few lov'd him *Gratis*, but to make advantage by him: And this the *Devil* knew too well, when he charg'd *Job* with it, saying, *Does Job serve God for nought?* In a word, *Gain* and *Advantage* is that which every Man aims at; be the *Busi-ness* never so *Bad*, you may have it done for *Money*; and be it never so *Good*, you cannot have it done without. Let us but cast our *Eyes* upon those two Religions, the *old Heathenish* and the *Romish*, and we shall soon see their respective *Priests* offering *Incense* to the *Un-righteous Mammon*. Whoever looks into the whole *Body* (or rather *Chaos*) of the Religion of the *Ancient*

Governs the WORLD. 5

Heathens, will find, that it was chiefly made up of such strange and extravagant Stories of their *Gods* and *Heroes*, that it became loathsome to the most Intelligent Part of themselves. Their very *Mysteria Sacra* were so full of all wickedness and filthy Abominations, that it was counted the very wisest Point in all their Religion, to take such mighty care as they did, for the keeping them Secret. Such confused Notions had they of their *Elysi-um*, that the Epithet of *Shades* belong'd more properly to the *Darkness*, than the *Refreshment*; and was a Reward fit for the *Votaries* of those ambiguous *Oracles* they consulted! In short, their Religion was all wrapt up in Clouds, and Darkness: Many of their *Worships* were nothing but a Solemnity of the Foulest Vices; and their *Divinity* taught 'em only to vitiate *Morality*. In *Rome*, their Religion was grown to that height of absurdity, that one tells us in *Cicero*, That even

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the *Roman* Priests themselves did to such a degree contemn their own Devotions and Ceremonies, that they could scarce forbear smiling when they met in the Street, to think how cleverly the Cheat went on: In a Word, never any one scorn'd any thing more, than *Cæsar* himself did his own *Gods*, and, as *Tertullian* observes, would often please himself, in that he was able to make his *Gods* feel the Power of his Anger.

But to be a little more Particular; No sooner was that which was called by the name of Religion, planted among the *Heathen*, but immediately their *Priests*, a pert forward sort of Men, stood up, and insinuated to the People the absolute Necessity of *Sacrifices*; and that these *Sacrifices* cou'd never be acceptable to the *Gods*, unless they were offer'd up by uncorrupt, Sanctified Hands, meaning *their own*. How beneficial these *Sacrifices* were to the *Heathen Priests*, you may easily imagine;

gine; since according to the old Proverb, 'tis an ill Cook that can't lick his own Fingers. And unless their *Priests* had found advantage by it, certainly they would never have enjoin'd the People such an unaccountable way of Worship. For what a strange and uncouth Belief was it to think that the most proper way to atone and pacifie their *Offended Gods*, was by slaying and sacrificing *Innocent Creatures*? But as unreasonable as this may seem to Men of Honesty and Sincerity, yet the *Heathen Priests* (men wholly actuated by Interest) conceiv'd different sentiments. For whatever contributed to their advantage, they never boggled at; and the *Prosperum Scelus* was all the *Vertue* they desir'd. Hence then it was, that the *Heathens* turn'd Religion into a Trade, wherein the most gainful was their *Sacrifices*: *Mendicantes vicatim Deos ducunt*; a God was then as fit an Object for Charity, as now a broken Arm, or a Wooden Leg;

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Nor did they consider their Gods any otherwise, than for their own Interest. Thus then these subtil, crafty *Heathen Priests*, observing that mankind was for the most part ill-natur'd and not apt to oblige others without some reward, as also judging of God Almighty by themselves, did at first conceive the *Gods* to be like their *Eastern Princes*, before whom no Man might come empty-handed: Hence, I say, the crafty Sacerdotal Order (who were maintain'd and grew rich out of the Follies and Passions of Men) did above all things inculcate and propagate this Opinion: And for as much as good part of the Offerings fell to the *Priest's* share: Therefore they soon left off *Pythagoras's* poor Institution of *Frankincense, Fruits, Flowers, &c.* Which lasted till their *Gods* (or to speak truly their *Priests*) grew so covetous, that nothing but the Bloud of *Beasts* could satiate them, and so fell to *Sacrificing* first *Beasts*, then *Men, Women* and *Children,*

dren, and the very *Gods* themselves, if they could have got them, and (as a late Author observes) all this was to bring Rost-meat to the *Priests*.

Was it not also from the same root, I mean, the covetous Temper of the *Heathen Priests*, from whence sprung up the first *Idolatry* that ever was in the World? I know very well, that many of the *Ancients* have excus'd the *Heathen's Polytheism*, by telling us, That they worship'd not divers *Gods*, but one and the same, under several Appellations, and Names, according to those various Benefits they had received from him, or those divers Apprehensions they had of him. As *Lipsius*, speaking of the *Gods* of the *Stoicks*, says, They were rather *Multitudo Nominum, quam Numinum*, a Multitude of Names, rather than of Natures. And *St. Austin*, in his *De Civitate Dei* cap. 24. brings in the *Heathens*, pleading for themselves, That they were not so ridiculously ignorant,

as

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as to think *Vertue*, or *Fortune*, or the Rest, *Gods*, but only divers Expressions of the same *Deity*. Take it (then) with this charitable Interpretation, still these *Godlins*, or *Under-Gods*, were of mighty advantage to the *Priests*, and brought in abundance of Grist to their Mill. For those *Spiritual Sharpers* knew well enough, That the celebrating many *Gods*, and the introducing several *Worships* of them, would turn much more to their Profit and Advantage, than the single *Worship* of the *Supreme God*: And therefore rather than want *Gods*, they took care to coin a Sufficient number of them; there being no less (according to *Varro*) than thirty thousand *Heathen Deities*. And that the *Priests* (let 'em pretend to what they would) consulted not herein the Good of the People, so much, as their own particular *Interests*, does most manifestly appear, by the choice they made of their *Gods*; most of whom (we know) were renowned
for

for nothing so much as for their Vices: *Mars*, a Bloody God; *Bacchus*, a Drunken God; *Mercury*, a Cheating God; and so proportionably in the several kinds all the rest; Nay, even their great Capital God, *Jupiter*, was guilty of almost all the Capital Vices. And therefore no Wonder, we find such gross and extravagant things in the old *Heathenish* Religion, when the very *Gods*, whom they Worshipp'd, gave such encouragement thereunto by their own lewd example: And where the *Gods* are naught, who can expect the *Religion* should be good; for 'tis the Nature of all Religions, to encline Men to imitate him whom they Worship.

Another Artifice whereby the *Heathen Priests* us'd to make themselves valu'd and esteem'd, was that Invention of theirs, the setting up of *Oracles*. 'Tis hard to say, who were guilty of the greater folly, the ignorant *Heathen*, who believ'd those Prædictions to come from *Heaven*;

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or those *Superstitious Christians*, who thought they came from the *Devil*; since they were both under a gross Mistake. For certainly to any Man, who is unbiass'd in Opinion, and who dares suffer himself to think beyond, the narrow Rules of his Education, they cannot appear to be any thing but the meer juggling and Imposture of the *Heathen Priests*. But since a learned Divine of the Church of *England* (Mr. *John Edwards*, in his farther *Enquiry* into some Remarkable *Texts* of *Scripture*) has thought fit to fall foul upon this Opinion of Mine: He affirming, that the *Oracles* were first invented by the *Devil*, and that the *Priests* in this Matter acted only *Ministerially*; I hope, I shall not tire the Patience of the *Reader*, if in my own Defence I enlarge upon this Subject, and even from the very best Authorities prove this my Assertion. *Theodoret* says, That *Theophilus*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, shew'd the Inhabitants of that Town, the
Hollow

Hollow Statues, into which the *Priests* privately crept to deliver their *Oracles*. When the Temple of *Æsculapius*, in *Cilicia*, was by *Constantine's* Order pull'd down *Eusebius* in the Life of this *Emperour* tells us, they chased thence, not a *God*, nor a *Dæmon*, but the *Cheat*, that had so long deluded the People. He adds, that in general, in the demolish'd *Idols*, they found no *Gods* at all nor *Dæmons*, nor so much as a melancholy *Shade*, or obscure *Sight*; but only some *Hay*, *Straw*, or *Ordure*, or the *Bones* of dead Men. The same *Eusebius*, in the fourth Book of his *Evangelical Preparation*, says, That in his time, the most famous *Prophets* amongst the *Pagans*, and their most celebrated *Divines*, of whom some were *Magistrates* of their *Cities*, were compell'd by torments to discover the very *Particulars* of all the *Cheats* of the *Oracles*. *Osbourn* in his *Advice* to his *Son*, is of the *Opinion*, That the *Oracles* of *Old* were nothing but the *Impostures* of *Priests*

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Priests, who possibly might have the knack of speaking either in the *Throat* or *Belly*, (as our *Ventriloquists* now a days can,) which seem'd to be a *Voice* at a great *Distance*. But *others* fancy, That it is not improbable, but that sort of *Trumpet*, which multiplies the sound, might not then be altogether unknown: And that perhaps, *Sir Samuel Moreland* has but reviv'd this Secret, which formerly the *Pagan Priests* were *Masters* of; tho' they chose rather to get profit by concealing it than honour by publishing it. And that which induces many to believe this last *Opinion*, is from the assurance that *Athanasius Kircher* gives us, That *Alexander* had one of these *Instruments*, by which he made himself be heard by his whole *Army* at the same time. There were no *Countries* observ'd to be so full of *Oracles*, as those that were most *Mountainous* and by consequence full of *Holes* and *Caverns*; such as *Bæotia*, which as *Plutarch* tells us, was anciently

ciently thronged with 'em. But at the same time 'tis worth noting, That the *Bæotians* were counted the silliest and most ignorant People in the World; And therefore it was the most proper Country that could be for *Oracles*, being full of *Block-heads* and *Caverns*. Now, the presence of *Divine Exhalations* was one main thing that render'd these *Caverns* so very necessary: For according to *Plutarch's* vain Philosophy, we are to suppose, that the Predictions of the *Oracles* were perform'd by *Exhalation* or vapour drawn from the Earth; and this is the very reason he gives of their *Being*, that they were for a time nourish'd by those *Exhalations*; and when *those* ceased and were exhausted, the *Oracles* famish'd and dy'd, for want of their accusom'd Sustainance. But how so great a Man as *Plutarch* seems to be in other things, could entertain such a trifling Opinion, 'tis not easie to imagine.

Again, *Caverns* of themselves are

apt to affect one with a certain Horror, which does not a little advance Superstition ; and in things that are only to make Impressions on the Imaginations of Men, nothing ought to be neglected. Besides, these *Cavities* made the Voice sound much bigger, and caus'd rebounding *Echoes*, which imprinted a sort of awful Terror in all that approach'd it: Hence the *Poets* tell us, That the *Pythian Priestesses* strain'd their Voices, so much beyond the pitch of Nature, that they appear'd to be more than *Humane*. I cannot but wonder to see, how very zealous *Mr. Edwards* in his Discourse of the *Oracles* seems to be in asserting the Truth of their *Predictions*, when it is most notorious, that no *Almanack-Maker* writes with less certainty of the Weather, than *they* generally pronounced about future Events ; and if their *Answers* were not directly false, yet they were so Ambiguous, or at least so Obscure, that many times there needed another

ther *Oracle* to explain 'em. As to the common observation concerning the *Decay of Oracles* at the coming of our Blessed *Saviour*, 'tis but a meer fancy; for my part, I do not in the least value any *Oracle* or *Sentence*, that may be brought to that purpose being well assur'd, that they were but the meer *Forgeries* of *Primitive Christians*, whose blind intemperate Zeal did tempt 'em to forge not only *Sentences* but *whole Authors*, as any who have not read *Histories* themselves, may find in *Casaubon's Exercitations on Baronius*, *Blondel on the Sybils*, as also the *Decree of Pope Gelasias*, who amongst other *Counterfeit Authors* does prohibit *Counterfeit Prophets*, *Counterfeit Gospels*, and *Counterfeit Acts of the Apostles*. Besides, I would fain know what some Men mean by the *ceasing of Oracles* at the coming of *Christ*: If they mean, that *Oracles* were then quite silent, that's utterly false. For *Plutarch* tells us, that in his time, which was after

C Christ,

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Christ, the Oracle at *Delphos* in *Phocis*, as also that at *Lebadia*, a Town in *Beotia*, did still give Answers. Again, if they mean only, that *Oracles* were much out of Request at the coming of *Christ*; I answer, so they were long before his coming, witness a very good Author, *Marcus Tullius Cicero*, who died some Years before *Christ* was born. Yet it appears by his second Book of *Divination*, that *Oracles* were so much gon to decay long before his time, that in his days there was nothing more Contemptible. Now in short, that which did so much contribute to the keeping up the great Credit and Reputation of these *Oracles*, for so many Ages, was the mighty favour and deference shew'd 'em by the greatest Princes: And therefore we find that however ignorant the People were of these Matters, yet all things lay open to the view of the Prince, who made use of this set of Men upon a Politick Design; for *they* upon all Occasions were
ready

ready to promote the *Interest* and Ambitious Designs of the present Rulers. And therefore, whenever there was any extraordinary Emergency for making use of the People, as in time of War, it was always contriv'd, that the *Oracle* should be *consulted*, which never fail'd to *Pronounce* in favour of the present Government. No wonder then, the *Priests* were such *Favourites* at *Court*, since they were so useful to the *Prince* in the Managing and Steering of the common People. We find in History, that some few had the Priviledge to enter into the *Sanctuaries* of these *Oracles*, where all the *Machines* of the *Priests* lay; but they were Persons of no less Quality than *Alexander* and *Vespasian*. And the reason why they shew'd this favour only to *Princes*, was because they knew it to be *their Interest* to keep the Secret; and that in the Circumstances they were then, they had much more reason to *raise* than to *lessen* the Reputation

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of *Oracles*. And for this very reason, the learned Men, for fear they should disoblige their *Princes*, durst not speak against *Oracles*. But in process of time, the People grew less credulous of their *Priests*, and so the *Oracles* were struck Dumb. Hence the Learned *Selden* observes, *That no sooner did People cease to believe Oracles, but even the Oracles themselves did then cease to be.* So that the Occasion of their Ceasing, was no more, than as it is with Shop-keepers Breaking, the loss of Credit. But to conclude, that which most discover'd the Vanity of the *Oracles*, was that even those who consulted 'em (which they did only to comply with the Weakness of the People, and gain Reputation among the unthinking Multitude) if they found them not favorable, either went on nevertheless in the Prosecution of their Designs, or else forced them to *pronounce* such as should be to their advantage. This Course was taken by *Alexander*
der

der the Great, and Cleomenes; by the former, when he consulted the Pythian; by the other, when he consulted the Delphick Oracle: Both which they forc'd to say what they pleas'd themselves. And thus I hope, I have to the Satisfaction of the Reader, demonstrated, That the Oracles which have made such a mighty noise in the World, were nothing but the Juggles and Impostures of the Heathen Priests; and that the Devil was no otherwise the Author of 'em, than as he is properly said to be the Author of all Sin and Wickedness. What reason then had Mr. Edwards to fall upon me with so much Malice and Bitterness of Spirit, belching out such Expressions as these, viz. That *I am wonderfully Civil and Obliging, extremely Courteous and Friendly to the great Enemy of Mankind.* And then with wonderful Smartness he goes on, *I see the Devil is a very Innocent and Harmless Creature, according to some Persons;* (I fancy,

without consulting an *Oracle*, I can tell what he means by the word *Some*;) But now comes the *Inspiration Thought*, *But it will be well for them if they find it so*. Indeed, I thought it a thousand *Pitties*, that so much *Wit* and good *Nature* should be lost to the *World*, and therefore pray let *Mr. Edwards* have all the *Praise* and *Honour* of it, and so I bid him *Farewell*. Thus in the first *Ages* of the *World* did *Men* suffer themselves to be gull'd and chous'd by the *Artifice* of their *Crafty* and *Ambitious Priests*, whose only *Principle* was that of *INTEREST*.

Let us now see whether; when *Popery* came upon the *Stage*, the world was any thing mended: Or, whether the *Popish Priests* were men more abstracted from *Worldly Interest*, or no. In after times, when *Rome Pagan* became *Rome Christian*, then sprung there up a new *Set* of men, who for *Craft* and *Subtilty* did many degrees outgo their *Predecessors*,

deceffors, the *Heathen Priests*; thefe appear'd but meer Bunglers, Compar'd to this new Brood, whofe very *Religion* was nothing elfe, but *Sacerdotal Intereft*. For who ever examines the whole Fabrick of *Popery*, fhall find, That the Corner Stone of that Building is *Intereft*; and were it not for the *Profitable* part, I queftion not but the *Foolifh* part of *Popery* would foon be laught out of Doors. But fince the true Nature of things is beft to be learnt in their *Minute parts* we will lay afide *Generals*, and defcend to *Particulars*: To begin therefore with the very *Original* of *Popery*, which you will find to be thus. As on the one hand it muft be confefs'd, That the *Primitive Christians*, who were generally Subjects of the *Roman Empire*, had a very great Deference and Refpect, for the Bifhops of *Rome*, becaufe that was the *Imperial City*; fo on the other hand, Church-Hiftory plainly fhews, That notwithstanding this great Deference, the Bifhops of

24. *That* INTEREST

Rome had no Authority or Jurisdiction out of their own *Province*, that is, beyond the *Suburbicary* Region of *Italy*, till after the Division of the *Roman* Empire into *Eastern* and *Western*. It was not long after that Division, and chiefly upon the Weakness of the *Western* Empire, that that Power, which we now call the *Papacy*, grew up. As the *Empire* decay'd, so by degrees *this* encreas'd and gather'd strength; the Design being at first, not to set up a *new Religion*, but a *new Monarchy* in the place of the *Old* then expiring. Thus while the *Roman* Empire was gasping for Life, did the Bishops of *Rome* force it to make what Will and Testament they pleas'd. And therefore Mr. *Hobbs* calls the *Papacy*, *The Ghost of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting Crown'd upon the Grave thereof*. Being thus Establish'd, and making *Rome* whose Name was still Venerable, the Seat of their Dominion, they soon obtain'd a Supremacy over the *Western* World.

World. In this Manner, and with these Steps did the *Papacy* first advance it Self; their Designs being apparently Secular, tending not to the Salvation of Mens Souls, but the Support of their own Grandeur. And therefore these *Spiritual Machiavillians*, according to the Old Policy, are for preserving their Empire after the same Way and Manner as it was at first acquir'd. No wonder then, that the chief *Topick* of *Popery*, is *Argumentum ab Utili*; which of all Arguments carries the greatest force in the Church of *Rome*: And this will more plainly appear, if we do but draw up the Curtain, and present you with *Popery* in its full light. 'Tis scarce within the reach of *Arithmetick*, what vast, prodigious Sums these several Doctrines [the *Pope's Supremacy*; *Purgatory*; *Indulgences*; *Auricular Confession*; and the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy*] bring in to the Church; And therefore (as one wittily expresses it)

They

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They must maintain them; because they are maintained by them.

I. To begin then with the *Pope's Supremacy*. How slight a Foundation this Doctrine hath, I think to any rational Man will soon appear; for supposing St. *Peter* was Bishop of *Rome* (tho' as I shall prove anon, there is little reason to believe any such thing) and as *Metropolitan* thereof, he had the Precedency of the rest of the Apostles; what then? Could hence a sufficient Power be devolv'd on his Successor, to raise a real *Monarchy*; and to claim an absolute Jurisdiction over the whole World, with a Power to dispose of Crowns and Kingdoms? This is certainly a *Non Sequitur*. Nor was St. *Peter* ever vested with any such Priviledges as these, nor did his Successors for many Ages ever challenge 'em; and at last the only Title the *Pope* had to 'em, was *Ursurpation*. But indeed, 'tis so far from being demonstrable, that St. *Peter* was Bishop of *Rome*, that it
is

is not so much as Probable he was ever there. I am sure the *Scripture* mentions no such thing; and his *Epistle* is dated from *Babylon* in *Affyria*. When *Paul* writes to the *Romans*, and sends *Greeting* to above Forty by Name, he says not the least tittle of *Peter*; whom in all probability, he would have remember'd either then, or afterward, when from *Rome* he sent particular Salutation from others in several of his *Epistles*. Nay, he complains, *Philipp. 2. 21.* That *all who were at Rome, sought their own, not the Things which are Jesus Christ's.* And *2 Tim. 4. 16.* *Paul* at his first Answer, when conven'd before *Nero*, complain'd, That *no Man stood by him, but all Men forsook him.* All which sure he could not have said, if *Peter* had been there. I know it is generally said, That *St. Peter* assum'd the *Bishoprick* of *Rome* in the time of *Claudius*, who (as *St. Luke* and other *Histories* do report) did banish all the *Jews* from *Rome*, as
Tiberius

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Tiberius also had done before him. And then, how can a Man reasonably believe, That so skillful a *Fisherman*, as *St. Peter*, should chuse to cast his *Net* there, where he knew, there were no Fish to be caught? Again, I cannot conceive for what reason, or to what end and purpose *St. Peter*, who was an *Apostle* should be made a *Bishop*: Methinks this is so far from being necessary, that really to me it seems very preposterous. For by vertue of his *Apostleship* he had sufficient Power to exercise *Episcopal* Functions and Authority, either at *Rome* or any where else. What need a *Sovereign Prince* be made a *Justice of Peace*? It had therefore been a great Degradation of *St. Peter*, and Disparagement to the *Apostolical Majesty*, for him to take upon him the *Bishoprick* of *Rome*; just as if the *King* should be *Lord Mayor* of *London*; or as if the *Bishop* of *London* should be made *Vicar* of *Pancras*. But how unreasonable soever this Doctrine of the

Supremacy

Supremacy may appear to those who get not by it, yet his *Holiness*, has reason to keep it up, since it serves to the filling his *Coffers*: And if he should once part with it, he at the same time lopps off the best Branch of his *Revenue*.

2. As to *Purgatory*: This Doctrine was never so much as thought off till St. *Austin's* time, who both said it, and unsaid it, and at last left it doubtful: Nor did it come into any sort of Credit till about two Hundred years after, in the time of Pope *Gregory* the First. The *Papists* themselves are so divided as to all the Points and Circumstances of this Doctrine, that possibly it will not a little Entertain the Reader, to see the foolish variety of Opinions relating to this Doctrine: First as to the Place, where they suppose this Imaginary Gaol to be; *Eckius* will have it to be in the Bottom of the Sea; others will have it either in Mount *Ætna* or *Vesuvius*; but *Bernard de Bustis* places

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ces it in an Hill in *Ireland*. Next, as to the *Torments*; *Sir Thomas More* will have 'em to be only by *Fire*; but *Fisher* by *Fire* and *Water*; *Loriccius*, neither by *Fire* nor by *Water*, but by the violent *Convulsions* of *Hope* and *Fear*. Then as to the *Executioners*, or *Tormentors*; They do as little agree about them; for *Bishop Fisher* will have 'em to be the *Holy Angels*; but *Sir Thomas More* to be the very *Devils*. Then, as to the *Sins* to be there *Expiated*; some will have 'em to be the *Venial* only; but others say the *Mortal* too. And for the time of the *Souls* continuance in that State, *Dennis the Carthusian* extends it to the end of the World; whereas *Dominicus à Soto* limits it to ten years; and others make it depend on the Number of *Masses*, and *Offices*, that shall be said or done on their behalf. Lastly, as to the *Extremity* of the *Pains*; *Aquinas* makes them as violent as those of *Hell*; but the *Rhemists*, in their *Annotations* upon *Revelations*

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the 14th, *verse* the 13th, say, That the Souls there are in a very fine Condition; And *Durandus, de Offic. Mortuorum, cap. VII.* between these *Extreams*, gives 'em some Intermis- sion from those terrible Pains, upon *Sundays*, and *Holy-days*. So foolishly extravagant are these several Fancies & Conceits of *Purgatory*, that it may not be altogether Impertinent to en- quire into the Original and Source of this Doctrine: And this will presently appear to any one who is in the least vers'd in the Heathen Poets and Phi- losophers. *These* were the first Hatch- ers of this Notion, and from thence was it first deriv'd. *Homer*, in the second Book of his *Odyss.* Entertains us with long Stories of *Ulysses's* Descent into Hell; the Dialogues of Ghosts; the Punishment of De- parted Souls; and the Sacrifices to be Offer'd to relieve 'em: And here- in is he imitated by *Virgil*, who, in the sixth of his *Æneids*, brings in *Anchises* discoursing at the same rate. Nor were their *Philosophers* free from these

these sort of Dreams; witness *Plato*, who in his Book *De Animâ* broaches the like Doctrine: and *Cicero*, in *Scipio's* Dream, Harps upon the same String. Hence *Bellarmin* urging several reasons for this Doctrine of *Purgatory*, his *third* is taken from the common Opinion of all Nations, *Hebrews*, *Mahumetans*, and *Gentiles*, both *Philosophers* and *Poets*. But to conclude this Point, as ridiculous as this Doctrine of *Purgatory* is, there is not any one Opinion in the Church of *Rome*, that the *Romanists* are more zealous in the Asserting: Nor is it to be wonder'd, that they are so, since herein they Act upon *Demetrius's* Principle, because *thereby they have their Gain*; and therefore well may they be allow'd to be Angry, and Displeas'd at all those, who speak or write against it: For by that means *their Craft is in danger to be set at nought*. There being no Opinion in their Church, which brings in a better and more constant

Revenue

Revenue, by *Masses, Dirges, Requiems, Trentals,* and *Anniversaries,* besides *Casualties* and *Deodands,* by dying Persons, or their Friends, in hopes of a speedier Release out of the Pains of *Purgatory.* So that if this Opinion were once out of Countenance in the World, they wou'd then lose one of the best Arts they have of upholding the Grandure of their Church. And it is very remarkable, That the fear of losing this Income, was one main impediment to restrain the Pope from yielding to a *Reformation.*

3. As to *Indulgences* and *Pardons:* In the Primitive times, when the *Christians* had committed any heinous Crime, as for Example, either in denying their Faith, or Sacrificing to Idols, for fear of Persecution; the Parties offending were enjoyn'd some severe and long Pennance: And the rigour of this, the Bishops, or Pastors, in their respective Congregations had Power (if they saw Cause) to mitigate at their discretion; which

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Mitigation,

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Mitigation, or Relaxation of Punishment was call'd an *Indulgence*, or sometimes a *Pardon*. And this was deriv'd from St. *Paul*, who releas'd the *Incestuous Corinthian* from the Bond of Excommunication, upon his Humiliation, and serious Repentance. This manner of *Indulgence* was Ancient and of long Continuance in the Primitive Church. The first Account we have of perverting this Custom, and the prostituting it, to secular Ends; was in the time of Pope *Gregory* the I. about the year *Six Hundred*. And ever since that time, 'tis scarce credible, what an immense Sum this Doctrine has brought in to the Church. And certainly, of all the Arts that the Church of *Rome* hath for the raising of *Money*, this is the cleverest, and neatest Contrivance; and therefore One wittily calls these *Indulgences* Emulgences, and even by the *Romanists* themselves they are stil'd, in their truest Signification, *The Treasury of the Church*. The *Pope* is the
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the sole Dispenser and Disposer of these *Indulgences*; and therefore whenever he hath occasion, or a mind to fill his Treasury, all that he needs to do, is, upon pretence of War against the Infidels or Hereticks, to send out, and proclaim Marts, and Sales for these *Indulgences*; upon condition that those, who wou'd disburse any Sums of *Money* (which is all to be laid out, as he pretends, upon the said Occasion) shou'd have *Pardons* and *Indulgences* for numbers of years proportionable to the Sums they cou'd, or wou'd deposite; *Nam aliter non absolvebantur nisi tribuerent secundum posse Suum, & facultatem Suam*; for otherwise they cou'd not be absolv'd, except they did disburse as much as their Abilities wou'd afford, as *Henry de Knighton*, an *English* Historian in *Richard* the second's time, honestly and plainly tells us: And then as for the Poor and Indigent, truly they deserve our pity when the *Taxa Camerae Apostolicæ*, deals thus plainly with 'em,

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Nota diligenter quòd hujusmodi Gratiae non conceduntur Pauperibus; Quia non habent, ergò non possunt Consolari; Note diligently, That such Graces are not granted to the Poor; Because they have not wherewithal, they cannot be comforted: A very sad case indeed! Thus, tho' our Saviour tells us, how hard a thing it is for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, yet by the Religion of Popery, the difficulty lies wholly on the Poor Man's side; And the only Sin capable of Damning a Rich Man, is that of Covetousness; for let him but oil St. Peter's Keys well, and than the Wicket will presently be open'd, and the Soul let into the Popish Heaven, which I doubt at last will prove but a Fools Paradise.

4. As to *Auricular Confession*. The necessity of this Doctrine was unknown to the Fathers of the Primitive Church. Nay, about a thousand years after *Christ*, it was held disputable in the *Roman Church*.

And

And tho' the Practice of it was impos'd by Pope *Innocent*, in his Council of *Lateran*; yet even then it remain'd disputable as to the Doctrine, till the *Council of Trent* gave it the Sanction of *Divine Faith*. At first it was voluntary, and only us'd in case of a troubled Conscience, or a strong Temptation: But it is now made necessary at stated times, in all probability to make the *Priest* Master of every Man's secrets. This is the main curb of the *Laity*, whereby the *Clergy* hold them in awe; for by this means they have an *Intelligencer* in the breast of every great Man of their Communion; which is a Thing of that vast Consequence, that if ever they part with it, then farewell *Popery*.

5. As for the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy*. That this Custom was deriv'd from the *Heathens* will plainly appear; *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, That the *Ancient Hereticks* took occasion to condemn Marriage from the Precepts and Practices of *Pagan*

Philosophers. And St. *Hieron* saith, That the *Athenian Hierophanta's* to this day, by supping the Broth of *Hemlock*, make themselves Chast (being forbidden Marriage) before they were admitted into sacred Orders, or advanced to *Prelatical Dignity*. And *Alexander ab Alexandro* informs us, That the *Priests* of *Cybele* did castrate themselves, that they might be chaste. And he further adds in the same place, That those who perform'd their greatest Solemnities (or their *Chief Priests*) that they might continue in chaste Religion, and escape the Contagion of Women, did emasculate themselves with certain Herbs. And *Euripides* testifieth, That in *Crete* those whom they call'd *The Priests of Jupiter*, do not only abstain from Flesh, but also from all savoury Meat. And the like did the *Indian Magi*, who were advanced to the *Priesthood of the Sun*: And among the *Assyrians*, the *Priests* of *Diana Ecbatana* liv'd in perpetual Virginitie. To add more Testimonies

monies is needless, since the *Romanists* are themselves so far from denying it, that several of them, as Pope *Syricius*, *Medina*, and others, urge it as an unanswerable Argument against the *Marriage* of *Priests*. But notwithstanding the great care the *Heathen Priests* took as to their *Chastity*, yet we find it signified but little; and therefore *Arnobius* describing the single Life of *Priests* amongst the *Heathen*, saith, Where are *Whoredoms* more frequently committed than by *Priests*, even in their *Temples*, nay before the very *Altars*? And in the Conclusion he tells us, That their Lust was more frequently discharg'd in *Chancels*, than *Brothel-Houses*. But having shew'd this to be a Custom deriv'd from the *Heathens*, and the Effect it had; Let us (now) see, whether the *Primitive Christians* had any such Usage; and when, and by what means, it was first introduced, and the use that hath since been made of it. That there was no such

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Usage in the *Primitive Church*, is most certain; for *St. Ambrose* in his *Comment* on the *2 Cor. II.* testifies, That all the *Apostles*, except *St. John* and *St. Paul*, had *Wives*. And also *Eusebius*, *Ruffinus*, and *Socrates*, Ecclesiastical Writers of great Note, do all testify of several very Religious Bishops, who had Children by their Lawful Wives, after they were Bishops. And the *Greek Church* even to this day observes it for a Custom, not to admit any into *Holy Orders*, unless they were *Married*; as judging them then more Staid, and less subject to Temptations. The first Account we meet with of Prohibiting *Wives* to the *Clergy*, was not long before the *Nicene Council*: A foolish opinion had then seiz'd the Heads of some of the leading Men of the Church, That *no Married Man* was fit to *Officiate at the Altar*; Whereupon the Question came to be started in the *Council of Nice*; of which matter the Ecclesiastical Historians,

Socrates,

Socrates, lib. 1. cap. XI. gives us this Account, Ἐδόξε τοῖς ἐπισκόποις, &c. It pleased some of the Bishops to bring in a new Law into the Church, That those who were dedicated to the Holy Ministry, viz. Bishops, Priests and Deacons, should not sleep any longer with their Wives. But this at first was most strenuously oppos'd, and particularly by one *Paphnutius*, an *Ægyptian* Bishop, who had formerly one of his Eyes pluck out for the Testimony of the Blessed *Jesus*. Nor did this Doctrine advance it self into a Decree, till above fifty years after, at which time *Siricius* Bishop of *Rome*, first ordain'd it; tho' for many Hundred Years after it was not much observ'd, till *Gregory* the VII. commonly call'd *Hildebrand* began to put it in Execution; by excommunicating all such *Marry'd Priests*, as would not immediately quit their Wives, and take the Oath of *Continency*. And this hath been strictly observ'd ever since; the *Council* of *Trent* having denounced an *Anathema*

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ma against all those who shall say, That *Clerks in Holy Orders may contract Matrimony: And that such a Contract is valid*, notwithstanding the Laws and Constitutions of the Church. But how little this *Romish Celibacy* signified amongst their *Priests*, as to the keeping 'em Chast, even their own Historians can best inform us. *Matthew Paris* tells us, the *Pope* thought it almost a Miracle to hear a *Candidate* for a *Bishoprick* attested to be a *pure Virgin*. *Alvarus Pelagius*, a *Portugal Bishop*, in the 14th Century, in his known Book, *De Planctu Ecclesiæ*, amongst other crying Sins of the *Roman Clergy* of his days, laments in an especial manner their Incontinency, wishing that the *Spaniards* and *Regnicolæ* especially, had never promis'd Continency: The Children of the *Clergy* being in those Countries (saith he) more numerous than those of the *Laity*; and what is more detestable, for several years together, from their *Concubines Beds*

Beds they go straight to the *Altar*. And in another place, the very same Author complains of their debauching the Women, who came to Confession. *Alphonsus à Castro* tells us, That if they should attempt to conceal the Incontinency of the *Clergy*, their own Children would proclaim it. *Johannes Aventinus* affirms, That the *Salacity* of the *Priests* was so famous that it was grown into a *Proverb*. *Robert Holkot*, who liv'd in the 14th Century, a *Dominican* by Profession and born at *Northampton*, stiles the *Priests* of his days, *Priests of Priapus* and *Baalpheor*. *Johannes Gerson*, speaking of the Incontinency of the *Priests*, saith, That it was so rooted an Epidemical an Evil, that as things stood under the Reign of *Celibacy*, if *Priests* were not allow'd the use of common Women, they would (in several places) turn up the Wives and Daughters of their Parishioners. Nay, even *Albertus Pighius* and *Dominicus Soto*, as stout Assertors as they

they were of the *Celibacy*, yet were so ingenious as to confess the Lewdness it occasions. Thus could I from several other Instances of the like Nature, drawn from their own Historians, dilate upon this Subject; As also, by adding the remarkable Instances of the great *Incontinency*, or the un-Chast *Celibate* of several of their *Popes* themselves; as of *Paul* the II. *Sixtus* the IV. *Innocent* the VIII. *Alexander* the VI. *Julius* the II. *Leo* the X. *Paul* the III. *Julius* the III, &c. But I forbear this, since raking of Dunghills is an Employment more fit for a *Scavenger*, than a *Gentleman*. That so great Wickedness should ever be practis'd amongst such as serve at the *Altar*, is indeed a thing much to be lamented; but that ever any *Christian Church* should allow and approve of such Practices, is Matter of Astonishment! And yet that the Church of *Rome* does so, is most clear, and manifest. Hence we find it was One of the *German Grievances*,

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That such Priests as were dispos'd to live chastly, and abhorred this Sin of Uncleanness, were compell'd to take Dispensations to keep Concubines. *Nicolaus de Clemangis* also makes the same sort of Complaint; *What a strange thing is it,* says he, *That in several Dioceses now a days, the Rectors of Parishes bargain with their Bishops for License to keep Concubines?* That great Angelical Doctor of the Church of Rome, *Thomas Aquinas* (whether from his own Complexion, or no, I know not) seems to be so great a favourer of this Vice, that he argues for it in a pretty odd sort of a Manner, in his 4th Book *De Regimine Principum*; *Id facit in Mundo Meretrix, &c. A Whore in the World,* saith he, *is as the Pump in a Ship, or a Privy in a Palace: Take these away, and all will be filled with Stench and Annoyance.* Most Incomparable Divinity! Sure if this Rule be true, no place for sweetness can compare with Rome, where, by the best Computation, are reckon'd Three Thousand

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sand licens'd *Harlots*, which pay
 an annual Tribute to his *Holiness*.
 But to return to my Subject; since
 it plainly appears, That this Do-
 ctine of the *Celibacy* was never us'd,
 nor practis'd amongst the *Christians*
 of the Primitive Church, how came
 then this Innovation to be introdu-
 ced into the Church of *Rome*; *Cui*
bono? For what end and purpose
 hath it so many Ages been so very
 zealously asserted? *In promptu Causa*
est, The reason is very obvious, and
 a Man with half an Eye may see
 the Policy of it. This Doctrine
 then is maintained by the Policy of
 the *Court of Rome*, on purpose to
 make advantage of the *Clergy*, both
 while they live, and when they dye.
 Hence their great *Espencæus* crys
 out shame of that execrable Custom
 of indulging *Concubinage* to professors
 of Chastity, at a set annual Rate;
 assuring us, That amongst the vast
 Numbers of Delinquents in this
 kind, few, or none, suffer any o-
 ther Punishment than that of the
 Pocket.

Pocket. But besides this, 'tis of great advantage to his *Holiness*, to disengage the *Clergy* from all civil Interests, and thus to make 'em wholly depend upon the *Court of Rome*; Which is a thing cou'd never be effected, so long as the *Clergy* gave hostages of their fidelity to the Civil Government, by the Interests of their Families and Children. And therefore this Invention was cunningly enough contriv'd; That as the old *Roman* Soldiers were forbidden Marriage while they received Pay, lest their *Domestick Concerns* shou'd abate their Courage; So the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy* was strictly enjoin'd, to make 'em more true and hearty to the Interest of the *Court of Rome*. And the vast advantages that accrue to his *Holiness* by this one Doctrine of the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy*, is scarce to be computed; since now the *Church* is the general Heir to all the *Clergy*.

Thus

Thus have I run over those five several Gainful Doctrines in the Church of *Rome*; whereby it is most manifest, That, let 'em pretend what they will, Grandeur, and Secular Interest is all they aim at; And therefore let us no longer wonder at this *Priest-Craft* of theirs, but rather conclude with that Ingenious *Cardinal*, who, when the People flockt about him, gave them his Benediction in these Words, **Si decipi vult Populus decipiatur;** *if the People will be deceiv'd, let 'em.* Since then *Interest* has so great an Influence in our spiritual Concerns, no wonder it has so absolute a Dominion over the *Secular* part of the World. Let People therefore talk as long as they please of *Liberty*, *Property*, *Conscience*, and the like, all this is nothing but *Cant*; but the main Business and Earnest of the World is *Money*, *Dominion*, and *Power*, and how to compass those Ends; and not a rush Matter at last, whether it be by *Force*, or by *Cunning*;

ning. *Might* and *Right* are Inseparable, in the Opinion of the World; and he that has the longer Sword, shall never want, either *Lawyers* or *Divines*, to assert his Title. In a Word, he that understands Mankind aright, (that is, judging Men not as they shou'd be, but as they are, and I fear ever will be) shall find, That *Private Interest* is the string in the *Bears* Nose, it is that Governs the *Human Beast*. To conclude then, There's not any Corruption in Nature, but Money (another Word for *Interest*) is at one end of t; the whole World is under the Dominion of it; for all Things under the Sun are Bought and Sold:

Our *Iron* Age is grown an Age of
Gold;

'Tis who bids most; for all Men
wou'd be Sold.

DRYD. *Amphytr.*

E ESSAY II.

 E S S A Y II.

The great Mischief and Prejudice of
 LEARNING ; *And that a Wise*
Man ought to be preferr'd before a
Man of LEARNING.

LEARNING does but
 serve to fill us full of Arti-
 ficial Errors. That which
 we so much admire under
 the Name of *Learning*, is only the
 knowing the Fancies of Particular
 Men, *Deliri veteris Meditantes Som-*
nia vana, in effect but like *Gossipping*
 Women, telling one another their
 Dreams. Most of the Pretenders to
Learning are meer *Plagiaries*; they do
 but *Copy* one after another ; and me-
 thinks it is but a poor easie *Knowledge*
 that can be learnt from an *Index* ;
 and a mean Ambition to be rich in
 the Inventory of anothers Treasure.
 Thus have we not seen some, even
 of

of our *First rate* Writers, that have been better at Disguising other People's Works, than furnishing anything of their Own; That is to say, upon the taking them to pieces, the *Stuff* and *Trimming* is found to be wholly stolen, and new Furbish'd; and, Nothing (in short) that they can assume to themselves, but the *Needle* and *Thread* that tackt the *Composition* together. Many (therefore) who affect to be thought Men of *Learning*, may very properly be compar'd to *Æsop's Daw*, which is a true *Type* of a *Plagiary*; for he makes himself fine with the Plunder of all Parties: He is a *Smuggler* of *Wit*, and steals *Fancies* without paying the *Customary Duties*. Whatever he Writes, may properly be call'd his *Manufecture*; for it is more the Labour of his *Finger* than his *Brain*. In short, There is not a simpler Animal, and a more superfluous Member of a State than a *meer Scholar*: He is *Telluris inutile Pondus*. And were I to give a description of a *Pedant*,

52 *The great Mischief and*
newly arriv'd from the *University*, I
cou'd not do it more to the *Life*,
than in the Words of *Horace* :

Cùm Septem Studijs annos dedit,
insenuitq;
Libris & Curis, Statuâ tæciturnior
exit
Plerumq; & Populum risu qua-
tit.——

No wonder then, that the *Italians*, in their *Farces*, always bring in a *Pedant* for the Fool of the Play.

The *Romans* also were so far from esteeming *Learning*, as an essential part of *Wisdom*, that with them the Word *Scholar* was seldom us'd but by way of *Reproach*. That *Learning* is no way serviceable to the *Life* of *Man*, even daily experience sufficiently shews; for how many are there in the *World*, of high and low *Condition*, that live pleasantly and happily, who never trouble themselves with *Learning*. Neither is it
serviceable

Prejudice of LEARNING. 53

serviceable to things Natural, which an ignorant Sot may as well perform, as he that is vested with the greatest *Learning*; Nature is a sufficient Mistress for that. Nor doth it conduce to Honesty, and to make us Better; *Paucis est Opus literis ad bonam Mentem*, little Learning is requisite for a good Mind: Nay, some are of Opinion, it rather hinders it; And that where *Learning* and Knowledge go in the *Front*, Pride and Ambition always follow in the *Rear*. Hence it is observ'd, That *Rome* for the first five hundred Years, when it flourish'd in Virtue and Valour, was without *Knowledge*; but as soon as *Learning* came amongst them, they then began to degenerate, and to run into Factions. The best establish'd Government that ever was, and from whence have Sprung the greatest Personages in the World, I mean the *Lacedemonian*, did in no sort pretend to *Learning*: And yet it was the School of Virtue and Wisdom, and was ever Victorious

54 *The great Mischief and*

over *Athens*, the most *Learned* City of the World, the School of all Science, the Habitation of the *Muses*, and the Storehouse of *Philosophers*. *Learning* then serves for nothing, but to invent *Niceties* and *Subtilties*, artificial cunning Devices, and whatsoever is an Enemy to *Vertue* and *Innocence*. *Atheism*, *Errors*, *Sects*, and all the *Troubles* of the World, have risen from the Men of *Knowledge* and *Learning*: 'Tis *Learning*, I say, which has enabled them for those *Quirks* and *Subtilties*, of which grosser *Understandings* wou'd have remain'd more happily ignorant. If we search into the *Morals* of the most *Learned* amongst the *Heathens*, I mean their *Philosophers*, we shall find but little agreement betwixt their *Practices* and their *Doctrines*. And that the one did generally run counter to the other. *Plutarch* tells us, That not only *Socrates* and *Plato*, but also the rest of the *Philosophers*, notwithstanding their outward shew and ostentation of

Prejudice of LEARNING. 55

of some Vertues, were generally as Intemperate, Incontinent, and Wick- ed, as any common or ordinary Slave. We are likewise told from very good Authority, That *Aristotle* did by no means live up to the Rule of his own *Ethicks*; as being guilty of great Vanity in his Clothes, of In- continency, and Unfaithfulness to his Master *Alexander*, &c. Nay, what shall we say, if our great *Se- neca*, that Man of *Morals*, had his Vices and Enormities? Whom not- withstanding *St. Jerom* would have Canoniz'd for a *Saint*; yet if what *Dion Cassius* and other Authors of Note, say of him be true, I am sure he did but little deserve it. We contemn, says *Minutius Felix*, the proud Looks of the *Philosophers*, whom we have known to be Cor- rupters of Youth (or *Sodomites*) and *Adulterers*, and *Tyrants*, and always eloquent against their own Vices. *Grotius* in his *Annotations* on *Ephes.* 5. v.6. informs us, That the Sin of *Sodomy* was generally allow'd by

56 The great Mischief and
the *Philosophers*. And the same *Author* on 1 *Cor.* 5.2, assures us, That both the *Cynicks* and *Stoicks* judged *Incest* amongst their *Adopted*, Things *Indifferent*. Thus we see notwithstanding the specious Pretentions, & affected Gravity of these *musty Moralists*, the *Ancient Philosophers*, their Lives were no way correspondent to their *Doctrines*, nor did their *Practises* hold an equal pace with their *Theory*. ——— *Videō meliora, proboque; Deteriora sequor.* We naturally know what is *good*, but naturally pursue what is *Evil*. And as the *Philosophers* were defective in their *Morals*; so I do not find, they had any great Stock of solid Learning. *St. Austin* tells us, in his *Epist.* 131. That all the *Knowledg* and *Learning* of the *Philosophers*, was nothing else but jangling *Sophistry*, Towers built in the Air, proud Error and curious Lies. We may easily gather from *Tully* and *Laertius*, what a small Proportion of solid Learning these *Philosophers* were *Masters*

Prejudice of LEARNING. 57

sters of; Their Controversies were infinite, their Dissentions endless, and irreconcilable, about no less Matters than the *Sovereign* and *Chief Good*, nay and about *God* himself; holding concerning the *first*, 288 several Opinions, and 300 about the *latter*. Many of their *Summum Bonum*s that they presented us with, were only fit to entertain a *Brute*, tho others indeed were noble enough for a Spirit of the highest Order. I could not tell where to stop should I relate the Differences one Sect had with another, their Inconsistencies with themselves, and the ridiculous and ill supported *Tenets* some of the most famous of them have held. And therefore well might *Tully* observe, as he did, That there was scarce any Opinion in Nature so gross, absurd, or ridiculous, but was asserted and maintain'd by some *Philosopher* or other. 'Tis to be confess'd, *They* had a great Command of Words, and withal a good Stock of Assurance, and so were better able to *Harangue*
and

and *Dispute* it, than the common People; they could talk more plausibly about that they did not understand; but still their *Learning* lay chiefly in Flourish, and Terms, and Cant; for as for any real Improvements in Science, they were not much wiser than the less pretending Multitude. But after I have said this, I can by no means deny, but that some of these *Philosophers* were Men of excellent Wits, and great Natural Parts; yet, I say, the way they took was not like to bring much Advantage to *Knowledg*, or any of the Uses of *Humane Life*; being for the most part that of *Notion* and *Dispute*, which still runs round in a *Labyrinth* of *Talk*, but advanceth nothing. It was a most perverse Custom amongst the *Disciples* of the Ancient *Philosophers*, not to make any *strict Choice*; to leave some and embrace others of their Masters Doctrines, but to swallow all at once. Thus he that became a *Stoick*, an *Epicurean*, a *Peripatetick*,

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patetick, in *Logic*, or *Moral Philosophy*, or *Physicks*; never stuck presently to assent to whatever his *Founder* had said in all the other Sciences; tho' there was no kind of Connexion between his Doctrine in the *one* and the *other*. Thus was the whole Image of *Philosophy* form'd in their Minds altogether: And what they receiv'd so carelessly, they defended the same way; not in parcels, but in gross. No wonder then, since they took this unadvised Method, that they often slipt into such gross Errors and Mistakes. Hence therefore, if we look back into the first Ages of the Church, we shall find, That *Philosophy* was the chief Seminary of the main Errors broach'd in those times. And this (no doubt) *Tertullian* was highly sensible of, which made him style the *Philosophers*, the *Patriarchs* of *Hereticks*. And *Cornelius Agrippa* says, That nothing more adulterates *Divinity* than *Philosophy*; forasmuch as all *Heresy* whatsoever hath had it's
first

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first Rise out of the Fountain of *Philosophy*. The Primitive Fathers of the Church, were wont to apply themselves with great diligence to the Study of *Heathen Philosophy*, on purpose to enable them to fight the *Heathens* with their own Weapons, and to baffle them with their own Arguments. Whereupon they chiefly consulted the *Philosophy* of *Aristotle* and *Plato*; but chiefly *Plato's*; because that seem'd to speak plainer about the *Divine Nature*; and also, because the Sweetness and Powerfulness of *Plato's* Writings, taught 'em at the same time the Art of Speaking, and the Strength of Reasoning. Having thus provided themselves against their Adversaries, they easily got the Victory over them; For tho' the *Heathens* for so many hundred Years, had very zealously asserted the Truth of their several Religions; yet now their *Philosophers* were so baff'd by these *Christian Doctors*, that they had nothing to say; and at last were so ingenious,

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nious, as to confess the ridiculousness of *their* Religions, and to own the purity and reasonableness of the *Christian* Worship. And now, after so good a Beginning, who could expect so unhappy a Conclusion? For it so fell out, That the *Christians* having had such good Success against the Religions of the *Heathens*, by their own Weapons; instead of laying them down when they had done, unfortunately fell to manage them one against another. So many subtle Brains having been set on work, and heated against a Foreign Enemy; when that was over, and they had nothing else to do (like an Army that returns victorious, and is not presently disbanded) they began to spoyl and quarrel amongst themselves. Hence that Religion, which at first appear'd so innocent and peaceable, and fitted for the Benefit of Human Society, was miserably divided into a thousand intricate Questions, which neither advance true Piety, nor good Man-
ners,

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ners. And from hence sprung up the first *Heresies* in the Church. I know it was the Policy of *Julian* to shut up the Fountains of *Human Learning* from the *Christian Youth*, least they should by that means become Masters of such acuteness, as might render them the more formidable Adversaries to *Paganism*: But cou'd he have foreseen, that they would have employ'd those Weapons, not so much against the common Enemy, as one against another; he would surely have revers'd the *Stragem*, and freely have open'd those *Magazines*, whence they might furnish themselves for their mutual Ruin, and have as solicitously promoted their *Learning*, as ever he obstructed it. And thus we see how little *Religion* is promoted, or advantag'd by *Human Learning*, which the Apostle sufficiently inculcates, when he so wisely advises us, *to avoid all vain Philosophy*.

And as *Learning* is of little Use in making Men truly *Religious*; so

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it likewise signifies but little in the making us either good *Subjects*, or great *Politicians*. *Licinius* and *Valentinian*, Emperors of *Rome*, were wont to say, That their State had no Poyson more dangerous than that of *Learning*: *Lycurgus* also seem'd to be of the same opinion, when he establisht Ignorance in his Republic. Most Men do attribute the Greatness of the *Grand Seigneur's*, and the Duke of *Muscovy's* Power over their *Subjects*, to this one single piece of *Policy*, viz. Their suppressing of *Literature*. And do we not see here in *England*, That, in time of *Popery*, when that little Stock of *Learning* that was amongst us, was cloister'd up in *Monasteries* and *Abbeys*, the ignorant *Common People* patiently crouch'd, and readily bore whatsoever burden was put upon 'em. But as soon as ever *Learning* peept abroad in the World, and began to diffuse it self, amongst the *Vulgar*: They then began to expostulate with their Superiors, and immediately

ately threw off that Yoke , which formerly they and their Fore-fathers had so long lain under. And indeed upon this Consideration it is, that Princes take so much Care to keep their Subjects in Ignorance, by suppressing all such Books, as lay open and prostitute the *Arcana Imperii* to the Knowledg of the Vulgar. For Books give Men new Hints and Notions, and those Notions do often put Men upon such Actions, as are not always agreeable to the Interests of Princes. Hence that subtle and crafty Prince , King *James* (I mean the *First*, not the *Second*) would often say, *That of all sorts of Subjects the Thinking Man made the Worst.* And even by daily Experience we find it confirm'd , That the High-flown *Arbitrary* Men (commonly the Darlings of Tyrants) are not Men of the deepest Thoughts, nor of the greatest Foresight and Consideration ; since if they were, they might easily discover, That the Absolute Power of the Prince cannot
be

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be made up of any other Ingredient, than the Slavery of the Subject. Whereas in all Great and Noble Souls (*Quæ's Meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan*) there is an inbred Love to Liberty: And certainly they work by a wrong *Engine*, who seek to gain their *Ends* by Constraint. The crossing two *Lovers* knits but their Affection the Stronger, and makes it burn with the greater Heat. You may stroke the *Lion* into tameness, but you shall sooner hew him into pieces, than *beat* him into a Chain. I have known several, whom the greatest Importunity could never prevail with to take up their Glass, when at the same time, give 'em but their *Liberty*, and they would be the first Men drunk in the Company. In short, the noblest Weapon where-with *Man* can conquer, is Love and Good Nature. For, generally Speaking, 'tis with *Men*, as 'tis with *Trouts*, the surest way to *take* 'em, is to *tickle* 'em. In a Word, 'tis *Liberty* alone which inspires Men with

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Lofty Thoughts, and elevates their Souls to the highest pitch: Whereas a Man that is under any Restraint, and in a State of Dependency, has presently a Damp struck upon his Genius, his Thoughts are overaw'd, and the range of his Fancy totally disorder'd. And for this reason it was, That *Parmenio* could not rise up to *Alexander's* Height of *Thinking*, because he was under his Command. 'Tis *Longinus's* Observation, That there were no considerable *Orators* in *Greece* after their Government was alter'd by the *Macedonians* and *Romans*. According to *him*, their *Elocution* and their *Freedom* seem'd to languish and expire together. When they were once *enslav'd*, the *Muses* scorn'd to keep 'em Company any longer. Thus then we find, That we cannot continue long in the Condition of *Slaves*, but we must degenerate into the Habits and Temper that is natural to that Condition, Our Minds will grow low with our Fortune, and by being accustomed

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med to live like *Slaves*, we shall become unfit to be any thing else: *Etiam fera Animalia si clausa teneas virtutis obliviscuntur*, says *Tacitus*; The fiercest Creatures by long Constraint, lose their Courage. And I remember, 'tis the Observation of that noble Author, *Sir Francis Bacon*, That the Blessing of *Issachar*; and that of *Judah*, falls not upon one People, to be *Asses* crouching under *Burthens*, and at the same time to have the Spirit of *Lions*. And with their *Courage* 'tis no wonder if they lose their *Fortune*, as the *Effect* with the *Cause*, and act as ignominiously abroad, as they suffer at home. *Machiavel* observes; That the *Roman* Armies that were always victorious under *Consuls*; all the while they were under the Slavery of the *Decemviri* never prosper'd. And certainly, People have reason to fight but faintly, where they are to gain the Victory against themselves, when every success shall be a Confirmation of their

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Slavery, and a new link to their Chain. Since therefore *Liberty* is a thing so highly valued by Mankind, and in all Ages has been so; no wonder then, that the wisest *Princes* have been for granting to their Subjects the greatest *Liberty*; allowing them even the freedom to speak whatever they had a mind to. And this was so far from being any prejudice to the *Prince*, that it was really the greatest Advantage imaginable to him. *Augustus Cæsar*, one of the Happiest and Greatest *Princes* that the Sun ever saw, when he was told at any time, That even his own Person and *Edicts* were too boldly discours'd of in *Rome*, was wont to say, *In Civitate liberâ linguas quoque Civium liberâ esse oportere*: That in a free State or City, Mens Discourses ought also to be free, and without Restraint. And this Candid Profession of his, might possibly be no mean Ingredient in the Composition of his own Felicities. *Thuanus* writing to the
great

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great *Henry* the 4th of *France*, unto other Praises of that *Prince's* Reign, adds this, as none of the meanest, *ea est, Domine, rara tuorum temporum fœlicitas, in quibus unicuique sentire quæ velit, & quæ sentiat eloqui licet*: Such (Great Sir) is the rare Happiness of your Times, that in them every Man may think what he pleases, and speak what he thinks. And of the same Complexion was that Serene Age, in which the Excellent Emperour *Trajan* reign'd as *Cornelius Tacitus* (who was then living) affirms, from whom the said *Ihuanus* seems to have borrowed the very individual Words before recited. The Lord *Bacon* very wisely noteth, that such *Liberties* do oftentimes give vent and discharge to Popular Discontentments; and besides, the *Prince* is thereby instructed in what part the *Subject* is pinch'd, and griev'd, when perhaps he shall attain this Information no other Way. And to the same Effect does the learned *Selden* tell us, That tho' some

make flight of *Libels*, yet you may see by them how the Wind sits; as take a Straw, and throw it up into the Air, you shall see by *that* which way the Wind is; which you shall not do by casting up a *Stone*. In short, *saith he*, more Solid things do not shew the Complexion of the *Times* so well, as *Lampoons* and *Libels*. But as valuable as *Liberty* is to most Men, yet in some tempers there is such a Natural Love to Servitude and Vassallage, that they think no pleasure Comparable to the Hugging of their Chain; and with the Slavish *French Man*, their greatest Glory is, *Nostre Roy est Absolu*, the Grammatical construction whereof is, *We are Slaves*. But, God be thanked, this is not the Character of our Country-men; They have still known better things: For never was any Nation under the Sun more tenacious of their Properties, and by Consequence greater Asserters of their *Liberties* than the *English*, and that even in the most bigotted

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gotted Times of *Popery*. And nothing can be a greater Testimony of the Truth hereof, than the great Care our *Ancestors* took in defending that inviolable Bulwark of our *Liberties and Properties*, the **Magna Charta**, or **Great Charter** of *England*; a *Charter* purchast with the *Treasures*, and seal'd with the *Bloud* of our *Ancestors*. A *Law* promulg'd and establish't to the *English*, with a Terror and Solemnity, inferiour only to *that* of the *Holy Commandments* by God himself to the *Jews*. There was here no *Thunder* or *Lightning* it's true; but there was so dreadful a Fulmination of Curses upon the Violaters thereof, that no Man ever yet consider'd them without Horror and Astonishment. A *Law* rever'd by former *Parliaments* to that Degree, that they enacted Transcripts thereof to be carefully preserv'd in all the *Cathedrals* of the Realm: That it should be four times a year publickly read before the People. That twice in the Year the *Prelacy* should

Thunder out the greater Excommunication against the Infringers thereof. That the Lord *Chancellor*, and all the great Ministers of State, upon entry into their Offices, should constantly be Sworn to the Observation thereof. Nay that the *Priests* and *Confessors* should frame the Consciences of the People to the Observance thereof. And Lastly, a *Law* confirm'd by no less than Thirty Two several Acts of Parliament. And (now) what was the Reason of all this *Veneration* and *Carefulness*? Was this **Charter** of that *Sanctity* and *Importance*? Yes surely, This *Bulwark* was then thought as necessary to the *English*, as that of the *Palladium* to the *Trojans*, the *Holy Ark* to the *Hebrews*, or the *Sea-Banks* to the State of *Holland*. In Company of this *Tutelar*, there could be no Danger; and in the Absence thereof, there could be no Safety. Such *then* was the Care of our *Ancestors*, in the fencing about of their *Rights* and *Properties*. And so invincible was their Zeal to trans-

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mit these *Jewels* to their Posterities, with the same *Lustre* and *Beauty*, that they themselves had receiv'd them from their Predecessors. These old *English Heroes* seeming to me to bear always in mind that Gallant saying of *Galaacus*, (our Countrey Man and a great Captain) when his Army was in the Instant of joyning Battle here with the *Roman* Invaders: *Et Majores vestros, & Posterios Cogitate*; **Fellow Soldiers**, saith he, **Remember your Ancestors, and Posterities.** An Expression so weighty and significant, that, if it were possible, it ought to be Writ with a Quill drawn from the Wing of a *Cherubim*. And now, that ever any who call themselves *English Men*, should sink into such a meanness of Spirit, so degenerating from the Virtues of their *Ancestors*, as to give up at one Breath our *English Liberties*, is that, which as our Forefathers could never have dreamt of; so, for the Honour of the present Age, I hope Posterity will never remember. But Monsters

are the Product of every Age; and there is no Climate without some Insects. Tho' *Liberty* (as I have said) be the Mistress of all generous Souls, and is that alone which gives a Relish to Human Life: yet, I say, there hath been lately found amongst us a sort of *Animals* who have been as Industrious in giving up, as ever our Noble Progenitors were in establishing our *Liberties*. But whatsoever Charms, these the more Gross, and earthly part of Mankind, may think there is in such a Lazy, slavish Subjection; yet to Men of more refined Intellectuals, and whose Veins run with a Nobler Sort of Blood, all that the World can give without *Liberty* hath no Taste. It must be confess'd, That in the two last Reigns, this precious Jewel of *Liberty*, hath been little valued; nothing hath been Sold so Cheap by *Unthinking* Men: But alas that doth no more lessen the real value of it, than the Ignorance of the Foolish *Indians* did that of
their

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their *Gold*; which at first they exchanged for the most inconsiderable Bawbles. 'Tis the Happiness of our Constitution, That *King* and *People* are both bounded; and Curst be the Man, who shall go about to remove either of these Land Marks: The *Crown* hath *Prerogative* enough to protect our *Liberties*; and the *People* have so much *Liberty*, as is necessary to make them useful to the *Crown*: So that the *King's Prerogative*, and the *Subjects Liberty*, do naturally tend to the Preserving one another: It was the Observation of that learned Attorney General, *Sir Francis Bacon*, That whilest the *Prerogative* runs within its ancient and proper Banks, the main Channel thereof is so much the stronger; for Over-flows evermore hurt the River.

Certainly, it was no ill saying of *Pliny* the younger, to *Trajan* the Emperour, *Fælicitatis est posse quantum velis, Magnitudinis velle quantum possis*, It is an Happiness for your Majesty

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Majesty to be able to do what you will, but your Greatness consists in doing what you justly may. And *Comines* (that Honest *French States-Man*) notes, That it is more Honourable for a *King* to say, *My Subjects are so Good and Loyal as to deny me nothing*; than to say, *I take what I please, and I will keep it*. And those Courtiers that preach any other Doctrin, do not a little mistake the Interest of their Masters, and are so far from exalting their Grandeur and Prerogative, that they make 'em indeed no Kings. For, as *Bracton* says, *Non est Rex ubi dominatur Voluntas*; It is not a King, where Will and Pleasure bears Sway; but rather some *Cyclopick Monster*, which eats and drinks the Flesh and Blood of Mankind. Nay, even King *James* the I. (that high Asserter of Prerogative) in his Speech in the Star-Chamber, *Anno 1609*. saith, That no sooner does a King give over Governing according to *Law*, but he ceases to be a *King*, and degenerates

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rates into a *Tyrant*. And the Lord Chancellor *Bacon* tells us, That the People of this Kingdom love the *Laws* thereof, and nothing will oblige 'em more, than a Confidence of the free enjoying them. What the *Lords* upon an Occasion once said, **Nolumus Leges Anglia Mutari**, we will not have the *Laws* of *England* alter'd, is imprim'd upon the Hearts of all *English Men*, who take themselves to have as good a Title to their *Laws*, as to the Common Air they breath in. And therefore Sir *Walter Raleigh* (a Man of no Vulgar Observations) tells us a great Thing, and in no wise to be slighted, That *the Kings of England* have evermore sustained more loss by one Rebellion, than by a hundred years Observance of **Magna Charta**. 'Tis observ'd of the *Camel*, that it lies quietly down till it hath its full Load, and then riseth up; but the *English Mobile* is a kind of *Beast*, which riseth up soonest, when it is over-loaden. And therefore

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therefore (to Conclude this Point) as an *English Monarch* may (so long as he observes the *Laws*) be the Happiest Prince in the World ; so if he will turn *Phaeton*, and drive furiously, he will in the end find himself a King not of *Men*, but of *Devils*. And this brings to my Mind the Observation of a great Man, *viz.* That that which had in all Ages kept the *English* so Free a People; and from being Enslav'd like some of their Neighbouring Nations, was (next to Gods particular Goodness) that natural Churlishness, and Roughness of Temper, which is inherent in a true right *English* Man. This Character may (possibly) seem to bear a little hard upon us: But let us set the *Good* against the *Bad*, and for my part I think (if from so bad a *Cause* we have found so good an Effect) we have no reason to Repine, but be Thankful. And besides who knows but the same Observation may hold true in *Men*, which is in *Metals*, That these

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those of the strongest and noblest Substance, are hardest to be Polisht. But begging Pardon for this long Digression, I shall now proceed.

That Men of *Learning* are not always the Greatest *Politicians*, even the Experience of all Ages does sufficiently shew; That great and learned Antiquary Mr. *Selden* informs us, That when *Constantine* became *Christian*, He had so great an Affection for the *Clergy*, that he put good part of the Civil Government into their Hands; but after three or four years Experience, he was very sensible how fatal this Error had like to have been: Whereupon he took new Measures; and in the Posts of these unhappy *Politicians*, he was fain to put in a set of *Lay-Men*, who having truer and better Notions of Government, soon corrected, and amended *Their* Errors and Mistakes. That the *Clergy* of *England* have since the Reformation been much abridg'd of their former Power, is what I think

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think every Man will grant. And therefore, that such of 'em as love to be Great and Powerful, have still a hankering after that old Constitution, I, for my part, cannot so much admire. But how comes it, that the *Clergy* are not *now* allow'd to have as great Power, as in times of *Popery*? The reason is very apparent; because we found by Experience, That when they were vested with such great Power, no sort of Men ever carried it more Arbitrarily, and Tyrannically, nor (indeed) committed greater Solecisms in *Politicks* than they did: And therefore the History of those times does sufficiently warn us against runing into the same Error. When Men act out of their own Sphere, who can expect any good will come of it? Hence we find, it seldom happens, That the *States Men* are more Fortunate in meddling with Religion, than the *Church Men* with State-Affairs. They both mar all with Tampering out of their Province. *Christ's Kingdom*

dom is not of this World; nor ought the Divines *οεεγματινειν*, to meddle in this *Political* Province; and when they do, God knows no sort of Men proves so Unfortunate. Let us hear what the Ingenious *Andrew Marvel* says, as to this Point.

“ Whether it be, that the Clergy
“ are not so well fitted by Education,
“ as others for Political Affairs, I
“ know not; tho’ I should rather
“ think (*saieth he*) they have advan-
“ tage above others, and if they
“ wou’d but keep to their Bibles,
“ might make the best Ministers of
“ State in the World; yet ’tis gene-
“ rally observ’d, That Things mis-
“ carry under their Government.
“ If there be any Counsel more pre-
“ cipitate, more violent, more rigo-
“ rous, more extream than other,
“ that is *theirs*. Truly I think, the
“ reason, God does not bless ’em in
“ Affairs of State, is because he ne-
“ ver intended ’em for that Employ-
“ ment. Or, if Government, and
“ the Preaching of the Gospel, may
“ well

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“ well concur in the same Per-
“ son, God therefore frustrates him,
“ because, tho’ knowing better, he
“ seeks and manages his Greatness
“ by the lesser and meaner Max-
“ ims.

Upon these therefore, and such like Considerations, the Wise *Venetians* have so slight an Opinion of the *Politicks* of their Church Men, that whenever any thing that is of a considerable Nature, occurs to be debated in the *Senate*, before any suffrage passeth, they cause Proclamation to be made, for all *Priests* to depart: And the proper Officer, with a loud and audible Voice, pronounceth these Words, *Fuora I Preti, Out Priests*. And it is further Remarkable, That he who in this Common-Wealth is call’d the *Divine of the State* (an Ecclesiastical Person to be advis’d with in Matters of Religion) is commonly chosen such a One, as is reputed the least addicted to *Bigottry*. It is the general Observation of the most Faith-
ful

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ful Historians, That the *Clergy* in all Ages have been the greatest Promoters of those civil Distempers and Contentions, that have every where shak'd the Foundations of *Church and State*; so that as a *Catholick* noted, There hath been no Flood of Misery, but did spring from, or at least was much swell'd by their *Holy Water*. Those *Torches* that should have been for saving Light, have still degenerated into Firebrands; those *Trumpets* that shou'd have sounded Retreats to Popular Furies have never known any other Musick than *Martial All-Arms*. But God defend our *Pulpits* from such *Boutefeus*, as like *Ætna* and *Vesuvius* belch out nothing but Flames and Fiery Discourses. Certainly, if these Men ever think to merit Heaven, it must be by an *Antiperistasis*. But in a Word, when the Men of the *long Robe* have once preach'd the People to *Tinder*, the least Spark then sets 'em on Fire. And therefore, let any Man but read

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the History of *Christendom*, and he will find, that most of the Quarrels in this part of the World have sprung from the *Pulpit*, and that the *Clergy* were the *Porcupisces* that portended the Storm. That no sort of Men have prov'd more fatal in their Counsels to Princes than the *Political Divines*, is a truth too much confirm'd, by Experience to be deny'd. That which these Men chiefly aim at, is to render themselves acceptable at Court; as knowing that the best Preferments come from thence; and therefore, If they can but sooth and please the *Prince*, they value not whether their Doctrin be true, or false. Hence then their chief business is, to give a helping hand towards making the *Prince* Arbitrary: And their way to do this, is by Entitling him to all those *Regalia's* or *Prerogatives*, that the Kings of *Juda*, or *Israel*, ever enjoy'd, or usurp'd; as if the *Judicials* of *Moses* were calculated for all Seasons, and all Meridians. And thus arose that
Doctrin,

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Doctrin, That *Monarchy* is *Jure Divino*. But this way of Proceeding is no new Invention, for we find it very usual amongst the Ancient *Heathens*, whenever they had a mind to obtrude any odd Belief upon the Common People, they presently trump up a *Jus Divinum*; and after this manner we see both their *Laws* and *Religions* were established. Thus *Solon's* Laws were said to come from *Minerva*; *Lycurgus* deriv'd his Laws from *Jupiter*; *Numa Pompilius*, the first Founder of the *Roman* Rites and Ceremonies, declar'd he receiv'd them from the Goddess *Ægeria*; and *Mahomet* pretended his Religion was imparted to him, by the Angel *Gabriel*. There is not any thing whatsoever, that derives so great an Authority amongst Men, as the Opinion of Divine Favour, or Heavenly Designation: And therefore St. *Austin* speaking of that Custom amongst the *Heathen*, of deriving the Pedigree of their *Heroes* from the Gods,

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says, He lookt upon it to be of great use; in as much as it had made Valiant Men, fancying themselves to be Heaven-born, upon the confidence thereof, to undertake high Attempts the more boldly, intend them the more earnestly, and accomplish them the more successfully. And *Ludovicus Vives* says, That another great Advantage which accrued to the *Heroes* by this Beleif, was, the Readiness which hereupon they found in the Common People to submit to whatsoever they commanded, as thinking their very Commands to be Sacred and Divine. This therefore made *Scipio*, that he cultivated and improved that Opinion of the People, *viz.* That he was begot by some *God*; and *Alexander* in *Lucian* tells us, That it further'd him in many great Designs, to be accounted the Son of *Jupiter Hammon*; for thereby he was fear'd, and none durst Oppose him, whom they held to be a *God*. Thus we see, That that Piece of Policy,

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Policy, which many of our Court-Flatterers in the late Reigns have been so fond off, *viz.* Their asserting *Monarchy* to be *Jure Divino*, is but borrow'd from this old *Heathen* Custom; the Original Design whereof was, *first*, to flatter the *Prince*, by making him Believe, his Power was absolute, and his Will was uncontrollable; and the next purpose upon the *People*, by making them believe, That a *Prince* (tho a Tyrant, and the very Worst of Men) was not to be oppos'd, or resisted. But from what I have now said, let no Man think I am an Enemy to *Monarchy*; for I do most solemnly, and unfeignedly Declare, That of all Sorts of Governments, *Monarchy* is the most agreeable to my Genius; and that of *Monarchy* the *Pure* and *Unmixt* would please me best (it being *that* by which the *Almighty* governs the *Universe*) cou'd human Nature be long trusted with it; and cou'd we be as certain, that his *Vicegerent* on Earth, wou'd as

easily imitate those Divine Attributes of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, as they are prone to lay Claim to his other Attributes of *Power* and *Greatness*. But alas, *Kings* are but *Men*; they are not exempted from *Error*; They have their *Vices* and *Infirmities*, their *Sallies* and *Enormities*, like the rest of *Mankind*: And indeed, considering the unhappiness of their *Education*, and their being continually surrounded with *Sycophants*, and *Flatterers*, 'tis a wonder they prove at the common rate of other *Men*. Hence therefore that great *Man of Wisdom* and *Experience*, *Phillip de Comines*, tells us, That a *Vertuous Prince* is worthy of more than ordinary *applause*. Thus then, the fault is not in the *Government* as *Absolute*, but in *humane Nature*, which is not often found *Sufficient*, at least for above one or two *Successions*, to support and manage so unlimited a *Power* in one single *Person* as it ought to be. And now to return to my *Subject*.

Since

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Since *Learning* therefore is a thing of so little Value, and Use to Mankind, as we have made it appear to be; how Vain are Those, who extol it to such a Degree, as to make it the Standard both of *Happiness* and *Wisdom*; by concluding, That no Man can be either Happy or Wise without it: Tho' the *Scripture* tells us, That he who encreaseth in knowledge, encreaseth in Sorrow; and daily Experience shews us, That *Folly* and *Learning* do often cohabit in the same Person. The ingenious *Montaign*, enquiring into the reason why Men of *Learning* do generally seem to be more uncouth in their Discourse as also more unfit for Business than other Men, saith, *I cannot conceive the true Cause hereof, unless it be, that as Plants are Choakt by over-much Moisture, and Lamps are Stif'd with too much Oil; so are the Actions of the Mind overwhelm'd by over-abundance of Matter and Study: And in a diversity of things, as in a mist, the Mind*

90 *The great Miscōief and*

is apt to lose it self. Besides, it often happens. That *Scholastick Education*, like a *Trade*, does so fix a Man in a Particular way, that he is not fit to judge of any thing that lies out of that way; Indeed, they are scarce capable of any other Thoughts; so that if a thing be never so little out of their Rode, it is altogether free from their Discovery: As I have heard of some Creatures in *Africk*, which still going a violent pace straight on and not being able to turn themselves, can never get any Prey, but what they meet just in their way. And thus we see, that *Learning* is so far from contributing to *Wisdom*, that if it be not well manag'd, it really hinders us in the pursuit of it. And a great Part of that which we call *Learning*, is like *Cobwebs*, which tho' they seem fine and Artificial, are of no Manner of use. For what is a Man the wiser for knowing the *Genitive Case* of *Jupiter*. Or whether we shou'd Write *Fælix*, or *Felix*?

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Felix? Or what are we the Better, for knowing how many *Knots* there were in *Hercules's* Club? Or whether *Penelope* was honest or No? And yet as ridiculous as these Things are; many of those Men, whom the World hath call'd *Learned*, have trifl'd away their time in these, and such like Enquiries. In a Word, it is not the knowing much, but the knowing what is useful, makes a Man a Wise Man. Suppose a Man knows what is *Latin*, *Greek*, *French*, *Spanish* or *Italian* for a *Horse*, this makes the Man no more the *Wiser*, than the *Horse* the better: Whereas if the same Person had but two or three good *Receipts* to cure either the *Farcy* or a *Surfeit*, this would be of real Advantage both to the *Master* and the *Horse*. Thus then, if a Man have all other Points of Knowledge and *Learning*, yet if he wants that one of *Sibi Sapere*, all his other Knowledge is but Impertinence, and a Gawdy sort of Ignorance. There are indeed some Men, who are arrived

ved to a sort of *Lip-Wisdom*, as I may so call it; who have a Knack of talking like *Wise Men*; by their Discourse you would judge of 'em, as the Ancient *Heathens* did of their *Heroes*, That they were Sprung from the *Gods*; but if you search into their *Actions*, you wou'd rather think 'em a Kin to the *Horse* or *Mule*, which have no understanding. *Odi Homines ignavos Operâ, Philosophos Sententiâ*, was the saying of a great Man, *I hate Men that act like Fools, but speak like Philosophers.* He who *Speaks*, but does not *Act* like a wise Man, is at best but like a *Tinkling Cymbel*, which makes only a pleasant Noise. Certainly, of all Parts of *Wisdom*, the *Practick* is the best. To conclude then, it is not a Mans cloistering himself up in his Study, nor his continual Poring upon Books, that makes him a wise Man: No, this Property is chiefly to be acquir'd by *Meditation* and *Converse*. 'Tis true (indeed) Books well manag'd afford

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ford mighty Help and Assistance : They strengthen the Organ, and enlarge the Prospect , and give a more universal Insight into Things, than can be learned from *unletter'd* Observation ; Whereas he who depends solely upon his own Experience, has but a few Materials to work upon. These Advantages I say , may be had from Books *well manag'd* : But alas ! How Few are there that make this use of their *Reading* ? Or that really are one jot the better for it ? With many Men *Reading* is nothing better than a *dozing* kind of Idleness, and the *Book* is a meer *Opiate*, that makes 'em sleep with their Eyes open. It is us'd for no other purpose, than as an *Antidote* against *Thinking* ; and they only look upon it as the most Creditable way for the dismissing of business. Such Mens *Studying* is meerly an Artifice to reconcile the Ease and Voluptuousness of Sloth with the Reputation of Wisdom : A Genteel and Wary kind of *Epicurism*,

94 *The great Mischief and*

curism, that surfeits without Pain or Shame, and in which Men spend their time without Profit to themselves, or usefulness to the World: Thus then, *Thinking* is so absolutely necessary, that *Reading* signifies little, or nothing without it. *Thinking* may do without *Reading*, as appears in the first Inventors of Arts and Sciences; who were fain to *Think* out their Way to the Recesses of *Truth*; but the *Other* can never do without this. *Reading* without *Thinking* may indeed make a rich *Common-place*, but it will never enrich the Brain; it may indeed furnish a Man with great store of *Matter*, but it is still without *form* and *void*, till *Thinking*, like the *Seminal Spirit*, agitates the Dead shapeless Lump, and works it up into figure and Symmetry.

So much *Reading* then only is useful, as will excite a Mans thoughts, as will afford Hints or Sallies to the Mind, or as will furnish him with *Matter* for *Meditation* and *Discourse*; which

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which two Things are the two great Instruments of Improving our selves, and therefore are to prescribe the Measures of our *Study* and *Reading*. Now *Reading* may very properly be compar'd to *Eating*, and *Thinking* to *Digesting*; as therefore to one Hours Eating, we allow many hours for Digesting; so to one hours *Reading*, we should assign a Sufficient time for Meditating, and Digesting, what we have Read. Or else as the one by breeding ill Humours, and obstructing the Passages, impairs the Health of the Body; So will the *other* be of no less Prejudice to the understanding, by occasioning Diseases to the Mind. A Man therefore may as well expect to grow stronger by always Eating, as Wiser by always *Reading*. Too much over-charges Nature, and as I said before, turns more into *Disease* than Nourishment. 'Tis Thought and Digestion which makes Books Serviceable, and gives Health and Vigour to the
Mind.

Mind. Hence therefore it is, that many Men by their *Reading* so much and *Thinking* so little do instead of Improving, really impair themselves by their Studies. For by over much *Reading* they do but clog and oppress their Minds, and so digest nothing. They stuff themselves so full of other Mens Notions, that there is no Room for their own Faculties to display themselves. Whereas the Man of Thought and Meditation, moves in a larger Sphear; he does not thus *Pinion* his Fancy, but puts it upon the Wing, which seldom returns home without some Noble *Quarry*. And did Men but know, how much the Pleasure of *Thinking*, transcends all other Pleasures, they would certainly put a greater Value upon it. 'Tis an happy thing when a Mans Pleasure is also his Perfection: For most Mens Pleasures are such as debase their Nature. We commonly gratifie our lower Faculties, our Passions, and
our

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our Appetites: And *these* do not improve, but depress the Mind; and besides, they are so gross that the finest Tempers are Surfeited in a little time. In short, there is no lasting Pleasure but *Contemplation*. All others grow flat and insipid upon frequent use; and when a Man hath run through a set of Vanities, in the Declension of his Age, he knows not what to do with himself, if he cannot *Think*. He saunters about from one dull Business to another, to wear out Time: And hath no reason to value Life, but because he's afraid of *Death*. But *Contemplation* is a continual spring of fresh Pleasures: And nothing is comparable to the Pleasure of an Active and a Prevailing Thought; a Thought prevailing over the Difficulty and Obscurity of the Object, and refreshing the Soul with new Discoveries, and Images of Things, and thereby extending the Bounds of Apprehension; and (as it were) enlarging the Terri-

H tories

tories of Reason. But the *Learned* Man that daily plods on in his *Reading*, and never makes use of this *Thinking* Faculty, by reflecting upon what he hath read, quite loseth this *Intellectual Enjoyment*; Nor is he sensible of that *Suavissima Vita*, as the Poet calls it, of *Descending into Himself*, and being daily sensible of his own *Improvement*: But like the Carriers Horse, he still keeps the old Track; and his *Learning* (to continue the Simile) like the Pack, is but a Burthen to the Beast that carries it. I know, it is generally said, That *Learning* doth conduce much both to the *Discovery*, and to the *Defence of Truth*, and this indeed I cannot deny; but then at the same time it must be allow'd, That only *Freedom* and *Sincerity*, are fit to be entirely trusted in that Search. For let a Man have never so much *Learning*, yet if he be not allow'd to make a free use of it, but (as is the Common Case of most *Clergy Men*; especially such as are

Beneficed,

Prejudice of LEARNING. 99

Beneficed, and have Preferment ;)
is lyable to be over-aw'd by his Superior for fear of Deprivation, Suspension, or some other Punishment ; I say , in that Case, *Learning* gives no Authority to his Opinion. And for this reason, I remember a Person of very great Learning and Judgment us'd to say, That, for his Part, he never valued any of those Books, which came out *cum Permissu Superiorum*, since their Design was rather to promote the Interest of a *Party*, than to advance *Truth*. It is not then to be wonder'd, That the *Clergy* in all Parts of the World, are so very zealous in the Asserting and Defending the several Religions of their Respective Countries ; since it is not only their Interest, in hopes of Preferment, so to do ; but also, because the Civil Government hath so great a Check upon them, that they durst do no other. Whereas if these Shackles, and Restraints were but taken off, *Learning* would then (beyond all Dispute) be the best,

100 *The great Mischief and, &c.*

and most proper Vehicle for *Truth*:
Whatsoever then hath been said a-
gainst *Learning*, thus much must at
last be acknowledg'd, That when
Learning meets with an ingenious
Temper, and is join'd to a pregnan-
cy of Mind, it is then of excellent
use, and advantage: For there is
no Man but will speak the better,
where he knows what others have
said upon the same Subject. And
sometimes the Consciousness of his
inward Knowledge, gives a graceful
Confidence to his outward Behavi-
our. But on the other hand, if *Learning*
happens to be in the possession of a
Fool, 'tis then but a Bawble, and,
like *Dr. Donne's Sun Dial in the*
Grave, a Trifle, and of no Use.

ESSAY III:

ESSAY III.

of EDUCATION and CUSTOME.

WE suck in the first Rudiments as we do the Common Air (*facili haustu*) as the Lord *Bacon* expresseth it, without *Discrimination* or *Election*; of which indeed our tender, and unexercis'd Minds are not capable. And I confess, 'tis necessary we shou'd do so; nor were there any hurt in this innocent Easiness, did not most Men all their Lives Worship the first Thing they saw in the *Morning* of their Daies, and ever after obstinately adhere to those unexamined Receptions. But here lies the Mischief, when we are *Children*, we are apt to

Believe every Thing ; and when we are grown *Men*, we seldom examine Things, but settle in their first *Impressions*, without giving our selves the trouble to consider, and review them. And these Prejudices, by *Custom* and long Acquaintance with our Souls, get a Mighty Interest, and become irresistible to every thing that is different from those Images of Education.

*Quò semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu. —*

Said the Heathen Poet, the first seasoning Principles and Prejudices, which we receive in our Youth, stick closely to us for a long time after. *Tully*, I remember, makes mention of a *Musician*, who being ask'd what the *Soul* was, presently repli'd, That it was *Harmony*; whereupon *Tully*, being well enough pleas'd with the Answer, makes this witty Remark, *Hic à Principiis Artis suæ*

non recessit, He knew not how to leave the Principles of his own Art. So likewise *Plato's Scholars* had been altogether bred up in *Arithmetick*; and the knowledge *Numbers*; and therefore hence it was that afterwards when they diverted their Studies to the knowledge of *Nature*, or *Moral Philosophy*; wheresoever they walk'd, or whatsoever they were doing, their Heads were still running upon *Numbers*. They fancied, the World was fram'd out of *Numbers*; Cities, Kingdoms, and Common-wealths, they thought stood by *Numbers*; *Number* with them was *Sole Principle* and *Creator* of every Thing. In a Word, it fares much with us, as it did with *Tully's Musician*, or *Plato's Scholars*, *Difficulter à Principiis Atris nostræ recedimus*, 'Tis with much Difficulty that we forsake those *Principles* we have been bred up in. The wise Philosopher tells us, That the *Soul* of Man is *Rasa Tabula*, like a white Sheet of *Paper*, out of which therefore it

must be more than common Art, that can so clear take out the first Writing, as to superinduce a new Copy fair and legible. This is the true Reason, why any Person finds it so difficult to quit those Notions of Religion, which have been establish'd in his Mind from his early Infancy. There is a Marvellous Agreement and Natural Kindness to those Opinions, which we suck in with our Milk ; they are like *Foster-Brothers*, to whom it has been observ'd, There is as strong an Inclination, as to the *Natural* ; we play and converse with 'em from our *Cradles* and as soon as we can go alone, we take 'em by the Hand ; we sleep with 'em in our Bosoms, and contract an insensible Friendship with 'em, a pleasing Familiarity, which takes off all Deformities ; we love 'em, and we like 'em, and their very *Blackness* is a *Beauty*, as it is with the *African* Nations, to whom even that which we judge *Deformity*, appears more lovely, than the
 most

most Delicate *European Beauty*. Thus it was truly said of *Philo*, That every Mans own Religion seem'd to him the best, because he judgeth of it not by Reason, but by Affection; like those *Philosophers* of whom *Cicero* spake, who approv'd of no Discipline but their own. Hence we find, That the best Account many can give of their Faith, is, That they were bred in it: And the most are driven to their Religion, by *Custom* and *Education*, as the *Indians* are to *Baptism*, that is, like a drove of Cattle to the Water. Thus do we judge all Things by our Anticipations, and condemn or applaud 'em, as they differ, or agree, with our first Opinions. 'Tis on this Account, that almost every Country censures the *Laws*, *Customs*, and *Doctrins* of every other, as absurd and unreasonable, and are confirm'd in their own Follies beyond possibility of Conviction. In a Word, there's nothing so absurd, to which *Educacion* cannot form our tender Youth;

it can turn us into Shapes more Monstrous than those of *Africk*. For in our *Childhood*, we are like the Melted Wax to the prepar'd Seal, capable of any Impression from the Documents of our Teachers. The *Half Moon* or *Cross* are indifferent to us; and with the same ease can we Write on this *Rasa Tabula*, **Turk** or **Christian**. Hence therefore it is, that we find no Religion so irrational, but can Boast of its *Martyrs*; nor no Opinion so silly and Ridiculous, but has had some *Philosopher* or other to support and defend it. And because there is not any thing more strange, than the great Diversity of Laws, and Customs in the World; I shall not here think it impertient to transcribe some of those, which are most Remarkable; as for Instance, to account it a most Pious and Religious Act, to kill their Parents, when they come to such an Age; and then to eat 'em: In one and the

the same Nation, Virgins go with their Privy Parts uncover'd, and Married Women carefully Cover and Conceal them: *Where* Children are excluded, and Brothers and Nephews only inherit: *Where* Chastity, in unmarried Women, is in no esteem; for such may prostitute themselves to as many as they please, and being got with Child, may lawfully take Physick to make themselves Miscarry; but Married Women keep themselves Chast and Faithful to their Husbands. *Where* the Custom was, that every Bride should be prostituted to all Comers the first Night, and she who had entertained most, was most Honour'd: *Where* they have no marriages, and therefore Children only own their Mothers, not being able to guess at their Fathers: *Where* Bawdy-houses of young men are kept for the Pleasure of Women, as there are of Women for the Necessities of Men: *Where* the Servile Condition of Women is
lookt

upon with such Contempt, that they kill all the Native Women, and Buy Wives of their Neighbours to supply their Use: *Where* they Boil the Bodies of the Dead, and then dry 'em, and beat 'em to a Powder, which they mix with their Wine, and so drink it: *Where* the greatest Oath they take, is to Swear by the Name of some Dead Person of Reputation, laying their Hand upon his Tomb: *Where* the Ordinary way of Salutation, is, by putting a Finger down to the Earth, and then Pointing it up towards Heaven: *Where* it is the Fashion to turn their Backs upon him they Salute, and never look upon the Man they intend to honour: *Where*, whenever the King Spits, the greatest Ladies of his Court put out their Hands to receive it: And *Where* also the most eminent Persons about him stoop to take up his Ordure in a linnen Cloth. Thus have I Collected, and Copied out
Several

Several of those Customs, which to me seems the most extravagant and uncouth; Whereby it plainly appears, that there is no Opinion or Imagination so Idle or Ridiculous, which is not establish'd by Laws and Customs, in some place or other. Thus, in a word, do we see the mighty Power of *Custom* and *Education*; which is so great that the Rankest Follies are counted Sacred, if Customary; and the *Fashion* is always handsom and agreeable, tho' never so uncouth, or ridiculous to an indifferent beholder. In short, we are civil or uncivil, good or bad, foolish or wise, or any thing else according to *Custom*, which *Erasmus* calls the *Monosyllable Tyrant*, because 'tis term'd *Mos* in Latin; though *Pindar* Stiles her the *Queen and Empress of the World*. *Seneca* says, that we govern ourselves not by *Reason* but by *Custom*; accounting that most honest, which is most Practis'd; and Error serves

serves us for a Law, when it is become
 Publick. *Custom* we know is of
 so great account among *Physicians*;
 that according to the great *Hip-
 pocrates*; there is no one thing
 ought more to be regarded: Nay, *says*
he; whatsoever a Man is us'd to;
 altho' it be bad, is less harmful
 than what we are not accustomed to,
 altho' in it self it be better. And
 among the *Lawyers*, we see, there
 is nothing more esteem'd of than
Custom: Prescription is always coun-
 ted the best Title; and the *Com-
 mon Law*, which is nothing but
 several *Customs* establish'd by time
 and experience, has always the Pre-
 ference of *Statute Law*, and is e-
 steem'd the nobler Part. Again,
Custom governs our very *Affections*;
 and we love rather by *Custom*, than
 by *Reason*: Hence Mothers more
 tenderly affect their Children with
 whom they commonly converse;
 more than Fathers do; and Nurses
 more than some Mothers. *Custom*
 hath likewise such a Power over
 the

the *Imagination*, that when we are a sleep, we often dream of those Things, which our Minds most run upon when we are awake. And what a mighty Influence has it upon the outward senses? Which may be perceiv'd in those Persons, who (after they have been for some time kept in a dark place) come into a full and open Light; not being able to bear that Luminous Body, which by its glaring seems to dazzle and offend their Sight. And hence it is, That those who live near the *Cataracts* of *Nile*, as also Those several Tradesmen whose Noise displeases us so much, and who dwell in Mills and Forges, *Custom* has made it so familiar to them, that they are no ways disturb'd with this constant Clattering, but rest and sleep as quietly with the Noise, as others do without it. Thus doth *Custom* sufficiently shew its own Force and Power, which is Stronger than Nature, in-
somuch as it both alters and
Nature,

Nature, and is so Powerful, that it cannot be destroy'd but by it self. To conclude then, the Power of *Custom* is much greater then most Men imagine, and therefore it is, that thro' mistake we often call that the *Law of Nature*, which really is but the effect of *Custom*, and *Education*. That Affection, which we say every Man Naturally bears to his own Country, whence comes it? Is it not from *Custom*? I know indeed, some tells us, that this Love to our Native Soil, is by the *Instinct* of *Nature*, as Beasts love their Dens, and Birds their Nests: But I rather think it is from Civil Institution as being accustomed to the same Laws, the same Ceremonies, the same Temples, the same Markets, and the same Tribunals. No wonder then, that the Generality of Mankind is so influenced by *Custom*, since that *Idea* which most Men have of *Truth* and *Reason*, is no other, than what *Custom*, dispenses to 'em. And therefore,

therefore it is, that we often are so strangely deluded, and impos'd upon. For *Custom* says *Mountain veils from us the true Aspect of Things. Miracles appear'd to be so, according to our Ignorance of Nature, and not according to the Essence of Nature. The continually being accustomed to a thing, blinds the Eye of our Judgment.* It may therefore seem ridiculous to think, there is any Common Standard of *Reason* amongst Men; since that charms in one Country, which is abhor'd in others; and the very *Imaginary Lines* which divide *Kingdoms*, seem likewise to divide their way of *Thinking*, and to make a different *Geography* in the *Reason* which they adore, as well as in the Earth on which they trample. Hence then it is, that all Nations are so fond of their own *Customs*: The *Greeks* and *Romans* thought all other Nations *Barbarous* in respect of themselves. The *Italians* call all *Oltramontani* (such as are on this side

the Alps) *Barbari*, as tho' none knew what *Civility* meant but they. The *Venetians* will commonly say, when they hear a Man speak in a Language which they understand not, *Mo, parlate Christiano*, as if no Language were *Good* and *Christian like* but theirs. The *Chineses* esteem themselves the only Reasonable and Civiliz'd People, whence it is a Common Proverb amongst them, that the *Chineses only see with two Eyes, and all other Men but with one.* And thus do *We* still keep up the same Humour, by judging all those, who differ from us in their *Customs* and usages, to be at least Ridiculous, if not Barbarous. Tho' (after all) the *Barbarians* are no more a Wonder to us, than we are to them; nor (it may be) with any more reason. Those *Americans*, who kill their old Decrepit Parents, instead of Believing themselves *Parricides*, call us cruel for letting ours continue so long in the Miseries of old Age. And as for

for that practice of theirs (which to us seems so unnatural) of eating their own Parents, they think they do thereby give 'em the most Noble sort of *Sepulture*, by burying 'em in their own Bodies, in a manner reviving 'em again, and regenerating them by a kind of *Transmutation*, into their living Flesh by the means of Digestion and Nourishment. And to say the truth, there are many *Laws* and *Customs*, which seem at the first view to be Savage, Inhumane, and Contrary to all Reason; but if they were without Passion and soberly Consider'd; though they were not found to be altogether just and good, yet at least they might be plausibly defended by some kind of Reason. A wise Man therefore ought to suspend his Judgment, and not to be over forward in Censuring and Condemning the Practices and *Customs* of other Nations; which sort of *Narrowness* I find many

are Subject to, and with the *Hermit*, are apt to think, the Sun shines no where, but in their *Cell*: and that all the World is Darkness but themselves. But this certainly is to measure *Truth* by a wrong Standard, and to circumscribe her by too narrow a Scantling. But to proceed: Since *Custom* hath so great a sway in all our *Actions*, we may well look upon it, as *another Nature*. A rooted *Habit* becomes a governing Principle, and bears almost an equal sway in us with that which is *Natural*. It is (says *Tillotson*) a kind of a *New Nature* superinduced, and even as hard to be expell'd, as some Things which are *Primitively* and *Originally Natural*. When we bend a Thing at first, it will endeavour to restore it self; but it may be held bent so long, till it will continue so of it self, and grow crooked; and then it may require more force and violence to reduce it to its former *Straightness*, than we us'd to make it crooked at first.

Mens

Mens minds are naturally of the the same *Clay*; **Education** is the *Potter's* Hand, and Wheel, that forms them into Vessels of Honour and Dishonour. *This* of all humane Means is most Effectual towards the Refining and Sharpening Mens Intellects, giving them an Edge and Quickness; and that the more, because it takes 'em in that Age, where in their *Faculties* are, as their *Joynts*, pliant and tractable, and so capable of being by Exercise improv'd into great Degrees both of Strength and Activity. In a Word, There is nothing tends more to the forming an Honourable and Vertuous Life, than a good **Education**. Most certain it is, without *this* we are as good as lost in our very Cradles; for whatsoever *Principles* we make choice of in our Infancy, we carry for the most part to our Graves; and in a Word, 'tis the **Education** that makes the Man. With much Elogancy and Smartness, then does the Incomparable *Dryden* tell us :

- “ By **E**ducation most Men are
 “ misled ;
 “ So We Believe, because We so
 “ were Bred :
 “ The *Priest* continues what the
 “ *Nurce* began ;
 “ And thus the *Child* imposes on
 “ the *Man*.

Thus we see, that the least false
 Step at the first setting out, makes us
 hobble and limp all the journey af-
 terwards. Since **E**ducation (then)
 carries so great force and Authority
 along with it, how much does it be-
 hove such Parents, who have any re-
 gard to Vertue and Wisdom, to
 give their Children a Vertuous and
 sober *Education*? Tho' indeed this
 does not always prove successful.
 For *Nero*, notwithstanding his two
 excellent Tutors, *Seneca* and *Burr-
 has*, receiv'd but little Improvement.
Cicero's Son to the stupidity of his
 Nature, added Drunkenness, and re-
 turned from *Athens*, and *Cratippus* as
 arrant

arrant a Blockhead as he went. *Marcus Aurelius* provided fourteen of the most approv'd Masters to Educate *Commodus*, yet could not rectifie his froward and barbarous Humour. Thus, as *Sir Henry Wotton* observes, There is in some Tempers such a Natural Barrenness, that, like the sands of *Arabia*, they are never to be cultivated or improv'd. And according to the old Proverb, *Ex quovis Ligno non fit Mercurius*— There are some *Crabb-Stocks* of such a Nature, that all the Ingrafting in the World can never Correct or Amend. But these Monsters of Nature are not often to be met with: For we usually observe, That the Culture of the *Mind*, as of the *Earth*, doth deliver it from the Barrenness of its own Nature: And that the toughest, and most unbended Natures, by early and prudent Discipline, may be much corrected, and improv'd.

ESSAY IV.

Of the ANCIENTS: *The Respect that is due to 'em: That we shou'd not too much enslave our selves to their Opinions.*

AS we should not be so fondly conceited of our selves, and the extraordinary Abilities of the present Age, as to think every Thing that is Ancient to be absolute; Or, as if it must needs be with *Opinions*, as it is with *Cloths*, where the Newest is for the most part best; so neither should we be so superstitiously devoted to *Antiquity*, as to take every Thing for *Canonical*, which drops from the Pen of a *Father*, or was approv'd by the Consent of the *Ancients*. Antiquity is ever venerable, and
justly

justly challenges Honour, and Reverence; but yet there is difference between *Reverence* and *Superstition*; We may assent to 'em as *Ancients*, but not as *Oracles*; They may have our Minds easie and inclinable, but there is no reason they should have them Captivated and Fetter'd to their Opinions. As I will not distrust all, which without manifest proof they deliver, where I cannot convince 'em of Error; so likewise will I suspend my Belief upon probability of their Mistakes; and where I find reason to *dissent*, I will rather respect *Truth* than *Authority*. As there may be Friendship, so there may be Honour, with Diversity of *Opinions*; nor are we bound therefore to *Deise* Men, because we Reverence 'em. We wrong our *Ancestors* more by admiring than opposing 'em in their Errors; and our Opinion of 'em is very dishonourable, if we think they had rather have us followers of *Them*, than of *Truth*. Certainly, the greatest Re-
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spect we can shew the *Ancients*, is by following their Example : Which was not *Supinely* and *Superstitiously* to sit down in fond Admiracion of the Learning of those who were before 'em; but to Examine the Writings, to avoid their Mistakes, and to use their Discoveries, in order to the further improvement of Knowledge. This they did, and never any Man took a greater Liberty in censuring and reproving the supposed Errors and Mistakes of the Elder Philosophers, than *Aristotle* himself; and therefore I do not see any reason why he should be allow'd greater Priviledge, than what he himself thought good to allow to those before him. *Veritas nec Mea est nec illius, aut Ullius*, says *St. Austin*, No Man can say, *I am Infallible*; for as we are *Men*, so we are subject to *Error*. As for the *Truth* of Things, *Time* makes no Alteration; Things are still the same they are, let the Time be *Past*, *Present*, or *to Come*. Those Things which
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we Reverence for *Antiquity*, what were They at their first Birth? Were they false? Time cannot make them True: Were they True? Time cannot make them more True. The circumstance therefore of *Time*, in respect of *Truth* and *Error*, is meerly impertinent. For as *Antiquity* cannot privilege an *Error*, so *Novelty* cannot prejudice *Truth*. I know in all Ages there have been Those, who with a great deal of Zeal and Elegance have declaim'd against *New Things*, setting forth the great danger of *Alteration* and *Novelty*. But let us not be frightend with shadows: If to be the Author of *New Things*, be a Crime; how will the first Civilizers of *Men*, and Makers of *Laws*, and Founders of *Governments* escape? Whatever now delights us in the Works of *Nature*, that excels the rudeness of the first Creation is *New*; Whatever we see in *Cities*, or *Houses*, above the first *Wildness* of *Fields*, and *Meaness* of *Cottages*, and *Nakedness* of *Men*, had

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its time, when this Imputation of *Novelty* might as well have been laid to its Charge. It is not therefore an Offence to introduce *New Things*, unless that which is introduced prove pernicious in it self; or cannot be brought in without the Extirpation of others, that are better. If *Novelty* shou'd always be rejected, neither would Arts have arriv'd to that Perfection, wherein now we enjoy them, nor cou'd we ever hope for any Future Reformation. Tho' all *Truth* be in it self *Eternal*, yet in respect of Mens Opinions there is scarce any so *Ancient*, but had a Beginning, and was once counted a *Novelty*; And if for this Reason it had been condemn'd as an *Error*, what a general darkness and ignorance wou'd then have been in the World, in comparison of that Light which now abounds. The great *Architect* of the World hath been observ'd not to throw down all Gifts and Knowledge to Mankind confusedly at once, but in

a Regular Parsimonious Method, to disperse them by certain Degrees, Periods, and progress of Time leaving Man to make industrious Researches and Investigations after Truth ; he left the World to the Disputations of Men, as the *Wiseſt* of Men ſays, who in the Acquisition of Natural Truths went from the Hyſope to the Cedar ; *one Day certifieth another*, and one Age rectifieth another, and the morrow hath more Experience than the preceding Day. Thoſe Times which we term vulgarly the *old World*, was indeed the *Youth* of it, and tho' if reſpect be had to the Particular and Personal Acts of Generation, and to the Relation of Father and Son, they who liv'd before us, and preceded us, may be call'd our *Anceſtors* ; yet if you go to the Age of the World in general, and to the true length and longævity of Things, *We* are more properly the *Ancients*, and the present Age is the greateſt Antiquity : Hence, as the
Lord

Lord *Bacon* observes we have generally a wrong Notion of Antiquity; for (says he) *to speak truly, Antiquitas seculi, juventus Mundi*: That which we commonly call *Antiquity*, is but the *Nonage* of the World: And in this respect, the *Younger* Brother may be term'd more Ancient than his *Elder*, because the World was older when he enter'd into it. The admiring of Former Ages, was a Vanity that possess'd all Times as well as Ours; and the *Golden Age* was never the *Present*. They who went before us, have not prevented us, but have opened a Door, that we may enter into the *Recesses* of *Truth*: He that comes last hath certainly the best advantage in the Inquiry. Our *Ancestors* have done wisely and well in their Generations, but they have not done all; much Work still remains behind; and he that lives a thousand ages hence, shall not have reason to complain, That there are no hidden *Truths* fit for him to Enquire after.

ter. There are more Worlds to conquer ; every day brings a new Light, and by a wise and careful Labour, we may improve what our Fore-Fathers spy'd , when they peep't thro' the Crevifes. If the latter Ages cou'd be abstracted from the mixture of *Interest*, and the Engagement of their Party, they are in many things better able to teach the People than the *Ancients*. There is certainly a truer, and more certain knowledge of Things, now than formely : But that which spoils all, is, Men are grown a great deal more Cunning, and few there are who take any other Aim, than that of *Interest* ; so that hence it is, That many times it proves safer to rely on the Authority of Former Ages, tho' more ignorant than of Latter Ages, which tho' more knowing, yet more dangerous to follow, in respect of that Design and Artifice, which now a days Men use, on purpose to promote their own private Interest. In short, it behoves every one in the
 search

search of *Truth*, always to preserve a Philosophical Liberty : Not to be so enslav'd to the Opinion of any Man, as to think whatever he says, to be Infallible. We must labour to find out what Things are in Themselves by our own Experience, and a thorow Examination of their Natures, not what another says of them. *Non tam Authoritas in Disputando, quàm rationis Momenta quærenda sunt,* said *Cicero* ; a Man ought not so much to regard the Person who speaks, as the Thing that is spoken. but it is the unhappy Humour of too many Men, *jurare in Verba Magistrum*, servilely to tye themselves to the Authority of particular Men, and to see with other Mens Spectacles: The greatest part of the World being rather led with the Names of their Masters, and with the reverend Respect they bear their Persons or Memories, than with the Soundness and Truth of the Things they teach. Men first take up a Confidence of the Learning or Sanctity of
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of a Person, and then all his Notions are receiv'd implicitly, and are strictly embraced, without the least Examination: And this admiration of Mens Persons, has in all ages been of huge mischief, and very pernicious; it has nurs'd up private Fancies into solemn publick Errors, and given an unhappy Perpetuity to many Heterodox Opinions, which wou'd else have expir'd with their first Defenders. Men do not any where more easily err, than where they follow a Guide, whom they presume they may safely trust. Belief, without Evidence of Reason, must be only there absolute, where the Authority is unquestionable; And where it is impossible to err, there only it is impious to distrust. As for Mens Assertions, *Quibus possibile est subesse falsum*, what one said of Friendship, *Sic amata quam Osurus*, love with that Wisdom, as to remember you may be provoked to the Contrary, is more warrantable and advantagious

in Knowledge *Sic crede tanquam Dissensurus*, so to Believe, as to be ready, when cause requires to dissent. It is a too much Straitning of a Man's own understanding, to enthrall it unto any; and besides, there is not any thing, which hath bred more Distempers in the Body of Learning, than Factions and Sidings; when as *Seneca* said of *Cato*, that he would rather esteem Drunkenness a Vertue, than *Cato* Vicious. To conclude, There is no one thing hath more stunted the Growth of Learning, than a stiff adhering to the Dictates of the *Ancients*; For he who makes *Plato* or *Aristotle* the standard of Humane Knowledge, cannot possibly transcend the Learning of *Plato*, or *Aristotle*; the utmost he can do, he may come up to that height, but (like *Water*,) he can never rise heigher than the *Source*. I know many are of Opinion, that vast advantages have accrued to modern Knowledge,

Knowledge, from the help and assistance, which the *Ancients* have transmitted to us; but for my part, I never did, or cou'd believe any such thing: Nay, for ought I know, in this respect, we have rather lost than gain'd by the *Ancients*; for by our Acting thus implicately and resigning our selves to their Authorities, we have not been so careful as we ought to have been, in preserving our Reason in its just and due Liberties: And to walk always upon Crutches, is we know the sure way to lose the use of our Limbs. Such an absolute Submission (then) to the *Ancients*, does wonderfully cramp the parts, and fetters the understandings of Men; for so long as they have this narrowness of thought, and are thus streight laced, they think it a sort of Sacrilege to transcend their *Ancestors*. Thus then for fear of out shooting our ForeFathers Mark, we do but Copy one after another, and so the Dance goes round; nor are

we one jot the Wiser, for growing Older. Those who rely wholly upon the help of others, and never use any Industry of their own, must be contented to live in a constant Poverty. And therefore while we Superstitiously follow the Dictates of the *Ancients*, 'tis but reasonable to believe, we break the Force, and stunt the Growth of our own Genius, and by constraining and grafting our own Notions upon the Opinions of others, we may very well be thought to have gain'd a less stock of *Learning* and Knowledge, than otherwise we might have been Masters of, if we had but suffered our own Thoughts and Fancies to have ranged more freely, and with less Restraint, Thus he who spends all his time in *Translating*, or *Painting of Copies*, will never do well in making an *Original*, unless it be in the worst Sence. Besides, if a Man has good Natural Parts of his own, why may we not believe, that too
much

much *Learning*, may as well Suffocate and Stifle such a Man's *Invention*, as we see too much *Wood* heaped on the Fire, or too close together, does often quite extinguish and put it out. In a word, the *Mind* as well as the *Body* receives more Strength and Vigour from the warmth of *Exercise* than of *Cloths*: Nay, too much of this *Foreign Heat* says Sir *William Temple*, does rather make Men faint, and their Constitutions more tender and weaker, than otherwise they wou'd be; which is agreeable to that *Aphorism* of *Hippocrates*, That all *Adventitious Heat* destroys the *Natural*.

Indeed, it is wonderful to observe, how well pleas'd some Men are, in propping themselves up by the Learning and Knowledge of other Men; which appears by their many and frequent *Quotations* out of *Authors*, and that upon every slight occasion. No doubt the Man valued himself much, and thought

the saying to be Learning, and an Elegancy too, that *Men have Beards*, and that *Women have none*; when he had quoted *Beza*, for it: Nor ought he to be esteem'd less considerable for *Clarkship*, that cou'd tell us, *Pax res bona est*, Saith *St. Austin*. But as silly and ridiculous as this Humour seems to be, I find it was once very Common among such as affected the Reputation of *Learning*; nor indeed, is it yet quite out of use among *Pedants*, and the Vulgar sort of *Scholars*; tho' all the Wiser have outgrown and do despise it; nor is it to be doubted, but the rest will do so too, when once they consider, how mean and inglorious it is, to have our Heads and Books laden, just as Cardinal *Campius's* Mules were with old and useles Luggage. For my part, I love to hear a Man speak his own Sense; I affect not an Author who runs altogether upon *Quotations*, without something of his own too. 'Tis no great Satisfaction

faction to me, to hear only that which I may read at any time. And he who recites another Mans Words, is no more to me than a *Notary*. And therefore let these sort of Men value themselves as much as they please: This way of theirs, to content themselves with other Mens Knowledge and Opinions, is certainly the Idlest and most Superficial sort of Learning. For can any thing be easier, than to say, *Cicero* says thus, or these are the Words of *Plato*, or *Aristotle*? A Mag Pie, or a Parrot wou'd say as much as that. I remember I have read of a Rich Man at *Rome*, who at a great expence had got into his Family some of the Ablest Men, and such as were the most exquisitely skill'd in all sorts of Science, whose employment it was, always to be at his Elbow, that in case it should ever happen, there might be any dispute among his Friends upon any Subject whatsoever, that they might Sup-

ply his Place, and be ready to prompt him, one with a Sentence out of *Seneca*, another with a verse of *Homer*, and the like, every one according to his *Talent*; And all this while the Block-headed *Patron* fancied his knowledge to be his own, because they being Maintained at his Charge, he thought himself justly entitled to all the Learning they possess. This is just like some of the highest Quality, who would fain have their Learning be esteem'd in proportion to those noble Libraries their Ancestors have left them; tho' at the same time (God knows) they make no more use of the Books, than the old Woman who sweeps the Library.

But to proceed; If we enquire the reason why the *Mathematicks*, and *Mechanick Arts*, have so much got the start in growth, of other Sciences: This may very well be thought, to be one considerable cause of it, that their Progress hath not been regarded by this Reverential
Awe

Awe of former Discoveries : Here-
 in Men have acted freely without
 laying any restraint upon themselves,
 or *Embargo* upon their Intellectuals :
 No Man ever thought it an Heresie
 to out-limn *Apelles*, or to out-work
 the *Obelisks* : It was never imputed
 to *Galileus* as a Crime, that he saw
 further than the *Ancients*, and that
 he chose rather to believe *his own eyes*,
 than either *Aristotle* or *Ptolomy*.
 Those famous *Optick Glasses*, which
 are now so Serviceable to us, are not
 a jot the less valued, because they
 were not us'd by the *Ancients* ; nor
 do we give the less credit to their In-
 formations, because they were *hid*
from Ages. The *Polar* vertue of the
Loadstone, was unknown to the *An-*
cients, this was reserv'd for latter
 days ; and yet no Man is so silly, to
 think the vast advantages, which ac-
 crue to Mankind by that Noble In-
 vention, are (therefore) the less to
 be esteem'd. And had the Author
 of that Invention (one *Flavius Goia*, a
Neapolitane, who liv'd about three
 hundred

hundred Years ago) been of this narrow Principle, that we are not to transcend the Bounds of the *Ancients*; we must then (for want of this Discovery) have committed ourselves to the Sole conduct of the *Stars*; and as the *Ancients* did, must *We* always have been creeping near the Shoar: Then the fourth part of the Earth had been yet unknown, and *Hercules's Pillars* had still been the World's *Ne Ultra*: *Seneca's* Prophecy had been an *unfulfill'd* Prediction, and one Moiety of our Globes an Empty Hemisphere.

ESSAY V.

Whether the MEN of this present AGE, are any way Inferiour to those of former Ages; either in respect of Virtue, Learning, or long Life.

THAT the World doth daily decline, is an Opinion so *Universally* believ'd, that whoever goes about to defend the Contrary, presently shall be thought to maintain a Paradox. But that thing call'd *Universality*, is so slight an Evidence of Truth, That even Truth it self is ashamed of it: For what is *Universality* but a quaint Word to signify the *Multitude*: Now humane Authority at the strongest is but weak, but the *Multitude* is the weakest
part

part of humane *Authority*; for it is the great Patron of Error, the most easily abus'd, and the most hardly dis-abused. The beginning of Error may be, and generally is, from Private Persons, but the maintainer and continuer of Error is the *Multitude*. To infer the truth of a Religion, from the Number of its Professors, is falsely to conclude the fineness of the Cloth from the largeness of the Measure. How vain and ridiculous then is it in the *Papists*, who think this Argument of *Universality*, so invincible a Proof of the truth of their Religion. If *Multitude* be an Argument that Men are in the right, in vain then hath the Scripture said, *Thou shalt not follow a Multitude to do Evil*: For if this Argument signifie any thing, the greater Number can never be in the wrong. Indeed could wishing do any good, I could wish well to this kind of Proof; *Sed nunquam ita bene erit rebus humanis, ut plures sint meliores*, It will never go so well with
Man.

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Mankind, that the *Most* shall be the *Best*. In short, the best that can be said of Argument and Reason drawn from *Universality* and *Multitude*, is this, such Reason may perhaps serve well to excuse an *Error*, but it can never serve to warrant a *Truth*. Notwithstanding therefore, that the opinion of the World's constant Declining is so firmly radicated in the minds of most Men, yet this is no sufficient reason, why we should acquiesce in such a belief: Nor can any thing be more Unphilosophical, than an Implicite Faith in this matter. And therefore we shall now presume to enter upon the Subject. There are two extreams common amongst Men: the one proper to young Men, who always value themselves above their Predecessors, and like *Rehoboam*, think their own little finger stronger than the whole Body of their Fathers; the other Peculiar to old Men, who always extol the time past above the present. To
Speak

142 The present AGE not

Speak impartially, old Men, says Dr. Brown, from whom we should expect the greatest Example of Wisdom, do most exceed in this point of folly; Commending the days of their Youth, which they scarce remember, at least well understood not; extolling those times, which in their younger Years they heard their Fathers condemn, and condemning those times, which the Gray Heads of their Posterity shall commend. And that Old Men always were of this temper, we may understand from *Horace*, who makes the same Complaint of them. Now, the reason why Old Men are so much out of humour with the present times, I take to be this; They being for the most part much altered from what they were in their Youth, as to their Temper and Complexion, and being full of sad Melancholly thoughts, this makes them think the World is chang'd, whereas in truth the Change is in themselves. It fares with them in this Case, as with those whose Mouth is out of
tast;

tast, or whose Eyes are bloodshot, or are troubled with the Jaundise, the one imagining all things bitter or sour, which they tast, and the other red or yellow which they see.

Terræq; Urbesque recedunt.

Virg. *Æn.* 3.

Themselves being launch'd out into the Deep, the Trees and Houses seem to go backward, whereas really the Motion is in themselves, the Houses and Trees still standing where they were. *Seneca* tells us a pleasant Story of *Harpaste* his Wife's Fool, who being all of a sudden struck blind, would by no means be perswaded of her own blindness, but still cry'd out how dark the Room is grown. Such for the most part is the Case of Old Men, who, by reason of the Infirmities of their Bodies and Minds, no longer finding the same gust and pleasure in the delights of the World, that they found in their Youth, lay
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the fault upon the World, instead of imputing the same to themselves, as they ought to do. For God creates not Souls now with less advantages then formerly; He is as liberal of his Favours to us of this Generation, as ever he was to any before us; And Nature being still as Wise and Powerful as heretofore, and the Universal Causes the same, their Operations must be likewise as perfect, and their Effects as excellent in these days, as they have been in any. Let not Men therefore deceive themselves, and think that we live in the Dregs of Time, and what mighty advantages the *Ancients* (as they call them) had over us; for if *Antiquity* be to have the preference, the advantage will then be of our side; For *Antiquity* consists in the old Age of the World, not in the youth of it. 'Tis *we* are the Fathers, and of more Authority than former Ages; because *we* have the Advantage of more time then they had, and Truth (we say)

is

is the Daughter of Time. And besides, our Minds are so far from being impair'd, that they improve more and more in acuteness; and being of the same Nature with those of the Ancients, have such an advantage beyond them, as a Pigmy hath upon the shoulders of a Gyant; from whence he beholds not only as much, but more than his Supporter doth. But since the Question now to be handled, is rather of *Fact* than of *Right*, the best way of discussing it, will be by comparing the past Ages with the present, and that in these three Respects, of *Vertue*, *Learning*, and *long Life*:

1. First then, if we survey the Vices of former Times, they will certainly appear more Barbarous and Epidemical, than such as now Reign in the World. Even to this day, do we not esteem it an unparallel'd piece of wickedness, That no stranger could enter *Sodom*, without being defiled by the Lust of the more than brutish Citizens? A Crime

so foul, that nothing but Fire and Brimstone could purge the stench of it from the World. After this, among the *Ægyptians* was that of the *Strawless Tax*. The *Græcians* under their wisest Lawgivers approv'd of Theft, if it were committed with Art and Cunning. And Drunkenness was so usual a Vice among them, that from thence *Pergræcari*, signifies *to be mad with Drink*. The *Romans* had two Rules of Drinking, which they commonly observ'd; the one was, to Drink down the Evening Star, and Drink up the Morning Star, *ad Diurnam stellam matutinam potantes*, saith *Plautus*; the other commonly practis'd among them, was the Drinking so many Healths, as there were Letters in their Mistresses Name, according to that of *Martial*:

*Navia sex Cyathis, septem Justina
bibatur,*

*Quinque Lycas Lyde quatuor, Ida
tribus.*

Nor

Nor were their very Women free from this excess: Nay, *Seneca* assures us, that even in Drinking, they sometimes out-did the Men. But to proceed. Have we any so vain as *Xerxes*, that would think to whip the Sea into Calmness? Or so Prodigal as was *Alexander*, who, according to *Plutarch*, spent twelve Millions of Talents upon *Hephæstion's* Funeral? Such a prodigious Sum, that many question whether at that time the Revenue of the whole World would amount to it. Or, what Prince is there in these days so profusely extravagant, as *Heliogabalus*, the Emperour, who was possess'd rather with a Madness, than excess of Prodigality; he fill'd his Fish-Ponds with Rose-Water; he supplied his Lamps with the precious Balsam, that distils from the Trees in *Arabia*; he wore upon his Shoos Pearls and Precious Stones engraven by the hands of the most skilful Artists; his Dining-Room was strew'd with Saffron, and his

Portico's with the dust of Gold: And he was never known to put on any Garment a second time, whether it was of the richest Silk, or woven with Gold. Then as for the Cruelty of former Ages, we shall find it many degrees to transcend any thing that is done in these days; even amongst the *Jews*, who by their Religion pretended to more preciseness, what more common amongst them, than Incest, Fratricide, Parricide, Sawing Men to Death, and the most Barbarous sorts of Cruelties, oftentimes committed only for the diversion, and entertainment of Princes? What Action did ever carry in it so much of Inhumanity, as that of the thirty *Athenian Tyrants*, who caused the Daughters of some of the Slain Citizens to dance, in the Blood of their own Parents, who had newly been Murder'd by them? *Lucius Florus* tells us, that the *German Women*, in their Wars with the *Romans*, would very commonly take their Naked Sprawling Infants,

Infants, and throw them in the face of those they fought with; thinking that so Inhuman a Spectacle might daunt the *Roman* Courage. Was there ever since then, any thing like the *Ten Persecutions*? What but *Nero's Luxury*, could ever compare with *Nero's Cruelty*? And yet *Domitian*, in one particular, out-went him; for he took delight in seeing those Torments executed, which *Nero* but commanded. What shall I now say of *Servius Galba*, who, when he was in *Spain*, having assembled together the Inhabitants of three Cities, to consult (as he pretended) about their common safety, at one stroke cut off seven thousand of them, among whom were the very Flower of their Youth? I might also tell you of *Licinius Lucullus*, who, contrary to express Articles, put to the Sword twenty thousand of the *Caucæi*, after they had surrender'd: And of *Octavianus Augustus*, who, after the taking of *Perusia*, at one Sacrifice offer'd up the lives of three

hundred of the Principal Citizens at the Altar of his Uncle *Julius*: And of *Antoninus Caracalla*, who being incensed against the Citizens of *Alexandria* upon the account of some jests they had made of him, entred into the City in a peaceable manner, and summoning before him all the Youth, he surrounded them with his Souldiers, who, upon the Signal given, fell immediately upon them, and slew every Mothers Son of them; and afterwards using the like Cruelty upon the rest of the Inhabitants, he utterly destroy'd that most Spacious, and Populous City of *Alexandria*. Thus could I easily give many more instances, to shew the wickedness of former Ages, not only in respect of their Barbarous Cruelties, but of their other Vices; but I forbear this, since I very well know, that the Character of those Times cannot be better described, than is already by the *Apostles*, in their several *Epistles*: For what a Monstrous Catalogue of Sins do
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we meet with in the first Chapter to the *Romans* ; Sins of so deep a dye, and of so horrid a nature, and such an Inventory of all sorts of wickedness that one might very well imagine the Apostle had been rather describing some *Vision of Hell*, than the *Seat of the Roman Empire*. To conclude then this Point, let us not imagine that ever any Age was, or will be, free from Vice and Enormities ; while Humane Nature continues, there will be Frailties : *Vitia erunt donec Homines erunt*, saith *Tacitus*, Vice hath always had a being in the World, and will continue as long as Men are upon Earth. How unreasonable is it, to think that *Man* can be better out of *Paradise*, than he was in it ? *Nemo sine Crimine*, The best of Men have their Imperfections. We are no Angels upon Earth, but are always transported with some Infirmity or other ; and 'twill be so while these frail, fluxible humours reign within us. This as I conceive is that *Black Bean*,

which the *Turkish Alchoran* speaks of, when they feign, That *Mohomet* being asleep among the Mountains of the Moon, two Angels descended, and ripping open his Breast, they took his Heart, and wash'd it in Snow, and afterwards pull'd out a *Black Bean*, which was the portion of the Devil, and so replaced the Heart. All things here below run in a kind of Circle; And as in Arts and Sciences, so likewise in the Manners of Men there is a Vicissitude and Revolution. Virtue and Vice have no settled Habitation; every Climate hath had its turn: Sometimes one Country carries it for Vertue and Learning, and sometimes another. *Athens*, which was formerly the only place for Learning and Civility, is now quite over-run with Barbarism and Ignorance. Every Nation hath its *Achme*, or highest pitch of Elevation; And when once the spoke of the Wheel is uppermost, it soon whurries to the bottom. As a Kingdom rises in Empire,

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pire, so it enlarges both in Vertue and Vice ; and when it declines, so the Declension of these is proportionable. And though as to particular Kingdoms, one time may be either better or worse than another ; yet take the World in Gross, and lump it together, we shall find that Humane Nature is much at the same Standard, as it was formerly ; And as we commonly observe of the Sea, That as it gets in one place, it loses in another ; so every Age may make the same Observation of the Vertues and Vices of Mankind.

2. The next thing to be consider'd, is, whether *former* Ages excell'd the *Present* in respect of Learning. Of all the Ancients there were none more esteem'd for Learning than the *Ægyptians* : The old *Ægyptian* Learning was so Famous, that the Spirit of God, sets forth the Eminency of *Moses's* Knowledge by his skill in it, and the Matchlessness of *Solmon's* Wisdom by its exceeding it ; And therefore we may very well conclude, that the *Ægyptian*

tian Learning in those days, was conversant about more generous and more useful Notices, than afterwards; such as *Geometry, Astronomy, Policy, Physick*, and other such like Arts, which either were perfective of their Rational Faculties, or did Minister to the Uses and Necessities of Nature: As is generally reported by all Ancient Historians: But had the Primitive Learning of *Ægypt* been the same it was in latter Ages, it had been as great a disparagement to *Moses*, as 'tis now justly reputed a Commendation, That he was accomplished in all the *Ægyptian* Learning, and had amounted only to this, That he was a vain trifling, Superstitious Fellow. And what the *Ægyptian* Priest objected to the *Greeks*, That they were always Children, might be more truly applied to themselves, if it be the property of Children to value trifles. What Childish Fooleries their *Hieroglyphicks* were, Learned Men now prove from the lost labour, and fruitless

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fruitless Industry of *Kircher's Oedipus Ægyptiacus*. Certainly, if they had design'd to abuse and debauch this humour, they could scarce have contriv'd more fond and extravagant Emblems; and indeed their Courseness, and Unlikeness to the things they should resemble, sufficiently discover them to have been but the rude Essays of a Barbarous and Undisciplin'd Fancy. *These Hieroglyphicks*, says the Learned Bishop *Wilkins*, seem to be but a slight, imperfect Invention, suitable to those first and ruder Ages; much of the same Nature with that Mexican way of Writing by Picture, which was a meer shift they were put to, for want of the Knowledge of Letters. And it seems to me questionable, says the same Author, whether the *Ægyptians* did not at first use their Hieroglyphicks upon the same account, namely, for want of Letters. The Lord *Herbert of Cherbury*, speaking of these *Hieroglyphicks*, says, they were first invented by *Priests*, rather to
hide

hide their Opinions, or perchance their Ignorance, than to instruct others. But for all this, it is scarce credible what a mighty noise this *Hieroglyphick* way of Philosophizing hath made, though there is so little of substance in it, and how exceedingly it took in the Infancy of the World; as it is the property of Children, to be taken more with sensible Forms, Shadows, or Pictures, which please the Fancy, than with solid Reason. Indeed, to a Man that considers it, nothing could ever seem more preposterous to the design of Learning, than these *Hieroglyphicks*, or *Mystical Representations*, which were unavoidably clogg'd with two Inconveniencies, very unsuitable to the propagation of *Knowledge*, which were *Obscurity* and *Ambiguity*: For it not only cost them a great deal of Time to gather up such *Symbolical Things*, which might represent their Conceptions; but when they had pitc'd upon them, they were liable to a great variety of *Interpretations*,

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pretations, as is evident in all those remainders of them, preserved by the Industry of some Ancient Writers. I cannot therefore imagin any rational Man could think that Study worth his pains, which at the highest can amount but to a *Conjecture*; and when it is come to that with a great deal of pains, it is nothing but some ordinary and trivial Observation. *Certainly* (saith the Learned *Stillingfleet*) *this kind of Learning deserves the highest form among the DIFFICILES NUGÆ, and all these Hieroglyphicks put together, will make but one good one, and that should be for LABOUR LOST.* I might here (if it were not too great a Digression) shew how very Pernicious the use of these *Hieroglyphicks* were to the Vulgar, who seeing the *Attributes* of God represented under the shapes of *Animals* and *Plants*, took occasion to adore those Corporeal Things, and so became the most Superstitious of all Nations, going so far as to deifie

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But to proceed: The truth of it is, the *Ægyptians* seem to have had only Knowledge enough, to know that their Neighbours had none at all, and cunning enough to pretend an inspection into strange and abstruse Mysteries; knowing that others by reason of their Ignorance could not controul them, and by reason of their Credulity would be very apt to credit them; and thence they continually abus'd the Credulous *Grecians* with Tales and Fables. The Learned *Stillingfleet* tells us, There wanted not grounds of Suspicion, that the old *Ægyptian* Learning was not of that Elevation, which the present distance of our Age makes us apt to think it was. And the Learned *Conringius*, in his Book *de Hermetica Medicinâ*, hath endeavour'd to shew the great defects there were in it. *Nor can it, I think, be denied, saith Stillingfleet, but according to the reports we have now concerning the old Ægyptian Learning, some parts*
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of it were frivolous, others obscure, a great deal Magical, and the rest short of that Improvement, which the accession of the parts and industry of after Ages gave unto it. It were easie to shew, how much even those parts of Learning, wherein the *Ægyptians* and the other *Ancients* did most excel, have been improved in these latter Ages; but this Task having been performed by abler Pens, I shall only touch upon three Things, so very useful to Mankind, viz. *Anatomy*, *Geography*, and *Navigation*; to shew what a mighty improvement they have received in this last Age. First then, as for *Anatomy*; This Art was doubtless in very little use among the *Ancients*. I know indeed, there are some who tell us, that the *Ægyptians* were very accurate in the knowledge of *Anatomy*; but when I consider how excessively Curious and Ceremonious, or rather Superstitious they were in preserving their Bodies entire and unputrified, I cannot but
conceive

conceive their opening them was rather for the *Embowelling*, than the *Anatomizing* of them. As for the *Grecians*, this Art could not well be in practice among them, because their usual Custom was to Burn their dead Bodies, as we find it attested by *Homer*, *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *Plutarch*; and besides, had *Anatomy* been in use among the *Grecians*, there is no dispute but the works of *Hipocrates*, yet extant, would have discovered it, which we do not find in any place they do: Nay; so far from that, that *Hipocrates* himself going one time to visit *Democritus*, he happen'd to find him busie in Dissecting several Beasts, who asking him what he meant by his being so employ'd, *Democritus* (by way of Apology) makes him this reply, *Hæc Animalia quæ vides propterea secò, non Dei opera perosus, sed fellis bilisque naturam disquirens*. Now, if he apprehended that the Dissecting of *Beasts* might be lookt upon as an *hating* of *Gods* works, he might

might much more have feared that censure, had he cut up the Bodies of *Men*. Nor does it appear by any thing extant in the Writings of *Galen*, that that other *Father of Physicians*, ever made any *Anatomy* of *Humane Bodies*. Nor was this Art practised among the *Romans*, nor indeed could it be, forasmuch as they held it unlawful, *Aspicere humana exta*, (as *Pliny* in his Preface to his 28 Book tells us) to look upon the Entrails of *Mens Bodies*, And *Dion* in his 55th Book says, That it was allowed to *Tiberius* to touch the Body of *Augustus*, *Quod nefas alias erat*, which otherwise had been unlawful. And that the *Primitive Christians* favour'd not the Practice of *Anatomy*, will plainly appear from *Tertullian*, who in the 4th Chapter of his Book *de Anima*, speaking of one *Herophilus*, doubts whether to call him *Medicum* or *Lanium*, a *Physician* or a *Butcher*, *Qui Hominem odit, ut nosset*, saith he, who hated Man, that he might know him: And *St. Augustine* in his

22^d Book *de Civ. Dei. Cap. 24.* runs much upon the same strain. And among others we find Pope *Boniface* the 8th such a profess'd Enemy to this art of dissecting Humane Bodies, that he threatens immediately his *Thunderbolt of Excommunication* to all such as should do any thing of this nature. Thus we see how very shie and unacquainted the *Ancients* were with this most excellent Art, which certainly is one of the most useful in humane Life, as tending most to the Eviscerating, and disclosing the secrets of Nature. But now in these latter Ages, we have taken off this thick Veil of Superstition, and there is scarce any Man, who has not a desire to know, *How curiously and wonderfully he is made.* Hence then *Anatomy* hath of late been a *free and general Practice*; and particularly in this Age it hath receiv'd wonderful Improvements. For proof whereof I need not take much pains, since there is no Man that hath the least insight into Physick,
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but knows how much the Learned Dr. *Harvey* in that excellent Treatise of his, *De Generatione Animalium*, hath transcended all that went before him, in that full and satisfactory account he there presents the World with, concerning the Constitution, Structure, and Nutrition of Humane Bodies: What a mighty name hath he justly got in the *Orbis Literarius*, by that wonderful and surprizing discovery of the *Circulation of the Blood*; a Doctrine so Universally embraced, and so unquestionably true, that a Physician would be thought a Heretick *primæ Classis*, who should in the least dispute it? How much is the whole Colledge of Physicians indebted to the memory of the Famous Dr. *Glisson*, for giving them a more true and perfect account of the Nature of Sanguification, Bilification, Separation of Urine, and other Humours from the Mass of Blood, than ever the World was formerly acquainted with? And does not the Incompara-

ble Dr. *Willis* deserve to be reckon'd among the Benefactors of Mankind, for those great Discoveries he hath made of Nutrition, Generation, and Separation of the *Succus Nervosus*, and Animal Spirits, with their præternatural affections? How glimmering a light, and how imperfect a notion had the Ancients of the nature of the *Saliva*, and other Juices that are convey'd into the Mouth, together with their Passages; until our Learned and Famous Country-Man, Dr. *Wharton*, and of late the Learned *Steno* so happily disclos'd those Secrets of Nature? Did any of the Ancients ever imagine, that the Lungs consisted only of Vessels and Bladders? That the Liver, Spleen, and Reins were *Conglomerate Glandules*; and yet that these are so, that expert Anatomist, and great Naturalist, *Malpighius*, hath informed the World? Which of the Ancients ever dreamt, That the Testicles of the Male should be nothing but a *Conglomeration of Vessels*;

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Vessels; and the Female Testicles, *Ovaries*; was not this Discovery also an honour reserv'd for the present Age, and to the Industrious and Learned *De Graef* are the thanks due? Who among the *Ancients* ever rightly inform'd us as to the Operation of *Cathartick* Medicines in Humane Bodies: Or as to the Reason of the different Colours of the *Excrements*, that are observ'd to be evacuated by them, until that great *Anatomical* Light, *Sir George Ent*, imparted it to the World? Which was it of the *Ancients*, that ever had a true notion how the *Chyle* was convey'd into the Mass of Blood? We very well know, they told us it discharg'd it self through the *Meseraick* Veins into the Liver; but as to its true Passage into the Blood, they were as little able to give an account of that, as they were to demonstrate the Commixture of the Air therewith; and yet they had the confidence to teach it in their Schools as an *Ens Rationis*, though

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they had never made any Proof, or Experiment for the truth of this Assertion. In what a high Measure then did that great Anatomist Dr. Lower, oblige the World, by his great Industry and indefatigable Pains, who in that rare and admirable Tract of his, *De Corde*, hath not only more punctually shew'd the true passage of the *Chyle* through its Lacteals, Receptacle, and Chyliferous ducts, than formerly, but hath plainly demonstrated that it is impossible there can be any other, by which it should have its discharge into the Mass of Blood? Nor are his Arguments less nervous and cogent, for proving the Commixture of the nitrous Particles of the Air with the Mass of Blood. Thus have I given you an account of several of the most considerable Improvements made in this present Age, in that part of Physick relating to *Anatomy*; all which ingenious and excellent Inventions, are of great use, as affording us better Hypotheses in Physick, and by Consequence

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sequence tending to a better and more effectual way of Curing Diseases.

The next thing that falls under our Consideration, is, to shew how much *Geography* hath lately been Improv'd. The *Ancients* were so very defective in this Art or Science, that the Learned *Varenius* tells us, That the most General and Necessary Things belonging threunto, were then unknown; as the Flux and Reflux of the Sea; the Habitableness of the Torrid Zone; the Polar Property of the *Magnet*; the diversity of Winds, the true dimension of the Earth: Nor had they any true Descriptions of remote Countries, concerning which both the *Greeks* and *Romans* had very fabulous Relations; they knew not that the Earth was encompassed by the Sea, and might be sailed round; They were totally ignorant of *America*, and both the *North* and *South* parts of this Hemisphere; yea, and understood very little of the

remoter parts of their own *Asia*; That part of the *Indies* that lies on the other side of the River *Ganges*, was in a manner a *Terra Incognita* to them; they knew little or nothing of the vast Kingdom of *China*, nothing of *Japan*, or the numerous Oriental Islands, and these made a great, if not the best part of *Asia*. But that which to me seem'd stranger, or more remarkable, is, That neither *Thucydides* nor *Herodotus*, nor any other *Greek* Author Cotemporary with them, have so much as mention'd the *Romans*, though then growing up to a dreadful Power, and being both *Europeans*. *Budæus* in his 4th Book *De Assæ*, tells us, That the *Grecians* were so utterly ignorant of the *Spaniards*, that *Ephorus*, one of their most accurate Geographers, took *Spain*, which he calls *Iberia*, to be a City. It was in former times counted so dangerous a thing to believe the *Antipodes*, that *Boniface*, Arch-bishop of *Mentz*, by chance seeing a Treatise written

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written by *Virgilius*, Bishop of *Saltzburg*, touching the *Antipodes*, thinking that some Damnable pernicious Doctrine might be couched under that strange Name, complain'd first to the Duke of *Bohemia*, and afterwards to Pope *Zachary*, Anno. 745. By whom the poor Bishop (whose great misfortune was to be Learned in such a blockish Age) was condemn'd as a *Heretick*. Nay, even *St. Austin*, *Lactantius*, and some other of the Ancient Writers, do by no means allow of the *Antipodes*, but look upon it to be a ridiculous, incredible story; and Venerable *Bede* is much of the same Opinion. The Learned *Fracastorius* saith, That our Ancestors knew little *Westward* beyond the *Fortunate Islands*, and *Eastward* as little beyond *Catygara*, now call'd *Canton*, the Richest City in *China*; So that (as that Learned Author informs us) of the whole Habitable World, scarce one half was known to the *Ancients*. Now, by the account I have here given, it
plainly

plainly appears, how grossly ignorant the *Ancients* were in the knowledge of *Geography*, as also what a vast Improvement it hath received in these latter Days: For our Navigation is far greater, our Commerce is more general, our Charts more exact, our Globes more accurate, our Travels more remote, our Reports more intelligent and sincere; and consequently, our *Geography* far more perfect, than it was in the Elder Times of *Polybius* and *Possidonius*; yea, than in those of *Ptolomy*, *Strabo*, and *Pomponius Mela*, who liv'd among the *Cæsars*. And if this Art was so very defective in the flourishing times of the *Roman Empire*, there is no dispute but it was much more so, in the days of *Aristotle* and the *Græcians*: And therefore no wonder the *Macedonian Youth* was no better instructed, than to believe he had Conquer'd the whole World: When (God knows) there were Nations enough, both before him and behind him, to have
swallow'd

swallow'd up the *Young Commander*, and his *Triumphant Armies*, at a Morfel. But as great an Improvement as hath in these latter Ages been made in the knowledge of *Geography*, we have yet reason to believe, That our Discoveries may still be enlarged to further Countries, a good proof whereof it is, That so many spacious Shores, and Mountains, and Promontories appear to our *Southern* and *Northern* Sailors; of which we have yet no account, but only such as could be taken by a remote Prospect at Sea: From whence, and from the Figure of the Earth, it may be concluded, That almost as much space of Ground, remains in the Dark, as was fully known in the Times of the *Assyrian* or *Persian* Monarchy. So that without assuming any vain *Prophetick* Spirit we may foretel, That the Discovery of another *New World* is still behind. To accomplish this, there is only wanting the Invention of *Longitude*. This if it shall be
once

once accomplish'd, will make well nigh as much alteration in the World, as the Invention of the *Needle* did before. And then our *Posterity* may out-go us, as much as we can travel further than the *Ancients*; whose *Demi-Gods*, and *Heroes* did esteem it one of their chief Exploits, to make a journey as far as the *Pillars of Hercules*. Whosoever shall think this a desperate Business, can only use the same Arguments, wherewith *Columbus* was at first made ridiculous: If he had been discourag'd by the Raillery of his Adversaries, by the judgment of most *Astronomers* of his Time, and even by the Intreaties of his own Companions, but three days before he had a Sight of Land, we had lost the knowledge of half the World at once.

I am now come to the last *Parallel*, and that is, to shew what vast Improvements the Art of Navigation hath received in these last Ages. *Cardan*, a great searcher into the Curiosities of Nature, tells us,
That

That among other late Noble Inventions, that of the *Mariners Compass* is the most worthy of Admiration, as being of the greatest Use and Convenience to Mankind. By the help hereof, we are now able to find out a way through the *vast Ocean*, in the greatest Storms and darkest Nights, where is neither Path to follow, nor Inhabitant or Passenger to enquire ; It points out the way to the skillful Mariner, when all other helps fail him, and that with greater certainty than the wit of Man can possibly do. By means hereof, are the Commodities of all Countries discover'd, Trade, Traffick, and Humane Society maintain'd, their several Forms of Government and Religion observ'd, and the whole World made as it were one *Common-Wealth*, and the most distant Nations, *Fellow Citizens* of the same *Body Politick*. But the best way to make us rightly value the blessing of this Invention, is, by considering the many Shifts and Inconveniencés

conveniencies the Ancients were put to, for want of it. We may easily Imagine, how Inconvenient the Ancients found it to sail by the guidance of the Stars : For in dark Cloudy weather, when their *Pleiades*, *Helice*, and *Cynosura* were not to be seen, the *Pilot* was always at a loss for his Guide, and knew not how to steer his Ship, but lay expos'd to the casual conduct both of Winds and Tides. And for this reason, the Ancients seldom or never durst venture into the main Ocean, but were fain to go creeping along by the Shoar side: And no more than this (as we have reason to believe) did the *Phœnicans* and *Carthaginians*, the *Tyrians* and *Sydonians*; who though renowned in History for great *Navigators*, yet by the most Learned are thought to have perform'd their Voyages only by *Coasting*, and not by *Crossing* the Ocean. Hence therefore it was, That the Commerce and Communications of those days were very inconsiderable; Their
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famed Travels in Comparison were nothing: And that renowned ten years Voyage of *Ulysses* (so highly celebrated by the Poets of Old) was much short of what many of our Merchants do now every Year perform. Thus you see how very defective the Ancients were in this Art of Navigation, the Benefits and Advantages whereof are so very Considerable, That the Wealth and Strength of a Nation are really to be computed in Proportion to their flourishing herein. It was long since a wise and true Observation of *Cicero*, *Qui Mare tenet, eum necesse est RERUM potiri*, He that commands the Sea, must necessarily enjoy all things. There is not any thing can be a greater Demonstration of the Flourishing of a Nation, than when its Genius lies towards *Naval* Affairs, and when by its Industry it is arriv'd to a Sovereignty of the *Seas*; This is the true Characteristical mark of the greatness of Empire: For whoever is Master of the Ocean
does

does *ipso facto* command the Trade of the World, and whoever hath the Command of that, hath the Absolute disposal of the Riches of the World, and that Money is that which governs Mankind, is a Demonstration as clear as any in *Euclide*. Thus without the least straining of the Argument, we see it naturally follows, that nothing is more vain or ridiculous, than for a Prince, or State, to pretend to an uncontrollable Greatness, that hath not first laid their Foundation in the Deep. And who can be a better instance of this than that Great Emperour *Charles the Fifth*, whose carelessness in his *Naval* concerns not only broke his own Design as to the *Universal Monarchy*, but likewise terminated in the ruine of his *Successor*? And this oversight or neglect (though too late) that great Prince was sensible of, when he so strictly gave it in Charge to his Son *Philip*, That if either he would be happy at Home, or Considerable Abroad, he should

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should take care to make himself Great at Sea. By his Example then, let no Prince, who aspires to be great, slight or neglect this *Watry Element*; since 'tis but a *jest* in Politicks, and an *Utopian* Fancy, to think to arrive at the utmost height of Empire, without *Fleets* and *Armada's*: And that Prince who thinks to give Law to Mankind, must be sure in the first place to make the *Sea* his Friend. This (without a Figure) is to build upon a Rock, whose Foundation will stand firm and sure. And therefore that Spirit of Laziness, which makes the Spainard so much slight this Rule, is that, which (in spite of the Wealth of the *West Indies*) keeps him so poor and beggarly: And while he sits idle at home, swelling with his own Pride, the *English* and *Dutch* (by their Industry) grow Rich by his Spoils, and with his Treasure of the *West Indies*, do they carry on the Trade of the *East*. Thus you see, the improving of Trade and Com^{er}

merce, is no such slight matter ; Nor is it to be wonder'd, that this does so often prove the Ball of Contention ; for men may well be allowed to be zealous, when their interest is so nearly concern'd ; and this, that wise and Glorious Princess, *Queen Elizabeth*, very well knew, when she so narrowly ey'd and observ'd the *Dutch*, whom she was always jealous of, lest they should grow too great in Navigation, and so by that means might prove our Competitors both by Sea and Land. Since then Commerce and Navigation bring such mighty advantages to a Nation, 'tis no wonder, I say, that the greatest and wisest States, and Governments, have been so very solicitous for the improving it. *Trade* is the very Life and Soul of the *Universe*, which, like the *Vital Blood* in the Body, Circulates to the Health, and well-being of the whole, and when by the failure of Industry, there is a stop put to *Commerce*, it often proves as fatal to the *Body Politick*,

litick, as the stagnating of the Blood does to the *Natural Body*. What were the World but a rude and dull *Indigested Lump*; a noisome and pestilential Mass, did not *Commerce*, like the *Sun*, by its *Universal Rays*, exhale all its malignant and noxious Vapours, and by a continual Motion and Transaction, render it wholesome and profitable? What would become of the *Busy Soul* of Man, had she not found out variety of Employment for its Exercise? And therefore *Nature* wisely did foresee the many and great Inconveniencies of *Idleness*, how that it would Convert the World into another *Chaos*; making the *Earth* but as one dull and useless *Mass*, when she hid her Rarities and Treasures in the secret Bowels thereof, and buried them in the *Watry Deep*; and lodg'd them at so vast and remote a distance, that so their *Worth* and *Value* might be a *Spur* to *Labour* and *Industry* to fetch them thence. Nay, God himself is particularly call'd *the God of the Isles*;

as looking on them, by Virtue of their skill, in *Navigation*, to be the best *Factors* for the *Common Good*; and as a Blessing upon their Industry, we find most *Isles* and Maritime places exceed all In-land Cities and Countries in Riches, and Variety of Plenty. We see then, 'tis not the vastness of Territory, but the Convenience of Situation; nor the Multitude of Men, but their Address and Industry, which improve a Nation. Now, since we have hitherto discours'd of Trade in general, and the several Advantages that accrue from thence; possibly the Reader may not think it altogether impertinent, if we entertain him with an Account of the Original of *Trade*, and shew how, and by what steps and Methods *Commerce* hath advanced it self amongst Mankind. The first of all Humane Race, when they were dispers'd into several Lands, were at first sustain'd by the *Fruits* of the *Earth*, which fell to their share. These at first they che-

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rished, and us'd, not by any *Rules of Art*, but by that *Natural Sagacity*, which teaches all Men to endeavour their own Preservation. And that they might peaceably enjoy these, they thought the best Course they could take, was to Associate themselves into Families, and to enter into little Leagues, and thus begun *Civil Government*. But finding that no Place was so fruitful as to produce all Things necessary for Humane Life ; this put them upon a Necessity, either of taking by force what their Neighbours possessed, or else of Exchanging the several Productions of their respective Sojls. This then was the way and Method of *Trading*, in the first Ages of Mankind ; when one had eaten or spent what was his own, he repair'd to his Neighbour for more, at the same time accommodating him with some other Thing whereof he stood in need, by way of Exchange, the respective value of the Things being limited according to

their estimation of their goodness and scarcity, in the first place; and then of their Beauty or Comeliness. And because Oxen and Sheep afforded them the most Commodities, as their skins for Clothing, and their Milk and Flesh for Food, besides other uses to which they were serviceable, they made all their Traffick with *Cattle*, in which their whole wealth consisted. But because 'twas too troublesome a thing for Man to drive always a Flock of Sheep before him, or lead a Cow by the Horn, for making of payment; the Industry of Men encreasing, they cast their Eyes upon that which was in the next degree of most use to them, and most durable; and finding that nothing was of more general use than *Iron* and *Copper*, and especially that the latter was the fairest, and easiest to be melted, and cast into Kettles and other Domestick Utensils, they made choice thereof, mutually giving and receiving it, by Weight,
for

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for other things they needed, and divided it by *Pounds*, which word still remains amongst us, to signifie Twenty Shillings, which is very near the just value that a Pound of *Copper* had in those days: And to save the Labour of weighing this *Pound*, and the parts of it, they stamp'd upon one side the Figure of a *Ship*, with the weight and value; and on the other side the Picture of one of those *Beasts*, which are design'd by the word *Pecus*, whence *Money* came to be call'd *Pecunia*. Afterwards the *Arms* of the *Prince* were substituted instead of the *Ship*, and *Constantine* put a *Cross* in the place of the *Beast*. Now because, in the old *Gaulish* Language, a *Ship* was call'd *Pile* (whence the Word *Pilote* remains to this day) the side of the *Coin* on which the *Ship* was is still call'd *Pile*, and the other *Cross*, how different stamps soever have succeeded since. This was the *first Original* of *Trade*, which from a narrow Commerce between the Hills, the Vallies, the Woods, the Plains, and the Rivers,

that border'd one upon another, is since extended to the whole Compass of the Earth. And now 'tis high time to dismiss this Subject of *Navigation and Trade*; and therefore having already demonstrated, how much the Present Age hath transcended Former Ages in those three parts of Learning, *viz. Anatomy, Geography, and Navigation*, I now proceed.

If from the first Ages of the World we turn our eyes to latter Times, I mean, to the Times of *Popish* Darkness, we shall Comparatively find that great is the light we now enjoy. Ignorance (we know) is the Mother of their Devotion and the very Essence of *Popery*, therefore no wonder that before the Reformation Learning was at so low an Ebb. That the *Clergy* had scarce Knowledge enough, to read the Liturgy, and the Laity no more Clarkship that to save them from Hanging. King *Alfred* in his Preface upon the *Pastorals* of *St. Gregory* (which he translated into *English*) says, That
when

when he came first to his Kingdom, He knew not one *Priest* on the South side of the River *Humber*, that understood his Service in *Latine*, or that could Translate an Epistle into English. *Vignier* in his *Ecclesiastical History* affirms, That *Gerbertus* the first Archbishop of *Rhemes* and *Ravenna*, afterwards *Pope*, under the name of *Silvester* the Second, was reputed a *Magician*, because he was well skill'd in the *Mathematicks*. (Thus, saith *Dr. Fuller*, do Ignorant People count all *Circles* above their own *Sphere* to be *Conjuring*, and presently cry out, those Things are done by the *Black Art*, for which their dim Eyes can see no Colour in reason. And in such Cases, when they cannot fly up to *Heaven* to make it a *Miracle*, they fetch it from *Hell* to make it *Magick*) And how low Learning ran in *England* amongst the Native Nobility, in the Reign of King *Henry* the *Sixth*, too plainly appears by the *Motto* on the Sword of the *Martial*, Earl of *Shrewsbury*,
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which was, *Sum Talboti, pro Occidere in imicos meos*, the best Latin that Noble Lord, and perchance his Chaplains too (in that Age) could afford. *Erasmus* tells us, That some Divines in his time undertook to prove, that *Hereticks* ought to be put to Death, from those Words of the Apostle, *Hæreticum Hominem devita*, which it seems they understood, as if he had said, *De vitâ tolle*. I have read of two *Fryars* disputing whether God had made any more *Worlds* than One; the One wisely alledging that passage of the Gospel touching the ten *Lepers* which were cleans'd, *Annon Decem facti sunt Mundi?* As if God had made Ten *Worlds*; the other (with great gravity) looking into the Text, replies as wisely, with the words immediately following, *Sed ubi sunt Novem?* But what is become of the Nine? So as from thence he would prove but one to be left. An old Priest in *Henry the Eight's* time, being reprov'd for reading in his ServiceBook *Mumpsimus Domine*, instead

instead of *Sumpsimus*, reply'd, He had now us'd *Mumpsimus* these thirty Years, and for his part he would not leave his old *Mumpsimus* for their new *Sumpsimus*. At any time when their *Priests* were taken breaking *Priscian's* head, their Common Defence was, those words of *St. Gregory*, *Non debent verba cælestis Oraculi subesse regulis Donati*, The words of the Heavenly Oracles ought not to be Subject to the Rules of *Donatus*. But these are Stories so well known, that I ought to Apologise for insisting so long upon them; and therefore to proceed to the last *Question.viz.*

Whether Men do now live to as great an Age, as they did formerly? It must be granted, That in the first Ages of the World, both before and for some time after the *Flood*, Men did generally arrive to a much greater Age, than they have done since. But this is certainly to be attributed to some *extrordinary Cause*, and not to the *Ordinary Course of Nature*. The World (we know) was then to
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be replenish'd with Inhabitants, which could not so speedily be done, but by an extraordinary Multiplication of Mankind; Neither could that be done, but by the long lives of Men. And again, Arts and Sciences were then to be planted, for the better effecting whereof, it was requisite, that the same Men should have the Experience and Observation of many Ages. We know it was the Complaint of *Hippocrates*, *Ars longa, Vita brevis*; And therefore Almighty God, in his Wisdom did then proportion Mens *Lives* to the length of *Arts*: And as God gave them this special Priviledge to live long; so 'tis probable he gave them withal a Temper, and Constitution of Body, answerable thereunto. As also the *Food* wherewith they were nourish'd, especially before the *Flood*, may well be thought to have been more *wholesome* and *nutritive*, and the *Plants* more *Medicinal*: And happily the *Influence* of the *Heavens* was at that time,

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in that Climate where the *Patriarchs* liv'd, more benigne and favourable. These (as far as we poor Mortals can Conjecture) might be the reasons, why Divine Providence did assign to those first Inhabitants so long a lease of their Lives. But in after-times, when the World was fully Peopl'd, and Arts and Sciences were Propagated, then it pleas'd the same Divine Providence to curtail, and abridge the Life of Man; insomuch that in *Moses's* time the common Standard of humane Life was *Seventy*, or at most *Eighty Years*. And so it was ever after counted. Hence also *Herodotus* sets the longest Bounds of Man's Life to be but *Eighty Years*. *Barzillai* was said to be a very Old Man, and yet he liv'd but to fourscore: And *David* was full of Days, yet but *Seventy Years Old*. *Solomon*, as Divines Conjecture, was not *Sixty*, yet it is said, *when Solomon was Old*. The Learned *Johannes Jonstonius* tells us, That in all the Records of the *Roman, Greek, French,*
and

and *German* Emperours, there were but four who liv'd to be fourscore. And our *English* Chronicle informs us, That *Queen Elizabeth* out-liv'd all her Predecessors from *William* the Conquerour. *Petrus Crinitus* saith, that the *Ægyptians* by a subtile Conjecture, taken from the Weight of the *Heart*, found out within what bounds the Life of Man was included; they affirming, That it was scarce possible for a Man to live above a Hundred Years: For, said they, the *Heart* every Year till Fifty increased two *Drams*, and from thence to an hundred Years it decreased as much, and so returning to its original Weight, it can then make no further Progress. Now, though this Observation does certainly carry in it more of *Curiosity* than *Truth*, yet doth it plainly shew, That the common Opinion of the *Ancients*, was, That Men did seldom live above a Hundred Years. And we find, the Learned *Varro* was also of the same Belief, and there;

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therefore he tells us, They call'd the space of a Hundred Years, *Seculum*, from *Senex*, an old Man, because they thought that was the utmost Period of Mans life. Thus then we see, That Men live now as long as they did formerly ; and that for these three Thousand Years at least there hath been no Alteration. It is the Observation of that great Philosopher, the Lord *Verulam*, *Decursus Seculorum, & Successio Propaginis, nihil videntur omnino demere de Diuturnitate vitæ* ; The Course of Times, and Succession of Ages, seem to have no whit abated from the length of Mens Lives. No doubt, says that Noble Lord, *There are times in all Countrys, wherein Men live either longer or shorter ; longer, most commonly when the Times are Barbarous, and the Diet more plain, and more given to bodily Exercise ; shorter, when they are more Civil, and there is more Luxury and Idleness ; But in these Things there is a Vicissitude and Revolution ; The Succession*

cession of Generations alters it not. If it did, the first Man in reason should have lived longest, and the Son should still come short of his Fathers Age; So that whereas *Moses* tells us, That the Days of Man in his time were Threescore Years and Ten, by this reckoning they might well enough by this time be brought to ten, or twenty, or thirty at the most. In a Word, we will not say, but that Accidents, Accidental Occurrences; Intemperance, ill and noxious Effluvia from the Earth, Waters, and intemperature of the Air, and other Accidents may in these latter Ages of the World produce some such Diseases, and accidental Disorders, as may possibly more infest Mankind, and occasion more Mortality, than in former Ages. But as to the regular and ordinary Course of Natural Procedure and State of Things with Mankind, yea and other Animals, there seems to be little or no decay, or Variation from what hath been formerly.

ESSAY VI.

Of PASSION; *And whether the PASSIONS are an Advantage, or Disadvantage to Men.*

T WAS the usual saying of a very Ingenuous Person, *That Passionate Men, like Yorkshire Hounds, are apt to over-run the Scent.* They have not the Patience to pause and deliberate, but *Quicquid in Buccam venerit*, whatsoever they think they speak; and therefore it is, they often run into such gross Absurdities; for as *Aristotle* well observes, *Qui citò pronunciat, ad pauca respicit.* A mind transported with Passion, rejects the best Reasons, and retains the worst

worst Opinions; like a *Bolter*, which lets the *Flour* pass, and keeps nothing but the *Bran*. Therefore *Plato* speaking of *Passionate* Persons, says, They are like Men who stand upon their Heads, they see all things the wrong way. How inconsistent *Passion* and *Reason* is, *Seneca* seems to intimate, by that Expression of his *Nemo consilium cum Clamore dat*: And how incompatible the Spirit of God and *Passion* is, the Holy Scriptures themselves do plainly shew; For when *Elias* was upon the Mountain, there came a Whirlwind, and God was not there; then an Earthquake, and God was not there; But at last came a still Voice, and God was there. The Scripture likewise exhorteth us, *To possess our Souls in Patience*; intimating, according to the Lord *Bacon's* Paraphrase, *That whosoever is out of Patience, is out of the Possession of his Soul*; Well therefore might the Poets call *Anger* a *short Midness*: For look upon an *Angry Man*, when he is in the height of

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of his Rage, and you may see all *Africa*, and its Prodigies in him: He is more savage than the Tygers there; Blow him into a Flame, and you may see *Vulcano's*, *Hurricanes*, and *Borasco's* in him. And certainly were he (while his Passion was thus raging) forc'd to look himself in the Glass, those very Convulsions and Distortions his Anger had put him into, would soon shame him into a better temper. In short, there is no surer Argument of a great Mind, than not to be transported to Anger by any Accident whatsoever; The Clouds and Tempests are form'd below, but all above is quiet and serene; which is the true Emblem of a Brave Man, that surpasses all Provocations, and Lives within himself. This made a great Philosopher say, That a Wise Man ought to be like the *Caspian Sea*, which is said never to *Ebb* or *Flow*. But from this excess of the Passions to infer an utter uselessness of them, to me seems very unreason-

nable: For I cannot think Nature is such a severe Step-Dame, as that by her Planting these Passions in us, she design'd only to Plague and Torment us: I therefore conclude, There is an honest and an innocent use of them. As *Bias* once said of the Tongue, that it was the best and worst part of Man, so may we of the Affections; *Nec meliores unquam servos, nec Dominos sentit Natura Deteriores*, They are the best Servants, but the worst Masters that Nature can have; like the Winds, which being moderate, carry the Ship; but drown it, being tempestuous. And as it is observed in greater States, so does the same hold true in Man's little Common-wealth, that those who are the fittest for Service, if once they become Mutinous, always prove the most dangerous sort of Enemies: And thus the old Rule, *Corruptio Optimi Pessima*, holds true. I know there have been several Modern *Stoicks*, who with a zeal much transcending their Knowledge, have declaim'd

declaim'd against the Passions ; Nothing less than an utter Extripation will satisfie these Men : They are not contented with our keeping them under, and retaining them upon the same terms, as *Abraham did those Domesticks he bought with his Money*, whom the Scriptures saith, *He both Circumcis'd, and kept as Servants* ; But they tell us, that the Mind ought to deal with its Affections, just as *Pharaoh* would have dealt with the *Jews-Males*, whom he thought it best to cut off, for fear they might (some time or other) be in a condition to make head against him. But whether this be reasonable or no, let any Man judge : Because the Passions are now and then disorderly, must we therefore wish there were no Passions ? No certainly ; for this would be every whit as unreasonable, as to wish there were no *Rivers* in the world, because it sometimes happens, that by their overflowing we receive great Detriment. When I consider, That

our Blessed Saviour, who took upon him all our *Natural* Infirmities, but none of our *Sinful*, has been seen to *Weep*, to be *Sorrowful*, to *Pity*, and to be *Angry*; I cannot but than conclude, *That a Man may be Angry and Sin not.* It is not the bare Agitation, but the Sediment at the bottom that troubles and defiles the Water. The Passions are so far from being always hurtful, that we read of several that have receiv'd great advantages from them. For *Wit* proceeds from Active Spirits, or a good Degree of Heat in the Brain; And therefore they, who have been deny'd by Nature this Faculty, and will not take the Pains by Study and Exercise to improve their Parts, do often times encrease their Heat by some high Passion, and so appear more Witty and Ingenious than at other times, when their Spirits (being as it were benumm'd with Cold) are not able to exert themselves; And from hence came that known saying, *Vexatio dat Intellectum.*

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telleſum. Seneca, hearing a dull Orator make a moſt Eloquent Harangue the very day his Son dy'd, cry'd out, *Magna pars Eloquentiæ eſt Dolor*; ſo Polus the Actor, to enable him to make a more lively Representation of the Grief of a Father upon the Body of his Deceaſed Son, brought in an *Urn* the Aſhes of his own Son newly Dead. So much for the Paſſion of Grief. Then for Anger, *Si Natura negat, Facit Indignatio verſum.* Archilochus and Hipponaux were two very indifferent Poets, yet in meer Spleen and Malice, to be revenged of two Perſons that had injur'd them, invented thoſe Doggrel ſorts of Verſes, *Iambicks* and *Scaxons*, which they did to ſuch a Perfection, that their Adverſaries deſpairing of ever being able to answer them, made away themſelves. And as for the Paſſion of Love, let the Smith of *Antwerp* paſs for an Inſtance; who being rejected by his Sweet-Heart becauſe of his dirty Profeſſion, chang'd his Hammers and

Anvil, for Pencils and Tables, and so from an Inconsiderable Black-Smith, he became the most noted Painter of his time. Thus we see, the Passions, if rightly manag'd, are of great Use and Service to us; But if once we suffer them to grow headstrong, Lions, Wolves, and Tygers are more governable. We too well know, there is not any one thing hath done more hurt to the Christian Religion, than the Spirit of Passion; as is most evident by those many late unhappy Disputes and Controversies amongst us. 'Tis strange, that Men cannot talk of Religion, but at the same time they must Quarrel too; as if the best way of establishing the Law of God, was by violating the Laws of Charity. I thank God my Charity is of an Extensive Nature; I refrain no man's Company, because his Opinion comes not up to mine; Nor do I think it reasonable, that a difference in Opinion should divide an Affection. Mens Understandings are
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not all of one Size and Temper; and therefore it cannot be imagin'd, there ever will be such a Consonancy, and Uniformity of Judgment amongst all Men, no, not amongst Wise and Good Men, but that in many things, yea and those sometimes of great Importance, they may and will dissent one from another unto the Worlds end. But it is one thing to *Dissent from*, and another, to be at *Discord with*, a Man: *Ita dissensi ab illo* (says Tully concerning himself and Cato) *ut in disjunctione sententiæ, conjuncti tamen amicitiam maneremus.* 'Tis an excellent Rule saith Bishop Wilkins, to be observ'd in all Disputes, That Men should give soft words, and hard Arguments: That they should not so much strive to vex, as to convince an Enemy. If this were but diligently practis'd in all Cases, and on all sides, we might in a good Measure be freed from those vexations in the search of Truth, which the Wise Solomon, by his own Experience, did

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so much complain of, when he told us, That in much Wisdom there is much Grief, and he that encreaseth Knowledge, encreaseth Sorrow. There is nothing so impertinent in Disputes and Controversies, as Anger and Passion: For every Man is fond of his own Notions, and no Man cares to be Huff'd and Hector'd out of it; and therefore this Blustering way is so far from inclining us to yield to Mens Opinions, that it rather hardens us against them, by giving us a prejudice to their Persons. For my part, I love to speak of *Persons* with Civility, but of *Things* with Freedom; and therefore I abhor the Practice of Many, who write, as if they thought *Railing* at any Mans Person, or *Wrangling* about his Words, necessary to the Confutation of his *Opinions*; Methinks, it is as unwise, as provoking; for if I civilly endeavour to reason a Man out of his *Opinions*, I make myself but one Work to do, namely, to convince his Understanding; but

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if in a bitter or exasperating Way, I oppose his Errors, I encrease the difficulties I wou'd surmount, and have as well his *Affections* against Me, as his *Judgment*: And it is very uneasy to make a *Profelyte* of him, who not only differs from us, but is an Enemy to us. Besides, as a *Mad-Dog* by biting others, is wont to make those he bites run Mad like himself; So, these *Provoking Writers*, are wont to enrage those they offend, and infect them also with their own virulent Distemper. In a Word then, They are the Gentle Insinuations which pierce, as Oil is the most penetrating of all Liquors; And the best way of *Profelyting* Men, is to gain their *Affections*. If Disputes could be manag'd with Temper and Moderation, Men might certainly reap great benefit by them: But our unruly Passions do so much get the Ascendant over our Understandings, that this is a thing rather to be wish'd, than to be expected. Upon this Consideration was it, That
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the great *Montaign* was for suppressing and hindering all Disputes and Controversies : And much of the same Mind was the Philosopher *Plato*, who in his *Republick* prohibits this Exercise to Fools and ill-bred People. I think, there is not any Man so ignorant, but knows, That nothing hath been a greater Scandal to the Reformed Religion, either among *Heathens*, *Mahometans*, or *Papists*; nay, nor hath given a fairer occasion for bringing in of Atheism and Infidelity, than our Divisions and Animosities, which proceed from our many Controversies and Disputes of Religion. Indeed, our Controversies about Religion, saith the Learned *Stillingfleet*, have brought at last even Religion it self into a Controversie : For weaker heads, saith he, when they once perceive the Battlements shake, are apt to suspect the Foundation it self stands not firm; and if they see any thing call'd in Question, they presently conclude, there is nothing certain.

Luther,

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Luther, observing how prejudicial School-Divinity had been to the Christian Religion, crys out, *Quam-primum apparuit Theologia Scholastica, evanuit Theologia Crucis*. The *School-Men* have spun the *Thread* too fine, and made *Christianity* look liker a Course of *Philosophy*, than a *System of Faith*, and *Supernatural Revelation*: So that the Spirit of it evaporates into Niceties and Exercises of the Brain; and the Contention is not for *Truth* but *Victory*. Indeed, when I consider the Works of the *School-Men*, it puts into my Thoughts, how far more importantly a good Method of *Thinking*, and a right Course of *Apprehending Things*, does contribute towards the attaining of *Perfection in true Knowledge*, than the strongest and most vigorous *Wit* in the *World*, can do without them. It cannot without *Injustice* be deny'd, That they were Men of extraordinary strength of *Mind*: They had a great *Quickness of Imagination*, and *Subtilty of Distinguishing*: They
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very well understood the Consequence of Propositions: Their Natural Endowments were Excellent: Their Industry Commendable: But they lighted on a wrong Path at first, and wanted Matter to contrive; And so, like the *Indians*; only expressed a wonderful Artifice, in the ordering of the same Feathers into a thousand varieties of Figures: But after all that can be said in their Commendation, we must needs own; That nothing hath been of more mischievous Consequence to Christian Religion than *School-Divinity*. I know it is much controverted amongst the Learned, how this *School-Learning* came first to be set up: But to give *Aristotle* his due, I think it may easily be prov'd, That he was not the chief Author of this *Sophistick* kind of Disputation, which now reigns in our *Schools*, but rather the *Arabians*, *Averroes* and *Avicenna*, his Commentators; who being wholly unacquainted with the *Greek Tongue*, were fain to depend upon

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upon the *Versions* of *Aristotle*, which being very imperfect, left them under great *Darkness* and *Ignorance* touching *Aristotle's* Sense and Meaning; whence there sprang a world of *Unintelligible Terms*, and *Distinctions*, with as many *Sophistick Disputes* and *Controversies*. These the *School-Men* greedily lick'd up (as the *Minor Poets* what came from *Homer*) and incorporated with their *Theology*; which fill'd the *Universities* of *France*, (where this *School-Divinity* was first broach'd,) and *England* (which had continual *Recourse* to *Paris* for *Learning*) with nothing but vain *λογομαχία*, or *strife* about *Words* instead of solid *Philosophy* and *Divinity*; far worse than what was to be found in the *Pagan Schools*. Which vain *Itch* of *Disputation* hath proved the *Scab* of the *Church*, as hath been observ'd by many *Learned Men*. When *Men* will be wiser than *God*, and in their foolish *Wisdom* think it fit to add their strength to *Gods* weakness, as a speedier and surer way

way to establish the Truth; then does God, to convince them of their folly, suffer that strong Man, the Enemy of the Gospel, (whom none but his almighty Arm can bind and Master) to come, and sow his Tares of Division, which soon overruns the good Seed of the Church, and so brings all to Confusion. Thus then, by our foolish Notions and Conceptions do we often stain and dilute the very Fountain it self. And as the *Jews* dealt with the Blessed *Jesus*, so do we now with his Holy Religion, by plating its head with a Crown of Thorns. And this is that, that hath robb'd the Christian World of its Unity and Peace, and made the Church the Stage of Everlasting Contentions. For nothing puts Men more out of humour one with another, than Schisms and unnecessary Breaches of Church Communion: This naturally sours the Tempers of Men, and alienates their Affections to the highest Degree; for both Parties endeavouring to vindicate

vindicate themselves, are forc'd to recriminate, and these Recriminations always end in Heat and Passion; And so, like two *Flints* struck together, they will be continually sparkling and spitting fire at one another, till they have kindled the Quarrel into an inquenchable Flame. It is the Learned *Selden's* Observation, That *Disputes in Religion* will never be ended, because there wants a *Measure*, by which the Business wou'd be decided. 'Tis just as if two Men were at *Bowls*, and both judg'd by the Eye: *One* says, 'tis his Cast, the *Other* says, 'tis my Cast; and having no *Measure*, the Dispute is Eternal. I remember, *Ben. Johnson* satyrically expresses the vain Disputes of *Divines* by *Inigo Lanthorn*, disputing with his *Puppet* in *Bartholomew Fair*. *It is so; It is not so; It is so; It is not so;* crying thus one to another a Quarter of an Hour together. Thus we see, how much even Religion suffers by these unhappy Disputes and Quarrels among

us: For there is nothing does more abate the inward strength of Religion, than when it is rarified into Airy Notions and Speculations; This (indeed) gnaws and consumes the very Vitals, and in a short time will quite destroy the substance of it. It was the *Motto* of the Primitive Christians, *Non magna loquimur, sed vivimus*, our Religion consists not in *Talking*, but in *Doing* Great Things. But may not the *Reverse* of this be properly apply'd to the Present Age, *viz. Non vivimus, sed Magna Loquimur*. Religion is now become one of the *Artes Sermocinales*, a Talkative Mystery, an Art not to govern the *Mind*, and to regulate the *Actions*, but to Frame and Fashion *Discourse*. The *Essence* and *being* of *Christianity* is *Pradice*; and according to that Test, where almost can it be said to exist in the World? 'Tis true we have some Images and Shaddows of it: Some have taken its Picture, but the Substance and Solid Body is vanish'd,

resolv'd into Air, and like the Fable of the *Sybills* being worn into a *Voice*, we have turn'd it into a meer *Noise* and *Sound*; nay, which is worse, into an *Eccho*, that flattering complying *Voice*, which Reverberates every Mans own Language to him: Men dictate to their *Religion*, and then will needs persuade Themselves and others, That their *Religion* dictates to *them*, and so will have the *Rebounds* of their own Fancy pass for *Divine Oracles*. And now to conculde, 'tis no wonder, that our Disputes and Controversies have so ill an effect, when our unruly Passions have so great a share in them. For, as we have said before, the Passions if not moderated, are the Brutish Part in us; and therefore, when we transform ourselves into *Beasts*, it is not to be supposed we can Act like *Men*.

ESSAY VII.

The Variety of OPINIONS : Whence it proceeds : The uncertainty of Humane Knowledge.

ALL our several *Opinions* are nothing but the meer various *Tastes* of several *Minds*, fram'd partly by our several *Natures*, partly by our different *Educations*, and *Instructions*, and partly by the various *Encounters*, which we have met with in our ways of *Life*. Hence it is, that *Quot Homines, tot Sententiæ, Opinions* are as numerous as *Mankind* it self; and that the several *Constitutions* of our *Minds*, differ no less than

than those of our Bodies. There are as many Internal Forms of the Mind, as there are External Figures of Men: And the Soul of Man hath its Palat, as well as the Body; *Opinion* being nothing but the Gusto or Relish of the Soul: Nay, some have been so Critical, as to affirm, That there is so great a Correspondence betwixt the one and the other, that those who are of a different Diet, are generally observ'd to be of different Opinions; and the Learned Dr. *Harvey* gives this for the reason, Because (says he) a different Diet sends up different *Steams* to the Head, and according to these *Steams* are Mens *Opinions*. But this sounding more like a *Notion* than a *Truth*, we shall lay no stress upon it, but proceed. There is (then) a certain Congruity of some Opinions to the particular Tempers of some Men; and therefore we see, how readily such Doctrines, as suit themselves to the particular Inclination of the Mind, or Understanding, are

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embraced, and received; whereas those that are opposite to it, are commonly rejected with the greatest contempt imaginable. Thus do we Love, and Hate without being able to give a Reason why. Some Faces both of Persons, and Things, we admire and doat on; to others, much better deserving our esteem, we can scarcely afford a common Civility. Indeed, the dull and unactive Spirits, that concern not themselves in *Theory*, do seldom take the trouble to examine Matters, but taking Things in the Gross, follow the Common Belief, and are for keeping the beaten Road; But those, whose Minds are of a Brisker, and more Vigorous Constitution, will fall into that of their particular *Craisis*. Hence then, I say, is it, we find Men taking in some particular *Opinions* with strange Pleasure and Satisfaction, upon their very first Proposals; when at the same time they will not hearken to others, though they recommend themselves with a much greater strength of Reason.

Reason. Thus it is easie to distinguish in most Men, two Sorts of *Opinions*; *Opinions* that grow upon Mens Complexions, and *Opinions* that are the Results of their Reason; and we meet with very few that are of a Temperament so equal, or a Constitution so even poised, but that they encline to one set of *Opinions* rather than another, antecedently to all proofs of Reason: And when they have espoused their *Opinions* from that secret *Sympathy*, then they find out as good Reasons as they can to maintain them, and say, nay think sometimes, that 'twas for the sake of those Reasons, that they first embraced them. But we may commonly distinguish these *Inclination-Opinions* from the *Rational*, because we find them accompanied with more *Heat* than *Light*, a great deal of eagerness and impatience in defending of them, and but slender Arguments. In a Word, almost every one is satisfied, That there is a particular Genius, or special In-

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clination in Mens Minds, and that some *Opinions* do naturally make a much greater impression than others; but the *vexata Quæstio* is, how, or from whence this *Temperament* of the *Mind* proceeds. Some therefore tell us, That this great Diversity of the Operations of the Mind, is to be ascribed to the Souls Dependance upon the Body, and that a Good, or Bad Disposition of the *Organical* Parts, does certainly render the Soul either Vigorous or Unactive in its several Operations. Whatsoever defect (then) we may perceive in some Men, we are not to think it proceeds from any Deficiency in the Soul, but from the Coexistence it has with a Body ill dispos'd for Assistance and Information. For he who is carried in a Coach, (as the Body is *Vehiculum Animæ*) though he himself could go much faster, must yet receive such Motion as that affords; And Water, which is convey'd through Pipes and Aque-ducts, though its Motion by it self would

would have been otherwise, must yet then be confin'd and limited by the Posture and Proportion of the Vessels through which it passes. Hence we are told, That some Men are even by Nature, and Complexion, inclin'd to Vertue and Goodness; as it was said of *Clitus*, (whom *Alexander* in a Drunken humour slew,) *That he had Vertues by Nature, and Vices by Accident*; And that others, even by the oddness of their particular Make and Contexture, are determin'd to Actions of Vice. It was a received Opinion among the Ancients, That outward Beauty, was an infallible Argument of inward Beauty; and so on the contrary, That a deformed Body was a true Index of a deformed Mind, or an ill Nature. Hence was that of the Poet:

*Clauda tibi mens est, ut pes: Natura
notasque*

Exterior certas Interioris habet.

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As also that of *Martial*, *Lib. 12.*
Epigram 54.

Crine ruber, niger ore, brevis pede,
lumine læsus :

Rem magnam præstas, Zoile, si bonus
es.

It was also the saying of *Victorinus*, *In distorta Membra virtus cadere non potest*: And *Pythagoras* was so bigotted to this Opinion, that he would never admit into his School any that had the least Natural Blemish or Deformity. Upon this general Opinion was grounded that common Saying, *Cave tibi ab ãis, quos Natura Signavit*, which we may render thus, *Whom God hath Markt, let Man Mark.* And therefore *Homer*, speaking of the several ill Qualities of *Iherfites*, takes care to fit him with a Body suitable to such a Mind. Now, the reason (possibly) why Nature for the most part orders it so, may be this; the Method she takes (though imperceptible to us)

us) is Regular and Mathematical, and therefore probably nothing may more break and disorder that Symmetry she observes, than by matching a good Soul with a deformed Body; for this seems to be *Impar Congressus*, putting things unequally together. But yet this Rule is not so general; as to admit of no Exception, as we may see in the Emperour *Galba*, a Prince of an unhappy outward Figure, of whom it was said, *Ingenium Galbæ malè habitat*; The same may be also observed of *Agésilæus*, and some others, (though not many;) and therefore *Seneca* tells us, *Ex casâ vir Magnus exire potest, & ex deformi humilique Corpusculo formosus Animus & Magnus*. I grant indeed, several Examples there are of Great Persons, whose outward Deformities have been very remarkable, and yet we find their Vertues and good Qualities highly celebrated; But yet (possibly) did we but make a narrow search into their Lives, we should find the difference and alteration was chiefly wrought

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wrought by Education or Custom,
which often-times over-ſways Na-
ture. Thus we ſee, what a great
Correſpondency there is betwixt the
Soul and the Body, which is ſuch,
that they manifeſtly participate the
Affections one of the other : And
therefore if the Body be ſick, the
Soul is alter'd in it's Operations, as
we ſee in high Fevers, and' other a-
cute Diſeaſes : And on the contrary,
let the Soul be ſad or joyful, the Bo-
dy is ſo too. Therefore the Sophi-
ſters of old were wont to Purge them-
ſelves with *Hellebore* ; when they
would diſpute beſt. For though in
its Eſſence the Soul depends not on the
Corporeal Organs, yet it depends up-
on the ſame in its Operations, which
are different according to the diverſe
ſtructures of the Organs ; which, if
they were alike diſpos'd; their Actions
would be alike in all, and at all
times. Whence ſaith *Ariſtotle*, if an
old Man had a young Mans Eyes, he
would ſee as clear as a Young Man.
That Ingenious Maſter of Poetry,
Mr.

Mr. *Dryden*, speaking of the mutability of *Man*, says, That our Minds are perpetually wrought on by the temperament of our Bodies : Which (saith he) makes me suspect, they are nearer ally'd, than either our Philosophers, or School-Divines will allow them to be. I have observ'd, says *Mountaign*, That when the Body is out of Order, its Companion is seldom at ease : An ill Dream, or a Cloudy Day, has power to changethis wretched Creature, who is so proud of a *Reasonable Soul*, and make him think to day what he thought not yesterday. The Learned Dr. *Henry More* says, *That our Imagination alters, even as our Blood and Spirits are alter'd; And therefore, sayshe, as Dreams are the Fancies of those that sleep, so Fancies are but the Dreams of Men awake; And these Fancies by day, as those Dreams by Night, will vary and change with the Weather, and present Temper of the Body.* Thus experience shews us, That sudden changes of *Weather* do often affect the Brain :

This

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This, disturbs the Imagination, and gives a new and Melancholy Complexion to the Appearances of things. Some Men can scarcely talk *Sense*, unless the Sun shines out, a Cloud is enough to discompose 'em, and they rise and fall with the *Mercury* in the *Weather Glass*. But to proceed; Others are of Opinion, that this great Diversity proceeds from another Cause; to wit, from the *Climat*. *Peter Heylin*, speaking of the Dispersion of the Families of the Sons of *Noah*, says, That though they all descended from one Common Root, yet by the Situations of their several Dwellings, they came to be of several Tempers and Affections; in which they were so different from one another, that they seem'd rather to have been made at first out of several Principles, than to have been deriv'd from one Common Parent. The Ground or Reason of which difference (says *Heylin*) is to be attributed to the different Tempers of those Countries in which they liv'd, and to the different Influences

Influences of the Heavenly Bodies on those several Countreys ; which do continue still the same, though many times the Countreys shift and change their old Inhabitants. Thus, if we enquire into the old Characters, which either *Florus*, *Cæsar*, *Tacitus*, or *Juvenal* gave of the old *Britains*, *Gauls*, *Germans*, *Normans*, &c. We shall find that the same Vertues, and Vices, do still prosper under the same Climats, notwithstanding in most of these Places the old Inhabitants, or their Breed, are quit wore away. 'Tis observ'd, That where the Heaven is always in the same Posture, as toward the *Poles* ; or where the Sun heats almost in the same Degree, as near the *Equator*, (which makes the Days and Nights equal,) the Manners and Inclinations of the People are also equal : And on the contrary, Those that by the several Remotions and Approaches of the Sun have different Constitutions of *Air*, receive suitable impressions from the same, which are afterwards manifested in their
Actions.

224 *The variety of* OPINIONS :

Actions. As (therefore) Fruits and Beasts differ according to the several Countries, in which they are ; so are Men born more or less Warlike, Just, Temperate, and the like, according to their several *Climats*. And therefore *Plato* thank't God, That he was an *Athenian*, and not a *Theban*. *Plutarch* tells us, That those of the higher part of the City of *Athens* were of a quite contrary humour to those that dwelt about the Gate of *Pyreus*; and it is observ'd, that those who dwell on the North-side of a Mountain, differ as much from those that dwell on the South side, as they do both from those in the Valley. Now, from this Diversity of Mens Tempers, proceed the several Forms, and Constitutions of Government; and thence it is, that in the same Countreys we find little Variation as to Government; but that in all Ages they have still kept to much one and the same Form; the same Genius or Temper ever continuing under the same *Climat*: And whenever any
Country

Country, either by persuasion, have voluntarily, or by force, have been compell'd to quit their old Form of Government: yet in process of Time they naturally return into the old Channel. This then is the reason, why those who inhabit the most Intemperate Climes, are always for preferring the Despotick, Arbitrary Rule; whereas those who live under the more temperate, and less severe Climates, especially in *Europe*, have affected and preferr'd more gentle & moderate Governments, running anciently much into Common-Wealths, and of latter Ages into Principalities, circumscrib'd by Laws, which differ not so much in Nature as in Name. The natural reason whereof, says that Accomplish'd Author, *Sir William Temple*, I take to be this, *viz. That in the more Intemperate Climates, the Spirits either exhal'd by Heat, or compress'd by Cold, are render'd faint and slaggish and by that reason the Men grow tamer and fitter for Servitude: That in more temperate Regions, the Spirits are*

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stronger.

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stronger and more active, whereby Men become bolder in the Defence or Recovery of their Liberties. Now by what we have already said, it plainly appears, That the great Variety of Mens Actions and Opinions cannot proceed from the Diversity of their Souls, which are accounted all equal, but from that of their Bodies; wherein according to the various Tempers thereof, the Soul produces that variety of Manners. Let us not then any longer wonder, to find so great a Diversity of Opinions in the World; since it is a thing wholly impossible for all Men to be of the same mind: For so long as Mens Organs are of several makes, and we live under divers Climats, we must necessarily have different Sentiments, and Apprehensions of things. Nor would there be any harm in this Diversity of Opinions, could Men but divest themselves of that Pride and Arrogance, which makes them so fond of Propagating their own Notions. But while every Man pretends to
the

the *Spirit of Infallibility*, and must be a *Dictator* to the rest of Mankind, then there is nothing but Confusion and Disorder to be expected. And this was that, which made such Disturbance, and Embroilments amongst us in the late times: Every Opinion was made an Article of Faith, and every Article became a Ground of a Quarrel, and every Quarrel made a Faction, and every Faction was Zealous, and all Zeal pretends for God, and whatsoever is for God cannot be too much; and indeed, we were come to that pass, That we thought we lov'd not God; unless we hated our Brother, and that we had not the Vertue of Religion, unless we persecuted all Religions but our own. But let us not deceive our selves, for, whatsoever some may think, this is not the violence that gains *Heaven*; Nor is there any thing that makes us more unlike God, who is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Consolation, than a Furious, Hot, and Persecuting Spi-

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rit. His appearance was in the soft and still Voice, not in Whirlwinds and Hurricanes; and where there is *Spiritus Procellæ*, we may satisfy our selves it proceeds from another Principle. The *Holy Ghost* was pleas'd to appear not in the Form of a *Vultur*, (a ravenous and devouring Creatur) but in the shape of a *Dove*, the Emblem of *Meekness*: The true Church is styl'd by the name of the *Lilly amongst Thorns*: The *Lilly* does not *Scratch* and *Tear*, that's the Property of *Thorns* and *Briars*, the most inconsiderable sort of shrubs. (And indeed, let us but reflect who were the chief Promoters of our late Persecutions, and we shall find they were the slightest of the *Clergy*, and the most Profligate of the *Laity*: None being so fit to make Shipwrack of other Mens Consciences, as those who have none of their own.) The most natural and effectual way (then) of Promoting the Blessed Gospel, is, by following its own Rules, and Precepts of Meekness and Moderation. Sweetness

ness and Ingenuity will more command Mens Minds, than Passion, Sourness, and Severity : As the soft Pillow sooner breaks the Flint, than the hardest Marble. Therefore when we would convince Men of any Error by the strength of Truth, we should do it with all the tenderness, and in the most obliging manner we are able. For Truth and Love are two the most Charming Things in the World ; and when these go hand in hand together, there is no Humane Force can withstand them. But that which proves very mischievous to many, is their taking that to be *Zeal* for God and Religion, which really is nothing but their own violent and furious Passion. True Zeal then is a sweet, Heavenly, and gentle Flame, which makes us active for God, but always within the Sphere of Love. It never calls for *Fire from Heaven*, to Consume those who agree not with us in all Points and Circumstances. It is much of the Nature of that

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kind of *Lightning*, (that the Philosophers tell us of) which melts the *Sword* within, but never singeth the *Scabard*: It strives to save the Soul but at the same time hurteth not the Body. In a word, we may learn what kind of *Zeal* it is we should make use of in promoting the Gospel, by an Emblem of Gods own, given us in the Scriptures, those *Fiery Tongues*, which upon the Day of *Pentecost* sat upon the *Apostles*; and that these were Innocent Flames, no Man can doubt, for we do not find, that they did so much as singe an hair of their heads. This then is *true Zeal*, and whatsoever is more than this, proceeds from evil, and is no other than a *Fever* in the Soul. There is not any thing that drives Men more furiously, nor that hath more disturb'd the Peace of Mankind, than *Mistaken Zeal*. *Odia Religionum sunt acerbissima*, is now grown into a *Proverb*; of all Hatreds, there are none more furious and unnatural, than

than those which arise out of Contrarieties in Religion ; and it is generally observ'd, That the less Material their Difference, the more implacable is the Hatred : As the *Turks* think it more acceptable to God, to kill one *Persian*, than seventy Christians. Nothing so vehemently alienates Mens Affections, as variety of Judgment in matters of Religion ; Here they cannot disagree, but presently they must fall together by the Ears ; and when once Religion divides Mens minds, no other common Interest can unite them ; and where Zeal dissolves Friendship, the ties of Nature are not strong enough to reconcile it : And therefore our Saviour tells us, That in this Case Men would forget all the Bonds of Natural Obligation ; inso-much that the Father would deliver up his own Child, and the Children their Parents unto Death : As we find, that the Bloody Hatred of *Cain* against *Able* arose from the different Acceptance of their Sacrifice. Nor

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indeed is it to be wonder'd, if that enmity grow excessive, which hath zeal to kindle it, and pretence of Religion to warrant it: For when that which should restrain, and set limits to a Passion, is made a Party to engage it, and fuel to foment it, no wonder if a Passion, which hath no Bounds from Religion, do impose none upon it self. And this occasion of mutual Hatred, we find observ'd even in the ridiculous Superstitions of *Ægypt*, when one Town would kill and eat the Flesh of another, in zeal to the Calves, or Sheep, or other Creatures, which they did severally worship. Now, having shew'd how much mischief *Mistaken Zeal* has done in the World, I need not spend much time in shewing the ill Success that Persecution hath constantly been attended with; the History of all Ages has done this to my hand. *Sanguis Martyrum, semen Ecclesiæ*, is a Truth will last to the Worlds End. For there is scarce any Man so void of
Huma-

Humanity, but hath good Nature enough to compassionate those that are in misery, and at the same time to shew their abhorrence to the Authors of such Cruelties: And therefore, no wonder that Persecution doth rather encrease, than lessen the number of *Martyrs*: For as it gives most Men a prejudice to the *Persecuting* Party, so it enclines them to commiserate the *Suffering* Party; and this kindness to their *Persons*, does often terminate in the favouring their *Opinions*. How preposterous then is it in any State, or Government, to endeavour to force their Subjects to Unity in Religion; when, alas! The experience of all Ages shews how impracticable the Thing is. 'Tis true, a State may sometimes force all its Subjects, to submit to an outward Uniformity in all Things that concern Divine Worship; but yet they must know, that every publick Disturbance in the Commonwealth, breaks all those Bonds asunder of dissembled Obedience,

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dience, and that such Compulsions do both beget and ripen all Disorders. Thus we see, that it is Mens being so fond of their own Opinions, which gives the greatest disturbance to Mankind; and while we are so highly conceited of our own Parts and Abilities, it cannot be otherwise. Now the only cure for this sort of Vanity, is to reflect upon the uncertainty of Humane Knowledge. *Wisdom* is a Gift, that comes from above; 'tis a Talent that few are trusted with. *Fools* will always be the greater Number. *Wise Men* are like *Timber-Trees* in a Wood, but thin planted in the World, here and there One. We see in all *Greece* there were but Seven. A *Plurality of Voices*, 'tis true, carries the Question in all our Debates, but rather as an Expedient for *Peace*, than any Eviction of *Right*. Take the World throughout, and you will find a Thousand *Blockheads* to one *Wise Man*; *Flies* breed in *Swarms*, but *Lions* do not come in-

to the world by *Litters*. There is Folly (then) in all the Sons of Men, They know but a very small part of the Things that are in the World; and those things they do know, they know but in part. And besides their natural Ignorance, what thro' Precipitancy, Misinformation, Prejudice, Partial Affections, and several other Causes, they are subject to many gross Mistakes and Errors: Whereby it cometh to pass, That the *Wise* Men sometimes are foully over-seen, and are fain to take up the *Fool's* Plea, and to cry, *Non putaram*, Who cou'd have thought it?

There is no Head so sound or strong, but hath some soft Place, nor is any Mans Understanding so perfect and so clear, as to have no *Flaw*, nor *Dark Water* in it. The *French* tell us, That every Man hath his *Foible*, his Blind or Weak side, and that there is no Man so *Wise*, but hath more or less of the *Fool* in him. Every Man hath some-

something whereby he may be taken; and it is hard to find that *Fish*, that at some time or other will not bite, if the Bait be such as likes him, *One Man* is transported out of his Reason, and his Honesty, by sensual Pleasures; *Another* by Money, perhaps, or by Ambition. Every Man, in short, by Somewhat or Other: And it is but striking him in the right Vein, to do his Business. Men are every jot as easily impos'd upon, as *Birds*, *Beasts*, or *Fishes*; while the Eagerness of our Appetites suspends the Exercise of our Reason. A *Treat*, a *Woman*, or a *Bottle* is the same thing to us, that a *Worm*, a *Gudgeon*, a *Grain of Corn*, or a *Piece of Flesh* is to these Animals: We snap at the *Bait*, without ever dreaming of the *Hook*, the *Trap*, or the *Snare*, that goes along with it. Upon these Considerations therefore was it, That these several Sentences were grounded; *Nemo Mortalium omnibus Horis Sapit*— *Auriculas Asini Quis non habet?*—

Stulto

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Stultorum plena sunt Omnia—*Quis- que suos patimur Manes*—All which sayings, are but different *Phrases* and *Dialects* to express the Frailty and Imperfection of Humane Knowledge The reason then, why wise Men do never appear so peremptory, and Dogmatical as others, is, because they very well know, there are but few things so certain, as to create much boldness, and confidence of Opinion. It was probably upon this Consideration, that the wise *Romans* shew'd so much Modesty, when they gave their Sentiments and Opinions, concluding still for the most part with these two words, *IT A VIDETUR*. 'Tis the Observation of the witty *Mountaign*, That as amongst wise Men he is the wisest, that thinks he knows least; So amongst Fools he is the greatest, that thinks he knows most. Humane Nature is very fallible, the wisest of Men do sometimes err, and therefore at the very Instant a Man seems most positive, how does he know but he may

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may be *most Mistaken*? Do not even our very Senses sometime deceive us? And yet most of our Conceptions are taken from the Senses, and we can scarce judge of any thing but by the help of Material Images, that are thence convey'd to us, according to that old Rule, *Nihil est in Intellectu, Quod non fuit prius in sensu*, Since therefore our Senses are so very fallacious, and from them result most of Humane Knowledge, how fond and ridiculous is it in any Man to pretend to such an Assurance? *Est in ipsis rebus Obscuritas; & in judiciis nostris Infirmitas*, saith *Tully*; so slight a Thing is Humane Knowledge, That the most inconsiderable, and minutest Works of Nature, serve to Puzzel, and Confound it. *Plato* says, That in Man there is no such Thing as *Science* or *Knowledge*, 'tis but barely *Opinion*: and in another place he calls *Opinion*, a Middle Thing betwixt *Ignorance* and *Knowledge*, Indeed, while

while we are in this World, we do but behold by the favour of a Glimmering-Light, the Phantasms and Shadows of Things, which Custom makes us take for Bodies and Truths: All *Humane Knowledge* (then) is defective: As it is, it is but *lesser folly*; which hitting sometimes, fails as Often. And as the *Fools Bolt* does not always Miss, so the Wise Mans *Counsels* do not always prosper. The best Knowledge a Man hath, is but a dim sort of Light; which makes us apt to Stumble, and often puts us to grope out our Way. Our clearest day here is Misty and Hazy: We see not far, and what we do see is in a bad light. In a Word, we may properly be said to see the *wrong side* of the *Hangings*; and let us pretend to what we will, the utmost of *Humane Knowledge*, is but a fair and Hopeful Conjecture.

Through

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Through Seas of *Knowledge*, we
our Course advance,

Discovering still new Worlds of
Ignorance ;

And these Discoveries make us
all Confess,

That *Sublunary Science* is but
Guess.

Matters of Fact to Man are only
known,

And what seems more, is meer
Opinion.

Sir *JOH. DENHAM*.

Our Demonstrations are raised up-
on Principles of our own, not of Uni-
versal Nature; and, as the Lord
Bacon notes, *We take up Opinions,*
suitable rather to the Analogy of our
selves, than that of the Universe.
How unreasonable then are those
Men, who are so positive and dog-
matical in their own Opinions, that
rather than admit of the least Con-
tradiction, chuse to make the whole
World an *Aceldama* and a *Babel*?
And

And thus, have we not by sad Experience found it most true; That all the Miseries, which have attended the variety of Opinions since the Reformation, have proceeded from this Grand Mistake, the making our own private Opinions the Standard of infallible Truth? Whereas all wise Men ought to consider, That truth is a Thing not certainly known; Nay possibly, the All-Wise God thinks it too dazzling a Thing for the Eyes of us poor Mortals, and therefore reserves it for our Glorified Faculties.

ESSAY VIII.

An ESSAY of RELIGION.

THAT Idea which most Men have of *God*, is nothing else but a Picture of their own Complexions, just as the *Ethiopians* pictur'd their *Gods* Black, because they were Black themselves. And therefore we commonly observe, That such as are of a sour, morose Nature, are very apt to frame to themselves a *God* of their own Temper. Thus do these Men vainly imitate the Power of the *Almighty*; who as he at first was pleas'd to make *them* after his Image, so wou'd they now make *him* after theirs. In this Manner do

We Model all that is in *God* to our own Fancies; and instead of Believing him what he is, we even make him what we wou'd have him: Like *Micha*, we make us a *God* for our own peculiar Use, and form the *Deity* we intend to Worship. This then is the reason, that we many times represent *God* in such false Colours, and so utterly unlike *Himself*; for out of an unreasonable partiality to our selves, we first mistake the Deformities of our own Natures for Perfections, and then Deifie them into *Divine Attributes*. And thus many times it comes to pass, that our Notions of *God*, are nothing but the Images of *our Selves*, which *Narcissus* like we fall in love with, for no other Reason, but because they reflect our own dear likeness. But let us not deceive our selves, for whatever our little, narrow Conceits may be, still *God* is the same, and will for ever keep up that Character, *I am that I am*. We can therefore no more alter the

true Nature of *God* by our Wild and extravagant Representations of him, than a Deforming *Optick Glass* can the Object it disguises. But certainly of all Sorts of Men, none do more mistake the *Divine Nature*, and by consequence do greater Mischief to *Religion*, than those who wou'd perswade us, That to be truly *Religious*, is to renounce all the Pleasures of Humane Life; As if *Religion* were a *Caput Mortuum*, a heavy, dull, insipid thing; that has neither Heat, Life, nor Motion in it: Or were intended for a *Medusa's* Head to transform Men into Monuments of Stone. Whereas (really) *Religion* is of an Active Principle, it not only elevates the Mind, and invigorates the Fancy; but it admits of Mirth, and pleasantness of Conversation, and indulges us in our Christian Liberties; and for this reason, says the Lord Bacon, *It is no less impious to shut where God Almighty has open'd, than to open where God Almighty has shut.*

But,

But, I say, if Men will suffer themselves to be thus impos'd upon, as to Believe, That *Religion* requires any such unnecessary Rigours and Austerities, all that can be said, is, The fault does not lye in *Religion*, but in their *Understandings*; Nor is this to paint *Religion* like herself, but rather like one of the *Furies* with nothing but Whips and Snakes about her. And so, they Worship *God* just as the *Indians* do the *Devil*, not as they love him, but because they are afraid of him. It is not therefore to be wonder'd, that since their Notions of *God* are such; their Way of Worship is agreeable thereunto; And hence it is, That these Men serve *our God*, just as some Idolaters Worship *theirs*; with painful Convulsions of Body, and unnatural Distortions of Face, and all the dismal solemnities of a gloomy Soul, and a dejected Countenance. Now these are the Men, who upon all Occasions are so apt to condemn their Brethren, and, as

if they were of God's *Cabinet Council*, pretend to know the *Final Decrees* of the *Almighty*. But alas! who is sufficient for these Things? Certainly, no Man can render himself more foolishly ridiculous, than by meddling with these *Secrets* of *Heaven*. The *Decrees* of God we say are *Hidden*, but in the same breath we contradict our selves, and endeavour to Confute that *Epithet*, by pretending to know them. Methinks our Ignorance in the *Creatures*, and being so far at a loss as to flie to *Occult Qualities*, which *Scaliger* calls *Ignorantiæ Asylum*, shou'd check our Curiosity in the Things of God, and teach us to sit down Contented to resolve Gods *Actions* into some *Hidden Causes*. The Heathen *Seneca* cou'd say, *Nunquam Verecundiores debemus esse, quam cum de Deo Agitur*, Modesty never becomes us better, than when we speak of God, *qui ut intelligatur tacendum est*, as *Arnobius* elegantly expresses it, which seems to agree with

with that of the *Apostle*, who advises us *to become Fools, that we may be Wise*. Secular states, we see, do with a great deal of Jealousy reserve their *private Councils*; and shall we think *God* so scrutable, or our selves so penetrating that none of his *Secrets* can escape us? Or if we think him, as indeed he is, unfathomable, why do we thus madly attempt what we confess impossible? Especially since we shall not only lose the thing we so vainly pursue, but others we might else enjoy. *God* has given us Rules of Life, which upon the severest Penalties he requires us to study and practice; but alas! This we make no part of our Business, and most of our time is taken up in unfolding the *impene- trable Counsels of Heaven*. I have read of a *Philosopher*, who not minding his way, but gazing upon the *Stars*, happen'd to fall into a Ditch: Even so is this much our Case; while we are prying into the *Stars* to read our *Destiny*, and do not re-

gard the necessary Duties of *Religion*, we do thereby fall into the *Worst Fate* they could have portended: And, for my part, I firmly Believe, That the Extravagant Notions some Men have had concerning Gods *Decrees*, have reprobated more than those *Decrees* upon which they are so willing to charge their Ruine. And, indeed, it is but just and reasonable it should be so; for if Men will at this rate transcend the Bounds of Modesty, and usurp God's Prerogative, they very well deserve to meet with their own Destruction. That *Ark* which devoutly revered, brought *Blessings*, when curiously pry'd into, diffus'd *Pestilence* and *Death*. Nay, the very *Poets* will tell us, That if we will have *Prometheus's Fire*, we must take *Pandora's Box* also: And sure Industry cannot be worse laid out, than thus to fetch home *Plagues* to our selves. Let us then be contented to act within our own Sphear, and no longer soar after things *Inscrutable* and

and past finding out : Let us learn contentedly to be ignorant, where God wou'd not have us knowing ; nor think it any disparagement to acknowledge some *Depths* in God, which our shallow Reason cannot Fathom. *Næ intelligendo faciunt, ut nihil intelligant* ; the way to make our selves meer Fools, is to affect to know more than God would have us. Just as he who affects to pry into the Body of the Sun, by gazing grows stark Blind, and sees less then otherwise he might by those scatter'd Rays in the Air. In a Word, it is the Glory of our *Religion*, that we acknowledge such a God as is unsearchable.

And as *Religion* teaches us *Modesty*, so does it likewise incline Mento *Meekness* and *Goodness of Nature*. Of all Vertues and Dignities of the Mind *Goodness of Nature* (says *Bacon*) is the greatest, being the very Character of the *Deity* : And without it *Man* is a Busy, Mischievous,

chievous, wretched thing; no better than a kind of *Vermin*.

The *Heathen* speaking of God, usually stile him by two Attributes, *Optimus* & *Maximus*, the one importing his *Goodness*, the other his *Power*; but we see the Precedency is given to his *Goodness*, it being *that* wherein *God* himself is most delighted; and therefore all the Acts of our *Saviour*, while he convers'd on Earth among Men, were purely the effects of, and emanations from, his *tenderneß* and *Good Nature*. Tho' all God's *Attributes* are *Infinite*, yet this Beloved, Triumphant Attribute of his, his *Mercy*, transcends the rest; and therefore (if it were possible) he seems herein to be somewhat more than *Infinite*. *Tertullian* Observes, that the Prime Quality in God is *Goodness*; this (saith he) is Natural and Eternal; but his *Severity* is casual and adventitious; the one is proper unto him, the *other* is but borrowed; the *one* inwardly flows from him,

him, the *other* is inwardly fixed upon him. Almighty God may be said to measure his *Judgments* by the *Ordinary Cubit*, but his *Mercies* by the *Cubit* of the *Sanctuary*, twice as big. The *Primitive Christians* lookt upon *Good Nature* to be such an *Essential* part of *Religion*, That *Tertullian* tells us, the *Professors* of *Christianity* were at first call'd not *Christiani*, but *Chrestiani*, from a word importing *Sweetness of Temper*. And we know, it was the great *Distinguishing Character* of the *Christians* of *Old*, given 'em by their profest *Enemies*, *Ecce ut Christiani ament*: Behold how these *Christians* love one another. From all this (then) we may inferr, That true *Christianity* is the *best natur'd* Institution in the *World*; and that so far as any *Church* is departed from *Good Nature*, and becomes cruel and barbarous so far is it degenerated from *Christianity*. But such has been the *Misfortune* of these latter *Ages*, That this blessed *Religion* (so apt
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are the best Things to corrupt in process of time) is so much mistaken by some Men, that under pretence thereof, they act the most Barbarous and Inhumane Actions; and in a most preposterous Manner think, that the best way to advance *Religion*, is to banish Peace. But it is wonderful to me, That, that which was design'd to make us Happy in *another* World, shou'd by its Divisions make us most Miserable in *this*; and that which was ordain'd for the saving of Mens *Souls*, shou'd be made use of to take away their *Lives*, or, what is more valuable, their *Liberties*.

Of all the Tyrannies on Humane Kind

The Worst is that which Persecutes the Mind.

Let us but weigh at what Offence we strike,

'Tis but because we cannot Think alike.

In punishing of This we overthrow

The Laws of Nations and of Nature too.

D R T D. Hind and Panther

And what is all this Bustle for ? Only to *force* Men to the same Opinion in Matters of *Religion*, a Thing which the Experience of all Ages hath shewn to be both Unsafe and Impracticable. Alas ! 'Tis a fond Imagination to think, That *Religion* can be impos'd on Men ; or that we can bind the *Understandings* and *Wills* of Men with the same Fetters we do their Bodies. 'Tis true, did *Religion* consist only in some *External Conformities*, then *External Force* might bear some Proportion to it : But *Religion*, we know, is seated in those *Faculties*, to which *outward Violence* can have no access. 'Tis *Reason* then,

then, not *Force* must gain the Conquest. *Force* in matters of *Opinion* is so far from doing any good, that it is often apt to do hurt; for it is not in any Mans power, to alter his *Opinion* whenever he has a Mind to't; Indeed, it were very well if he cou'd, for by that Means he might cure many Inconveniences of his Life: As for instance, if a Man who lies under a severe fit of the *Colick*, or the *Stone*, could but perswade himself he was at ease and felt no pain; or if a Man, who is plunder'd or Imprison'd, cou'd but imagine he was kindly us'd, he might then sleep without any disturbance: But, I say, since a Man cannot alter his *Opinion* when he lists, nor ever does heartily, or resolutely but when he cannot do otherwise, then to use *Force* may make a Man a *Hypocrite*, but never to be a *Real Convert*. No wonder then, the *Heathens* lived so quietly, without any Quarrel, or War of *Opinions* in Matters of *Religion*: For tho' their

their several Cities profess'd the Worship of several *Deities*, yet we read not of any War which sprung from that Diversity. The *Poets* have made the *Gods* enter into *Factions* and Quarrels for *Common-Wealths*, but *Common-Wealths* never did the same for their *Gods*. This Quiet and Happiness, which to the shame and scandal of the *Christian* Name was enjoy'd four thousand Years among the *Heathen*, continued so long and so uninterrupted, because every Man, following the Rules of his own judgment, allowed that *Liberty* to others which he found so necessary for himself. And even the *Stoicks* themselves, who enslav'd the *Will*, durst never attempt this violence to the *Understanding*. But (God knows) among us *Christians* it has (unhappily) fallen out quite otherwise; for the least Difference sets us together by the Ears, and then we Stigmatize one another with the Blackest Characters and the most Reproachful Terms

Terms. When People once separate and randezvous themselves into distinct *Sects* and *Parties*, they always confine their kindness to their own *Party*, and look with a Scornful and Malignant Aspect upon all the rest of Mankind; those that are not within the Pale of their *Church*, cannot be within the Sphear of their *Charity*. For they think it no part of their Duty to Commiserate or Supply the Wants of the *Unregenerate*. As the *Poet* describes the *Jewish Bigots*:

Non Monstrare vias, eadem nisi sacra
Colenti,
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere
Verpos.

They would not so much as direct the Way to any but a *Circumcis'd Brother*, nor bestow a Cup of Cold Water upon a *Thirsty Samaritan*. And thus, according to *Hudibras*,

*Do all Religions flock together,
Like Tame and Wild Fowl of a
Feather.*

Most Men are so fond of their own *Opinions* in Matters of *Religion*, that whoever opposes them, are lookt upon not only as *their* Enemies, but as *God's* too: And therefore when *Passion* is fired with *Religious Zeal*, nothing can temper its outrageous Heats; But it works the Minds of Men into rancour and bitterness, and drives 'em into all manner of Savage and Inhumane Practices: Nay, and which is still the more deplorable, it is constantly observed, That all *Parties* are much Warmer and more Furious in defending those *Points* for which there is least *Reason*; for, says *Tillotson*, what Men want of *Reason* for their *Opinions*, they usually supply and make up in *Rage*. We are now come to that pass, that we cannot with pa-

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tience admit of *other Mens Opinions*, nor endure that *our own* shou'd be oppos'd. As it was in the *Lacedemonian Army*, almost all were *Captains*; so in our Disputes, all will be *Leaders* and we look on our selves to be much affronted, if others think not as we do. Men are as apt to defend their *Opinions*, as their *Property*, and wou'd take it as well to have their *Titles* to their *Estates* question'd as their *Sense*. And it often happens, that the Weaker their *Opinions* are, the fonder they are of them; just like Indulgent Mothers, that are most tender of those Children that are Weakest: Hence many Men are so possess'd with their own *Phancies* and *Opinions*, that they take them for *Oracles*, and think they see *Visions*, when at the same time (God knows) they do but *Dream Dreams*. In a Word, most Men are so fond of their own *Opinions* that they make themselves the *Standards* of Wisdom,

dom, to which all are Bound to conform, and whoever weighs not in their Ballance, be his Reasons never so Weighty, they write *Tekel* upon them. But after all, *Opinions* are but *Relishes*; and Men differ no less in them, than in their *Tasts* and *Palats*: Therefore I may with as much reason be angry with a Man, for not being of my *Diet*, as for not being of my *Opinion*. That all Men shou'd be of the same *Opinion*, and agree in the same Conception and Apprehensions of things, is impossible, and no more to be expected in this Life, than that all Mens Faces and Complexions shou'd be alike, for as long as Men have different Educations, Tempers, Constitutions of Body, Inclinations of Mind, and Several Interests to serve; so long there will be Disputes and Controversies even about matters of *Religion*: What Devilish Pride (then) is it, to endeavour (like the *Old Tyrant*) to Stretch, or

Cramp up, every Man to the proportion of my Bed? It is certainly the greatest Oppression and Usurpation imaginable, to assault, or try to overcome the Reason of another by any thing else but Reason. The way to our future happiness has been perpetually disputed throughout the World, and must be left at last to the *Impressions* made upon every Mans *Belief* or *Conscience*, either by Naturel or Supernatural Arguments and Means; which *Impressions* Men may disguise or dissemble, but no Man can resist. For *Belief* is no more in a Man's Power, than his Stature, or his Feature: And he that tells me, I must change my *Opinion* for his, because it is the truer and better, without other Arguments, that have to me the force of Conviction, may as well tell me, I must change my *Gray Eyes* for others like his that are *Black*; because these are lovelier, or more in esteem. He that tells me, I must *Inform* my self; has reason,

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if I do it not : But if I endeavour it all that I can, and perhaps more than he ever did, and yet still differ from him ; And he, that it may be is idle, will have me Study on, and *Inform* my self better, and so to the end of my Life ; Then I easily understand what he means by *Informing*, which is in short, that I must do it till I come to be of his *Opinion*. If he that perhaps pursues his Pleasures or Interests as much or more than I do ; And allows me to have as good sense as he has in all other matters ; tells me, I should be of his *Opinion*, but that *Passion* or *Interest* blinds me ; unless he can convince me *How* or *Where* this lies, he is but where he was, only 'pretends to know me better than I do my self, who cannot imagine , why I should not have as much care of *my* Soul as he has of *his*. A Man that tells me, my *Opinions* are absurd or ridiculous, impertinent or unreasonable, because they differ from *his*, seems to intend a *Quarrel*

instead of a *Dispute* ; and calls me *Fool* or *Madman* with a little more Circumstance ; Tho perhaps I pass for one as well in my Senses as *He*, as pertinent in Talk, and as prudent in Life : yet these are the common Civilities in Religious Arguments of Conceited Men, who talk much of *Right Reason*, but mean always *their own* ; and make their private Imagination the measure of general truth. But such Language determines all between us, and the Dispute comes to end in three Words at last, which it might as well have ended in at first, that *he is in the Right, and I am in the Wrong*. At this rate, and in this obstinate manner, do the generality of Men act in the Concerns of *Religion*, as thinking they cannot shew too much Heat and Zeal upon that Subject. When once Mens Minds have taken up *Schemes* and *Ideas* of *Religion* right or wrong they are resolv'd to defend them, and every thing within their reach is prest and made to serve

serve in defence of those preconceiv'd Opinions. Even *Scripture* it self, let the genuine Sense be what it will, is too often made use of to these purposes; Nay, if there be any one Word, or Phrase in the *Bible*, that Sounds like the *Tinkling* of such Mens Fancies, presently they conclude, that God himself speaks their Language. And thus do they stamp Divinity on their wildest and most extravagant *Opinions*, twisting and twining the *Scripture* as they have a mind to't; They fasten their own Conceits upon God; and like the *Harlot* in the Book of *Kings* do they take their dead and putrified Fancies, and lay them in the Bosome of *Scripture*. But these Men deal with *Scripture* just as *Chymists* do with Natural Bodies, torturing them to extract that out of them, which God and Nature never put in them. And therefore no wonder, we find such Diversity of *Opinions* in matters of *Religion*,

for if we strive to *give* unto *Scripture*, and not to *receive* from it the Sense, we may easily deduce what Inference we please and likewise establish whatever Notions we think fit. *Religious Disputes* are of a *Proflifick* Nature, especially when they are manag'd by Men of Art and Sophistry, as may appear by the Elaborate Trifles of the *Schoolmen*. Indeed when I consider the Subtile Divisions and Nice Distinctions of these Men, I cannot but fancy, they had the power of Working Miracles; Questions in their Hands, Multiplying in the Breaking, like the *Loaves* in our *Saviour's*; Tho' I must confess to very different purposes, no solid Nourishment being deriv'd from the *One*, but on the Contrary *Stones* given us instead of *Bread*, and those too, even to sling at one another. Little advantage (then) has our *Religion* receiv'd from these Men, the best of whose Curiosities, and Learned Trifles

Trifles, are but like *Paint on Glass*, which serves only to hinder and intercept the Light. But as our Differences in *Religion* are many, so, that which aggravates our Misfortune is, that these Differences have (many of them) been grounded upon the slightest, and most minute matters, and have often times proceeded from the most Inconsiderable Beginings. What was *Religion* the better for that long dispute concerning the day on which *Easter* was to be observ'd? Or did it signifie any thing to *Religion*, what *Cecilian* or his *Ordainers* were especially, in the Age after they were dead? And yet not only a Seperation and violent Rage, but a great Effusion of Blood, with the other dismal Consequences of that blind Fury, follow'd upon this, and the *Africans* continued Quarrelling about it, till the *Vandals* came, and destroy'd both the one and the other. • But I need not go so far

far from home for Instances of this Kind ; since our own Histories do furnish us with Examples of this Nature. One could not reasonably have imagin'd, that the Dispute concerning *Hoods* and *Surplices* could have rise to so great a Height. Who could ever have thought, that an old Womans Muttering against the *Liturgie*, when it was first introduced into *Scotland*, should have prov'd the first beginning of the late Civil Wars? And yet in Fact that it was so, every Body knows. Thus we see, that one Contest Breeds another, and that which perhaps began at a *Speculative* Point, ends in a *Practical* one; and that which begins in some *Rite* or *Ceremony*, grows at last to a Breach in Matters of *Faith*. And thus it is beyond all Dispute, that many of the Contests about *Mysteries* began at
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some unwary Expressions, in which the *one side* fasten'd ill Senses on the Words spoken by the *other*; and the *other*, rather than yield so far, for Peace sake, as to explain themselves, chose rather to justify their Words in any Sence, than to retract or mollifie them.

I have often-times been amaz'd to see, with how much Zeal and Fury some Men have defended the use of *Ceremonies*, as if they were really essential to *Religion*; whereas nothing has been a greater Clog or Impediment to *Religion*, than the mixing it with too many *Ceremonies*. We know it hath been the constant observation, that the Life and Vigour of *Christianity* never decay'd more, than when *Ceremonies* multiplied most. *Christian Religion* is a Plain, Simple, Easie thing; *Christ* commends his Yoke to us by the easiness

casiness of it, and his Burthen by the lightness of it. It was an excellent Testimony which *Ammianus Marcellinus*, a Heathen, gave to *Christianity*, when spoken of *Constantius*, that he had Spoil'd the Beauty of *Christianity*, by Muffling it up in Superstitious Observations. And it is as true which *Erasmus* said in Answer to the *Sorbonists*, that *External Ceremonies teach us Backwards, and bring us back from Christ to Moses*. It is not to be imagin'd by any Sober Man, that the Lord of Heaven and Earth, who is so Jealous of his own Worship, that under the *Law* he severly prohibited the *Adding to*, or *Diminishing* one Tittle from what he had commanded, and under the *Gospel* gave no other Commission, than to teach according to what he had commanded; 'tis not I say to be imagin'd, that he hath left his Worship to the Invention of corrupt, frail

frail Man, inclinable above all things to Superstition and Idolatry, and who are by Nature endlessly various in their Sense, Imaginations and Understandings: This certainly seems highly irrational, and to accuse *Christ* of not having been as a *Son*, so careful of his Church, as *Moses* a *Servant* was of the Church of God under the *Law*: For had *Christ* intended to have left his Church under a *Negative* Obedience in Worship, making all things Lawful that he had not forbidden, the Command had been as readily made, to do whatsoever he had not prohibited, as it was to do whatsoever he hath commanded. The Learned and Ingenious Mr. *Hales* tells us, That to charge *Churches* and *Liturgies* with things unnecessary, was the first Beginning of all Superstition. And agreeably hereunto, does Bishop *Bramhal*, in his Discourse of *Schism*, profess to all the World, That the transforming of *Indifferent Opinions*
into

into *Necessary Articles of Faith*, hath been that *Insana. Laurus*, or *Cursed Bay-Tree*, the Cause of all our Differences and Contentions. The *Ancient Fathers* call'd the *Creed Symbolum*, the *Shot*, and *Total Summ of Faith*; but since their Times we have had a great many *after-Reckonings* brought us in; to which it we will not pay our Belief, our Souls must be arrested without *Bail* upon pain of *Eternal Damnation*. In the *Beginning of the Reformation*, CEREMONIES were retain'd to win upon the People, who were then generally *Papists*; and doated upon old usages, and not as the necessary conditions of *Communion*; they were retain'd not to shut out of doors the *Protestants*, as in the late Reigns they were us'd, but to invite in the *Romanists*, which was their original End; But there's nothing more common, than for *Institutions* to degenerate, and be perverted from the first Reasons of their

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their usage, and yet still to plead the Credit of their *Originals*: Thus *Indulgences*, and *Remission of Sins*, were first granted to all that wou'd engage in the *Holy War*, to recover the *Sepulchre of Christ* out of the Hands of the *Saracens*; but in process of time they were dispenced to them who would Massacre the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, and such as cou'd not Obey the Tyranny of the *Romish Faction*: Thus was the *Inquisition* first set up to discover the Hypocritical *Moors* in *Spain*; but the Edge of it since turn'd against the *Protestants*. And thus were the *Ceremonies* perverted, at first made a *Key* to let in the *Papists*, and since made a *Lock* to shut out *Protestants*.

F I N I S.



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